

*Affective variables, parental involvement and
competence among South Korean high school
learners of English*

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationships between various affective variables and two measures of competence in English, for 190 South Korean high school students. A 55-item questionnaire was used to measure attitudes (Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture), motivation (Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn and Attitudes toward the Learning of English), amotivation, parental involvement (Active Parental Encouragement, Passive Parental Encouragement and Parental Pressure), parental disinterest and students' competence in L2 (English-EXAM and English-SELF). Pearson product-moment coefficients indicate that active and passive forms of parental encouragement correlate with motivation

to learn, as conceptualized by Gardner (1985, 2010), as well as with parental pressure, which suggests that South Korean students report undergoing forms of pressure when their parents actively or passively encourage them. Furthermore, the obtained correlations of the active and passive forms of encouragement with different variables suggest that the two forms represent two distinct concepts. While parental disinterest correlated negatively with motivational variables, parental pressure correlated only with motivational intensity, and only weakly. Therefore, parental pressure seems not to interact significantly with participants' attitudes, motivation and competence. Multiple linear regression analyses confirm the importance of motivation to learn for students' L2 competence.

Keywords: parental involvement, parental disinterest, motivation, amotivation, L2 competence

English is currently the most common language employed worldwide for various means of communication. In many Asian countries, the learning of English as a second language (L2) has become an important educational topic (Nunan, 2005). In order to describe the situation in South Korea, Park (2009) uses the term "English fever," which clearly expresses how important the learning of English has become. In South Korea and several other countries, competence in English is of great importance for success in life since it provides access to prestigious universities and to higher employment positions (Park, 2009; Sorensen, 1994; Stevens, Kinam, & Hyun, 2006).

In cases where parents rely on their youth to care for them in their elderly years, the financial success of their children through education becomes paramount to their own future (Sorensen, 1994). Korean mothers are willing, even for an extended period of time, to emigrate with their children to English-speaking countries in order to help them learn the target language (Park, 2009). Surprisingly, while parents' involvement in their children's education is recognized as substantial, student motivation is known to be low (Niederhauser, 1997).

Many studies have focused on several aspects related to South Korea's educational issues (Hwang, 2001; Park, 2009; Stevens, Kinam, & Hyun, 2006) as well as on direct or indirect ways to improve students' English competence (Han, 2003; Kim & Kim, 2011; Pae, 2008; Park, 2009; Stevens, Kinam, & Hyun, 2006). However, no researcher seems to have investigated South Korean students' perceptions of their parents' support. This lack of research interest is surprising, given the fact that many authors (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei, 2009; Gardner, 2001) have identified parents' role as a variable that can affect students' attitudes and motivation to learn an L2. Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Holbein

(2005), Hung and Marjoribanks (2005), Spera (2005), and Wang (2004) have recognized parental involvement as a significant predictor of young learners' academic competence. However, few researchers have investigated the possible relationships between parental involvement, affective variables and students' competence. Masgoret and Gardner (2003), through a meta-analysis, sought to identify which of the various affective variables, except parental involvement, correlated the most with students' competence.

When considering contexts where a second language such as English has become important for social promotion, thus making parents and children interact in a way that favours the learning of the L2, it would be pertinent to investigate relationships between parental involvement¹ or their disinterest and other affective variables. The purpose of this study is to investigate possible relationships between parental involvement, parental disinterest and different affective variables among South Korean learners of English. By doing so, we will attempt to answer three questions:

1. How do South Korean students perceive the role their parents play in their learning of English?
2. Is there a relationship between parental involvement or parental disinterest and various affective variables?
3. Do parental involvement and parental disinterest correlate with students' competence in a second language?

Literature Review

Numerous studies in L2 acquisition have focused on the role of a variety of affective variables. Among those variables, attitudes and motivation have been widely studied (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985, 2010; Gardner & Lambert, 1959, 1972; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Gardner (1985) defined motivation as the learner's effort to learn an L2, the effort being the consequence of a desire to reach a given goal: "Motivation to learn a second language is seen as referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p. 10). Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggested two distinct types of motivation: integrative and instrumental. "Integrative motivation refer[s] to positive attitudes and feelings toward the target language group"

¹ Parental involvement refers to parents' different forms of encouragement. It could consist of active or passive forms of encouragement, as well as forms of strong parental interest or of strong parental encouragement which can be perceived as forms of pressure by the participants.

(Matsuzaki Carreira, 2005, p. 39), while instrumental motivation refers to practical gains from L2 proficiency, for example to obtain a better working position or a higher salary (Matsuzaki Carreira, 2005). Integrativeness which “reflects a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer psychologically to the other language community” (Gardner, 2001, p. 15) does not apply to all foreign language learning contexts, especially where learners have no contact with the target languages and people (Dörnyei, 1990; Matsuzaki Carreira, 2005). According to Matsuzaki Carreira (2005), this constitutes the reason why some researchers started to incorporate notions from psychological motivation research, such as *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* motivation.

Vallerand (1997) reports that extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation had been discussed in over 800 psychology publications. Intrinsic motivation refers to the “motivation [to] engage in an activity for its own sake;” extrinsic motivation refers to the “motivation [to] engage in an activity as a means to an end” (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002, p. 245). When a learner has neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivational goals, amotivation is said to be present in the language learner (Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand, 2000). Therefore, conceptually speaking, amotivation is not a negative form of motivation, but rather represents a lack or an absence of motivation. Motivation is known to be one of the most important variables for predicting competence (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), while amotivation characterizes students who tend to abandon their studies of the L2. Most students are brought up by parents whose own views and goals toward the learning of an L2 can influence their own children’s goals, or lack thereof, to learn an L2. When parents outwardly demonstrate their disinterest toward the learning of an L2, this can negatively shape their children’s own attitudes and motivation to learn this L2.

Parents’ role or implication have been identified by many authors (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 2001) as an element that can affect students’ attitudes and motivation to learn an L2. Gardner (1985) categorized parental involvement according to active and passive forms of encouragement. The active form refers to positive or negative parental behaviour toward their children’s learning of a language. Parents who encourage and reward their children’s learning of a language can be viewed as adopting an active and positive role, whereas parents who discourage L2 learning by emphasizing other subjects or by criticizing the language and its speakers play an active role, with a negative impact.

Parents’ passive role relates to their disposition toward the L2 community, which influences their children’s desire to align with the speakers of the language, and this behaviour, according to Gardner (1985), reflects an integrative orientation (Bartram, 2006). A negative parental attitude toward the L2 speaking community would affect their children’s attitude and not allow motivation to develop. In

Gardner and Smythe's summary on the development of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (1981), parental encouragement significantly contributed to the students' integrative motive factors (Gardner & Smythe, 1981).

Parents have also been identified as having a significant influence on the general attitudes of their children (Barton, 1997; Phillips & Filmer-Sankey, 1993). Different forms of parental encouragement are among the many ways parents exert their attitudinal influence (Young, 1994). Through a qualitative survey, Bartram (2006) studied the influence of parents on the attitudes toward the language learning of 411 learners of French, English and German. The researcher investigated the different ways that parents try to influence their children's learning of a foreign language. The German students' positive attitudes, and the more negative attitudes of the English students, corresponded with their parents' attitudes. Results from this study provide evidence of a relationship between students' attitudes and those of their parents. As Gardner (1985) suggested, the fact that parents contribute to the language learning of their children affects their children's attitudes.

In 2005, Dörnyei proposed the L2 motivation self-system, which focuses on learners' self-identity, on their self-visualization or image of themselves as L2 learners, and on their desire to attain their future self-image, which consequently affects their motivational behaviour. In the L2 motivation self-system, parents are considered an influential factor. At least two subsequent studies (Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) identified parental influence as being either internalized or correlating with one of the three components of Dörnyei's motivational system. In Csizér and Kormos (2009), parental influence became an internalized part of the Ideal L2 Self component, which represents the learner's idealistic self-image (Dörnyei, 2005). In Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009), parental influence correlated with the learner's Ought-to L2 Self, which is what a learner believes he or she should possess or ought to be in order to avoid negative outcomes, such as disappointing one's parents (Dörnyei, 2005). Therefore, parents are identified as forms of influence that can differently affect their children's attitudes and motivation toward the learning of an L2.

Studies conducted in South Korea have focused on how to improve students' performance and competence in English by improving teaching (Han, 2003) or by motivating students to learn English (Kim & Kim, 2011; Pae, 2008). Suggestions to parents could be made if we knew more precisely how their involvement interacts with their children's affective variables. In their aforementioned meta-analysis, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) found the highest correlation between measures of achievement and motivation to learn an L2. In Gardner's work, three scales are commonly used to evaluate motivation: Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn the Target Language, and Attitudes to-

ward Learning the Target Language. Masgoret and Gardner consider these three scales to be the most representative components of motivation as a variable in the learning of an L2.

In light of the first question of the present study, and according to the important role parents play in South Korea in their children's learning of English, it is hypothesized that active or passive forms of parental involvement will correspond with forms of pressure. Since parents are considered a touchstone that can affect, in many ways, L2 students' attitudes and motivation, and since motivational variables correlate with students' competence in L2, it is legitimate to hypothesize, in regards to the second question, that parental variables may be expected to correlate with students' attitudes and motivation to learn English. The same is also legitimate in regards to the third question of the present study, that parental variables are expected to correlate with students' competence in an L2.

The goal of the present study is to investigate, among a South Korean high school population, the interaction between parental involvement as perceived by students, as well as parental disinterest, affective variables and competence in English. This study will therefore provide data on parental involvement in South Korea and extend the body of research in L2 acquisition on attitudinal and motivational affective variables, including parental variables. It will also extend, within the L2 acquisition research agenda, the possible role that parental variables play on students' motivation and English L2 competence.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 190 participants, ranging from 16 to 18 years of age, all native South Koreans attending private high schools located in Seoul and Incheon. The capital city of Seoul with its metropolitan area (Incheon) is known to have the best South Korean universities and therefore is considered to be an excellent pool of participants, that is, students, especially those in their final years of high school, undergoing pressure to take their university entrance exams. The study was conducted during students' regular summer classes at two different high schools. Participants were from seven classes in their last two years of high school.

Participants were asked, in their respective classrooms, to answer a questionnaire on a volunteer basis. They took 10 to 15 minutes to complete it. In three of the seven classes, it was the teacher who explained the guidelines for each section of the questionnaire, the main author not being allowed to be present. This situation could be due in part to the competitiveness of South Korea's educational system.

Material

The questionnaire comprises 55 items (see the Appendix) covering 10 different independent variables. The questionnaire contains items from Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) scales, which are widely used and shown to be reliable for evaluating various affective variables (Gardner, 2010; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Items from Taguchi, Magid and Papi's (2009) Family Influence and Ought-to L2 Self scales were borrowed in order to estimate forms of parental pressure that could correspond to the South Korean context. Other items from the same authors, which relate to opportunities to interact with native English speakers or their communities, were adapted to measure participants' desire to interact with native English speakers, in view of the limited possibilities offered in the South Korean context. Some items were shortened and also transformed from questions to statements to better fit a Likert scale. Items from Csizér and Kormos (2009), which relate to parents' active forms of encouragement, were also used. Noels, Pelletier, Clément and Vallerand's (2000) amotivation scale, which is perhaps the most widely used scale of amotivation for L2 studies, was included in the present study to verify whether, within the South Korean education-centered context, participants could show significant levels of amotivation. Finally, additional items were created to better suit the South Korean context. For example, the emigration situation for the learning of English and parental demands for students to attend extra English classes were among those items. Since no scale for parental pressure and disinterest seems to exist, a series of items were created anew, or the aforementioned scales were used to build them. Items from the questionnaire were translated into the official South Korean *Hangul* language. The following section provides detailed information on the number and nature of these items.

Most of the affective variable items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). Items in the negative form were used to insure reliability of the instrument; data from these items were transformed for reverse scoring before computation. Two scales, Motivational Intensity (MI) and Desire to Learn (DL), were in the form of multiple-choice items, as found in Gardner's (1985) questionnaire. Values were given once questionnaires were filled out, according to the chosen answer. As an example, for the item measuring participants' desire to learn: "If there were English-speaking families in my neighbourhood, I would," a value of 3 was given to answer A ("speak English with them as much as possible"), a value of 2 to answer B ("speak English with them sometimes"), and a value of 1 to answer C ("never speak English with them"). Answer choices were not always associated with the same scores. Using SPSS, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients were computed for each scale to verify their internal consistency and to provide an indicator of their reliability value

within the instrument. Even though an acceptable value for an Alpha is said to be higher than .70 (Bland & Altman, 1997; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), one must bear in mind for interpreting our data that Alpha coefficients are influenced by the number of items on a test: They tend to be low for a very low number of items and tend to be artificially inflated by a high number of items (Cortina, 1993). Factorial analyses were beyond the scope of the present study.

Independent Variables

Parental involvement (PI). Of the 55 items, a total of 16 addressed parental involvement, either in the form of encouragement (active or passive), or pressure. The item numbers provided in this section are those that were used in our instrument, and not in the questionnaires from which they were borrowed. Three scales were used to investigate parental involvement.

The Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT; $\alpha = .75$) scale contains six items: four borrowed from Gardner's (1985) AMTB (items 4, 10, 34, & 40) and two from Csizér and Kormos' (2009) questionnaire (items 18 & 21). For example, item 4 ("My parents try to help me with my English") represents an active form of parental encouragement. A high score reveals a strong active form of parental encouragement, as perceived by the participants.

Table 1 gives an overview of the nature and number of items used for each scale and for each independent variable. The number in parenthesis indicates the number of items included in the category.

Table 1 Details of the scales and items used

Independent variable	Scales	Item numbers
Parental involvement (16)	P_ACT/Active encouragement (6)	4, 10, 18, 21, 34, 40
	P_PAS/Passive encouragement (5)	9, 14, 37, 38, 42
	P_PRES/Pressure (5)	12, 17, 26, 27, 30
Parental disinterest (5)	P_DIS/Disinterest (5)	2, 19, 22, 33, 36
Attitudes t. English (12)	ACOM/Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (9)	1, 5, 11, 13, 23, 28, 31, 32, 44
	ACUL/Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (3)	6, 15, 20
Motivation (19)	MI/Motivational Intensity (5)	46, 49, 51, 52, 54
	DL/Desire to Learn (6)	45, 47, 48, 50, 53, 55
	ALE/Attitudes toward the learning of English (8)	3, 7, 16, 24, 29, 35, 39, 43
Amotivation (3)	AMOT/Amotivation scale (3)	8, 25, 41

The Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS; $\alpha = .85$) scale contains five items taken from Gardner's (1985) AMTB (9, 14, 37, 38, 42). Some of these have been adapted to better express South Korean parents' thoughts rather than their hopes, their feelings or their expectations, as was the case in Gard-

ner's (1985) AMTB. Here is an example: "My parents think that I should continue studying English all through school" (item 14). High scores show a strong passive form of parental encouragement.

The Parental Pressure (P_PRES; $\alpha = .78$) scale consists of five items (12, 17, 26, 27, 30) and represents parents' strong interest in their children's learning of English, which can eventually be perceived negatively by the learners, as a form of pressure. Such is the case with item 26, created for this study: "My parents require that I take additional English classes, aside from my regular classes." Four items were borrowed from Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009). Two of them (12 & 30) measure family influence (e.g., item 30: "My parents put a lot of pressure on me to study English") while the other two (17 & 27) are used to estimate the "ought-to L2" self-concept. For the purpose of the present study, these four items were transformed in order to represent forms of strong parental interest that could eventually correspond to forms of pressure. For instance, parents can be slightly disappointed if their child does not study English seriously, but a high level of disappointment can be associated with negative resentment, leading the child to take it as pressure to work or study differently (e.g., 17: "My parents have great expectations toward my learning of English" or 27: "My parents would be disappointed if I did not study English seriously"). A high score reflects high levels of pressure from parents, as perceived by the participants.

Parental disinterest (P_DIS). The five items for Parental Disinterest (P_DIS; $\alpha = .72$; items 2, 19, 22, 33, 36) were created expressly for the purpose of this study. These items represent parents' lack of interest in their children's learning of English. For example: "My parents think that English is useless" (item 2). A high score therefore reflects the parental disinterest in the learning of English, as perceived by the participants.

Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) is related to the idea that English is useless or unnecessary and that the learning of it is not valued by parents. Parental Pressure (P_PRES), on the contrary, is a form of interest that, once expressed on a high level, can be interpreted or felt as a form of pressure. As for the Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) scale, it is expressed in the form of thoughts, while the Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) scale corresponds to actions.

Attitudes toward English (ATT). This variable was measured using a total of 12 items. Two scales were used to measure the participants' attitudes toward the English-speaking community and culture in general.

Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM; $\alpha = .87$) consists of nine items. Three items were borrowed from Gardner's (1985) scale measuring Attitudes toward English speakers (items 5, 13, 32) and two from Ta-

guchi, Magid, and Papi's (2009) questionnaire (items 1 and 28) were used to measure Attitudes toward the L2 Community. These last two were transformed from questions to statements to better fit a Likert scale. Four items were created by the authors in order to question participants on the possibility of having English speakers as friends, or for traveling or living in English-speaking communities (11, 23, 31 & 44). "I agree with the possibility that one day I may choose to live in an English speaking country" (item 44) is an example of one of these created items.

The Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL; $\alpha = .52$) scale consists of three items (6, 15, 20) borrowed from Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009), which were modified as previously explained. These items are related to culture in general such as music, movies and magazines. The following is one example: "I think that English magazines, newspapers and books are really interesting" (item 15).

Both scales were used to evaluate the participants' level of integrativeness, which for the present study will focus on students' attitudes toward English speakers and their communities, as well as their attitudes toward the English-speaking culture. A high score reflects participants' strong positive Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) or their strong positive Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL).

Motivation (MOT). Three scales were borrowed from Gardner's (1985) AMTB in order to estimate participants' levels of motivation: Motivational Intensity (MI; $\alpha = .65$), Desire to Learn (DL; $\alpha = .65$) and Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE; $\alpha = .88$). A total of 19 items cover this variable: The Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) scale consists of eight items (3, 7, 16, 24, 29, 35, 39, 43), the Motivational Intensity (MI) consists of five items (46, 49, 51, 52, 54), and the Desire to Learn (DL) consists of six items (45, 47, 48, 50, 53, 55). These scales are considered by Masgoret and Gardner (2003) to be pivotal in defining motivation. High scores on Motivational Intensity (MI) items such as "I actively think about what I have learned in my English class" (item 51) reflect participants' considerable efforts to learn English. Motivational Intensity (MI) and Desire to Learn (DL) items are in the form of multiple choice questions (see the Appendix), and high scores on Desire to Learn (DL) items reflect participants' strong desire to learn English. One question from the Motivational Intensity (MI) and Desire to Learn (DL) items was adapted to better represent the South Korean educational context, as in the following: "If English class were not required for my graduate studies, I would ..." (item 53). "Learning English is really great" (item 24), and "Learning English is a waste of time" (item 35) are two examples of questions used to investigate participants' positive and negative attitudes towards the learning of English. A high score reflects participants' positive Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE).

Amotivation (AMOT). The Amotivation (AMOT; $\alpha = .69$) scale was used to evaluate participants' absence of motivation. Three items, retrieved from Noels, Clément, and Pelletier's (2000) study on amotivation, have been included for measuring this variable (8, 25, 41). The questions were shortened from the original version and the colloquial aspect of the questions was also taken out in consideration of the South Korean social formalities; for example: "I learn English without really wanting to" (item 25). A high score reflects a high level of amotivation to learn English.

Dependent Variables

Two measures were used to estimate participants' competence in English. The first measure (English-EXAM) consisted of an inquiry about the score that students obtained for the last exam taken. Participants chose their last corresponding score from seven ranges of marks: 0 to 30, 31 to 50, 51 to 60, 61 to 70, 71 to 80, 81 to 90, and 91 to 100. The second measure of competence (English-SELF) consisted of participants' self-perception of their ability to read, write, listen and speak in English. Participants were required to evaluate their competence for each skill on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *very insufficient* (1) to *very satisfactory* (5). An average of the ratings for the four skills was calculated. A number of authors (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985; Tannenbaum, Rosenfeld, Breyer, & Wilson, 2000; Wilson, 1999; see Roever & Powers, 2005) agree on the fact that self-ratings for language competence tend to be accurate, since correlations with competence scores on standardized tests range from moderate to high. As previously mentioned, the whole questionnaire was translated into the official South Korean language. Roever and Powers (2005), who studied the effect of administering a self-assessment in English versus in the participants' first language (L1), confirm the validity of self-assessment in the L1.

Results and Analysis

Pearson Correlations Between Variables

A first series of Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed to examine relationships between computed variables. Three scales were aggregated to assess Parental Involvement (PI): Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT), Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES). As in Gardner's work, Motivational Intensity (MI), Desire to Learn (DL) and Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) were computed to assess Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT). Also, Attitudes to-

ward English (ATT) is the result of computing the two scales assessing Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL). All other measures were also used in this first sequence of correlations: Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), Amotivation (AMOT), English-EXAM and English-SELF. Correlation coefficients between all variables are presented in Table 2; results are examined in light of the three study questions. In the present study, given the large number of variables involved when investigating this type of socio-psychological behaviour (see Cohen, 1988), correlations will be considered weak below .20, moderate between .20 and .50, and strong above .50.

Table 2 Correlations between variables

Scales	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Parental involvement	—	-.62**	.27**	.27**	-.08	.21**	.12
(2) Parental disinterest		—	-.30**	-.29**	.30**	-.26**	-.15*
(3) Attitudes			—	.61**	-.57**	.17*	.26**
(4) Motivation				—	-.79**	.40**	.46**
(5) Amotivation					—	-.32**	-.37*
(6) English-EXAM						—	.45**
(7) English-SELF							—

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Research Question 1: How do South Korean students perceive the role their parents play in their learning of English? This question requires examining correlations between Parental Involvement (PI) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), which yielded a strong negative coefficient ($r(190) = -.62, p < .01$). This correlation suggests that when South Korean parents are involved (actively, passively or by putting a form of pressure on their children) students tend to report that their parents are not disinterested in their learning. More details concerning the role parents play in their children's learning of English will be provided through the second sequence of correlation analysis.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between parental involvement or parental disinterest and various affective variables? As evidenced in Table 2, Parental Involvement (PI) correlates with Attitudes toward English (ATT) ($r(190) = .27, p < .01$) the same way it correlates with Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) ($r(190) = .27, p < .01$). Even though the correlations are not strong, Parental Involvement (PI) nonetheless expresses a positive relationship with students' attitudes and motivation. With almost similar coefficients, Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) negatively correlates with Atti-

tudes toward English (ATT) ($r(190) = -.30, p < .01$) and with Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) ($r(190) = -.29, p < .01$). Therefore, parental disinterest also expresses a moderate relationship with students' attitude and motivation. A strong correlation was obtained between Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) and Attitudes toward English (ATT) ($r(190) = .61, p < .01$). This last result is consistent with what is found in the literature (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), for it suggests that the participants' motivation seems to be intertwined in an important manner with students' integrative forms of motivation, which are present in the Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales.

While the Parental Involvement (PI) variable does not correlate significantly with Amotivation (AMOT), Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) does correlate moderately with Amotivation (AMOT) ($r(190) = .30, p < .01$). Students' Attitudes toward English (ATT) obtained a high negative correlation with Amotivation (AMOT) ($r(190) = -.57, p < .01$) and students' Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) obtained a higher negative correlation with Amotivation (AMOT) ($r(190) = -.79, p < .01$). Thus, the more a student is motivated to learn a second language or the more he or she presents levels of integrativeness, that is, levels of interest toward English-speaking people, their culture and their communities, the less he or she expresses signs of amotivation.

Research Question 3: Do parental involvement and parental disinterest correlate with students' competence in a second language? Parental Involvement (PI) correlates moderately with English-EXAM ($r(190) = .21, p < .01$), but not with English-SELF, while Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) correlates negatively with both measures of competence, that is with English-EXAM ($r(190) = -.26, p < .01$) and with English-SELF ($r(190) = -.15, p < .05$). Coefficients show a relatively moderate relationship.

Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) correlates with both measures of competence in English: English-EXAM ($r(190) = .40, p < .01$) and English-SELF ($r(190) = .46, p < .01$). The results obtained for Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) and the two measures of competence are consistent with what is found in the literature (Gardner, 2010; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Since Amotivation (AMOT) is said to represent students' lack or absence of motivation, it is logical that it also correlated negatively with both measures of competence, that is with English-EXAM ($r(190) = -.32, p < .01$) and with English-SELF ($r(190) = -.37, p < .01$).

In the case of Attitudes toward English (ATT), it correlates with both measures of competence: with English-EXAM ($r(190) = .17, p < .05$) and with English-SELF ($r(190) = .26, p < .01$). These correlations are similar to those noted between both measures of competence and Parental Involvement (PI), as well as

between Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and both measures of competence. Therefore, Parental Involvement (PI) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), as well as Attitudes toward English (ATT), only moderately correlate with competence.

Pearson Correlations Between Scales

In order to further detail the previous correlations, a second series of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to assess relationships between all scales, that is, all variables broken down into their components, including the two competence measures (see Table 1, second column). Table 3 displays the various correlations. As in the first sequence of correlations, all of the obtained data will be examined in light of the three study questions.

Table 3 Correlations between scales

Scales	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
(1) P_ACT	—	.72**	.56**	-.55**	.30**	.34**	.37**	.35**	.27**	-.22**	.26**	.20**
(2) P_PAS		—	.61**	-.69**	.23**	.26**	.24**	.21**	.15*	-.12	.15*	.03
(3) P_PRES			—	-.40**	.09	.06	.06	.17*	-.04	.11	.14	.08
(4) P_DIS				—	-.28**	-.25**	-.30**	-.18*	-.18*	.30**	-.26**	-.15*
(5) ACOM					—	.59**	.63**	.29**	.50**	-.57**	.17*	.24**
(6) ACUL						—	.52**	.23**	.40**	-.46**	.11	.22**
(7) ALE							—	.48**	.73**	-.81**	.32**	.41**
(8) MI								—	.48**	-.39**	.43**	.39**
(9) DL									—	-.66**	.26**	.41**
(10) AMOT										—	-.32**	-.37**
(11) EXAM											—	.45**
(12) SELF												—

* $p < .05$
 ** $p < .01$

Research Question 1: How do South Korean students perceive the role their parents play in their learning of English? Analysis shows a strong correlation between Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) scales ($r(190) = .72, p < .01$), suggesting that South Korean parents are perceived as encouraging in both forms, active and passive. Both active and passive forms of encouragement (P_ACT and P_PAS) correlate with the Parental Pressure (P_PRES) scale; coefficients are high between Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES) ($r(190) = .56, p < .01$) and between Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES) ($r(190) = .61, p < .01$). Thus, the more South Korean parents are reported as encouraging their children, actively and passively, the more their children report undergoing pressure to perform.

Parental disinterest (P_DIS) yielded negative correlations with all three scales used to estimate Parental Involvement (PI). Therefore, the less students reported that their parents were disinterested in their learning of English, the more they estimated that their parents encouraged them passively ($r(190) = -.69, p < .01$), actively ($r(190) = -.55, p < .01$), or by putting forms of pressure on them ($r(190) = -.40, p < .01$). South Korean parents' role is to be further examined through the two other questions of the present study.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between parental involvement or parental disinterest and various affective variables? This second question is to be looked upon with the obtained correlations between the three Parental Involvement (PI) scales (Active Parental Encouragement, Passive Parental Encouragement, Parental Pressure) and the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales (Attitudes toward the Learning of English, Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn), as well as with the Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) scale and the Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales. Parents' active (P_ACT) and passive (P_PAS) forms of encouragement both moderately correlate with the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales. Correlations between the Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales range from .27 to .37 ($p < .01$), and from .15 ($p < .05$) to .24 ($p < .01$) between the Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales. The interaction between motivation and parental encouragement seems to be more important in the case of the active form. Furthermore, the more students report being motivated to learn, the more they report that their parents are providing them with active and passive forms of encouragement.

Among the four parental scales, Parental Pressure (P_PRES) is the only one that correlates with only one of the other affective variables, that is, with Motivational Intensity (MI). The coefficient shows a positive but weak relationship between the two variables ($r(190) = .17, p < .05$). As previously mentioned, Motivational Intensity (MI) is estimated with items reflecting participants' efforts to learn the language. Thus, the more parents are reported to apply pressure on their child, the more efforts students estimate that they put into their work.

The first sequence of correlations expressed a negative correlation between Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and the aggregated score for Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT). In this second sequence, Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) negatively correlates with all three scales used to estimate Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT). From these three scales, Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) obtained a negative correlation of $-.30$ ($p < .01$) with Parental Disinterest (P_DIS). The two other scales, Motivational Intensity

(MI) and Desire to Learn (DL), both obtained the same coefficient of $-.18$ ($p < .05$), suggesting a weak relationship. Thus, parents' disinterest is on some level related to their children's levels of motivation.

In the first sequence, correlations were obtained between Parental Involvement (PI) and Attitudes toward English (ATT), as well as between Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and Attitudes toward English (ATT). In this second sequence, each Parental Involvement (PI) scale (Active Parental Encouragement, Passive Parental Encouragement, and Parental Pressure) as well as Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) will now be examined in terms of their relationships with the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales. Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL), the two scales of Attitudes toward English (ATT), significantly correlated with one another ($r(190) = .59, p < .01$). They also yield significant correlations with both active and passive forms of parental encouragement (P_ACT and P_PAS). Coefficients range from $.23$ to $.34$ ($p < .01$). Thus, this could be expressed as follows: The more parents are reported to show both forms of encouragement, the higher the students' attitudes, or the higher the students' attitudes, the more they report their parents as showing both active and passive forms of encouragement.

While Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) correlated with the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales (Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM), and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL)) with scores that ranged from $.30$ to $.34$ ($p < .01$), the Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and the Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales obtained scores that ranged only from $.23$ to $.26$ ($p < .01$). Gardner (1985) suggested that it was the parental passive role that was more effective to influence learners' integrative orientation, but the present results suggest that the active parental role may be as effective as the passive role, if not more, for triggering participant's integrativeness, at least in the South Korean context.

No correlation was found between Parental Pressure (P_PRES) and the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales (Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM), and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL)), suggesting that there is no connection between the fact that participants perceive their parents as showing forms of pressure and their own levels of integrativeness.

Moderate but significant negative correlations are present between Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales, that is Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = -.25, p < .01$) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) ($r(190) = -.28, p < .01$). These last correlations suggest that the more parents are reported as showing disinterest toward the learning of English, the less positive the students' attitudes are toward the English speakers, their community and their culture. A corre-

lation does not indicate a causal relationship; however, the opposite, namely a low level of negative attitudes on the part of the students that would cause parents' disinterest, would be surprising. This, however, remains to be confirmed.

Although Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT), Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) all correlated with the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales (Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture), it is the Motivation to Learn a Second Language scales (MOT) that yielded high correlations with the Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales. The three scales used to evaluate participants' motivation, that is, Motivational Intensity (MI), Desire to Learn (DL) and Attitudes toward the learning of English (ALE), also all positively correlated with one another, and a strong relationship ($r(190) = .73, p < .01$) was found between Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) and Desire to Learn (DL). An identical coefficient ($r(190) = .48, p < .01$) was obtained between Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) and Motivational Intensity (MI), and between Desire to Learn (DL) and Motivational Intensity (MI). Correlations between the three motivation scales and the two attitude scales ranged from .23 to .63 ($p < .01$). It is the Attitudes toward the learning of English (ALE) scale that showed high correlations with Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = .63, p < .01$) and with Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) ($r(190) = .52, p < .01$). These strong correlations suggest that students' Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) are related to their own level of integrativeness, that is, their own attitudes toward the English speakers, their communities and their culture. Desire to Learn (DL) also correlates significantly with Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = .50, p < .01$) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) ($r(190) = .40, p < .01$). Thus, Desire to Learn (DL) can also be related to students' integrativeness.

In light of the second question, the correlations between the three Parental Involvement (PI) scales, as well as Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and Amotivation (AMOT) will now be further examined. First, Amotivation (AMOT) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) scores correlate significantly and moderately. Second, not surprisingly, the Amotivation (AMOT) scores yield highly significant negative relationships with most other variables except Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES), which did not correlate at all with Amotivation (AMOT). The South Korean Parental Pressure is therefore not related to students' levels of Amotivation.

In the first correlation sequence, Parental Involvement (PI) did not correlate with Amotivation (AMOT), and in the second sequence, only Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT), out of the three other Parental Involvement (PI) scales, correlates with Amotivation (AMOT). However, the negative correlation

is not strong. While Amotivation (AMOT) negatively correlates with Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) ($r(190) = -.22, p < .01$), it also positively correlates with Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) ($r(190) = .30, p < .01$). Therefore, the more students report that they are amotivated (e.g., studying English without knowing why), the less they report that their parents show active forms of encouragement and the more they report that their parents show disinterest. Also, the more students report that their parents are actively involved and interested in their learning, the less they report being amotivated. The only positive correlation, which was obtained between Amotivation (AMOT) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), suggests that when levels of parental disinterest are reported, levels of amotivation are also reported. Thus, the fact that parents show no interest in their children's learning could also be related to the absence of goals being set by their children.

While Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) both moderately correlate with Amotivation (AMOT), the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language scales (MOT) strongly correlate with Amotivation (AMOT). From the Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales, Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE) strongly correlates with Amotivation (AMOT) ($r(190) = -.81, p < .01$) and Desire to Learn (DL) strongly correlates with Amotivation (AMOT) ($r(190) = -.66, p < .01$). Correlations are also significant between the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales and Amotivation (AMOT), Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = -.57, p < .01$), and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) ($r(190) = -.46, p < .01$). Generally speaking, the higher the participants' levels of attitudes and motivation, the lower they report to be amotivated.

Research Question 3: Do parental involvement and parental disinterest correlate with students' competence in a second language? The two measures assessing participants' competence are students' last exam score (English-EXAM) and students' self-evaluation (English-SELF). The first sequence of correlations indicated that Parental Involvement (PI) correlated with only one of the two measures assessing participants' competence: English-EXAM. This last correlation is nonetheless moderate. Out of the second sequence of correlations, where all of the three Parental Involvement (PI) scales were observed, only Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) correlates with both measures: English-EXAM ($r(190) = .26, p < .01$) and English-SELF ($r(190) = .20, p < .01$). Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) only correlates with English-EXAM but with a low coefficient ($r(190) = .15, p < .05$), and Parental Pressure (P_PRES) does not correlate with either measure of competence. The moderate correlations between Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and both measures of competence tend

to suggest that parents' active forms of encouragement may have a connection to their children's levels of competence. Moreover, and from a broader perspective, Parental Involvement (PI) may uphold a relationship with students' English-EXAM, that is, with their graded performance rather than with their self-evaluated competence. These last results tend to contradict Gardner's claim, in his early work (1985), about the absence of a relationship between the parental role and students' in-class performance.

Gardner (1985) suggested that the parental roles were closely related to one another. Mueller (1986) suggested that the active and passive parental roles could simply be measuring the same concept. However, in the present study, it is the active parental forms of encouragement (P_ACT) that yield significant correlations with the competence measures, as well as with Amotivation (AMOT), while the passive parental forms of encouragement (P_PAS) showed few significant correlations with the two competence measures and amotivation. Therefore, the parental active form of encouragement tends to represent a concept that is distinct from the passive form.

Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) correlates negatively with both measures of competence. The correlation with English-SELF ($r(190) = -.15, p < .05$) is weak, while it is moderate with English-EXAM ($r(190) = -.26, p < .01$), as was observed within the first sequence of correlations. Moreover, the Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and English-EXAM's correlation is similar to the one obtained between Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and English-EXAM, which tends to suggest that parents' disinterest as well as parents' active encouragement may both be related to their children's in-class performances.

The two measures of competence show systematic correlations with the three scales used to assess Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT), and coefficients are moderate, ranging from .26 to .43 ($p < .01$). For instance, Motivational Intensity (MI) correlates with last exam score (English-EXAM) ($r(190) = .43, p < .01$) and with participants' self-evaluation (English-SELF) ($r(190) = .39, p < .01$). These three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales, considered by Masgoret and Gardner (2003) as the most representative components of motivation, were expected, according to the literature, to correlate with the two competence scales. However, it is interesting to note that Desire to Learn (DL) showed the same correlation coefficient as Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) with English-EXAM ($r(190) = .26, p < .01$). These results could suggest that active parental forms of encouragement (P_ACT) and participants' desire to learn (DL) may both be related to participants' in-class performance, that is, participants' English-EXAM.

As for the correlations obtained between the two competence scales and the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales, only English-SELF correlates moder-

ately with both attitude scales: Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = .24, p < .01$) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) ($r(190) = .22, p < .01$). English-EXAM shows one low correlation with Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) ($r(190) = .17, p < .05$). Therefore, as in the first sequence of correlations, Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales do not seem to have any significant relationship with English-EXAM, while it has a moderately weak one with participants' English-SELF.

Amotivation (AMOT) correlated with both measures of competence (English-EXAM and English-SELF), with coefficients ranging from $-.32$ to $-.37$ ($p < .01$). Since Amotivation (AMOT) represents students' lack or absence of motivation, it is only logical that it negatively correlates with both measures of competence, as observed in the first sequence of correlations.

Linear Regressions

In order to better answer the third question, two multiple linear regressions were performed, one with English-EXAM as the dependent variable and the other with English-SELF (see Tables 4 and 5). The Adjusted R^2 values indicate that the tested model accounts for 17.2% of the variance in English-EXAM ($F_{5,184} = 8,872, p < .0005, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .172$) and for 19.5% in *English-SELF* ($F_{5,184} = 10,182, p < .0005, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .195$). One significant variable is underlined in both models, that is Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT). The Standardized Beta Coefficients confirm that Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) constitutes a significant predictor of English-EXAM (beta = $.399, p = .001$) and of English-SELF (beta = $.493, p < .0005$). Both regression analyses indicate that only one affective variable plays a role for English-EXAM and for English-SELF. We can only speculate that the other variables, such as the parental variables, are intertwined with the "motivational process" while not being directly involved in the outcomes, that is, with students' competence.

Table 4 Linear regression coefficients, with score on final English exam (English-EXAM) as the dependent variable

Model	Non standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		T	Sig.
	A	Std Error	Beta			
(Constant)	2.064	1.895			1.089	.278
P_involvement	.095	.193	.046		.491	.624
P_disinterest	-.319	.192	-.151		-1.662	.098
MOT	1.469	.446	.399		3.294	.001
ATT	-.368	.188	-.169		-1.950	.053
Amot	-.084	.197	-.051		-.424	.672

Table 5 Linear regression coefficients, with self-evaluated English competence (English-SELF) as the dependent variable

Model	Non standardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients		T	Sig.
	A	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.577	.704		.819	.414
P_involvement	-.018	.072	-.023	-.255	.799
P_disinterest	-.029	.071	-.036	-.406	.685
MOT	.684	.166	.493	4.129	.000
ATT	-.038	.070	-.046	-.537	.592
Amot	.005	.073	.007	.062	.950

Discussion

This study was conducted in order to investigate possible relationships between parental involvement, parental disinterest, various affective variables, and L2 competence among South Korean high school learners of English.

Considering the South Korean context, three hypotheses were made. First, that the active or passive forms of parental involvement would correspond to forms of pressure; second, that parental variables were expected to correlate with students' attitudes and motivation to learn an L2; and last, that parental variables would correlate with students' competence in English.

Three questions led our research. The first question was about the role South Korean parents play in their children's learning of English. By examining correlations between all the parental scales, active and passive forms of encouragement (P_ACT, P_PAS), pressure (P_PRES) and disinterest (P_DIS), as well as the aggregated scores (Parental Involvement (PI) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS)), it was found that South Korean students perceive their parents as encouraging them in both ways, actively and passively, but their parents' encouragement was also reported, as hypothesized, as a form of pressure. Other data allowed for the conceptual observation that forms of parental disinterest were nonetheless present in that education-centered society. In other words, some parents were perceived by their children as not being interested in their learning of English. Thus, as previously mentioned, the fact that parents show little or no interest in their children's learning could also be related to the absence of goals being set by their children, for the conceptual observation of data also allowed the observation of levels of amotivation among the South Korean participants.

Two sets of correlational analysis were performed in order to examine and answer the second question concerning possible relationships between parental involvement (Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT), Passive Paren-

tal Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES)), or Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), and the various affective variables under study.

As mentioned by many authors (e.g., Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 2001), parents have been identified as having an effect on students' attitudes and motivation to learn an L2. Moreover, the passive parental form of encouragement is thought to be more effective than the active form of parental encouragement to influence learners' integrative orientation (Gardner, 1985).

In the present study, the participants' perceptions of active and passive forms of parental encouragement show significant correlations with scores on the three motivation scales, which confirms data from previous research. However, coefficients in the case of active forms of parental encouragement (P_ACT) tend to show a sustained relationship, while correlations in the case of passive forms of parental encouragement (P_PAS) are relatively weak. As mentioned earlier, South Korean parents may be very active through various forms of sacrifice not common, for instance, in North America. While South Korean parents may pay for extracurricular activities, they can also spend money on special surgery in order to favour a more precise pronunciation (Park, 2009). Therefore, the results obtained could be limited to the specific context of this so-called English fever.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the Active Parental form of encouragement (P_ACT) did correlate with students' levels of motivation, and that when students report higher levels of Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT), they also report that their parents are providing them with active forms of encouragement. Therefore, parents' actions for their children's learning are not totally inefficient, according to the obtained moderate correlations, and may be considered as one of the many possible forms of motivation for students' learning of an L2.

As for Parental Pressure (P_PRES), this variable only expressed a weak correlation with Motivational Intensity (MI). This result tends to suggest that the more participants perceive "pressure," in other words an "extreme" interest from their parents, the more efforts they report putting forth to learn English. This result could hypothetically be related to the Confucian heritage culture widespread in Asia (Han, 2003), in which students are known to be silent participants, accepting quietly the different forms of pressure. No educator would suggest that parents place great amounts of pressure on their children to learn, for this would most probably negatively affect students in many ways. However, aside from the correlations Parental Pressure (P_PRES) obtained with the parental active and passive forms of encouragement, it surprisingly did not correlate with any other affective variables aside Motivational Intensity (MI).

Parental Disinterest (P_DIS), a scale entirely created by the authors for the present study, yielded data suggesting that parents' disinterest may be

related to their children's levels of motivation, that is, to their children's Motivational intensity (MI), Desire to Learn (DL) and, more importantly, to their children's Attitudes toward the Learning of English (ALE). Since students' motivation to learn may be influenced, in part, by their parents' disinterest, teachers should try, at least, to get the parents interested in their children's work. Thus, in many countries, different educational systems actively seek parents' involvement in their children's school work (Corter & Pelletier, 2004). Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) also yielded data that suggests that parents' disinterest may be reflected through students' less positive Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) and less positive Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL), which represents students' levels of integrativeness.

This new scale Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) as well as the Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and the Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) scales correlated with students' Attitudes toward English (ATT) and Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT). Their correlations confirm the second hypothesis of the present study that parental variables correlate with students' attitudes and motivation.

Although Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT), Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) all correlated with the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales, which represent the students' level of integrativeness, it is the three Motivation to Learn a Second Language (MOT) scales that obtained strong correlations with the two Attitudes toward English (ATT) scales. Therefore, it is the participants' motivation that upholds a strong relationship with their own levels of integrativeness. Since the South Korean society allows few possibilities for interaction with native English speakers and their community, the several significant correlations observed between the Attitudes toward English Speakers and their Communities (ACOM) and Attitudes toward the English-speaking Culture (ACUL) scales and the three motivation scales (Attitudes toward the Learning of English, Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn), as well as with the parental encouragement scales, may express what Dörnyei (2005) identified as a "World English Identity." This term is useful to describe our era of globalization, where English is widely spread as a global lingua franca (Crystal, 2003) rather than as a specific English speaking community. In South Korea many reasons exist for learning English, so the integrative goal of getting closer to the English community could be multidimensional.

In this South Korean educational context, where parents are greatly involved in their children's learning, it is interesting that Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) was identifiable and moreover that it correlated moderately with Amotivation (AMOT). While Parental Pressure (P_PRES) did not correlate with Amotivation (AMOT) and therefore does not affect students' levels of amotivation in any way, Parental Disin-

terest (P_DIS), with its correlations with Amotivation (AMOT), rather seems to be related to students' levels of amotivation. Therefore, it seems to be more harmful to students when parents show disinterest, for it may affect students' levels of amotivation much more than when parents put pressure on them to learn English. Parents' active forms of encouragement also need to be considered in light of amotivation, since Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) negatively correlated with Amotivation (AMOT). Therefore, parents' active forms of encouragement and their disinterest also carry a certain weight on students' levels of amotivation.

While the second question of the present study concerned the possible relationships between parental involvement or parental disinterest, and the various affective variables under study, the third question was about the possible relationships between parental involvement, parental disinterest and students' competence in English as an L2. Results from the two different sequences of correlations, as well as from the two linear regressions, were used for this purpose.

Of the parental variables, there were mainly Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) that correlated with students' in-class performance (English-EXAM) and with students' self-evaluation of their own competence in English (English-SELF). However, the two linear regressions indicate that the aggregated measure of Motivation to Learn (MOT) is the only significant predictor for students' competence in English. Consequently, all the other variables, such as the parental variables, may simply be intertwined in the "motivational process" while not being directly involved in the outcomes, that is, in students' competence.

Moreover, even if correlations were found between parental variables and students' attitudes and motivation to learn an L2, as well as between the various affective variables and students' competence, motivation remains the important factor in the process of learning.

Conclusion

While students' own motivation is the only strong predictor of students' levels of competence, and while parents' roles seem to be minimal within the whole scope of their children's learning, their involvement or disinterest nonetheless presents some link with students' levels of attitude, motivation and amotivation and therefore their role should not be ignored, even though it seems limited among the wide range of affective variables intertwined with students' learning of English. Other studies would be needed to fully understand the interrelationship between what parents think and do, perceptions of students, and competence. In the meantime, practitioners may look for ways to involve parents in their children's learning, at least to avoid parents' disinterest, which seems to be negatively related to various affective variables.

In the South Korean educational context, parents' active forms of encouragement seem to present a certain relationship with students' levels of attitude, motivation and amotivation. This is not surprising, since South Korea is an education-centered society in which parents are actively involved in their children's learning. Also, because the obtained coefficients between Active Parental Encouragement (P_ACT) and various variables were sustained and different from the ones obtained between the Passive Parental Encouragement (P_PAS) and other variables, the present study concludes that the active and passive forms of encouragement tend to measure two distinct concepts.

Parental Disinterest (P_DIS) and Parental Pressure (P_PRES) provide new data regarding the parental variables and their interrelationships with various affective variables. It would be interesting to see whether in other countries Parental Pressure relates to more variables, if there are levels of pressure. Parental Disinterest is a new variable that should be considered, especially by educators who not only need to arouse interest in their students, but also need not neglect the possible disinterest of their students' parents, which seems to have a certain negative weight on their students' levels of motivation, attitude and amotivation. This last variable seems to outweigh Parental Pressure. Involving parents in their children's learning is indeed a positive step towards lowering parents' levels of disinterest. Results therefore support the many different governmental concerns regarding the importance of involving parents in their children's learning. This also further suggests that teachers need to continue to try and work, as much as possible, with their students' parents, for they could become another asset in their students' learning of an L2. They should also, and more importantly, try to motivate their students, for it is the students' motivation that is a strong predictor of their competence to learn an L2.

Few studies have focused mainly on the possible relationship parental variables may have with learners' affective variables and their competence when learning English as an L2. Such research was therefore needed. However, by reproducing this study in other countries, very different results might be obtained which would either confirm or refute the impact of the different parental scales on students' learning of English as an L2. It would also, as the present study does within the larger scope of affective variables studies, provide more data on the parental variables, including the two new variables, all the better to help educators understand parents' relationships with their students' learning of an L2.

Given the pressure South Korean students undergo and the few correlations the Parental Pressure scale yielded with the other affective variables, further investigation into South Korean students' perceptions of parental pres-

sure would be more than warranted, at least to understand the ways in which it can affect South Korean students.

In order to further expand the body of research on the relationship between the parental role and the learners of English as an L2, another interesting field of research would be to investigate students' perception of their parents according to gender, that is, perception of both their mothers' and fathers' involvement.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire used and statistics (VAL: score value for each answer in the multiple choice section; CAT: category of the item; AVE: average score; SD: standard deviation; +: maximum score observed; -: minimum score observed; MOD: most often choice selected (between 1 and 7 or between 1 and 3 for the multiple choice section); and MED: score that separates the sample of participants in half (50% chose a higher or lower value))

QUESTIONNAIRE

Following are statements that people could agree or disagree with. There are no RIGHT or WRONG answers; everyone is entitled to his own opinions.

For each statement, please provide us with your first reaction. Read each statement and answer spontaneously. Use the numbers from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). CIRCLE the number corresponding to your opinion.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree

		CAT	AVE	SD	+	-	MOD	MED
1	I would like to travel to English-speaking countries.	ACOM	6.21	1.09	7	1	7	7
2	My parents think that English is useless.	P_DIS	2.15	1.31	7	1	1	2
3	When I will leave school, I shall give up the study of English entirely because I am not interest in it.	ALE	5.71	1.3	7	1	7	6
4	My parents try to help me with my English. (Ex.: They pay me extra lessons in English or they help me out with my homework.)	P_ACT	5.12	1.73	7	1	6	6
5	I like people who speak English.	ACOM	5.36	1.23	7	2	4	5
6	I enjoy listening to the music of English-speaking countries (ex: pop music, rock, etc.).	ACUL	5.57	1.32	7	1	7	6
7	I hate English.	ALE	4.87	1.62	7	1	4	5
8	I am learning English, but I think I'm wasting my time.	AMOT	2.25	1.18	7	1	2	2
9	My parents think that I should practice my English as much as possible.	P_PAS	5	1.47	7	1	4	5
10	My parents show considerable interest in anything to do with my English courses.	P_ACT	4.81	1.47	7	1	5	5
11	If it were possible, I would like to have many English-speaking friends.	ACOM	5.58	1.25	7	2	7	6
12	My parents could go as far as punishing me if I do not get good grades in English.	P_PRES	4.28	1.69	7	1	5	5
13	I think English-speaking people are social and friendly.	ACOM	4.6	1.22	7	1	4	4
14	My parents think that I should continue studying English all through school.	P_PAS	5.85	1.12	7	1	6	6
15	I think that English magazines, newspapers and books are really interesting.	ACUL	4.15	1.56	7	1	4	4
16	I plan to learn as much English as possible.	ALE	6.69	0.65	7	4	7	7

17	My parents have great expectations for my learning of English.	P_PRES	5	1.23	7	1	4	5
18	My parents encourage me to practice my English as much as possible.	P_ACT	3.71	1.54	7	1	4	4
19	My parents prefer that English would not be provided in school.	P_DIS	1.72	1.07	7	1	1	1
20	If I were able to better understand English I would watch more English movies.	ACUL	6.05	1.46	7	1	7	7
21	My parents have stressed the importance English will have for me in my future.	P_ACT	5.84	1.28	7	1	7	6
22	My parents don't think it's necessary that I practice my English.	P_DIS	2.35	1.38	7	1	1	2
23	Living in an English speaking country for a while, in order to improve my English, appears to me a good idea.	ACOM	5.95	1.29	7	1	7	6
24	Learning English is really great.	ALE	4.73	1.49	7	1	4	5
25	I am studying English, but without being interested in it.	AMOT	3.56	1.71	7	1	4	4
26	My parents require that I take additional English classes, aside from my regular classes.	P_PRES	3.43	1.69	7	1	4	4
27	My parents would be disappointed if I did not study English seriously.	P_PRES	4.48	1.66	7	1	6	5
28	I think that people from English-speaking countries are generally nice people.	ACOM	4.39	1.27	7	1	4	4
29	I love learning English.	ALE	4.12	1.49	7	1	4	4
30	My parents put a lot of pressure on me to study English.	P_PRES	3.94	1.57	7	1	4	4
31	I would like to travel to a place where you can communicate in English.	ACOM	5.71	1.31	7	2	7	6
32	I would like to meet English-speaking people and get to know them better.	ACOM	5.83	1.27	7	1	7	6
33	My parents do not have any expectations regarding my learning of English.	P_DIS	2.81	1.35	7	1	2	3
34	My parents really encourage me to study English.	P_ACT	4.59	1.34	7	1	4	4
35	Learning English is a waste of time.	ALE	5.95	1.13	7	2	7	6
36	My parents do not believe that I need to learn English.	P_DIS	2.53	1.35	7	1	2	2
37	My parents think that, nowadays, it is important to learn English.	P_PAS	5.95	1.14	7	1	7	6
38	My parents think I should really try to learn English.	P_PAS	5.72	1.2	7	1	6	6
39	I think that learning English is dull.	ALE	4.58	1.55	7	1	4	4
40	My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher when I am having problems with my English.	P_ACT	4.88	1.66	7	1	6	5
41	I could not explain why learning English is useful.	AMOT	2.65	1.43	7	1	2	2
42	My parents think I should devote more time to my English studies.	P_PAS	4.86	1.33	7	1	4	5
43	I really enjoy learning English.	ALE	4.19	1.49	7	1	4	4
44	I agree with the possibility that one day I may choose to live in an English speaking country.	ACOM	5.29	1.66	7	1	7	6

Instructions for multiple-choice questions

The goal of this part of the questionnaire is to answer each of the following statements by circling the letter of the alternative which appears most applicable to you. Keep in mind

that none of your teachers or parents will have access to this questionnaire or any other pieces of information provided under your name in this questionnaire.

Since the success of the present study depends on your honesty, we insist that you answer as honestly and as spontaneously as possible.

	VAL	CAT	AVE	SD	+	-	MOD	MED
45	During English class, I would like: 3 a. to have only English spoken. 2 b. to have a combination of Hangumal and English spoken. 1 c. to have as much Hangumal as possible spoken.	DL	1.98	0.41	3	1	2	2
46	When it comes to English homework, I : 1 a. just skim over it. 2 b. put some effort, but not as much as I could. 3 c. work very carefully, making sure I understand everything.	MI	2.43	0.57	3	1	2	2
47	If there were an English club in my school, I would: 1 a. definitely not join. 3 b. be most interested in joining. 2 c. attend meetings once in a while.	DL	2.24	0.57	3	1	2	2
48	If there were English-speaking families in my neighbourhood, I would : 3 a. speak English with them as much as possible. 2 b. speak English with them sometimes. 1 c. never speak English with them.	DL	1.68	0.69	3	1	1	2
49	After I get my English assignments back, I: 1 a. just throw them in my desk and forget them. 2 b. look them over. 3 c. take the time to understand my mistakes.	MI	2.47	0.51	3	1	2	2
50	If I had the opportunity to speak English outside of school, I would: 1 a. never speak it. 2 b. speak it occasionally, using Hangumal whenever possible. 3 c. speak English most of the time, using Hangumal only if really necessary.	DL	2.33	0.61	3	1	2	2
51	I actively think about what I have learned in my English class. 1 a. hardly ever. 2 b. once in a while. 3 c. very frequently.	MI	1.56	0.59	3	1	1	2
52	Considering how I study English, I can honestly say that: 1 a. I will pass on the basis of sheer luck or intelligence because I do very little work. 3 b. I really try to learn English. 2 c. I do just enough work to get along.	MI	2.12	0.63	3	1	2	2

53		If English class were not required for my graduate studies, I:	DL	2.00	0.49	3	1	2	2
	2	a. don't know whether I would take it or not.							
	3	b. would definitely take it.							
	1	c. would drop it.							
54		When I have a problem understanding something that we are learning in English class, I:	MI	1.91	0.74	3	1	2	2
	1	a. just forget about it.							
	3	b. immediately ask the teacher for help.							
	2	c. only seek help just before the exam.							
55		I find studying English:	DL	2.17	0.61	3	1	2	2
	3	a. very interesting.							
	2	b. no more interesting than most subjects.							
	1	c. not interesting at all.							

Last Part of the Questionnaire

► Please circle the numbers corresponding to your last English exam score.

0 to 30 31 to 50 51 to 60 61 to 70 71 to 80 81 to 90 91 to 95 96 to 100

► Please circle your gender

Female Male

► Please enter your date of birth _____

► Evaluate your level of ENGLISH COMPETENCE. Indicate your response with a check mark (✓).

	very insufficient	insufficient	Average	satisfactory	very satisfactory
1. WRITING	:	:
2. READING	:	:
3. LISTENING	:	:
4. SPEAKING	:	:

► Write down your nationality and the city you live in. (ex: Korean, Seoul)

Thank you very much for your participation! ☺