

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' JOB
SATISFACTION IN UPPER SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN FINLAND

Bachelor's thesis
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Opettajien työtyytyväisyyttä on yleisesti ottaen tutkittu jonkin verran, mutta tiettyjen kouluaineiden opettajien työtyytyväisyyteen ei ole kiinnitetty huomiota juuri lainkaan. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää englannin opettajien työtyytyväisyyden tasoa suomalaisissa lukioissa. Tutkielma perustuu Herzbergin määritelmään työtyytyväisyydestä sekä hänen teoriaansa siitä, mitkä tekijät työssä koetaan tyydyttäväiksi ja mitkä epätydyttäväiksi (motivation-hygiene theory).

Tutkimus toteutettiin kyselytutkimuksena sähköpostitse, ja siihen osallistui 10 englannin kielen lukio-opettajaa eri puolilta Suomea. Tutkimuskyselykaavake oli kaksiosainen. Ensimmäinen osa sisälsi 10 avokysymystä, ja toisessa osassa osallistujia pyydettiin arvioimaan numeroasteikolla opettajan työhön liittyvien tekijöiden vaikutusta työtyytyväisyyteensä.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi, että suurin osa tutkimukseen osallistuneista englannin kielen lukio-opettajista oli tyytyväisiä tai todella tyytyväisiä työhönsä. Sellaiset opettajan työhön liittyvät fyysiset olosuhteet ja asiat, kuten työtilat, opetusvälineet, opetusmateriaalit, opetusryhmien koko, työtuntien määrä, lomat, palkka ja työn määrä olivat merkityksellisimpiä vaikuttajia opettajien työtyytyväisyyteen. Opettajan työhön kuuluvista sosiaalisista piirteistä tärkeimmiksi vaikuttajiksi työtyytyväisyyden kannalta nousivat suhteet kollegoihin ja rehtoriin sekä heiltä saatu tuki, suhteet oppilaisiin ja heiltä saatu arvostus. Hallinnollisesta ja uranäkökulmasta katsottuna tärkeimpiä vaikuttajia olivat mahdollisuudet vaikuttaa omaan työhön, itsensä kehittäminen työssä ja vastuullisten työtehtävien saanti. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa todettiin, että eniten tyytymättömyyttä englannin lukio-opettajan työssä aiheuttavat palkka, kiire, fyysinen työympäristö, lisääntyvä työn määrä, kausittainen työn kasaantuminen ja isot opetusryhmät.

Tutkimuksen tulokset korreloivat osittain Herzbergin työtyytyväisyysteorian kanssa. Herzbergin mukaan eniten työtyytyväisyyteen vaikuttavat työn abstraktit *motivation* –tekijät, mikä kävi ilmi myös tämän tutkimuksen tuloksista. Kuitenkin osa edellä mainituista Herzbergin työhön liittyvistä tekijöistä ei ollut tähän tutkimukseen osallistuneille opettajille merkityksellisiä työtyytyväisyyden kannalta. Herzbergin mukaan fyysisemmät työn *hygiene* –tekijät eivät ole yhtä tärkeitä työtyytyväisyydelle verrattuna *motivation* –tekijöihin. Tässä tutkimuksessa kuitenkin todettiin niillä olevan tärkeä merkitys opettajien työtyytyväisyyteen.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 20th and the 21st century working life in Finland as well as in other parts of the world has become increasingly demanding and challenging for employees in any professional field. Requirements for efficiency are being emphasized more and more and, thus, the strain imposed on employees has grown extensively. As a result, work-related health problems, for example depression and burn out, have increased at an alarming rate. Therefore, employees' job satisfaction, health and the means of preventing their exhaustion have become an important topic in the media as well as in workplaces.

When talking about different fields of work, people tend to think that jobs which are often viewed as vocations, for instance teaching, could more easily cause work-related problems, since the employees are seen to be highly devoted and committed to their work. In fact, teachers are nowadays facing many issues in their work which can contribute to health problems and a decreased level of job satisfaction. For example, the size of teaching groups has grown continuously, and teachers can easily feel overburdened, since monitoring and supporting every student in the classroom has become virtually impossible. Some other factors generating decreased job satisfaction among teachers are, for instance, lack of time and the sense of diminishing safety in the classroom, as the amount of students' social problems has steadily grown and teachers even face more aggressive attacks from students than before. Moreover, the social problems that students have, have become more serious and difficult.

Previous research on the area of job satisfaction has mostly focused on examining the job satisfaction of teachers on some specific school level, for example elementary school teachers or upper secondary school teachers as one mass. Studies aimed at some particular subject teacher group as, for instance, English teachers are fewer. Having followed the discussion on teachers' job satisfaction and the changing school world, I decided to conduct a study on how English language teachers feel about their work in Finland, and what issues they find rewarding and challenging in their job. Since I am studying to become a language teacher myself, I have felt some concern over the social changes taking place in the school world and, for this reason, I want to find out how English teachers themselves actually view their work nowadays in Finland, and what the level of their job satisfaction is.

Job satisfaction is a psychological concept and, therefore, giving accurate scientific definitions of the term is nearly impossible. Nevertheless, in this study I base my definition of job satisfaction on Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (1971) which I will further elaborate in the second chapter on the theoretical background of this study. I chose this theory because it is one of the first large theories formed of job satisfaction and, therefore, considered as ground-breaking. Furthermore, it gives clear frames and classification criteria for the analysis of the results of my study. The study was conducted via a questionnaire.

This research paper begins with definitions on job satisfaction, an explanation of the background theory and presentation of the results of previous studies. Next, I will present the data, method and research questions of my study. This section is followed by explaining the results and describing which factors enhance and which ones decrease English teachers' job satisfaction. In the discussion part I will relate the results with the theoretical background. Finally, I will view this research as a whole in the conclusion section.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter I will first view some definitions given on the concept of job satisfaction. Secondly, I will present Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, on which this study was mainly based. To conclude the chapter, I will discuss the results of some previous studies conducted on job satisfaction.

2.1 Defining job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a problematic term to define with a sense of genuine scientific accuracy, since the nature and the concept of the term itself are rather abstract. As Evans (1998:4-5) points out, the main debility in the definitions provided on job satisfaction is their vagueness which results in it being often a rather poorly defined term. Job satisfaction cannot be defined based on any visible concrete material. For this reason, there is no common agreement on the definition of job satisfaction among researchers and thus, as Evans (1998:4-5) states, it may cause problems with construct validity of the term.

Spector (1997:2) views job satisfaction as an attitudinal variable. According to him, job satisfaction means the various feelings which people have about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs.

More simply put, job satisfaction implies the extent to which people like their jobs (satisfaction) and dislike them (dissatisfaction). In its division into job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, Spector's approach to defining job satisfaction resembles Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, which I will further explain in the next chapter.

Another more specific description on job satisfaction is given by Locke (1976:1300) who defines it as 'a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience'. Moseley (1988:211-219), on the other hand, points out that job satisfaction is concerned with the match between characteristics of the job and the worker's social and personal needs, feeling of significance, worth and usefulness, and expectations regarding the work. The better the match, the more satisfied one is with one's job.

My study is based on the definition of job satisfaction given by Frederick Herzberg in his motivation-hygiene theory, since it is one of the first extensive theories written about job satisfaction. I could have also used, for example, Linda Evans' (1998) more modern definition and theory on job satisfaction, which has its roots in Herzberg's theory. However, I preferred using the original source because Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory has been one of the most important bases for many job satisfaction studies. I will explain the theory more specifically in the next chapter.

2.2 Motivation-hygiene theory by Herzberg

Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory on job satisfaction is considered to be one of the most ground-breaking research done in this field. Herzberg (1971:71) discusses a study which he had conducted with two hundred engineers and accountants in the state of Pittsburgh, which then formed the basis of his motivation-hygiene theory. In his study Herzberg had asked the employees about events at work which had either led to remarkable improvement or decrease in their level of job satisfaction.

Based on the results of the study, Herzberg (1971:72) concluded that there are five factors that work as strong determiners of job satisfaction. These factors had an improving effect on the employees' job satisfaction and they were effective in motivating individuals to higher job performance. Therefore, Herzberg named them as motivation factors. According to Herzberg (1971:72), the five motivation factors are *achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility* and *advancement*.

Achievement refers to successful performance of one's work tasks, solving problems, vindication and seeing the results of one's work. *Recognition* relates to notice, praise and criticism received from colleagues or management and it mainly means getting recognition due to achievement in tasks. *Work itself* describes the actual content of one's job, basically meaning the tasks of the job. *Responsibility* means the sense of responsibility given to an employee for his/her own work or being given new responsibilities. Lastly, *advancement* refers to a change in one's position at work and, therefore, involves the concept of promotion. (Herzberg, 1967:44-48).

The motivation factors clearly worked as satisfiers for the employees but Herzberg also found a set of other factors which, more often than not, worked as dissatisfiers or merely as factors preventing job dissatisfaction, but not as genuine positive attributes to the level of job satisfaction. These factors were named as hygiene factors, since they mostly describe the environment of one's job. The hygiene factors are *company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations* and *working conditions* (Herzberg 1971:74). *Company policy and administration* relate specifically to organisation management at workplaces and they also entail personnel policies. *Supervision*, on the other hand, refers to the actual behaviour of managers towards employees, for example how fair or unfair they are and how willing they are to delegate responsibilities. *Salary* naturally means monetary compensation for work. *Interpersonal relations* refer to the social relationships between colleagues and between employees and their superiors. *Working conditions* entail the physical environment of working and especially the available facilities with all their space and tools, for instance (Herzberg, 1967: 46-48).

Since two separate factor groups, one generating job satisfaction and another generating job dissatisfaction, were found, Herzberg (1971:76) concluded that these two feelings were not the opposites of one another. In other words, the opposite of *job satisfaction* is not *job dissatisfaction*, but *no job satisfaction*. Accordingly, the opposite of *job dissatisfaction* is not *job satisfaction*, but *no job dissatisfaction*. For this reason, Herzberg views job satisfaction being made up of two unipolar traits.

According to Herzberg (1971), motivation factors generate mainly positive attitudes to work and increase job satisfaction. Similarly, the hygiene factors have mainly a role of decreasing job satisfaction. Therefore, it follows from this view that motivation aspects cannot be the source of job dissatisfaction and that hygiene factors cannot function as a basis for genuine positive job satisfaction. However, Herzberg (1971) distinguishes between the kind of satisfaction that

motivation and hygiene factors can generate. He states that motivation factors are *satisfying* while hygiene factors can only be *satisfactory* for an employee. In my opinion, Herzberg's theory is in this respect rather black and white and it does not describe clearly enough whether, for example, motivation factors such as responsibility could cause job dissatisfaction in the case that it is not given to an employee. In addition, the theory does not fully explain whether hygiene factors, such as salary, could strongly increase job satisfaction, if the salary was extensive. Moreover, it is quite simplistic to make such general assumptions as hygiene factors cannot genuinely satisfy anyone, since there surely are people who get most pleasure out of their salary and do not even care about other job related factors so much.

Herzberg (1971:74) also recognized the two separate factor groups, motivation and hygiene factors, evolving around distinct themes. Motivation factors are concerned with an individual's relationship to what one does, meaning the actual content of one's job, task achievement, recognition for achievement on a task, the nature of tasks, responsibility for tasks and professional advancement or growth in performing tasks. Whereas motivation factors relate to individuals' relationship to work itself, the hygiene factors describe employees' relationship to the context and environment where the job is done.

According to Herzberg (1971:78), the reason behind the inability of hygiene factors to give genuine job satisfaction lies simply in their environmental nature. Job satisfaction is essentially based on the possibility of one's personal and professional growth in one's job. However, hygiene factors do not include characteristics which would contribute to an individual's personal and professional growth, since the feeling of growth is dependent on achievement in tasks and hygiene factors are not interlinked with tasks. Motivators, on the other hand, are task factors and 'provide the psychological stimulation by which the individual can be activated toward his self-realization needs' (Herzberg 1971:78).

Although the hygiene factors are mainly not related to positive job satisfaction, some individuals in Herzberg's study reported to get satisfaction solely from job environmental aspects, meaning the hygiene factors. Herzberg (1971:80) calls these people *hygiene seekers*, and states that they are at a less mature level in their personality development, in which self-actualizing needs are not yet active. Due to their less developed personality, hygiene seekers are largely attracted only to job environmental factors, which only prevent dissatisfaction. In my opinion, this labeling of people, who happen to receive job satisfaction from hygiene factors, into less mature individuals is quite an

outrageous statement. In some ways it implies that these people are less intellectual compared to the people who get satisfaction through the motivation factors. In other words, making conclusions about people's level of psychological development based solely on what they experience as satisfying in their job seems unjustified.

Other criticism on Herzberg's theory is concerned with overgeneralisation of the theory to pertain all professional fields, since the research was based on a restricted group of accountants and engineers. The motivation-hygiene theory has also received criticism due to its psychological nature which imposes problems of reliability, since psychological matters cannot be proved through the means of hard sciences. Furthermore, Evans (1998:3-6) imposed critique on the basic concept of job satisfaction and its inadequate definition, but it must be said that the ambiguity of terminology is a common hindrance of research conducted on psychological issues. Moreover, Evans (1998:146-151) points out that Herzberg's theory is rather black and white in that it does not give any notice to the fact that for some individuals hygiene factors can give some sense of job satisfaction.

In my research I intend to find out how satisfied English language teachers of upper secondary schools in Finland are with their jobs in general, and which factors of their work they distinguish as satisfying and dissatisfying. Herzberg's theory on job satisfaction works as the main background for my research. Accordingly, I will view the research results in relation to his motivation-hygiene theory and whether my study results are or are not in accordance with it.

Next I will present previous research done on job satisfaction and employees' well-being at workplaces. I will view three different studies from this area.

2.3 The results of previous studies

Maria Mäenpää (2005) conducted a research on the job satisfaction of teachers of English in Finnish upper secondary schools, using thematic, transcribed interviews and thematic analysis of the interview results as her method of study. Altogether, she interviewed six teachers from two upper secondary schools and she aimed to find out which factors in English teachers' job give teachers genuine satisfaction, which factors they experience as satisfactory and which aspects they were dissatisfied with.

According to Mäenpää (2005:2), the findings implied that teachers have rather individual views about job satisfaction. A particular aspect of the job, for example salary, proved out to be genuinely satisfying for some teachers, while others regarded it as merely satisfactory or even as a source of dissatisfaction. Moreover, the participants in the study experienced some factors of the job having a good and a bad side at the same time. Mäenpää (2005:2) reports that the teachers in her study received most job satisfaction from working with students and colleagues, teaching the language, feelings of successful teaching and the appreciation received from headmasters of the schools. In addition, working environment, teaching materials, headmaster, salary and colleagues were seen as satisfactory. However, these aspects also generated dissatisfaction, alongside with the amount of work. Mäenpää (2005:2) states that half of the teachers in her study were generally satisfied with their job and half of them were not. Interestingly, all the teachers had reported the amount of work being unreasonably extensive.

Linda Evans (1998) set out to study which factors in teachers' work influence their job satisfaction and job motivation, using Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as her basis. Evans (1998:138-139) states that one of her key findings was that job satisfaction is to a large extent contextually determined. Most of the teachers who took part in the study reported that school-specific factors had the most significant influence on their job satisfaction. Evans (1998:141) says that the reason behind the significance of school-specific factors is that they constitute teachers' working lives. Teachers carry out their work at context-specific levels and, thus, the school environment proved out to have the most significance on their job satisfaction. In addition to school-specific factors, Evans (1998:142-143) says that the teachers in her study felt remarkable job satisfaction if they achieved something at work, for example if they came up with a task which enhanced pupils' learning.

3 DATA AND METHOD OF THE STUDY

In this chapter I will first describe in detail how I collected the research data. Second, I will explain the method of this study and how the analysis was done.

3.1 Data

I collected the data for this research during February and March 2008. Since my goal was to find out how English teachers in upper secondary schools of Finland view their level of job satisfaction in general, I requested teachers from several cities and towns to participate in the study by email. The cities from which I requested for participants for my research were Siilinjärvi, Kuopio, Tampere, Oulu, Vaasa, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Turku, Rovaniemi and Joensuu. I chose these locations because in my opinion they represent the different parts of Finland well. The contact information of the English language teachers I got from the schools' websites

I sent an email, which included my research questionnaire, requesting for participation to 167 teachers and I got 15 replies. I decided to approach them by email because sending letters to all the cities would have been unpractical, taken more time and been costly. In other words, conducting the research by email seemed to be the most efficient way. The participants sent the filled in questionnaire form back to me via email. I got responses from most of the places I sent the participation request to, since I got them from Siilinjärvi, Kuopio, Tampere, Oulu, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Turku and Rovaniemi. Unfortunately, I did not receive any replies from Vaasa and Joensuu. Altogether I included 10 upper secondary school English teachers in the study: one teacher from Siilinjärvi, Kuopio, Helsinki, Oulu, Turku and Rovaniemi and two teachers from Tampere and Jyväskylä. I left out five participants based on the quality and usefulness of their answers for my study. The participants were from 10 different upper secondary schools. Since my questionnaire consisted of nine open-end questions and a multiple choice section including several points, choosing ten participants for this particular study seemed enough in order to be able to keep the extent of the research suitable.

Some of the socioeconomical background information of the participants, for example their age, was not an essential factor in this study, since I only aimed at studying upper secondary school English language teachers' job satisfaction in general. However, the gender distribution of the research was clearly in favour of females, as nine of the participants were women and only one was a man. Since the vast majority of teachers in Finland are females, the outcome of the gender distribution of the study was predictable.

3.2 Method and research questions

As I mentioned in the previous section, I conducted my research on English teachers' job satisfaction with a questionnaire. Doing the research with a questionnaire was the simplest way of reaching participants from various places in Finland. Another alternative would have been to interview the teachers, but travelling or making phone calls to all the places would have been time-consuming and expensive. Another advantage of the questionnaire is that one gets specific answers, whereas in interviews the answers can get off the point sometimes. In addition, a questionnaire allows one to ask more personal matters also, since the participants can remain anonymous and unrecognized, and they do not need to feel uncomfortable answering them face to face. The questionnaire consisted of nine open-end questions and another part in which I listed a series of factors influencing teachers' job and the participants were asked to choose a suitable option to express how great importance the particular factors have on their job satisfaction. Therefore, the research is qualitative by nature. The questionnaire was in Finnish in order to keep possible misunderstandings minimal and to provide the participants with a chance to express their thoughts freely, without feeling any pressure of producing correct English. I have included the original Finnish questionnaire form and its English translation into this paper as Appendices 1 and 2.

I formed the nine open-end questions on the basis of Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (1971) and Maria Mäenpää's (2005) interview questions which she had used in her Pro Gradu thesis on a similar topic. Due to the similarity of her research topic, Mäenpää's questions gave a suitable basis for my questionnaire, which I then modified to fit my study purposes. The idea of the open-end questions was to find out what sorts of thoughts, views, experiences and feelings the participants had of their job and their job satisfaction in general, and give them a chance to express them in their own words.

In the second part of the questionnaire I listed and grouped some factors related to teachers' job and asked the participants to rate the influence of those factors on their job satisfaction with the help of the given scale. The purpose of the second section of the questionnaire was to provide more accurate information on how much relevance the participants place on the particular aspects of their job. The job related factors were listed into three separate groups. The first group of factors (*working space / equipment / materials, the size of teaching groups, working hours, holidays, salary and work amount*) represented the environment and frames of a teacher's job. The second factor group consisted of social aspects related to teachers' work (*relations with colleagues / headmaster,*

appreciation / recognition / support from colleagues, appreciation / recognition / support from headmaster, relations with students, appreciation from students and relations with the parents of students). The third group of factors described the administrative and advancement aspect of the job (*working and managing principals of the school, opportunities to influence the job / the decisions, getting responsible tasks, developing in one's job / self development / learning new things and opportunities of promotion*). I decided to divide the factors into these groups in order to make the analysis of the results clearer. The environmental factors relate to *work itself* –factors in Herzberg's (1971) motivation-hygiene theory. The social aspects related to teachers' work are represented as *recognition*-factors in the theory, and the administrative and advancement aspect of the job are referred to as *achievement, responsibility and advancement* –factors by Herzberg (1971).

The research questions I intend to answer based on the findings of the qualitative research method described above are as follows:

- 1) Which factors related to teachers' job enhance English teachers' job satisfaction and have a greater significance on it?
- 2) Which factors related to teachers' job decrease English teachers' job satisfaction and have less significance on it?
- 3) What is the correlation between the study results and Herzberg's (1971) motivation-hygiene theory?

In the next chapter I will explain the results of my research. First, I will present the general outcome of my study based on the participants' replies to the open-end questions of my questionnaire. In addition, I will provide examples of the replies in order to reinforce my points. Second, I will view the job related factors which have more or less significance to teachers' job satisfaction on the grounds of the results of the second part of the questionnaire.

4 RESULTS

In this section I will present the results of my research. First I will report on the results of the open-end questions which were the first part of my research questionnaire. In order to present the findings clearly I have divided the nine questions into three categories: general level of job satisfaction and expectations regarding teachers' work, satisfying and dissatisfying features in teachers' work and incidents at work which caused a lot of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. I will not

use exact numbers in reporting the results of the open-end questions, since answers to them are often ambiguous or even inconsistent. The second part of the questionnaire, the numerical evaluation of different aspects in teachers' work, will be presented with the help of tables and further explained verbally.

4.1 General level of job satisfaction and expectations regarding teacher's work (questions 1, 2 and 3)

The first three questions dealt with the general level of job satisfaction and the expectations the participants had for teachers' job. In the first question I wished to find out how satisfied the participants are in general with the teaching profession. All of the ten participants reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with their profession. They felt that the teaching profession suited their character and abilities. However, a few of the participants wanted to point out that they are satisfied specifically with the teaching part of their job, but that the additional activities, for example different types of projects, are not satisfying.

With the second question I enquired the participants about their expectations concerning a teachers' job. A very common expectation for the job among the participants was teaching students English language and cultural matters and, thus, interacting with them. In addition, the participants mentioned wanting to set an adult example for students, and turning them into active and motivated language learners and users. They also reported on expecting to be able to apply in practice everything they had learned in theory during their university studies.

In the third question the participants were asked to assess whether the teaching profession has met with their expectations or not, and if something in their job surprised them. Most of the participants felt that the job has met with their expectations, and most of them had also found some aspects of the job surprising. Some of these surprising issues were the lack of time for performing their job properly enough, the lack of respect in the relationships between students and teachers, the amount of other job tasks in addition to teaching, and having to learn how to use several technical appliances.

4.2 Satisfying and dissatisfying features in teacher's work (questions 4,5,6 and 7)

Questions four, five, six and seven in my research questionnaire were about the features in teachers' work which the participants found satisfying, dissatisfying or in need for development. When asked about matters that the participants wished to develop in their work in the fourth question, most of them reported on wanting to use more various teaching methods and materials and wanting to take more part in further teaching training programmes. However, all of them felt that their schedules were too tight for them to actively train themselves, or that too little money has been reserved in schools and municipalities for training teachers. Due to lack of time and constant hurry at work, a few of the participants also felt that there are not enough possibilities for a teacher to take care of oneself physically and emotionally. In addition, criticism was placed on the working morale of students, and a few participants wished to find ways to get students to take on more responsibility of doing their homework and of their studies in general.

The fifth question enquired the participants about the most satisfying feature in their work. All of them mentioned interaction with students to be the most satisfying part of their job. This included getting students interested in something, watching them learn, grow and develop in their use of language, succeed in their studies and being able to teach them other things than just language. In other words, the participants were satisfied if they managed to encourage open discussion in class about any matter in life. They felt pleased if students were able to count on them in other matters than just language learning and course related issues. In addition, a couple of participants mentioned a good working atmosphere in class and the 'flow-phenomenon', meaning that students work in class with such eagerness and pleasure that time just flies, without any one even noticing it.

With the help of the sixth question I wished to find out which general factors in a teacher's job (for example salary) were not liked. The participants reported on various different aspects. For example, salary, hurry, physical environment, the increasing amount of job tasks, the seasonal piling up of work and large student groups were mentioned in the replies. They felt that their job is getting more and more demanding with all the extra activities in addition to teaching. Some of these activities included meetings with school staff and students' parents, having to learn how to use new technology, cleaning up and taking part in developing the school. In relation to the increasing amount of work, a lot of dissatisfaction was expressed about the salary which stayed the same, no

matter how much more work the teachers did. Moreover, none of the participants mentioned if these aspects of their work had been tried to improve.

In the seventh question I asked the participants to analyse which aspects in their own personal job (for example atmosphere among colleagues) they were unsatisfied with. Almost all the participants listed the same things under this question as question number six. These things included hurry, the amount of work and large student groups. Moreover, the participants reported on minimal amount of cooperation with colleagues, conflicts with colleagues, poor working materials and working environment, the feeling of inadequacy no matter how much work they did and vague common guidelines given by the school on how to proceed, for example, in different types of situations with students. All in all, the participants saw the general dissatisfying features in teachers' job to be the ones to cause most problems in their own personal working life also.

4.3 Incidents at work which caused a lot of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (questions 8 and 9)

Questions eight and nine in my questionnaire gave the participants a chance to describe a good and a bad work day or a work related incident in their own words. In the eighth question the participants were asked to describe an incident or a day when they felt very satisfied with their job. Due to the nature of this question the replies were rather individual but common to the replies was that the participants had felt very satisfied with their work when classes went according to plan and even extra work was done, when they had managed to teach some difficult aspect of language to students so well that everyone had understood it, when they had had good discussions in class in English and when they had received positive feedback from their students. Here are a couple of examples of the replies I received for the eighth question:

- (1) 'Ihmisytyteen liittyvien suurten kysymysten käsittely kielten tunneilla tuottaa minulle suurinta tyytyväisyyttä.'
'Dealing with important and large issues related to humanity in language classes gives me the most satisfaction.'
- (2) 'Jos on suunnitellut tuntinsa oikein hyvin, ehkä jotain ekstraa, ja se sujuu ja saa oppilaat toimimaan motivoituneesti, arvostamaan työtänsä ja opettajan työtä.'
'If one has planned one's lessons well plus maybe some extra work, and it all goes well and one gets the students to work with motivation, appreciate their own work and also the teacher's work.'

Naturally, in the ninth open end question I asked the participants to describe an incident or a day when they were very dissatisfied with their job. The replies to this question were also individual by

nature. Some common features in the replies were not having enough time to listen to students and help them, holding an unsuccessful class, saying something offensive by accident in class, receiving bad feedback about teaching and having a conflict with a student. Here are a couple of examples of the replies to this question:

- (3) 'Välitunnilla ei ole aikaa jonkun oppilaan tärkeälle asialle, se harmittaa pitkään. Siinä ikään kuin menettää tilaisuuden.'
'When there is no time for some students' important issues during recesses. That bothers one for a long time. It is as if one loses an opportunity there.'
- (4) 'Sellaiset hetket aina harmittavat jälkikäteen, kun huomaa, että liiallisella kiirehtimisellä vesittää koko tunnit.'
'If one has ruined classes by hurrying too much, it bothers one afterwards.'

4.4 Environmental, social and career aspects

In Table 1 below I listed the factors which represent the environment and frames of a teacher's job. These are working space, equipment, materials, the size of teaching groups, working hours, holidays, salary and work amount. As can be seen from the table, most of the participants placed either remarkable significance to job satisfaction on these job related factors, or saw them as being necessary factors to it. Moreover, only a few participants thought that these factors have either no significance or only some significance to their job satisfaction. The difference between remarkable significance and necessary in the tables is that without necessary job factors one cannot feel satisfied with one's job at all. In other words, necessary factors are compulsory and they need to be taken care of in order for one to feel satisfaction of one's job. Factors with remarkable significance are not compulsory to satisfaction, meaning that one can feel satisfied, even if those factors are not fully taken care of.

The numbers of Table 1 are in accordance with the replies the participants gave in the open-end questions. For example, salary, the vast work amount and large teaching groups were frequently mentioned in the replies as a cause for dissatisfaction. Accordingly, high value was placed on them also in the numerical evaluation part.

Table 1. Job related factors concerning the environment and frames of a teacher's job

Job related factors	no significance to job satisfaction	some significance to job satisfaction	remarkable significance to job satisfaction	a necessary factor to job

				satisfaction
working space / equipment / materials	0	0	4	5
the size of teaching groups	0	1	5	4
working hours	1	2	7	0
holidays	0	2	6	2
salary	0	2	7	1
work amount	0	1	5	4

Table 2 shows the social aspects related to teachers' work which are relations with colleagues and headmaster, appreciation / recognition / support from colleagues, appreciation / recognition / support from headmaster, relations with students, appreciation from students and relations with students' parents. Most of the participants, (6/10), marked the relations with their colleagues and headmaster and the appreciation coming from them as having remarkable significance to their job satisfaction. In addition, seven of the participants saw relations with students affecting their job satisfaction in a remarkable way, and seven reported the appreciation coming from students being a necessary factor to it. However, in the case of relations with the parents of students, six participants placed only some significance to them, while two participants saw them having no significance at all, and other two placed remarkable significance on them.

Table 2. Job related factors concerning the social aspect of teacher's work

Job related factors	no significance to job satisfaction	some significance to job satisfaction	remarkable significance to job satisfaction	a necessary factor to job satisfaction
relations with colleagues / headmaster	0	0	6	4
appreciation / recognition / support from colleagues	0	3	6	1

appreciation / recognition / support from headmaster	0	2	6	2
relations with students	0	0	3	7
appreciation from students	0	0	7	3
relations with the parents of students	2	6	2	0

Table 3 shows how the participants viewed the administrative and advancement aspects of a teacher's job affecting their job satisfaction. These factors included working and managing principles of the school, opportunities to influence the job / the decisions, getting responsible tasks, developing in one's job / self development / learning new things and opportunities of promotion. As can be seen from the table, opportunities to influence one's job had the most importance to the participants' job satisfaction, since eight of them marked those as having a remarkable significance. In addition, getting responsible tasks was a remarkable factor to six of the participants, and developing in one's job was remarkable to five of them. Moreover, working and managing principles of the school had remarkable significance to five of the participants. On the contrary, the least significance to job satisfaction was placed on opportunities of promotion, since five people saw it having no importance at all, and five marked it having only some significance.

Table 3. Job related factors concerning the administrative and advancement aspects of a teacher's job

Job related factors	no significance to job satisfaction	some significance to job satisfaction	remarkable significance to job satisfaction	a necessary factor to job satisfaction
working and managing principles of the school	0	1	5	4
opportunities to influence the job / the decisions	0	0	8	2
getting responsible tasks	0	4	6	0
developing in one's job / self development / learning new	0	1	5	4

things				
opportunities of promotion	5	5	0	0

5 DISCUSSION

In this section I will analyze the results of my research further, present answers to the research questions, and see how the study results relate to the theoretical background of this research. Firstly, I will view what the open-end questions and the numerical evaluation part of the research questionnaire reveal of the job related factors which enhance and decrease teachers' job satisfaction. Secondly, I will report on the accordance between my study results and Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (1971) and the other theoretical framework also.

5.1 Answering the research questions

My research questions were listed in Chapter 3 as follows:

- 1) Which factors related to teachers' job enhance English teachers' job satisfaction and have a greater significance on it?
- 2) Which factors related to teachers' job decrease English teachers' job satisfaction and have less significance on it?
- 3) What is the correlation between the study results and Herzberg's (1971) motivation-hygiene theory?

According to the study results, job related factors concerning the environment and frames of a teacher's job were given great value by the research participants. Working space, equipment, materials, salary, holidays, working hours, the size of teaching groups and work amount were all seen as having a great significance on job satisfaction. Many participants reported that having good teaching equipment, environment and materials is a necessary basis for one to do one's job well. This was particularly emphasized by teachers who worked in schools that did not have all the modern equipment. Accordingly, poor environment, equipment and materials decrease job satisfaction, since teachers feel that they are not able to perform their job well enough.

In the case of working hours, work amount and salary most of the participants reported that the amount of work and other work tasks than teaching is ever increasing, and that their salary is not in

accordance with it, since it does not increase. Tarja Aila and Anna Halme (2003) came to the same conclusion in their questionnaire with which they set out to explore how well language teachers in comprehensive schools are doing and feeling in their jobs. They also ran into a lot of dissatisfaction about teachers' salary because, in addition to teaching, teachers often have to carry the roles of a social worker, a police, a parent and a PR-person for their schools. Aila and Halme (2003) found out that the unchanging amount of salary in relation to the work becoming more and more demanding caused frustration among teachers. When it comes to working hours, the participants often mentioned that their amount of weekly working hours is huge and exhausting, especially during examination weeks in the end of teaching periods and matriculation examinations. Aila Mustonen and Sari Saarinen (2003) report in their study of upper secondary school teachers' working hours that the weekly amount of work increased by three hours for English teachers. In addition, they mentioned that the number of English teachers' weekly working hours during matriculation examinations was three hours more than for teachers of other languages.

The size of teaching groups is a significant factor for teachers' job satisfaction because too large groups increase social problems in class, and make the differentiation of teaching suitable for every student very difficult for the teacher, as Aila and Hurme point out in their article (2003). Large teaching groups also mean that teachers have less time to concentrate on the actual task of teaching, since they constantly need to take care of problematic situations and disturbance caused by students in the class. The fact that these environmental factors in teachers' work are significant to job satisfaction means also that if they are poorly attended, it decreases job satisfaction.

According to the replies given by the research participants, some of the job factors having most significance on teachers' job satisfaction were the social relations with colleagues and students, and the appreciation coming from them. Furthermore, relations with students and the appreciation coming from them were seen as the most important social aspects affecting job satisfaction. The reason why social relations play quite an extensive role in making teachers feel good about their job could be because teachers' job is independent and even lonely sometimes. There is not a lot of job related cooperation between teachers in schools and, therefore, good relations with colleagues are seen as valuable in order for teachers to socialize with each other. Most of the interaction in school takes place with students and, thus, relations with students are the most significant social job satisfaction factor for teachers. Moreover, the participants clearly reported that students are the most important and valuable part of their work, and that they do their work especially for students. Interestingly, relations with students' parents were not seen as significant on job satisfaction as the

other social relations. This could be explained by the fact that upper secondary school teachers actually do not need to communicate with students' parents often, and they usually contact them only if a student has problems in school. All in all it can be said that the social aspect of teachers' work, meaning relations with colleagues and students had a great significance on job satisfaction and enhanced it. On the contrary, if there are major problems in the social relations in schools, it decreases job satisfaction.

In the case of factors concerning the administrative and advancement aspect of a teacher's job, the participants reported that opportunities to influence their job and the decisions made in school, getting responsible tasks and developing in one's job had most significance on their job satisfaction. Opportunities to influence one's job is meaningful because teachers need to feel that they are in control of how their job changes and develops, and because they want to be seen as essential members in the decision making processes of schools. In addition, getting responsible tasks was significant to job satisfaction because it could be related to achieving appreciation and recognition from colleagues and students. In other words, the more responsible tasks one gets, the more social respect one receives.

Developing in one's job was viewed as significant to job satisfaction, since teachers need to keep themselves updated on the subject they teach, and on the way they teach. Many participants mentioned that they wished to be able to take part in teacher training programmes more often, and to pay special attention to keeping up with the latest teaching methods and materials because it also affects the level of interest and motivation of students. However, many of the participants mentioned that their schools do not offer many chances for taking part in training programmes. Aila and Hurme (2003) faced the same problem in their questionnaire. Teachers genuinely wish to train themselves further and society expects them to do so, but it can be impossible, for example due to financial issues. In addition, Mustonen and Saarinen (2003) point out that the training possibilities are often unequal in different regions, since the teachers of large schools need to put more of their own money into training themselves than the teachers of smaller schools.

The least significance to job satisfaction was placed on opportunities of promotion which could be explained by the lack of possibilities of proceeding in a teaching career. Basically, in the school world the only possible promotion for teachers is becoming a headmaster which many teachers do not desire. Headmasters mostly deal with the administrative tasks of schools, and many teachers do not want to give up teaching, since it would at least to some extent alienate them from students.

Accordingly, they do not see promotion as relevant to their job satisfaction. When it comes to administrative and advancement aspects of teachers' job, they can decrease job satisfaction if teachers feel they do not have enough possibilities for training and challenging themselves. Some of the participants reported on, for example, the lack of money in municipalities for training teachers.

5.2 The research results in relation to the theoretical background

The results of my research were to some part congruent and to some extent divergent with Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. According to Herzberg (1971), *achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility* and *advancement* are job factors which generate job satisfaction and have more significance on it. My study reinforced Herzberg's view in that the participant-teachers reported the above mentioned factors giving them significant satisfaction. Especially achievement, which in this case was often mentioned by the teachers as getting students to learn, ranked highly in the study results as a significant factor for job satisfaction. In addition, recognition from colleagues and headmaster received high priority. Responsibility was also seen as an important factor for job satisfaction, since most of the participants thought that getting responsible tasks had a remarkable significance on it. In the case of Herzberg's *work itself* –factor, my research revealed that in addition to it being important on job satisfaction and generating it it also caused dissatisfaction. The content of teachers' job, meaning the actual teaching and the communication with students, gave the participants significant satisfaction, but the amount of work was a dissatisfying feature to most of the participants. Moreover, my study results revealed that advancement in one's job is not a significant factor for teachers' job satisfaction, which is in conflict with Herzberg's view.

Herzberg (1971) stated that such job related factors as *company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations* and *working conditions* are less significant to job satisfaction and generate even dissatisfaction. However, my research revealed all of these factors being important on teachers' job satisfaction. Especially social relations with colleagues and students and working conditions were seen as either remarkable factors or necessary factors to satisfaction. My research was in line with Herzberg's view in that the teachers often reported on, for example, poor working environment and salary causing dissatisfaction.

Herzberg (1971) concluded that the more abstract, psychological motivation factors (*achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement*) are the source of genuine job satisfaction,

while the more concrete, environmental hygiene factors (*company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, working conditions*) are less important. This general view came across from my research as well, apart from the few exceptions mentioned earlier. The importance of the abstract job factors was especially visible in the replies the participants gave to the open-end questions of my study. They highlighted such matters as seeing students learn, having open discussions with them, conveying cultural and language information, acting as good role models and helping students become independent, active citizens as the most satisfying things in their work.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of my research was to find out how satisfied English language teachers in upper secondary schools in Finland are, which job related factors are significant to their job satisfaction and enhance it, and which factors are less significant or decrease job satisfaction. In addition, I set out to explore how the results of my study correlate with Frederick Herzberg's (1971) motivation-hygiene theory. The data for the study was collected by e-mail with the help of a two-parted questionnaire which included ten open-end questions, and a section in which the participant were asked to numerically evaluate the significance of specific job related factors on their job satisfaction. Accordingly, the method of the study was qualitative.

All of the participant-teachers were either satisfied or very satisfied with their work. Environmental job related factors and issues which had the most significance on the teachers' job satisfaction were working space / equipment and materials, the size of teaching groups, working hours, holidays, salary and work amount. In the case of social aspects of teachers' work the most significant job factors were relations with colleagues / headmaster and the support from them, relations with students and appreciation from them. Career aspects which had the most significance on the teachers' job satisfaction were opportunities to influence one's job, self development and getting responsible tasks. Moreover, some of the common job factors and issues which caused dissatisfaction among the participants were salary, hurry, physical environment, increasing amount of job tasks, seasonal piling up of work and large student groups.

My research results correlated to some extent with Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, since they revealed that most of Herzberg's motivation factors were significant on the teachers' job

satisfaction, while a few of them were not. Moreover, my study results differed with Herzberg's view in that the hygiene factors of the job were also seen as important to job satisfaction. However, Herzberg's perception that the more abstract motivation factors of work generate the most genuine job satisfaction did clearly show from my study results as well.

In order to take the research further and to bring other interesting aspects to it, the job satisfaction of language teachers could be, for example, compared between teachers who are rather new to the job and teachers who have more work experience. In addition, the job satisfaction of language teachers could also be compared regionally.

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Appendix 1: The questionnaire

Tutkimus englannin kielen opettajien työtyytyväisyydestä lukiotasolla

Hannele Kaski / Jyväskylän yliopisto 2008

Yleistä

1. Kuinka tyytyväinen koet olevasi opettajan työhön yleisesti?
2. Mitä alun perin odotit opettajan työltä?
3. Onko opettajan ammatti vastannut odotuksia? Millä tavalla se on vastannut/ei ole vastannut odotuksia? Onko jokin yllättänyt?
4. Mille asioille työssäsi antaisit arvosanan välttävä? Missä asioissa olisi kehittämisen varaa?
5. Mistä saat eniten tyydytystä työssäsi?
6. Mistä asioista et pidä opettajan työssä yleisesti? (ajatellen opettajan toimenkuvaa yleisellä tasolla, esim. palkka)
7. Mihin asioihin olet tyytymätön omassa työssäsi? (esim. ilmapiiri kollegoiden välillä)

8. Kerro jostakin tapauksesta/päivästä, jolloin olit erittäin tyytyväinen työhösi.

9. Kerro jostakin tapauksesta/päivästä, jolloin olit erittäin tyytymätön työhösi.

Kuinka paljon seuraavat opettajan työhön liittyvät tekijät vaikuttavat työtyytyväisyyteesi

Valitse asteikosta itsellesi parhaiten sopiva numerovaihtoehto ja merkitse se viivalle.

Asteikko:

- 1-ei merkitystä työtyytyväisyyteen,
- 2-jonkin verran merkitystä työtyytyväisyyteen,
- 3-huomattava merkitys työtyytyväisyyteen,
- 4-välttämätön tekijä työtyytyväisyydelle

työtilat/välineet/materiaalit: _____

opetusryhmien koko: _____

työajat: _____

lomat: _____

palkka: _____

työmäärä: _____

suhteet kollegoihin/
rehtoriin: _____

kollegoilta saatu arvostus/
kannustus/tunnustus: _____

rehtorilta saatu arvostus/
kannustus/tunnustus: _____

suhteet oppilaisiin: _____

oppilailta saatu arvostus: _____

suhteet oppilaiden vanhempiin: _____

koulun työskentely-/johtamistapa: _____

vaikutusmahdollisuudet työhön/
päätöksentekoon: _____

vastuullisten tehtävien saanti: _____

ammattissa kehittyminen/
uuden oppiminen: _____

ylenemismahdollisuudet: _____

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Appendix 2: Translation of the questionnaire

A study of the job satisfaction of English language teachers in upper secondary schools

1. In general, how satisfied do you feel with the teaching profession?
2. What did you originally expect from teacher's job?
3. Has the profession met your original expectations? In what way has it met them/has not met them? Has something in the job surprised you?
4. Which aspects in your job would you describe as tolerable/adequate? What aspects in your job could be developed?
5. Which factors in your job are most satisfiable to you?
6. When considering the teaching profession in general, which aspects in teacher's job do you dislike? (e.g. salary)
7. When considering your own job, which aspects are you dissatisfied with? (e.g. atmosphere among colleagues)
8. Describe an incident/a day when you felt very satisfied with your job.
9. Describe an incident/a day when you felt very dissatisfied with your job.

How much do the following factors related to the teaching profession effect your job satisfaction

Choose a suitable number from the scale and mark it on the line

Scale:

- 1 - no significance to job satisfaction
- 2 - some significance to job satisfaction
- 3 - remarkable significance to job satisfaction
- 4 - a necessary factor to job satisfaction

working space/equipment/materials: _____

the size of teaching groups: _____

working hours: _____

holidays: _____

salary: _____

work amount: _____

relations with colleagues/headmaster: _____

appreciation/recognition/support from colleagues: _____

appreciation/recognition/support from headmaster: _____

relations with students: _____

appreciation from students: _____

relations with the parents of students: _____

working and managing principals of the school: _____

opportunities to influence the job/the decisions: _____

getting responsible tasks: _____

developing in one's job/self development/learning new things: _____

opportunities of promotion: _____