

## **EFL Learning Motivation and Influence of Private Education: Cross-grade Survey Results**

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This study examined differences in South Korean students' motivation to learn English as a foreign (EFL) from elementary to high school, and investigated the impact of private education experience on their English learning. A questionnaire was administered to 7,957 students in elementary through high school. This cross-sectional survey results revealed that EFL students' motivation to learn English presented different levels of medians depending on their school grades and levels; it showed lowering trends from the elementary to high school levels. However, during the same period, students' perceptions of the importance of learning English was not in a downward trend. Students with private education experience tended to have a higher level of motivation than did those without private education experience, especially with respect to instrumental, intrinsic, and integrative motivations. Socio-educational factors in South Korea, such as excessive pressure from the College Scholastic Ability Test and *hakbul* orientation, are discussed.

**Key words:** EFL learning motivation, private education, the College Scholastic Ability Test, *Hakbul* orientation

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The current study investigated changes in South Korean students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language (EFL) and the impact of private education on students' English learning. Previous cross-grade studies (i.e., those that examined motivation across different grades in school) have generally indicated that in East Asian contexts, students' motivation to learn English decreases as they advance to higher school grades (e.g., Johnson, 2013; Kikuchi, 2013; Kim, 2012a; Kim & Seo, 2012; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). These studies attributed the decrease in motivation to the influence of unique contextual factors on students' learning motivation.

Accordingly, second language (L2) researchers have argued that L2 learners' motivation should be conceptualized in specific contexts not simply focusing on general characteristics (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009, 2011; Kim, 2006; Ushioda, 2013). Even though there are identifiable common motivational constructs of L2 learners that may encompass different educational contexts, L2 learning motivation is essentially a socially mediated phenomenon that is influenced by unique sociocultural and educational milieus (Ushioda, 2003).

In South Korea (hereafter, Korea), most students perceive English as a major school subject at all grade levels. In 1997, English became a compulsory subject starting at Grade 3 at the elementary school level. According to the Ministry of Education in Korea, students in Grades 3 and 4 have two 40-minute English classes a week, those in Grades 5 and 6 have three 40-minute classes, those in junior high have three to four 45-minute classes, and those in high school have four to five 50-minute classes. Because English test scores from official standardized tests such as the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) are used for initial job screening purposes by most Korean companies, a majority of students continue to study English at the university level.

Within this backdrop, private English education has become a widespread phenomenon in Korea, and a majority of Korean students and their parents rely on it. Private education includes both instruction at private institutes known as *hagwons* and individual tutoring (Park, 2009; Park & Abelman, 2004). It has been reported that an average of 10.7 percent of family monthly income is spent for private education per child, and as of 2013, private education market in Korea is estimated to be approximately \$17 billion a year (Statistics Korea, 2014). Although public English education begins in Grade 3, students are often enrolled in an English-medium kindergarten because there is a strong belief that if children learn English early, they will have greater success in school and better opportunities for employment (Park, 2012). According to Statistics Korea (2013), 84.6% of elementary school students, 70.6% of junior high school students, and 50.7% of high school students have received private education.

Kim (2011) has indicated that students' experience with private education has a tangible impact on their English-learning motivation. In particular, he has argued that experience in attending private institutes is one of the major contributing factors to the decrease in students' intrinsic motivation to learn English at public schools because the learning content is duplicated in the two contexts (i.e., school first and private institute later, or vice versa). In other words, there is a decrease in motivation because the students are exposed to the material in the private school setting again. Despite the observed decrease in motivation in students with private English education, Kim and Seo (2012) reported that these students did make more effort to learn English at the private institutes than they did at the public schools. Thus, the results of these two studies suggest that private education in Korea exerts a negative influence on students' motivation to learn English although it makes them make more effort.

This paper investigates the psychological impact of shadow, or private, education on EFL

students' L2 learning motivation. In fact, an excessive level of shadow education in East Asia has attracted much academic concern in recent years (e.g., Dawson, 2010; Larmer, 2014; Seth, 2002). However, with only a few exceptions (Kim, 2012a), a systematic cross-grade investigation identifying the link between shadow English education in elementary and secondary schools and students' EFL learning motivation has not been made to date.

To this end, by administering a questionnaire to 7,957 students in Korea, the current study examined the nature of motivation across 10 school grades (from grades 3 to 12) and investigated the effect of shadow education on students' EFL learning motivation at three different educational levels (i.e., from elementary to high school).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Previous L2-learning Motivation Research

Among individual difference factors in L2 studies, motivation has been the major area of investigation (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). According to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), over the past six years, between 2009 and 2015, at least seven anthologies on L2 motivation have been published. Undoubtedly, this reflects "a wider interest in the topic" (p. 73). Compared with the previous era in L2 motivation research (e.g., Gardner, 1985), which focused on the internal structure of L2 motivation, particularly in English as a second language (ESL) contexts, recent research has increasingly emphasized the impact of specific sociocultural contexts on L2 learner motivation. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) have emphasized, understanding contextual factors is essential when investigating the motivation of L2 learners. Similarly, Ushioda (2003) has conceptualized L2 motivation as a socially mediated phenomenon and emphasized that the study of L2 motivation should focus on the broader society. Recently, emphasizing the beneficial role of narrative inquiry in L2 research, Benson (2014) also have stated that L2 learners' perception of such societal influences are becoming one of the main foci of motivation research. Recently, the pursuit of identifying unique sociocultural factors for students' L2 learning (de)motivation has been spearheaded by the adoption of the complex dynamic systems theory (Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015).

It is noteworthy that groups of East Asia-based researchers have actively published articles on EFL learning motivation. For example, in Japan, Ryan (2009) defines the Japanese EFL university context as "a motivation wasteland" (p. 407) and states that there exists a permanent sense of crisis in English education in Japan. Moreover, the increasing number of demotivation studies in East Asian countries (e.g., Kikuchi, 2015; Kim, 2011; Wang & Malderez, 2006) reflects the powerful role of English in regulating students' learning behavior for the purpose of university admission and/or initial job placement.

Previous cross-grade studies (i.e., those that examined motivation across different grades in school) have generally indicated that in Asian contexts, students' motivation to learn English decreases as they advance to higher school grades (e.g., Alavinia & Sehat, 2012; Hamada, 2008; Kikuchi, 2013; Kim, 2012a; Kim & Seo, 2012). These studies attributed these demotivational phenomena in motivation to the influence of unique contextual factors on students' learning motivation. For example, in Iran, Alavinia and Sehat (2012) investigated 165 students' demotivation and found that, along with simultaneous learning of other languages and learners' cumulative experience of failure, their negative learning environment was the prime cause of demotivation. In Japan, Hamada (2008) also found that the perceived difficulty of English course books was the strongest demotivator for high school students, whereas English grammar was the strongest demotivator for junior high school students. In Korea, Kim and Seo (2012) identified three prime factors in elementary school students' demotivation in learning English: negative impact from their English teacher, excessive social expectation of EFL proficiency, and the widening EFL proficiency gap among students. Accordingly, L2 researchers have argued that L2 learners' motivation should be conceptualized as a socially mediated phenomenon influenced by unique sociocultural contexts (Ushioda, 2003, 2013).

In the Korean context, Kim (2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012a, 2012b) has conducted a series of studies exploring Korean students' EFL learning motivation. He has argued that it is important to focus on the impact of Korean-specific sociocultural and educational factors in students' motivation to learn. For example, Kim (2006) identified competitive motivation in 346 Korean high school students. This factor reflected Korean students' aspirations to excel relative to their classmates in terms of English test scores because of their strong belief that high English test scores and GPAs would secure admission to a prestigious university and would ultimately lead to a stable job in Korean society. Kim (2010) extended his 2006 study by comparing factors for Korean high school students' EFL learning motivation and attitude. He found that competitive motivation, which was identified as a unique motivational construct among Korean students, is related to excessive peer-pressure among students. However, a subsequent stepwise regression analysis indicated that this type of English-learning motivation did not predict Korean students' English test scores.

Kim (2010) has pointed out that competitive motivation reflects Korean society's excessive emphasis on the importance of learning English. In addition, he linked competitive motivation to the influence of the nationwide College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT). Each November, the CSAT is administered by the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) to a majority of college-bound Grade 12 students. This high-stakes test is composed of Korean, Math, English, and Social Science (or Science) sections. Although the university admissions process is now determined by multiple components (including a written essay and an admission-officer system), the CSAT score remains the most crucial determinant. For example, there is a widespread belief that students with high CSAT scores have a better chance to enter

academically renowned universities in Korea that are often equated with a prosperous future. Kim has further linked the conceptual lineage of competitive motivation to *hakbul*, or “the conceptual stratification of society based on an individual’s university degree” (Kim, 2006, p. 166). He explained the concept of *hakbul* as follows:

Competitive motivation reflects the *hakbul* orientation in Korean society. To be successful in the academia and in future employment, all high school students need to maximize their possibility of being admitted to a prestigious university. Society gives merit to the person holding a prestigious university degree, which has been regarded as the most convenient way to select the best person for employment in industrial sectors. (Kim, 2010, p. 218)

## 2.2. Large-scale Studies in L2 Learning Motivation Research

In educational research, except for some longitudinal statistical data at a national level (e.g., Korean Educational Development Institute, 2012), it is rare to find large-scale studies involving participants with various school levels and grades. It is also true that in reality, due to the research timeline and the lack of financial support and systematic effort from the research team, it is not easy to collect large-scale data. However, in order to present overall trends convincingly and to capture the most salient aspects of a research phenomenon, it would be highly desirable to conduct large-scale research.

In the case of motivation research, such large-scale survey data are not usually found, but since the millennium, the number and variety of samples seem to have increased. For example, Schmidt and Watanabe (2001) reported the result of a survey of motivation, strategy use, and learner preferences for different types of classroom activities with 2,089 ESL learners with five different mother tongues. Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh (2006) presented longitudinal changes in foreign language choice in three successive years, 1993, 1999, and 2004, involving 13,391 Hungarian participants. Recently, You and Dörnyei (2016) illustrated geographical, school-level, and gender differences in English-learning motivation involving over 10,000 Chinese students.

Although the above mega-studies provide a wealth of conclusive findings, studies are not found that focus on investigating EFL students’ motivational differences in three different school-aged groups: elementary, junior-high, and high school. Schmidt and Watanabe’s (2001) participants were adult ESL students, Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh (2006) focused on Grade 8 students, and You and Dörnyei (2016) on secondary schools and universities. Like many other EFL countries, English education starts from elementary school level (grade 3) in Korea and continues until high school graduation (grade 12). This continuity of English language learning strongly indicates the necessity of investigating the 10-year longitudinal changes in students’

EFL learning motivation. Thus, this paper endeavors to present systematic cross-grade comparisons of EFL learning motivation among school-aged students in 10 different school years from grades 3 to 12.

### 2.3. Shadow or Private Education in East Asia and EFL Learning

Bray (2003, 2007) used the term shadow education in order to contrast it with public education. According to him, the characteristics of shadow education are: 1) it exists due to the existence of public education; 2) it imitates public education; 3) compared with public education, it receives less attention from people; 4) it is difficult to define its form and characteristics. Since 2000, it has been observed that, contrary to its name “shadow,” shadow education has influenced public education, and a systematic institutionalizing of shadow education is prevalent around the globe (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Bray, 2003).

Shadow, or private, education in the Korean educational context usually denotes additional (over-)learning and its related tuition fees, particularly in primary or secondary school contexts. This means that private education in Korea is not an alternative to public education (like public university versus private university); instead, it is a supplementary shadow education while attending regular schools. In some cases, the subjects taught in shadow education may include physical training (e.g., horseback riding) or music lessons (e.g., cello lessons). However, shadow education in Korea is almost exclusively used for over-learning of major school subjects such as English, math, and Korean (i.e., the national language) usually in *hagwons* or private cram schools. Shadow education includes both instruction at *hagwons* and individual tutoring (Park, 2009; Park & Abelman, 2004), and *hagwons* (学院) are similar to *shingaku juku* (進学塾) in Japan (Dawson, 2010), or to *dersane* in Turkey (Lee & Lee, 2008). In order to gain admission to prestigious universities, which is largely equated with a prosperous future after securing a decent job, students in both primary and secondary schools exert every effort to achieve higher scores in in-house school tests and the CSAT.

The intense educational contexts surrounding shadow education are found in many Asian countries. The role of shadow education in China has been highlighted in recent years (Larmer, 2014). The role of *gaokao*, the college entrance exam in China that is administered over two to three days every June, is similar to the CSAT in Korea insofar as the exam score determines the test-taker's entrance to university. More than nine million Chinese students take the *gaokao* every June, and have similar, if not more intense, educational contexts such as test-prep “factories” where thousands of teenagers spend most of their time from 6:30 am to 11:00 pm. Therefore, the dominance of extrinsic motivation among students with low English proficiency may also be found among Chinese EFL students in secondary school contexts. Given this socioeducational atmosphere, private cram schools and shadow education are proliferating, particularly in urban areas in China. Furthermore, in Japan, as Dawson (2010) demonstrated,

*juku* education has been increasing steadily since the 1990s, when streaming in cram schools and entrance exams for private middle schools became popular.

Like other Asian countries such as China (Hu, 2005) and Japan (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2006), Korea has placed paramount importance on EFL teaching because learning the English language has been regarded as the symbol of modernization and is closely associated with having a competitive edge in international commerce and cultural exchange. Although public English education begins in Grade 3, most students are enrolled in a private English-medium kindergarten because there is a strong belief that if children learn English early, they will have greater success in school and better opportunities for employment (Park, 2012). According to Statistics Korea (2013), 84.6% of elementary school students, 70.6% of junior high school students, and 50.7% of high school students have received shadow education.

According to Yang, Kim, Son, and Kim (2014), English institutes for preschool children are thriving in Korea, and as of 2014, 54.3% of children were enrolled in private English institutes, where the average monthly expenditure was KRW 769,000, approximately US \$700. In terms of overall expenditure on shadow education including English lessons, it has been reported that an average of 10.7 percent of family monthly income is spent per child, and as of 2013, shadow education market in Korea is estimated to be approximately \$17 billion a year (Statistics Korea, 2014), which is greater than that of Japan (\$12 billion) (Dawson, 2010). Because the expenditure on shadow English education is unreasonably high, and fundamentally dismantles nationwide household financial security, the Ministry of Education in Korea (2014) proposed comprehensive measures to suppress the expansion of shadow education.

In this social atmosphere, shadow education exerts a considerable influence on Korean EFL learners' motivation to learn English. For example, Kim (2011) conducted a comparative study to explore 6,301 Korean elementary school students' motivation to learn English and found that they experience a steady decrease in motivation from Grades 3 to 6. He also explored the effect of students' prior experience with private instruction on their motivation and found that students who had private education had greater satisfaction with both public and private English education, exhibited a greater level of expectation regarding their future success in English, and showed greater levels of instrumental and intrinsic motivation. At the same time, he showed that experience with private education exerted only a negligible influence on elementary school students' integrative and extrinsic (both parental and academic) motivations. Kim and Seo (2012) also showed that Korean elementary school students experienced a decrease in instrumental, intrinsic, integrative, and parental/academic extrinsic motivations from Grades 3 to 6. In addition, Yeon and Kim (2010) found that secondary school students tended to consider instructors at private institutes as being more qualified to teach English than teachers at public schools. This indicates that students have a tendency to make more of an effort to learn English in private institutes while showing mediocre interest in English classes at school.

Similarly, Park (2012) conducted in-depth interviews with nine elementary school students in order to explore their perceptions of their learning experiences at private English institutes. The results indicated that the participants started learning English at private institutes earlier than other school subjects, and that the type of education they received was quite diverse, including group or individual tutoring, subscribing to English learning magazines, and attending English institutes. The students had different perceptions regarding their English learning experiences between private institutes and public schools. In particular, they perceived that private institutes played a beneficial role in increasing their overall English proficiency, whereas public school English education was only for obtaining a course grade.

Research has also suggested that prior experience with private English education has a negative impact on students' English-learning motivation. For example, Kim, Kim, and Zhang (2014) indicated that English teachers in China and Korea reported that students exposed to private education were more likely to lose interest in English classes at school. Kim and Seo (2012) also presented similar findings: students often find English classes in school to be too easy compared to what they have learned at private institutes.

To date, except the elementary school level (e.g., Kim, 2010; Kim & Seo, 2012), few studies have actually looked at changes in L2 learners' motivation to learn English across changes in school grades, or explored the effect of shadow education on students' EFL learning motivation at different school levels. Therefore, by building on Kim's (2010) and Kim and Seo's (2012) previous findings, the following two research questions were set:

- 1) What are the overall trends in English learning motivation of elementary, junior high, and high school students?
- 2) What are the differences in English learning motivation between students with shadow education and those without across school grades?

### **3. METHOD**

#### **3.1. Participants**

The participants were 7,957 EFL students attending elementary to high school in Korea. The survey data were collected first by contacting English teachers in Seoul ( $n = 23$ ) and Gyeonggi province ( $n = 42$ ). After obtaining their consent, the questionnaire packages were distributed to the participating teachers by regular mail. In particular, with the support from the elementary school English teacher association in Gyeonggi province, the researcher could collect a large volume of data from the elementary school students. Because Grades 3 and 4 experience two class hours per week of differential instruction but Grades 5 and 6



experience three, we divided the elementary school students into two groups. As shown in Table 1, there were 3,273 students in Grades 3 and 4 and 3,028 in Grades 5 and 6. Since English class hours and curriculum between public and private elementary schools are qualitatively different, it was decided to exclude private elementary schools in Seoul or Gyeonggi province, and only public ones were included in the current study. There were 467 junior high school students and 1,189 high school students. Among the students, 77.5% had experienced some type of shadow English education, such as classes at English *hagwons*, private tutoring, or instruction in English over the phone. However, compared with the other groups, there was a decrease in the difference between the number of high school students with and without shadow education (57.4% and 41.9%, respectively).

**TABLE 1**  
**The Number (Percentage) of Participants in Each Group and Type of Education**

	Grade in School				Total
	Elementary: Grades 3–4 ( <i>N</i> = 3,273)	Elementary: Grades 5–6 ( <i>N</i> = 3,028)	Junior High: Grades 7–9 ( <i>N</i> = 467)	High School: Grades 10–12 ( <i>N</i> = 1,189)	
With private English education	2,574 (79.6%)	2,590 (85.5%)	319 (68.3%)	682 (57.4%)	6,165 (77.5%)
Without private English education	657 (20.1%)	409 (14.5%)	122 (26.1%)	497 (41.9%)	1,686 (21.2%)
Missing	42 (.3%)		26 (5.6%)	9 (.8%)	106 (1.3%)

### 3.2. Data Collection

A questionnaire (see Appendix) adapted from Lamb (2007) was administrated to the student participants. The questionnaire included 12 items that inquired about students' expectations, satisfaction, and perceptions related to learning English; the students responded to each question on a three-point Likert scale (1 = disagree/not satisfied/not confident/not important; 2 = neither agree/satisfied/confident/important nor disagree/dissatisfied/diffident/unimportant; and 3 = agree/satisfied/confident/important). Additionally, in order to collect students' background information, at the end of the questionnaire, a series of open-ended questions such as their English test scores, years of shadow education, and the types of shadow education experienced were included. A three-point Likert-type response format was used instead of a five-point format because the participants included elementary school students whose cognitive level was much lower than that of the junior high and high school students.

In the questionnaire, three assessed the students' satisfaction regarding their English learning (Items 1, 4, and 5), two assessed their expectations regarding their English at

private institutes and the public school (Items 2 and 3), two assessed their perceptions of the importance of learning English (Items 6 and 7), and five assessed their instrumental, intrinsic, integrative, and extrinsic (parental and academic) motivations (Items 8–12). The five items on motivation were selected based on Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model and Deci and Ryan's (2002) self-determination theory, two of which have been influential for decades in the field of L2 learning motivation. Given elementary school students' relatively short attention span, it was decided to include only minimal number of motivation items. The questionnaire was originally written in Korean in order to prevent any misinterpretations by participants whose English proficiency was low.

### 3.3. Data Analyses

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS; Version 20.0). First, because the three-point Likert scale did not assume an equal distance between the response choices, we checked whether the data dispersion represented a normal distribution, and it did not. Accordingly, two non-parametric tests were used to compare the four groups. The Kruskal-Wallis test, a nonparametric equivalent of the analysis of variance (ANOVA), was used to identify changes in the students' motivation to learn English across the four groups; the Mann-Whitney test, a nonparametric counterpart to the t-test, was conducted to explore differences in motivation to learn English between students with and without shadow education.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Overall Characteristics in EFL Learning Motivation

Table 2 presents the overall characteristics in Korean students' motivation to learn English across the four different school levels. Overall, the medians in students' instrumental, intrinsic, and integrative motivations are highest among the elementary school students, but in the junior high and high school students' cases, the medians in their motivations are not as high as their elementary school counterparts. It is noteworthy that Grades 5 and 6 students exhibited a lower level of extrinsic motivation (both parental and academic) compared with Grades 3 and 4 students. However, junior high school students showed a higher level of extrinsic motivation, and high school students showed a lower level. Also, the median of instrumental motivation was lowest among junior high school students compared with their elementary and high school counterparts. The Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that all these differences were statistically significant.

**TABLE 2**  
**Overall Trends in English-Learning Motivation for Each Group**

Item No.	Total <i>Mdn (SD)</i>	Grade in School				Kruskal-Wallis test	
		Elementary (3-4)	Elementary (5-6)	Junior high (7-9)	High (10-12)	Chi-square	Significance (2-tailed)
1. Satisfaction with progress in English thus far	1.93 (.66)	2.18 (.62)	1.93 (.60)	1.70 (.63)	1.38 (.55)	1373.13	.000
2. Expectation of ultimate success in English in public school	1.89 (.70)	2.16 (.67)	1.85 (.65)	1.70 (.60)	1.34 (.54)	1297.14	.000
3. Expectation of ultimate success in English in a private institute	2.22 (.71)	2.32 (.71)	2.18 (.70)	2.00 (.65)	1.87 (.66)	392.93	.000
4. Satisfaction with English education experience in public school	2.21 (.67)	2.47 (.61)	2.18 (.62)	1.98 (.61)	1.70 (.58)	1237.12	.000
5. Satisfaction with English education experience in a private institute	2.72 (.81)	2.89 (.79)	2.71 (.79)	2.44 (.81)	2.42 (.80)	381.53	.000
6. Perceived importance of learning English	2.41 (.62)	2.43 (.59)	2.33 (.66)	2.40 (.64)	2.56 (.58)	100.83	.000
7. Relative importance of English compared to other school subjects	2.28 (.60)	2.24 (.57)	2.20 (.62)	2.37 (.62)	2.56 (.56)	331.24	.000
8. Instrumental motivation	2.34 (.65)	2.39 (.63)	2.30 (.65)	2.21 (.69)	2.35 (.66)	41.89	.000
9. Intrinsic motivation	1.88 (.71)	2.10 (.68)	1.79 (.69)	1.62 (.66)	1.60 (.66)	634.67	.000
10. Integrative motivation	2.27 (.66)	2.43 (.63)	2.19 (.66)	2.11 (.60)	2.11 (.71)	315.56	.000
11. Extrinsic (parental) motivation	1.71 (.72)	1.80 (.75)	1.69 (.70)	1.76 (.69)	1.51 (.67)	144.51	.000
12. Extrinsic (academic) motivation	1.67 (.68)	1.80 (.70)	1.61 (.65)	1.68 (.64)	1.53 (.63)	196.06	.000

TABLE 3

The Impact of Private Education on Motivation to Learn EFL

Item No.	Elementary (3-4)		Elementary (5-6)		Junior high (7-9)		High (10-12)		Mann-Whitney test
	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn (SD)</i>	
1	2.21 (.63)	2.10 (.59)	1.94 (.60)	1.84 (.59)	1.74 (.63)	1.60 (.65)	1.42 (.57)	1.32 (.52)	-2.87* .18
2	2.17 (.67)	2.14 (.67)	1.85 (.65)	1.85 (.64)	1.72 (.62)	1.68 (.56)	1.32 (.53)	1.37 (.55)	-1.69 .09
3	2.42 (.68)	1.95 (.72)	2.24 (.69)	1.81 (.69)	2.07 (.65)	1.79 (.60)	1.96 (.65)	1.76 (.65)	-5.27*** .31
4	2.46 (.62)	2.53 (.58)	2.17 (.62)	2.23 (.62)	2.00 (.63)	1.96 (.60)	1.69 (.59)	1.71 (.57)	-1.62 -.03
6	2.45 (.57)	2.38 (.58)	2.35 (.66)	2.27 (.65)	2.46 (.63)	2.30 (.66)	2.60 (.54)	2.50 (.61)	-2.64* .19
7	2.25 (.57)	2.22 (.57)	2.21 (.62)	2.15 (.63)	2.43 (.61)	2.26 (.62)	2.59 (.53)	2.51 (.60)	-2.02* .14
8	2.41 (.62)	2.34 (.64)	2.32 (.65)	2.25 (.68)	2.27 (.68)	2.12 (.70)	2.39 (.63)	2.30 (.70)	-2.11* .14
9	2.12 (.67)	2.04 (.69)	1.80 (.69)	1.70 (.66)	1.68 (.66)	1.47 (.64)	1.64 (.67)	1.55 (.65)	-2.20* .14
10	2.44 (.62)	2.38 (.64)	2.21 (.66)	2.15 (.67)	2.15 (.61)	2.01 (.58)	2.12 (.71)	2.09 (.71)	-1.62 .11
11	1.80 (.76)	1.82 (.75)	1.70 (.70)	1.62 (.69)	1.76 (.70)	1.76 (.68)	1.54 (.68)	1.47 (.65)	-1.62 .11
12	1.78 (.71)	1.87 (.69)	1.60 (.66)	1.65 (.65)	1.70 (.67)	1.64 (.59)	1.56 (.64)	1.48 (.62)	-2.11* .13

Note: #Group 1 = students with private education and Group 2 = students without private education. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .000$ ,  $d$  = Cohen's  $d$  for effect size

In addition, in the items about satisfaction with their English education (Items 4 and 5) and about their expectation of ultimate success in learning English (Items 2 and 3), their medians became low in junior high and high school students' cases. This phenomenon is identified regardless of their experience of shadow English education (see Table 3). However, except in the cases of Grades 5 and 6, students perceived learning English as more important (Item 6) as presented in junior high and high school students' data.

#### 4.2. The Impact of Shadow Education on Motivation to Learn EFL

Table 3 presents differences in English-learning motivation between students with shadow education experience and those without<sup>1</sup>. Students who had experience learning English at a private institute throughout elementary and high school were more satisfied with their progress (Item 1) than students who only had experience in public education settings. Students with shadow education also had higher expectations toward their ultimate success at learning English at private institute (Item 3); this is not a surprising result given that these students were enrolled in private institutes and likely had beliefs regarding the effectiveness of shadow education in general. The result of the Item 3 also had the largest effect size ( $d = .67$  and  $.62$  for the two elementary school groups, respectively). However, it is noteworthy that their expectations toward ultimate success in English in public school (Item 2) did not statistically differ between the two groups at all educational levels. This indicates that regardless of shadow education experience, there was a clear, gradual decrease in students' expectation regarding the ultimate success of English education in public schools.

Table 3 also shows that there was no significant difference in the level of satisfaction with the English education experienced between public schools and private institutes among junior high and high school students (Item 4). However, students in Grades 3 and 4 who did not experience shadow education had a higher level of satisfaction with their English education experience (Item 4). From this result, we can speculate that students without shadow education are more satisfied with public English education initially, but their satisfaction attenuates as they progress to higher school levels, which nullifies the statistical differences between public school group and private institute one.

In terms of EFL learning motivation (Items 8-12), students with private education generally showed a higher level of motivation than did those with only public education,

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<sup>1</sup> In Table 3, the statistical difference in Item 5 was not reported because students who did not have shadow education experience do not have any means to report on their satisfaction in a private institute.

especially in instrumental, intrinsic, and integrative motivations. However, students in Grades 3 and 4 who experienced shadow education had a lower level of extrinsic (academic) motivation.

## 5. DISCUSSION

This study explored changes in students' EFL-learning motivation from elementary to high school and investigated the impact of shadow education on their English-learning motivation. The results revealed that EFL students' motivation for learning English demonstrated various differences depending on their school grades and levels, and with a couple of minor exceptions, it shows a downward trend from elementary to high school. This is not different from the case of Japanese elementary school students (Nishida, 2013), but during the same period, students' perception of the importance of learning English increased. Such differences between Korea (this manuscript) and Japan (Nishida, 2013) involve two contextual factors: (1) the influence of the nationwide CSAT in Korea; and (2) the remaining influence of *hakbul*, or the degree of societal stratification based on obtained education.

As Korean EFL students advance through school levels, they begin to realize the importance of learning English. In particular, high school students' CSAT scores are a determining factor of admittance to an academically prestigious university. For a majority of Korean students and their parents, English is seen as an important foreign language directly linked to job prospects and future success. Given the high social pressure associated with English as a school subject, Korean students continue to study it despite their decline in interest in it. Illustrating the importance of English on Korean students, Kim (2010) stated that:

Within such a stratified social system, Korean students and their parents considered English learning as an important tool for obtaining a modern lifestyle and for climbing "the social ladder" (Zeng, 1995) into the power-elite group of Korean society. (p. 212)

In another study, Kim (2012b) conducted interviews with 39 Korean elementary, junior high, and high school students to explore their English-learning motivation and their English-speaking self-image. This study revealed that Korean students continue to learn English regardless of their level of motivation due to the psychological pressure from their parents, teachers, and society in general. Based on the qualitative data, he argued that in many cases, Korean students can achieve a high level of English proficiency without being highly motivated to do so. It seems that Korean students

assume they have to learn English, even though they may not want to do so. In a recent study, Kim (2015) presents a new phenomenon called ‘amotivated English learning’, where students continue to learn English and can obtain a relatively high English test score even though they are extremely demotivated or even amotivated. In the current study, a similar phenomenon is also identified in the relatively low level of extrinsic motivation (academic) among high school students. They are required to study English as an important school subject to take the CSAT regardless of their levels in academic motivation, as shown in Table 2.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that shadow English education has a strong impact on students’ EFL-learning motivation. As shown in Table 3, even though the students’ medians in motivational constructs, expectations, and satisfactions for learning English showed a downward trend as they advanced to higher school grades, students at most school levels (except Grades 3 and 4) who had experienced shadow education generally showed higher levels of these items than did those who did not.

Overall, the results of this study regarding the influence of shadow education invites cautious interpretation. First, there exist a couple of previous studies (e.g., Kim, 1999; Russell, 1997) supporting for the ‘positive’ effects of shadow education, as shown in the current study. For example, Russell (1997) argued that the prime reason for enrolling children in private institutes is “to raise children’s motivation to study” (p. 158). Kim (1999) found that students who had experienced shadow education showed higher levels of intrinsic and integrative motivation than those who did not. Nonetheless, there equally exist studies highlighting the ‘negative’ effects of shadow education on students’ psychological development. Kim, Kang, Ryu, and Namgung (2003), OECD (2004), and Stevenson and Baker (1992) have reported that students in Japan and Korea have a tendency to neglect public education and show less interest and a low level of self-regulation and confidence in school subjects because of their advanced study provided by shadow education. In addition, as discussed above, previous studies (e.g., Kim, 2011) have suggested the potentially negative influences of prior shadow education experiences on students’ motivation to learn English, such as loss of interest in the public school English curriculum.

Thus, the findings of this study indicating the high level of motivational constructs identified among EFL students with prior shadow education deserve further academic attention. Particularly, changes in students’ levels of intrinsic motivation after receiving shadow education will invite future research.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the differences of elementary, junior high, and high school

students' motivation to learn English depending on their experiences of private education. The main findings of this study are summarized as follows. First, EFL students' motivation to learn English presented different levels of medians depending on their school grades and levels; it showed lowering trends from the elementary to high school levels. However, during the same period, students' perceptions of the importance of learning English was not in a downward trend. Second, students with shadow education showed more motivations than students without shadow education in general, but in terms of extrinsic motivation (parental) for elementary school students, shadow education did not exert a clearly beneficial impact.

There are some limitations to this study. For example, the reasons for changes in motivation other than the influence of private education were not assessed with students' verbal reports. Therefore, future research should include systematic interviews with students at different school levels in order to explore their perceptions of the differences in English education between private and public settings. Given the strong emphasis that parents place on shadow English education, future studies should probe parents' perceptions of English education via interviews or surveys. Furthermore, in the collected data regarding the influence of private education, the duration, frequency, and type of private education students received were not measured, and only the existence of private education was considered for data analysis. For future research, more comprehensive data will be needed for detailed analyses. Moreover, as indicated above, further research will be required to identify the high level of EFL students' motivation when they receive shadow education because there might be a different interpretation of the relationship between intrinsic motivation and private education. It would be equally true to speculate that the students with a higher level of intrinsic motivation might wish to attend a private institute than those with less intrinsic motivation. Thus, the directionality of the relationship between motivation and private education invites further research. In addition, although this study collected data from various school levels across Korea, due to the large sample size of elementary school students, nonparametric tests such as the Kruskal-Wallis test and the Mann-Whitney test were used. Thus, the findings of the present research need to be implemented by more sophisticated parametric testing methods and their subsequent post-hoc tests.

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## APPENDIX

**Survey on Korean Students' EFL Learning Motivation**

1. Are you satisfied with your progress in English so far?  
(1) not satisfied (2) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3) satisfied
2. Do you think you will eventually speak English fluently and understand it accurately when you learn English at a public school?  
(1) not confident (2) neither confident nor diffident (3) confident
3. Do you think you will eventually speak English fluently and understand it accurately when you learn English at a private institute?  
(1) not confident (2) neither confident nor diffident (3) confident
4. Are you satisfied with your experience of learning English at a public school?  
(1) not satisfied (2) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3) satisfied
5. Are you satisfied with your experience of learning English at a private institute?  
(1) not satisfied (2) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3) satisfied
6. How important do you think it is to learn English?  
(1) not important (2) neither important nor unimportant (3) important
7. How important do you think English is compared to other school subjects?  
(1) not important (2) neither important nor unimportant (3) important
8. English is important because I will need it for my career in the future.  
(1) disagree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) agree
9. English is important because I enjoy learning it.  
(1) disagree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) agree
10. English is important because it helps me meet foreigners and learn about other countries.  
(1) disagree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) agree

11. English is important because my parents encourage me to learn it.

(1) disagree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) agree

12. English is important because it is a compulsory school subject.

(1) disagree (2) neither agree nor disagree (3) agree

Applicable levels: Elementary, secondary

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