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## Children's EFL Motivation: An investigation of 7-12 year old students in training schools in China

Daosheng Liao  
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**Children's EFL Motivation:  
An investigation of 7-12 year old students  
in training schools in China**

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**November 2004**

**Research thesis submitted as partial requirements  
for  
Master of Arts  
(Applied Linguistics)**

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School of Education**

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## **ABSTRACT**

English training schools in China are a new EFL phenomenon and information about EFL for 7-12 year old students is also new. There appears to be little research done regarding their motivation to learn EFL, and this constitutes a gap in theory addressing this area. This research attempts to fill the gap by investigating the factors that affect the motivation of learners in this age group. Questionnaires were administered to 200 students and the responses were analysed to establish the motivational factors associated with learning English in training schools in Xi'an, China.

The analysis showed that the training school students themselves held surprisingly strong views about learning English and their views were influenced by their training school experiences.

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# **Chinese Children's EFL motivation: An investigation of 7-12 year old students in training schools**

## **Chapter One Introduction**

### **1.1 The Background to the Study**

#### **Historical and political factors**

Since the normalization of the Sino-American relationship in 1979, and China's reformation and the implementation of the open-door policy soon after it, when economical, cultural, educational and scientific-technological exchanges between the two countries began on a normal basis, and when such exchanges between China and other countries also began to grow, the need for communication in English and the need of people who understood English began to increase steadily. This necessitated the enhancement of teaching of English in middle schools and institutions of higher education. This strengthened the awareness of the need and the power of knowing English on the part of the government, of the social bodies, and of people seeking better education, better job opportunities, and better chances of promotion. In return, the increased awareness from them expected much of schools and teachers teaching English for better English proficiency, which, along with the introduction of linguistic theories, psycholinguistic theories and theories in Applied Linguistics and English teaching methodology into China, helped drive teachers and schools to improve teacher-centred teaching effectiveness with the students who were admitted into the schools.

In the meantime, especially from the mid-1980s, the influences derived from the above-mentioned factors had an influence on a limited number of elementary school students in big cities, particularly on their parents who, themselves suffered from the lack of opportunity of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) well during their school days. They wanted their children to have a prior experience of English before they went to middle school where English was taught according to the school curriculum, and so in a few elementary schools in big cities English was taught as an extra subject (Liao, 2002) in addition to the regular curriculum that did not require the teaching of English by the national syllabus and policy. At such a level of teaching of English, unlike that at the levels of middle school and institutions of higher education, the EFL learning for the elementary students was like “wild grass” whose existence and growth was given attention by no governmental authorities and by few academic researchers. Teaching was conducted mainly through the teachers’ personal probing, mainly through pattern drills and grammar-translation to uninterested students who regarded the learning of English as unimportant because the score in it did not contribute to their upgrading in schooling.

### **The socially perceived need for EF learning**

Since the 1990s, more than a decade has seen the rapid growth in China’s economy and social development and in foreign-related or foreign-oriented involvement at many levels, and in many fields, especially in education, economy, science and technology, and travel and tourism. This has generated many English-related events such as Beijing’s hosting the Asian Games, followed by Shanghai’s hosting the APEC conference, then by Beijing’s efforts to apply for and success in obtaining the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games, and most importantly by China’s entry into World Trade Organization (WTO). These events have, as a result, generated Chinese awareness of globalization, and of the concept of English as a global language, particularly, since the turn of the century, have contributed to a great many drastic changes concerning the learning and use of English in China, especially in the big cities.

There have been more and more Chinese students going to English-speaking countries such the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore for western-style education, at the middle school level, the graduate level or higher levels, namely for Master's or/and doctorate degrees. More and more common people have travelled to foreign countries, especially developed countries including major English-speaking countries.

An increasing number of exchange programs or co-operational programs emerged across the borders, and across the various societies, associations or other social bodies between China and foreign countries. A constantly growing number of Chinese private- collective- or state-owned companies have expanded their business overseas.

An ever increasing number of foreign-owned companies or Sino-foreign joint ventures is arising in big and medium-sized or less-influential cities in China. So, more and more English-speaking people are working in China and having their children attend local kindergartens, and/or local elementary schools in the vicinity of where they work, study and travel in China.

Some Chinese people occasionally have foreign English-speaking visitors at their houses or at their parties; a few middle schools and even elementary schools have native English-speaking teachers teaching English. It is not rare that some family members, relatives, relations, friends, colleagues and acquaintances exchange their knowledge or/and experiences in contact with foreign English-speaking people in China or knowledge or/and experiences in English-speaking countries.

Besides such contact, there are accessible resources of English. English books, both original and adapted, can be available in bookstores; English is also accessible through technological global media, such as internet. Original English films and songs, as well as more and more English in the media like TV programs, radio programs, and even advertisements in some newspapers, can be found there.

Learning English has become a mass concern and is a frequent topic of average people's everyday conversation, of family conversation, of students' chat or conversation, of teachers of English and of teachers of other subjects. Besides, there is a readily perceptible trend towards mass psychological accord in China: almost everybody seems to want to have what other people have, do what other people do, even try his/her utmost to outdo others, once he/she considers what others have/do to be superior to his/hers. This mass psychology contributes to heating up the growing trend in EFL learning. Ordinary employees or executives in their 20s, 30s, 40s or even older, are trying to learn English, refresh or improve their English. A good command of English with the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, means upgrading, promotion, privilege, priority, opportunity and potential success.

### **Educational background**

National English education policy has a dominating influence on students on the issue of learning English. The national standards for College English Band IV and VI tests have critical impact on college students. University graduates can not be upgraded or admitted to postgraduate school to have further education if they fail to pass the entrance English examination for postgraduate school, the difficulty level of which is equivalent to College English Band VI. University graduates with a diploma and honours can not be granted a graduation certificate and bachelor's degree if they fail to pass the Band IV test.

The national Entrance Examination in English for university entry has been raising the standard these years. The entrance examination in English for going to senior middle school has been raising the standard accordingly. Junior middle schools, which are not allowed by the government to enrol students through cross-district selection by imposing an entrance examination on them, are nonetheless imposing 'examinations' in one way or another on students who wish to get enrolled in them. These examinations include English, (Olympic) mathematics and Mandarin Chinese. And the level of English required is being raised. Although it is estimated that no more than a third of junior middle schools do this, such imposition by the key schools or



widely accepted good schools seeking enrolment of students with a high ability and high potentiality to enter key schools in future as a means of competition is influential in cities and big towns.

### **Need for EFL in elementary schools**

The social and educational climate encourages the rapidly growing demand of EFL learning development for teenagers and younger children. Therefore China has concurrently experienced swift expansion in the teaching of English from middle school down to elementary school. The reason for this expansion also comes from the fact that general people, the government and the circle of TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) providers have realized the following: (1) the EFL in middle schools and higher institutions in China is not adequate in quantity and quality for the growing social need; (2) middle school students may be overburdened if they are required to take more EFL classes in addition to their existing weekly 5-6 class hour load, for more quantity and better proficiency of English; (3) elementary school students are believed to be in an advantageous position to learn EFL with regard to age factor, in comparison to middle school students; and (4) many believe that learners may develop English proficiency better if they start learning it at an earlier age and for a longer time. In addition, the teaching of English in elementary schools has been explicitly encouraged by the government who expect EFL to be taught from grade three if condition permits, particularly in cities.

So, EFL is taught in many elementary schools, at least from grade three onward. Some government-run elementary schools that have the right conditions and private elementary schools, which are usually better provided for, have reacted quickly to the need of the society by teaching EFL from grade one.

### **EFL learning in elementary schools**

However, there has been no common EFL standard in elementary schools nation wide. There have been no national syllabus, unified curricula and no unified textbooks created for the subject of English nation wide as has been done with other subjects until 2001(See Note at the end of this chapter). Still,

due to the range of situations across the country, different schools in different regions, areas or cities have adopted different textbooks and curricula. Some schools provide English teaching in an informal manner: one or two 45-minute teaching period in a week in outside-curriculum periods in the afternoon. However, most schools that have English teaching provide a formal curriculum English subject teaching. The number of teaching hours varies from 2 to 4 in a week.

Textbooks are chosen from English book suppliers by individual schools. Some sets of books begin with one volume or two that bear no words at all, followed by volumes that bear a word for a picture, then gradually a couple of words to go with a picture, and at last followed by volumes that have phrases or short sentences to go with a picture. Some books are structure-based, for example, English for Children (Shanghai Foreign language Education Press) and others are communication-based, for example, The New English for Children. Some textbooks are English-Mandarin bilingual and some are English monolingual.

In spite of the fact that different schools use different textbooks, the schools do share some characteristics. One common aspect is that English is treated as a side subject with comparatively lesser value and lesser status in the school. Another is that the input of English is rather small. The third similarity is that English is taught mainly in Mandarin. The fourth is that the English teaching is mainly focused on an introduction to English for students rather than on acquisition of communicative language proficiency. And also students use no more than one textbook at a time for a school year.

English teachers, mostly diploma graduates in the English major, are not adequately trained in their own English proficiency. They are not well enough trained in teaching methodology, theories and principles in TEFL and so most of them teach mainly in the way their teachers taught them or through their own personal experience. These teaching approaches vary greatly from school to school and from teacher to teacher. Many teachers may make students learn partly by telling them that they must consider their movement

to good or better schools or their opportunity to go abroad, partly by carrot-and-stick policy and partly playing some games with them. The class sizes vary from 45 to 60. The students do not have many opportunities to play games or role-play or group activities. Not much communication in a real sense takes place.

It is true that the students' achievements in English contribute to their total score requirement for being upgraded to and getting enrolled in junior middle school. However, it is not a decisive factor as every elementary school student is unvaryingly enrolled into a junior middle school upon their graduation from the elementary school according to the national educational policy, if they do not desire to go to the "key schools" which are inaccessible for the absolute majority of them. What may matter to some of them is that high total scores might help them get successfully enrolled into better junior middle schools, which might pave their way to a smooth entry into good senior middle schools or universities later on.

### **The rise of English training schools and EFL in them**

English **training schools** TS , together with other training schools that do training in art, music, dancing, science, math, computer, driving, etc., constitute one of the four categories of schools that support the whole educational system of China, although training schools as such are a new element in China and have a history of only over a decade as a result of this historical stage of China's social, political, economical and educational development. The other three categories are: one, the regular mainstay systematic schooling category that consists of such series as kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and university; two, the vocational schools that enrol students who have finished junior or senior middle school and have unfortunately failed to be admitted into institutions of regular higher education and so have to go to such schools for skill training in 2-4 years in a certain profession in pursuit of jobs after having obtained graduation certificates; and three, what is referred to as "wuda" meaning five means of education with formal record of learning at a level equivalent to higher education recognized by the government, namely university education via night classes, TV

programming, mails, self-teaching and national entrance examination for adult non-school students. All of the five enrol adult non-school students who have received a minimum of education equal to or higher than high school graduates. **Training schools** are one of the four important categories that complement the three categories of the whole education system by enrolling any students ranging from pre-school children to adults who need or would like to receive the training on a personal-option basis, in after-school hours or after-work hours. Most of the students do not expect any certificate or formal record of learning but expect practical improvement of their own skills or expansion of certain field of knowledge which may promote their personal interest or opportunity to meet their needs or other ends. The student sources are general pre-school children from kindergartens or students from general elementary schools, from general middle schools, from institutions of high education, and from adults of various trades or professions who go to training schools for classes on Saturday, Sunday, school vacations or holidays when they do not have to go to school for regular schooling or go to work.

Among schools of this category, **English training schools**, which have a shorter history and have received extensive notice for about 5 years as a social, and educational, EFL learning phenomenon, by far outnumber other training schools, and are the most popular and prosperous because English seems to be needed by almost everyone in one way or another. The English training schools mainly enrol school students coming from regular/general schools, most of whom are elementary and middle school students, from any part of the city who like to come regardless of prior learning, age, gender, or occupation, and hire teachers mainly from universities or middle schools. Training programs that are provided may last anywhere between several weeks and several years and normally give classes on Saturday and Sunday and in holidays. English training schools use self-chosen materials, many of which are different from those used in general schools, for example, Cambridge English for Children, New Concept English, and have comparatively smaller sizes of class ranging from about 20 to around 50. They provide two to four 50-minute class hours a week for a class of students. They provide a salient English environment: teaching-learning materials,

slogans, posters, signs, labels, audio and video playing. All are English content-based. The teachers speak mainly English outside class in addition to media of instruction in mainly English in class. Even many administrative staff use some English in interacting with the teachers and students. English training schools concentrate on improving students' listening and speaking ability and provide more chances to speaking interactively between groups, and pairs, individuals. The school climate, especially the classroom climate in English training schools encourages more freedom, friendliness and less formality and less rigidity compared to general schools (GS).

In large cities like Xi'an, Beijing, for example, where people place high value on education in general and, on English in particular in recent years, on Saturday and Sunday and in holidays, many parents sacrifice their time for a rest or recreation after a week's work to help their children in learning English by escorting or accompanying them to and from the English training schools (some even sit in to audit the English training class of the child students). They also provide cassette-recorders, pocket cassette-players, VCR, VCD or DVD apart from colour TV sets as their usual house furniture, and additional English books, cassettes, video-tapes, VCD discs, DVD discs. Some parents who can speak some English help their children with their homework. Parents encourage children to speak English with their fellow English learners or with foreigners whenever they could meet any. If children happen to have a chance to talk a little with a foreigner, even a good Chinese speaker of English, they are sure to be enthusiastically praised by their parents, teachers and adult relatives or relations, parents' colleagues, friends or acquaintances, and admired by peers. Parents and teachers also encourage children to participate in English competitions, parties, games and the like. Such participation and winning of prizes are rewarded from the organizing bodies and also normally by parents of the participants or the winners, apart from the reward of participation per se. Children themselves, with different cognitive ability and affective characteristics, may have different attitudes toward, and perceptions of, going to English training schools, and participating in such activities. Some children, we assume, may feel English training school climate pleasant and their classroom climate interesting; some may find they can

learn more there; some may go there because their friends do; some may go there because of their wishes for their future; some may go there to pave the way to going abroad; others may go there because their parents want or persuade them to. Of course there may be other reasons.

## 1.2 The significance of the study

Interest in studying English in China is a phenomenon arising out of a complex background of historical, political, cultural, and educational and mass psychological factors. Since there has been general agreement that motivation to learn an FL is as important as language aptitude for successful acquisition of that language (Noels, 2001), it is timely to investigate students' motivation to learn EFL in the training school (TS) context. However, there has been little research yet in and outside China.

### **In China**

A survey of existing literature found little research relating to EFL motivation for the 7-12 years old students, especially those who study in training schools, in China. In major learned journals in China between 1996 and 2003 there have been more than 45 research articles relating to motivation for learning English as a foreign language in China and over 30 of them are about motivation of college students, one about postgraduate students, four about middle school students and one about elementary school students (Gao, 2003). Other articles are about literature commentary. However, no article was found to relate to the motivation of students in training schools.

### **Outside China**

A survey of literature world wide found substantial research efforts in second language (SL) motivation or motivation in foreign language (FL) learning (Gardner, 1985; Schumann, 1998; Schumann, 1999; Deci and Ryan, 1985; Deci and Ryan, 2002; Dörnyei, 1994; Noels, Pelletier, and Vallerand, 2000; Dörnyei, 2002; Dörnyei, 2003). These researchers focused their attention mainly on SL/FL motivation theoretically or in a way to address the motivation

of SL or FL learning on the part of students primarily at the middle school level (Baker & MacIntyre, 2003; Belmechri & Hummel, 1998) and at the tertiary level (Svans, B., 1987; MacIntyre, Noels, and Clément, 1997) and the motivation of adults (Dörnyei, 1990), with little focusing on the motivation of SL or FL learning of students aged 7-12 in particular. Some researchers (Kubaneck-German, 1998, for example) touched on young foreign language learners but did not address their FL motivation in particular. Some of the research done by some overseas researchers (Dörnyei, 2003) spoke of motivation in EF learning in China; others (Chen, 1990; Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels, 1994; Dörnyei, 1990; Ramage, 1990) addressed motivation of EF teaching-learning in a monolingual context that is similar in one way or another to that in China. It is understandable that none researched the motivation of Chinese 7-12 year old Chinese EFL students in the unique sociolinguistic context with a peculiar background of history and politics and mass psychology, although the previous studies may shed some light on the research on motivation of Chinese 7-12 year old Chinese EFL students.

There has been research endeavour addressing elementary school students' motivation in language learning in general education (Butterworth and Weinstein, 1996; Dolezal, Welsh, Pressley, and Vincent, 2003, Thompson and Vaughn, 2003) but they do not focus on SL or FL learning.

### **A summary**

It should not be taken for granted that the research results on the motivation of SL or FL learning of students in middle schools and in tertiary institutions in China or/and in other countries naturally apply to that of 7-12 year old Chinese students, and that research in this field in other socio-political and cultural contexts applies fully to the complex socio-political and cultural context in China for the age group in question. Also, the research results obtained from English language learning in general education for elementary school students in other countries can not be expected to apply to that of Chinese 7-12 year old EFL students. This indicates that the lack of theoretical research focusing on the motivation of Chinese 7-12 year old EFL students constitutes a considerable gap in the whole field of EF theoretical research.

In short, this research is important and necessary for four major reasons. Firstly, it is new: English training schools are quite a new EF teaching-learning phenomenon in China; students aged 7-12 constitute the biggest portion of the main body of students in English training schools. Secondly, research about 7-12 year old students' motivation to learn EFL in training schools, including motivation in hypothesized gender differences and age differences, for example the difference between 7-9 year old students and 10-12 year old children, is a pioneering research in China, where few researchers are found to have been involved in research of this kind. Thirdly, this research may fill the gap in the whole picture of EF learning motivation research itself. Lastly, the EFL teaching-learning undertakings for the said age group in training schools in a country of the world's largest population need theory for guidance. In a word, it is of great theoretical significance and of important practical value to do this research into the motivation of Chinese 7-12 years old EFL students.

### 1.3 The purpose of the study

Students of this age group in different general schools in different parts of the city, take the city of Xi'an for example, increasingly get themselves enrolled in English classes in training schools to study English. An investigation of such students' motivation to learn EFL in one training school may be representative of motivation of such students in training schools in general in the City of Xi'an, and might be indicative of such students in training schools in China at large. And so, the purpose of the study is to find out about the motivation of Chinese 7-12 year old students in English training schools in Xi'an, China, hopefully to contribute to filling the gap in the picture of EFL learning theory.

Specifically this will involve investigating the nature of the students' motivation, its characteristics and features. Then it will be important to determine whether the students' motivation in these age groups has features



that are different from those of other age groups of Chinese students. Finally it will be useful to examine the detail of the primary school students' motivation in age and gender divisions. These issues will be addressed in the research questions which will guide the study.

## 1.4 Research questions

The research questions are the following:

- (1) What is the motivation to learn English for Chinese 7-12 year old students in the training school?
- (2) Do the students have their own characteristic components of motivation?
- (3) Are there any differences in their motivation in terms of age (7-9 and 10-12) and gender?

Note:

The Education Ministry of the People's Republic of China issued "The Implementation Plan of Syllabus Curriculum for Compulsory Education" on 21 November 2001. The "Plan" provides a guideline and a framework for English to be taught as a subject in primary schools that have the conditions needed for it. The ratio of English is set at 6-8% of all subjects. The plan allows room for schools in different local regions/areas to have flexibility in implementing the plan. So, English teaching in primary schools in the whole country is not as standardised as other compulsory subjects. This accounts for the varied situations at the school level.

In Xi'an, the official document issued by the Education Bureau of Yanta District of the City of Xi'an on 10 January 2002 which was to materialise the Education Ministry's "Plan" dictated 3 class hours per week for each grade from grade three on through grade six. Other details are left open to the decision of particular primary schools.

## Chapter Two Review of the Literature

### 2.1 Explanation of terms

In the study of motivation, several terms commonly arise. Three key terms are clarified below.

### **Motivation**

Motivation is defined by Gardner (1985:10) as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language", which has three interrelated components. Crooks and Schmidt's (1991) explanation of motivation has four internal and attitudinal factors: (1) interest in the SL based on existing attitudes, experience, and background knowledge on the learner's part; (2) relevance which involves the perception that personal needs such as achievement, affiliation, and power are being met by learning the SL; (3) expectancy of success or failure; and (4) outcomes. This framework brings many factors, including the intrinsic and extrinsic factors, into the concept of motivation. Dörnyei (1998:126) sees motivation as embracing static- and process-oriented conceptualizations, and defines it as "a state of cognitive and emotional arousal, which leads to a conscious decision to act, and which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or physical effort in order to attain a previously set goal (or goals)". This definition is relatively broad, embraces Gardner's "goal", "effort" explicitly and "pleasure" implicitly and clearly positions itself as a state which is psychological and affective, and implies that learning is a conscious activity.

These definitions add to the understanding of SL/FL motivation, but hardly give a satisfying definition of motivation catering to both SL and FL learning probably because the concept of motivation itself involves too many factors and contexts and is too "complex and multi-faceted" (Dörnyei, 1998:117). It is not advisable to take the notion of SL motivation in general but it ought to be used in a specified sense, as implied by Dörnyei (1998).

Considering all this, I attempt to use Gardner's definition of SL motivation as a framework with some light from the FL environmental context and with substantiation from other perspectives for a synthesized notion of FL

motivation. FL motivation, it seems, is the social and psychological desire of an individual to achieve the goal of learning a foreign language with a favourable attitude and a perceivable effort accompanied by the feeling of existing or expected pleasure in or related to the actual activity of learning it. This definition keeps Gardner's definition skeleton but emphasizes the element of pleasure perceived by the learner.

### **Orientation**

Orientation is "a long-range goal which, along with attitudes, sustains learner's motivation to learn a second language" (Belmechri and Hummel, 1998: 220), a desire to learn the second language either integratively or instrumentally (Gardner, 1985), working as the basis of language learning motivation (Noels et al, 2000). It is further suggested that "The definition of orientation is context-bound." and that "Orientations are related to motivation", and "they function as predictors of motivation."(Belmechri and Hummel, 1998:238). I have re-organized these elements as orientation: in FL learning, orientation is a tendency, which may contribute towards, but may not necessarily lead to effort in, learning a FL as a long-range goal with a favourable attitude toward the FL and the activity of learning it, which may help sustain the motivation to learn the FL. Thus, orientation is different from motivation only in that the two share every component except that orientation excludes the activity or effort in learning the target language.

### **Attitudes**

Attitudes exert a directive influence on behaviour of learning a language (Dörnyei, 1998). There have been many understandings of "attitude" resulting from different perspectives. Gardner (1985: 8) defined attitude as "an evaluative response to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent." Wenden (1991) provides an overall understanding of attitude. She has noted that there have been many ways of expressing the nature of attitude which share three characteristics of attitudes: (1) attitudes always have an object; (2) they are evaluative; (3) and they predispose to certain action. In FL learning, it is advisable to base the understanding of attitude on Gardner' and Wenden's

ideas about attitude. Attitude, in this case, is an evaluative response toward foreign language learning based on the learner's belief, perception or information about it that predisposes learning behaviour.

It must be pointed out that, in all the literature, it can be seen that motivation, orientation, and attitude arise out of both external and internal factors

## 2.2 Division of sources of SL/FL motivation

For nearly half a century, research in motivation has aroused great attention in the circles of SL and FL, and has shown remarkable development. Viewed in a macro-outlook, all research falls roughly into two general types: the external outlook and the internal outlook. The first comprises two sub-types: the behaviourist perspective and the social cultural perspective, including socio-political, socio-historical, socio-educational perspectives. The second also covers two subtypes: the psychological and the neurobiological perspectives(see Diagram 1 below).



### 2.2.1 The external perspective

**The behaviourist perspective** reveals that the individual learner is motivated to learn the SL/FL because of external stimuli, and aims to study learner's motivation as a stimulus-response process in which little cognition is involved in the learner. But language learning is exclusively a human activity, and no human learning activity is a cognition-free stimulus-response process, so this theory faded out of the interest of researchers more than a decade ago. (More will be given on the behavioural perspective later in this chapter).

**The social cultural perspective** is an umbrella term, which includes "social political" (Dörnyei, 1998), "social economical"(Ramage, 1990), "socio-educational model"(Gardner, 1985) the "social political context" (Noels et al 2000) or in the "ethno linguistic context" (Dörnyei, 1990; Gardner, 1985; Noels, 2001), "situated motivation", "contextualization" (McGroarty, 2001). The research under this umbrella term has a proliferation of literature. The most influential and durable research in motivation of SL learning was done by Gardner and Lambert (1959) and their colleagues.

Gardner and Lambert (1959) first made the distinction between *integrative motivation* and *instrumental motivation* which outlined, and laid the basis for, research in SL acquisition and learning, and strongly influenced subsequent research in SLA/FLL. *Integrative motivation* reflects learner's orientation toward the goal of learning a SL. The SL learner has the positive attitude toward the people of that SL, with potentiality of integrating into that society or at least with the interest in meeting and interacting with the people as members of the target language. So, integrative motivation accounts for "a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second-language community in order to facilitate communication with that group" (Dörnyei, 1990: 47). *Instrumental motivation* accounts for more functional (Crooks and Schmidt, 1991) learning of a SL, such as passing a required examination, getting better education, getting a good job, or getting a chance of promotion.

These dual concepts are strengthened by Gardner and Lambert's work (1972) on attitude and motivation of SL learning which make motivation a distinguished research topic (Dörnyei, 1990). Gardner's book (1985) systemizes the duality of the integrative motivation and instrumental motivation while clarifying some confusion regarding orientation and motivation. He embodies attitudes, orientation, achievement and goal in his theory. But the attitudes are more directed to integrative motivation. A generalization of the integrative motivational orientation concerns two basic points (Dörnyei, 2003:5): (a) "a positive interpersonal/affective disposition

toward the SL group and (b) the desire to interact with and even become similar to the valued members of that community”, and there is potentiality of withdrawing their own original identity and finally becoming members of the community as an extreme case (Dörnyei, 1990).

However, in monolingualistic and uni-cultural settings like Hungary and China where there is little possibility of learner’s integrating into the people or community of English as the target language, integrative motivation theory has its own limitations (Ramage, 1990: 192). Dörnyei (2003) advocates the expansion of Gardner’s concept of integrative motivation. The learner, instead of orientating to integrate into the contact with the FL people or their community, integrates into “cultural and intellectual values” that are associated to the FL (Dörnyei, 2003) through “the contact with the target language and culture through media and through the use of high-technology devices such as computers” (Clément et al, 1994:419). In this case, there is no “integration” in its real sense. This accounts for Dörnyei’s (2003) suggestion that integrativeness does not apply to the FLL situation like that in China, hence the implication of change of the conceptualization of “integrativeness”.

On the other hand, Clément et al (1994) cite Julkunen’s conclusion that situation-specific factors contribute to SL motivation in a FL classroom context. In language learning classrooms, groups are the usual forms in which group formation, group structure and group development go along with the learning process, where group dynamics, an area of social psychology, plays an important role. In most institutional language teaching situations, small groups are organized, where group cohesion serves as a kind of learning environment believed to be related with group performance, since the quality and quantity of classroom interaction under the influence of group cohesion--- “the strength of the relationship linking the members to one another and to the group itself” (Forsyth, 1990:10) --- is a function of the social structure and milieu of the class (Prabhu, 1992). This emphasizes the motivational aspects in EFL learning context typical of “virtual absence of the target language group” (Clément et al, 1994), hence their “tricomponent motivation complex”,

which comprises integrative motivation, linguistic self-confidence, and appraisal of classroom environment. Therefore, it is suggested that Gardner's integrative/instrumental dichotomy is too simplistic and misleading. Some other researchers (Ely, 1986; Oxford and Shearin, 1994) "challenge the proposed primacy of integrative motivation" and advocate that the notion of SL motivation "be extended" or "be broadened" and suggest three motivational clusters with two corresponding to integrative and instrumental and the third being "the need to fulfil a language requirement".

In response to challenges, Gardner and Tremblay (1994) extended Gardner's theoretical framework by adopting a "macro perspective" "motivation renaissance" which examines "classroom environment" from three angles: (1) course-specific motivational components, which takes into consideration the factors caused by specific courses that differentiate learner's motivation to learn the target language; (2) teacher-specific motivational components, which takes into account the factors brought about by the specific teacher, his/her teaching styles, methodology and his/her personality; and (3) group-specific motivational components, which indicate the possible factors that result from group in the classroom and group outside of the classroom. These three angles focus on what is termed as "situated approach" or contextualization consisting of three branches: (a) willingness to communicate, (b) task motivation, and (3) relationship between motivation and the use of language learning strategies.

Despite all the criticism, Gardner's theory still remains the main SL motivation theory, and has now evolved as such: (1) SL motivation consists of two aspects -- integrative and instrumental -- with considerable openness; (2) both aspects are subject to contextualization which allows room for subtypes such as travel, friendship, knowledge that do not confine themselves within "integrative" only or within "instrumental" only, but may apply to both, and also allows "integrative" to have more room for integration into the culture or intellectual value; (3) contextualization or situated motivation is tolerant to many aspects: inter-group setting including multicultural or bilingual settings



and uni-cultural, monolingual settings, or interpersonal settings, teacher factor, parent factor, age and gender factors, etc.

**The social psychological perspective** of Clément et al. (1994) emphasizes the psychological perspective factors. It regards action of SL/FL learning as the “function of the social context and the interpersonal or inter-group relational patterns” (Dörnyei, 1998: 118 ) in which an individual’s attitudes toward other social group and their language are an important index in measuring the motivation. This perspective also aims to cover the components and characteristics of motivation to learn a FL in the monolingual, and uni-cultural settings like those in Hungary and China. This perspective forms its structure on three sources (Clément et al, 1994: 419): (1) the basis of components of “orientations and attitudes as affective correlates of SL behaviour and proficiency” borrowed from Gardner’s social cultural study of motivation; (2) the theory of linguistic self-confidence and anxiety; and (3) aspects of group dynamics.

### 2.2.2 The internal perspective

**The psychological perspective** (Belmechri and Hummel, 1998; Baker & MacIntyre, 2003) focuses on the psychological process that is internal rather than external to the individual as the source of motivation. It looks at the motivated learning behaviour of the individual rather than a social member. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) belongs to this type of study of motivation. By the Self-Determination Theory, “motivational orientations can be categorized according to the extent to which the goal for performing an activity is self-determined” (Noels, 2001). This theory consists of three sections: (1) intrinsic motivation, (2) extrinsic motivation, and (3) amotivation. *Intrinsic motivation* is the most highly self-determined type of motivation of all, as an individual freely chooses a learning activity because s/he regards the activity as interesting and fun to do when s/he is intrinsically motivated. Once s/he finds it interesting or fun to learn, s/he finds it enjoyable to do it, s/he will do it voluntarily, the behaviour of which provides a challenge

to his/her existing competencies that leads to need of using their creative powers. Thus the learning behaviour and performance of the individual learner are regarded as fully self-determined instead of being made to occur out of external coercion. Intrinsic motivation can be represented by three categories: IM-knowledge, IM-accomplishment and IM-stimulation. *Extrinsic motivation* refers to the motivation that arises from some practical purpose out of the activity carried out. The individual does not experience pleasure in the activity per se but possibly gets satisfied with the after-effects that result from the activity that has been done, for example, getting a reward or avoiding a punishment (Noels et al, 2000). Extrinsic motivation can be divided into three types according to the degree the extrinsic motivation is internalized into self-concept, e.g. motivation is self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Vallerand, 1997): (1) external regulation, (2) introjected regulation, and (3) identified regulation, which are listed from (1) to (3) as the lowest level to the highest level of self-determination. *Amotivation* is placed in contrast to intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, and it explains the reason for not engaging in, or bringing an end to, an activity.

It may seem that external motivation is out of place in the category of internal perspective. Actually, this is where overlapping takes place in both the external perspective of Gardner's integrative/instrumental theory and the internal perspective of Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory. But, unlike Gardner's integrative/instrumental motivation theory which deals typically socio-culturally with the SL learning in a bilingual and multicultural country, it is Deci and Ryan's intrinsic motivation theory that takes more of a psychological position and seems to be more suitable for SL/FL research at large.

Besides these theories, there are other less influential theories that can be placed in the category of psychological perspective. They are the attribution theory and the goal theory. But, due to their limited application, they will not be considered here.

**The neurobiological perspective** (Schumann, 1998; Schumann, 1999) attempts to examine human brain mechanisms which generate motivation when they receive a stimulus. Schumann's motivation theory from the neurobiological perspective has stimulus appraisal as its key constituent. The stimulus appraisal works in the brain in five dimensions: (1) novelty, (2) pleasantness, (3) goal/need significance, (4) coping potential, and (5) self- and social image. *Novelty* refers to the degree of unexpectedness or familiarity, which implies that a learner might feel motivated to learn a SL/FL when his/her nerves receive a stimulus that is novel. *Pleasantness* refers to attractiveness, which implies that s/he would learn if the novel stimulus makes him/her feel pleasant. *Goal/need significance* refers to the degree of the stimulus being instrumental in achieving a goal or in satisfying a need, which implies that s/he would learn the SL/FL if the stimulus attributes to the goal achievement. *Coping potential* refers to the degree the individual expects to be able to cope with the event of learning, which implies that the individual might learn if s/he expects to be able to cope with the learning. *Self- and social image* refers to the degree the learning event is in agreement with the individual's self-concept or with the social norms, which implies that s/he would learn if the learning event is compatible with his/her self-concept or the social norms.

There seems to be a connection between behaviourist motivation theory mentioned earlier and the neurobiological theory of motivation. They share a concentration on the role of stimulus which gives rise to motives, but they are essentially different in that the former emphasizes the cognition-free mechanism of stimulus-response that is believed to start language learning activity and keep it going, a process which is exclusively external to the individual learner. However, the latter stresses the internal process in which the individual receives a stimulus that activates the nerves that in return arouse the individual's cognitive and affective aspects to initiate and sustain the learning activity.

It is now appropriate to move from a survey of theories dealing with motivation in SL/FL learning and to consider literature relating to the motivation of children generally.

## 2.3 Sources of children's motivation to learn in the field of general education

A survey of literature in general education finds that children's motivation to learn can also be organised into internal and external categories. For example, the achievement goal theory and the self-worth theory look more at the internal perspective. The motivational climate theory, the ecological perspective, and contextualization, etc. look more at the external factors that enhance motivation.

### 2.3.1 The internal perspective

**The achievement goal theory** has emerged as a useful framework for understanding students' motivation for, and engagement in, schoolwork (Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin and Midgley, 2001). The theory used to emphasize the cognitive bases of behaviour but recently has integrated cognitive and affective components of goal-directed behaviour (Ames, 1992) and has a dichotomy of *mastery motivation* and *performance motivation*. Mastery goals and performance goals reveal "contrasting patterns of motivational processes" (Ames, 1992:261). This theory is widely used by researchers in general education at elementary level, for example, Ames (1992), Patrick et al (2001), Thompson, Davidson and Baker (1995), and Xiang, Mebride and Solman (2003). Mastery goal orientation refers to that the learner wants to gain understanding, insight, or skill. It values learning as an end in itself. Mastery motivation has been related to adaptive perceptions and behaviour, including feelings of efficacy, the use of effective learning strategies, and achievement. A mastery orientation involves the goal of developing the individual's ability through task mastery. On the other hand, performance goal orientation refers to the degree that the learner wants to be

seen as being able. A *performance orientation* involves the indication of the individual's superiority over others or achieving success with little effort (Xiang et al, 2003). Performance goal orientation falls into two components: the approach component and the avoidance component. The performance-approach goal focuses on the relative "attainment of competence" that is in comparison to that of peers. The performance-avoidance goal focuses on the avoidance of incompetence that is in comparison to that of peers. It can be seen that both performance-approach goal and mastery goal, which focuses on the development of competence and task mastery, can be grouped as approach orientations, while the performance-avoidance goal belongs to the avoidance orientation. This can be represented below (See diagram 2):

Chart 2 Components of achievement goal theory



**Self-worth theory** of achievement motivation states that in certain situations some self-worth protecting students stand to gain by not trying --- deliberately withdrawing effort (Thompson et al., 1995) to protect their sense of self-worth. This theory can help teachers understand how to motivate students to learn by using "appropriately challenging" (Dolezal et al, 2003:243) tasks---and ensuring that the tasks are not too difficult.

### 2.3.2 The external perspective

#### **The motivational climate**

Research pays much attention to external factors that sway children's motivation to learn. "The term 'climate' is routinely used to describe this quality-of-life phenomenon in schools and classrooms." (Dunn & Harris, 1998:100) It "involves a group phenomenon and centres on a consensus in perception. It concerns those aspects of the psychological, social, and physical environment of the school, and also concerns the aspects that impact behaviour." (Dunn & Harris, 1998:100). Particularly in elementary schools the relationship between classroom climate and academic achievement seem

obvious (Dunn & Harris, 1998). The relationship involves teachers, students, parents, school administration members (Butterworth & Weinstein, 1996) and even the community (Oliver, 1995).

### **The ecological perspective**

In addressing “climate” in the school context, Butterworth and Weinstein (1996) adopt an ecological perspective, and maintain that “a systemic focus is particularly critical given increased interest in the environmental factors that enhance motivation.” They suggest that the administrative leadership, especially including the principal, foster “a motivating school environment.” They put forward “four ecological principles”: (1) the development of diverse niches that demand student involvement of diverse adaptation; (2) the expansion of resources to include the students, the teacher and the parents; (3) the interdependence of teacher, parent, and student activities; and (4) a balancing and monitoring of resources and activities for the purpose of all participants’ productive engagement being consistently supported. Many researchers (Ames, 1992; Butterworth & Weinstein, 1996 ;) point out that there should be agreement between the classroom orientation and the school orientation to obtain students’ motivation to learn. The school motivational climate provides policies as well as programs beyond what the students can experience in the classroom so as to support a mastery orientation. Butterworth and Weinstein (1996) maintain that mastery goal, equitable expectations, and meaningful activities are important in enhancing intrinsic motivation; ecological theory emphasizes integrating the multiple contexts of classroom, school-wide activities, and family-school relationships to enhance motivation (Butterworth and Weinstein, 1996).

Classroom climate concerns six conceptualized “dimensions or structures” (Xiang et al., 2003) that are agreed upon by many theorists (Ames, 1992; Maehr & Anderman, 1993; Patrick et al., 2001). They frequently emphasize the six categories that contribute to the classroom environment. The six categories, conceptualized by Ames (1992), are: (1) task, (2) authority, (3) recognition, (4) grouping, (5) evaluation, and (6) time. These are known by the acronym TARGET and are used by many (Ames, 1992; Maehr & Anderman,

1993) researchers in general education, particularly in the elementary school as a classroom goal structure, “referred to as the motivational climate” (Xiang et al., 2003). TARGET is strongly dependent on the teacher.

Besides the teacher factors that influence the students’ motivation to learn, the parent factors also play an important role in swaying children’s motivation to learn. “Numerous studies in elementary schools,” Murdock and Miller (2003 385) indicate, “have confirmed the relations between various indices of school functioning, such as student involvement in school activities and setting high achievement expectations, and parents’ school-related support”. Family supportiveness revealed by attachment, parenting style, family cohesion, and school-specific parental support including encouragement and school involvement are all important factors which impact on children’s motivation to learn.

### **Contextualization**

It is implied by Cordova and Lepper (1996) that for young children at elementary school “de-contextualization of instruction” is responsible for motivation decrease. They suggest that young children may maintain their motivation if the instructional activities are contextualized, personalized, and provide student choice. *Contextualization* requires the teaching-learning activities to be linked to children’s ideas about practical utility and their interests and activities that give students zest for learning and avoid presenting material in an abstract or decontextualized form. Connected to the contextualization is the *personalization* that requires that, in a learning context, incidental features are personalized with the association of the activity with characters and objects of inherent interest to the students. With the children’s prior interest and curiosity in the characters or objects, they “spread interest” to characters, topics, or ideas of high interest value. Then the children may “spread action” (Collins and Loftus, 1975) in the learning activity. *Provision of choice* to children in the learning activity increases children’s sense of control and self-determination. “The provision of choice has long been the paradigmatic procedure for manipulating intrinsic motivation.” (Cordova and Lepper, 1996: 716). Children provided with choice

feel enjoyment, perform better and persist in the learning activity, even if the choice is trivial.

In summary, the source of “motivation to learn is internal to the child” (Skinner and Belmont, 1993), and when the external social environment meets the child's psychological needs, motivation to learn arises and flourishes (Skinner and Belmont, 1993). However, the internal conditions may vary in age and gender together with the cognitive and affective stage of personal development. Gardner (1985) points out the age factor in SL motivation.

## 2.4 Theoretical framework

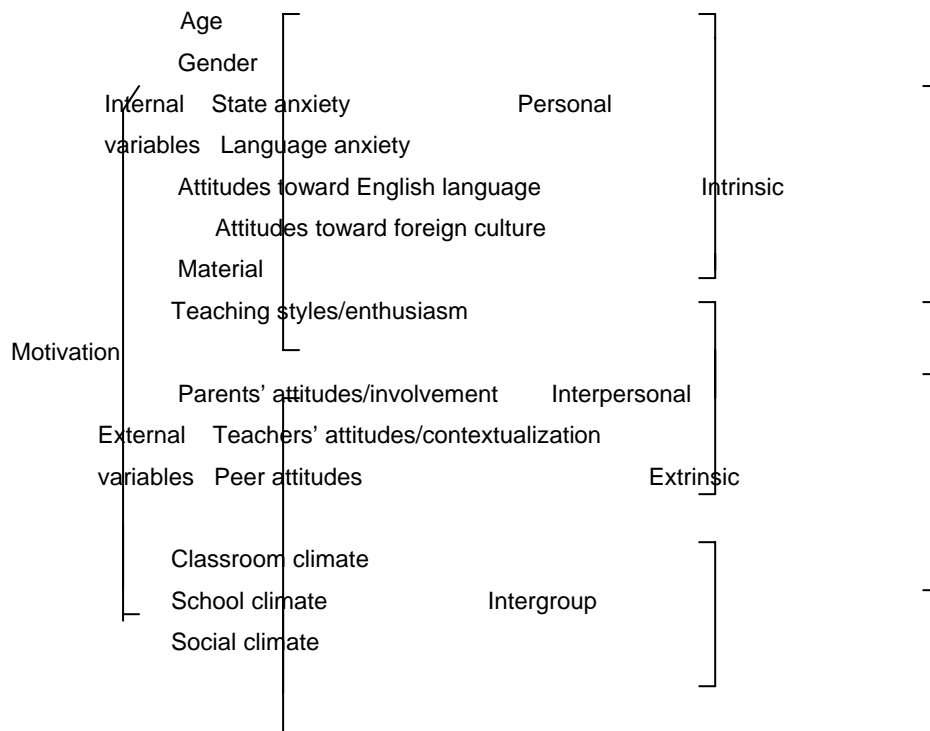
Motivation of EFL learning arises both from internal factors of an individual learner and how the individual is affected by the external factors surrounding him or her. The internal factors include cognitive, affective and neurobiological elements. The cognitive level is relevant to the development of the individual as a whole person, especially age and education received and gender differences. The affective level relates to the psychological state of development such as attitudes. The external factors include social elements such as political, societal influences, educational impacts, family influence, school influences, teacher influences, peer influences and classroom effects, etc. Motivation is dependent on the complex combination of independent factors that result from the internal and external elements.

This research assumes that the internal factors such age and gender, attitudes towards the FL and foreign culture, together with material and teaching styles and enthusiasm contribute to intrinsic motivation, and that external factors such as parents' attitudes toward the English language, foreign culture, and the child's English learning activity, teachers' attitude toward the English language, foreign culture, and the child's English learning engagement, and peer attitudes have an interpersonal impact on the learner's motivation. The emotional climate of classroom and school, and the influence of the community/society including media as external factors also help to



contribute to the child's motivation to learn EL in training schools. All this is organised into the following schema by this researcher (See Chart 3 below).

Chart 3 Components of SL/FL learning motivation



## 2.5 The questionnaire as a research instrument

A survey of empirical research literature finds that either a set or sets of, survey questionnaires, or interview questions, or both survey questionnaires and interview questions are used to collect data in studies of this kind.

Interview questions and survey questionnaires are designed to fit their purposes in studies and are placed under certain headings. The headings are grouped by certain categories. For example, Baker and MacIntyre (2003) used a questionnaire to investigate students' willingness to communicate perceived competence, frequency of communication, and communication apprehension in both French- and English-language situations. Clémont et al (1994) used a questionnaire addressed to the students and a questionnaire addressed to the teachers. These questionnaires include some items that were previously used in other studies and some other items newly designed to suit their research in question. In their 1994 study, there are four tables, two

of which are tables (1 &2) which show the headings listed in groups. Noels et al's (2000) table 1 shows the items in three sections disclosing students' intrinsic/extrinsic motivation.

Questionnaire headings and items are also listed in some books. For example, Wenden (1991) uses various tables or lists to show the categories and items of questionnaires, even actual questions under each heading, like her "Table 6.2" on page 91 which shows categories and items of questionnaires. She also uses 5-grade scale multiple choice questionnaire model (p.150) for "attitudes questionnaire for self-access", which is used to find the degree of agreement. Gardner (1985) displayed in appendices many different types of questionnaires regarding students' attitudes toward their target language, the target language group, and orientations, etc. Some are statements followed by three possible evaluative responses marked a, b, and c for students to tick (pp.180-182). Some others are gradable series (pp.183-184). The extremities at both ends are stated, with blanks in between for students to fill.

Accurately stated questionnaire items are clear for informants to understand and ensure that researchers obtain the kind of data that will allow them to find out what they want to know. The drawbacks are that the questionnaire items may prevent the informants from telling what is in their head and that they might suggest things to the informants to the effect that the findings are not reliably true. Similarly the type of questionnaire which consists of a statement followed by alternative choice items is open to the same drawbacks. Open questions in questionnaires are good for finding what is true without informants being prompted or suggested. But there might be the drawback that expressions by the informants, especially children who are not capable of expressing their ideas and thoughts adequately, might leave unrevealed the kind of information that researchers want to find out. Actually every model of questionnaire has its own strong points and drawbacks. The researcher needs to choose what best suits his/her research situations. In this research study, which involved large numbers of informants, the questionnaire rather than an interview instrument was considered more suitable.

Considering the informants in the research are young, it was necessary to adopt a combination of item types in the questionnaires. One is the open-question model and the other is the multiple-choice model.

From our first model, 7-8 questionnaire items were designed for questionnaire 1 for the children to answer in their own words. The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to draw facts from the respondents, without the researcher's pre-suggestions or pre-implications that might interfere with the respondents' views.

For our second model, 29-31 questionnaire items were designed with fewer possible answers for the very young children to choose. The purpose was to find the definite responses. In order to avoid the likelihood of confusingly fine gradability among the choices that might endanger the validity of the data, a three-grade scale in questionnaire 2 was adopted.

## Chapter Three Methodology

### 3.1 Participants

This research involved students in an English training school (TS) which is medium-sized in terms of student population in an average city -- the City of Xi'an, in the middle part of China. The chosen school is Xi'an Stars English and Culture School (XSEACS), which is located close to the centre of the city. It has a population of about 600 students, who come from all parts of the city and attend a wide range of general primary schools. The students attend their general primary schools on weekdays for their schooling and come to XSEACS for English training on the weekend, four hours each weekend for each class. There are 12 classes numbering over 300 students in the relevant ages. The class sizes vary from 20 to 50. Every class uses the same classroom allotted to them for a whole semester. They use the classroom two times a week, two hours a time. After one class leaves the classroom, another class comes in it. All classes do this in turn.

This research also involved students in three general primary schools (GS) in Xi'an, which were meant to serve as comparative reference to the TS students on the issue of TS students' EFL motivation as a discrete object of this research, based on the realization that the data of TS informants only might not really reveal the full extent of the TS students' motivation.

The three general schools were drawn from different parts of the city. One school is located in the urban area very close to the city. Another is located further from the centre of the city. The third school is located in the outskirts of Xi'an and is significantly smaller in student numbers than the other two schools. The smallest school supplied only a small number of questionnaires to the study. The questionnaires used in the research from both general schools and the training school were randomly chosen.

It was not possible to control the locations of the general schools that contributed to the study as it proved difficult to obtain schools willing to participate in the study. In using participants from the general schools and the training school, it was expected that the children would be drawn from similar backgrounds. It is conceded that the TS children may come from backgrounds where their families are more affluent and more valuing of

education generally. However there was no attempt to be selective regarding participants' level of English or general academic ability. The only factor used in selection was to obtain the desired numbers in the age and gender groups.

Students who were 7-12 year old from both the training school and the three general schools were asked to make responses to the questionnaires.

Fifty 7-9 year old students from TS and the same number from GS participated. Half were boys and half were girls. Similarly, fifty 10-12 year old students from TS and the same number from GS participated. Again, boys and girls were equally represented. Overall, there was a total of 100 TS informants and a total of 100 GS informants as shown in Chart 4 below.

Chart 4 Population of informants for this study

	TS 100		GS 100	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Older	25	25	25	25
Younger	25	25	25	25

### 3.2 Instrument

Questionnaires were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data about EFL learning motivation in the training school and the general schools. Considering the characteristics of the informants in both categories of schools, two sets of questionnaires were designed. One set was for the TS students and the other was for the GS students. Most of the two sets of questionnaire items were meant to examine the same factors and so were corresponding in content, using as much of the same or similar wording as possible in corresponding items. In order that the participants understood the questionnaires better, both questionnaire 1 & 2 for both TS and GS were presented in English with Mandarin translation. The questionnaire items were translated by the researcher and were then checked for accuracy and appropriateness by a Chinese university lecturer who teaches postgraduate translation courses.

Questionnaire 1 for both TS and GS were for the 10-12 year old students who could express themselves in writing. Questionnaire 1 for TS consisted of a list of 7 items which included both closed and open questions. For example, "Do you enjoy learning English in the training school? If yes, what are the five best things in it?" Questionnaire 1 for GS consisted of a list of 8 items which included both closed and open questions. For example, "Do you like coming to the English class in your school? If yes, what are the five best things in it?"

Questionnaire 2s for both TS and GS are for the 7-9 year old students who may have difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. The children did not need to write anything. What they needed to do was only to circle one of the three prescribed symbols to each questionnaire item in a Likert-type response scale.

Questionnaire 2 for TS had 29 items and Questionnaire 2 for GS had 31 items.

For comparison of data between the two categories of schools, equivalence was achieved in the design of questionnaires. TS Questionnaire 2 corresponded to items (1-4 & 7) of TS Questionnaire 1 regarding motivational factor/ aspects. Items of Questionnaire 2 corresponded to items (1-4 & 7) of GS questionnaire 1. Five items (items 1-4 & 7) in TS Questionnaire 1 were equivalent to five items (Items 1-4 & 7) in GS Questionnaire 1. Two TS items (5 & 6) and three GS items (5, 6, & 8) related to the situations in the respective categories of schools.

24 of the 29 items in Questionnaire 2 for TS corresponded to 24 of the 31 items in Questionnaire 2 for GS. The remaining items in either TS or GS were to cater for their respectively special situations. 5 out of 7 Questionnaire 1 items for TS corresponded to 5 out of 8 Questionnaire 1 items for GS. The remaining ones in either type of schools served their respective different circumstances.

In order to guarantee the viability of the questionnaires, the researcher prepared in-built checks in the design of the items 2, 6, 10, 19, 22, 23 and 26 in TS questionnaire 2 and in the design of the items 2, 6, 10, 14, 17, 18 and 21 in GS questionnaire 2. (See Appendices) These items were stated in the negative form while all others were stated in the positive form. This was to ensure that the respondents did not make responses in an unthinking, automatic pattern without paying due attention to each particular item. It also overcame the possible tendency by respondents to perceive that the questionnaires were expecting only positive responses from them.

### 3.3 Procedure

The questionnaires were implemented by a research assistant in both the training school and the general schools at different times.

First, the research assistant went to each of the three schools to contact the persons in charge, and then was introduced to the students of suitable classes. After she distributed the questionnaires and explained the directions to the students, they made responses to the items at their own will without the presence of their teachers. When the students in each of the participating classes finished in the time allowed (30 minutes) to them, the research assistant collected the papers from the students, and then grouped the papers according to the two ages and finally handed them over to the researcher.

Soon after the data were collected from the general schools, the research assistant collected data from the classes in the training school in the same manner as she had done in the general schools.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Responses to TS questionnaire 2 and to GS questionnaire 2 were counted and tabled; responses to TS questionnaire 1 and to GS questionnaire 1 were categorised and grouped.

All responses to both TS questionnaire 2 and GS questionnaire 2 were counted. All answers to TS questionnaire 1 and GS questionnaire 1 were grouped under certain headings according to the factor to which they belonged. The factors involved such areas as the students' interest in the English language / the learning of the language, the students' perceptions of their teachers and their teaching, and the school atmosphere. The data analysis was predominantly qualitative rather than quantitative because it was felt that statistical techniques would not have allowed the detail and range of the various aspects of the factor analysis to be effectively represented.

### **3.5 Limitations**

It is acknowledged that the research conducted in this study has the inevitable limitations associated with the scope possible in a project of this size. Hence the extent to which the findings can be generalised is restricted.

Also, due to the age differences between the younger and older students, it was not possible to use parallel forms of the questionnaires. The questionnaires used with the two age groups varied in format and length. Specifically the older children were asked open questions where they were free to spontaneously give or not give particular reasons. The younger children, on the other hand, did not have this freedom and were obliged to deal with specific matters.

These two questionnaire formats allowed detailed data to be collected from the two sets of school students (GS and TS) within each age group and hence provided information for the first two research questions, which addressed the central issues of the study, that is, what motivated 7-12 year old Chinese students to learn English in training school and were there differences between GS and TS students in their motivation to learn English?

However it is conceded that the differences in the formats of the questionnaires did create difficulties in the analysis of the data relating to age differences in motivation. This comparative analysis of student motivation



across age groups was the subject of the third research question which, while clearly of interest in the general thrust of the topic, was considered a more subsidiary issue in the study.

In addition, the TS samples were drawn from only one training school and not from all the classes within that training school. Therefore the results are limited in their application beyond that school. Again, the questionnaire as a research instrument has an inherent limitation in that it does not always allow respondents to reveal the full extent of their perceptions, feelings and beliefs. This is particularly the case with the younger children in this study whose maturity and language levels in both English and Chinese made it difficult to gain information from them.

## Chapter Four Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the data analyses will be presented and discussions of them will then follow.

The results of both TS Questionnaire 1 and GS Questionnaire 1 will be presented and discussed first. Then the results of both TS Questionnaire 2 and GS Questionnaire 2 will be presented and discussed.

### 4.1 Questionnaire 1

Questionnaire 1 data regarding older children will be discussed in two sections. The first will deal with the items which compare training school (TS) and general school (GS) responses, and the second will deal with the items that are separate in the TS and GS questionnaires respectively and do not make comparisons between the two school populations.

#### 4.1.1 Pairs of items that compare TS and GS

There are five items that are equivalent in TS Questionnaire 1 and GS Questionnaire 1. The equivalent items in TS and GS will be compared in pairs in presentation and discussion in the first place. Then the remaining separate

TS items (2) will be dealt with. Finally, the remaining separate GS items (3) will be dealt with.

Responses according to gender are also presented in the tables but will be discussed in next chapter.

### Pair 1 TS item 1 versus GS item 1

TS item 1 and GS item 1 share the same questions and the answers from both groups are similar.

As shown in Table 1, all of the TS respondents answered “Yes” to the first question while almost all (47) GS respondents answered “Yes”.

Table 1 Ideas about the importance of learning English

Item 1 & Opinion		Do you think it is important to learn English? Why?			
		TS		GS	
Attitude	Gender	Gender total	Category total	Gender total	Category total
Yes	Boy	25	<b>50</b>	22	<b>47</b>
	Girl	25		25	
No	Boy	0	<b>0</b>	3	<b>3</b>
	Girl	0		0	

As to the reasons why students think it is important to learn English, responses from TS respondents and GS respondents can be grouped into eight categories (See Table 2). With one exception, the differences in particular categories are not great.

In reason category “f” “English is a world language”, there is a far higher frequency from TS respondents (40%) than GS respondents (6%). This is where TS and GS respondents differ greatly in attributing reasons to thinking it is important to learn English. TS students obviously believe that English is a world language and is important as a means of international communication. GS students have almost no recognition of the importance of English as a common world language.

Table 2 Reasons for thinking it important to learn English

TS & GS item 1: Do you think it is important to learn English? Why?							
TS				GS			
Category of explanation for "Yes"	Opinion total		Category total	Category of explanation for "Yes"	Opinion total		
	Gender total				Gender total	Category total	
a. Going to university	Boy	0	1	a. going to university	Boy	4	7
	Girl	1			Girl	3	
b. Communicate with foreigners	Boy	11	21	b. communicating with foreigners	Boy	8	18
	Girl	10			Girl	10	
c. Exams for going to JMS/SMS	Boy	3	4	c. exams for going to /key MS/JMS/SMS	Boy	4	7
	Girl	1			Girl	3	
d. Future use	Boy	1	2	d. future use	Boy	2	8
	Girl	1			Girl	6	
e. Job opportunity in future	Boy	4	7	e. English is convenient for finding a job	Boy	1	2
	Girl	3			Girl	1	
f. English is an important means of communication/a world common language/a bridge of communication	Boy	12	20	f. English is the most widely used language/a world common language	Boy	0	3
	Girl	8			Girl	3	
g. Go abroad	Boy	4	7	g. go abroad	Boy	2	2
	Girl	3			Girl	0	
h. Raise my English level	Boy	1	1	(No equivalence)			
	Girl	0					
(No equivalence)				i. English as a weapon of human struggle	Boy	1	2
					Girl	1	

But, TS respondents have lower response frequencies than GS respondents in two reason categories: "Going to university" and "Future use".

It can be seen in Table 2 that TS students are more aware of the important function/status of English in the world and so it is closely connected with communicating with foreigners and going abroad in considering it important to learn English whereas GS students are more interested in English playing a narrower role in their upgrading to a school (or university) of a higher level than where they currently are attending.

## Pair 2 TS item 2 versus GS item 2

TS item 2 and GS item 2 have the same two questions. To the first question, all of TS respondents gave positive answers while only 70% of GS respondents gave positive answers and 26% gave negative answers as to whether they enjoyed learning English. (See Table 3)

Table 3 Whether students enjoy learning English

To the second question which is based on the first, TS respondents gave a much larger range of reason categories (24 in all) than GS respondents did (8 in all) and all the GS 8 categories were covered by the TS categories. In other words, TS students have more diversified reasons for enjoying learning English. (See Table 4 on next page)

The frequencies in the TS separate categories and the frequencies in most GS separate categories are not high (no more than 2) although category “i” is an exception with 5 responses. In most shared categories the frequency in either TS or GS is not very high (no more than 2). So, they are presented without being commented upon. Only the few shared answer categories that have relatively high frequencies (no smaller than 3), and the one exception, are presented and commented upon.

TS & GS Item No 2		Do you enjoy learning English? Why?		Do you enjoy learning English? Why?					
attitude		TS		GS					
Category of explanation for Yes		Gender	Opinion loading total	Category	Opinion loading total				
Yes		Boy	Gen total	“50”	Gen total				
		Girl	25		35				
		total	25		total				
a. Have pleasure in English learning	Boy	2	6	a. English brings pleasure	11	Boy	1	13	3
	Girl	4	0		2	Girl	2		
b. English is interesting	Boy	6	15	b. English is interesting	2	Boy	1	3	
	Girl	9	0		2	Girl	2	2	
c. English is an important world language	Boy	3	4	c. English is important to me		Boy	2	6	
	Girl	1				Girl	4		
d. Communicate with foreigners	Boy	4	9	d. communicate with foreigners		Boy	8	13	
	Girl	5				Girl	5		
e. English can improve my language skills	Boy	1	8	e. improve one's language proficiency including 1 <sup>st</sup> language		Boy	1	1	
	Girl	7				Girl	0		
f. Increase learning/knowledge	Boy	2	6	f. increase knowledge		Boy	1	3	
	Girl	4				Girl	2		
g. Go to university	Boy	1	1	g. Go to university		Boy	2	3	
	Girl	0				Girl	1		
h. Learning English enriches my life in my spare time	Boy	2	3	h. Enrich life		Boy	0	1	
	Girl	1				Girl	1		
i. English is easy to learn	Boy	2	5	(no equivalence)					
	Girl	3							
j. Future use	Boy	2	3						
	Girl	1							
k. English is important	Boy	2	3						
	Girl	1							
l. English is a beautiful language	Boy	0	2						
	Girl	2							
m. Learning English is a means of relaxing	Boy	1	2						
	Girl	1							
n. good teaching	Boy	2	2						
	Girl	0							
o. Learning English makes me acquire a language	Boy	0	2						
	Girl	2							

p. The environment here is pleasant.	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
q. Paving the way to studying overseas	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
r. English broadens my vision	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
s. I like reading	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
t. Feel the need of English in primary school	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
u. Learning English improves communicating ability	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
v. Learning English is helpful in my general lessons	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
w. English helps us know the characteristics of Western languages	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
x. Fast advance in teaching	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	

Table 4 Reasons for enjoying learning English

Table 4 shows that in each of five shared categories the frequencies of TS responses is higher than those of GS responses in such areas as pleasure in learning English (a), English is interesting(b),English improves language skills (e),English increases knowledge (f), and learning English increases knowledge and enriches life (h). Far more TS respondents (30%) than GS respondents (6%) say that English is interesting. Clearly the greatest difference in reasons for enjoying learning English is that “English is interesting in training school”. Also clearly more TS than GS students reported that English could improve their language skills.

Table 4 also shows that TS frequencies are lower than GS frequencies in three categories of English as a world language, communication with foreigners and going to university, which have closer connection to the function of English rather than interest in English. It could be that this indicates that learning English in the TS was likely to develop integrative rather than instrumental motivation.

The last category (the exception, category “l”) in this table shows interestingly that 10% of TS responses showed that they enjoyed learning English because English was easy to learn, but no GS students gave such an indication at all. Related to this phenomenon, a retrospective inspection of the 13 GS respondents' negative answers to the first question in Item 2 finds that 76.9%

(10 out of 13) respondents who reported that they did not enjoy learning English said that they found English difficult to learn.(See Table 5)

Table 5 GS informants' reason for not enjoying learning English

<b>GS Item 2: Do you enjoy learning English? Why?</b>			
Category of explanation for "No"	Opinion loading total		
	Gender total		Category total
a. Difficult to learn	Boy	8	<b>10</b>
	Girl	2	
b. teaching is not lively/rote learning	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	0	

### Pair 3 TS item 3 versus GS item 3

To the question whether or not students choose to use English, by far the higher frequency of TS respondents' answers (92%) than GS respondents (36%) were "yes" and a far lower frequency of TS respondents than GS respondents said "no". (See Table 6 on page 40)

This indicates that far more TS than GS children chose to use English.

Table 6 Students' choosing to use English

TS &GS Item 3 & Opinion		In your daily life, do you choose to use English in reading, writing, speaking, or listening whenever possible?			
		TS		GS	
attitude	Gender	Attitude total		Attitude total	
		Gen total	Cate total	Gen total	Cate total
Yes	Boy	23	<b>46</b>	6	<b>18</b>
	Girl	23		12	
No	Boy	2	<b>4</b>	19	<b>32</b>
	Girl	2		13	

### Pair 4 TS item 4 versus GS item 4

<b>TS</b>	<b>GS</b>
Item 4: Do you like coming to the English class in the training school?	Item 4: Do you like coming to the English class in your school?

TS & GS Item 4		TS		GS	
		Do you like coming to the English class in the training school? If yes, what are the five best things in it?		Do you like coming to the English class in your school? If yes, what are the five best things in it?	
Answer		Attitude total		Attitude total	
	Gender	Gender total	Cate total	Gender total	Cate total
Yes	Boy	25	<b>50</b>	6	<b>21</b>
	Girl	25		15	
No	Boy	0	<b>0</b>	18	<b>29</b>
	Girl	0		11	

TS respondents and GS respondents are greatly different in answering whether they like coming to their English class in their respective schools.

(See Table 7)

Table 7 Whether or not students like coming to their English class

Table 7 shows that all TS informants like coming to their classes in their training school while only 42% GS informants like coming to their class in their general schools and 58% GS informants (markedly more GS girls than GS boys among them) do not.

TS and GS informants' frequencies of answers to the follow-up question in this item in which they were asked their reasons were also very different. (See Table 8 on page 41)

One difference was that there is a much larger range of TS answer categories (26 in all) to support their report that they liked coming to the English class in the training school than that of GS answer categories (10 in all). What is more, TS answer categories covered all the GS answer categories.

Table 8 Things in TS & GS students find which make them like coming to their English class



If yes, what are the five best things in it?				If yes, what are the five best things in it?			
Category of explanation for "Yes"	Opinion total			Category of explanation for "Yes"	Opinion total		
	Gen total	Boy	Cat total		Gen total	Boy	Cat total
a. Teachers are friendly, cordial, humorous, enthusiastic, careful responsible, ready to respond to students' needs	Boy	21	<b>38</b>	a. Teachers are good, kind, responsible, concentrated,	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	17			Girl	3	
b. Teaching methods are good/excellent	Boy	9	<b>19</b>	b. Teaching methods are good	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	10			Girl	1	
c. Teaching is interesting	Boy	8	<b>15</b>	c. Teaching is interesting	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	7			Girl	1	
d. Teaching quality is good/effective	Boy	6	<b>18</b>	d. Teaching quality is good	Boy	0	<b>7</b>
	Girl	12			Girl	7	
e. Material is good/difficult	Boy	3	<b>12</b>	e. Material is good	Boy	0	<b>5</b>
	Girl	9			Girl	5	
f. Play games in class	Boy	4	<b>6</b>	f. Play games	Boy	0	<b>2</b>
	Girl	2			Girl	2	
g. Students practice much	Boy	3	<b>9</b>	g. Practice with students	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	6			Girl	1	
h. Learn 4 skills (listening, speaking, reading & writing)	Boy	0	<b>1</b>	h. Learn 4 skills (listening, speaking, reading & writing)	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	1			Girl	3	
i. Increase knowledge	Boy	0	<b>2</b>	i. English brings extra-curriculum knowledge	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	2			Girl	0	
j. Content is interesting/much	Boy	1	<b>4</b>	j. Learn words, sentences , dialog, songs	Boy	4	<b>5</b>
	Girl	3			Girl	1	
k. Classroom atmosphere is lively/relaxing	Boy	4	<b>13</b>	(No equivalence)			
	Girl	9					
l. School environment is good	Boy	10	<b>19</b>				
	Girl	9					
m. Advanced equipment & facilities, air conditioning	Boy	4	<b>11</b>				
	Girl	7					
n. TS emphasises oral English and grammar	Boy	2	<b>4</b>				
	Girl	2					
o. Homework is less but enough/meaningful	Boy	2	<b>5</b>				
	Girl	3					
p. English-only instruction in classroom teaching	Boy	2	<b>5</b>				
	Girl	3					
q. We can reach high English level in TS	Boy	3	<b>4</b>				
	Girl	1					
r. TS has good time arrangement	Boy	3	<b>4</b>				
	Girl	1					
s. We can make new friends	Boy	2	<b>3</b>				
	Girl	1					
t. In TS we can learn what can't be learned in GS	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
u. We have frequent/weekly quizzes	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
v. We have reading and writing lessons	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
w. Fellow students have good quality/virtue	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
x. We can learn English as the only subject in TS	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
y. Good discipline in classroom/safety measures	Boy	1	<b>2</b>				
	Girl	1					
z. We can contact with teachers	Boy	1	<b>1</b>				
	Girl	0					

From Table 8 it can be seen that the frequencies of TS answers in the equivalent categories "a", "b" and "c", and "d", regarding the issues of teacher factors, teaching methods and interesting teaching, and teaching quality are considerably greater than those in GS answers.

The frequency of TS answers in the equivalent categories “e” regarding the issues of teaching material is strikingly greater than that of GS answers. There are also more TS answers than GS answers in category “g” on the issue of amount of practice on the learner’s side as opposed a more prevailing teacher-centred approach.

The Table also shows that in categories “k”, “l”, “m” regarding classroom atmosphere, school environment, and advanced equipment there are high frequencies of answers from TS respondents but none from GS respondents. It is interesting to note that TS students make a distinction between the classroom and the school atmosphere.

In evaluating the reasons why students like coming to their English class in their respective schools, all these many sharp differences favouring the training school can be attributed to teacher factor, teaching approach, materials and classroom environment and school environment in general.

**Pair 5 TS item 7 versus GS item 7**

Item 7 for both TS and GS respondents was meant to find out about students’ perceptions of, and attitudes toward, society’s attitudes toward learning English in training schools.

These perceptions could be divided into two sections. One was awareness of society’s attitudes (See Table 9 below) and the other was students’ understandings of the society’s attitudes (See Table 10 on page 44).

Table 9 Students’ awareness of society’s attitudes toward learning English at a training school

Item 7	What do you find about the attitude of the society (esp. people around you such relatives, and other people you know, and even the media) toward learning English in training schools? Do you agree? Why?					
	TS			GS		
Awareness types	Opinion loading total			Opinion loading total		
Types of response	Gen total		Cat total	Gen total		Cat total
a. Findings	Boy	18	<b>39</b>	Boy	13	<b>27</b>
	Girl	21		Girl	14	
b. No finding	Boy	7	<b>10</b>	Boy	2	<b>8</b>
	Girl	3		Girl	6	
c. non-sensible response	Boy	0	<b>1</b>	Boy	9	<b>13</b>
	Girl	1		Girl	4	
d. No response	Boy	0	<b>0</b>	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	0		Girl	1	

Table 9 shows that markedly more TS respondents (78%) than GS respondents (54%) were aware of the society's attitudes toward learning English in training schools. These respondents indicated that they had found in the general society that people did have definite attitudes toward learning English in training schools.

The table also shows that the frequencies in "No finding" (The category "no finding" refers to the situation in which respondents said definitely they did not find/notice or were unaware of any attitudes in society toward learning English in a training school) in TS and GS were not greatly different. This indicates that around 20% students in both TS and GS were definitely not aware of any attitudes in society toward learning English in a training school at all.

In Table 9 the category "non-sensible response" was used to label the response data given by the respondents that could not be simplistically labelled as "findings" or "no finding" as the raw data themselves could show. The data seemed superficially to be responses from GS respondents about their awareness or understanding of society's attitudes toward learning English in training schools, but a close examination found they were not pertinent to, or not to the point of, what the questionnaire item aimed at. The striking but puzzling point here is that far more GS respondents (26%) than TS respondents (2%) gave non-sensible responses. While it is possible that some of the GS children did not comprehend the meaning of the item, given both their age and English language proficiency it is more likely that they did understand the meaning of the item but were not aware of the general social attitudes toward learning English in training schools. It is possible that the difference in the GS responses was due to the GS students not wanting to admit that they had little/no knowledge about the general social attitudes on the matter. They nonetheless tried to answer the question in a co-operative manner by producing responses that were "non-sensible". Therefore, the data in the "non-sensible" category in this table may suggest that far more GS

respondents were not really aware of the general social attitudes toward learning English in training schools.

The category “No response” was used to show that in this item the respondents did not make any response at all. Table 9 shows that all TS students did make responses to Item 7. There were two GS students who made no response to the item.

The table shows a trend that TS students were far more aware of the social attitudes to learning English in training schools than GS students.

In spite of their difference in the awareness of social attitudes, the TS and GS respondents’ understanding of the social attitudes they were aware of were not different and could be grouped into the same three categories: people who had positive attitudes, people who had negative attitudes and those whose attitudes toward learning English in training schools were a mixture of positive and negative attitudes. This latter group contained people whose attitudes reflected both positive and negative aspects of learning English in training schools. (See Table 10 below)

Table 10 Students’ understanding of the social attitudes toward learning English at a training school

Social attitudes		TS		GS	
		Gender total	Attitude total	Gender total	Attitude total
a. People have positive attitudes	Boy	13	<b>27</b>	7	<b>17</b>
	Girl	14		10	
b. People have negative attitudes	Boy	2	<b>5</b>	3	<b>3</b>
	Girl	3		0	
c. People have mixed attitudes	Boy	3	<b>7</b>	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	4		1	

However, Table 10 shows that the response frequencies of positive, negative and mixed perceptions of social attitudes given by TS and GS respondents were different: many more TS than GS respondents understood social attitudes as positive or mixed. There was only a small difference between TS and GS frequencies in the “negative attitudes” category.

The respondents’ attitudes toward the social attitudes in the three categories mentioned above were very different. (See Table 11 on page 45)

Table 11 shows five major features. The first is that with all of the 27 positive views of social attitudes, all 27 TS respondents agreed while with all the 17 positive social attitudes (shown in Table 10) only 11 GS respondents agreed. The second is that more TS than GS respondents believed that social attitudes were mixed and negative. The third is that both TS and GS respondents who perceived mixed social attitudes agreed with the positive side, and, both TS and GS respondents who perceived social attitudes as negative disagreed with these attitudes.

Table 11 Students attitudes to the three social attitudes and their reasons

Item 7: What do you find about the attitude of the society (esp. people around you such relatives, and other people you know, and even the media) toward learning English in training schools? <b>Do you agree? Why?</b>					
Students' attitudes toward the three social attitudes		TS		GS	
		total	Reasons	total	Reasons
With positive social attitude	Agree	27	English is beneficial / helpful /important	11	English will be important in future
	Disagree	0		6	1. No time to go to TS 2. Students will have no free time for spare for themselves if they go to TS
With negative social attitude	Agree	0	xxx	0	xxx
	Disagree	5	1. English is important to learn as a key subject / helpful to in communicating with foreigners; 2. Need to keep up with the class tops in GS;	3	(No reason given)
With mixed social attitude	Agree to the positive side	7	1. Need to win in competition; 2. Need to improve English skills	1	English will be important
	Agree to the negative side	0	xxx	0	xxx

The fourth is, in explaining why they agreed or disagreed with the social attitudes, TS respondents were more concerned about their current needs while GS respondents tended to relate more to future rather than current needs when they showed agreement, and they (GS respondents) related to current needs only when they showed disagreement.

The last but not the least important feature is that, what is particularly interesting about the TS responses to Item 7 is that there were 12 TS students who were expressing a resistance to what they see as the prevailing social attitudes to attending training schools.

In brief summary, this pair 5 (TS Item 7 versus GS Item 7) indicates that, in awareness of the social attitudes toward learning English at training schools, more TS respondents were aware than were GS respondents; in understanding the social attitudes respondents found, far more TS than GS respondents perceived positive social attitudes although both TS and GS respondents understood in common the three categories of social attitudes: positive, negative and mixed; in children's attitudes toward the society's attitudes, all TS respondents agreed with positive social attitudes they found and provided supporting explanation but about one third of GS respondents disagreed with the positive social attitudes they reported. Both TS and GS respondents disagreed with negative social attitudes and agreed with the positive side of the mixed social attitudes. In a word, the major differences between TS and GS are that far more TS than GS respondents were aware of the social attitudes and TS respondents' own attitudes toward the social attitudes were all positive while GS respondents' attitudes toward the social attitudes were diverse. Nearly one third (30.8%) of TS students who perceived social attitudes chose to go to the training school to learn English, in resistance to what they saw as the prevailing social attitudes to training school attendance.

**The five pairs** summarised between TS Questionnaire 1 and GS Questionnaire 1 show that the results in each of the TS items and each of the GS items in a series seem consistent in their respective schools. Generally, TS respondents and GS respondents reported what they perceived in their respective school situations. The general results show that TS respondents were more positive than GS respondents about learning English per se and in their school situations.

In the view that it is important to learn English, in enjoying learning English, in voluntary use of English, and in perception of social attitudes toward learning English, TS informants were more positive than GS informants.

In explaining the reasons given for the view that it is important to learn English, why they enjoyed learning English, and in naming the best things in

their schools which caused them to like coming to the English class in their respective schools, TS informants had a much larger range of categories than did the GS informants.

In the response categories shared by both TS and GS informants, there were far higher frequencies of responses from TS informants than from GS informants in mentioning interest in English, awareness of the importance of English as a world medium of communication, and in mentioning good teachers, good teaching methods, interest level of teaching, and good teaching quality.

#### 4.1.2 Separate items in TS and GS

Separate items which had no equivalents across the two questionnaires will be dealt with next. In the first section of the separate items, TS data in item 5 and 6 will be presented and discussed.

**TS item 5** asked TS students what caused them to decide to learn English at an English training school. To this question, TS students gave answers which could be grouped into 11 categories (a-k). (See Table 12 below)

Table 12 shows that the most important of the 11 categories of reasons are categories “b” and “j”, i.e. students’ wanting to learn English and improve their own English and encouragement by their relatives/friends/other.

Table 12 TS students’ reasons to decide to learn English at a training school

Item 5 in TS Questionnaire 1	What leads you to a decision that you study English at an English training school?		
Category of reasons for a decision	Gen total		Cat total
a. I understand the importance of English	Boy	3	5
	Girl	2	
b. I want to learn English/improve my English	Boy	7	12
	Girl	5	
c. I have interest in English	Boy	1	6
	Girl	5	
d. I want to broaden my scope of knowledge	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
e. Enrich my life	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	
f. Want to go abroad	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
g. Social competition	Boy	1	3
	Girl	2	
h. I find that my classmates who study English at TS are very good at English.	Boy	2	3
	Girl	1	
i. This TS is famous for good teaching quality	Boy	4	8
	Girl	4	
j. Encouraged by relatives/friends/other	Boy	6	12
	Girl	6	
k. Parents' influence	Boy	5	8
	Girl	3	

Next to these are two other important reasons: TS being famous for good teaching quality and their parents' influence. The former seems to be very closely connected with the first two most important reasons.

Next come the two comparatively less powerful but still important reasons: TS students' interest in English and their understanding of the importance of English. These also seem to be very closely connected with the first two most important reasons.

What is interesting about the reasons given by the students as to why they attended a training school is that there are as many that could be described as internal to the student as there are that could be described as external to the student. The students did not appear to be passively responding to external pressures to attend the English training school.

**TS item 6** asked TS students whether they were better at English in the training school or in the general school and the reasons. To the first question, by far most of TS informants said that they were better at English in the general school. (See Table 13)

Table 13 TS students' self-perception of being better at English in TS or GS

Item 6 in TS Questionnaire 1: <b>Are you better at English in the training school or in your general school? Why?</b>
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	Gender	Gender total	Division total
Better at TS	Boy	5	<b>8</b>
	Girl	3	
Better at GS	Boy	19	<b>37</b>
	Girl	18	
Equally good at both	Boy	1	<b>5</b>
	Girl	4	

To the second question, most TS informants did give answers (See Table 14).

Table 14 TS students' reasons for being better at English in their general school

Category	Gender	total	Cate total
a. English at GS is easy	Boy	5	<b>15</b>
	Girl	10	
b. What is learned at TS is not learned by those GS-only students	Boy	8	<b>9</b>
	Girl	1	
c. Good learners of English are not many at GS	Boy	2	<b>2</b>
	Girl	0	
d. I like the teacher	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	0	

Note to Table 14 : Many students did not give explanation.

Table 14 shows that the major reason for their being better at English in GS was that English at GS is easy and the second major reason is that what is learned by those studying at TS is not learned by those GS-only students, and so these TS students found themselves better once they merged with their GS-only classmates in their general schools. These two major reasons may incorporate into one: "English in GS is easier and less than English in TS". In other words, English in the training school provides more in quantity and difficulty than in general schools.

In summary, TS items 5 and 6 show that it is students wanting to learn English and their handy access to information about training schools known for good teaching quality that contribute to a decision for them to go to a training school to learn English. The English they learn in the training school provides more in quantity and difficulty compared to English in general schools and consequently TS students feel improved and elevated in English.

It is likely that this level of performance at GS encourages both the students' attendance at a training school, along with their parents' commitment to this attendance.

### GS items 5, 6, & 8

The presentation and discussion of GS Items 5, 6, and 8 which have no equivalents in the TS questionnaires follows. These items relate to the students' connection with training schools in the past, currently and in the future.

**GS Item 5** asked about any previous experiences of GS students with training school. (See Table 15)

Table 15 GS students' previous experience in a training school

GS Item 5	Have you ever studied in a training school? Why?		
Answer	Gender	Gen total	Cate total
Yes	Boy	8	11
	Girl	3	
No	Boy	16	37
	Girl	21	
other	Boy	1	2
	Girl	1	

From Table 15 it can be seen that most of GS students had not been to any training school to learn English.

When asked to explain, most GS students with TS experience gave reasons that fell into five (a-e) categories. (See Table 16)

Table 16 GS students' self-reported reasons for having been to a training school

GS Item 5:	Have you ever studied in a training school? Why?		
Category of Reasons for "Yes"	Gen total		Cat total
a. like English	Boy	2	2
	Girl	0	
b. To learn more English	Boy	1	2
	Girl	1	
c. Feel easy at the beginning lessons at TS	Boy	1	1
	Girl	0	
d. My English at GS is too poor	Boy	2	2
	Girl	0	
e. Parents' asking	Boy	1	2
	Girl	1	

Table 16 shows that most reasons were internal to the GS students. Most GS

GS Item 5: Have you ever studied in a training school? <b>Why?</b>			
Category of reasons for "No"	Gen total		Cat total
	Boy	Girl	
a. Not want to learn English	Boy	0	2
	Girl	2	
b. Didn't find English important	Boy	2	2
	Girl	0	
c. English is too difficult to learn	Boy	3	4
	Girl	1	
d. My English is too poor	Boy	1	2
	Girl	1	
e. TS is not interesting	Boy	1	2
	Girl	1	
f. English is not a major subject in primary school	Boy	1	3
	Girl	2	
g. Have no time to go to TS for English	Boy	0	3
	Girl	3	
h. Have no money to study there	Boy	0	2
	Girl	2	
i. Didn't have access to TS	Boy	2	5
	Girl	3	
j. Parents' prevention	Boy	1	5
	Girl	4	
k. Priority to other out-of-curriculum activities	Boy	0	1
	Girl	1	

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without experience in the training school gave reasons that could be grouped into 11 (a-k) categories. (See Table 17)

Table 17 GS students' reasons for not having been to a training school

The table shows that the two major reasons for not going to training school are lack of access to TS and parents' prevention. Both of these reasons constitute external causal factors.

**GS Item 6** was meant to find out the GS students' reasons as to why they were not currently studying English in a training school. Most GS students gave reasons which could be grouped into 12 categories (a-l). (See Table 18 on page 51)

The table shows that the three most important reasons why GS students were not currently studying English at a training school are that they did not like English (a), they thought there was no need to go to TS at the initial stage (h) and they had no time to attend a training school (i).

The table indicates that most reasons (63%) given by GS students arose from internal causal factors ("a" to "h").

Table 18 GS students' reasons for not being currently learning English to a training school

GS Item 6: Please tell the reasons you know for the fact that you are currently not studying English at a training school/class.			
Category of reasons	Opinion loading total		Cat total
	Gen total		
a. Dislike English /English is not interesting/ not want to learn it	Boy	6	<b>8</b>
	Girl	2	
b. Not consider English important	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	0	
c. English at TS is difficult to learn	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	1	
d. My English is too poor	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	1	
e. I am afraid that I can not learn well in TS	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	3	
f. Priority of GS curriculum lessons	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	1	
g. My impression on TS is not good	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	3	
h. No need to go to TS at the beginning of English learning	Boy	4	<b>7</b>
	Girl	3	
i. No time/too much work load at GS	Boy	1	<b>6</b>
	Girl	5	
j. Nave no money to study there	Boy	2	<b>2</b>
	Girl	0	
k. Parents' prevention	Boy	2	<b>5</b>
	Girl	3	
l. Have no access to TS	Boy	3	<b>4</b>
	Girl	1	

**GS Item 8** asked GS students about the possibility of learning English in a training school in the future and the reason for the possibilities.

To the first question, there were far more positive than negative answers.  
(See Table 19)

Table 19 GS students' answers about the possibility of learning English at a training school in the future

GS item 8 & Opinion	Do you think you will be studying English at a training school/class later on? Why?		
attitude	Gender	Gen total	Cate total
Yes	Boy	12	<b>32</b>
	Girl	20	
No	Boy	13	<b>17</b>
	Girl	4	
Other	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	1	

The table shows that most respondents said that they would be studying English at a training school. Besides; more girls than boys said so and far more boys than girls said not. This indicates that the girls were more positive about learning English at a training school in the future than were boys.

Both positive and negative answers were explained by most students. There were more explanations for the positive than for the negative. All explanations for the positive fell into 11 categories (a-k). (See Table 20 on next page)

The table shows that the four most important reasons (a-d) focus on one common area: GS students' liking and pursuit for more English. The overall information in the table confirms this point: the first six reasons that account for 58.6% of the positive responses shown in the table can be attributed to students' internal factors.

Table 20 GS students' explanations for positive possibilities of learning English at TS in future

GS Item 8: Do you think you will be studying English at a training school/class later on? <b>Why?</b>			
Category of reasons for "Yes"	Opinion loading total		
	Gender total		Category total
a. Find English important	Boy	0	<b>2</b>
	Girl	2	
b. Like English	Boy	2	<b>4</b>
	Girl	2	
c. Want to improve my English	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	3	
d. Pursuit for more English	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	3	
e. Communicate with foreigners/go abroad	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	1	
f. Want to be a teacher	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	0	
g. There are many good teachers in TS	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	1	
h. If I do well in my GS English	Boy	1	<b>4</b>
	Girl	3	
i. When I have the money for it	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	1	
j. Exams for going to middle school	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	1	
k. Parents' permission	Boy	2	<b>4</b>
	Girl	2	

All explanations for negative responses fell into 7 categories (a-g). (See Table 21)

Table 21 GS students' explanations for negative possibilities

GS Item 8: Do you think you will be studying English at a training school / class later on? <b>Why?</b>			
Category of reasons for "No"	Opinion loading total		
	Gen total		Cat total
a. Not want to	Boy	2	<b>2</b>
	Girl	0	
b. Dislike English	Boy	4	<b>6</b>
	Girl	2	
c. My English is too poor to go to TS	Boy	2	<b>2</b>
	Girl	0	
d. Think it no need to study at TS	Boy	1	<b>1</b>
	Girl	0	
e. Have dreams for other things instead of	Boy	1	<b>1</b>

English	Girl	0	
f. Have no money to study at TS	Boy	1	<b>2</b>
	Girl	1	
g. Poor impression on TS	Boy	0	<b>1</b>
	Girl	1	

The table shows that the most important reason for not wanting to go to a TS in the future is GS students' dislike of English ("f").

To summarise, the results in Items 5, 6 and 8 in GS questionnaire 1 show that most GS students have not attended a training school in the past to learn English and the most influential reasons for this were external factors such as parents' prevention and lack of access to TS; the most influential reasons for GS students not currently studying English in a training school were internal factors such as students' own dislike of English; and the most influential reasons for the future possibility of students' attending training schools were students' liking English, wanting to improve English or pursuing more English, and the most influential reason for not attending training schools in the future was the students' dislike of English.

Overall, the results from items in TS Questionnaire 1 and GS Questionnaire 1 reveal a common fact: whether or not students go to a training school to learn English is dependent on factors that are as much internal as external to the student.

## 4.2 Questionnaire 2

The results and discussions of Questionnaire 2 data analyses regarding younger children will be dealt with in three sections. The first will deal with eight pairs that had great differences in responses between TS and GS students. The second will deal with the sixteen pairs that had no or few differences in responses between TS and GS respondents. The third will deal with items that were separate in the TS (5 items) and GS (7 items) questionnaires respectively and do not make comparisons between the two school populations.

Responses according to gender are also presented in the tables but are to be discussed in next chapter.

#### 4.2.1 Pairs with great differences between TS and GS responses

Twenty-four items in TS Questionnaire 2 have equivalence with those in GS Questionnaire 2. A comparison of them finds that eight items (TS 8, 9, 16, 17, 23, 24, 26 and 29) showed great differences in responses from 8 Gs equivalent items. These items will be compared for analysis in pairs. Each pair of items will be presented and discussed below in the TS-based sequential order.

#### **TS item 8 and GS item 7 correspond to each other.**

TS item 8 and GS item 7 differ markedly in the responses given. (See Table 22) (“COR” stands for “Category of response” in tables from here on)

Table 22 Variety of English material

COR & Gender		TS			GS		
		item & statement	Gen total	COR total	item & statement	Gen total	COR total
A ☺	Boy	Item 8: There is a variety of English material to learn in the training school.	15	<b>35</b> (70%)	Item 7: There is a variety of English material to learn.	10	<b>20</b> (40%)
	Girl		20			10	
D ☹	Boy		3	<b>6</b>		5	<b>9</b>
	Girl		3			4	
N ☹	Boy		7	<b>9</b> (18%)		10	<b>21</b> (42%)
	Girl		2			11	

From Table 22 it can be seen that far more TS respondents (70%) report that there is a variety of English material used in the training school than do GS respondents (40%). Far fewer TS students (18%) than GS students (42%) were uncertain about the variety of materials used in their English lessons.

It seems that the students have identified the varied nature of the materials used in English lessons as a difference between the TS & GS.

#### **TS item 9 & GS item 8 correspond to each other.**



Still on the issue of English material, TS and GS young children demonstrated different observations in item 9 of TS questionnaire 2 and in item 8 of GS questionnaire 2. (See table 23 below)

Table 23 Material is difficult but interesting

COR & Gender		TS			GS		
		item & statement	Gen total	COR total	item & statement	Gen total	COR total
A ☺	Boy	Item 9: The material in the training school is difficult but interesting.	22	41	Item 8: The material is difficult but interesting.	13	30
	Girl		19			17	
D ☹	Boy		2	4		2	5
	Girl		2			3	
N ☺	Boy		1	5		10	15
	Girl		4			5	

Table 23 shows that more TS young informants considered their English material as “difficult but interesting” than did GS young informants. Far less TS young informants felt uncertain as to whether or not their English material was difficult but interesting than did GS informants.

It is worth pointing out that in both TS items 8 and 9, which correspond to GS items 7 and 8, the informants’ responses were highly consistent as a whole and in their respective categories.

The data presented in Table 22 and Table 23 indicate that the TS students saw material as contributing variety and interest to their English learning to a greater extent than did their GS peers. In both the GS and TS situations, it may be that the student responses had been influenced by their experiences with teaching materials in both their English lessons and their other curriculum lessons. What is important in the matter of the English materials is that the TS children were familiar with the GS materials as well as the TS materials but not vice versa.

### **TS item 16 & GS item 12 correspond to each other.**

In Table 24 (see page 56), item 16 in TS questionnaire 2 and item 12 in GS questionnaire 2 show marked differences in the responses. 90% GS informants agreed to the statement “You think English is very important” and only 4% disagreed. But only 64% TS informants agreed, and 24% of them

disagreed, to the statement “You go the training school to learn English because you think English is very important.”

Table 24 Importance of English as a reason for going to a training school to learn English

COR & Gender		TS			GS		
		item & statement	Gen total	COR total	item & statement	Gen total	COR total
A ☺	Boy	Item 16: You go to the training school to learn English because you think English is very important.	14	32	Item 12: You think English is very important.	23	45
	Girl		18			22	
D ☹	Boy		6	12		0	2
	Girl		6			2	
N ☺	Boy		5	6		2	3
	Girl		1			1	

It seems misleading that fewer TS informants than GS informants seemed to think that English was very important, and yet, TS informants went to training school to learn English.

However, closer examination finds that there may be an asymmetric contrast between the two items in Table 24. The GS item asked about how important GS informants thought English was. But TS item did not aim at finding about how important the TS informants thought English was, but rather at revealing how important the TS informants considered English to be in accounting for one of their reasons for going to the training school to learn English.

Therefore, the differences of frequency in the responses in the positive and negative cells between TS and GS probably did not imply that less TS informants thought English was very important than did the GS informants, or that TS informants thought English was less important than GS informants did.

### TS item 17 corresponds to GS 13.

In this pair of responses (see Table 25), it can be seen that far less TS informants (68%) reported that they went to the training school to learn English because English was important for going to university than GS informants (82%) who reported that they learned English because English was important for going to university.

Table 25 Importance of English for going to university as a reason for going to a training school to learn English

COR & Gender		TS			GS		
		item & statement	Gen total	COR total	item & statement	Gen total	COR total

A ☺	Boy	Item 17: You go the training school to learn English because English is important for going to university.	14	34	Item 13: You learn English because English is important for going to university	22	41
	Girl		20			19	
D ☹	Boy		4	6		1	3
	Girl		2			2	
N ☺	Boy		7	10		2	6
	Girl		3			4	

This indicates that the idea of English being important for going to university contributed far less to TS informants' reasons for learning English in the training school than it did to GS informants' reasons for learning English in their general schools. This is rather an unexpected result as it suggests that university attendance was not as powerful a reason for students' going to an English training school as might have been predicted.

### TS item 23 corresponds to GS item 18.

Both TS item 23 and GS item 18 related to the issue of students' perceptions of parents' opinions about going abroad and there were striking differences between TS and GS response frequencies (see Table 26). The statement was negatively worded. Far less TS respondents (only 14%) than GS respondents (32%) agreed with the statement "Your parents don't think that it is good to go abroad;" and far more TS informants (62%) than GS informants (42%) disagreed with that statement.

Looked at in another way, it can be seen that the frequency difference in the proportion of agreement and disagreement among TS informants was 25, which constituted 50% of TS respondents and the frequency difference in the proportion of agreement and disagreement among GS informants was 5, which constituted 10% of GS respondents. This confirms great disparity of perceptions of parents' opinions between TS and GS students.

Table 26 Children's perception of their parents' attitudes about going abroad

TS 23 & GS 18: Your parents don't think that it is good to go abroad.					
COR & gender		TS		GS	
		Gender total	COR total	Gender total	COR total
Agree ☺	Boy	4	7	11	16
	Girl	3		5	
Disagree ☹	Boy	16	32	9	21
	Girl	16		12	
No idea ☺	Boy	5	11	5	13
	Girl	6		8	

This shows that far more TS students perceived their parents' opinion about going abroad as positive than did GS students.

**TS item 24 corresponds to GS item 19.**

Still on the students' perceptions of parents' opinions about going abroad, TS item 24 and GS item 19 attempted to find out about the importance of the relationship between learning English and going abroad. In this case, the statement was positively worded. In Table 27 (See page 58) it can be seen that far less TS informants (56%) than GS respondents (80%) perceive that their parents thought learning English was important for going abroad. Nearly half of TS respondents (44%) either disagreed or felt unsure whereas only one fifth of GS respondents disagreed or felt unsure.

This contrast shows, surprisingly, that the influence of parents' attitudes about the importance of learning English in going abroad on TS informants' going to the training school to learn English was much less strong than the influence of parents' attitudes on GS students.

Table 27 Children's perception of their parents' attitudes about the importance of learning English for going abroad

TS 24 & GS 19: Your parents think that learning English is important for going abroad.					
COR & gender		TS		GS	
		Gender total	Opinion total	Gender total	Opinion total
Agree ☺	Boy	14	28	19	40
	Girl	14		21	
Disagree ☹	Boy	6	11	2	4
	Girl	5		2	
No idea ☹	Boy	5	11	4	6
	Girl	6		2	

When Table 26 and Table 27 are put together, it be seen that on the issue of perception of parents' attitudes about going abroad, TS responses showed that more parents were perceived to think that it was good to go abroad but less TS parents were perceived to think that it was important to learn English in going abroad. This may imply that TS students did not necessarily learn English at the training school for going abroad. In other words, TS students agree that their parents thought that it was good to go abroad but their

learning English at training school might not necessarily be for going abroad. That is, going abroad was not perceived by the TS students to be a big contributor to their parents' reasons for their children to learn English at the training school.

### **TS item 26 corresponds to GS item 21**

This pair of responses dealt with the issue of students' opinions about English speaking countries and showed obviously different responses between TS and GS respondents to the same negatively termed statement "You don't think that English speaking countries are good". (See Table 28 below) Far less TS respondents (10%) than GS respondents (32%) agreed, and far more TS respondents (72%) than GS respondents (44%) disagreed with the statement.

Table 28 Informants' attitudes about English speaking countries

TS 26 & GS 21: You don't think that English speaking countries are good.					
COR & gender		TS		GS	
		Gender total	COR total	Gender total	COR total
Agree ☺	Boy	2	5 (10%)	11	16 (32%)
	Girl	3		5	
Disagree ☹	Boy	18	36 (72%)	9	22 (44%)
	Girl	18		13	
No idea ☹	Boy	5	9 (18%)	5	12 (24%)
	Girl	4		7	

This indicates that the majority of TS respondents had definitely positive attitudes toward English speaking countries. Only a minority of GS respondents have positive attitudes toward English speaking countries. This is an expected result and can probably be attributed to TS students receiving more information and experience about English speaking countries from both their training school and their families.

### **TS item 29 corresponds to GS item 24**

This pair of responses was intended to discover how much students chose to use English in their daily life and revealed a sharp contrast between TS and GS respondents' responses. Far more TS (70%) than GS (42%) respondents reported that they chose to use English in their daily life. Far less TS respondents (14%) than GS (40%) respondents did not choose to. (See Table 29)

Table 29 Informants' choosing to use English in their daily life

COR & gender		TS Item 29 & GS Item 24: In your daily life, you choose to use English in speaking, reading, or writing, whenever possible.			
		TS		GS	
		Gender total	COR total	Gender total	Cor total
A ☺	Boy	17	35	11	21
	Girl	18		10	
D ☹	Boy	3	7	12	20
	Girl	4		8	
N ☹	Boy	5	8	2	9
	Girl	3		7	

These differences indicated that TS students were definitely keener on using English than GS students were. In other words, TS students were more self-directed in applying and practising English than GS students.

A review of all the 8 pairs of results and discussion of them as a summary reveals the following points.

One is that there was a focus on English learning material in the comparison between TS and GS in the two pairs of data with TS items 8 & 9. The focus highlights that TS students experience more of the variety and difficult but interesting material than do GS students in their English learning in their general school. Clearly, the range of materials used in TS English lessons is a clear difference between GS and TS English lessons in this age group.

Another is that in the two pairs with TS items 23 & 24 there is a focus on parents which shows that, although more parents of TS students than GS parents are perceived to think that it is good to go abroad, fewer of TS parents are perceived to assign importance of learning English to going abroad. Interestingly, this shows that, compared to GS parents, TS parents are not perceived by their children to emphasize going abroad as a major reason for learning English.

The third is that the two pairs with TS item 16 & 17 focus on TS students' self-reported reasons for going to training school to learn English. The focus turned out, unexpectedly, that TS students report that it is not so much because they think English is very important in itself and important for going to university that they go to training school to learn English.

The comparison with GS students' responses on these two items indicates that the importance of English itself and to use for university entry while still strong are not as powerful as could be expected as reasons for students' attending training schools.

Finally, item 29 shows that TS students use more English voluntarily outside the classroom. This is not an unexpected result given the unanimous level of enjoyment in learning English expressed by TS children (Table 3).

#### 4.2.2 Pairs with no or minor differences between TS and GS responses

As mentioned at the beginning of 4.2, there were 16 more pairs between TS Questionnaire 2 and GS Questionnaire 2 that are equivalents remaining to be analysed. These 16 pairs had no or minor differences and could be grouped into four broad categories: (1) students' affective aspects in English learning situations, (2) students' behavioural aspects in learning English, (3) children's perceptions of parents' attitudes, and (4) students' desire to have contact with people of the target language. These four categories will be presented and discussed one by one.

**The first category** includes Items 1-7 & 15 in TS Questionnaire 2 and their GS equivalent items numbered 1-6, 9, & 11. (See Table 30 on page 61)

Table 30 shows all the items which contained a focus on children's affective aspects in their English learning settings, such as the children "enjoy learning English", "like coming to English classes" and found class and school climates "pleasant", teachers "enthusiastic", and found teaching methods, learning activities and English homework "interesting".

Table 30 Students' affective responses to English learning situations

COR	Gender	TS			GS		
		Item / statement	Gen total	COR total	Item / statement	Gen total	COR Total
A ☺	Boy	15. You go to the training school because you enjoy learning English.	16	36	11. You enjoy learning English.	16	34
	Girl		20			18	
D ☺	Boy		6	8		6	9
	Girl		2			3	
N ☺	Boy	3	6	3	7		

	Girl		3			4	
A ☺	Boy	1. You like coming to the English class in the training school.	12	35	1. You like coming to the English class in your school.	16	36
	Girl		23			20	
D ☹	Boy		4	5		4	6
	Girl		1			2	
N ☹	Boy		9	10		5	8
	Girl		1			3	
A ☺	Boy	2. The school climate in the training school is not pleasant.	6	11	2. The school climate for English is not good.	9	14
	Girl		5			5	
D ☹	Boy		12	25		12	23
	Girl		13			11	
N ☹	Boy		7	14		4	13
	Girl		7			9	
A ☺	Boy	3. The classroom climate in the training school is pleasant.	15	37	3. The classroom climate for learning English is pleasant.	20	39
	Girl		22			19	
D ☹	Boy		5	8		2	4
	Girl		3			2	
N ☹	Boy		5	5		3	7
	Girl		0			4	
A ☺	Boy	4. The English teachers in the training school are enthusiastic.	21	43	4. The English teachers are enthusiastic.	18	40
	Girl		22			22	
D ☹	Boy		2	3		1	2
	Girl		1			1	
N ☹	Boy		2	4		6	8
	Girl		2			2	
A ☺	Boy	5. The English teaching methods in the training school is interesting.	15	40	5. The English teaching methods of your teacher is interesting.	21	40
	Girl		22			19	
D ☹	Boy		7	7		0	4
	Girl		0			4	
N ☹	Boy		3	3		4	6
	Girl		0			2	
A ☺	Boy	6. The English learning activities in the training school are not interesting.	4	7	6. The English learning activities are not interesting.	6	10
	Girl		3			4	
D ☹	Boy		13	29		14	29
	Girl		16			15	
N ☹	Boy		8	14		5	11
	Girl		6			6	
A ☺	Boy	7. The English homework in the training school is interesting.	8	22	9. The English homework is interesting.	13	28
	Girl		14			15	
D ☹	Boy		9	13		8	12
	Girl		4			4	
N ☹	Boy		8	15		4	10
	Girl		7			6	

On the whole, Table 30 shows that the frequencies of positive responses to negatively worded statements from students were in most cases the lowest (14% and 22% in TS) and frequencies of negative responses to these negatively worded statements were around 50% in terms of school climate and as high as 58% in terms of learning activities; and that frequencies of positive responses to positively worded statements from students were higher than the sum of both negative and neutral responses, except TS Item 7 and GS Item 9 relating to students' view as to whether their English homework was interesting.

This indicates three points: (1) most (no less than 70%) of TS young students enjoyed learning English and liked coming to English classes in their



respective schools; (2) TS young students felt that their school and class climates were pleasant for them to learn English; and (3) their teachers' enthusiasm and the interest level of teaching methods and learning activities were favourable for these students to learn English in their respective schools. As the results of the comparisons show, GS children's responses had the same trends.

The results of the homework pair (TS 7 and GS 9) are worthy of a special comment. The lower level of TS "Agree" category and the high percentage of neutral TS responses are seemingly puzzling but understandable. The first sight of the contrast between TS and GS students suggests that English homework in the training school was less interesting than that in general school. But careful reflection on it finds that this may not necessarily be the case. English homework in general school is quite different from homework in other curriculum subjects mainly in three major ways: (1) English homework is in a new medium of communication – English rather than Mandarin; (2) it is in forms that are, in many ways, different from homework of other curriculum major subjects; and (3) doing English homework is, to GS students, more of a change than doing homework of other subjects as a major routine experience. However, all homework in the training school is in English; the English homework has no or little comparison with homework of other subjects; and doing homework for TS students is more of a routine experience rather than a change. It is understandable that most routines do not count as interesting or uninteresting. These aspects could have caused difference in TS and GS students' perceptions of the interest level of homework. Therefore, the results in the comparison between TS Item 7 and GS Item 9 may not suggest that homework in training school is less interesting than that in general school, or, TS students' affective aspect for learning English was more greatly reduced by their homework than that of GS students.

All the results in Table 30 suggest, together, that TS young children had strong affect /emotions in learning English in TS school settings, but this was not specific to TS students, for, as the comparison shows, GS young

children’s emotions for learning English in general schools were almost as strong.

**The second category** includes TS Items 10, 19-21, and 27 and GS equivalents numbered 10, 14-16, and 22 (See Table 31 below). All the items in Table 31 focused on children’s behavioural aspects or commitment of learning English, such as working hard at English, not delaying homework, choosing to use English in their spare time.

Table 31 Students’ behavioural aspects in learning English

COR	Gender	TS			GS		
		Item / statement	Gen diff	COR total	Item / statement	Gen total	COR total
A ☺	Boy	19. You don’t work hard at English in the training school.	6	13	14. You don’t work hard at English.	5	14
	Girl		7			9	
D ☹	Boy		15	27		15	24
	Girl		12			9	
N ☹	Boy		4	10		5	12
	Girl		6			7	
A ☺	Boy	20. You work hard at English in the training school because of parents’ pressure.	9	17	15. You work hard at English mainly because of parents’ pressure.	10	18
	Girl		8			8	
D ☹	Boy		11	24		11	25
	Girl		13			14	
N ☹	Boy		5	9		4	7
	Girl		4			3	
A ☺	Boy	21. You work hard at English in the training school because of teachers’ pressure.	6	13	16. You work hard at English mainly because of parents’ pressure.	7	11
	Girl		7			4	
D ☹	Boy		18	34		14	31
	Girl		16			17	
N ☹	Boy		1	3		4	8
	Girl		2			4	
A ☺	Boy	10. You don’t do your homework of the training school until you go to class the next time.	4	9	10. You don’t do your homework until you go to class the next time.	3	8
	Girl		5			5	
D ☹	Boy		18	33		13	30
	Girl		15			17	
N ☹	Boy		3	8		9	12
	Girl		5			3	
A ☺	Boy	27. In your spare time you choose to do one or some of the following: reading English books, viewing English video programs, listening to English, doing things related to English.	11	30	22. In your spare time you choose to do one or some of the following: reading English books, viewing English video programs, listening to English, doing things related to English.	16	30
	Girl		19			14	
D ☹	Boy		9	13		6	12
	Girl		4			6	
N ☹	Boy		5	7		3	8
	Girl		2			5	

Table 31 shows that there were no or marginal differences between TS and GS students in giving positive and negative responses to all the paired items.

Table 31 shows that the frequency of positive responses to the negatively termed statement regarding “work at English” was higher than the frequency of either negative responses or neutral responses, even higher than the sum

of both. This shows that most TS children did work hard at English in the training school.

In the issue of whether or not the children's hard work was because of external pressure from their parents or teachers, Table 31 shows that the frequency of negative responses to the parental pressure item was 48% while the frequency of positive responses was 34%. The frequency gap between the negative and positive responses was 14%.

Table 31 shows that the frequency of negative responses to the item of teachers' pressure was 68% while the frequency of positive responses was 26%. The frequency gap between the negative and positive responses was as great as 42%.

All this indicates that (1) both teachers' pressure and parental pressure played their roles, though very weak ones, in causing TS children to work hard at English; (2) teachers' pressure was much weaker than parental pressure on TS children in their working hard at English.

The most striking biased frequencies (more than 60%) to favourable responses for English learning were in TS items 10, & 27 relating to homework delay and voluntary use of English, which occurred mainly outside the school. This indicates that TS children were definite in not delaying their English homework and in choosing to use English in their spare time.

Also, all findings in Table 31 were favourable, but not uniquely so for TS children, for, as the comparison in the table shows, the results were almost as favourable for GS children in their behaviour toward learning English.

**The third category** contains TS Items 22 and 25 and GS equivalents numbered 17 and 20 relating to parents' attitudes to English speaking countries and to the importance of English for university entry. (See Table 32 next page)

Table 32 shows that roughly there was no or marginal difference between TS and GS responses.

Table 32 Children's perceptions of parents' attitudes

Items shared by TS and GS	COR	Gender	TS		GS	
			Gender total	COR total	Gender total	COR total
TS22 & GS17. Your parents don't think English speaking countries are good.	A ☺	Boy	5	11	5	11
		Girl	6		4	
	D ☹	Boy	14	24	15	31
		Girl	10		13	
	N ☹	Boy	6	15	5	8
		Girl	9		3	
TS25 & GS20. Your parents think that learning English is important for going to university.	A ☺	Boy	19	35	20	39
		Girl	16		19	
	D ☹	Boy	4	9	0	2
		Girl	5		2	
	N ☹	Boy	2	6	5	9
		Girl	4		4	

The first pair (TS item 22 & GS Item 17) in Table 32 shows that an equally very low percentage (22%) of both TS and GS students agreed to the negatively termed statement about their perceptions of parents' opinions on English speaking countries, and the frequencies of negative responses (TS 48% & GS 62%) were higher than any other category of responses. This indicates that the children perceived their parents' attitudes towards English speaking countries as more positive than other wise.

However, in the same pair (TS item 22 & GS Item 17) there were observable differences in the negative and neutral responses to the negatively termed statement between TS and GS students: less TS than GS children negated the negative statement and more TS than TG children showed neutral perception of parents' attitudes toward English speaking countries. Examined in another way, the frequency of TS positive responses was less than the sum of frequencies of TS negative and neutral responses while the frequency of GS negative responses was greater than the sum of GS positive and neutral responses, and by far greater (nearly 4 times) than the frequency of GS neutral responses alone. This might suggest that TS parents were perceived to have a more balanced or many-sided or true-to-life knowledge of English countries whereas GS parents were perceived to know English speaking countries far more for their good side than the other side, and so TS parents

were perceived to be more diverse in attitudes toward English speaking countries than were GS parents.

The second pair in Table 32 (TS Item 25 & GS Item 20) shows that both TS and GS parents were strongly perceived (no less than 70%) to think that learning English was important for university entry, though TS parents were marginally less perceived like this.

Table 32 shows that, on the whole, TS children did perceive their parents' attitudes as positive, and the perceived attitudes were contributing to children's learning of English. It was the same case with GS children in this respect.

**The last category** contains only one pair – TS Item 28 and GS Item 23 relating to children's wish for contact with English speaking foreigners. (See Table 33)

Table 33 Children's desire to have contact with English speaking people

TS 28 & GS 23: You have or would like to have contact with a foreign child/person who speaks English.					
COR	Gender	TS		GS	
		Gender total	COR total	Gender total	COR total
Agree ☺	Boy	12	27	14	30
	Girl	15		16	
Disagree ☹	Boy	10	16	8	13
	Girl	6		5	
No idea ☹	Boy	3	7	3	7
	Girl	4		4	

that there were not great differences in responses from TS and GS students; a great majority of both TS and GS children had or would like to have contact with English speaking foreigners. This appears to contribute to both groups of children's motivation to learn English.

In summary, although there were only marginal differences between TS and GS students in these 16 pairs, these items are nonetheless useful in presenting a more complete picture of what TS students feel and believe about, and do in, their English learning settings.

A review of the 16 items in all the four tables (30, 31, 32, & 33) finds that TS students were:

- Strong in affective feelings to learning English, such as “like” coming to the English classes and “enjoy” learning English largely due to the enthusiasm of teachers, interesting teaching methods, pleasant classroom climate, as well as the contributing attitudes of their parents;
- Also strong in the behavioural aspects learning English, such as the reports that they work “hard at English”, that the hard work was not much because of parental pressure, even less because of teachers’ pressure.
- Keen to have contact with English speaking people;
- Aware of their parents’ strong attitudes towards English speaking countries and the importance of English for university entry.

The review confirms that these four findings were not unique to TS younger children. GS children were closely similar to, or even the same as, TS children.

#### 4.2.3 TS and GS separate items

Finally, there are five separate items in TS Questionnaire 2 and seven separate items in GS Questionnaire 2. They will be presented and discussed separately. The TS separate items will presented and discussed first, then the GS separate items will follow.

**The five TS separate items** were designed to identify factors that led to children attending TS English classes. (See Table 34 next page)

The pattern of positive and negative responses in items 11, 12, 13 relating to who had a strong influence in deciding whether the children went to a training school to learn English shows that the children saw themselves as the greatest contributor to the decision; surprisingly, parents played a less

powerful role, and children's friends played a far weaker role, in contributing to the decision.

Items 14 & 18 in this table show that the frequency of positive responses to Item 14 was very high (72%) and the frequency of negative responses to Item 18 was very high (68%). This indicates that the children's goal in going to training school was to learn more English instead of to make new friends.

In general, Table 34 shows that the young children themselves played a strong role, with their parents and friends playing minor roles, the latter weaker than the former, in deciding whether or not they could go to a training school to learn English, and they went to the training school in order to learn more English instead of making new friends.

Table 34 Separate items in TS Questionnaire 2

TS Item	TS item statement	COR	Gender	Gender total	COR total
11	<b>It is mainly yourself</b> who decide to go to the training school to study English.	Agree ☺	Boy	9	24
			Girl	15	
		Disagree ☹	Boy	11	17
			Girl	6	
		No idea ☹	Boy	5	9
			Girl	4	
12	<b>It is mainly your parents</b> who decide that you go to the training school to study English.	Agree ☺	Boy	11	21
			Girl	10	
		Disagree ☹	Boy	10	23
			Girl	13	
		No idea ☹	Boy	4	6
			Girl	2	
13	<b>It is mainly your friends</b> who contribute to the decision that you go to the training school study English.	Agree ☺	Boy	4	10
			Girl	6	
		Disagree ☹	Boy	18	35
			Girl	17	
		No idea ☹	Boy	3	5
			Girl	2	
14	You learn English in the training school because <b>you want to learn more.</b>	Agree ☺	Boy	18	36
			Girl	18	
		Disagree ☹	Boy	4	7
			Girl	3	
		No idea ☹	Boy	3	7
			Girl	4	
18	You go to the training school to learn English mainly <b>to make new friends.</b>	Agree ☺	Boy	2	9
			Girl	7	
		Disagree ☹	Boy	20	34
			Girl	14	
		No idea ☹	Boy	3	7
			g	4	

**The seven GS separate items** were designed to find the major reasons why the children did not go to training schools to learn English. (See Table 35 on page 70)

Table 35, on the whole, shows (1) the frequencies of negative responses to Items 26, 27, 29, and 30 were by far higher (3-6 times) than the frequencies of positive responses to the same items. This indicates that parents' disallowance, children's self-judging their English as too good, children's wanting to be free on the weekend, and their not knowing where training schools were far from being the reasons for children's not attending an English training school; (2) that the frequencies of positive and negative responses to item 25, 28, and 31 were very close, with a slight more weight on the negative side (except Item 31).

This may suggest that, children's shortage of time, children's self-judging their English as too bad, and children's idea that they would study there at a later time were important reasons, though not the most powerful reasons, for not going to a training school to learn English.

Table 35 Separate items in GS Questionnaire 2

GS item	GS statement		COR	Gender total		COR total
25		you have no time for it	Agree☺	Boy	10	19
				Girl	9	
			Disagree☹	Boy	11	21
				Girl	10	
			No idea☹	Boy	4	10
				Girl	6	
26	The fact that you did not study, and are not studying, English in a training school/ class is because	because your parents don't let you go there.	Agree☺	Boy	6	11
				Girl	5	
			Disagree☹	Boy	16	32
		Girl		16		
		No idea☹	Boy	5	9	
			Girl	4		
27		your English is too good to go there.	Agree☺	Boy	6	8
				Girl	2	
			Disagree☹	Boy	15	33
		Girl		18		
		No idea☹	Boy	4	9	
			Girl	5		
28		Your English is too bad to go there.	Agree☺	Boy	10	19
				Girl	9	
			Disagree☹	Boy	14	23
		Girl		9		
		No idea☹	Boy	1	8	
			Girl	7		
		you want to be free on	Agree☺	Boy	4	6



29		the weekend.		Girl	2	35
			Disagree ⊗	Boy	16	
				Girl	19	
			No idea ⊖	Boy	2	9
Girl	7					
30		you don't know there are English training schools/class for you to learn English.	Agree☺	Boy	4	7
				Girl	3	
			Disagree ⊗	Boy	18	33
				Girl	15	
No idea ⊖	Boy	3	10			
	Girl	7				
31	You think you will be studying English at a training school/class later on.		Agree☺	Boy	16	26
				Girl	10	
			Disagree ⊗	Boy	2	3
				Girl	1	
			No idea ⊖	Boy	7	21
				Girl	14	

Item 31 had an extremely low frequency (6%) of negative responses. This indicates that it was not because children thought they would learn English in a training school in the future that they did not study, and were not currently studying, English in a training school. The more predictable reasons for GS students' non-attendance, such as parental pressure or lack of time, were shown to not be consistent factors that were keeping students away from training schools.

Examined from another perspective, GS items 26, 27, 29, 30, on the one hand, had greatly differing proportions between frequencies of positive responses and frequencies of negative responses. This suggests that children were very decided in reporting that parents' disallowance, their English being self-judgingly too poor, their wanting to be free on the weekend, and their not knowing about access to training school were not the reasons for non-attendance at a training school to learn English.

GS Items 25, 28 & 31, on the other hand, had close frequency levels either in positive and negative responses (Items 25 & 28) or in positive and neutral responses (31). This indicates that in the issue of whether children's lack of time, children's English being self-judged as too good, and children's idea of going to a training school in future were the reasons for not going to a training school, there were no clear trends or indication in the children's responses.

The data did not identify clear reasons why GS children did not attend a training school. However patterns do emerge. The two reasons of relative

importance (with equal totals of 38%) were: having no time and having no self-confidence (students self-judging their English as too bad to attend TS). The former could be partly external pressure, like homework, and partly internal choice of other self-chosen activities. The latter was an internal factor. A reason of much less importance was prevention by their parents---an external factor. It seems that children's non-attendance at TS tends to be mainly driven by internal factors.

## Chapter Five Differences in gender and age

Chapter 5 has two tasks. One is to deal with gender differences in children's responses, and the other, to address age differences in children's responses.

### 5.1 Gender differences in children's responses

A close study of the children's responses in the light of differences between boys and girls, both the older and the younger, in both TS and GS, found that there were no consistent or major patterns of differences in the responses according to gender. The only gender difference worthy of comment was in

the TS younger children's responses where the difference between the boys' and the girls' responses was greater than 10. To the statement of the item in TS Questionnaire 2 "You like coming to the English classes in the training school", there were 12 (=24%) positive responses from the TS boys but 23 (46%) responses from the TS girls. This indicates that more TS girls than TS boys liked attending the English classes in the training school. Perhaps, it is indicative of the increasing role that girls or women are assuming in Chinese society where girls are becoming more assertive and definite in their views or opinions. Alternatively, it may simply be a reflection of the substantial literature that shows that girls are more motivated for language learning than are boys.

## 5.2 Age differences in children's responses

The data showed substantial differences in the responses between the older students and the younger students. These differences will be presented and discussed in this section. Despite the fact that the older and the younger children responded to different formats of items in their respective questionnaires, it has been possible to compare their responses, because in effect the nature of the information given by the children in each case is similar.

The age differences will be presented and discussed in three sections: TS age differences, GS age differences, and TS age differences compared with GS age differences.

### 5.2.1 TS age differences

TS age differences were substantial and great. These differences can be grouped into two clusters. The first cluster contained the major age differences that could be compared in equivalent pairs of items. The second contained the age differences can be deduced from similar but not equivalent item responses.

There were eight major pairs of age differences in the **first cluster**. These pairs are shown below in Table 36.

Table 36 TS age differences in equivalent pairs of items

Aspect as basis of comparison	Age	Table(item/ category)	Frequency & %	Age (%) Difference
a. Like coming to the TS English classes	Older	Table 7, "4"	50 = 100%	30
	Younger	Table 30, "1"	35 = 70%	
b. University entry as a reason why English is important	Older	Table 2, "a"	1 = 2 %	66
	Younger	Table 25, "17"	34 = 68%	
c. Communicate with foreigners as a reason for enjoying learning English; Contact with foreigners	Older	Table 4, "d"	9 = 18 %	36
	Younger	Table 33, "28"	27 = 54%	
d. Enthusiastic teachers as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "a"	38 = 76%	10
	Younger	Table 30, "4"	43 = 86%	
e. Good teaching methods as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "b"	19 = 38%	42
	Younger	Table 30, "5"	40 = 80%	
f. Interest level of teaching as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "c"	15 = 30%	28
	Younger	Table 30, "6"	29 = 58%	
g. Classroom climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "k"	13 = 26%	48
	Younger	Table 30, "3"	37 = 74%	
h. Pleasant school climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "l"	19 = 38%	12
	Younger	Table 30, "2"	25 = 50%	

The first pair asked whether or not the students liked coming to the TS English classes. All the older students' responses were "yes" while 35 (70%) younger students responded positively to the positive statement. The percentage difference was 30. This indicates that more older children than younger children liked coming to the English classes.

The second pair of these related to university entry as a reason why students thought English was important. The older children were asked to list their reasons why they believed English was important. Only one older student gave a response to "going to university" as a reason category, while, the younger children gave 34 (=68%) positive responses to the statement "You go to the training school to learn English because English is important for going to university". This was the sharpest difference between the older and the younger TS students. This surprising result indicates that the older students attributed far less to university entry as an important reason for TS English attendance than did the younger students.

The third pair related to the aspect of communication or contact with foreigners where there was a great age difference in responses. Though,

unlike the older children's responses in the category of "communicate with foreigners" as a reason for enjoying learning, the younger children's responses to the statement did not directly associate "enjoying learning English" with "communicating with foreigners", their responses to the statement can be interpreted as reflecting reasons for enjoying learning English. Therefore, the difference in responses indicates that far more younger children identified communication with a foreigner as a category of reason for enjoying learning English than did the older children.

The fourth pair focused on enthusiastic teachers as a reason for enjoying attending TS English classes. The response difference in the two age groups was not great. This indicates that the TS older (76%) and younger students (86%) did not perceive their English teachers as very different in terms of enthusiasm in teaching all the lessons to them. In other words, both the older and the younger students recognized the enthusiasm of the teachers similarly very highly as a contributing factor for them to enjoy learning English in the training school.

The fifth pair related to the aspect of good teaching methods. There were 19 (=38%) responses to category of the good teaching methods as a reason for TS attendance from the older students, while 40 (=80%) younger students responded positively to the statement regarding teaching methods. The difference between the responses was great (42). This indicates that far more younger students felt that the teaching methods in the TS were a reason for liking to come to TS than did the older students. This is no doubt due to the greater experiences of teaching methods the older students had, so that there is less novelty associated with teaching methods for older children.

The sixth pair dealt with the interest level of teaching. 15 (=30%) older students responded to the category of interesting teaching as a category of reasons why they liked coming to the English classes in the training school while 29 (=58%) younger students responded negatively to the negatively worded statement about the interesting teaching. That is to say, 58% of the younger students regarded the English teaching as interesting. The

percentage difference between the age groups was 28. This indicates that more younger children than older children felt the English teaching was interesting. But this does not necessarily mean that the English classes the older children attended were not interesting. It is possible that the older children are harder to please due presumably to the fact that the range and depth of their interest increase as they grow in age and years of schooling.

The seventh pair related to students' feeling about the classroom climate. It had the second largest difference between the older and the younger TS. Of the 50 older students, 13 (=26%) responded with "classroom atmosphere" as a category of reasons why they liked attending the English classes in the training school, while, 37 (=74%) of the younger students responded positively to the statement "The classroom climate in the training school is pleasant". The difference is 48%. This indicates that far more younger students felt that TS classroom climate was positive. Again, this may indicate that the older students due to their greater experience of TS classrooms have come to expect the climate of their classrooms to be positive and hence take it for granted and thus not worthy of comment.

The eighth pair related to pleasantness of school climate. 19 (=38%) older children responded in the category of pleasant school climate as a reason for liking attending the English classes in the training school. 25 (=50%) younger children responded negatively to the negatively worded statement "The school climate in the training school is not pleasant." That is to say, 50% of younger children thought of the school climate as pleasant. The difference in percentage was 12. It was a small difference. This indicates that the perception of the pleasantness of the school climate was very similar: the level of pleasantness of the school was consistently positive for both age groups and was thus one of the key contributors to TS English class attendance.

In summary, there were three points of observation in these 8 pairs.

The first was that the younger children were usually more positive about matters pertaining to school than the older children. This is probably a standard difference between younger children who still find school a novel experience and older children for whom school is no longer as fresh and stimulating. The exception to this pattern was in “a” where more of the older children (100%) liked coming to TS than did the younger children (70%).

The third was that two items (d & h ) showed a closing of the gap in the responses where both the older and the younger children approached a common point in identifying teachers’ enthusiasm and the pleasantness of the school climate as key aspects of why they enjoyed attending the English training school.

There were seven pairs of age differences in the **second cluster** where the differences can be deduced from similar but not equivalent items. They are shown below in Table 37.

Table 37 TS Age differences in similar pairs of items

Aspect as basis of comparison	Age	Table(item/ category)	Frequency & %
a. Good learning material as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, “e”	12 = 24%
	Younger	Table 22	30 = 60% (variety) 41 = 82% (difficult but interesting)
b. Homework	Older	Table 8, “o”	5 = 10%
	Younger	Table 30, “7”	22 = 44%
c. The view of the importance of English as a reason for attending TS English classes	Older	<b>Table 1, “1”</b>	<b>50 = 100%</b>
	Younger	Table 24, “16”	32 = 64%
d. Having interest in/Enjoying learning English as a reason for attending TS English classes	Older	<b>Table 3, “2”</b>	<b>50 = 100%</b>
	Younger	Table 30, “15”	36 = 72%
e. It is mainly myself that decide my TS attendance	Older	Table 12, “a-h”	32 = 64%
	Younger	Table 34, “11”	24 = 48%
f. Parental influence in decision making as to TS attendance	Older	Table 12, “k”	8 = 16%
	Younger	Table 34, “12”	21 = 42%
g. friends’ influence on decision of TS attendance	Older	Table 12, “j”	12 = 24% (including relatives & other)
	Younger	Table 34, “13”	10 = 20%

The first pair related to learning material. 24% older children responded to the category-- “material is good / difficult” (By “difficult” the students meant challenging, and large in quantity of input, which they considered as good, as opposed to the material used in general school)-- as a reason for attending TS English classes. Though this number of responses ranked the sixth important reason for the older children’s TS attendance, it was among the

highest in the frequency level of categories for TS attendance. In contrast, 60% the younger children responded positively to “a variety of material” in Item 7 of TS Questionnaire 2, and even more of the younger children (82%) responded positively to the statement “The material the training school is difficult but interesting”. Though the two statements for the younger children were not explicitly related with TS attendance, their high frequencies of positive responses would reflect that the younger children liked attending TS because of the materials used. This indicates that the younger children were satisfied with the learning material and this contributed to their TS attendance. The large difference between the older children’s responses and the younger children’s responses indicated that the younger children felt much more strongly about the positive nature of the English material they used in the training school than did the older children.

The second pair related to homework. Only 10% of older children responded in the category of homework as a reason for TS attendance whereas 44% of younger children gave positive responses to the statement “The homework in the training school is interesting.” Though the frequencies of both the older and the younger children to homework category was lower than their respective response frequencies in other high-frequency categories, the younger children’s response frequency was much higher than the older children’s at this level. This indicates that the homework was a greater attraction (motivational factor) to the younger children than to the older children in TS attendance.

The third pair related to the association of the view of the importance of English. 100% of older children responded positively to the question “Do you think it is important to learn English?”, while 64% of younger children responded positively to the statement “You go to the training school to learn English because you think English is very important. Clearly, far more TS older than younger children held the view that English was important.

The fourth pair related to the enjoyment of learning English. 100% of older children responded positively to the question “Do you enjoy learning



English?”, while 72% of younger children responded positively to the statement “You go to the training school because you enjoy learning English.” This indicates that all the older children enjoyed learning English while most younger children did so.

The fifth pair focused on self-decision making about TS attendance. The sum of older children’s responses was greater than the total frequency of responses given by the younger children. This indicates that the older children had more power over the issue of making a decision as to whether they attended TS than did the younger children.

The sixth pair related to the parental role in decision making as to children’s TS attendance. More younger (42%) than older (18%) children gave responses which indicated parental influence in their attendance at TS. This indicates that far more younger children’s TS attendance was decided by their parents.

The seventh pair focused on friends’ influence on decision making as to TS attendance. 12 of older children gave responses that fell into the category of “Encouraged by relatives/friends/other” as a decision-making factor. Therefore, less older than younger TS children responded to friends as a category of decision-making factor over the issue of TS attendance. This indicates that friends played a less powerful role on the older than on the younger children over the issue of deciding on TS attendance.

In summary, there were three patterns in these seven pairs. One was that generally the younger children were more positive than the older children about aspects of the training school itself playing a dominant role in arousing and strengthening students’ TS attendance (a-b); second, in the decision making about TS attendance, the older children had more say than the younger in attending TS, with the older children having less influence from parents and friends (e-g). The other was that the older children were more positive than the younger children regarding the nature of English itself as a factor to their TS attendance (c-d).

## 5.2.2 GS age differences

There were many equivalent or similar pairs of GS age differences. These differences were grouped into two clusters. The first cluster contained the age differences that could be compared in equivalent pairs of items. The second contained the age differences that were not in equivalent but in similar pairs of items.

There were eight pairs (a-h) in the **first cluster** shown below in Table 38.

Table 38 GS age differences in equivalent pairs

Aspect as basis of comparison	Age	Table(item/ category)	Frequency /score & %	Differ- ence (%)
a. like coming to the English classes	Older	Table 7, "4"	21 = 42%	30
	Younger	Table 30, "1"	36 = 72%	
b. University entry as a reason why English is important	Older	Table 2, "a"	7 = 14%	68
	Younger	Table 25, "13"	41 = 82%	
c. Communicate with foreigners as a reason for enjoying learning English; Contact with foreigners	Older	Table 4, "d"	13 = 26%	34
	Younger	Table 33, "23"	30 = 60%	
d. Enthusiastic teachers as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "a"	4 = 8%	72
	Younger	Table 30, "4"	40 = 80%	
e. Good teaching methods as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "b"	1 = 2 %	78
	Younger	Table 30, "5"	40 = 80%	
f. Interest level of teaching as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "c"	1 = 2%	56
	Younger	Table 30, "6"	29 = 58%	
g. Lively classroom climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "k"	0	78
	Younger	Table 30, "3"	39 = 78%	
h. Pleasant school climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, "l"	0	46
	Younger	Table 30, "2"	23 = 46%	

The first pair asked whether the students liked coming to their GS English classes. Far more younger (72%) than older (42%) children gave positive responses. This indicates that more GS younger students liked coming to their GS English classes than did GS older students.

The second pair related to university entry as a reason for their view that English was important. The great majority (82%) of the younger children responded positively while just a few (14%) older children gave responses to this reason. This surprising result indicates that the GS older students attached far less importance of English to university entry than did the younger students.

The third pair related to communication with foreigners. More younger (60%) than older (26%) children gave positive responses. This indicates that GS younger children identified communication with foreigners as a reason for enjoying learning English more did the older children.

The fourth pair focused on enthusiastic teachers as a reason for liking the GS English classes. Far more younger (80%) than older (8%) children responded positively. The difference was huge. This indicates that the GS younger children felt their English teachers were far more enthusiastic than did the older children. Perhaps, this is due to the difference in the lengths of their school experiences.

The fifth and sixth pairs focused on the teaching methods and interest level of teaching. Far more younger children (80% in the 5<sup>th</sup> pair; 56% in the 6<sup>th</sup> pair) than older children (only 2%) gave a response to each of the categories “good teaching methods” and “Teaching is interesting” as reasons for liking coming to GS English classes. This indicates that very few of the older children had a positive impression of the teaching methods and recognized the English teaching as interesting while most of the younger children recognized the teaching methods and teaching activities as interesting. Perhaps again, this is due to the younger children’s fresh experiences of a new subject made them feel they were novel and interesting while older children’s longer and wider experiences made them feel less than positive in the two areas.

The seventh and eighth pairs related to the pleasant school climate and lively classroom climate. Very many of the younger children (78% in the 7<sup>th</sup> pair; 46% in the 8<sup>th</sup> pair) responded positively to the respective statements about school climate and classroom climates but simply none of the older children gave a response to these two categories. This indicates that GS younger children felt positive about the contribution of the school and classroom climates to their liking to come to the English classes while the GS older

students did not identify either the GS climate nor their English classroom climate as a factor in their responses to their English learning.

In summary, the younger children were far more positive in matters pertaining to the English learning in the general school than were the older children.

There were ten pairs in the **second cluster** shown below in Table 39. (See the table next page)

The first pair related to the learning material used in their English lessons. Not many (10%) older children responded to this category of reason. In contrast, around half of younger children responded positively to “a variety of material” (40%) and to “difficult but interesting” material (60%). This indicates that the younger children recognised the material more positively than did the older children.

Table 39 GS age difference in similar pairs of items

Aspect as basis of comparison	Age	Table(item/ category)	Frequency/score & %
a. Good learning material as a reason for liking attending English classes	Older	Table 8, “e”	5 = 10%
	Younger	Table 22	20 = 40% (variety) 30 = 60% (difficult but interesting)
b. Homework is interesting	Older	Table 8	0
	Younger	Table 30, “9”	28 = 58%
c. Think English is important	Older	Table 1, “4”	47 = 94%
	Younger	Table 24, “12”	45 = 90%
d. Enjoy learning English	Older	Table 3, “3”	35 = 70%
	Younger	Table 30, “11”	34 = 78%
e. Parents’ positive influence	Older	Table 16, “e”	2/9 = 22.2%
		Table 20, “k”	4/29 = 13.8%
	Younger	Table 32, “17”	31 = 62%(Negative to negative)
		Table 26, “18”	21 = 42%(Negative to negative)
f. Parents’ influence as a reason for not attending TS	Older	Table 17, “j”	5/31 = 16.1%
		Table 18, “k”	5/46 = 10.8%
g. Not knowing where TS is as a reason for not attending TS	Older	Table 17, “i”	5/31 = 16%
		Table 18, “l”	4/46 = 8.7%
	Younger	Table 35, “30”	7 = 14%
h. Lack of time as a reason for not attending TS	Older	Table 17, “g”	3/31 = 9.7%
		Table 18, “i”	6/46 = 13%
i. Self-judgement of poor English as a reason for not attending TS	Younger	Table 35, “25”	19 = 38%
		Older	Table 17, “d”
j. Future possibility of attending TS	Younger	Table 18, “d”	2/46 = 4.3%
		Older	Table 19, “8”
		Table 35, “31”	26 = 52%

The second pair related to homework. More than half younger children responded to the statement “The homework is interesting” while not a single older child mentioned 'homework' as an aspect of their English lessons. This indicates that the younger children recognised their English homework as interesting while perhaps the older children thought of homework as a commonplace aspect and did not find it worthy of comment.

The third pair focused on the view of the importance of English. The responses to the positive view from both the older and younger children reached similar heights (90% & 94%). This indicates that both the older and the younger children believed that English was very important. Given the earlier patterns, the older children are surprisingly aware of the importance of English compared with the younger children.

The fourth pair focused on the enjoyment of learning English. The positive responses from both the older and the younger children were very high (70% & 78%). This indicates that both the older and the younger children enjoyed learning English at GS. Again the older children are unexpectedly positive about enjoying English compared with the younger children.

The fifth pair related to parents' positive influence on children's English learning. When the older children were asked why they had been to a training school for English, 22.2% of them gave responses “parents' asking”. When asked whether they would be studying English at a training school in future, only 13.8% older children who said yes gave responses to “parents' permission” as a category of reason for yes. In contrast, around half of the younger children (56% & 42%) responded negatively to the two negatively worded statements about their parents' views on English speaking countries and the attraction of going abroad. And, the majority of the younger children responded positively to the two positively termed statements about their parents' views about the importance of learning English to going abroad (80%) and to university entry (78%). The contrast of percentages of parents' influence between the older and the younger children was very sharp. This

indicates that the younger children had far more of a positive influence from their parents than did the older children.

The 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> pairs focused on reasons why the children had not been to and were not currently at TS for English. To the first question, 16.1%, 16%, 9.7% & 6.5% older children gave responses to the respective reasons of parents' prevention, not knowing where a TS is, lack of time and self-judgement of poor English. To the second question, 10.8%, 8.7%, 13% & 4.3% older children gave responses to the respective responses of these same reasons. In contrast, 22%, 14%, 38% & 38% younger children responded to these same reasons. All this indicates that the older children's responses were lower than the younger children's although not greatly so, especially in parents' influence and not knowing where a TS is.

The tenth pair related to future possibility of attending TS. Only a little more than half of both the older and the younger children responded positively. The difference was very small (12% more of the older children). This indicates that the older were a little more positive about future TS attendance.

In summary, the four pairs (a-d) that focused on children's attitudes about English learning showed that the younger children were generally more positive than the older children. The other five pairs (e-i) that focused on TS attendance showed that the younger children somewhat more negatively influenced than the older children. The last pair (j) showed that the older children were somewhat more positive about future TS attendance.

### 5.2.3 Comparison between TS and GS age differences

A comparison between TS age differences and GS age differences found that there were noteworthy differences between them in seven items in the first and second clusters in TS and GS age responses. These differences will be presented and discussed one by one, with a table for each.

There were six dramatic differences between the responses of the TS and GS age groups in the **first cluster**.

The first of these differences focused on the item “like coming to the English classes” in their respective schools(See Table 40).

Table 40 First difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

a. Like coming to the English classes	TS (Older / younger)	GS (Older / younger)
	100% / 70%	42% / 72%

The table shows that the overall differences between the positive responses of the two age groups in the TS and those in the GS were the same (30%). However, on closer examination, the nature of the difference between them was quite varied: the younger children’s responses in both schools were almost the same (70% & 72%), while the TS older children’s responses differed markedly from the GS older children’s responses. This indicates that both TS and GS younger children liked coming to English classes to a common high degree but there was a large disparity between TS older and GS older children’s responses. It is clear that all TS older children liked to come to the TS English classes while only less than half of GS older children liked coming to the GS English classes. This indicates that the TS older children were by far more positive about coming to the TS English classes than were the GS older children about attending the GS English classes.

The second difference focused on enthusiastic teachers as a reason for TS & GS students’ liking to come to the English classes in their respective schools(See Table 41).

Table 41 Second difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

d. Enthusiastic teachers as a reason for liking attending English classes	TS (Older / younger)	GS (Older / younger)
	76% / 86%	8% / 80%

The table shows that the TS age difference (10%) was far smaller than the GS age difference (72%). This indicates that the TS children, both older and younger, identified TS teachers as enthusiastic but the recognition of enthusiastic teachers was not shared by the GS older children.

The third difference focused on teaching methods as a reason for TS and GS students' liking to come to the English classes in their respective schools (See Table 42).

Table 42 Third difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

e. Good teaching methods as a reason for liking attending English classes	TS (Older / younger)	GS (Older / younger)
	38% / 80%	2% / 80%

The table shows that both the TS and the GS younger children's responses were at exactly the same high level. The table also shows that more TS older children were positive about the teaching methods used than were GS older children.

The fourth difference focused on the interest level of teaching as a reason for students' liking to come to the English classes (See Table 43).

Table 43 Fourth difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

f. Interest level of teaching as a reason for liking attending English classes	TS (Older / younger)	GS (Older / younger)
	30% / 58%	2% / 58%

The table shows that the responses of both the TS and the GS younger children were at exactly the same high level. This indicates that the same number of

both the TS and the GS younger children found the teaching methods interesting in their respective schools. The table also shows that the TS older children's responses were far more positive about the interest level of the teaching than the GS older children's.

The fifth difference focused on the liveliness of the classroom climate as a reason for students' liking to come to the English classes (See Table 44).

Table 44 Fifth difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

g. Lively classroom climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	TS (Older / younger)	GS (Older / younger)
	26% / 74%	0 / 78%

The table shows that the TS younger and the GS younger children's responses were nearly the same while there was a marked difference between TS older children's responses and the GS older children's responses.



The sixth difference focused on the pleasantness of the school climate as a reason for students' liking to come to the English classes (See Table 45).

Table 45 Sixth difference in TS/GS students' liking to come to TS English classes

h. Pleasant school climate as a reason for liking attending English classes	TS(Older / younger) 38% / 50%	GS (Older / younger) 0 / 46%
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This table indicates that both the TS and the GS younger children were equally pleased with their school climate while there was a discernible difference in the number of older children who felt this way in the two schools.

There was one considerable difference between the TS and GS age difference in the **second cluster**. It focused on the enjoyment of learning English(See Table 46).

Table 46 TS/GS difference in enjoyment of learning English

d. Enjoy learning English	TS (Older / younger) 100% / 72%	GS(Older / younger) 70% / 78%
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The table shows that the number of TS and the GS younger children's responses were similar, but that, overall TS older students were more positive than the GS older children about the enjoyment of learning English.

In summarising the two clusters, there were two very clear patterns:

- Generally, TS students were more positive than GS students about their English classes.
- The responses of the younger children in both TS and GS were similar and all the notable differences in the responses occurred between the TS older children and the GS older children.

## Chapter Six Findings and implications

In this chapter, findings will be presented on the basis of the results and discussion in Chapter Four and on the gender and age differences presented and discussed in Chapter Five.

The presentation of findings will be organised with specific reference to the research questions which initially directed the study.

Implications from the findings will then be drawn.

## 6.1 Findings

### 6.1.1 Research question 1: What is the motivation to learn English for Chinese 7-12 year old students in the training school?

The two age groups will be discussed separately.

#### The TS older children

The TS older students' responses to Questionnaire 1 showed that they were very positive about learning English.

All of the TS older children responded positively regarding their attitudes toward learning English. Their responses showed that they held the view that it was important to learn English. Two reasons were given as the most important. One was that communication with foreigners needed English; the other was that English was a common world language.

All of the TS older children showed that they enjoyed learning English. In their reasons, they focused mainly on English itself as a language that gave pleasure: to them English was interesting; they experienced pleasure in English learning; they found English was easy to learn. Other important reasons for enjoying English at TS focused on the functioning of English: that is, its communication with foreigners; English could improve their language skills and increase knowledge. In a word, TS students generally enjoyed learning English and experienced pleasure in doing so.

All of the TS older students liked coming to the TS English classes. They gave a very large range of categories of reasons for this. The main reasons focused on the factors that were closely related to TS school, classroom and teachers. The TS older students found many aspects of TS school and classroom attractive and these contributed to the children's willingness learn English at TS. (Details of these reasons will follow in 6.2)

The TS older students were very positive not only in attitudinal, affective aspects, but also in behavioural aspects. All of them chose to use English in their daily life voluntarily when possible.

Most of the TS older children were very aware of society's attitudes toward learning English in a training school. More than half of them understood the society's attitudes to be positive and they agreed with the society's positive attitudes; those who believed that society held negative attitudes to learning English in TS were quite definite in rejecting these views of society. This shows that TS older children's awareness and understanding of the society's positive attitudes could have been a contributing external factor to the students' learning English in a training school. As well, the older children showed that they had taken their own personal position regarding society's view about learning English in a TS and this indicates that there was a significant internal motivational component in the students' attendance at TS.

This theme of the older children's motivation to attend TS is further revealed by their answers as to what led them to attend TS. Predominantly, these reasons were related to their own individual self-pressure rather than to external pressures, such as from their parents or other people. This means that the TS older children's internal factors had a prominent position among all the motivational factors for deciding to learn English at a training school.

Finally, when the TS older children were asked whether they were better at English in TS or GS, most said that they were better in GS. They found that the TS English lessons placed them in an advantaged position in their GS English lessons. They generally found that they were better in English in GS than in TS and that their GS English was easy. This indicated that one aspect of the TS older children's motivation to learn English at TS was to learn more English that was challenging to them so that after meeting the challenge, they were placed in a better position in the GS English classroom.

The TS younger children

The TS younger children's responses to Questionnaire 2 showed that they were also positive in learning English in a training school. Their responses can be classified in the following groups of motivational factors:

- Factors internal to children
- School factors
- Parental factors
- Behavioural factors

Many of the motivational factors shown by their responses were internal to the children. They liked coming to the TS English classes; they enjoyed learning English and wanted to learn more English as reasons for TS attendance; they considered the importance of English itself and the importance of English to university entry as reasons for TS attendance; they thought of English speaking countries as good and would like to have contact or communicate with foreign children/persons. Their responses in all these aspects indicate that their motivation was strong in these internal aspects.

But their responses regarding self as a decider about TS attendance showed that in the actual decision to go to TS the younger children's internal influences were less powerful.

Many factors that aroused and strengthened motivation to learn English at TS arose from the training school. High frequencies of their responses occurred in regard to the following aspects: they identified their English teachers as enthusiastic, the English teaching methods as interesting, their classroom climate as pleasant, and their classroom and school climates as pleasant, and they found that the English learning activities were interesting. They identified the materials used as varied and difficult but interesting. These affective factors related to the training school were the powerful motivational factors for the TS younger children to learn English at TS. But other school factors, like interesting homework, had a less high frequency, and was hence a less powerful motivational factor.

Parental factors were strong contributing motivational factors for the TS younger children to learn English at TS. The children perceived their parents' view that learning English was important to university entry and perceived their parents' positive attitudes towards going abroad. The children's high responses to these parental factors indicate that these were strong motivational factors and were external to the child. There was another but less powerful parental factor that affected the younger children: the children worked hard at TS English because of parental pressure.

Behavioural aspects were indicative of the children's motivation to learn English at TS. The TS younger children chose to use or learn English and used English voluntarily in their daily life. They worked hard at TS English and did not delay their TS English homework. Their high response frequencies in these aspects showed that the efforts they expended were great. This indicates strong behavioural motivational influences.

### 6.1.2 Research question 2: Do the TS students have their own characteristic components of motivation?

This question was intended to establish whether the motivation towards the learning of English of TS students was different from that of GS students.

Against the general picture of TS older and younger students' motivational factors, the major motivational factors that were characteristic of just the TS students were clearly revealed after comparing with GS students' responses to the equivalent motivational factors in the following.

Compared with the GS older children, the TS older children were prominent in the following five motivational aspects:

(1) Attitudes about the English language and English learning:

The TS older students thought it was important to learn English because they considered English as a world common language. All of them enjoyed

learning English and they had a large range of reasons for the enjoyment. Their most important reason was that they found English was interesting. GS students, on the other hand, differed significantly in their responses on these aspects of their attitudes toward English language and English learning in that very few GS older students mentioned English as a common world language as the most important reason for their view of the importance of learning English, and that far fewer GS students enjoyed learning English and they had by far a smaller range of reasons, the most important of which was that learning English could facilitate communication with foreigners.

(2) Attitudes about TS school and classroom: TS students considered the TS teaching quality to be good, and facilities good as well. GS students were far less positive about their general school and their English learning.

(3) Affective aspects: The TS older children liked coming to TS English classes because of factors such as enthusiastic teachers, good teaching methods, interest level of teaching, effective teaching methods, learning materials used, lively classroom and school climate. GS students, again, did not find these aspects of their school experience attractive.

(4) Awareness of society's attitudes: The TS older children were well aware of society's attitudes toward learning English at a training school; they believed that most of the social attitudes were positive and they agreed with these positive attitudes; when they perceived social attitudes as negative, they disagreed with those attitudes. However, GS students were not as aware of social attitudes towards English learning at TS; those GS students who were aware of social attitudes towards English learning at TS saw social attitudes as less positive than TS students did.

(5) Self aspects: most TS older students attended TS English classes through a decision made by themselves. In contrast, GS students attributed their non-attendance at TS to a mixture of external and internal (to themselves) factors.

Clearly it is at the 10-12 year age level that the training school is experiencing great success in making the learning of English a positive experience.

Far less divergence in the motivational aspects affected the younger children. In many ways the TS and GS younger children were remarkably similar in what motivated them in their learning of English. However there were two differences between TS and GS younger children that deserve comment.

The TS younger children identified the materials used in their TS as varied and difficult but interesting. On the other hand, the GS younger children found that the materials used in their GS were considerably less varied, less difficult and less interesting.

In behavioural aspects of motivation, the TS younger children chose to use English in their daily life. But, the GS younger children were by far less keen to use English in their daily life.

In summary, motivational factors that were unique to TS older children were more internal in the positive attitudes to the English language and towards the learning of English. The internal positive affective aspects of the TS children were stimulated by the external factors such as enthusiasm of teachers, interesting style of teaching, varied, challenging and interesting materials used, classroom climate and pleasant school climate. Their self-determination level was high as reflected by their attitudes toward the society's attitudes toward learning English at training schools and by their decision making regarding attending a training school. TS younger children also held the varied, challenging and interesting material used as a strong motivation factor. It is surprising that TS older and younger children did not hold going abroad as a motivational aspect for TS attendance to learn English because one could have expected going abroad to be a major motivational aspect.



### 6.1.3 Research question 3: Are there any differences in their motivation in terms of age (7-9 and 10-12) and gender?

A comparison between responses of TS boys and girls, in both the older group and the younger group, found that there was no consistent difference in motivational factors according to gender except that TS younger girls were more positive than TS younger boys in just one affective factor, namely, their liking for coming to TS English classes.

A comparison between the responses of the TS older and younger children in motivational factors found that there were seven major differences according to age.

On the one hand, the TS younger children were more definite in the following five aspects of motivation for liking to come to the TS English classes.

(1) The TS younger children identified TS English teachers as enthusiastic. In contrast, the TS older children had less such identification and consideration of their teachers.

(2) The TS younger children classified the teaching methods in the TS English classroom as good/interesting and they regarded this as a reason for liking to attend the TS English classes. However, the TS older children expressed less of this view.

(3) The TS younger children found that the interest level of the English teaching was high and they held this to be a reason for liking to attend the TS English classes. The TS older children found less interest in the teaching in the TS English classroom.

(4) Most TS younger children felt that the TS English classroom climate was positive and so they liked coming to the TS English classes. By contrast far

fewer older TS children cited a positive classroom climate as a reason that they liked coming to TS English classes.

(5) The TS younger children recognised school climate as pleasant and saw it as a reason for liking to attend the TS English classes. In contrast, the TS older children showed less recognition of a pleasant school climate.

These five differences between TS older and younger children should not be interpreted as meaning that the TS older children were not positive about these aspects of learning English at the training school. Both age groups were positive, with the younger children more so. It may be that the younger children's relative inexperience at schools of any type made them more impressionable compared with the older children.

On the other hand, in the following two affective aspects of motivation for attending TS to learn English, the TS older children's responses differed as more positive from those of the TS younger children.

More TS older children (100%) than TS younger children (70%) stated they liked attending TS English classes.

Again, the TS older children were unanimous in stating that they enjoyed learning English in the training school while fewer TS younger children (72%) stated they did.

In summary, both groups are influenced in their motivation by internal and external factors. In the two age groups, the relative proportions of these two types of factors are reversed. The older children are more influenced by internal than external factors; the younger are more influenced by external than internal factors. This is surprising because one might expect that the older children could be more influenced by external factors such as the need of learning English for university entry and for future jobs. But the results of this research did not support this expectation.

## 6.2 Implications

A brief review of TS students' motivational aspects shows that their EFL motivation at TS was neither integrative nor instrumental. Their motivation did not have much connection with going abroad; their view of communication or contact with foreigners aimed at general communication both at home and abroad as part of life, without orientation of integrating into the community as Gardner found or into the target-language culture as Dörnyei suggested; their motivation did not heavily relate to instrumentality such as treating the learning of English as a tool for up-grading to a higher level of schools, going to university, or for jobs.

Instead, their motivation fits more into the theory of the dichotomy of intrinsic /extrinsic motivation, with a heavy bias on the intrinsic motivation. More important motivational aspects were in affective aspects such as "liking", "enjoyment", "interesting", "pleasantness" in the learning of English at TS.

The neurobiological theory also adds to understanding of TS students' motivation. Their internal affective motivational aspects existed in themselves but were stimulated and activated by external factors such as challenging and interesting materials used, teachers' enthusiasm, interesting style of teaching, liveliness of the classroom climate and pleasantness of the school climate.

Based on all this, implications of the findings of this research for training schools and their teachers are clear: TS students' motivation to learn English at TS arises and can be maintained through the use of varied, challenging and interesting materials, through teachers' enthusiasm and interesting method/style of teaching, through creating a lively classroom climate and a pleasant school climate. It is more and more challenging to training schools and their teachers, as the TS students are growing in age and EF learning experiences in schools, to maintain the students' motivation. This can be done by increasing the students' interest levels and enthusiasm for learning English through the quality of teaching, by varied teaching methods and skills, by

improving the liveliness of classroom climate and pleasantness of school climate, and the adoption of materials with new, varying, challenging and interesting levels.

### 6.3 Future Research

This study samples a sparsely researched area of English language teaching in China and investigated only a small part of the issue of students' motivation in the training school context. To gain a more complete coverage of the area, more research needs to be done.

Future research needs to include larger numbers of informants, and adopt interviewing techniques as a support to the questionnaire data. Also, classroom observation of the children may prove a useful supplementation to the children's questionnaire responses.

It could be useful to include training school teachers in future research dealing with student motivation. Teachers' observation of student classroom behaviour and homework results, for example, could provide additional perspectives on student attitudes and motivation towards learning English in Chinese training school settings. An analysis of assessment results of children could also be useful in giving further insight into students' motivation towards the subject.

Similarly, parents would be able to provide additional information about their children's motivation as demonstrated by their out-of-school behaviour towards learning of the English language.

The inclusion of these sources of data in future research of students' motivation towards learning English in the training school setting would enable a fuller picture to be gained.

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## Appendices

### A1: TS Questionnaire 1

(For 10-12 year old training school students 10-12)

Years of age \_\_\_\_ Boy  / Girl

#### **Directions**(    ):

- A. *Answer each of the following questions in your own idea, not referring to others' idea (用自己的观点,而不要参考别人的观点,回答下列问题):*
- B. *You are free to decide to answer the questions in either English or Chinese (你可以自由选择英语或者汉语来回答这些问题).*

1. Do you think it is important to learn English?

Why? 你认为学英语重要吗?为什么?

2. Do you enjoy learning English? Why? (你喜欢学习英语吗?为什么?)

3. In your daily life, do you choose to use English in reading, writing, speaking or listening whenever possible? If yes, which?

(在日常生活中,你有意地尽可能使用英语阅读,书写,讲话,或者听英语吗?

若是,哪几项?)

4. Do you like coming to the English class in the training school? If yes, what are the five best things in it? (你喜欢到这所培训学校来上英语课吗?

如果喜欢,请指出这里的哪五样最好?)

5. What leads to a decision that you study English in an English training school? (是什么因素导致你到英语培训学校来学英语的?)

6. Are you better at English in the training school or at the regular primary school? Why? (在哪所学校里,你的英语算是比较好的,

在培训学校还是在普通全日制学校?为什么?)

7. What do you find about the attitude of the society (especially people around you such as your relatives, and other people you know, and even the media) toward learning English in training schools? Do you agree? Why?

{关于社会对到培训学校去学英语的态度(尤其你周围的人,如亲戚,你认识的其他人,甚至新闻媒体),你有什么发现?你同意吗?为什么?}

## **A2: GS Questionnaire 1**

(for 10-12 year old study-English-at-general-school-only students 10-

12

Years of age \_\_ Boy / Girl

**Directions** ( ):

**A.** Answer each of the following questions in your own idea, not referring to others' idea 用自己的观点, 而非别人的观点, 回答下列问题

**B.** You are free to decide to answer the questions in either English or Chinese 你可以自由选择英语或者汉语来回答这些问题

1. Do you think it is important to learn English?  
Why? 你认为学英语重要吗? 为什么?

2. Do you enjoy learning English? Why? (你喜欢学英语吗? 为什么?)

3. In your daily life, do you choose to use English in reading, writing, speaking or listening whenever possible?  
(在日常生活中, 你尽可能地有意用英语阅读, 书写, 说话, 或者听英语吗?)

4. Do you like coming to the English class in your school? If yes, what are the five best things in it? (你喜欢来上学校里的英语课吗? 如果喜欢的话, 请列出你最喜欢的五样。)

5. Have you ever studied English at a training school?  
why? 你到培训学校或培训班去上过英语课吗? 为什么?

6. Please tell the reasons you know for the fact that currently you are not studying English at a training school/class.  
请说明现在你不在培训学校/班学英语的原因。

7. What do you find about the attitude of the society (especially people around you such as your relatives, and other people you know, and even the media) toward learning English in training schools? Do you agree? Why?  
{(关于社会对到培训学校/班去学英语的态度 (尤其你周围的人, 如亲戚, 你认识的其他人, 甚至新闻媒体), 你有什么发现? 你同意吗? 为什么?)}

8. Do you think you will be studying English at a training school/class later on?  
Why? 你认为你将来可能去外面的培训学校/班学英语吗? 为什么?

### A3: TS Questionnaire 2

(For 7-9 year old training school students

7-9

Years of age \_\_\_\_\_ Boy  /Girl

**Directions:** Here are 29 statements about what you perceive about your learning of English in the training school. You may agree, or disagree or you may feel you neither agree nor disagree. Beside each statement there are three faces: a happy face ☺---meaning “Agree”, an unhappy face ☹---meaning “Disagree”, and a face neither happy nor unhappy 😐---meaning “No idea”. So, if you agree to the statement, please draw a circle around the happy face. If you disagree, please draw a circle around the unhappy face. If you have no idea, please draw a circle around the face that is neither happy nor unhappy. But, remember: you should circle only ONE face for each statement. (说明:

这里有29个观点陈述，

都是关于你对英语培训学校英语学习的感觉的。你可能同意，可能不同意，也可能不知道怎么你自己是同意还是不同意。在每个陈述旁边有3个娃娃脸。

一个是笑脸，表示同意。一个是苦脸，表示不同意，还有一个脸不笑也不苦，表示“我不知道是同意还是不同意”。所以，如果你同意，就给笑脸画个圈；

如果你不同意，就给苦脸花个圈；如果你不知道，

就给那个不笑也不苦的脸画个圈。但是切记：对每个陈述，你只能圈划一个脸。)

Example ( )

A☺ D☹ N☹ A bus is bigger than a car. ( )

A☺ D☹ N☹ A bus is bigger than a train. ( )

A☺ D☹ N☹ A bus is 5 metres long. ( 5 )

A☺ D☹ N☹ 1. You like coming to the English class in the training school. (你喜欢来培训学校上英语课吗。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 2. The school climate in the training school is not pleasant. (培训学校的学校气氛让人感到不愉快 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 3. The classroom climate in the training school is pleasant. (培训学校的课堂气氛让人感到很愉快 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 4. The English teachers in the training school are enthusiastic. (培训学校的英语老师满怀激情 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 5. The English teaching method in the training school is interesting. (培训学校的英语教学方法很有趣 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 6. The English learning activities in the training school are not interesting. (培训学校的教学活动没意思 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 7. The English homework in the training school is interesting. (培训学校的英语作业有趣 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 8. There is a variety of English material to learn in the training school. ( 培训学校里有多种学习材料要学习 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 9. The material in the training school is difficult but interesting.(培

训学校的教材有难度但是很有趣儿 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 10. You don't do your English homework of the training school until you have to go to class the next time. (直到培训学校下一次上课时间到了, 你才不得不写英语作业 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 11. It is mainly yourself who decide to go to the training school to study English. ( 去培训学校学英语,主要是由你自己来决定 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 12. It is mainly your parents who decide that you go to the raining

school to study English. (去培训学校学英语,主要是由你家  
来决定的 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 13. It is mainly your friends who contribute to the decision that  
you go to the training school study English.  
(你去培训学校学英语的决定,主要是你的朋友促成的。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 14. You learn English in the training school because you want to  
learn more. (你到培训学校去学英语,是因为你想多学一些英  
语 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 15. You go to the training school to learn English because you  
enjoy learning English.(你到培训学校去学英语,是因为你喜欢  
学英语 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 16. You go to the training school to learn English because you  
think English is very important. (你到培训学校去学英语,是因  
为你认为英语很重要。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 17. You go to the training school to learn English because  
English is important for going to university.  
(你到培训学校去学英语,是因为英语对上大学很重要。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 18. You go to the training school to learn English mainly to make  
new friends. (你到培训学校去学英语,主要是为了交新朋友。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 19. You don't work hard at English in the training school.  
(对培训

学校的英语,你不用功学。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 20. You work hard at English in the training school mainly  
because of parents' pressure.(你用功学培训学校的英语主要是  
因为家长的压力。)

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 21. You work hard English in the training school mainly because

of the teachers' pressure. (你用功学培训学校的英语主要是因为来自培训学校的老师的压力 )

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 22. Your parents don't think that English speaking countries are good. (你的家长认为英语国家不好。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 23. Your parents don't think that it is good to go abroad. (你的家长认为出国不好。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 24. Your parents think that learning English is important for going abroad. (你的家长认为学英语对出国很重要。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 25. Your parents think that learning English is important for going to university. (你的家长认为学英语对上大学很重要 )

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 26. You don't think that English speaking countries are good. (你认为英语国家不好 )

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 27. In your spare time you choose to do one or some of the following: Reading English books, viewing English video programs, listening to English, doing things related with English. ( 在你的业余空闲时间, 你有意做下列之一项或者几项:

看英语书, 看英语影像节目, 听英语录音, 或者  
做跟英语有关的事 )

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 28. You have or would like to have contact with a foreign child/person who speaks English. (我跟说英语的外国小孩/大人有过接触或者我想跟说英语的外国人接触 )

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 29. In your daily life, you choose to use English in speaking, reading or writing, listening, whenever possible. (在你的日常生活中, 你有意地尽可能用英语说话, 读书, 写东西, 或者听英语 )



**A4: GS Questionnaire 2**

(For 7-9 year old study-English-at-general-school-only students 7-9 )

Years of age \_\_\_\_\_ Boy / Girl

**Directions:** Here are 31 statements about what you perceive about your learning of English in your school. You may agree, or disagree or you may feel you neither agree nor disagree. Beside each state there are three faces: a happy face☺---meaning “Agree”, an unhappy face☹---meaning “Disagree”, and a face neither happy nor unhappy☺---meaning “No idea”. So, if you agree to the statement, please draw a circle around the happy face. If you disagree, please draw a circle around the unhappy face. If you have no idea, please draw a circle around the face that is neither happy nor unhappy. But, remember: you should circle only ONE face for each statement.

(说明：这里有31个观点陈述，

都是关于你对在学校里学习英语的的感觉的。你可能同意，可能不同意，也可能不知道怎么你自己是同意还是不同意。在每个陈述左边有3个娃娃脸。

一个是笑脸，表示同意。一个是苦脸，表示不同意。还有一个不笑也不苦的脸，表示“我不知道是同意还是不同意”。所以，如果你同意，

就给笑脸画个圈；如果你不同意，就给苦脸画个圈；如果你不知道，

就给那个不笑也不苦的脸画个圈。但是切记：对每个陈述，你只能圈划一个脸 )

Example ( )

A☺ D☹ N☺ A bus is bigger than a car.

A☺ D☹ N☺ A bus is bigger than a train. ( )

A☺ D☹ N☺ A bus is 5 metres long. ( 5 )

A☺ D☹ N☺ 1. You like coming to the English class in your school.

(你喜欢上英语课。)

- A☺ D☹ N☹** 2. The school climate for English is not pleasant.  
(学校英语气氛让你感到不愉快 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 3. The classroom climate for learning English is pleasant. (课堂  
英语气氛让你感到很开心 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 4. The English teachers are enthusiastic.  
你的英语老师满怀激情
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 5. The English teaching method of your teacher is interesting.  
(老师的英语教学方法很有趣 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 6. The English learning activities are not interesting.  
(英语教学活动没意思 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 7. There is a variety of English material to learn. (   
你有多多种英语教材要学习。 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 8. The material is difficult but interesting.  
(英语教材有难度但很有趣.)
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 9. The English homework is interesting. (你英语作业有趣.)
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 10. You don't do your English homework until you go to class  
the ext time. (直到下一次英语课快到了, 你才写英语作业 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 11. You enjoy learning English. (你喜欢学英语 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 12. You think English is very important. (你认为英语很重要。)
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 13. You learn English because English is important for going to  
university. (你学英语, 是因为英语对上大学很重要 )
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 14. You don't work hard at English. (对学英语,你不用功。)
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 15. You work hard at English mainly because of parents'  
pressure. (你用功学英语主要是因为家长的压力。)
- A☺ D☹ N☹** 16. You work hard at English mainly because of the teachers'

pressure. (你用功学英语, 主要是因为老师的压力.)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 17. Your parents don't think English speaking countries are good. (你家长认为英语国家不好.)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 18. Your parents don't think that it is good to go abroad. (你家长认为出国不好。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 19. Your parents think that learning English is important for going abroad. (你的家长认为学英语对出国很重要。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 20. Your parents think that learning English is important for going to university. (你的家长认为学英语对上大学很重要。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 21. You don't think English speaking countries are good. (你认为英语国家不好)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 22. In your spare time you choose to do one or some of the following: reading English books, viewing English video programs, listening to English, doing things related with English. (在你的业余空闲时间里, 你有意做下列之一项或者几项: 看英语书, 看英语影像节目, 听英语录音, 或者做跟英语有关的事。)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 23. You have or would like to have contact with a foreign child/person who speaks English. (你跟说英语的外国小孩/大人有过接触或者你想跟他们接触)

**A☺ D☹ N☹** 24. In your daily life, you choose to use English in speaking, reading or writing, listening, whenever possible. (在日常生活中, 每当可能的时候, 你用英语说话, 读书, 写东西, 或者听英语。)

The fact that you did not study, and are not studying, English in a training school/class is

because 你以前没有到外面的培训学校/班去学英语，现在也没有去，是因为

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 25. you have no time for it 你没有时间

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 26. your parents don't let me go there. 你的家长不让我去

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 27. your English is too good to go there. 你的英语学得很好，用不着到外面去学

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 28. your English is too bad to go there. 你的英语太差，跟不上外面的英语

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 29. you want to be free on the weekend. 你想在星期六和星期天有时间玩

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 30. you don't know there are English training schools/classes for you to learn English. (你不知道外面有英语培训学校或者英语班可以教你学英语 )

**A**☺ **D**☹ **N**☹ 31. You think you will be studying English at a training school/class later on. (你估计你将来可能到外面的培训学校/班去学英语 )