

Tapping into family power: Enhancing English learning for Chinese children in Banda Aceh through parental involvement

Nira Erdiana^{*}, Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf, Jacqueline Lie

Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia

Manuscript received February 25, 2024, revised May 21, 2024, accepted July 29, 2024, and published online November 7, 2024.

Recommended APA Citation

Erdiana, N., Yusuf, Y.Q., & Lie, J. (2024). Tapping into family power: Enhancing English learning for Chinese children in Banda Aceh through parental involvement. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 12(1), 29-49. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v12i1.22662>

ABSTRACT

Learning English at an early age is believed to lead to a significant improvement in children's language skills. Parental involvement is thought to have a positive influence on children's development in learning English as a second/foreign language. A preliminary study found that Chinese parents are actively involved in helping their children learn English. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the types of parental involvement of Chinese parents and their roles in helping their children learn English in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The focus of this study is on six types of parental involvement (parenting, communicating, volunteering, supervising children's learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community) and five roles of parents (motivators, models, facilitators, sources of knowledge, and coordinators) in children's education as proposed by Epstein (2011). The participants of this study are ten Chinese parents, seven mothers and three fathers, who have enrolled their children for early English language learning in one of the private courses in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. This study used a qualitative approach and was conducted through interviews. The findings show that Chinese parents engage in four types of parental involvement: parenting, communication, monitoring

*** Corresponding author:**

Nira Erdiana
Universitas Syiah Kuala
Jl. Teuku Nyak Arief No.441, Kopelma Darussalam, Kota Banda Aceh, 23111, Indonesia
Email: niraerdiana@usk.ac.id

children's learning at home, and decision making. They also fulfil five parental roles in their children's language learning: motivators, models, facilitators, knowledge sources and coordinators. As this study focuses on parental involvement in children's English learning at primary school level, it is suggested that further research should aim to examine parental involvement in children's English learning at different levels of education, such as middle school or senior high school.

Keywords: *English language learning; Chinese children; Parental involvement; Roles of parents; English language learning*

1. Introduction

It is argued that parental involvement is one of the crucial factors affecting children's educational development, including their development in learning English as a second/foreign language. Hornby (2011) claimed that the education that children receive is fundamentally determined by the support that their parents give since they were children. It means that parental support is an essential factor in children's early education. Slameto (2010) also argued that parents are the closest ones to the children; thus, the parents' support/involvement in their children's education affects the children's learning performance.

Parental involvement can be interpreted as a form of parental attitudes that monitor children's learning development. Jeyness (2011) said that parental involvement refers to direct and indirect academic encouragement to children from parents' comportment. Parental involvement in children's language learning can be manifested in giving advice, providing what the children need, helping with the homework, and so on. Parents' attention and contributions in helping their children learn a foreign/second language are assumed to play a role in determining the children's learning progress and achievement. Gao (2006) posited that parents' contributions and support for their children's L2 learning encompass both active involvement in the language learning process and a passive role shaped by their abilities and attitudes towards the L2 community. Furthermore, parents need to collaborate with teachers to provide an environment that can thoroughly assist their children's learning performance (Yulianti et al, 2018). In general, parental involvement in children's language learning is parents' full participation with all the available resources to support their children in the language learning process.

The issue of parental support on children's English education in Aceh has been studied before by Wati (2016). However, the focus of the study was on the parents with various professions whose children were learning English at an Islamic primary school in Langsa. Her study found that Acehnese children in general may not have urgent needs to learn and to use English; however, the interest toward English language teaching to children at an early age grows rapidly in recent years and many primary schools begin to introduce English at an earlier grade in their programs. Another study conducted by Kalaycı and Öz (2018) which investigates Turkish parents' perspectives of involvement

in their children's English language learning. The parents of children enrolled in a private primary school in Ankara in grades one through four are participants in this study. This study included a semi-structured interview. Results indicate that Turkish parents are generally aware of the academic and psychological components of schooling and have a good attitude toward parental engagement.

Chinese, as a minority group in Aceh, may have different cultural aspects than other ethnic groups. They may view the English language differently than parents from other ethnic groups. Moreover, Chinese families frequently uphold different cultural customs, values, and beliefs from the prevailing ethnic groups. Gaining knowledge of the ways in which these cultural aspects affect English language instruction might help one better understand how culture supports language development. Besides, Chinese parents may employ unique strategies, such as enrolling children in supplementary classes, hiring private tutors, or utilizing online resources, to support English language learning. By focusing on the involvement of Chinese parents in supporting their children's English language learning in Aceh, researchers can uncover valuable insights into the intersection of ethnicity and language education, offering a more comprehensive understanding of parental involvement. For this reason, the researchers are eager to conduct a study on Chinese parents' involvement in assisting their children in learning English in Banda Aceh.

Considering the above research background description, two research questions are developed as follow:

- 1) What types of parental involvement are performed by Chinese parents to assist their children to learn English in Banda Aceh?
- 2) What are the roles of Chinese parents in their children's English learning?

2. Literature review

2.1. Parental involvement in children's education

Parental involvement in children's education can be defined in different ways. According to Epstein (2011), parental involvement in education is a series of actions and beliefs in relation to sending children to school, supporting the children's learning outside school through facilitating and monitoring on behalf of the children, and communicating with teachers and school staff regarding the necessary learning program. In a similar way, Jeyness (2011) said that parental involvement includes communication about the expectation's parents have from their children, support with the studies and homework, providing advice and encouragement, and communicating with the teachers and with the children about their schoolwork. To conclude, parental involvement in children's education is a series of actions done by parents to help the children in their education that has a significant influence in the children's learning development and achievement.

2.2. *Parental involvement in children's English learning*

Parental involvement is believed to be an important factor on Children's development in learning English. Parental involvement in children's English learning can be defined as a practice performed by parents to help their children achieve their goal in learning English. Latifa (2020) stated that parental involvement in children's English learning is a process in which the parents use their capability to help their children develop their potency in English. Meanwhile, Niehaus and Adelson (2014) argue that parental involvement in English learning helps improve children's English learning progress and heighten their academic achievement. In general, parental involvement can include a variety of practices that the parents could apply to contribute to their children's English learning development (Kalaycı & Öz, 2018). Similarly, Erdener and Knoepfel's (2018) research indicates that parents should embrace the reality that parental participation has a significant role in their children's academic achievement while holding onto the belief that schools should be the primary source of instruction.

One of the contributions that can be made by parents to help their children learn English is to make them understand the importance of the English language for their future. Mahmoud (2018) stated that parents' awareness towards the importance of foreign language learning influences their children's success in multilingual competence. Children have a tendency to impersonate their parents' attitudes; thus, the parents must first understand and believe in the importance of the English language. Once children realize that their parents think learning English is important, they will be likely to view the subject with a positive attitude. To conclude, parental involvement in children's English education is not limited only at home but also in all aspects related to children's English learning and has positive influence in their learning achievement.

2.3. *Types of parental involvement in children's English learning*

2.3.1. *Parenting*

Parents are expected to be involved in the learning process by doing good parenting for their children. Good parenting means parents provide education, health, and safety to children. Parents can help their children learn English by ensuring they are well-prepared for English class in general such as preparing for breakfast/lunch, checking their learning utensils, and providing accommodation to school (Huang, 2013). Also, parents should maintain a fitting home environment, school attendance, time management, children's behavior, and the awareness of the importance of learning (Cetin & Taskin, 2016). Overall, parenting means the act of maintaining and managing both physical and spiritual needs of children both at home and at learning institutions.

2.3.2. *Communicating*

Parent-teacher communication allows teachers to suggest the best methods for practicing English at home and point some helpful resources to parents. Indriati (2016) mentioned that proactively consulting the teacher about the children's English learning

problems is part of parental involvement in helping the children to learn English. Besides, parents-children communication is also important so that parents have the opportunity to know their children's learning development and encourage them to keep learning (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Parents can communicate with their children by asking about their English performance at school, listening to the children's worries about their learning progress, and encouraging them to learn English earnestly.

2.3.3. Volunteering

Volunteering is enlisting and organizing help and support for their children at school activity (Epstein, 2011). It means that parents can volunteer in school activities and attend school events to support their children in learning English. The willingness to support children in all types of activities related to English learning is the main point of this type. Parents' direct effort as volunteers, such as participating in some activities (seasonal events, games, etc.) with children in English class, has positive effects on their children's learning progress (Indriati, 2016).

2.3.4. Supervising children learning at home

Parents as good educators can boost the impact of learning at home through their involvement. Parents are supposed to get involved in learning activities at home with their children. Cunha et al.'s (2015) study on parents' attitudes about homework engagement revealed that parents had good views about it and that their main goals were to help children feel more responsible and autonomous while also emotionally inspiring them through homework involvement. This finding is consistent with the findings of both Mahmoud (2018) and Şad and Gürbütürk (2013), which indicate that parents frequently give their kids a supportive atmosphere at home to help with learning.

2.3.5. Decision making

Epstein (2011) said that decision making means the parents decide what they think is the best for the children such as educational programs and activity outside the school hour. That means the parents make a decision on what, when, and how the children are supposed to learn. Also, parental involvement in decision making can be demonstrated by making decisions to solve the children's English learning problems, hiring private tutors, and sending the children to English courses outside school (Wang, 2015).

2.3.6. Collaborating with the community

Collaborating with the community means parents get involved in the children's learning by working with other teams such as neighbors, social workers, etc. with the help from the school. Wang (2015) stated that schools and families are expected to make regular use of community resources to support children's English education. The school, parents, and the community need to cooperate effectively to notice the children's frequent development. The school and parents can collaborate with the community to support

children's education by raising funds for and creating educational events and activities for the children (Niehaus & Andelson, 2014).

2.4. The roles of parents in children's English learning

2.4.1. Parents as motivators

Students with high motivation to learn tend to come from a home where enthusiastic parents have a basic integrative orientation combined with a supportive attitude towards the learning subject, in this case English. Previous research by Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) reflected that parents believed their involvement had a significant influence on children's achievement.

2.4.2. Parents as models

Children tend to imitate what they see and hear in everyday life. Therefore, parents, as the closest people to children, should act as role models for their children (Ule et al 2015). Parents can be the first educators for their children by giving a good influence and example in the form of a positive attitude for their children to imitate. Indriati's (2016) finding reported that parents can be models to their children in learning English by greeting children in English, mentioning several things in English at home, and giving some instruction in English.

2.4.3. Parents as facilitators

As education occurs both at home and schools, parents as facilitators are responsible for providing sufficient learning facilities for their children based on their developmental level. Research conducted by Cetin & Taskin (2016) reported that parents need to recognize their children's needs in their learning so that the needs can be fulfilled according to their abilities (Cetin & Taskin, 2016). This is in line with the study conducted by Indriati (2016). Parents are supposed to provide their children with environmental input for the development of their second or foreign language. English learning facilities provided by parents can be in the form of tuition fees (both formal and informal education), English textbooks, English recording such as song and conversation, and English cards.

2.4.4. Parents as coordinators

Parents as coordinator are responsible for supervising and assisting their children in English learning activities. Children's learning process might be interrupted by things that make learning time ineffective without parents' supervision. Thus, parental supervision is needed; parents should not neglect their children while learning English at home to maintain the effectiveness of the learning hours (Gao, 2006).

2.4.5. Parents as source of knowledge

The role of parents in children's learning is not only as providers of facilities but also as a source of knowledge. Parents may assist and encourage their children in learning English by becoming home-teachers to their own children. Kim (2002) stated that parents should be willing to become a source of knowledge for their children so that the children's curiosity can be answered. As a source of knowledge, parents are supposed to assist their children in learning English by providing relevant information according to children's learning needs-heading.

3. Method

3.1. Research design

This study was conducted based on a descriptive qualitative approach which stresses on the emphasis of a phenomenon coming from the individuals taken as the participants using detailed narrative explanation (Miles & Huberman, 2011). Moreover, Creswell (2012) added that qualitative research is developed and used in the social sciences to study people's attitudes, behaviors, values, system, concerns, motivation, or aspirations. It means that the utilization of a qualitative approach is imperative for gaining deeper insights into the specific phenomenon under investigation. It is in line with the purpose of this current study which is to investigate the types and roles of Chinese parents in assisting their children in learning English.

3.2. Participants

The present study involved ten Chinese parents (seven mothers and three fathers) whose children learn English at SUN Private course situated in Kulu Street No. 13 in Blower, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Those ten participants were selected based on purposive sampling. Purposive sampling means respondents are selected based on certain criteria to deliberately give information regarding a related issue examined in the study (Creswell, 2012). Hence, the researchers purposely selected ten parents who send their respective children to learn English at the private course at an early age (six or seven years old).

3.3. Instrument

The instrument used to collect data was a semi-structured interview. The interview questions were inspired by the descriptions of parental involvement and roles in children's English learning presented by Poyraz (2017) and Akram et al. (2020). The interview questions are divided into two parts: part I, consisting of ten questions, which is to answer the first research question and part II, consisting of six questions, to answer the second research question.

3.4. Data collection

The data were collected through an interview using audio recording. One or two

Chinese parents were interviewed per day from 4th to 18th September 2023; each parent was interviewed in Indonesian for 15 to 20 minutes.

3.5. Data analysis

The technique of data analysis used in this study is an inductive qualitative analysis technique. Miles and Huberman (2011) stated that inductive qualitative analysis technique is the way the data obtained, analyzed, and then developed with a certain pattern of relationships. Those steps are explained as follows:

3.5.1. Data reduction

It is the process of grouping the raw data to then reduce or summarize the data to make explainable understanding. In this study, the raw data from the interview results with 10 Chinese parents are selected, simplified, and those that are not related are excluded.

3.5.2. Data presentation

It is the process of organizing and describing the data as a result of data reduction. In this study, the data collected through interview sessions that have been reduced and summarized are organized based on the research focus. They are types of parental involvement and their roles in assisting children's English learning by Epstein (2011). After the data are organized, the results of the interview with details are presented in an immaculate description to directly answer the research questions.

3.5.3. Drawing conclusion

Drawing conclusion, also known as verification, is making final verification based on the results of data analysis. In this case, after the process of reducing and displaying the data from the interview results is performed, all of the data are concluded to make recommendation of the findings. Lastly the results are written in a readable description.

4. Findings

4.1. Types of parental involvement performed by Chinese parents in assisting their children to learn English

The findings of this study found that Chinese parents perform four out of six types of parental involvement in assisting their children to learn English as mentioned by Epstein (2011). The four types of parental involvement are parenting, communicating, supervising children learning at home, and decision making.

4.1.1. Parenting

Answering the question “do you prepare your child for the class such as serving breakfast, taking him/her to school and private course, etc. as well as make him/her study regularly and on time?”, all the parents gave positive responses regarding the act of

parenting as a way to assist their children in learning English. Some of the prominent answers are described as follows.

Parent 4: Yes. I always prepare breakfast, take him to school and private courses, and arrange his agenda so that his learning hours are sufficient.

Parent 6: Yes, I always make sure my child has meals before class and arrange her schedule so that she has enough time to study regularly.

It can be concluded from the parents' responses that all of them do prepare their children for the class. They serve breakfast for the children, make sure to prepare everything the children need to study, and take the children to school and private courses. Also, they arrange the children's schedule for studying and playing so that the children have enough time to study regularly and on time.

4.1.2. Communicating

Parents-children communication is manifested by checking the children's progress, asking their difficulties, and giving some advice regarding their English learning. All of the parents gave positive responses to the question "*do you regularly check your child's progress in learning English such as checking his/her English score or asking his/her difficulty in learning English?*". Some of the noticeable responses are listed below.

Parent 3: Yes. I always make sure to check her learning result after my English private class ends.

Parent 5: Yes. I check my child's English scores both at school and private courses.

It can be verified that all of the parents often check their children's progress in learning English. Some of them said that they regularly check their children's English scores, both scores from school and private courses. Some of them check their children's learning results after the class ends. Some of them even check their children's notebooks and exercise books. Meanwhile, the majority of them also ask if the children have some difficulties in learning English.

Furthermore, the parents gave positive answers for the question "*do you ever give some advice/ guidance to your child regarding his/her English learning? If yes, what kind of advice and guidance do you give?*". Some of the prominent answers are described as follows.

Parent 7: I often say to my child that he has to be confident in learning English, especially speaking. It's okay if he makes some mistakes while learning because making mistakes is natural, as long as he has the will to learn and is not shy, he can do it.

Parent 9: I do. I often advise my child to review the English materials that he learns at school and private courses so that he won't forget what he has learned.

4.1.3. Supervising children learning at home

Supervising children learning at home means that parents get themselves actively involved in their children's learning English at home such as providing facilities needed, helping the children doing homework, and communicating in English according to the children's proficiency level. All of the parents gave positive replies to the question "*do you prepare some facilities and media that you believe can assist your child's English learning? If yes, what type of facilities and media that you prepare?*". The noticeable answers are explained below.

Parent 2: Yes. I provide a gadget and an earphone so that my child can watch some videos in English to learn the English sentences and pronunciation.

Parent 6: I buy my child some dictionaries, story books in English, and some English word cards. I also prepared a gadget and let her watch some English learning videos from YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.

It can be indicated that the parents prepare some facilities and media that they believe can assist their children in learning English. Some of the parents provide some text books and dictionaries while others provide some story books for kids and English word cards. Meanwhile, some others prepare a gadget (laptop or cell phone) and download some English learning apps and English dictionary apps for the children to use. Besides providing a gadget, some of them also give the children an earphone set so that they watch some videos in English from YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram to learn the English sentences and hear the pronunciation clearly.

Moreover, the parents gave positive answers to the question "*do you usually speak some English words with your child at home? If yes, could you please give some of the words or phrases that you use?*". Some of the prominent answers are listed below.

Parent 9: Yes. I often say parts of the body in English such as nose, eye, hand, knee, foot, etc.

Parent 10: Yes. I usually say colors, animals, and things found around us like table.

According to their answers, all of them usually speak some English with their children at home.

In addition, the parents also gave positive responses to the question "*do you monitor your child when he/she studies English at home and help him/her to solve some problems with English homework? If yes, what kind of help do you offer?*". The prominent responses are listed below.

Parent 7: Yes. I usually monitor and help my child with the English homework

such as helping him to understand the English text and the questions.
Parent 10: Yes. I help my child by giving examples based on the materials given.

Their responses indicate that all of them do monitor their children when learning English at home and help them to solve some problems with English homework. The majority of the parents teach their children how to understand the materials given such as English text and the questions being asked based on the knowledge they have.

4.1.4. Decision making

Decision making means the parents decide what they think is the best for the children such as educational programs and activity outside the school hour. Answering the question “*what is your purpose of registering your child in an English course outside the school?*”, the parents stated their reasons to send their child to learn English at a private course. The prominent answers are described as follows.

Parent 1: To get my child prepared for a better education and job opportunity in the future.

Parent 8: My child has a dream to continue to study abroad in the future and he also takes a course in coding. When learning coding, all the tools are in English. So, I sent him to an English private course to make him learn English attentively and speak English fluently.

Based on the answers given by the parents, the reasons they send their children to learn English at a private course outside the schools are varied. Some parents want their children to be prepared for a better education like studying abroad and job opportunities in the future by studying English. In general, all of these parents believe that learning English is important for their children; thus, they make a decision to send their children to learn English at a private course outside the school.

4.2. The roles of parents in their children's English learning

Through the interview, it was found that the Chinese parents fulfil all of the five roles of parents in assisting their children's English learning by Epstein (2011). The roles are parents as motivators, as coordinators, as facilitators, as models, and as source of knowledge.

4.2.1. Parents as motivators

Parents as motivators mean that they encourage their children to learn English thoroughly. Answering the question “*in your opinion, what is your role as a parent in assisting your child in learning English?*”, five out of ten parents said that they play the role of motivators in assisting their children in learning English.

Parent 1: I think as a parent I play the role as a motivator. When my child is a bit lazy to review his English lesson, I always say to him that learning

English is important for his future, that's why he must not feel lazy to learn English attentively.

Parent 8: I always encourage my child to learn English. Whenever he makes some mistakes, I always tell him 'It's okay to make mistakes, that's why you must keep learning so you can improve your English skill, everything will be alright.

Based on their responses, half of the parents believe that they play the roles of motivators in assisting their children to learn English. They are certain that as parents, they need to encourage their children to learn English. They explain to their children why learning English is important and comfort the children whenever they make mistakes in learning and when they get an unsatisfying score on an English assignment.

Besides the responses above, all of the parents also gave positive replies to the question "*according to your point of view, are you, as a parent, obligated to give motivation to your child to learn English?*". The prominent answers are listed below.

Parent 1: Of course! As a parent I need to motivate my child to learn English.

Parent 6: Absolutely! I need to give motivation to my child so that she becomes more enthusiastic to learn English.

According to the parents' answers, they believe that it is necessary for them, as parents, to motivate the children to learn English. They said that to encourage their children to learn is a must. They also believe that giving motivation to the children will make the children more enthusiastic and passionate to learn English.

Additionally, the majority of the parents also implied that they are motivators for their own children in response to the question "*in your opinion, what is your role as a parent when your child discovers some difficulties in learning English?*". The noticeable answers are listed below.

Parent 1: As a parent, I am obligated to help my child find the solution and encourage him to learn although he has hindrance in learning.

Parent 2: I play the role of a motivator. I would cheer her up so that my child will not feel down and keep learning English.

According to parents' responses, the majority of them regard themselves as motivators for their children when they find some difficulties in learning English. They said that they encourage the children to learn when the children face some difficulties in learning English so that they will not feel down. Also, they encourage the children to keep learning even though it takes time for them to get better and help to overcome their learning problems.

Based on the parents' responses to the three questions above, it can be concluded that all of them think that as parents, they are obligated to motivate their children to learn English. They believe that by giving motivation to the children, they can become more enthusiastic to learn English. Also, when the children discover some difficulties, the parents encourage them to keep learning and to not feel down as well as help to find the

solution. Hence, one of the roles of parents in their children's English learning is as motivators.

4.2.2. Parents as coordinators and facilitators

Parents as coordinators mean that they supervise and organize their children's learning activity. On the other hand, parents as facilitators mean that they provide sufficient learning facilities for their children based on their developmental level. The parents' answers to the question "*according to your judgment, what is your role as a parent in monitoring your child while learning English at home? Are you a mere coordinator or a facilitator as well?*" indicates that all of them regard themselves as both coordinators and facilitators in assisting their children in learning English. Some of the noticeable answers are listed as follows.

Parent 4: As a parent, I am a coordinator since I arrange my child's roster when he needs to review the lesson and do his homework. And I'm a facilitator as well. I give him the facilities he needs like English books for kids, dictionaries, and sometimes my smartphone.

Parent 6: Well, I monitor my child when she learns English at home and provide her with the facilities she needs, so I play the roles as both a coordinator and a facilitator.

Based on the parents' answers, all of them believe that they are both coordinators and facilitators in assisting their children to learn English. They arrange the children's learning schedule and play time as well as monitor the children when they learn English at home; that makes them the coordinators. Also, they facilitate the children with the media needed to learn English such as books, dictionaries, and smartphones; that makes them the facilitators.

In addition, responding to the question "*in your opinion, what is your role as a parent in assisting your child in learning English?*", three out of ten parents implied that they are coordinators and facilitators in their children's English learning.

Parent 5: I am responsible for monitoring and creating an appropriate and comfortable learning environment for my child when she learns at home.

Parent 7: As a parent, I am responsible to prepare everything that my child needs to support him in learning English.

Based on the responses, the parents believe that they are coordinators and facilitators in assisting their children to learn English. They monitor the children's learning activity at home; that makes them the coordinators. They prepare everything the children need and create a suitable and comfortable learning environment; that makes them the facilitators.

Besides, the parents' responses to the question "*in your opinion, what is your role as a parent when your child discovers some difficulties in learning English?*" show that

they view themselves as coordinators and facilitators in helping their children learn English. Some of the prominent responses are explained below.

Parent 3: I discuss with my child about her difficulties and try to find the solution. If needed, I will provide some new media for her to use to learn English.

Parent 4: I organize my child's learning hour and play time so that he won't get strained from learning and of course try to find the solution.

According to their answers, they believe that they are both coordinators and facilitators when their children find some difficulties in learning English. They organize the children's learning hour and play time so the children will not get strained from learning; that makes them the coordinator. Also, they provide some new media for the children based on the difficulties they face so that they can use the new media to learn English; that makes them the facilitators.

Based on the parents' responses for the three questions above, it can be concluded that they regard themselves as coordinators and facilitators in their children's English learning. They organize their children's learning hours and other activities and monitor the children when they learn English at home. In addition, they provide necessary facilities and media such as English books, dictionaries, and smartphones for the children to use to learn English. Thus, the parents play the roles as both coordinators and facilitators.

4.2.3. Parents as models

Parents as models mean that they give a good influence and example for their children to imitate. All of the parents' responses to the question "*in your opinion, could the English words and phrases that you usually say be the models for your child to improve his/her English skill?*" were positive. Some of the prominent answers are listed as follows.

Parent 2: Yes. When my child cannot say the words accurately, I pronounce the words so she can imitate the way I pronounce the words.

Parent 3: Of course! My child can use my articulation of some English words and phrases as a reference to improve her pronunciation skill.

Based on the parents' answers, they believe that the English words and phrases they usually say can be the models for the children to improve their English skill, especially pronunciation skill. Some of the parents explained that their articulation of the daily words and conversation they speak at home can be used as a reference/model by the children to learn and to improve; when the children are not sure how to pronounce the words, the parents pronounce the words so that the children can imitate the parents. Meanwhile, some others admit that their knowledge of English is average; still, some of the words and sentences that they say based on their range of knowledge can be used as models by their children. In brief, they believe that one of their roles in their children's English learning is as models.

4.2.4. Parents as source of knowledge

Parents as a source of knowledge mean that they assist and encourage their children in learning English by becoming home-teachers for their own children. All of the parents gave positive responses to the question “*do you think that every answer to English questions that you give to your child can be the new source of knowledge for him/her?*”. The noticeable answers are described as follows.

Parent 6: I translate some new words that I myself do not know the meanings and I also use Google for help, so yes, my answer for the question my child asks can be the new source of knowledge for her.

Parent 7: I always help my child with his English tasks based on my knowledge. And when I don't know the matter being asked, I always search for the answer by translating some words that I myself don't know the meaning and browse via Google too. I believe at least he could always learn some new knowledge from me.

Based on the parents' responses, they believe that they can be the source of knowledge to the children when they learn English. They always make sure to give the correct answer for every question the children ask. They help the children with the English tasks based on their knowledge and translate some new words that they themselves do not know the meanings of.

Also, responding to the question “*in your opinion, what is your role as a parent in assisting your child in learning English?*”, two out of ten parents believe that they can be a source of knowledge in helping their children learn English.

Parent 3: I, as a parent, become my child's peer for simple conversation at home and the one she could ask for help if she finds something she doesn't understand like new words and new information.

Parent 9: I can be a help for my child when he finds some difficulties with English such as tell him some word meanings and some grammar that he doesn't know, and help to translate several new words.

Based on the answers, the parents believe that they can provide some new knowledge about English to their children. According to the parents' replies, they do believe that the answer to English questions that they give to their children can be the new source of knowledge to them. In short, they regard themselves as a source of knowledge in assisting their children in learning English.

To sum up, it was found out through the interview that Chinese parents accomplish the five roles of parents described by Epstein (2011) in assisting their children in English learning.

5. Discussion

5.1. Types of parental involvement performed by Chinese parents in assisting their children to learn English

Chinese parents prepare their children for class on a regular basis as a sign of their parenting, which is the first sort of parental engagement. They offer breakfast to them, make sure the children have everything they need to study, and take the children to school or private courses. This is compatible with the theory stated by Huang (2013) that parents can help their children learn English by ensuring they are well-prepared for English class in general such as preparing for breakfast/lunch, checking their learning utensils, and providing accommodation to school.

Furthermore, communicating is revealed by the parents giving some advice to their children in learning English, checking their learning progress, and consulting with the teachers. They advise the children to learn English attentively, to review what they have learned regularly, and to not be shy about making some mistakes in learning. They also check the children's score and ask if they have difficulties in learning English. This is well-matched with the theory that parent-child communication is important so that parents have the opportunity to know their children's learning development and encourage them to keep learning (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Also, they discuss with the teachers at school or private courses about their children's progress in learning English. This is in accordance with the notion proposed by Indriati (2016) that proactively consulting the teacher about the children's English learning problems is part of parental involvement in helping the children to learn English.

In addition, supervising children learning at home is shown by the parents speaking some English at home, helping with the homework, and providing the facilities needed. This is also in agreement with previous survey study conducted by Nasir et al (2021) on parental involvement in teaching English for their children as young learners. The participants were 24 English lecturers who taught English to their children as young learners. The result described that the parental involvement in teaching English to their children is verified by facilitating their children with some media to support their learning process, practicing English at home while doing daily activities, and helping to memorize and pronounce English words. The active involvement from the parents makes their children more familiar with English. Another previous study conducted by Rasyid (2017) reported the similar result. He did a quantitative study on the importance of parental involvement in their children's English learning and cited the significant outcome of parental involvement by giving an English test to 70 students and a questionnaire was given to 70 parents. It was found that parental involvement (helping with homework, speaking English at home, and giving necessary learning resources) positively affects the children's development in English learning.

Moreover, decision making is verified by the parents sending the children to learn English at a private course outside the school. The parents send their kids to a private English language school for many reasons. Some said that it is because they want their children to learn more about English as a required subject in schools and an international language. Others claim that in order for them to speak English fluently, they want them to speak the language with peers and a private tutor. It is evident from this that the parents

think enrolling theirs in a private English course is the greatest approach to help them get better at the language. Thus, it is in line with the concept declared by Wang (2015) that parental involvement in decision making can be demonstrated by making a decision to solve the children's English learning problems, hiring private tutor, and sending the children to English courses outside school.

On the other hand, two types of parental involvement mentioned by Epstein (2011), which are volunteering and collaborating with the community, are not performed by the Chinese parents. LaRocque et al (2011) argued that lack of time from the parents' side and nonexistence of school activities that involve parents are likely the reasons why parents do not perform the act of volunteering. Meanwhile, lack of resources to create collaborating programs and events as well as lack of free time are likely the causes as to why collaborating with the community is not performed by parents (Niehaus & Andelson, 2014).

5.2. The roles of the parents in their children's English learning

Based on the results, it was found that Chinese parents' personal view toward their roles in their children's English learning is in agreement with the theory proposed by Epstein (2011) that as parents, they are motivators, models, coordinators, facilitators, and source of knowledge for their own children. First of all, the parents believe that their roles in their children's English learning are as motivators. They said that, as parents, it is necessary for them to motivate the children to learn English thoroughly, especially when the children face some difficulties in learning English. The parents said that by giving motivation to the children, they will not feel down if they find some problems and stay enthusiastic to learn more about English. This is in line with the idea stated by Butler (2013) that motivation from parents when the children have some hindrances in learning English is essential to build up the children's enthusiasm to keep going.

Moreover, the parents regard themselves as both coordinators and facilitators for their children when they learn English at home. The parents organize their children's learning hour and play time so that they will not get strained from learning. They also monitor their children when learning English at home and help with the homework. This is in line with a study conducted by Emi (2019) which reported that parents played three roles in supporting their children in English learning. The result showed that parents took roles as motivators, facilitators, and coordinators in supporting their children in learning English. The roles are manifested through encouraging children to learn English, helping them do their homework, providing learning sources, registering extra English classes for the children, creating a friendly environment at home, and keeping in touch with the English teacher. Similarly, Pant (2015) carried out a survey study on the role of parents towards their children's English learning. The study was performed by means of a questionnaire. The participants were 45 parents of different backgrounds whose children were at primary level and whose qualification was above intermediate. The results

described that parents played the role of feedback providers, facilitators, motivators, and controllers in supporting their children's English learning.

However, this is compatible with what has been stated by Gao (2006); parents should not neglect their children while learning English at home to maintain the effectiveness of the learning hours. Also, the parents provide everything the children need to learn English such as textbooks, dictionaries, gadgets, word cards, etc. If the children find some problem in learning, the parents will likely ask about the problem and provide some new media for them to use to learn English based on the problem they face. This is in harmony with the notion that parents need to recognize their children's needs in their learning so that the needs can be fulfilled according to their abilities (Cetin & Taskin, 2016).

Besides, the parents believe that they play the role as models and sources of knowledge for their children to improve their understanding about English. When the children are not sure how to pronounce some words, for instance, they can imitate the parents. This is well-matched with the concept mentioned by Indriati (2016) that parents can be models to their children in learning English by greeting children in English, mentioning several things in English at home, and giving some instruction in English. Additionally, the parents make sure to give the accurate answer for the questions asked by the children based on their knowledge. Thus, the parents play the roles as are the sources of knowledge for their children in this case. And this is corresponding with the idea that parents should be willing to become a source of knowledge for their children so that the children's curiosity can be answered (Kim, 2002).

6. Conclusion

The study explored the involvement of Chinese parents in their children's English learning, drawing from Epstein's framework. Based on a case study conducted at the Sun Private English School in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, through interviews with ten respondents who sent their children to that course, results were obtained four out of six types of parental involvement were identified: parenting, communicating, supervising children learning at home, and decision making. Parents typically prepare children for classes, offer learning advice, engage in English at home, and enrol children in private courses. However, volunteering and community collaboration were not common practices among these parents. Meanwhile, all ten Chinese parents surveyed expressed fulfilling Epstein's five parental roles: motivators, models, coordinators, facilitators, and knowledge sources. They motivate their children to learn English passionately, coordinate their learning and play times, facilitate comprehensive learning environments, serve as language models, and provide accurate answers to their children's inquiries, thus fostering English proficiency.

Based on the findings of this research, the researchers recommend some suggestions. First for teachers, it is necessary for English teachers to involve parents in children's home assignments so that their knowledge and skill of English can be

developed well. Also, the teachers need to regularly communicate with the parents about the children's progress and problems in learning English so that both parties know what language program is essential and the best solution for the learning problems. Second, parents, as the first educators and primary partners for their children in everyday interaction, should get engaged in their children's English learning by speaking some English words and conversation at home, accompany the children doing homework, ask the children if they face some difficulties, and motivate them to learn thoroughly. Also, they need to provide necessary facilities such as books, dictionaries, English learning app, word card, etc. for the children to use in learning English.

References

- Akram, M., Fida, F., & Nosheen, S. S. (2020). Emerging role of parents for evolving speaking skills of the distance learners: A descriptive study. *Pakistan Social Science Review*, 4(1), 641-652.
- Al-Mahrooqi, R., Denman, C., & Al-Maamari, F. (2016). Omani parental involvement in their children's English education. *SAGE Open*, 6(1), 4-12.
- Anderson, K. J., & Minke, K. M. (2007). Parent involvement in education: Toward an understanding of parents' decision making. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 100(5), 311-323.
- Butler, Y. G. (2013). Parental factors and early English education as a foreign language: A case study in mainland China. *Research Papers in Education*, 5(2), 45-46.
- Cetin, S. K., & Taskin, P. (2016). Parent involvement in education in terms of their socio-economic status. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 66(4), 15-18.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research (6th Ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.
- Cunha, J., Rosário, P., Macedo, L., Nunes, A. R., Fuentes, S., Pinto, R., & Suárez, N. (2015). Parents' conceptions of their homework involvement in elementary school. *Psicothema*, 27(2), 159-165.
- Emi. (2019). The influence of parents' role toward the students' achievement in learning English. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 10(2), 123-126.
- Erdener, M. A., & Knoepfel, R. C. (2018). Parents' perceptions of their involvement in schooling. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science*, 4(1), 1-13.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: preparing educators and improving schools (2nd Ed.)*. Philadelphia: Westview Press.
- Gao, X. (2006). Strategies used by Chinese parents to support English language learning: voices of elite' university students. *Regional Language Centre Journal*, 37, 285. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071302>
- Hornby, G. (2011). *Parental involvement in childhood education: Building Effective School-Family Partnerships*. Springer Science+Business Media, LLC.

- Huang, S. (2013). The use of literacy bags promotes parental involvement in Chinese children's literacy learning in the English language. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(2), 257-260.
- Indriati, I. (2016). Parental involvement in supporting their children learn English, *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 6(2), 150-152.
- Jeynes, W. H. (2011). *Parental involvement and academic success*. New York: Routledge.
- Kalaycı, G., & Öz, H. (2018). Parental involvement in English language education: understanding parents' perceptions. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET)*, 5(4), 839-840.
- Kim, E. (2002). The relationship between parental involvement and children's educational achievement in the Korean immigrant family. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 33(4), 531-535.
- LaRocque, M., Kleiman, I., & Darling, S. M. (2011). Parental involvement: the missing link in school achievement. *Preventing School Failure Journal*, 55(3), 115-119.
- Latifa, A. (2020) The role of parents towards early childhood in the process of learning English in the global era. *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif*, 10(1), 11.
- Mahmoud, S. S. (2018). Saudi parents' perceptions of the kind of help they offer to their primary school kids. *English Language Teaching*, 11(3), 102-112.
- Miles, M. B., & Hubberman, A. (2011). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook* (6th. Ed). London: SAGE.
- Niehaus, K., & Adelson, J. L. (2014). School support, parental involvement, and academic and social-emotional outcomes for English language learners. *American Educational Research Journal*, 51(4), 810-811.
- Pant, L. R. (2015). Role of parents towards their children's English language learning, *Journal of Linguistics, Literature & Language Teaching*, 2(2), 28-30.
- Poyraz, E. (2017). The effects of parental involvement in English language learning of secondary school students. *ELT Research Journal*, 6(3), 265-266.
- Rasyid, F. (2017). Parental involvement of Indonesian senior high students: contribution towards academic success. *Journal of Linguistics, Literature & Language Teaching*, 3(1), 36-38.
- Sad, S. N., & Gurbuzturk, O. (2013). Primary school students' parents' level of involvement into their children's education. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 13(2), 1006-1011.
- Slameto. (2010). *Belajar dan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhinya*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Sugiono. (2010). *Memahami penelitian kualitative*. Bandung: CV. Alfabeta.
- Ule, M., Zivoder, A., & du Bois-Reymond, M. (2015). Simply the best for my children: patterns of parental involvement in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 28(1), 329-348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2014.987852>

- Wang, Y. Q. (2015). A trend study of the influences of parental expectation, parental involvement, and self-efficacy on the English academic achievement of Chinese eighth graders. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 44(5), 45-50.
- Wati, S. (2016). Parental involvement and English language teaching to young learners: parents' experience in Aceh. *Prosiding Ictte Fkip Uns*, 1(1), 5-6.
- Yulianti, K., Denessen, E., & Droop, M. (2018). Indonesian parental involvement in their children's education: a study in elementary schools in urban and rural Java, Indonesia. *School Community Journal*, 8(2), 253-278.