

University of Jyväskylä

What motivates Finnish and South Korean students to study English?

Bachelor's Thesis

Erika Heikka

6.5.2019

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Humanistinen tiedekunta	Laitos – Department Kieli- ja viestintätieteiden laitos
Tekijä – Author Erika Heikka	
Työn nimi – Title What motivates Finnish and South Korean students to learn English?	
Oppiaine – Subject Englannin kieli	Työn laji – Level Kandidaatin tutkinto
Aika – Month and year Toukokuu 2019	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 20
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Kandidaatin tutkielman aiheena on englannin kielen opiskelijoiden oppimismotivaatio. Tutkinnan kohteena ovat suomalaiset ja eteläkorealaiset englannin kielen yliopisto-opiskelijat. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selittää, mitkä seikat motivoivat suomalaisia ja eteläkorealaisia yliopisto-opiskelijoita opiskelemaan englantia. Aineisto kerättiin paperikyselynä oppitunneilla Jyväskylän yliopistossa ja Ewha Womans University:ssä. Kysely sisältää avoimia, suljettuja, sekä asteikkokysymyksiä. Kysymysten aiheita ovat opiskelumotivaatio, motivoivat seikat, stressitaso, kilpailu opinnoissa ja kieliasenteet.</p> <p>Kvalitatiivisen tutkimuksen aineistosta suoritettiin teema-analyysi, eli etsittiin useimmin mainittuja teemoja ja niiden esiintymisyleisyyttä, kun taas kvantitatiivista aineistoa tutkittiin tilastollisin metodein. Sen jälkeen Suomen ja Etelä-Korean tuloksia vertailtiin sekä etsittiin yhtäläisyyksiä ja eroavaisuuksia. Teoreettisena taustana toimii Dörnyein L2 Motivational Self System, joka selittää motivaatiota mahdollisten omakuvien (possible selves) kautta, mutta ottaa huomioon myös sosiaalisen oppimisympäristön merkityksen motivaation rakentumisessa. Saatuja tuloksia verrataan myös PISA tutkimuksen tuloksiin.</p> <p>Keskeisimmät löydökset ovat, että suomalaiset ja eteläkorealaiset opiskelijat raportoivat yhtäläisesti stressaantuneisuudestaan ja oppimismotivaatiostaan. Yleisimmät motivoivat seikat ovat myös samankaltaisia, joskin niissä on hieman esiintyvyyden eroavaisuuksia. Kuitenkin selkeä eroavaisuus on se, että eteläkorealaiset raportoivat opiskeluympäristön olevan erittäin kilpailuhenkinen, mutta suomalaisten mukaan kilpailua ei juurikaan näy yliopisto-opiskelussa. Tulosten perusteella vaikuttaisi siis, että suomalaisia ja eteläkorealaisia englanninopiskelijoita motivoi samat asiat. Silti on mahdotonta soveltaa tätä tulosta muihin koulutusasteisiin tai maihin ilman syvempää ja laajempaa tutkimusta aiheesta. Onkin siis tärkeää jatkossa tutkia opiskelumotivaatiota, mutta myös oppilaiden hyvinvointia ja stressiä.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords language learning, English language learning, learning motivation, motivation	
Säilytyspaikka – Depository JYX	
Muita tietoja – Additional information	

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON MOTIVATION	5
2.1 Defining Motivation	5
2.2 Learning Motivation	6
3. PRESENT STUDY	9
4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS	12
4.1 Competitiveness in the university	12
4.2 How do students of English language motivate themselves?	15
4.3 English language in the society	16
5. CONCLUSION	18
SOURCES	20

1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I will research the factors that motivate university students to learn English language at university level. Through a questionnaire, I will ask university students in Finland at the University of Jyväskylä and South Korea at Ewha Womans University about their English language learning motivation, studying environment, and the perceptions of English language learning in their countries. There has been a lot of research on motivation, language learning motivation, and English language motivation, but very little comparative scholarly research between Finland and South Korea. Therefore, I believe this paper will provide new insight into the topic.

There is no one universally accepted or even largely accepted model for motivation, although many researchers have attempted to create one. Still, it is impossible to grasp such a complex human phenomenon in a way that would explain it perfectly and apply in all cultures around the world. I believe it is more realistic and even more beneficial to try to understand students' language learning motivation on a smaller scale in numerous contexts to better understand what motivational factors are most prevalent in each context. This way teachers can better understand, help, and motivate their students.

Although there is no one theory that fits all contexts, there are many that can describe some aspects of motivation. In this study, I will be using Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005, 2009, in Ushioda 2011), which draws on the idea of *possible future selves* that have been studied and used in other theories as well. This is because I am interested in how and to what extent imagined future selves in different environments can motivate students. I am also interested in finding out how the students and their families and friends perceive English language learning. Additionally, I want to discover how the study environment is seen by the students.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON MOTIVATION

Although the study of motivation in learning is not new, I believe it is still lacking. There is no single definition for motivation, nor is there any general answer as to what motivates people, as the factors behind motivation can be numerous. And a general “applies to all” explanation for motivation may never be identified. Still, it is a topic worth exploring, as better knowledge of what motivates students to study certain subjects could help educators and institutions develop more suitable ways to help students, especially those who are not so motivated in the subject. In this thesis, I am interested in the English language learning motivation of university students majoring in English in two countries – Finland and South-Korea.

2.1 Defining Motivation

I will begin by defining motivation. It is a concept used every day in all areas of life, but most of the time no one really explains what they mean by motivation. Still, we somehow seem to understand. Questions of motivation have been discussed since the works of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and the systematic study on matters associated with motivation started in the late 19th century (Ames and Ames 1984: xi). The word *motivation* comes from the word *movere*, which means to move in Latin, and it deals with questions of what moves people to make decisions, to act, and continue the action for a period of time (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2011: 3).

Dörnyei (2001: 1) says that “strictly speaking, *there is no such thing as ‘motivation’.*” He goes on to explain that by this, he means that at its core motivation is still an abstruse, imaginary theory and that it is a tool for us to make sense of the reasons for human behavior and thinking. Therefore, he points out that motivation blankets a wide range of different reasonings and contexts - from finances to freedom - that may motivate a person. Later, he concludes that motivation is “related to one of the most basic aspects of the human mind” and most people both in education and research agree that motivation is an important factor in successful learning (Dörnyei 2001: 2).

An important issue that Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011: 4) raise is that developing a so called “super-theory” of motivation that applies on all the types of motivation is an unattainable ambition. I believe that this is true and should be understood by all. Although it is a tempting idea to make a theory or a model that “fits all”, it is problematic to think that all human motivation could be generalized or summed up into one framework. Human cognition and behavior are so complex that such an attempt, although ambitious, is bound to have many flaws. Still, it is important to try to make sense of motivation, in my case, English learning motivation, to further understand the factors behind students’ learning motivation to better understand and cater to their learning needs.

2.2 Learning Motivation

Learning motivation is often divided into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. *Intrinsic motivation* is, as the word suggests, something that comes from inside the person, and in Pintrich and Schunk’s words, “motivation to engage in an activity for its own sake” (2002: 245 in Franco and Svensgaard 2012: 246), whereas *extrinsic motivation* is the outside influence on motivation or “motivation to engage in an activity as a means to an end” (Ibid.). One could guess that, in general, learning motivation in a school setting can be heavily based on the extrinsic motivation of, for example, needing to pass a test or find a job in the future. At university level, however, I would expect many students are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors as students can study topics that they have chosen themselves. Although extrinsic motivation may result in successful test scores, it is questionable whether extrinsic motivators such as rewards could be successful in the long-run, as the student may feel that once the reward has been gained, the “job is done”.

The similarities and differences between English language learning motivation at university level in the two countries – Finland and South-Korea – have not been previously studied in pedagogic research even though there has been news coverage of the high rankings of both countries in the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) tests (Heo, Leppisaari, and Lee 2018). However, the two countries received indexes of average achievement motivation that shows less promising results. Finland’s index was 0.0, whereas Korea’s was even lower at -0.5, and so Finland was average for motivation, while Korea was below the OECD country average (PISA 2015 Results (Volume III)). Schoolwork-related anxiety index

in Finland (-0,14) was lower than the average of OECD countries (0,01), which means Finnish students were less anxious than their Korean counterparts who reported above the average index (0,10) (Ibid.) Also, the life satisfaction average in OECD countries was 7, where Finland was again above average at 7.9, while Korea fell below average at 6.4 (Ibid.). Still, both countries seem to do quite well in tests that measure academic skills.

Therefore, I think the motivational background of the students would be an interesting and relevant topic to study further, as the PISA index does not discuss the reasons specific for the motivation index. Also, the test results in both countries are well above average but the anxiety levels in Korea are significantly higher and life-satisfaction lower than in Finland. The PISA test is conducted on 15-year-old students. However, I believe that its results may be relevant for students at other levels as well. It seems that students in neither country report high levels of motivation, which is generally thought to influence the results of learning in a positive way as Dörnyei (2001: 2) pointed out as well. There are a lot of studies focusing on elementary school student motivation, but it seems that there is a gap in the coverage of university student motivation.

For this paper, I will be analyzing the data using the theoretical framework of L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei 2005, 2009) which draws from the theory of *future selves* first introduced by Markus and Nurius (1986). It can be seen as a more modern take on older integration theories. Ushioda (2012: 1) explains the limitations of traditional integration theories as follows:

A desire to integrate into the target language community lose their explanatory power (a) when English is fast becoming a ‘must-have’ basic educational skill in more and more primary curricula (Graddol, 2006); (b) when there is no clearly defined target language community (UK? US? The world?) into which learners of English are motivated to ‘integrate’; and (c) when physical geographical boundaries separating communities of language users become dissolved in the world of cyberspace and online communication networks.

The concepts that I am especially interested in here are *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self* of which the former represents the person’s thoughts on what he or she could be in different contexts (promotion focus) whereas the latter is more about what the person should become in

order to adapt and manage in different contexts, such as passing a test to graduate (prevention focus). Ideal L2 self would therefore be the desire to become a native-like speaker of English, using English as lingua franca in an international company one wants to work for, or something else that is not necessarily something that is needed for oneself, but something that he or she would really want to achieve. Whereas ought-to L2 self would be the need to be at a level of fluency that allows one to pass his or her exams, to get a job, be “as good as the others”, or something else that is necessary for him or her to feel comfortable with his or her L2 self. Of course, as Ushioda (2012: 5) explains “not all types of possible future self will channel motivation and those which represent ‘ideal’ future self-images are more likely to do so because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current and ideal selves”. The third aspect that is explained in the theory is *L2 learning experience* dimension, which describes the social learning environment. In other words, “it concerns situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience” (Dörnyei, 2019: 3).

Past research has found that:

Although the popularity and international dominance of English is as strong as ever, the link between motivation and the choice of Global English for language learning has been losing its significance because people tend to take up the study of English increasingly as self-evident part of education rather than driven by a motivated decision (Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh 2006: 143-144).

Still, motivation must play an important part even in English language learning, even if in many countries such as Finland and South-Korea is a mandatory part of education. Another finding was, that students thought that English language learning, as well as any other language learning, was socially supported (ibid.). For many people, English is also a language that is globally owned, which implies that there is no clear target community like in the traditional integration theory by Gardner (1985 in Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh 2006). Therefore, English language is a special case in terms target language community, as it does not have a clearly visible and defined language community, which for example Finnish and Korean still have.

3. PRESENT STUDY

As already discussed, motivation and learning tend to go hand in hand. Generally, it is agreed that motivation affects learning and that the more motivated one is the more likely he or she is to learn. In this study I will attempt to determine what motivates students to learn English and how these motivational aspects differ between South Korean and Finnish students. I am also interested in the levels of stress students have over their studies. As I was a student in a South Korean University for a year, I noticed differences in the way university students seem to study. For example, in South Korea I could see hundreds of people studying around the campus as late as midnight and most seem to take their studies seriously to the point of immense stress and exhaustion. Whereas in Finland, studying seems more relaxed and many people tend to study at home and spend a lot more time away from studying. Students seem to agree that their education is important, but that other things can be just as important. However, these are only my observations and perceptions and I can only guess the reasonings and factors behind these differences that I have observed. Therefore, I wanted to conduct a study on the students in my home university, the University of Jyväskylä (Jyväskylän Yliopisto), and the university I studied in South Korea, Ewha Womans University (이화여자대학교).

Therefore, my research question is:

What motivates Finnish and South Korean university students to study English?

In other words, why are they studying English? Do they see English language as a necessary skill when looking for a job, or is it merely enjoyable? Do they want to make friends using English, or does their favorite band make music in English? Do their parents force them to study English, or do the students themselves have passion for the language? But also, does this motivation come with immense stress or does it just boost their learning? I believe stress and anxiety can be powerful motivators and especially in university and school in general students often find themselves motivated by the approaching deadline or the need to at least reach the average grade. Of course, people are different and the factors that causes them stress or anxiety differ, but nonetheless these factors do push them to study. Therefore, I will also ask questions on the amount of stress the students experience and how it shows. The theory of future selves

and L2 learning experience fit these questions well, because they are about what motivates students in their studies as they are studying for a reason, whatever the motivation behind it may be – as well as what the social learning environment is like.

I will conduct my study through a questionnaire in a paper form. The questionnaire will include some open-ended questions, multiple-choice, and ratio scale questions to provide answers that can be made into statistics. I chose to conduct the study in second- and third-year classes, where most students tend to be still somewhat “new” in university. The data was collected through a questionnaire that participants answered in class individually. The topics of the questionnaire will include some of the themes studied before, such as what the participants feel about the language as well as the uses of English in their life (Dörnyei 2010).

There are three multiple-choice questions. The first inquires whether the student feels the need to compete in his or her studies and they will check yes, sometimes or no. The second question has 12 different motivational factors listed and the students will pick 5 most important factors. The third multiple choice question is similar to the second and has nine ways to use English in one’s everyday life listed and again the students will pick 5 most prominent ways they use English.

The questionnaire also has open-ended questions that inquire about what motivates the students, how competitive they think the study environment is and how it shows, and how they feel about the culture most commonly linked to English language. One question also examines the student’s and his or her family’s perception of English language and English language learning. Open-ended questions will be analysed thematically, in other words, I will analyze which themes emerge from the data. Additionally, there are three ratio scale questions that ask the student to answer on a scale of 1 to 10 how motivated they are in their studies, how stressed they were about their studies and how high do they think their intrinsic motivation is.

The Finnish sample consisted of 14 female and 11 male students around the age of 22 and on average in their second or third year in university. The Korean sample was made up of 34 female students around the age of 20 and mostly in their second year of university. The reason for an

all-female sample in South Korea was, that the university I collected the data in was a women's university, as the name Ewha Womans University implies.

Another key difference in the samples, is the grading system the universities use. The University of Jyväskylä uses absolute grading, which means that no matter the performance of other students the grade is fixed. For example, if a student has 90-100% correct marks they will automatically receive the highest grade. Therefore, in theory, everyone can receive the highest grade. However, at the time the data was collected, Ewha Womans University used relative grading, which is a grading system where only a certain percentage of students can receive each grade, so the grading is affected by student performance. In other words, only a certain number of people are able to receive the highest grade and so even if all students get 90-100% correct marks, they cannot all receive the highest grade like in the University of Jyväskylä.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Competitiveness in the university

Gathering from the data, I can conclude that the South Korean students do experience the study environment as stressful and competitive. This relates to Dörnyei's (2005, 2009, in Ushioda 2010) concept *L2 learning experience* dimension in his "L2 Motivational Self System", which deals with the social learning environment. 15 out of 34 participants stated explicitly that the studying environment is *competitive* or *very competitive*, whereas five answered with a more hesitant *somewhat* or *quite competitive*. Interesting, however, is that not one person said that the studying environment is *not* competitive. The way the participants describe the competitiveness was predominantly by comparison to peers. In fact, 17 out of the 34 participants explained the environment through comparison to other students, such as "everybody doesn't satisfy if he or she isn't the ace", "we felt nervous when we didn't study more than other students in the same grade" and "they're afraid that they didn't do well compared to others". This is seen in multiple choice question (Table 1) that enquired if the students felt the need to do better than the other students, where 22 answered *yes*, 11 *sometimes*, and only 1 *no*.

Table 1. Q. Do you feel the need to do better than others in your studies? (South Korea)

Yes	22
No	1
Sometimes	11

It therefore seems that the students' motivation in this respect comes from the pressure to be at least as good and successful as others, which is what Dörnyei calls *ought-to L2 self*, which is described as having a prevention focus. In other words, the students seem to be motivated to be at least at the same level as the others in order to feel comfortable in their studies. However, the table shows that for most being as good as the others is not enough, but they feel the need to do even better.

Many also believed the relative grading system makes the competitiveness worse and stresses students, as the distinction between the highest grades is so small that competition is inevitable. As for how the competitiveness shows, they explained that students tend to study extensive periods, especially during the exam period. Another prevalent answer was that, although the questions did not mention absences at all, the students continuously mentioned that absences are very rare and that this is a sign of competitiveness. Students also reported lack of sleep, medicating of stress related head and stomach aches, and some even commented that the country has a high rate of teenager suicides which they thought is related to school stress. It appears that the study environment is such that one is expected to continually compete.

In Finland, on the other hand, 20 out of 25 participants said that the study environment is not very competitive. Only one explicitly stated that “It is quite competitive”. However, 4 participants did report thinking that the competition is more subtle or depends on the situation. One of the reasons why the environment was seen as non-competitive was the considerable amount of groupwork and learning together instead of teacher-centered learning. Some also commented that they are at the university for themselves and that “it is not a race”. Comparison to others was mentioned by three people but as something that other people do, not the participants themselves. Still, people seemed to be motivated by seeing a peer doing well and consequently inspired to also be “that good”. In the multiple-choice question that enquired if the students felt the need to do better than the other students (Table 2), 6 answered *yes*, 6 *sometimes*, and 13 *no*. It seems, therefore, that prevention focused motivation is not as common in the Finnish university as it is in the South Korean.

Table 2. Q. Do you feel the need to do better than others in your studies? (Finland)

Yes	6
No	13
Sometimes	6

A possible reason for this difference in competitiveness may be that the universities' grading systems differ in a fundamental way. The Finnish grading system is static in that a certain score corresponds to a certain grade and therefore in theory, everyone is able to achieve the maximum grade. In South Korea, however, the relative grading system is quite common, and was also

used in Ewha Womans University. In the relative grading system, the number of students who are able to gain the highest grade is limited and so and so, students may be told in the first class “x amount of you will get the highest grade”. This, I believe is bound to cause the environment to become more. The school informed that starting from March 2018, a professor could decide how the grading was carried out and so relative grading was not the only option at this point. When talking to the students, however, I was told that many of the teachers continued the use of relative grading.

As I mentioned earlier, the stress levels of students in South Korea and Finland were compared in the PISA test and the results suggested that Finnish students are less stressed than the average, while South Korean students were more stressed than average. The study, however, is not done on university students and so I wanted to see whether or not my research would discover a similar pattern among university students.

Table 3. Q. How high would you rate your stress level because of school on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being “not stressed at all” and 10 being “extremely stressed”.

	Median value	Mean value
Finland	7	6,9
South Korea	7	6,6

Stress, similar to competitiveness of the studying environment would relate to the *L2 learning experience* dimension. It seems that the answers do not follow a similar pattern to the PISA results. In fact, the median of the answers was 7 as shown in Table 3 in both countries, but there was a difference of 0,3 in the mean value, which is quite small but still converse to the PISA results, as the 0,3 units more stress was reported in Finland. So, it seems that even with the differences in grading systems, the stress levels are similar in both samples. Still, it is necessary to remember that these are answers given by the participants based on their own feeling of their stress and people may have different ideas of what stress is or how much stress equals to which number.

4.2 How do students of English language motivate themselves?

When looking at the open-ended answers as to what motivates the students, I found eight themes, bearing in mind that one participant may have mentioned several categories. The themes and the number of answers falling into each theme in both countries can be seen below.

Table 4. Q. What motivates you?

	Category	University of Jyväskylä, Finland (out of 25 participants)	Ewha Womans University, South Korea (out of 34 participants)
1	Thinking about the future (job, opportunities, stable life etc.)	7	6
2	Comparison to others that are better	2	6
3	Literature, movies, youtube, musicals, etc.	3	4
4	Will to be better at communication and sound more native.	1	4
5	Becoming a globalized person, who visits other countries and follows the situation abroad.	2	3
6	The need to get credits, and to get a degree.	5	3
7	Learning because of the enjoyment it brings.	8	3

As mentioned in the previous section, *comparison to others* would best be described as belonging to the *ought-to L2 self*, but another category with a clear prevention focus is the need to do credits, and to get a degree. The categories with promotion focus, *Ideal L2 self*, would be number 1, 4, and 5. The third category was the cultural interest that motivates students, such as watching movies, musicals, tv-shows, reading, listening to music. Also, some stated they simply enjoy English language and language learning.

In the multiple-choice question on motivational factors, the most common answers in Finland were the following statements: “I want to use English in my future career”, “I enjoy English language learning”, “I need to learn English in order to find a job”, “I want to be able to

understand entertainment that is in English”, and “I want to be able to use English to make friends with people from different countries”. In South Korea, the most prevalent picks were: “I want to use English in my future career”, “I need to learn English in order to find a job”, “I want to be able to understand entertainment that is in English”, “I want to move to an English-speaking country” and “I want to be able to use English to make friends with people from different countries”. Both samples picked motivators dealing with working life, entertainment, and the desire to make friends through English. Although many South Korean students also picked “I enjoy English language learning”, it was only the sixth most chosen statement, whereas in Finland it was the second most common. In South Korea the desire to move to an English-speaking country, however, was the third most common statement, whereas in Finland, it was the sixth. It therefore seems, that South Korean students are motivated by the opportunities English language mastery brings them, and while the same is also true in Finland, enjoyment of the language itself is also a big part of their motivation.

4.3 English language in the society

Students in both countries reported that the general public understands the need for English language teaching and learning, and the opportunities that mastery of English brings, however, many participants note that it has become even a necessity in order to find a good job. Still, the South Korean students point out that the way English is taught is mostly academic and so people may not see it as practical: “I think it’s too much about studying the principles. Koreans are good at analyzing difficult English paragraphs, but not good at using in daily lives.”

In fact, English language was described in numerous answers as a “tool”, which highlights the practical need. Participants in both samples agreed that English is everywhere and mostly viewed in a positive light, so parents and friends are supportive and proud of their choice of major. A Finnish student commented: “my parents have always encouraged me and my sisters to study English because they see it as an important “tool” for the future” which was similar to many other students’ answers.

A small number of participants, however, brought up the idea that English is so prominent nowadays that it may even threaten the native language and culture. A Korean participant commented: “I think, in Korea, English is used too much. While walking the streets, I can hardly see signs written in Hangeul. Maybe they think it’s cool to use English, but sometimes this culture weakens Korea’s identity” and similarly a Finnish student said that: “Sometimes people see it as a language that could make the Finnish language, for example, disappear.”

Both groups of students also recognized that the culture of English-speaking countries, predominantly the USA, is influential and can be seen in both countries in the “main stream culture”. They reported mostly that US artists, movies, tv-shows, and so on are usually seen as “cooler” than those of their own country. A Korean participant explained: “I think Korean people think that something in English is much cooler than something in other language” and a Finnish participant similarly said: “Cool in USA → cool in Finland especially the American pop-culture and youngsters use it.” I believe this perception can motivate students to learn English to understand and talk about their English speaking idols and other influencers they find “cool” or inspiring.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it seems that the factors that motivate students in both countries do, in fact, overlap. What seem to be the most motivational factors, are the future possibilities English provides them in their career, their abilities to form new relationships, their abilities to consume global media, entertainment, take part in online and offline discussions in English, and even move to another country – in other words, the images of their ideal L2 selves in their desired environments. Still, the ought-to L2 self seems to keep the students focused even in times of lower energy and higher stress periods in their studies – in other words, when one feels that they just cannot care about their course paper anymore, they find motivation through the thought that they *need* to do it.

The most prominent difference was that although students in both countries were stressed, South Korean students felt the study environment as very competitive, while Finnish students did not. South Korean students also felt the need to do at least as well, if not better than others (prevention focus). Finnish students reported being motivated by peers doing well, but not the *need* to do better, in other words, they were mostly inspired – rather than pressured - by their peers doing better than them.

There are limitations to this study, such as the most obvious – the absence of male participants in South Korea. Also, some of the questions seemed to have the possibility of misunderstanding, although comprehension of the questions was overall good. Also, we cannot apply these findings to other countries or even other universities in Finland and South Korea without more extensive research. Another limitation is the fact that the data was collected through a questionnaire rather than observation, which meant that each participant reported based on how they themselves measure for example stress. Therefore, even if two participants, in reality, would have the same stress levels, the other may have reported higher stress levels than the other.

Nonetheless, I believe that the demand for a universal motivational model is unnecessary, as expressed in the beginning of this thesis, so I would suggest more research on all countries and

even regions across the world, to understand motivation better in different contexts. Through such efforts, teachers could attain insight into how to best motivate their students. Still, it is important that research on motivation will continue, as the society and the world we live in is continually changing and so it would make sense that motivational factors keep changing as well.

SOURCES

Ames, R. and Ames, C. (Eds.) (1984). *Research on motivation in education. Volume 1: Student motivation*. Cambridge: Academic Press, Inc.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. 8th printing (2010). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2010). The motivation questionnaires used in the 2008-2009 comparative survey project in Japan, China and Iran.

URL:

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/ba734f_ddb293f5fd9f4f2b8f46902e72e9f39b.pdf?index=true
(May 2019)

Dörnyei, Z. (2019). Towards a better understanding of the L2 Learning Experience, the Cinderella of the L2 Motivational Self System. *Studies on Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9 (1), 19-30.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2019.9.1.2>

Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K. and Németh, N. (2006). *Motivation, language attitudes and globalisation: a Hungarian perspective*. Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. and Ushioda, E. (2001). *Teaching and researching motivation*. 2nd edition (2011). London: Pearson Education Limited.

Educational Research Techniques: Absolute vs. Relative Grading

URL: <https://educationalresearchtechniques.com/2017/10/04/absolute-vs-relative-grading/>
(April 2019).

Franco, J. and Svensgaard, A. (Eds.) (2010). *Handbook on psychology of motivation: New research*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Heo, H., Leppisaari, I., and Lee, O. (2018). Exploring learning culture in Finnish and South Korean classrooms. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 111:4, 459-472.

DOI: 10.1080/00220671.2017.1297924

PISA 2015 Results (Volume III) Students' Well-Being
DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264273856-en>

Scales of Measurement in Statistics How To (April 2019).
URL: <https://www.statisticshowto.datasciencecentral.com/scales-of-measurement/>
(April 2019)