

**The Effectiveness, Perceptions, and Practices of English Private
Tutoring among Taiwanese Secondary School Students**

by

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Chapter One: Introduction

Private tutoring (PT) has expanded as a global phenomenon and is receiving increasing research attention, but evaluation studies on PT are lacking. In general, PT refers to activities outside of school with the intention to improve English achievement in mainstream education and on high-stakes examinations. In recent years, despite the Taiwanese government launching several educational reforms to reduce the over-reliance on PT, the popularity of PT is still growing. Furthermore, a number of research studies have been conducted on the effects of PT on students' academic performance in various subjects. However, the findings are still inconclusive.

With a control group pretest-posttest experiment, the first set of quantitative research in this dissertation, found in Chapter 4, aims to examine the effectiveness of English private tutoring (EPT) on the academic performance of Taiwanese secondary school learners. One group of students (N=95) participated in EPT over a period of three months and was compared to a non-tutored control group (N=95). Using national college entrance exam data gathered in 2017 and 2018 and t-tests and difference-in-differences (DID) analysis, the present study found that differences in the effect of EPT on students' academic performance between the tutored and non-tutored group decreased in magnitude after considering the students' individual characteristics, family socioeconomic status (SES), school type, and self-study practices. Among these variables, the time students spent on self-study activities showed a more significant and positive effect than PT. The findings show that rather than investing in EPT, investing time and effort in self-study activities can lead to an increase in students' academic performance.

The second set of empirical analyses, found in Chapter 5, further adds four dimensions of parental involvement (PI) in the research model to estimate the effects of EPT on students'

cognitive outcome through the activities of PI. The findings showed that the effects of parents' EPT related activities, school contact, and self-study variables are significantly associated with students' increased GSAET (General Scholastic Ability English Test) scores in comparison to other dimensions of PI such as discussions between parents and children and monitoring. Features of Taiwanese education where parents used EPT as a key strategy to improve their children's academic performance are discussed.

In Chapter 6, qualitative research was conducted to investigate 35 Taiwanese learners' EPT experiences based on their reflections on language learning after finishing their secondary education. Background questionnaires and one-on-one semi-structured interviews were administered to collect participants' data. The qualitative research found that the participants invested in EPT to attain academic results and overcome educational inequalities caused by SES. Lower-SES students also used EPT community as a medium to broaden their social network with those from higher-SES, with a hope to increase their upward social mobility. These results have implications regarding the use of self-study to regulate learners' learning processes, to construct learners' learning environment to meet their needs, to develop an effective mechanism for English language learning, and to mediate the investment in PT. This sheds light on the impact of PT as it has become more than a form of shadow education to emerge into the light in mainstream contexts. According to Stevenson and Baker (1992), shadow education is defined as "a set of educational activities that occur outside formal schooling and are designed to enhance the student's formal school career" (p.1639).

Although the quantitative results showed parents' EPT related activities, school contact, and self-study variables had a significant effect on students' academic performance, such statistics only present a partial picture of PT during the students' complicated educational

process. Through the interviews with stakeholders, this dissertation interpreted how parents relied on EPT among different options to support children's education and finally reached a consensus about EPT between parents and students and how shadow education counteracted equalization policies of the mainstream through access to EPT and sorting mechanisms in EPT. The data collected showed that ranking, tracking, and labelling through EPT undermined the students' equal opportunities for learning at the individual and institutional levels. These data from Taiwan contribute to the international analysis on PT and add an important component to the broader conceptual literature.

1.1 Background and Motivation

The industry of PT, also known as "shadow education," has spread across the globe, gaining considerable attention from both researchers and policymakers. According to Bray (1999), the reason the shadow metaphor is used is because PT duplicates or shadows mainstream education. As the size and scale of mainstream schooling changes, so do those of the shadow schooling; as public attention toward mainstream education increases or decreases, so does that of shadow education (Bray, 1999). The question is then, what are the benefits of shadow education? From a positive perspective, shadow education can increase students' educational opportunities, improving overall social and economic development (Mori & Baker, 2010). It also provides an expanding source of employment as well as an alternative method for not only mainstream education teachers but also private tutors to earn supplemental income (Bray, 2011). Shadow education can provide children and youth with a constructive environment, which some of them may lack. As noted by Ventura and Jang (2010), tutoring over the Internet can remove geographical barriers to education for children living in rural or remote areas. Also, shy and

unconfident students can have a safer forum to express their opinions and ask questions without fear or social anxiety (Bray, 2011).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In many English learning contexts, English private tutoring (EPT), offered by profit-oriented language institutes or private tutors, has become a major subject and one of the most important activities outside of school with the intention to raise students' achievement in mainstream education and on high-stakes examinations (Bray, 2011). However, the amount of research on EPT's effectiveness, on learners' perceptions and reflections, and on how parents and tutors practice EPT for students to obtain academic gains does not match the scale of its popularity. Little research exists because of the variety of tutoring forms, including "a paid private instructor, a volunteer, a school aide, a parent, a guardian, another student, or a computer or other teaching machine" (Medway, 1995, p. 271), which limits researchers' abilities to make precise statements regarding EPT. EPT has a major influence on students' experiences, attitudes, and motivation in the English learning process (Hamid, Sussex, & Khan, 2009). The researchers and policymakers concerned are required to have a deeper insight of language learning through EPT. If we do not take EPT's effectiveness, learners' perceptions and reflections, and stakeholders' EPT practices into consideration, "we would only see a partial picture of learners' real English-learning experience and proficiency" (Lee, 2010, p. 70), and we would fail to gain insights into language learning and teaching in settings beyond the classroom, which would otherwise provide alternative perspectives onto social and cognitive processes (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017).

1.3 Purposes of the Dissertation

To address this, the dissertation investigates the effectiveness of EPT in a control-group pretest-posttest experiment, designed to explore learners' reflections on their EPT learning experiences during their secondary school education in Taiwan, and to analyze stakeholders' practices through EPT.

This dissertation first reviews the relevant studies on the effectiveness of PT in a global context to interpret its expansion. The dissertation then concentrates on EPT studies to contextualize the discussion in sociocultural conditions in Taiwan. In order to fully understand learners' experiences in language acquisition, we should take sociocultural contexts into consideration because culture is the primary determining factor for knowledge construction and because learning takes place via socially meaningful activities (Vygotsky, 1962). Third, the dissertation focuses on the extent to which activities Taiwanese parents participate in to improve their children's academic achievement. Fourth, through statistical analyses, I extend the research on the recursive choices made by parents in making a decision on EPT for their children through in-depth interviews. Fifth, I investigate the access patterns to EPT and practices of tracking in the formal education. Finally, through analysis of the effects, perceptions and reflections, and practices of EPT in Taiwanese secondary school education, the current study makes an attempt to further elaborate upon the role of students (tutored and non-tutored), market providers (PT institutions), and interests groups (schools and families) in students' educational progress, which may create inequality in education and further alter social stratification patterns.

1.4 Research Questions

In this dissertation, I focus on EPT as one of the most popular subjects in PT and a

substantial area of language education.

This dissertation centers on one overall research question: what is the mechanism of the relationship between English private tutoring and students' academic performance under the current circumstance of shadow education? The overall research question is divided into the following specific research questions:

1. Does private tutoring have an effect on students' academic performance in English, a subject that most senior high school students take and that is highly valued in Taiwan, and if so, how large is its effect?
2. What are stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections toward English private tutoring in secondary education?
3. How do stakeholders (parents, schoolteachers, and tutors) practice English private tutoring to improve students' academic gains?

To answer the three research questions, I

- (a) evaluate the effectiveness of EPT based on participants' academic performance in English;
- (b) relate the perceptions of learners who have finished secondary education;
- (c) build on the learners' critical reflection of the EPT learning experience;
- (d) investigate the extent to which the effectiveness of EPT improves secondary school language learners' English abilities;
- (e) focus on how tutored students from low/high-SES families invest in EPT to obtain social capital and achieve upward social mobility;
- (f) discuss how tutored students attain academic gains through self-study activities;
- (g) identify how parents practice EPT to improve their children's academic gains;
- (h) concentrate on the choices made by parents in selecting EPT; and

(i) explore the access patterns to EPT and practices of EPT in formal education by schoolteachers and in shadow education by tutors.

1.5 Research Methodologies

This dissertation involves a mixed approach to secure its strength as empirical research (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The methodology calls for data collection and analysis using quantitative and qualitative approaches at different stages. This research design focuses on the “premise that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell & Plano, 2007, p. 5).

This dissertation employs t-tests that use the national examination marks of students (e.g., mean scores and standard deviations in pretest and posttest) to compare students who had EPT and those who did not (the control group). In order to test the effect of EPT segregated from other factors, the pretest marks (i.e., prior to EPT) should not differ significantly between the control and experimental groups. None of the outcomes of the t-tests in the pretest were significant, which indicated that the samples in the experimental group randomly represented the same population as that of the control group. Next, to investigate which factors may affect the effects of PT on the academic performance of the control group and treatment group, the difference-in-differences (DID) analysis was used.

To explore students’ perceptions of EPT and their reflections on their EPT experience, this dissertation adopted a more qualitative and contextualized approach, which is less reliant on survey methods and more on construction of learners’ language-learning perceptions and beliefs through context (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Kaypak & Ortactepe, 2014; Yang & Kim, 2011; Zaykovskaya, Rawal, & De Costa, 2017). That is, sociocultural contexts may influence learner

beliefs in behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and expectations through various teaching and learning methods. Taking sociocultural contexts into account, the current research sought to investigate learners' language-learning perceptions and their reflections upon their EPT experiences via narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is both a phenomenon and a research method in which "people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). This is achieved through different forms of data collection such as interviews. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) regard education as experience and further emphasize the narrative feature of experience. They state that since "narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience, educational experience should be studied narratively" (pp. 18-19). In the field of TESOL, Bell (2002) argues that narrative allows language educators and researchers to gain "explicit analysis and reflection" (p. 208), to "present experience holistically in all its complexity and richness" (p. 209) and to understand their students in the language-learning process through their experiences. Therefore, in this dissertation, narrative inquiry was selected to elicit and reflect upon learners' EPT experiences through semi-structured individual interviews. Students were administered a background questionnaire to survey their educational backgrounds and EPT experiences.

To access how the dimensions of PI are related to students' test scores, I implemented two-stage least squares models (2SLS) because these models permit the identification of the causal effect and of the correlation between the endogenous variable (PT variable) and instrument variables (family background variables). In other words, the requirements of instrument variables (family background variables) are to have no direct influence on dependent variables while having a significant influence on the endogenous variable (PT variable).

To investigate how parents and tutors practice EPT, the interviews were conducted with five groups of participants, namely (1) three senior high school principals; (2) eight senior high school teachers; (3) four PT managers; (4) ten PT tutors; and (5) 16 tutored students' parents. Interview questions focused on the scale, nature and reasons for undertaking EPT, types of EPT, relationships between PT and school, and influence on parenting attitudes and the society as a whole.

1.5.1 Analytical Framework

Reliably identifying the effect of PT on students' English performance is challenging because important determinants of English performance such as cognitive and motivational factors and ecological variables (e.g., parental support) must be taken into account. Social and individual factors that influence students' willingness to undertake EPT need to be considered to obtain an unbiased estimate of the causal effect of EPT on students' English performance.

With regard to cognitive and motivational factors, PT may have a positive effect on academic achievement because it increases actual learning time and instructional resources (Kuan, 2011). Carroll's (1963) model of school learning specifies that the time factor plays an important role in learning and "time on task" (the amount of time the learner spends processing the to-be-learned material) (p. 725). In this model, Carroll posited that whether learning is effective in enhancing student achievement depends on the actual time needed for learning and the time actually spent on learning. That is, the amount of time that students engage in learning activities and the length of time during which learning actually occurs are important factors affecting students' performance. Therefore, this model can be applied to evaluating the effects of PT, which depend on students' initiative, effort, ability, and the time they devote to learning.

As parents invest resources in their children's learning by using PT for either remedial or advancement purposes, ecological variables are likely to be factors that influence the effects of PT (Bray & Kobakhidze, 2015). Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological theory allows reconstruction of the different ecological systems relevant to PT and the relationships among these systems. Individual differences are an important component of Bronfenbrenner's (1994) theory. The microsystem of PT comprises the tutor and the learner. Within this microsystem, cooperative interactions occur between tutor and learner that affect future interactions and the cognitive structure of the learner. Another microsystem, the school learning context of the learner, interacts with the PT microsystem. The relationship between PT and schooling, referred to as the mesosystem comprising these microsystems, may affect learning in either school or PT; it may do so through via shared ideas, content, learning goals, beliefs about teaching and learning, or strategies and motivation between tutors and teachers. A third microsystem is the learners' family "as an immediate environment in which learners develop, both socially and cognitively" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p.38); this microsystem involves the parents' educational goals, beliefs, supporting strategies, and socioeconomic and intellectual backgrounds. These ecological variables may lead to the parental investment of both economic and social capital in PT because of their high expectations regarding the learning outcomes of their children. Hence, family socioeconomic background and PI may be differentiated in the learning process. The interaction (mesosystem) of PT (microsystem) and family (microsystem) is potentially important in contributing to differences between microsystems and the individual.

Receiving PT to maintain competitive advantage at school or to catch up with peers involves not only the student's initiative but parents' expectations. Both students and parents have high expectations that PT works. At the individual level, willingness to participate in PT

and expectations regarding the outcomes of attending PT vary from person to person. Conceivably, individual and family differences may have an impact on the effects of PT. Students who are motivated to enhance their learning or have high expectations for PT outcomes would benefit even more than those who are less motivated and more reluctant to learn. It is also conceivable that high achievers with higher socioeconomic family backgrounds and access to better schools would benefit more than low achievers with lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Bray, 2009). In short, the learning effects between students with and without PT can be predicted. Moreover, comparing the effects of PT between tutored students and non-tutored students is complicated because these two groups may be quite different at the individual and social levels, and the effects of undertaking PT on students' academic performance may differ.

Previous research regarding PT in the Taiwanese context (Liu, 2006; Kuan, 2011; Liu, 2012) has indicated that both individual and social factors influence participation in PT. These studies, using either Taiwan Education Panel Survey data or national survey data, revealed that parental education and occupational status affect students' academic performance. There are also other significant variables that have relative effects on students' achievement, such as gender, school type, family income, family status, sibling number, parental and self-educational expectations, and residential status.

However, the effects of PT observed in previous studies are likely biased. First, these studies failed to consider important variables such as students' self-study time spent doing homework and previewing and reviewing the subject. These omitted variables may contribute to the positive effects of PT on students' academic performance. Furthermore, most of the studies did not fully explore possible heterogeneous variables, such as cognitive and motivational factors, and ecological variables in a control-group pretest-posttest experimental design. This

dissertation argues that methods such as t-tests, which compare the mean scores between a tutored group and a non-tutored group, and difference-in-differences (DID) analysis, which takes heterogeneous variables into account to estimate the effects of PT on students' performance, are beneficial.

1.5.2 Data and Measures

This research used two measures of English achievement: the mock General Scholastic Ability English Test (GSAET) in November 2017 and the GSAET in January 2018. The GSAET scores are available in only two forms: (a) total scores, ranging from 1 to 15, and (b) handwritten scores, including translation and writing marks. This grading system converts raw English test scores into number scores. The aim of the pretest (mock GSAET) was to test participants' English ability before receiving EPT. The present research focused on (1) estimating the effects of EPT on secondary students' academic performance; and (2) evaluating how the dimensions of PI are associated with students' test scores.

To evaluate the effectiveness of EPT, a t-test was performed to compare the results of the pretest and posttest between the treatment and control groups. This analysis determined whether EPT made a significant difference in students' achievements. To test the significance of the differences, the pretest scores (i.e., prior to EPT) should not differ significantly between the control and treatment groups. None of the outcomes of the t-tests was significant in the pretest. T-tests were also run to examine the gains or losses from pretest to posttest considering differences between the treatment and control groups. Next, DID analysis was used to investigate which factors may influence the effects of PT on the academic performance of the control group and treatment group.

In addition to assessing the mean score changes from pretest to posttest by using t-tests, a simple regression model was employed in the empirical investigation to examine whether EPT enhances academic performance. The statistical model is shown as in Eq. (1):

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + u_i$$

where Y_i indicates the scores for the students; X_i refers to EPT; β_0 and β_1 are parameters of the regression line; and u_i refers to the error term. Next, DID was employed to estimate the effect of EPT by comparing the variables between the control group and the treatment group. The function form is shown as in Eq. (2):

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 \text{post}_i + \beta_3 (X_i * \text{post})_i + u_i$$

where $\beta_1 X_i$ is the main effect of treatment group; post_i refers to the posttreatment time dummy; β_3 , the average treatment effect, multiplies the interaction term $(X_i * \text{post})_i$, which is the same as a dummy variable equal to one for those observations in the treatment group in the post-period.

To examine how the dimensions of PI are associated with students' test scores, I implemented a two-stage least squares model (2SLS) because it permits the identification of the causal effect and of the correlation between the endogenous variable (PT variable) and instrument variables (family background variables). In other words, the requirements of instrument variables (family background variables) are to have no direct influence on dependent variables, while having a significant influence on the endogenous variable (PT variable).

The 2SLS estimation involves a system of two OLS regressions:

$$X = \gamma + \delta.T + \beta.Z + r \quad (1)$$

$$Y = \alpha + \tau.T + \omega.X + u \quad (2)$$

where X indicates the predictor (i.e., PT), Y refers to continuous outcome variable (i.e., students' test scores), T is a set of covariates (i.e., gender, school type, self-educational expectation, and residential status), Z refers to a set of instrument variables (number of siblings, family status, and parental educational expectation) that are associated with the PT variable but not associated with the outcome variable except through the PT, and r and u are errors. Additionally, δ and τ are the vector of coefficients for T , β and ω are coefficients for the predictor, γ and α are intercepts for the regressions (Habibov & Cheung, 2017).

1.5.2.1 Participants

Participants were 190 Taiwanese third-grade senior high school students (17-18 years old) who were from 13 different senior high schools attending 12 PT institutions. All 12 PT institutions are legally registered in Taiwan. Students in this study were engaged 90 minutes a day, two days a week, preparing for the English exam portion of the General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT) in 2018. Ninety-five students receiving EPT (i.e., the treatment group) were recruited to participate in this study. To ensure there were no significant differences in the t-tests for the pretest scores, the 95 students from the treatment group were encouraged to seek counterparts (i.e., 95 students not receiving EPT) in their senior high schools whose English scores on the national mock exam were similar to theirs to be part of the control group. Furthermore, in order to maintain the identicality between the tutored group and the non-tutored group, this study employed t-tests to examine the students' individual characteristics, family SES, and school type variables listed in Table A. None of the outcomes of t-tests in the students'

individual characteristics, family SES, and school type variables was significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table A. T-test results of students' individual characteristics, family socioeconomic status, and school type for the tutored group and the non-tutored group

Tutored group / Non-tutored group	<i>t</i> value	<i>p</i> value
Gender	0.70	0.47
School type	0	1
Monthly income	2.85	0.051
Parent's highest education level	1.08	0.279
Father's employment status	1.00	0.319
Family status	1.2	0.211
Parental educational expectation	0.61	0.537
Self-educational expectation	1.42	0.15
Residential status	1.57	0.115

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Source: Author

1.5.2.2 Survey Questionnaire

In the present study, survey questionnaires were used to collect participants' demographic details, their family's socioeconomic characteristics, their marks on the mock GSAET in November 2017, their scores on the GSAET in January 2018, their school type, and the time they

spent in self-study doing English homework and previewing and reviewing English learning materials other than EPT materials and PI variables.

The survey of non-EPT participants showed that they did not attend any English language tutorial courses in the past year. They had not engaged in self-study activities and had not used materials from tutorial classes since at least November 2016. As for the EPT participants, they were asked to report the self-study time invested in homework and in previewing and reviewing English related materials other than those related to PT. Thus, the time EPT participants invested in independent study did not include the time they invested with their PT materials. The EPT group invested in more self-study time than the non-EPT group.

The questionnaire for parents collected their perceptions of four dimensions of PI through 13 items: school contact, discussions between parents and the child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT. The parents' questionnaire was completely filled out and signed by one of the student's parents in both the tutored group and nontutored group. I selected 13 variables through a principal-components analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation to solicit four dimensions of PI: school contact, discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT. I included the above-mentioned independent variables in the research model to predict students' academic achievement.

1.5.2.3 General Scholastic Ability Test Pretest (English Mock Exam) and Posttest (English Exam)

The GSAET is a nationwide test for college admission in Taiwan. In the present study, data from the mock GSAET in November 2017 were used as the pretest, and data from the GSAET in January 2018 were used as the posttest. The mock GSAET and the GSAET are

national tests designed in Taiwan. The test is divided into two major parts, and the content of the first part (i.e., multiple choice questions) focuses on vocabulary items (15 points), grammar items in short and long readings (25 points) and reading comprehension questions (32 points). The content of the second part (i.e., handwritten questions) includes Chinese-to-English translation (8 points) and English writing (20 points).

1.5.2.4 Student Interviews

After the pretest, posttest, and the questionnaire survey, the 35 tutored subjects who became first-year undergraduates in September 2018 were asked to volunteer for an interview because their perceptions toward EPT would be fresh and appropriate to narrate their reflections on their EPT-learning experience. The details of tutored students' and their parents' SES are listed in Table B.

The interviews were semi-structured and were conducted on an individual, face-to-face basis. They lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes and were videoed and transcribed. In face-to-face interviews, the interaction between researchers and participants “compels more small talk, politeness routines, joking, nonverbal communication, and asides” (Shuy, 2003, p. 179) in which people can “communicate their attention and interest through their nonverbal nods or facial expression” (Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2013, p. 92). To ensure the consistency of answers, the interviews were guided by structured questions that stemmed from participants' responses to the survey questionnaire (e.g., EPT experiences, forms, durations, costs, and frequency). Next, more open-ended questions were asked on topics (e.g., students' reasons for seeking EPT, students' perceptions of EPT, comparisons of teachers and tutors, students' self-assessed academic

achievement, and students’ reflections on the language-learning process). The interviews were conducted in Chinese and then translated into English and transcribed for analysis.

Throughout the process of co-constructing the English learning experiences with participants, a research diary was kept by the researcher to record thoughts, reflections, and observations during/after interviews so that the analysis could begin with a process of “immersion” in the data and so the researcher could “become intimately familiar” with the dataset’s content and “notice” things pertaining to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 204). The analytic framework was based on the three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry, including temporality, sociality, and place, identified by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Temporality referred to the different stages of schooling in which the students existed. Sociality described the students’ interactions with their peers, teachers, and tutors. Place referred to the students’ requirement to attend formal schooling or private institutions for learning. All three dimensions came into play in settings in and out of the classroom.

Table B. List of tutored students interviewed

Tutored Students No.	Gender	School Type	Father’s Education	Mother’s Education	Father’s Occupation	Mother’s Occupation
T1	Male	Public	University	University	Engineer	Housewife
T2	Female	Private	University	University	Business	Business
T3	Female	Public	Junior High School	Junior High School	Cleaner	NA
T4	Male	Private	Ph.D.	Master	Professor	Lecturer

T5	Female	Public	University	Senior High School	Company Staff	Company Staff
T6	Female	Private	Master	University	Technology Company Staff	Technology Company Staff
T7	Female	Public	University	University	Bank Staff	Bank Staff
T8	Male	Private	Master	Master	Private Business Owner	Private Business Staff
T9	Male	Public	High School	High School	Worker	NA
T10	Female	Private	Master	University	Civil Servant	Civil Servant
T11	Male	Private	University	Master	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T12	Female	Private	University	University	Bank Staff	Housewife
T13	Male	Public	University	University	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T14	Male	Public	University	High School	Private Company Staff	Housewife
T15	Male	Private	University	Master	Technology Company Staff	Private Business Owner
T16	Female	Public	High School	University	Private Business Owner	Private Business Owner
T17	Female	Private	Master	Master	Engineer	Engineer
T18	Female	Public	Master	University	Technology Company Staff	Technology Company Staff

T19	Male	Public	High School	High School	Worker	Worker
T20	Male	Private	University	Master	Doctor	Bank Staff
T21	Male	Public	University	University	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T22	Female	Private	University	University	Bank Staff	Engineer
T23	Male	Public	University	High School	Worker	Private Company Staff
T24	Female	Public	High School	High School	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T25	Female	Private	Master	Master	Private Business Owner	Technology Company Staff
T26	Female	Private	Master	University	Doctor	Civil Servant
T27	Female	Private	Master	Master	Technology Company Staff	Technology Company Staff
T28	Female	Private	Master	Ph.D.	Lawyer	Professor
T29	Male	Private	University	University	Technology Company Staff	Private Business Owner
T30	Male	Public	University	High School	Technology Company Staff	Bank Staff
T31	Female	Private	University	University	Private Business Owner	Housewife
T32	Female	Private	University	University	Designer	Designer

T33	Male	Female	University	University	Elementary School Teacher	Elementary School Teacher
T34	Female	Public	High School	University	Worker	Bank Staff
T35	Female	Public	High School	High School	Construction Company	Construction Company

Source: Author

1.5.2.5 Parent, Schoolteacher, Principal, Tutor, and Tutoring Manager Interviews

I conducted the interviews with 35 tutored students; then, 16 parents, eight schoolteachers, three principals, ten tutors, and four tutoring managers were invited to participate in the interviews according to availability. The details of schoolteachers and principals interviewed are listed in Table C, and the details of tutors and tutoring managers interviewed are shown in Table D.

16 tutored students' parents (see Table E for details of parents' SES) were recruited through personal networks and contacts with tutors and other parents. The participants were asked about the nature, scale of, reasons for undertaking EPT, and influence on parenting attitudes and the wider society. In addition to the parents, five schoolteachers, three principals, ten tutors, and four tutoring managers were interviewed. The teachers, principals, tutors, and tutoring managers all have a direct match with the tutored students for the sake of interview data collection. The interview questions focused on reasons for practicing EPT, types of EPT, and relationships between EPT and mainstream education. Most interviews with the above-mentioned participants lasted approximately 60 minutes, and were conducted in schools and PT institutions.

Table C. List of schoolteachers and principals interviewed

School	School Type	District	Interviewee
School A	Private	Municipality	Two English teachers and one principal
School B	Private	Municipality	One English teacher
School C	Private	Municipality	Two English teachers
School D	Public	Municipality	One English teacher and one principal
School E	Public	City	Two English teachers and one principal

Source: Author

Table D. List of tutors and tutoring managers interviewed

PT Institution	District	Interviewee
Tutoring Institution A	Municipality	Two English tutors
Tutoring Institution B	Municipality	One English tutor and one tutoring manager
Tutoring Institution C	Municipality	Two English tutors and one tutoring manager
Tutoring Institution D	Municipality	One English tutors and one tutoring manager
Tutoring Institution E	City	Two English tutors
Tutoring Institution F	City	One English tutors
Tutoring Institution G	Town	One English tutor and one tutoring manager

Source: Author

Table E. List of tutored students' parents interviewed

Tutored Students' Parents Interviewed	Gender	School Type	Father's Education	Mother's Education	Father's Occupation	Mother's Occupation
T3 (Father interviewed)	Female	Public	Junior High School	Junior High School	Cleaner	NA
T4 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Private	Ph.D.	Master	Professor	Lecturer
T6 (Father interviewed)	Female	Private	Master	University	Technology Company Staff	Technology Company Staff
T7 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Public	University	University	Bank Staff	Bank Staff
T8 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Private	Master	Master	Private Business Owner	Private Business Staff
T10 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Private	Master	University	Civil Servant	Civil Servant
T11 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Private	University	Master	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T15 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Private	University	Master	Technology Company Staff	Private Business Owner
T17 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Private	Master	Master	Engineer	Engineer
T21 (Father interviewed)	Male	Public	University	University	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff

T22 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Private	University	University	Bank Staff	Engineer
T24 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Public	High School	High School	Private Company Staff	Private Company Staff
T29 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Private	University	University	Technology Company Staff	Private Business Owner
T30 (Mother interviewed)	Male	Public	University	High School	Technology Company Staff	Bank Staff
T31 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Private	University	University	Private Business Owner	Housewife
T35 (Mother interviewed)	Female	Public	High School	High School	Construction Company	Construction Company

Source: Author

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter One outlines the structure of the dissertation, first introducing the background of the study, the problem of the study, research questions, research methodologies, and the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter Two summarizes the existing literature on (1) the effectiveness of PT in global contexts; and (2) EPT studies to provide a theoretical background to interpret its expansion and contextualize the discussion of sociocultural conditions in Taiwan.

Chapter Three reviews (1) PI in Taiwanese education; (2) the structure of Taiwanese education and PI; (3) the widespread practice of PI; and (4) SES differences in PI to

conceptualize EPT used by Taiwanese parents as an important strategy to improve their children's educational outcomes in comparison with other forms of PI.

Through analyzing the national college entrance exam data gathered in 2017 and 2018 in a control-group pretest-posttest experiment, in Chapter Four, I investigate the effects of EPT on students' academic performance after considering the students' individual characteristics, family SES, school type, and self-study practices. Chapter Five elaborates on how tutored students' invested in EPT and in self-study activities to attain academic gains and secure a place in university.

Chapter Six focuses on how EPT was practiced via stakeholders in contrast to how it is examined and perceived in Chapters Four and Five. The analysis of stakeholders' practice in EPT is built on PI activities and interviews with parents, teachers, principals, tutors, and PT managers.

Chapter Seven summarizes the findings of the effects of EPT through analyses of cognitive, motivational, and ecological factors, tutored students' experiences and reflections on EPT, and the practices of EPT via stakeholders. Suggestions are proposed to alleviate the investment in EPT. Implications are identified for policy making and limitation of the study and directions of future research are discussed. The study also implies the findings from Taiwan contribute to the international analysis on PT and add an important component to the broader conceptual literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the global context and the prevalence of shadow education that are necessary to understand the PT phenomenon. The next section summarizes the existing literature on EPT. After a critical review of literature, I explain the gap in the existing literature, which this dissertation partially fills. Finally, I concentrate on the Taiwanese setting to contextualize the discussion in sociocultural conditions.

2.1 Global Contexts and the Prevalence of Shadow Education

The privatization of education in East Asia is a significant phenomenon that has resulted in the emergence of cram schools. As Liu (2012) stated, “cram schools are also known as *Buxiban* in Taiwan, *Juku* in Japan, *Hagwon* in Korea, and private tuition or shadow education system in Western countries” (p. 46). The context in Korea is particularly noteworthy: in 2016, 80% of elementary school students, 63.8% of middle school students, and 52.4% of high school students received private supplementary education (Korea Statistical Information Service, 2017). According to a 2007 survey conducted by Japan’s Ministry of Education (MOE), 15.9% of grade 1 students and 65.2% of grade 9 students received tutoring at home, in *Juku*, or with outside tutors (Bray, 2009). Data obtained from the Taiwanese MOE are particularly notable: in the 2014-2015 school year, 76.7% of elementary school students and 34.9% of senior high school students received PT (MOE, Taiwan, 2015b).

2.2 The Effectiveness of Private Tutoring

Despite the fact that PT is expanding, this widespread phenomenon “remains very firmly in the shadows” (Ireson, 2004, p. 110). Moreover, current studies on PT have been

directed mainly at its nature, scope, scale, and motivation and have paid less attention to its impact on achievement and on possible influencing mechanisms. Only a small body of research has been carried out on its impacts and mechanisms and is important to review.

In Mauritius, a study by Kulpoo (1998) was conducted in 1995 to assess the impact of input variables on the reading literacy of grade 6 students. Kulpoo distinguished between nonmalleable factors, such as students' socioeconomic characteristics and location, and malleable factors, which are amenable to change through interventions by parents, teachers, and education officials. Receiving PT was placed in the malleable category along with other components such as school resources and family interest in homework and attendance. Attendance at tutoring sessions outside school hours was shown to be the strongest malleable determinant of students' reading literacy, although it was not stronger than the nonmalleable factor of English being spoken in the home.

Positive results can also be found in Greece. Polydorides (1986) investigated the correlations between PT and academic achievement at the senior high school level. A small positive correlation was found between tutoring and students' GPAs, but the correlation with national examination scores was much weaker, indicating that PT did not consistently influence academic achievement. In Germany, Mischo and Haag (2002) compared the performance of secondary school students who had received PT over a period of 9 months with those who had not. The results showed that PT led to large improvements in school performance and motivation to study. Similar findings can be found in Buchmann's (2002) study on Kenya's highly competitive educational system, which indicated that PT resulted in fewer instances of grade repetition and contributed to stronger academic gains.

More recent literature has similarly identified positive relationships between tutoring and academic achievement. In Taiwan, a survey of 13,798 grade 7 students by Liu (2012)

revealed that receiving PT had positive effects on student analytical ability and mathematical performance, but the positive effects decreased as the number of tutoring hours increased. Also, in Taiwan, Chung (2013) surveyed 365 senior high school students as to their motivation towards English learning and their receipt of PT. The results showed that students enrolled in PT tend to be motivated, with 342 of 365 students reporting that undertaking PT was beneficial for obtaining high examination scores. In South Korea, Byun (2014) used longitudinal data collected by Korean Educational Research Institute from a nationally representative sample of approximately 7,000 Korean seventh graders to examine the causal relationships between different forms of shadow education and academic achievement in mathematics. He found that cram schooling, which focuses primarily on test preparation, made a greater contribution to academic gains than did other forms of tutoring.

However, other studies have not found any significant correlations between academic performance and PT. In Egypt, the MOE conducted a survey on 18,000 students in the primary and preparatory stages of education from 1990-1991. The study showed no significant impact on students' achievement based on gender, PT, or in-school tutoring groups (Fergany, 1994). Fergany (1994) conducted a follow-up research study at the primary level, covering 4,729 households with 7,309 individuals in three different parts of the country. The results again showed no correlation between PT and academic achievement. In Korea, Lee, Kim, and Yoon (2004) investigated the effects of preclass tutoring, that is, "institutions such as cram schools teaching school curricula at least one month ahead of the school schedule on student achievement (p.25)". Their statistical analysis found that "there exists no evidence that pre-class tutoring, either short-term or long-term, increases school grade points" (p. 40), and the authors concluded that learning attitude was the most important determinant of school performance, not preclass tutoring. In Singapore, a study by Cheo and Quah (2005) analyzed

the learning achievements of 429 grade 8 “Express” students in three secondary schools. The results suggested that “having a private tutor may be counter-productive in the Singapore setting” (p. 210), and time spent on PT instead of self-study may lead to a decline in overall academic performance. The authors also concluded that the conventional wisdom of “the more the better” (pp. 280-281) created a mismatch in reality in terms of tutoring and that diminishing returns set in far quicker when “over-investment in the child” (p.281) took place. In the UK, Ireson and Rushforth (2005) surveyed a sample of secondary school students and found that female students benefited from PT much less than male students. One possible reason for this result is that female students already had better grades than male students before receiving PT.

In China, Zhang (2013) examined the effect of PT on national college entrance exam performance in 6,043 grade 12 students. Her analysis revealed that the effects on Mathematics, Chinese, and English were mixed, with the average effect being non-significant. The author speculated that although the main functions of PT are to help students with time management and provide them with exercises to familiarize themselves with entrance examination, non-tutored participants prepare in similar ways. Zhang and Liu (2016) conducted follow-up research on the effects of PT on performance in Mathematics, Chinese and English in the national college entrance exam, with a focus on the class size of PT. The results showed that regardless of the class size of PT, PT had no significant impact on student academic performance. In Hong Kong, Yung (2019) explored the L2 (second language) “selves level” of 18 senior secondary students receiving EPT based on Dörnyei’s (2009) L2 motivational self system. The findings indicated that “the learners possessed insecure actual L2 selves, revealing a discrepancy with their future L2 selves consisting of dominant ought-to L2 selves and suppressed ideal L2 selves” (p.120).

In summary, the effectiveness of PT may depend on the following: (a) the content and techniques of the tutoring, (b) the motivation of students, (c) the duration of time invested in tutoring, and (d) the types of students receiving tutoring. Despite the potential importance of these factors, the volume and coverage of evaluation studies in PT is relatively limited. Currently, such studies are primarily concerned with assessment either during or after tutoring. They predominately survey participants about their academic achievement or their self-reflection about tutoring, and most of the results are related to motivational improvement and engagement in learning. As a control-group pretest-posttest experimental design is lacking in these studies, their results should be treated with caution. According to Bray (2009), it is still controversial whether PT truly improves students' academic achievement or whether high-achieving and motivated students are inclined to seek additional PT to aid in high-stakes examinations. Therefore, the study described in Chapter Four was conducted to examine the effectiveness of PT in a control-group pretest-posttest experiment.

2.3 English Private Tutoring (EPT)

According to Hamid et al. (2009), EPT is “of substantial interest to TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages), applied linguistics, and language education” (p. 283); however, other studies do not exclusively focus on this issue. Hamid et al. investigated PT in English for secondary school students in a disadvantaged rural area of Bangladesh. The study focused on student attitudes and motivations and established an EPT profile in connection with the school system, learning achievement, and parent and student expectations. They selected 228 grade 10 students to answer a survey questionnaire and take an English proficiency test, and 14 students participated in one-on-one interviews at students' homes. The results showed that students had clear, structured insights into EPT and regarded EPT as

a crucial factor for learning achievement due to the unsatisfactory English teaching they received in their formal education system. In another study conducted by Lee (2010), the researcher examined students' preuniversity English educational backgrounds with tutors or other private supplementary institutions in Korea. A questionnaire and in-depth interviews were administered to 43 freshman students, seven of whom were selected to explore personal language learning. The findings revealed that students who had opportunities to participate in PT had better English performance than those who had been exposed only to mainstream schooling. Coniam (2014) investigated the perceptions of 17 public-examination retakers after attending a fee-based private tutorial institution in Hong Kong for a whole academic year. The results showed that the respondents had positive views of tutorial institutions, but overall, students desired to study at state-sponsored schools for a more well-rounded educational approach. Another recent study on EPT was carried out by Huang (2017), who compared English learning motivation between adolescent students who had received PT and those who had not. A sample of 1,689 public secondary school students participated in a questionnaire survey. The study showed that students with PT demonstrated stronger intentions and learning behaviors to learn English than those with only mainstream education.

Although the previous research studies by Hamid et al. (2009), Lee (2010), Coniam (2014), and Huang (2017) focused on students' attitudes, motivations, and academic improvement regarding EPT, they paid little attention to students' critical reflections on their perceptions of EPT. Such a focus is pivotal because, in the view of students, "effective teaching is both aiding their learning but also provoking further interest in their subjects and encouraging them to engage in independent learning activities" (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 40). Because each regression model accounted only for a small percentage of variability in Hamid et al.'s (2009) study, the validity of the results showing a correlation between EPT and

academic achievement was limited. Additionally, the participants had not completed secondary education, so their reflections based on their perceptions might have limited the scope of application. Although Lee (2010) surveyed preuniversity students' exposure to extracurricular English instruction, he regarded the research as "rather explorative" (p. 72) because students' English learning backgrounds were his major focus rather than their perceptions of EPT. Coniam (2014) reported a case study of public examination retakers' perceptions of private tutorial schools, but he acknowledged that his study yielded a "rather minimal" (p. 387) amount of information because the data were collected from students who had not completed their secondary education and only one PT teacher. Finally, Huang (2017) investigated how English learning motivation differed between adolescent learners receiving and not receiving tutoring. Her study highlighted the importance of diverse learning experiences in L2 motivation research, but it lacked examination of learners' critical reflections on their English learning experiences. Most of these studies revealed that learners' test scores did have an impact on the effectiveness of EPT, but they did not specifically indicate learners' perceptions of and reflections on the effectiveness of EPT in terms of which needs had been met by their tutoring institutions that had not been met by their schools. Notably, improvements in test scores cannot be completely reduced to EPT, as mainstream English schooling coexisted with EPT in all of these studies.

The remaining research in this area has suggested that "the links between tutoring and academic achievement are not robust (Zhang, Bray, Wang, Lykins, & Kwo, 2013) and that "the evaluation criteria for effective tutoring should fit the motivations of the consumers" (p. 496). Therefore, one could conclude that learners' experiences and reflections on EPT play an important role in evaluating the effectiveness of PT.

2.4 The Context

Taiwan has an extensive network of public and private senior high schools. In 1968, compulsory education was extended from six years to nine years. The number of junior high school students has since dramatically increased, and the competition to enroll in a limited number of postsecondary schools thus increased in the 1980s. Therefore, the expansion of PT institutions was stimulated in the 1980s and 1990s (Liu, 2006). Another relevant educational policy leading to the boom of PT by the 1990s was the greater increase in the number of vocational schools than academic high schools. The consequence was that senior high school students engaged in intense competition to secure a chance to enter a top-ranked university (Chang, 2012). Until 2014, 12-year basic education was accomplished through a “6 + 3 + 3” model, with free education for the first 6 years (elementary school), middle 3 years (junior high school) and last 3 years (senior high school) in both public and private schools (MOE Taiwan, 2017a).

PT is a phenomenon that has greatly expanded in Taiwan since the 1980s. According to official statistics, approximately 40-60% of postsecondary school students undertook PT in 1978 (Wang, 2014). Based on a survey conducted by Taiwan’s MOE on private secondary school education consumption, approximately 60% of junior high school students undertook PT in the 2014-15 academic year (MOE Taiwan, 2017b). English is one of the subjects given the most attention in PT by secondary school students in Taiwan (Liu, 2012).

The widespread PT industry in Taiwan has both cultural and institutional dimensions. Culturally, Taiwan, with its predominantly Chinese ethnicity, is deeply rooted in Confucianism, which “emphasizes the value of meritocracy and the use of competitive examinations to determine talent” (Kuan, 2011, p. 344). Although the Taiwanese government has launched several educational reforms in the past decades in an attempt to relieve the

burden of the examination culture on students, PT has continued to expand, and the competition for admission to prestigious schools remains high (Jheng, 2015). Due to the competitive examinations and the high scores needed for admission to top-ranked high schools and universities, parents send their children to PT institutions to pursue higher scores on exams. Institutionally, students are positioned hierarchically in senior high schools and institutions of higher education in hopes of obtaining future opportunities in the labor market and greater social mobility (Tsai, 1998). This cultural and institutional context has led to stiff academic competition, and the subject of English is particularly competitive.

2.5 English Plans and English Education in Taiwan

Since the early 21st century, policymakers in Taiwan have proactively promoted multilingualism to respond to the political and economic pressures of internationalization. The English language policy has shifted to focus on “proficiency in international English” (Chen, 2010, p. 90) and communicative competence (Chang, 2008). Unlike other foreign languages in Taiwan, “English enjoys a unique status and prestige” (Oladejo, 2006, p. 149). More significantly, English has been part of the elementary school curriculum since 2001 and is the only compulsory foreign language subject from elementary school to university. The Taiwanese government has also initiated a number of measures to create a bilingual environment “in public institutions and in the community at large” and to “make English the second official language of the country” (Oladejo, 2006, p.149).

Three major national plans concerning English education were proposed by the Taiwanese government in the early 21st century. The first, “The Challenge 2008: National Development Plan,” is aimed at “developing a new generation of creative, lively youths capable of international dialogue and adept at using information and English skills to their

advantage” (MOE Taiwan, 2015a, p.1). Basic English communication classes have been provided to help Taiwanese people engage in English and further develop their English-speaking skills not only within the purview of the government but also in their work domains. Additionally, English competence has become a prerequisite for promotion for government employees (Chang, 2006). The second, The Plan for Enhancing National English Proficiency, proposed in 2009, aims to enhance Taiwanese English proficiency in both the public and private sectors and to create an environment for using and learning English (Research, Development and Evaluation Commission, Executive Yuan, 2009). The third, the Blueprint for Developing Taiwan into a Bilingual Nation by 2030, (1) strengthens the English proficiency of Taiwanese at the national level, (2) reduces the urban-rural divide with digital technology, (3) parallels bilingual policy and native language policy, and (4) forges competitive advantage for young talent (Executive Yuan, 2018).

In these three national plans, English is considered a language for international communication and a platform to connect, through digital technology, with people all over the world. Under these trends, English proficiency has become an essential ability to open the gateway to globalization. Therefore, the Taiwanese government emphasizes the needs to raise citizens’ English ability to an internationally competitive level and cultivate human resources equipped with English ability for international communication.

English is the only required foreign language subject taught in the Taiwanese education system. Because of the implementation of the General Guideline of Grade 1-9 Curriculum of Elementary and Junior High School Education (MOE Taiwan, 1998), English was introduced for fifth-grade and sixth-grade students in elementary schools in 2001 and was further extended to third- and fourth-grade students in 2005. Before the official implementation by the MOE, however, many local governments had already introduced

English education at all grades in their elementary schools.

Due to the implementation of the new curriculum, the textbooks used for elementary and junior high school students were no longer the unified national editions but still needed to follow the curriculum guidelines developed by the MOE. Teachers at the elementary and junior high school levels could select different sets of textbooks developed by private publishers but examined and approved by the MOE. For senior high school students, textbooks have been deregulated and developed by private publishers since 1999 and have been available since then for teachers' selection.

At the tertiary level, English was a compulsory subject for first-year university students by 1993. After 1993, the English course was replaced by a foreign language course in which students were allowed to choose any foreign language provided by their universities. Despite the changes made by the MOE, English has remained the core of the foreign language curriculum.

On the whole, "English education" in Taiwan has a prestigious status because English is the only required foreign language subject offered throughout Taiwanese education. English as a foreign language in Taiwan has been promoted by the government and has become a whole-nation movement in the 21st century.

As a result, most Taiwanese parents enroll their children in English classes to expose them to English in advance of the timeline suggested by government policy based on the thinking that earlier is better (Chang, 2008). This phenomenon is believed to have led to the increase in PT. According to a survey conducted by Liu (2012), 72.9% of seventh-grade Taiwanese students attended PT. English was the most frequently studied subject at PT institutions. Other official statistics also reveal that the number of PT institutions mainly for secondary school students rose from 3,299 in 2004 to 10,943 in 2018 (The Education Bureau

of the Kaohsiung City Government in Taiwan, 2018), although the enrollment of seventh-grade students dramatically decreased from 0.31 million in 2004 to 0.2 million in 2018 (MOE Taiwan, 2018). In short, the rapid expansion of secondary education in recent years has not diminished the popularity of PT in Taiwan.

The rapid growth of PT institutions reflects not only parents' willingness to invest in PT but also students' devotion of extra time and effort to learning outside of their regular classes with the hope of obtaining greater returns in the future via academic competitions.

The expansion of shadow education in Taiwan has been attributed to institutional characteristics that are rooted in the existing Taiwanese education system (Stevenson & Baker 1992). The prevalence of PT may also reinforce individual students' and parents' beliefs in the importance of attending private tutorial schools to achieve better examination results. It is therefore important to determine whether PT has a significant positive effect on academic performance. If it does, the issue of PT will be a concern not only for those who are engaged in PT but also for those who lack the opportunity or resources to attend PT, as it may affect students' educational choices through the stratification process. Therefore, the first research question in this dissertation is as follows: Does private tutoring have an effect on students' academic performance in English, a subject that most senior high school students take and that is highly valued in Taiwan, and if so, how large is its effect?

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN TAIWAN

As introduced in Chapter Two, since studies have often found that the effect of EPT on students' academic achievement is inconclusive, the relationship between children's academic performance and PI should be taken into consideration. To better investigate how PI is related to children's cognitive outcomes, this chapter, firstly, reviews different dimensions of PI and students' cognitive outcomes at different ages. Then, I examine how Taiwanese contexts shape the relationship between children's education and PI through the activities which parents participate in and factors that may influence parents' engagement in children's education. Finally, based on the analysis of parents' SES and effects of PI, the latter part of this chapter clarifies to what extent different dimensions of PI among different social stratifications may attribute to socioeconomic inequality of students' academic outcomes.

3.1 Parental Involvement in Taiwanese Education

Taiwanese education, which places students hierarchically in senior high schools and the institutions of higher education, provides an interesting context to investigate the association between students' academic performance and PI. Culturally, because Taiwan is deeply rooted in Confucianism, Taiwanese parents seldom get involved in children's school activities (Hung, 2007). They generally believe that teachers are the only authority to provide the knowledge and expertise for their children to learn in schools and they are highly respected by parents and society.

Therefore, the investment by Taiwanese parents in PT to improve their children's educational outcomes in hopes of obtaining educational/occupational success has been widely discussed in various studies (Chang, 2008; Chang, 2012; Jheng, 2015; Liu, 2006; Liu, 2012;

Kuan, 2011). According to the 2001 Taiwan Education Panel Survey conducted by Liu (2012), the findings indicated that 72.9% of junior high school students were attending PT institutions for an average of 6.24 hours per week, and academic subjects such as English and mathematics were the most popular subjects in PT. Moreover, the number of *wen-li* (a Chinese term meaning “literature and science”) PT institutions, which prepare students for entrance examinations in major academic subjects, rose from 3,299 in 2004 to 10,943 in 2018 (The Education Bureau of the Kaohsiung City Government in Taiwan, 2018).

Along with the investment in PT by Taiwanese parents, Taiwanese education has been well-known for students’ excellent achievement in international surveys such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The relationship between high levels of parental engagement and students’ educational outcomes makes the Taiwanese case interesting to investigate to what extent the activities parents get involved affect children’s educational outcomes.

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the PI activities that have not been discussed in previous literature to understand the role of PI in children’s education. In Taiwan, parents invest their time and money in their children’s PT. I analyze to what extent parents are engaged in activities related to EPT by comparing other dimensions of PI activities. More recent research in Taiwan has similarly examined the relationship between PI and children’s academic performance (Chen, Newland, Liang, & Giger, 2016; Kung & Lee, 2016; Jhang, 2019). However, the previous research has limited their focus on examining certain PI activities without taking PT as an important strategy that Taiwanese parents use more frequently than other dimensions of PI, which may fail to conceptualize children’s

educational outcome. Next, the chapter discusses structural characteristics in Taiwanese education that enables parents to use PT as a strategy for improving their children's educational outcomes. Finally, the chapter provides empirical evidence on whether PI has a significant impact on the effectiveness of EPT for academic results.

3.1.1 English Private Tutoring as a Dimension of Parental Involvement

PI is defined in numerous dimensions, ranging from what activities parents do at home to how activities parents participate in schools may influence children's academic performance. PI at home and school are two major institutions for children's education in many different cultural groups. For example, in academically-oriented Taiwanese families, PI concentrates mainly on school-based activities (e.g., volunteering at parent-teacher-association events, joining parent-teacher-association meetings, contacting schoolteachers and school officials), direct assistance at home-based activities (e.g., parent-child discussions, monitoring children's academic performance and behaviors, parental instruction on children's educational progress), and indirect assistance (e.g., using resources to support children's learning) to enhance children's academic outcomes (Kung & Lee, 2016). Therefore, in the current chapter, I took three dimensions of PI into consideration that have been widely discussed in the previous studies (Chen et al., 2016; Kung & Lee, 2016; Jhang, 2019): namely school contact, discussions between parents and child, and parental monitoring.

However, I have highlighted another dimension of PI—activities related to EPT—and added it to the research model. It is due to the fact that in the Asian contexts such as Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong, PT plays a significant role apart from home and school in educating students (Bray, 2009). A great number of the parents attempt to help their children

achieve higher scores on exams by sending them to PT institutions. According to data obtained from the Taiwanese MOE, in the 2014-2015 school year, 76.7 % of primary school students, 60 % of junior high students, and 34.9% of senior high students attended PT (MOE Taiwan, 2015b). In Taiwan, there are several types of PT services. One-on-one tutoring services are provided by a single tutor to one student at a time, mostly at a student's home. In another type, a tutor runs a class with a small number of students. Primary school students usually participate in this type of PT for homework checking and revision of lessons. Online tutoring services are also another potentially important marketplace for tutoring (Zhang et al., 2013). They vary from personal one-on-one instruction to one tutor-to-a group of students from different places via the Internet without geographical boundaries. The most common type of tutoring is lecture-type tutoring (called *Buxiban* in Taiwan). Tutors deliver their lectures to large classes where tutors are physically present, and lessons are live broadcast on a screen, or pre-recorded. Much of this type of tutoring mainly focuses on preparation for school subject tests and national entrance examinations by providing notes and mock examinations.

It is commonly known that PT expenditures occupy a large proportion of Taiwanese household income. According to a recent Taiwanese MOE survey, parents spend more than 60 billion New Taiwan Dollars (NTD) (approximately 2 billion USD) for primary school children in 2015 (MOE Taiwan, 2016), 22.3 billion NTD (approximately 0.74 billion USD) for junior high school children in 2016 (MOE Taiwan, 2017b), and 9.92 billion NTD (approximately 0.33 billion USD) for high school children in 2014 (MOE Taiwan, 2015b) on PT. A recent survey conducted by MOE on private education consumption of senior high students in the 2014-2015 academic year indicated that the monthly per capita expenditure on school subjects related learning activities outside of schools was about 41,000 NTD

(approximately 1,370 USD), which was about 10,000 NTD more than the average monthly spending on school tuition and fees (MOE Taiwan, 2015b). Similar surveys were conducted with junior high students in the 2016-2017 academic year and with elementary school students in the 2015-2016 academic year. The surveys reported that for junior high students, the average monthly spending on school subjects related learning was around 47,000 NTD (approximately 1,566 USD), which was 22,000 NTD more than school tuition and fees (MOE Taiwan, 2017b) , and for elementary school students, the average monthly spending on school subjects was around 52,000 NTD (approximately 1,740 USD), which was 41,000 NTD more than school tuition and fees (MOE Taiwan, 2016). Different estimates suggest the expenditure on PT was much higher than that on school tuition from elementary school to senior high school.

PT not only brings parents financial burden but also requires them to make many decisions such as deciding on the timing for PT, the schedules for lessons, what subjects to take as well as what kinds of tutors, tutorial centers, and forms of tutoring to select to meet their children's needs (Liu & Bray, 2018). However, PI in PT activities is not restricted to make the above-mentioned choices but also includes monitoring children's academic progress through grade reports provided by PT institutions or consultation with tutors. Although some parents may contact teachers directly to discuss their children's progress, the various aspects of standardization in mainstream education substantially limit Taiwanese parents' influence on children's educational processes. For instance, due to the uniformity within the school curriculum suggested by MOE, there is no room for Taiwanese parents to change the curriculum, the content or pace of instruction to better suit their children. In addition, ranking and tracking have been prohibited by MOE since 1979, and parents are less likely to use their connections to intervene in children's educational processes. Therefore, Taiwanese parents

seek an alternative way to continuously monitor their children's progress via interacting with tutors to precisely collect children's academic performance and to access the benefits based on children's PT experiences. Parents can audit PT lessons to monitor or keep track of children's learning progress and tutors' instructions, and if necessary, intervene to modify the curriculum and instruction. Compared to the standardization practice in mainstream education, it seems that PT is a more flexible and customized service that can accommodate parents' and children's specific needs for their educational success. In sum, considering the financial expenses, effort and time that parents spend on searching for appropriate PT services for their children, activities related to PT need to be considered as a dimension of PI in the context of Taiwanese education to obtain an unbiased estimate of the effect of PI on students' academic performance.

3.2 Structure of Taiwanese Education and Parental Involvement

It is important to discuss the structure of the Taiwanese educational system in which Taiwanese parents have no choice but to depend on PT as an important strategy to improve children's educational outcomes. The Taiwanese compulsory education follows a "6+3+3" model with free education for the first 6 years (elementary school), middle 3 years (junior high school), and last 3 years (senior high school) in both public and private schools (MOE Taiwan, 2017a). After junior high school, students can choose to study at general high schools, comprehensive high schools or vocational high schools. General high schools provide courses on general subjects and mainly prepare students to enroll in tertiary education. Comprehensive senior high schools provide courses for general and vocational subjects for entry into academia or industry according to students' aptitudes. Although vocational high schools are designed for learning practical skills through vocational subjects

to enhance employability, most of the vocational school students advance their studies in tertiary education, which further causes the expansion of PT to prepare students for admission to universities. According to 2019 Taiwanese MOE education statistics, 94.3% of general and comprehensive high school graduates and nearly 80% of vocational school graduates enrolled in tertiary education in 2018 in Taiwan (MOE Taiwan, 2019).

The most salient feature in Taiwanese education from elementary schools to senior high schools is its high level of standardization with uniform requirements in educational aspects practiced nationwide. Through the practice from top to bottom, the centralization further facilitates standardization. The Taiwanese MOE strictly regulates different aspects of education, including teacher education such as teacher training, teacher certificate examination, teacher recruitment, teachers' in-service advancement education, uniform curriculum guidelines, and pace of subject instruction. Furthermore, the united college entrance examinations such as GSAT for senior high school students and Technological and Vocational Education Examination for vocational high school students enforce standardization in teaching and learning. In schools, the textbooks used by teachers and students are based on the MOE's uniform curriculum guidelines rather than students' ability. The practice of within-class ranking or tracking has been historically prohibited.

Another practice of educational standardization in Taiwan is 12-year basic education. One of the 12-year compulsory education goals is providing equal opportunity in education. This policy prevents "school choice" as students are admitted to high schools based on their household registration. Furthermore, this policy is applied to both public schools and private schools. That is, even private schools have no rights to choose their students but receive them in accordance with students' household registration. The Taiwanese government also

instituted a tuition-free policy in the 12-year basic education system in order to thoroughly implement an equalization policy and reduce the differences among schools and families. However, this equalization policy has become one of the controversial policies in Taiwanese education because some critics have concerns that this policy may interfere with parents' and students' school choice, exacerbate inequality between advantaged and disadvantaged families, increase the competition of entering university, and thus lower the quality of Taiwanese education (Sung, Cho, & Tseng, 2014).

In summary, Taiwanese parents have very limited room to practice their involvement in children's educational process in schooling due to high degree of educational standardization. Given the situation that school curriculum and teachers' pace of instruction are highly controlled through standardized educational system, parents still could choose the schools that are tailor-made to meet the specific needs for their children. However, the household registration regulation in 12-year basic education substantially limits parents' and students' school choice that they favor. With the influence of standardization in schooling and restricted school choice, Taiwanese parents have no choice but to seek an alternative, PT, to successfully serve their educational needs and further secure their children's academic places in higher education.

3.3 The Widespread Practice of Parental Involvement

When identifying the effect of PT on students' English performance, important determinants of English performance, such as ecological variables (e.g., PI and parental support), and cognitive and motivational factors, must be taken into consideration.

With regard to ecological variables, as parents invest resources in their children's academic performance by using PT, PI and parental support variables are likely to be the

factors that influence children's cognitive outcomes—GSAET. The previous studies on the involvement of Taiwanese parents in children's educational progress have suggested that Taiwanese parents invested in PT by selecting tutors for their children and contacting tutors about their children's academic performance. Furthermore, the previous studies highlighted the high degree of Taiwanese parents' interest in their children's cognitive outcome (Chen et al., 2016; Kung & Lee, 2016; Jhang, 2019). Therefore, I anticipate a substantial degree of PI in home-based activities, such as discussions between parents and children and monitoring children's activities. Finally, parental school-based activities such as contacting school about children's performance, future plan and school activities and parenting at home were included to observe the contrast between parental home-based activities and prenatal activities related to EPT. It should be noted that the high degree of educational standardization previously mentioned may restrict parents' direct influence on children educational progress in mainstream education.

3.4 Socioeconomic Status Differences in Parental Involvement

Studies have shown that different levels of students' family SES background may determine the extent of PI in their children's educational progress (Benner, Boyle, & Sadler, 2016; McNeal, 2001; Park, Byun, & Kim, 2011). Parents need to spend time and effort to engage with children, which involves economic capital and social capital. These studies show that the relationship between SES and dimensions of PI such as parent-child discussions, involvement in parent-teacher organizations, and monitoring children's activities affects students' academic performance. However, the effects of PI on students' academic performance by SES observed in previous studies are likely biased. First, these studies failed to consider an important dimension of PI such as parents' activities related to PT. These

studies also omitted variables that may contribute to the positive effects of PI on students' academic performance. Furthermore, most of the studies did not fully explore possible heterogeneous effects. As mentioned earlier, PT is regarded as a dimension of PI, which requires parents' economic capital to pay for the fees involved. It is possible that students with different SES backgrounds, different previous academic achievements, and different levels of PI may gain different benefits from PT on students' academic performance.

Given my focus on PT, cognitive and motivational factors may have a positive impact on students' overall academic performance as PT increases real learning time and instructional resources (Kuan, 2011). Carroll's model of school learning (Carroll, 1963) specifies that the time factor plays a major role in learning and "time on task". Carroll indicated that in this model whether learning is successful in enhancing student achievement depends on the actual time needed for learning and the time actually spent on learning. That is, the amount of time that students participate in learning activities and the length of time during which learning actually takes place are important factors affecting students' performance. Therefore, this model can be applied to evaluating the effects of PT, which depend on students' initiative, effort, and ability and the time they spend on learning.

**CHAPTER FOUR: EFFECTS OF ENGLISH PRIVATE
TUTORING ON ENGLISH PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOLS IN TAIWAN**

The first research question is “does private tutoring have an effect on students’ academic performance in English, a subject that most senior high school students take and that is highly valued in Taiwan, and if so, how large is its effect?” This chapter compares the academic performance of Taiwanese secondary school learners by performing a control-group pretest-posttest experiment. As reviewed in previous studies, the general motivation of students and parents who decide to undertake PT is to improve students’ academic performance. In order to verify whether this overarching goal can be achieved through PT, the researchers conducted the studies introduced in the literature review through various research methods. However, a control-group pretest-posttest experiment is lacking in the literature. Tutored students tended to be different in many unobservable ways than non-tutored students. For example, tutored students have more motivation than non-tutored students (Chung, 2013); tutored students have more supportive family background than non-tutored students (Zhang & Xie, 2016); tutored students’ parents have more expectations on their children than non-tutored students (Hamid et al., 2009). In order to single out the effects of PT on students’ academic performance, these unobserved variables should be taken into consideration.

By conducting analyses in a control-group pretest-posttest experiment, I employ t-tests to compare tutored students and non-tutored students’ national examination marks. Next, to investigate which factors may affect the effects of PT on the academic performance of the

control group and treatment group, the difference-in-differences (DID) analysis is used. To identify the effect of PT on students' English performance, students' cognitive and motivational factors and ecological variables are taken into account in the research model.

In the following sections of this chapter, I will illustrate the analyses of data, definitions and measures of the variables, descriptive statistics of the variables, estimation models, empirical results, and round up with a discussion.

4.1 Definition of Difference-in-Differences (DID)

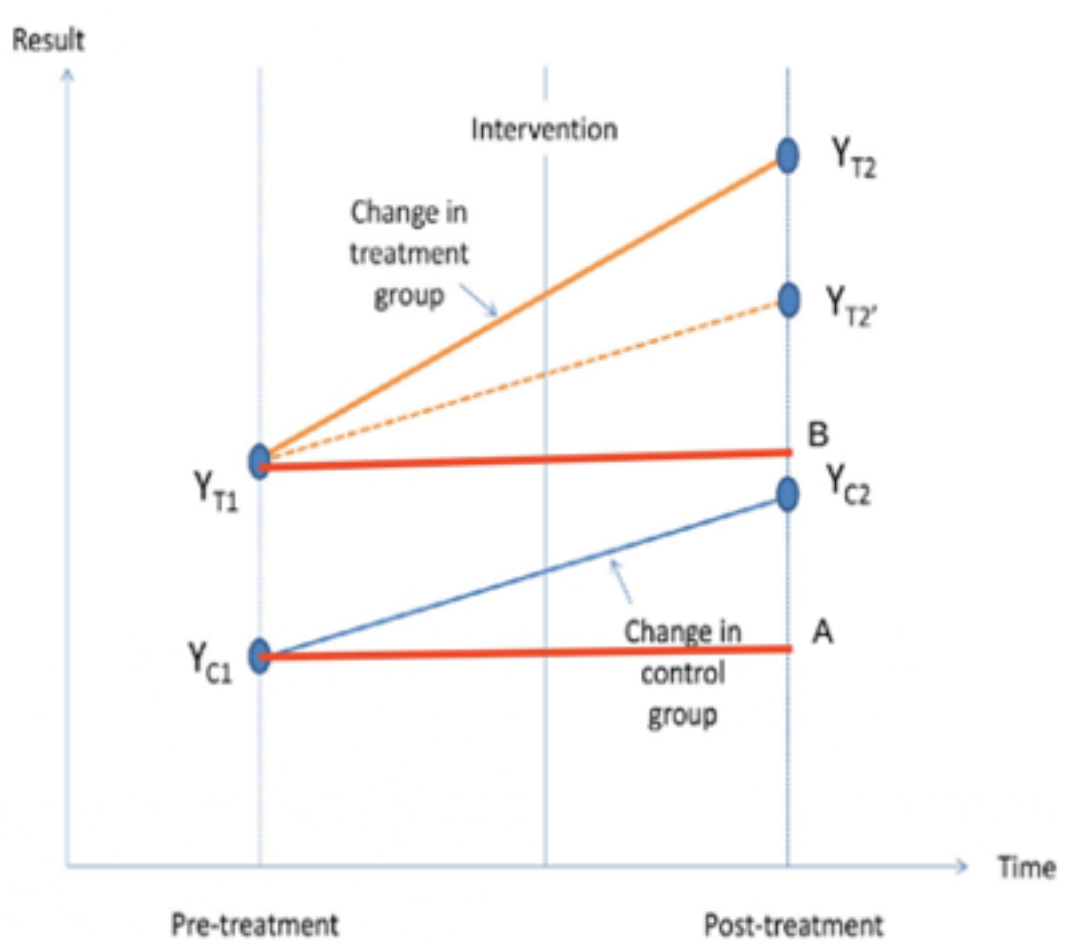
According to Angrist and Pischke (2008), difference-in-differences (DID) requires data measured from a treatment group and a control group at two or more different time periods, specifically at least one time period before "treatment" and at least one time period after "treatment." In Figure 1, the outcome in the tutored group is represented by $Y_T(1-2)$, and the outcome in the non-tutored group is represented by $Y_C(1-2)$. The pretest variable in both groups is measured at the pre-treatment line before either group has received the EPT, represented by points Y_{T1} and Y_{C1} . The tutored group then receives EPT, and both groups are again measured at the post-treatment line. Not all of the differences between the tutored and non-tutored groups at the post-treatment line (that is, the difference between Y_{T2} and Y_{C2}) can be considered effects of EPT because the tutored group and non-tutored group did not start at the same point at the pre-treatment line. DID therefore calculates the "normal" difference in the posttest variable between the two groups (the difference that would still exist if neither group experienced EPT), represented by the dotted line Y_{T2}' . (Note that the slope from Y_{T1} to Y_{T2}' is the same as the slope from Y_{C1} to Y_{C2} .) The EPT effect is the difference between the observed outcome and the "normal" outcome (the difference between Y_{T2} and

YT2').

By shifting line (Y C1 to A) to line (Y C1 to YC2) and line (YT1 to B) to line (Y T1 to YT2'), it can be shown how the outcome would change over time without the treatment (PT), while the line (YT1 to YT2) displays the change over time in the tutored group. Therefore, the DID design estimates the outcome attributable to the intervention. The DID (YT2 to YT2') cleans all time-varying factors from the first difference (YT2 minus YT1) by subtracting the second difference (YC2 minus YC1). This leaves us with the impact estimation (YT2 to YT2'). However, if the assumption that the changes in time-variant factors in the tutored and non-tutored groups are equal does not hold, we may overestimate or underestimate the causal effect using DID. It is possible to control for factors that may vary or change over time differently between the tutored and non-tutored groups in regression analysis, but the concern remains that unmeasurable factors may be time-variant factors.

Figure 1. Illustration of the DID model. Adapted from *Design and Commissioning of counterfactual impact evaluations* (p. 17), by Europeană, C, 2012, European Union.

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4.2 The Effects of English Private Tutoring on Students' Academic Performance

4.2.1 The Analysis of Mock GSAET and GSAET Marks

As shown in Table 1, mock GSAET marks were not significantly different between the groups of tutored and non-tutored students in terms of mean scores, standard deviations, and t-tests. This fact endorses my sampling of two groups whose original characteristics

before intervention are the same and the tutored students are the random sample of the total population except for their experience of tutoring. This result was necessary in order for the posttest data to exhibit any significance.

Table 1. Pretest marks of the tutored group and the non-tutored group (posttest is in square brackets)

Groups	Mean scores	Standard deviations	<i>p</i> value	<i>t</i> value
Tutored Pretest [Posttest]	10.72 [11.90]	2.63 [1.93]	0.86 [0.000]***	0.16 [3.42]
Non-tutored Pretest [Posttest]	10.66 [10.87]	2.51 [2.33]		

Note. *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Author

The difficulty levels of the mock GSAET and the GSAET were designed to be similar, thereby increasing the reliability of the tests. It was therefore interesting to investigate whether the EPT undertaken by third-grade students in senior high school would have a positive effect on their GSAET scores. The information in brackets in Table 1 are the mean scores and standard deviations for the posttest for the students in both the treatment and control groups. The treatment group showed significant improvement from the pretest ($M = 10.72$) to the posttest ($M = 11.90$), while the control group showed only a slight improvement, from 10.66 on the pretest to 10.87 on the posttest. The t-tests assessing the relationship between the English proficiency scores showed a significant difference between the treatment group and the control group on the posttest ($p < 0.001$, $t = 3.42$). This result indicates that PT had a significant positive effect for students who took part in it in improving the performance

in the test.

Table 2 displays the t-test analysis of the pretest and posttest scores for the tutored and non-tutored groups. The t-test result was $t = -3.51$ and $p < 0.001$, indicating that there was a significant difference before and after tutoring for the tutored group.

Table 2. T-Test results of the pretest and posttest for the tutored group and non-tutored group (in square brackets)

Groups Tutored [Non-tutored]	Mean scores	Standard deviations	p value	t value
Pretest	10.72 [10.66]	2.63 [2.51]	0.000*** [0.55]	-3.51 [-0.59]
Posttest	11.90 [10.87]	1.93 [2.33]		

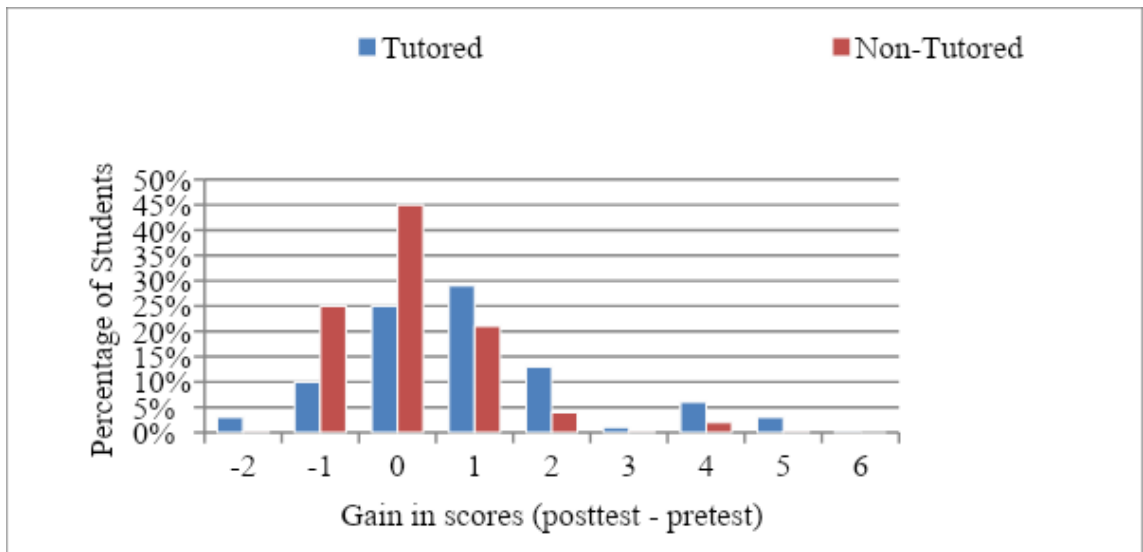
Note. *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Author

The brackets in Table 2 show the t-test results for the pretest and posttest scores of the non-tutored group. The results indicate that $t = -0.59$ and $p = 0.55$ ($p > 0.05$); thus, no significant difference was found between the pretest and posttest scores for the control group.

4.2.2 The Differences between Mock GSAET and GSAET Marks

Figure 2. Comparison of students' gains or losses from pretest to posttest in both the tutored and non-tutored groups



Source: Author

As seen in Figure 2, compared with the pretest, some students in both the tutored and non-tutored groups scored worse on the posttest, while some scored better. However, a majority of the students in the tutored group improved their scores (63%). Only 14% of the tutored students received worse scores, and 23% received the same scores on both tests. In the non-tutored group, 29% of the students improved their scores, while 71% either received worse scores or maintained the same scores. Thus, the data confirm that students in the tutored group showed more improvement overall than those in the non-tutored group.

To determine whether students in the tutored group made greater gains in their GSAET scores than the non-tutored group, a t-test was used to analyze the change in scores between the tutored group and non-tutored group. The results of this analysis are in Table 3 and reveal significant gains from the pretest to the posttest for the tutored group ($p < 0.001$). Brief descriptions of the definitions and measures of the variables used in this study are listed in Table 4.

Table 3. Change in scores: Results of t-test

Groups	Mean scores	Standard deviations	<i>p</i> value	<i>t</i> value
Tutored	1.07	1.63	0.000***	4.54
Non-tutored	0.21	1.10		

Note. *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Author

Table 4. Definitions and measures of the variables

Variable	Definition and measure
Tutored group and non-tutored group	1 if tutored; otherwise 0
Academic performance on mock GSAET (pretest) and GSAET (posttest)	Test scores of pretest and posttest. 1 if posttest; otherwise 0
Gender	1 if male; otherwise 0
School type	1 if public; otherwise 0
Monthly income	7 categories: less than 25,000; 25001-50,000; 50,001-75,000; 75,001-100,000; 100,001-125,000; 125,001-150,000; more than 150,000 (in New Taiwan dollars)
Parent's highest education level	3 categories: senior high school or below; bachelor's degree; master's degree or higher
Father's employment status	1 if employed; otherwise 0
Only child / With siblings	1 if only child; otherwise 0
Family and marital status	3 categories: married; single parent; not living with parents
Parental educational expectation	1 if university or higher; otherwise 0
Self-educational expectation	1 if university or higher; otherwise 0

Residential status	3 categories; town (less than 0.1million people); city (between 0.1 and 1.25 million people); municipality (more than 1.25 million people)
Self-study time spent doing English homework per week	5 categories: less than one hour; one to two hours; two to three hours; three to four hours; more than four hours
Self-study time spent previewing English learning materials per week	5 categories: less than one hour; one to two hours; two to three hours; three to four hours; more than four hours
Self-study time spent reviewing English learning materials per week	5 categories: less than one hour; one to two hours; two to three hours; three to four hours; more than four hours

Source: Author

4.3 Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in the Tutored Group and Non-tutored Group

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the tutored and non-tutored students (n=190). According to Table 5, in the tutored group, 47 students were male, and 48 were female. Among them, 82 lived in municipalities, 11 lived in cities, and two lived in towns. In the non-tutored group, 42 students were male, and 53 were female. Seventy-five of these students lived in municipalities, 14 lived in cities, and six lived in towns.

Monthly family income was, on average, NT133,200 (approximately 4,440) in the tutored group and NT108,800 (approximately 3,626) in the non-tutored group. Regarding parental education, in the tutored group, 90 of the parents of the students were university graduates, while only five had completed high school or below. In the non-tutored group, 81 parents were university graduates, and 14 had completed high school or below. The fathers of the students in the tutored group were all employed, and only one student's father in the non-tutored group was unemployed. Regarding family status, 90 students in the tutored group and

87 students in the non-tutored group lived with their parents; 5 students in the tutored group and 6 in the non-tutored group were from single-parent families; and 2 students in the non-tutored group did not live with their parents.

In terms of educational expectations, most of the students and parents in the tutored group (179) and non-tutored group (177) expected themselves or their children to complete university education. This result indicates that both the students and their parents had high educational expectations.

Unlike students' individual characteristics such as gender, participation in PT and English academic performance, family's SES, and school type, self-study variables have rarely been used in previous empirical studies on PT in Taiwan or other countries. Self-study variables refer to the amount of time that students spend per week doing English homework and previewing and reviewing English learning materials independently. On average, mean self-study time spent doing homework and previewing and reviewing English related materials was 3.35, 2.66, and 3.26 hours, respectively, in the tutored group and 2.24, 1.79, and 1.83 hours, respectively, in the non-tutored group.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of the variables used for analysis (N=190).

Variables	Description	Tutored group (n=95)	Non-tutored group (n=95)	Difference (tutored group minus non-tutored group)
Academic performance	Pretest (Mean)	10.72	10.66	0.06
	Posttest (Mean)	11.90	10.87	1.03
Gender	Male	47	42	5
	Female	48	53	-5
School type	Public	61	61	0
	Private	34	34	0

Monthly income	Means of monthly income (in 1000 New Taiwan dollars)	133.2	108.8	24.4
Monthly income	Standard deviation (in 1000 New Taiwan dollars)	56.29	33.54	22.75
Parent's highest education level	High school or below	5	16	-11
	Bachelor's degree	59	62	-3
	Master's degree or higher	31	17	14
Father's employment status	Employed	95	94	1
	Unemployed	0	1	-1
Only child / With siblings	Only child	58	87	-29
	With siblings	37	8	29
Family and marital status	Married	90	87	3
	Single parent	5	6	-1
	Not living with parents	0	2	-2
Parental educational expectation	University or higher	84	84	0
	otherwise	11	11	0
Self-educational expectation	University or higher	95	93	2
	otherwise	0	2	-2
Residential status	Town	2	6	-4
	City	11	14	-3
	Municipality	82	75	7
Self-study time spent doing English homework per week	Mean self-study time	3.35	2.24	1.11
Self-study time spent previewing English learning materials per week	Mean self-study time	2.66	1.79	0.87

Self-study time spent reviewing English learning materials per week	Mean self-study time	3.26	1.83	1.43
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Source: Author

4.3.2 Does English Private Tutoring Enhance Students' Academic Performance?

Table 6 represents the results of the DID regression analysis conducted to predict students' academic performance with and without EPT and other background variables. Model 1 controlled for students' prior achievement by including the pretest and family background variables but not the tutoring variables. In this way, I controlled for the situation in which students participated in EPT in response to their academic performance. Controlling the pretest may reveal the effect of EPT on students' academic achievement. Model 2 shows the relationships between students' academic performance with and without EPT. According to the estimations, PT matters. Attending PT enhanced students' academic performance: students who participated in EPT had a better chance of obtaining higher scores than their counterparts who did not participate in EPT. Model 3 included only the family background variables in the analysis, and Model 4 added the variables related to EPT. Importantly, the effect of EPT remained highly significant in Model 4, and the p value changed from 0.018 in Model 2 to 0.002 in Model 4. These results highlight the robust effect of EPT and the family background variables on students' academic achievement.

Models 5-7 were hierarchically nested. Model 5 included only variables related to students' academic performance and the self-study variables. Model 6 additionally controlled for students' participation in PT by including the tutored group and non-tutored group. The last model, Model 7, included the indicators of family's SES and school type.

As expected from Models 1-4, students from wealthy families exhibited higher academic performance than those from lower-income families. Parental education and employment status had positive effects on students' academic performance; that is, the higher education parents had, the greater the gain in students' scores. Regarding father's employment status, students with employed fathers had better scores than those with unemployed fathers. School type also had effects on students' performance: students from private schools had higher scores than those from public schools. Additionally, female students had a tendency to achieve higher scores on the GSAET than their male counterparts, although this result was not statistically significant. Students without siblings did not have higher scores than students with siblings. Family status, parental educational expectations, and self-educational expectations were not found to be significantly associated with scores on the GSAET. Students living in municipalities were more likely to have better results than those living in cities or towns. This finding suggests that EPT has a positive effect on students' academic performance, as exemplified in Models 1 to 4.

However, the findings above may overestimate the effects of EPT, as self-study variables were not taken into account. The results of Model 5 show that self-study characteristics have relatively strong effects on students' academic performance. Model 6 shows that the addition of the PT variable did not reduce the impact of the self-study variables; the effect of these variables seemed to be quite significant. This result points to the possibility of obtaining biased estimations of the effects of PT on students' academic performance if possible unobservable variables are not taken into account. If self-study variables are considered, the possibility of obtaining biased estimation on effects of PT can be limited. Specifically, the results of Model 7 indicate that female students who devote time to self-study activities tend to have better academic results than female students who do not

devote time to these activities. These self-study factors, which have a positive effect on students' academic performance, need to be considered in the estimation of the effects of PT on students' academic performance. If they are not, only a partial and biased picture of the effects of PT on academic achievement will be obtained.

Table 6. Effects of English private tutoring on students' academic performance

<i>t</i> value (<i>p</i> value)	M1 Pretest	M2 EPT	M3 Family backgro und	M4	M5 Self- study	M6	M7
Tutored (1); non-tutored (0)		2.35 (0.018)*		3.17 (0.002)**		-1.77 (0.078)	-0.91 (0.365)
Pretest (0); posttest (1)		2.86 (0.004) **	2.85 (0.005)* *	2.89 (0.004)**	2.95 (0.003)* *	2.97 (0.003)**	3.00 (0.003)**
Interaction		2.04 (0.042)*		2.07 (0.039) *		2.12 (0.034)*	2.14 (0.033)*
Male	-0.32 (0.752)		- 0.69(0.4 93)	-1.06 (0.290)			-2.11 (0.036)*
Public school	-1.78 (0.077)		-2.35 (0.019)*	-2.42 (0.016)*			-2.00 (0.047)*
Monthly income	0.25 (0.804)		0.83 (0.405)	1.99 (0.047)*			1.70 (0.090)
Parent's highest education level	0.36 (0.719)		0.03 (0.975)	1.96 (0.049)*			0.83 (0.407)
Father's employment status	1.23 (0.219)		1.87 (0.063)	2.20 (0.028)*			0.96 (0.336)
Only child	0.62 (0.538)		0.32 (0.746)	0.82 (0.411)			1.35 (0.179)

Family and marital status	0.60 (0.548)		0.45 (0.654)	-0.24 (0.809)			-0.60 (0.547)
Parental educational expectation	0.23 (0.821)		0.44 (0.662)	0.42 (0.672)			-0.59 (0.556)
Self-educational expectation	0.01 (0.993)		0.11 (0.912)	0.32 (0.750)			0.10 (0.921)
Residential status	1.37 (0.171)		1.56 (0.119)	1.29 (0.198)			1.20 (0.231)
Self-study time spent doing English homework per week					1.93 (0.054)	2.51 (0.013)*	2.24 (0.026)*
Self-study time spent previewing English learning materials per week					2.59 (0.01)**	2.49 (0.014)*	2.53 (0.012)*
Self-study time spent reviewing English learning materials per week					2.16 (0.032)*	3.22 (0.001)** *	3.15 (0.002)**

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, ** p

Source: Author

4.4 Discussion

To conclude this chapter, the findings of effectiveness of EPT for improving academic performance among Taiwanese learners while taking into account the students'

individual characteristics, family SES, school type and amount of time invested in self-study activities are summarized below. First, EPT had a clear, positive effect on students' GSAET performance. The subjects who participated in EPT exhibited a significant improvement in their GSAET scores, receiving higher scores overall than those who did not participate in EPT. The results of the t-tests show that students in the tutored group exhibited significant score gains between the pretest and posttest. Second, students from high-income families had better scores than those from low-income families. Students' scores were influenced by family income, parental education and father's employment status. Third, private school students made more significant academic gains than public school students. These findings may indicate that well-educated parents are more willing to invest in their children's education to improve their children's academic performance, and these findings echo certain aspects of previous studies (Liu, 2006; Liu, 2012). It should be emphasized, however, that the effect strength of PT became minimal when the self-study variables were added to the research model. The results demonstrate that time spent on self-study activities had a positively statistically significant effect on students' academic performance. Furthermore, this finding implies that the process of how PT influences students' academic performance may be complicated, and self-study variables may serve as a mechanism to reduce the time spent in PT. These results shed new light on the role of self-study activities, which can reduce the inequality between advantaged and disadvantaged students in terms of academic achievement and the time spent on and family resources invested in PT.

**CHAPTER FIVE: THE STAKEHOLDERS’
PERCEPTIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON ENGLISH
PRIVATE TUTORING**

Chapter Five aims to investigate the experiences of tutored students whose family backgrounds may be an important determinant to undertake EPT class in Taiwan. This chapter discusses the data analysis of the interviews that I conducted with 35 tutored students. In the current study, I focus on EPT, which is one of the most popular types of PT and an important area of language education. I (a) discuss the perceptions of postsecondary learners; (b) build on critical reflections of the EPT learning experience; (c) investigate the needs that are met by tutoring institutions that are not met by schools; (d) focus on tutored students from low/high-SES families; (e) explore how advantaged tutored students invest in EPT to obtain social capital and achieve upward social mobility; (f) investigate how disadvantaged students overcome current social, economic, and educational inequalities through EPT to obtain cultural capital and achieve social mobility; and (g) identify how tutored students attain academic gains through self-study activities.

To achieve these objectives, I focus on the second research question of my dissertation: What are stakeholders’ (students’ and parents’) perceptions and reflections toward EPT in secondary education? In addition, I propose the following subquestions: 1. What are tutored students’ and their parents’ perceptions of EPT in secondary education? 2. Why do tutored students and their parents invest in EPT? 3. How do tutored students and their parents invest in EPT? 4. How do tutored students use self-study activities other than EPT to improve academic achievement?

The questionnaire data provided an overview of participants' EPT experiences and the basis for analyzing the in-depth interviews. The qualitative data were coded, which led to the identification of the issues that emerged in the interviews and the further development of the arguments to respond to the research questions (Holliday, 2010). The interview data were coded as follows. First, each participant's EPT experiences were sorted in chronological order and coded with the key words for the different thematic categories. Second, each participant's language learning experiences were sorted into thematic nodes, such as family backgrounds, unsatisfactory schooling experience, EPT investment for a better future, investment in examination skills, and investment in EPT community. Third, participants' individual self-study experiences and self-study experiences through the EPT community were compared multiple times to reassess correspondence of the data to the themes.

As I had the same cultural and educational background as the 35 participants, I was able to accurately interpret the general state of EPT in Taiwan and avoid cultural misinterpretation (Bell, 2011). Moreover, Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 81) asserted that "narrative inquiry is relational." Narrative inquirers must "become fully involved" to develop trustworthy relationships. Thus, to encourage the participants to share memories and EPT experiences, I shared my own EPT stories in response to the participants' sharing of their experiences. According to Breen's (2007) theory on negotiating the insider/outside dichotomy, the role of the researcher may be conceptualized on a continuum. As an insider of EPT with the same cultural and educational backgrounds as the participants, I had the experiences and knowledge to interpret the practice of EPT in teaching and learning. As an outsider (a researcher), I was able to analyze the data more objectively to obtain a more complete picture of learners' EPT experiences based on their reflections.

5.1 Growing up in Different Family Backgrounds

T10 described her family background from her childhood. She felt blessed that her parents all worked for the government. She therefore had more resources than children in other families, such as having well-educated parents and not having to worry whether her parents would be laid off. She always reminded herself of these resources:

I should be very grateful for what I had. I could get more support and resources from my family...I know I can do much better in English because I got a foreign tutor to help me practice my speaking when I was six. I studied at bilingual schools from elementary to junior high. I always felt that I was luckier than my classmates.

However, even though T10 had better resources than her classmates, she still felt unsatisfied and compared herself with her cousin who lives in the UK. She said,

But my cousin is luckier than me. Her family immigrated to the UK when she was in 1st grade in elementary school. Her parents are working at a multinational company. She can learn English more easily than me. I have to take EPT to improve my English, while she doesn't. Every time when she comes back, I feel her English becomes much better than mine. But this could motivate me to study harder through EPT. And I can study at a better university than her if I study hard.

These excerpts show T10's competitive spirit and her very practical reasons for receiving EPT. Her comparison with her cousin who had more constant exposure to English shows that she considered English not only a subject to study but also a motivation to secure a place in a prestigious top university. T10 said that after someone enters a prestigious top university, it is easier for him or her to find a job through the university and through the people he or she meets at the university.

Although T10's excerpts show that affluent families with social, cultural, and

economic capital, to some extent, find it easier for their children to have access to a good educational environment and obtain the highest credentials (Collins, 1979), T3's remarks should also be noted.

T3 was from a low-SES, single-parent family. T3 described the constraints and difficult times she experienced in her childhood. She perceived that she was pitied because she did not have an educated father, and she sometimes felt jealous that other classmates had better resources than her. She always felt ashamed about her family background:

I felt that I was born in a disadvantaged family. I often experienced that my family couldn't provide me with the resources like other families could... My English was the worst of all the subjects since I was in elementary school. I felt that my classmates were far better than me, not only in terms of English but also in terms of family background.

T3 also encouraged herself to study harder to enter a good university. She said:

I know I am jealous of other classmates' English scores and their families, but this can remind me and motivate me that I have to surpass them because I know if I can't study at a university, I will be looked down upon in the future...I have been so afraid of the looks that people gave me since I was young. Can you imagine that fear? That's why I have to study hard.

These remarks from T3 reveal her fear, lack of confidence, and reasons for studying hard in English. Her comparison of her academic achievement and family resources with those of her classmates reveals that English is not only a subject that students are tested in but also an indication of social class and inequality. T3 said she decided to study at a university because she wanted to help her father have a better life and escape poverty. Her motivation to study hard and her fear of being looked down upon resulting from her anxiety about not

entering a university prompted T3 to begin EPT to achieve academic gains in English. T3's father's expectations expressed in the following quotation may have also reinforced her commitment:

I really want her to study more, not for me, but for herself. I hope she won't be like me who just graduated from junior high school and can't have a good job. We have to receive the subsidy from the government. [...] Nowadays, if you don't get a good degree, you can't make handsome money, and you will have an extremely hard time in the future. It really makes a big difference.

Based on the perspectives of T10, T3 and T3's father, one can conclude that Taiwanese society is deeply rooted in Confucianism, which highly values education. This explains why these participants believed that education can "shape one's place on the social and economic ladders" (Gao, 2008, p. 171). This belief may also have affected their investment in English studies.

5.2 Unsatisfactory Language Learning Experience in School

The interviews showed that students had needs regarding teaching quality and learning approaches, and the students argued that teachers could not fully meet these needs. These students' perceptions of the inadequacy of their schools may be identified as repulsion. Some students remarked that school lessons lacked relevance to examinations, teacher feedback on English writing, and comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. Participants T10, T16, and T28 said their teachers merely translated textbook content from English to Chinese and asked them to look words up in a dictionary for entire lessons, which they felt was a meaningless waste of time.

Participant T28 criticized her teacher as not doing enough to prepare students for exams,

as seen in the following excerpt:

T28: *I think teachers focus too much on content knowledge. It is very difficult for them to cover the entire syllabus, let alone teach us critical thinking and writing skills, but tutors teach structure and content in English writing more. They teach you how to organize writing and how to think, but teachers always tell us to just translate our meaning from Chinese to English.*

Interviewer: *It seems quite different between school and tutoring institutions. Which one do you prefer?*

T28: *It is hard to judge which one is better, but I think if the school could focus on exam skills more, then I wouldn't need to spend money on tutoring. This is the best way.*

The problem of discipline was raised by T15. In the following excerpt, he discusses his feelings of being unable to concentrate in school:

My class is always noisy. I know my teacher has tried a lot to teach us, but she spends too much time on disciplinary issues. She has to teach very fast to catch up with the lesson. Sometimes, we don't have break time before the next class. But in the tutoring class, we have the same goal, and we are motivated. We want to get good grades for our GSAET. Tutors don't have to shout in the classroom.

A different perspective was expressed by T5. She felt that her school lessons were too easy and therefore a disadvantage for her GSAET:

I feel the academic level of school lessons is too easy for me. The teacher doesn't provide us with different materials to study, and he only teaches some easy vocabulary. He was too busy with so many students, and he couldn't pay full attention to me. But, the tutors taught more difficult vocabulary and grammar that I never saw

with my teacher. And if I have questions, tutors can answer me immediately or after class, because we only have nine people. They can take care of us. This won't happen in school. And if you know more complicated grammar, when it shows up on the GSAET, you will know how to answer it or you can use it in your writing. My tutor said it is good to use different complicated grammar patterns in your writing so you can get higher scores than with normal grammar patterns.

These critical comments reflect students' repulsion from schools. Although T5's teacher could have provided more complicated grammar, the teacher did not do so.

From an attraction perspective, tutors taught more complicated grammar and vocabulary, summarizing the notes and preparing additional learning materials for students. They also offered a learning-rich environment where all tutored students had the same goal and were thus more motivated. Students paid additional fees to attend tutoring, while mainstream school was free of charge, which motivated students even more. Furthermore, students were placed in tutoring classes according to their English abilities, which allowed them to learn at the same level as their peers. This approach was significantly different from that of regular schools.

The introduction of multiple new entrance programs as alternative methods to enter universities has caused students and parents to become anxious, prompting them to learn examination skills and systems (Liu, 2012). Tutoring institutions thus stepped in to address students' and parents' anxieties.

Several interviewees were concerned about whether the criteria for English writing were objective, given that all English exam papers were graded by school teachers. Participants T2 and T10 were confused about how to compose English papers, and others worried about the fairness of the criteria. This lack of trust and confidence caused students to

pursue more clear and concrete guidelines through EPT.

Participants T13 and T16 said they did not believe their teachers could mark their papers objectively. They believed that their teachers had inadequate knowledge of the writing criteria. For example, T13 said the following:

T13: Actually, my teacher only gave us marks without feedback or comments on our writing. I don't know why I should learn English writing from her.

Interviewer: Have you ever asked your teacher to give you more specific feedback on your writing?

T13: No way; we know her personality. If you ask more, she will feel impatient, saying, "Do you know how many students I have to mark?" Because one of my classmates did that before, and the teacher gave her lower marks than we could imagine, even though she wrote it [the paper] very well. You know, in English writing, it doesn't look like multiple choice, which has a specific answer.

T16 also raised concerns about grading criteria and insufficient feedback from teachers:

My teacher only commented "unclear," but he didn't tell you which part was not clear. Sometimes, I think he focuses too much on grammar without paying attention to structure and content. For example, the writing topic was on the advantages of learning English. After writing the advantages, he said we should also write the disadvantages of not learning English, but the topic was advantages not disadvantages. It was very confusing and contradictory.

The tutors presented themselves as official exam markers who could fill in the gaps of teachers' inexperience and uncertainties. Tutors said their friends were GSAET graders and knew the criteria for English writing; however, in reality, they could not have known the

criteria because the criteria are not released until after the exam is finished. Participants T21 and T28 indicated that after their tutors taught a lesson on the exam, they would indicate their sources to alleviate any uncertainty. Their sources supposedly knew which grammar questions, vocabulary questions, and writing topics had appeared in each year of the GSAET exam and which questions and topics would appear on this year's exam.

Tutors further promoted a sense of security via in-house mock examinations. Tutors assured students that they had graded exam papers in a variety of different schools and that they had much more experience than teachers who saw only a small portion of student papers. Students remarked that in-house mock examinations could better assess their abilities because students were compared with not only intramural students but also interscholastic examination candidates.

Students believed tutors' guarantees that 90% of their students who took their classes would score more than 13 out of 15 on the GSAET. This assertion greatly increased students' confidence and decreased their insecurity. Participant T20 provided an example:

My neighbor's daughters, my sister, and even my teacher's son were all taught by this tutor, so he must know the GSAET very well. And he always bragged that 90% of his students got more than 13 and [said], "Don't be the 10% that loses face." So, I signed up for his class, thinking if I didn't get more than 13, at least I would know some exam skills.

Participant T21 described an exam skill he thought was very useful—one that he learned in the tutoring class and had never been taught in class. The tutor asked them to read the questions first and find the key words related to the questions within the reading. For example, if a student saw a word such as "seek" in a question, he or she needed to brainstorm synonyms such as "look for," "search," or "investigate" and then return to the reading to find

those keywords. Participant T21 added that he felt his teacher did not prepare the lessons and only translated the text into Chinese sentence by sentence.

Participant T25 shared the same experience as T21. These participants remarked that students were unwilling to ask for help from teachers because they were afraid of being seen as teachers' pets.

T25: In school, I think my classmates were reluctant to raise their questions. But in tutoring class, as soon as they have doubts, they ask the questions immediately. Their attitudes in school and tutoring class are poles apart.

Interviewer: What is the reason causing this different attitude?

T25: I don't know. It's weird. I like to talk to teachers. Actually, they are nice. But I heard some classmates had spoken ill of me behind my back, saying I approached teachers on purpose and tried to create an image of being a good student, maybe to get better marks from teachers.

Overall, the tutored students did not find their English learning experiences in school to be satisfying after they noted the differences between their school English classes and EPT. They preferred to invest in language learning at PT institutions rather than at school because they regarded their mainstream teachers as inadequate and considered that their classmates are not involved in learning (Gao, 2008). Consequently, they actively expanded their social networks and interacted with students from other schools through outside of school activities such as EPT.

5.3 EPT as an Investment for a Better Future

Because T4 wanted to study English at a university, his English teacher suggested that he should enroll in EPT to earn English certificates to have more opportunities for admission

interviews. T4 paid a monthly tuition fees of approximately NTD 8,000 (US\$266) to enroll in EPT courses, not only for the General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT) but also for English certificates. He said:

I think money is not a problem for my family. All my parents want me to do is to get higher scores on the GSAET. The English content at school is not enough for me.

Thanks to my teacher's advice, I can learn more from EPT.

T4 found a tutor through his uncle's social network, as T4's tutor was highly recommended by his uncle's friend:

My tutor is a very famous star tutor and he has the reputation of sending the students he teaches to the best university in Taiwan. Because my uncle is working in the PT industry, he has connections to ask his friends and find the best tutor for me.

In contrast, T9 expressed a different attitude toward the impact of EPT tuition fees for her family. Because T9 did not achieve good academic results in English at school, his homeroom teacher recommended that he enroll in EPT for the GSAT. He paid a six-month tuition fee of approximately NTD 30,000 (US\$1,000) to enroll in an EPT package course that offered online lessons, mock exams and consultation with a tutor's assistant. The EPT tuition fee was an extremely large burden for T9's family, as his mother said:

I have three children to raise. They all study at senior high schools. I feel so sorry that he [T9] studies so diligently, but I can't afford his EPT tuition fees. His dad and I tried our best to make money, but it is a huge amount of money. The tuition for one EPT course is two-thirds of our monthly income.

Because T9's family could not afford the tuition, his parents had to borrow the money from their friends and relatives to pay the tuition:

I know my parents called and visited their friends and relatives to borrow the money

for me. Some of them can lend the money, some don't. And some even asked for interest on the money. I feel so sorry about that. But if I can't study at a university, I won't be able to pay all the debts I owe. [...] It is a huge financial burden for my family, but this is the only way out. I can't let my families live in a rented apartment, use a public washing machine, and sleep without an air-conditioner during the hot summer anymore. Maybe I will be the first person in my family to study at a university and to make a lot of money in the future.

T4 and T9's consideration of learning English as an investment for a better future is closely associated with the concept of cultural capital proposed by Bourdieu (1973). They invested in learning English because they realized that this investment could allow them to obtain material profits (e.g., money) and symbolic profits (e.g., social networks and education). Such profits include learners' economic and social capital, which will in turn be converted into highly valued cultural capital such as knowledge and credentials (Bourdieu, 1977).

5.4 Investment in Examination Skills in EPT

By virtue of the limited opportunities to use authentic English in school or after school, the tutored students who were interviewed mostly learned drill practices, grammar, vocabulary memorization, and examination skills in EPT. EPT content was restricted to GSAET-related content, which led tutored students to become "test machines." Tutored students were trained to recite words mechanically and to practice writing with a specific provided template. Most of the tutored students who were interviewed expressed that they did not think these skills would be beneficial for their authentic English learning but that these skills were useful to achieve good scores on the GSAET. T3 described that in EPT classes,

she could practice different topics of essays based on specific templates. When tutors asked her challenging questions, it made her think about the questions, and she was satisfied with the questions that were accessible only in EPT classes. She also pointed out that one would waste time, money and the ample materials prepared by tutors if he or she did not review the EPT materials at home. According to T3's teacher, who was interviewed, T3 gradually became good at English in school, but she learned English in a formulaic and unnatural method:

She uses very difficult vocabulary only shown on the GRE in her English writing.

Sometimes she uses them on purpose and neglects very basic knowledge of English.

Her English writing is full of difficult words, but you also can see spelling errors on easy words, tense problems, and most importantly topic sentences; she may forget it.

T3 described EPT as a “magic” and an “effective” way to study English compared to learning English at school because tutors always used “funny stories” and “funny pithy formulas” to help her memorize English grammar rules. T3's teacher considered her to have a “competitive spirit,” explaining that if she thought something was beneficial, worth trying and investing in, she would go for it 100%. This impression from T3's teacher may further verify that T3 saw herself as investing in examination skills in EPT and that she considered EPT to be beneficial for achieving academic gains.

5.5 Investment in the EPT Community at the Tutoring Institution

T3 perceived that she had the same goal as her tutoring classmates, which she found motivating. The students' goal was to achieve good GSAET scores and to secure a place at a university. The tutoring institution represented a community where learners aspired to achieve their goals and felt motivated when they learned a language. T3 felt that her school lessons

were too easy, and the English level of her classmates in school was so low that she did not want to have interactions with her schoolmates:

I feel the difficulty of school lessons is too easy for me. The teacher doesn't provide us with different materials to study, and he only teaches some easy vocabulary. Maybe it is because my classmates' English level is so low that my teacher has to cater to those low achievers. I don't want to look down on them, but life is a one-time thing. I don't want to feel regret about my future career. So I don't want to get closer to my low-achieving classmates from a low-ranking high school. I have to think about the pros and cons. [...] They only want to pass the English test, but I aim higher. We have different goals for our future.

This remark in which T3 compares herself to her classmates at school reveals T3's attitude toward English learning and the learning community as well as her conscious choice to invest the time and effort to learning English. In contrast, T3 perceived her tutoring classmates to be “worth interacting with”:

They work very hard in learning English. Their English ability is much better than mine so that I always ask them English questions if I don't understand. They will try their best to help me. I really need those friends when I am in need.

Furthermore, T3 felt that learning with high-achieving students in tutoring institutions was more beneficial than learning with low-achieving students in school. Although sometimes she felt inferior in her English ability, especially when her high-achieving tutoring classmates showed off their English ability, she highly admired them and felt motivated when she looked at her “genius” tutoring classmates:

It brings me lots of advantages to make friends with my gifted tutoring classmates. We study with and teach each other. If they ask me something they don't understand, I will

study harder to find out the answers for them because I don't want to lose face. I always study very hard after school and after tutoring class. I don't want to lose them [her tutoring classmates].

In addition to indicating the importance of social networks, this excerpt reveals that tutoring class was a place for T3 to conceal her identities as a child from a low-SES, single-parent family and as a student from low-ranking high school. T3 could show her confidence instead of being looked down upon because she could prove her ability by helping top students from prestigious schools. She further added that the reason why she kept undertaking EPT was to “narrow the gap between those high-achievers from elite schools and her” because EPT class created a place where she felt equal to everyone and where the same tutor taught them the same content and instructions.

Although T3 ultimately obtained acceptable GSAT results to be admitted to a university, she refused the offer because of ranking of the university. She decided to retake the GSAT in hopes of entering a prestigious university that she would feel was worth the investment. She explained as follows:

It's not my fault to be born in this family. I can't choose my family but I can choose my future. I know I didn't work hard when I was little, ending up at a low-ranking high school. So, I chose to retake the GSAET to be admitted to the best university. I want to show those people that I can catch up with or be better than them.

T3 decided to take an EPT course especially for retakers that was designed differently than normal EPT classes because retakers “know the exam pattern inside and out and shortcuts to achieve the goal”.

T3's investment in EPT may be best explained in terms of the concept of “imagined communities” proposed by Anderson (2006), which refers to a “group of people, not

immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 241). The imagined community in T3’s case comprised the EPT tutoring classmates with whom she was currently engaged in her real life. Imagined communities may contribute to the development of Dörnyei’s L2 motivational self system, in which L2 learners navigate “the actual L2 self, its discrepancy with possible L2 selves, and the interrelationship between ideal and ought-to L2 selves” (Yung, 2019, p. 120). Through investment in EPT, learners can build imagined identities and create a sense of belonging within imagined communities (Norton, 2013).

5.6 Students’ Investment in Self-Study Activities or Studying in the EPT

Community

Self-regulated learning is a process in which students act as metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active in their own learning process (Zimmerman, 1989). In self-regulated learning, “students personally initiate and direct their own efforts to acquire knowledge and skill rather than relying on teachers, parents, or other agents of instruction” (Zimmerman, 1989, p.329).

Goal setting

In school and EPT, learning is scheduled at school or in the tutoring class, while during the process of self-study learning, learners must plan where to study, what time to study, and how to study. Furthermore, they must set goals and motivate themselves to study without external imposed deadlines. T28 explained as follows:

I usually set short-term goals and long-term goals for my studying. I tell myself I have to at least get something done every day. I fold the book page I have to finish studying today, and when I reach my short-term goals, that’s when I’ll start to set my long-term

goals. [...] I'll tell myself, "By this weekend, I have to finish lesson one to lesson two." And if I can't finish it, I will use my spare time to make it up [...] I like to schedule my learning progress based on a week so I will know whether I will hit my goals by Sunday.

Goal setting helps learners to monitor their progress, set self-imposed deadlines, and further motivate themselves to adhere to a plan. Some of the tutored students who were interviewed, however, preferred the pressure of externally imposed deadlines. Such students tended to rely on teachers and tutors to schedule the deadlines for them, as T5's experience demonstrates:

I'm pretty bad at planning my studying schedule. I have to rely on tutors to schedule the studying time for me. If tutors don't give me the pressure, I will get lost.

Some students created a penalty for not meeting the deadlines. As T6 reported, she would schedule a deadline and get it done by then. I won't find excuses for myself or find another way around and reschedule it. In doing so, you just keep putting your deadline off. It won't help.

The negative motivation of imposing a penalty helped T6 stay on schedule. Although T6 needed external factors to monitor and motivate herself, she autonomously created an environment she considered necessary and responsible for her learning.

Creating an acquisition-rich environment

Students not only sought additional inputs for learning resources but also created an environment for language learning. Input resources such as music, movies, comic books, newspapers, magazines, radio and Internet were popular among the students. All the tutored students who were interviewed reported that they utilized one or more of these resources.

Most students could more easily access the Internet than other resources. T7, for instance, was acquainted with many English speakers on the Internet, and she felt quite comfortable asking her online friends to help her with grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation:

Sometimes I just ask my online friends to help me. For example, if I don't know some grammar questions, I'll just go online, like "[Mike], could you please tell me what direct speech and indirect speech are?" [...] He'll answer my questions.

Aside from linguistic benefits, input resources also provided social and reflective benefits. For instance, T14 noted that after he read English newspapers, he talked about current events to his online friend, Jason:

This helped me not only remember the vocabulary from the news but also use the target language to socialize with a person who really speaks it [English]. And that helps me with [the question of] why I am learning this language?

Dealing with Negative Feelings

During learners' self-study activities, some participants experienced negative emotions. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) argued that "probably no other field of study implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does" (p. 128).

T14 reported in his interview:

When I practice my English writings during my self-study time, sometimes I can't express my meanings well or discuss some ideas that matter to me. I feel so frustrated.

All the students interviewed in the current study reported their anxiety, frustration, and upset feelings when they performed the self-study activities. T19 developed a strategy to deal with his negative feelings:

When I feel anxious or frustrated during my self-study time, what I usually do is to go

out and chill out. I don't want to be stuck there. I may leave behind my schedule, but it really does help me to relax more.

Studying a language individually may cause feelings of uncertainty and doubt. The avoidance of situations of indecision is a common method to actively deal with negative feelings. If learners can find a way to alleviate feeling of anxiety or discouragement, these feelings may not affect learners' efforts to learn in the long run.

However, some people doubt that avoidance, as a passive strategy, could affect learners' processes. Therefore, some learners who were interviewed used positive self-talk to maintain their motivation and to encourage themselves when they felt lost or stuck during the learning progress. When I asked how T28 dealt with her negative feeling when self-studying, she replied,

When I have negative feelings, leaving comes to my mind first. I want to get away from it. But then I talk to myself, "No you can't. You wanted to do this, and you have to get it done. You will get through it. You are almost finished."

Positive self-talk strategies helped learners maintain realistic expectations and positive beliefs about language learning.

Self-discipline

In the interviews with the participants, they tended to judge themselves about managing self-study activities in terms of discipline and motivation. Participants who regarded themselves as disciplined learners reported much more satisfaction with their overall self-study learning activities. For instance, T28 told me:

I like to do self-study. It went very well for me. I'm a disciplined person; I like to get study done step by step.

However, participants who perceived themselves to be undisciplined were more likely to be dissatisfied with their self-study experiences. T7 commented on her experiences with self-discipline:

I'm not an organized person, so self-study was difficult for me. I'm too lazy to schedule everything well.

Self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs in their ability to produce the desired outcomes that affect their lives (Bandura, 1994). Such beliefs are the foundation of human motivation and performance accomplishments (Bandura, 2010). “Unless people believe they can produce the desired effects through their actions, they have little incentive to undertake activities or to persevere in the face of difficulty” (Bandura, 2010, p. 1). Based on the interview data, self-described self-disciplined participants tended to have strong beliefs in their own capabilities to structure their learning. Such beliefs were consistent with their behaviors. As T28 reported:

I believe I am confident and motivated to do it well by myself. I know T2 is a similar person to me. We both push ourselves to the limits. Because when we set goals, no matter how it goes, we will do a great job. I have no problem with self study. The problem is more like, “Will I push myself too much?” It is not like, “Can I do it?” or “Can I manage the work?”

The excerpts from T28 and T2 show their beliefs about themselves, their self-discipline skills and their motivation. Zimmerman and Schunk (2001) argued that self-regulated learning is a process in which learners can take control of and evaluate their own learning and behavior.

However, not all of the participants who engaged in self-study activities had the same experiences as T28 and T2. Some of them felt that they could not concentrate in a self-study

environment, as T17 noted when she said, “I don't like to study alone; it makes me panic.” She added, “I wasn't born with self-study skills.” T18 said, “I want someone who can take the responsibility for me and help me when I don't understand.” T21 complained that self-study “is not my cup of tea; I need something more interesting to motivate me instead of studying alone.” These learners were not confident enough about their ability to take a self-study approach. It is unknown whether this passive attitude toward self-study leads to learners' low academic performance, but the interviews indicated that effective learners usually had good self-discipline.

Study in the EPT community

Most of the learners in this study felt a sense of isolation when they engaged in self-study activities. For example, when T21 was asked about how he felt about self-study, his answer was “lonely.” He further added that “sometimes I felt I was studying in a closed space; [it was] very difficult to concentrate on what I was reading.” Learners' motivation and learning progress were greatly affected by a sense of isolation, and some participants interviewed prefer to study in the context of the EPT community. Being “in the EPT community” may have had impacts on participants' learning experiences; to some extent, students were motivated and encouraged by the EPT community. T22 described her experience studying with her tutoring classmates at tutoring institutions:

I really felt it was very fulfilling to study with my tutoring classmates at the tutoring center. Especially when we studied in the tutoring centers, if we had questions, we could go ask tutors immediately rather than studying alone at home. If I have questions when I do self-study, I don't know who I can ask, and I can't get a prompt response.

T7 shared a similar experience, explaining that “studying in the EPT community was the best experience she has ever had.” T7 reported that tutors and tutoring classmates were willing to answer her questions, to try to understand her questions, and to provide her with suggestions.

Positive relationships among tutors, learners, and tutoring classmates encouraged learners to be motivated; however, negative relationships may impede learners’ motivation. The excerpts from T22 and T7 showed that tutors and tutoring classmates may play important roles in the EPT community, where learners do not feel isolated when they study.

Learners’ self-discipline, along with tutors’ and tutoring classmates’ help and support, shaped the learners’ tutoring experiences and supplemented their learning in school. Highly self-disciplined learners demonstrated self-awareness in self-study activities through their creation of rich language learning environments and their responses to negative feelings. Learners constructed their own learning experiences according to the affordance of having their needs met through interactions with the learning environment. If the actual learning conditions could not satisfy learners, they chose an alternative by creating an artificial learning environment via the help of EPT.

5.7 Discussion

This chapter investigated Taiwanese learners’ EPT experiences based on their investment in language learning, their expansion of social networks in the EPT community, and their self-study activities in the hopes of obtaining better examination results. Learners’ investment in EPT was driven by different socioeconomic family backgrounds, unsatisfactory schooling experiences, various levels of capability, and self-learning habits. Learners who grew up in underprivileged families often did not have a wide variety of assets to invest in

their English learning, which led them to develop their identities as poor students with low self-esteem, while learners from affluent families who used their resources to access an English learning environment such as that offered through EPT felt elite and advantaged. Such feelings of disadvantaged and advantaged learners were socially constructed and fueled by unsatisfactory schooling learning experiences; learners perceived their teachers' inadequacy in teaching examination skills and the lack of motivation and peer support from their classmates. To achieve their academic goals, therefore, learners invested in EPT to develop examination knowledge, engage in the EPT community, and become motivated. This finding is consistent with the argument by Norton and Toohey (2013) that "a language learner may be highly motivated, but may nevertheless have little investment in the language practices of a given classroom or community" (p. 421). Alternatively, tutored students' conceptions of good language teaching may not have been consistent with those of school teachers, leading the tutored students to invest in EPT rather than the school classroom.

Although student's family backgrounds, unsatisfactory schooling experiences, and EPT learning experiences offer a contextualized picture of why and how tutored students invested in EPT, they may reveal only a partial picture of students' language learning experiences if we do not consider learners' self-study activities. In the current study, highly self-disciplined learners constructed their thoughts, beliefs, and expectations in a way that shaped their motivation. When they confronted negative feelings, they modified their learning contexts by choosing instructors who were comfortable for them. Furthermore, they used several methods to alleviate their anxiety, frustration, and discouragement. In doing so, they were able to adjust their feelings, thoughts, and beliefs to redirect their emotions and motivation (Ushioda, 2003). In the ecological system of language learning, learners "interact with the physical and social world" (Van Lier, 2004, p. 92). Through interacting with the EPT

community individually or socially, learners were able to alleviate the sense of isolation, gauge the learning progress, and remain motivated.

CHAPTER SIX: THE STAKEHOLDERS' PRACTICES IN ENGLISH PRIVATE TUTORING

In the last two chapters, I investigated the effects of EPT on students' academic performance and tutored-students' and their parents' perceptions and self-reflections toward the effects of EPT after receiving EPT. In contrast, this chapter explores how stakeholders practiced EPT through an analysis of three interrelated groups: (1) parents; (2) teachers and principals; and (3) tutors and PT managers. First, quantitative data were collected from a questionnaire survey completed by 95 tutored students' parents and 95 non-tutored students' parents with the students' individual characteristics, family SES, school type, self-study practices, and four dimensions of PI. Second, data were collected from qualitative interviews: (1) 16 tutored students' parents; (2) three senior high school principals; (3) eight senior high school teachers; (4) ten PT tutors; and (5) four PT managers.

In this chapter, first, I analyze the determinants and the effects of PT on students' English performance through parents' activities related to EPT in comparison to other dimensions of PI variables. Second, I present interviews to illustrate parents' practices in EPT's decisions at different times during children's educational process. Finally, through the EPT practices in mainstream education and shadow education, I try to uncover EPT practices that may have effects on students' academic performance in Taiwan or in a broader context.

6.1 Practices in English Private Tutoring: Parental and Tutors' Involvement on Students' Cognitive Outcomes in Taiwan

In order to investigate how stakeholders practice and are involved in EPT, particularly from parents', tutors', and schoolteachers' aspects, data were collected from (1) a quantitative

method of questionnaires with 95 tutored students' parents and 95 non-tutored students' parents, (2) qualitative interviews with ten tutors from seven PT institutions, four managers of PT institutions, eight schoolteachers, and three principals from five senior high schools.

In this section, first, I analyzed the PI activities in EPT focusing on four aspects: contact school, discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT. Second, I investigated the access patterns to EPT and practices of tracking in EPT to further discuss the equalization of educational opportunities.

6.1.1 Parental Involvement in English Private Tutoring and Students' Academic Performance

In this research, I considered four dimensions of PI activities that are frequently seen in Taiwanese education: contact school, discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT. The previous literature review in Chapter Three has suggested that a certain degree of PI in these activities is related to PT. Second, parents' interests in their children's academic success are considerably highly related (Chen et al., 2016; Kung & Lee, 2016; Jhang, 2019). Finally, I expect that aside from direct influences such as activities related to EPT, contact school, discussions between parents and child, and monitoring could map out the parents' impact on educational processes within schools.

6.1.2 Socioeconomic Differences in Parental Involvement

From the parent questionnaires filled out by one of the students' parents, I selected 13 items that explain the four components of PI in the practices of EPT. The definition and measures of the variables for PI are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Definition and measures of the variables for parental involvement

Dimension of parental involvement	Short description of variable	Description of variable	Full description	Definition and measure
Contact school (CS)	CSQ1	Contact teachers about child's academic performance	During your child's Grade 12 year, how often did you or your spouse contact the teachers about his/her academic performance?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	CSQ2	Contact teachers about future planning after graduation	During your child's Grade 12 year, how often did you or your spouse contact the teachers about his/her plan after graduation?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	CSQ3	Contact teachers about school activities	During your child's Grade 12 year, how often did you or your spouse contact the teachers about school activities such as sports days, music competitions or field trips?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	CSQ4	Contact teachers about parenting at home	During your child's Grade 12 year, how often did you or your spouse contact the teachers about the information on school assignments or child's discipline issues?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	CSQ5	Contact teachers about participating in the activities in parents' association	During your child's Grade 12 year, how often did you or your spouse contact the teachers about volunteering the activities held in parents' association?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always

Discussions between parents and child (D)	DQ1	Discuss school academic performance with child	How often did you and your spouse discuss the academic grades with your child?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	DQ2	Discuss the information or advice about how to maintain or obtain good grades with child	How often did you or your spouse provide the information or advice about maintaining or obtaining good grades for your child?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	DQ3	Discuss the information or advice about homework with child	How often did you or your spouse provide the information or advice about child's homework?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
Monitoring (M)	MQ1	Check your child's homework	How often did you or your spouse check your child's homework such as completion of homework?	5 categories: never; rarely; sometimes; very often; always
	MQ2	Know your child's location when he/she is not at home or school	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My spouse or I know our child's location when he/she is not at home or school"?	5 categories: strongly disagree; disagree; undecided; agree; strongly agree
	MQ3	Set curfews for your child during Grade 12 year	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My spouse or I set curfews for our child during his/her Grade 12 year"?	5 categories: strongly disagree; disagree; undecided; agree; strongly agree
Activities related to EPT (A)	AQ1	Collect PT information for child	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My spouse or I collect PT information for our child"?	5 categories: strongly disagree; disagree; undecided; agree; strongly agree

	AQ2	Collect information from private tutors about child's academic performance	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My spouse or I collect our child's academic performance from tutors"?	5 categories: strongly disagree; disagree; undecided; agree; strongly agree
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Source: Author

Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics for the tutored and non-tutored students (N=190). In order to assess the relationships between students' cognitive outcomes and PI, I controlled the variables of students' individual characteristics, family SES, school type, self-study practices, and PI variables.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for the variables used in the analysis (N=190).

Variables	Description	Tutored group (N=95)	Non-tutored group (N=95)	Difference (Tutored group minus non-tutored group)
Test scores	Means of test scores	11.90	10.87	1.03
Gender	Male	47	42	5
	Female	48	53	-5
School type	Public	61	61	0
	Private	34	34	0
Monthly income	Means of monthly income (in 1000 New Taiwan dollars)	133.2	108.8	24.4
Monthly income	Standard deviation (in 1000 New Taiwan dollars)	56.29	33.54	22.75

Parent's highest education level	High school or below	5	16	-11
	Bachelor's degree	59	62	-3
	Master's degree or higher	31	17	14
Father's employment status	Employed	95	94	-1
	Unemployed	0	1	1
Only child / With siblings	Only child	58	87	-29
	With siblings	37	8	29
Family and marital status	Married	90	87	3
	Single parent	5	6	-1
	Not living with parents	0	2	-2
Parental educational expectation	University or higher	84	84	0
	otherwise	11	11	0
Self-educational expectation	University or higher	95	93	2
	otherwise	0	2	-2
Residential status	Town	2	6	-4
	City	11	14	-3
	Municipality	82	75	7
Self-study time spent doing English homework per week	Mean self-study time	3.35	2.24	1.11
Self-study time spent previewing English learning materials per week	Mean self-study time	2.66	1.79	0.87
Self-study time spent reviewing English learning materials per week	Mean self-study time	3.26	1.83	1.43
Contact teachers about child's academic performance	Mean of contacting school	1.29	1.21	0.08

Contact teachers about future planning after graduation	Mean of contacting school	1.08	1.06	0.02
Contact teachers about school activities	Mean of contacting school	1.31	1.4	-0.09
Contact teachers about parenting at home	Mean of contacting school	1.08	1.08	0
Contact teachers about participating in the activities in parents' association	Mean of contacting school	1.06	1.05	0.01
Discuss school academic performance with child	Mean of discussions between parents and child	3.45	3.41	0.04
Discuss the information or advice about how to maintain or obtain good grades with child	Mean of discussions between parents and child	2.71	2.37	0.34
Discuss the information or advice about homework with child	Mean of discussions between parents and child	2.30	2.25	0.05
Check your child's homework	Mean of monitoring	3.11	2.81	0.3
Know your child's location when he/she is not at home or school	Mean of monitoring	3.99	3.71	0.28
Set curfews for your child during Grade 12 year	Mean of monitoring	3.79	3.52	0.27

Collect PT information for child	Mean of activities related to EPT	3.78	2.73	1.05
Collect information from private tutors about child's academic performance	Mean of activities related to EPT	3.64	2.63	1.01

Source: Author

According to Table 8, in the tutored group, 47 students were male, and 48 were female. Among them, 82 lived in municipalities, 11 lived in cities, and two lived in towns. In the non-tutored group, 42 students were male, and 53 were female. Seventy-five of these students lived in municipalities, 14 lived in cities, and 6 lived in towns.

Monthly family income was, on average, NT133,200 in the tutored group and NT108,800 in the non-tutored group. Regarding parental education, in the tutored group, 90 of the parents of the students were university graduates, while only 5 had completed high school or below. In the non-tutored group, 81 parents were university graduates, and 14 had completed high school or below. The fathers of the students in the tutored group were all employed, and only one student's father in the non-tutored group was unemployed. Regarding family status, 90 students in the tutored group and 87 students in the non-tutored group lived with their parents; 5 students in the tutored group and 6 in the non-tutored group were from single-parent families; and 2 students in the non-tutored group did not live with their parents.

In terms of educational expectations, most of the students and parents in the tutored group (179) and non-tutored group (177) expected themselves or their children to complete

university education. This result indicates that both the students and their parents had high educational expectations.

Unlike students' individual characteristics such as gender, participation in PT and English academic performance, family's SES, and school type, self-study variables and PI practices have rarely been used in previous empirical studies on PT in Taiwan or other countries. Self-study variables refer to the amount of time that students spend per week doing English homework and previewing and reviewing English learning materials independently. On average, mean self-study time spent doing homework and previewing and reviewing English-related materials was 3.35, 2.66, and 3.26 hours, respectively, in the tutored group and 2.24, 1.79, and 1.83 hours, respectively, in the non-tutored group.

PI variables were constructed with 13 items with the means of contact school, discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT and differences in the tutored group and the non-tutored group. The means of each contact school item, which had a range of 1 to 5, were close to 1 (did not or almost did not contact the school) in both the tutored group and non-tutored group, showing that extremely low percentage of Taiwanese parents are contacting schools. A possible reason for this pattern is that standardized education may hinder parents' opportunities to get involved in schooling processes.

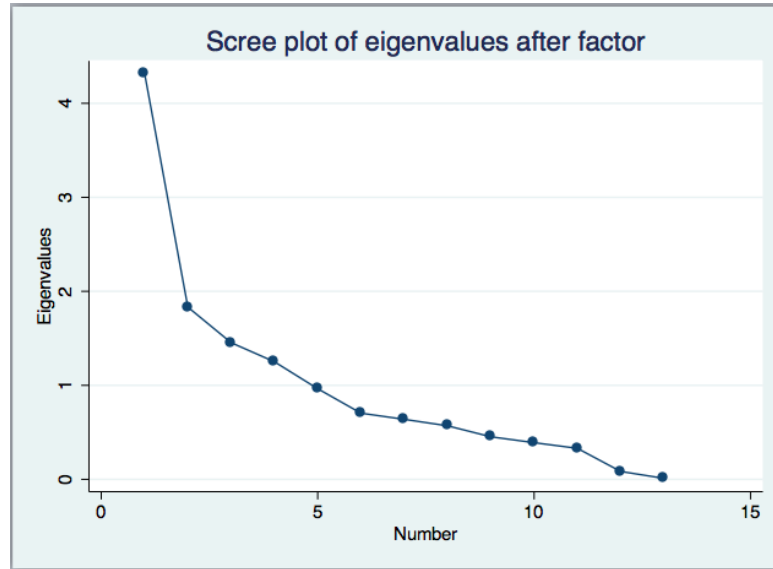
In contrast, the dimensions of discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT seem significant. The average response to the statement "How often did you and your spouse discuss the academic grades with your child?" was close to very often in both the tutored group (mean = 3.45) and the non-tutored group (mean = 3.41). Similarly, in the monitoring dimension, the average Taiwanese parents agree with the

statement “My spouse or I know our child’s location when he/she is not at home or school” in the tutored group (mean = 3.99) and in the non-tutored group (mean = 3.71). The dimension of activities related to EPT is also substantial in the tutored group. The mean response to the statement, “My spouse or I collect PT information for our child” is close to agree (mean = 3.78). More meaningfully, about a quarter of parents agree or strongly agree with the statement “My spouse or I collect our child’s academic performance from tutors” (not shown in the table), which means parents in the tutored group are more likely to get involved in gathering child’s scores from tutors (mean = 3.64).

Using the selected 13 items presented in Table 7, I conducted a PCA with a varimax rotation to solicit into four distinct dimensions of PI: contact school, discussions between parents and child, monitoring, and activities related to EPT. In order to choose the factors to represent the total variation in the data, an eigenvalue was a useful statistic for deciding how many factors I should retain from the analysis. According to Kaiser (1960), he stated that a factor associated with the eigenvalue greater than one accounts for as much variance in the data set as would one variable, on average. The scree plot was shown as Figure 3, which accounted for four factors (their eigenvalues greater than one) in the data. The rotated factor loadings from principal component analysis are presented in Table 9.

Furthermore, I created four indices of PI variables. I included the above-mentioned independent variables in the research model to predict educational outcomes.

Figure 3. The scree plot for PCA



Source: Author

Table 9. Rotated factor loadings from principal component analysis

	Dimension of PI	Dimension of PI	Dimension of PI	Dimension of PI
Short description of variable	Contact School	Discussions	Monitor	EPT Activities
CSQ1	0.919	-0.092	0.167	0.061
CSQ2	0.905	0.252	-0.025	0.090
CSQ3	0.638	0.457	-0.207	0.039
CSQ4	0.592	-0.109	0.138	-0.151
CSQ5	0.537	-0.057	-0.073	0.180
DQ1	0.016	0.858	-0.114	0.004
DQ2	0.070	0.774	-0.073	0.180
DQ3	-0.036	0.548	0.233	0.090
MQ1	0.118	-0.109	0.718	-0.174

MQ2	0.090	0.212	0.656	-0.638
MQ3	-0.174	-0.057	0.593	-0.043
AQ1	0.394	0.357	0.091	0.607
AQ2	-0.360	-0.227	0.304	0.557
Eigenvalue	4.32	1.83	1.45	1.25
% of Variance	33.23	14.10	11.18	9.62

Source: Author

To assess how the effects of PI are related to family background, I used ordinary least squares analysis to predict each dimension of PI by family background variables. The other variables of gender, school types, sidings, family status, parental educational expectations, self-educational expectations, and residential status were also included in the regression model. In order to concentrate on coefficients of four dimensions of PI, family monthly income, parents' education, and father's employment status are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Regression analysis of four dimensions of parental involvement by family background

	Contact School	Discussions	Monitor	EPT Activities
Monthly income	1.34 (0.190)	0.82 (0.454)	4.06 (0.000)***	2.56 (0.010)**
Parent's highest education level	-2.52 (0.012)*	2.10 (0.036)*	1.37 (0.172)	1.49 (0.137)
Father's employment status	-1.11 (0.285)	2.20 (0.028)*	1.67 (0.095)	0.01 (0.989)
Family and marital status	-1.34 (0.180)	0.10 (0.922)	0.29 (0.768)	0.69 (0.493)
Sibling size	0.90 (0.370)	-0.66 (0.511)	-1.68 (0.093)	-5.22 (0.000)***
R ²	0.034	0.022	0.067	0.093

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Source: Author

As shown in Table 10, parents with higher income tend to monitor their child's behaviors and practice EPT activities for their children. Parents with higher education are less likely to contact the school, but have more discussions with their child. The father's employment status is also statistically significantly associated with parent-child discussion. Married couples tend not to contact schools compared with other forms of families. Families with more than one child tend to get involved in PT activities. Finally, in contrast to the family status variable, the effects of household income, parent's education, father's employment, and sibling size are relatively strong in the four dimensions of PI.

6.1.3 The Effects of Parental Involvement

Data and Measures

An estimation of the effects of PT on students' academic performance is likely to be endogenous because undertaking PT and family background are jointly determined (e.g., parents' financial support may affect children to undertake PT). To address the endogeneity problem, I began with a first-stage regression model, namely, ordinary least square (OLS). OLS was estimated for the model with PT experiences by family background. Thus, the results of first-stage model provided an important benchmark, but I emphasized the results of instrument variable to decrease the omitted-variable bias and quantify the causal effect between PT variable and family background variables.

To assess how the dimensions of PI are related to students' test scores, I implemented two-stage least squares models (2SLS) because it permits the identification of the causal

effect and of the correlation between the endogenous variable (PT variable) and instrument variables (family background variables). In other words, the requirements of instrument variables (family background variables) are to have no direct influence on dependent variables, while having a significant influence on the endogenous variable (PT variable).

Estimation of 2SLS involves a system of two OLS regressions:

$$X = \gamma + \delta.T + \beta.Z + r \quad (1)$$

$$Y = \alpha + \tau.T + \omega.X + u \quad (2)$$

where X indicates the predictor (i.e., PT), Y refers to continuous outcome variable (i.e., students' test scores), T is a set of covariates (i.e., gender, school type, self-educational expectation, and residential status), Z refers to a set of instrument variables (i.e., monthly income, parents' education, father's employment status, number of siblings, family status, and parental educational expectation) that are associated with the PT variable but not associated with the outcome variable except through the PT, and r and u are errors. δ and τ are vector of coefficients for T , β and ω are coefficients for the predictor, γ and α are intercepts for the regressions (Habibov & Cheung, 2017).

Table 11 gives the summary of the estimates of the effects of PT on students' academic performance. Model 1 of Table 11 gives the OLS estimates of the effect of family background on the participation of PT. The results show that family monthly income, parents' education, and numbers of siblings are statistically significant with the participation of PT. In other words, higher SES families with more than one child are more likely to send their children to PT. Model 2 includes the one endogenous variable that has been instrumented on using *family background variables* as the instrument. The results, as presented in Model 2, show that EPT related activities, PT, and self-study activities are statistically in explaining students' academic performance. In other words, tutored students' parents devoted time and

efforts in EPT related activities and tutored students spent more time on self-study activities, the test scores of a tutored student increased.

Controlling the tutoring variables did not substantially reduce the association between PI and students' academic achievement in Model 2. The correlation of PI in contact school and in the activities related to EPT with students' academic achievement was significant. Students whose parents tended to gather their child's academic results from tutors and collected PT information for their children rather than contacting teachers obtained better scores. Interestingly, discussions between parents and child rather than monitoring is more significantly associated with students' academic performance, which is consistent with the finding that parent-child discussion in the United States tends to be relevant to students' cognitive performance, while monitoring was with students' behavioral performance (Domina, 2005; McNeal, 1999).

Moreover, comparisons across the four dimensions of PI variables indicate that self-study characteristics have relatively strong effects on students' academic performance, even with the addition of the PT variables. Even with PT variables added, PI in the activities related to EPT and parents without contacting school were statistically significantly associated with students' test scores. The results of Model 2 point to not only in examining independent relationships among the four dimensions of PI and tutoring but also in assessing the extent to which self-study variables might have effects on students' academic performance.

The results of Model 2 indicated that tutored students whose parents gather their academic information from tutors and collect PT information for them devote more time to self-study activities and they tend to have better academic results than those students who or whose parents do not devote time and effort to these activities. Importantly, however, the

effect of self-study practices, PT, and the activities related to EPT remained significant. The results highlight the robust effect of self-study efforts and PI to collect information about children's progress from private tutors on students' academic achievement.

Table 11. 2SLS Estimates of private tutoring on students' academic performance

<i>t</i> value (<i>p</i> value)	Model 1	Model 2
Dependent variable	PT OLS	Test scores 2 SLS
Family background		
Monthly income	7.95 (0.000)***	
Parent's highest education level	4.02 (0.000)***	
Father's employment status	1.84 (0.066)	
Number of siblings	-7.84 (0.000)***	
Family and marital status	-1.25 (0.212)	
Parental educational expectation	0.40 (0.689)	
PI		
Contact school		-2.88 (0.004)**
Discussions		1.17 (0.245)
Monitor		0.72 (0.473)
EPT		2.61 (0.010)**
PT		
Tutoring		1.93 (0.049)*
Self study		
Self study (do homework)		2.63 (0.009)**
Self study (previewing)		2.83 (0.005)**
Self study (reviewing)		2.44 (0.015)*
R ²	0.315	0.412

Note.*** $p < 0.001$,** $p < 0.01$,* $p < 0.05$

Source: Author

6.2 Discussion

It is quite common in many contexts that parents put effort and time in various activities to help their children to achieve academic gains. However, specific dimensions of PI and their influence on students' academic performance may be dependent on different educational settings. I implemented principal component analysis method through parents' questionnaires to identify four dimensions of PI and their effects on students' academic achievement in Taiwan. Taiwanese parents used an educational strategy—private tutoring—to help their children to meet specific needs. The high-stakes examinations such as GSAET have created the demand by Taiwanese parents to use PT to improve their children's educational academic success. Aside from the financial cost, effort, and time, parents are required to look for appropriate PT for their children through collecting information of PT and of students' cognitive results from tutors to maximize the effectiveness of EPT, I found activities related to EPT has a significant effect compared to other dimensions such as contact school, discussions between parents and child, and monitoring. It should be emphasized, however, that self-study variables had a positive and statistically significant effect on students' academic performance, too. Furthermore, the findings imply that the process of the effects of PT on students' academic performance may be complicated; PT, activities related to EPT, and self-study activities play important roles in increasing students' cognitive outcomes.

6.3 Parents' Practices in English Private Tutoring

Before parents decided to purchase PT services to meet their needs, they had to consider or screen different options. Those types of options were reflected by Taiwanese

parents in the following sections.

6.3.1 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Timing

The timing for parents to choose is significantly important, which may affect their arrangement for children's academic track. Some parents interviewed, especially of medium to high SES, tended to carefully arrange the right timing for their children to undertake PT. For instance, some parents told the researcher that they arranged EPT for their children during pre-school and elementary school in order to develop their interests, provide opportunities for them to spend happy times with foreign teachers through games to know this language, help them practice their speaking abilities, and instill in them a love for this language. According to the parents interviewed, they felt if their children love this language, they do not need to worry about their English test performance later on. After elementary school, parents started to increase the proportions of EPT for their children to learn grammar, which was not learned from native-English tutors, while it was extremely important for students to obtain higher scores for their subject tests and entrance exams for high schools or universities. As explained by T4's mother:

I think the best timing for my son to study English grammar was after elementary school because he had learned English since kindergarten, and he already obtained some basic knowledge and some experiences to talk and write something in English. From junior high school to senior high school, what I wanted was that he could learn English grammar in a systematic method to get higher scores on the exams and then he would have more time to prepare other subjects without worrying about English. It might be a waste of time to study English grammar at an early stage of English learning.

6.3.2 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Courses

The specific selection of EPT courses was an important component for parents to practice EPT. For example, T6's father had a priority list for arranging his daughter's courses: English writing was top priority, English grammar was second, and English speaking was last. Parents' priority list was based on their expectations for their children and their plans on achieving success in climbing the academic ladder. T6's father's future plan for his daughter was either to study at English-speaking countries for higher education or study at an English department in Taiwan. He told his daughter:

Your English writing scores are the worst, so you have to take a course and improve your English grammar. Although English speaking is not part of GSAET, you need to learn how to speak. If your GSAT scores are good enough to apply for studying at English department at national universities in Taiwan, you will need to do the interviews in English. If your GSAT scores are not good, I will send you to English-speaking countries to study. No matter whether your GSAT scores are good or bad, English speaking is very important for your future.

Parents' EPT practice was also affected by educational policies in multi-phased entrance program since most of the Taiwanese universities require students to provide English certificates such as GEPT (General English Proficiency Test), TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), or IELTS (International English Language Test System) when they applied for the universities. Most of the parents interviewed asked their children to undertake EPT for English certificates. T10's mother provided an example:

In order to make my daughter's pass the initial screening for admission interviews, I

sent her to take EPT courses for English certificates. It's a requirement from the university. We have to try to meet the requirements as possible as we can so she can get admitted.

6.3.3 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Institutions

There were more choices of PT institutions in cities than in rural areas. From the attraction side, the PT institutions had to use some marketing strategies to compete for the customers. T11's mother was attracted by a strategy used by a PT institution:

The reason I selected this institution for my child to study English is this PT center provided a set of organized arrangements which enable students to succeed in university admission. It offered not only courses for GSAET but also courses for English certificates and English interviews which were required by some national universities, even you did not apply for studying at English department. I felt this institution really arranged everything in a very careful manner.

Although the marketing strategy used by PT institutions was very important to help parents choose the right one, the location, cost in money and time, and monitoring were taken into consideration by parents as exemplified by T7 and T22's mothers. T7's mother chose a tutoring institution near her school and house to avoid the traffic in the city although she felt another tutoring institution was more professional. The reason why T22's mother chose the tutoring institution near her house is the tutoring fees were cheaper than the city's and she could monitor her daughter after she finished her tutoring classes.

6.3.4 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Tutors

Tutors' qualifications and teaching methods were the most concerning issues of the parents. Because of standardization in schools, parents cannot choose the teachers they want, but they can choose the tutors they are satisfied with. One parent interviewed stated that "my son will study in a national university, I don't want an English tutor whose degree is either from a private university or a non-English speaking country one." Some tutoring institutions provided free or cheaper sit-in classes for parents to select their favorite tutors. T20's mother recalled the experience of selecting an English tutor for her son:

The tutoring institution provided either free or cheaper sit-in classes. I chose one free sit-in class in A institution and one paid sit-in class in B institution. I expected the tutor in A institution could find my son's weaknesses part in learning English, and helped him to get good grades. But after one and a half hours, the tutor just asked my son to do the drill questions and explained the answers he got wrong. This was not what I wanted. I wanted a clear study schedule for my son to make up his insufficiency. But in B institution, although she did similar things, she arranged an organized schedule to teach my son after the sit-in class at once. Therefore, I chose her without a second thought.

6.3.5 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Types

As for PT services for GSAET received by Taiwanese senior high schools, there were mainly one-on-one and lecture-type tutoring in this study. Most of the parents preferred lecture-type tutoring because of cheaper expenses, more interactions with peers, and more services provided by tutoring institutions. T15's mother chose lecture-type tutoring for her son to prepare for GSAET:

The reason why I moved my son from one-on-one lessons to lecture-type tutoring was he usually fell asleep, lost focus, and lacked interactions with the tutor. In one-on-one lessons, the tutor spoke like a machine-gun and he kept cramming all his knowledge into my son's brain. I knew the tutor tried his best, but this is not what my son wanted after he talked to me. Therefore, I placed him in a lecture-type class. It was cheaper, filled with more interactions between the tutor and students, and more extra services for tutoring. For example, they recorded the lectures and provided free online make-up classes when students were absent. We could decide when we wanted to watch the clips without considering my son and the tutor's schedules.

6.3.6 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Schedules

Some parents paid close attention to the PT class schedules. Most of the parents arranged weekend-tutoring for their children. T21's father explained that:

They are so busy studying during weekdays. I wanted her to take a rest after a long-day studying in school. So she can take PT on weekends.

Meanwhile, one of high-SES parents had to arrange his son's tutoring schedule based on holidays. She explained that:

I mark the holidays in my schedule. It is very important for my son to have a break abroad when we have holidays. I don't want him to study at a tutoring center when we have more than 3-day holidays. We should spend quality time with our families together. So I chose the tutoring classes for my son only during non-holidays including weekends.

Some parents arranged some subjects for their children in an efficient and organized

method. T17's mother arranged five subjects for her daughter based on her monthly subject scores:

If she didn't achieve the scores I set for her on every subject test, I would send her to take tutoring classes from Monday to Sunday. We have seven days to arrange the tutoring classes. On weekdays, my daughter can take tutoring classes from 6 pm to 9 pm and on weekends from 9 am to 9 pm. It is easy to arrange the schedule from different tutoring centers. I have at least 20 tutoring centers' schedules. If you care about your children, you will do the same for them. Some parents are just lazy and neglect their children.

6.3.7 Parents' Practices in Private Tutoring Classmates

A few parents indicated that tutoring classmates' attributes were their major concern.

T15's mother explained:

I arrange the tutoring classes for my son with his friends I know very well... friends that they have known each other since they were at elementary school. I know their family backgrounds and their parents very well. So we share the tutoring information with each other. We have done this for a long time. Even though they study at different high schools, their English tests are always the same pattern. They only test their vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing.

Some high-SES parents arranged the tutoring classes according to tutoring classmates' schools. T8's mother's remarks provided an example:

My son is from the best boys' high school. I only chose his tutoring classmates either from his school or the best girls' high school. There are some tutoring centers offering

the “Dragon and Phoenix Class” (the class is only for best boys’ and best girls’ high schools). I think my son can learn more from this class and the tutor doesn't need to worry if the tutees are left behind.

In summary, the parents practiced the PT through a series of considerations before making decisions for their children to receive or make changes to PT services. Generally, parents might provide their children with EPT for interests or for academic gains based on the timing before or after junior high school. Then they had to choose the tailor-made tutoring courses for their children. To do this, they needed to further identify appropriate tutoring institutions offering one-on-one or lecture type tutoring which could meet their and their children’s needs for effectively attaining academic gains and educational goals. After that, they chose the tutors in accordance with the tutors’ qualifications and pedagogical approaches, and took consideration of whether the schedules of the tutoring centers would fit in with theirs and whether there would be best-matched tutoring classmates before coming to a final decision of selecting EPT. In this complicated process of selecting appropriate EPT, any changes to be made among these seven factors can result in large differences in a later decision. Therefore, parents’ practices in PT evolved via a careful and recursive decision-making process, and this process was not a one-off event.

6.4 Tutors’ Practices in English Private Tutoring

This section shows that tracking occurs not only in mainstream education but in PT institutions. I first investigated the patterns of access to EPT and how tutors practiced tracking in shadow education. Next, I concentrated on how the students’ participation in PT and tracking shaped socialization; and finally I investigated the implications of the access patterns

of equalization of educational opportunities.

Binary logistic regression was used for an initial analysis to identify students' access to EPT (1 if participation in EPT; otherwise 0) through their socioeconomic backgrounds.

Table 12 summarizes the brief descriptions of the definitions and measures of the variables.

For the interviewees, tutors and managers of PT institutions were recruited to participate in the interviews. Most interviews were approximately 60 minutes, and were conducted in PT classrooms with the focus on the relationships between PT and formal schooling, and influence on parenting and the larger society.

Table 12. Definitions and measures of the variables

Variable	Definition and measure
<i>Dependent variable</i>	
Participation in EPT	Yes=1; otherwise 0
<i>Independent variables</i>	
Gender	1 if male; otherwise 0
School type	1 if public; otherwise 0
Monthly income	6 categories: less than 25,000; 25001-50,000; 50,001-100,000; 100,001-150,000; 15001-200,000; more than 200,000 (in New Taiwan Dollars)
Parent's highest education level	3 categories: high school or below; bachelor's degree; master's degree or higher
Only child / With siblings	1 if only child; otherwise 0
Family and marital status	3 categories: married; single parent; not living with parents
Residential status	3 categories; town; city; municipality

Academic performance of mock GSAET (pretest) and GSAET (posttest)	Test scores of pretest and posttest. 1 if posttest; otherwise 0
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Source: Author

6.4.1 Unequalizing Shadow Education in Taiwan: Uneven Access

Table 13 shows variables shaping the receipt of EPT. The statistical analysis revealed that after controlling for other factors, male students from public schools are more inclined to undertake EPT than their counterparts. Interview results showed that male students felt they were better at science subjects than liberal arts subjects, while in order to obtain higher scores for GSAT, every subject matters a lot for securing a place in the university. Therefore, they had strong incentives to receive EPT, even though they were not interested in it.

At the household level, families with higher income and parents with higher education tended to invest in EPT. This is consistent with the studies conducted by Bray (2009). That is, parental economic and cultural capitals are determining factors and significantly correlated with students accessing EPT. The interview data indicated that well-educated parents can afford to invest in EPT for their children and use it as an important strategy to gain family cultural capital. Parents were more anxious about the competition surrounding GSAET and their children experienced greater peer pressures. Probably for similar reasons, married couples with more than one child were more engaged in the culture of EPT. Such a pattern partly indicated that parents with more economic capitals seemed to be more anxious to use EPT to strengthen their children's ability for taking tests and improve their chances of being selected by prestigious universities (Liu, 2012). Patterns were particularly significant among middle-class families interviewed. They aspired for shifting

with upward social mobility or social status, and PT is a ladder for them to achieve the goal through a prestigious academic trajectory.

Students' academic performance was also taken into account for analysis. After controlling for other variables, students with higher academic gains tended to undertake EPT. EPT seemed to be an effective strategy for higher achievers to adopt, which further broadened the inequality and educational outcome gaps between the low-achievers and high-achievers.

Table 13. The results of binary logistic regression used for the access to private tutoring (N=190).

Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	<i>p</i> value	Odds Ratio
<i>Individual level</i>				
Gender	0.497	0.357	0.165	1.644
School type	0.855	0.374	0.819	1.089
<i>Household level</i>				
Monthly income	0.680	0.137	0.000***	1.974
Parent's highest education level	0.773	0.320	0.016**	2.167
Only child / With siblings	-2.224	0.477	0.000***	0.106
Family and marital status	-0.528	0.584	0.366	0.589
Residential status	0.424	0.372	0.254	1.528
Academic performance	0.714	0.714	0.312	1.074

Note. ****p* < 0.001, ***p* < 0.01, **p* < 0.05.

Source: Author

6.4.2 Unequal English Private Tutoring through Tracking and Labelling

The access patterns to EPT above show socioeconomic stratification in the families with and without PT. Participation in PT has become a label to divide the students into a with EPT group and without EPT group, and further affects their mainstream education experiences. Nearly 75% of the teachers pointed out that students and their parents felt relatively deprived after they found out other families received EPT. The statement was echoed by most of the students and parents. One mother shared her child's experience that the child's English teacher asked the students to raise their hands in class to check whether they received EPT or not, which made their family feel discriminated against in school. "How come an English teacher can be so careless and insensitive to ask this question in class?", she asked. "My child was kind of upset and requested us to arrange EPT courses for her because nearly 80% of her classmates raised their hands."

The EPT labels also reinforced the students' academic abilities in school. For instance, three teachers in low-ranking public schools reported that only some students in their classes undertook EPT, not so much because of their family financial background but much more because they were "low achievers" lacking motivation. Therefore, the teachers formed a stereotype that students without EPT participation were low-achievers. Another teacher from a low-ranking school also made a similar remark: "Low-achievers are still weak even if they receive EPT. I only told my high-achieving students to attend EPT, but not those weaker ones."

However, parents and teachers from top-ranking schools indicated that some teachers suggested low-achievers undertake EPT and argued that they would not be able to catch up with other students without EPT. Students with EPT were regarded as "diligent", "motivated", and "determined" learners by many teachers. Relatively, parents sending their children to EPT

classes were viewed as “responsible”, “caring” and “reliable” parents, despite the effectiveness of EPT.

6.4.3 Ranking the Unranked Students

Despite the fact that MOE has prohibited schools in mainstream education from ranking students based on their academic performance, most of the participants were still ranked in their schools. Almost all high schools restricted students’ access to score records, and did not divulge other students’ ranking and scores publicly to the parents except those of their own child. Teachers used the hidden rank as a reference in their instructions and guidance. Some parents indicated that when the ranking was prohibited and inaccessible, many of them became worried because they had deeply believed in the credibility of ranking since their era as students. Some even felt confused and lost about their children’s future path and turned to seek an alternative way to re-rank their children according to their academic performance. Some parents used their connections (social capital) to obtain the information through the stakeholders in schools, while other parents used their economic capital to participate in nationwide chains of PT institutions. These institutions organized the mock examinations for GSAT for each subject every month, and further obtained a large number of samples from different schools to rank their tutees intensively and more precisely compared to when they were ranked in a single school. The major purposes of ranking students in PT institutions are to meet parents’ needs of predicting their children’s academic trajectory, to provide consultancy for students’ learning, to create keen competition among students from different schools, and to place tutees in classes of different levels based on their abilities.

6.4.4 Tracking the Students

Tracking students has long been prohibited in the mainstream schools, while PT institutions re-modified and implemented it through ability tracking and curriculum tracking.

6.4.4.1 Ability Tracking in English Private Tutoring

Almost all the participants interviewed in the study had received or experienced ability tracking in PT institutions. One parent stated that he had to apply many months ahead for his child to get the ticket to participate in EPT. The other parent indicated that she had to wait to be put on the standby list, just for an EPT placement test. The PT institutions in the study requested a full payment of six-months to one-year intensive courses for GSAT, which was a huge amount of money to most families the researcher interviewed. The EPT placement test was a principal mechanism for sorting and determining which level of class admitted students should be placed in. For example, one of the large-scale institutions divided students into five groups: A, B, C, D, and E. The first two groups, identified as having higher abilities, used the same textbooks and the last three used another set of textbooks. The first two groups were also supplemented with additional materials, while the last three groups were not. The pace of the course and teaching for the E group were the slowest, and most tutors in the E groups focused on repetition of content, drilling and practice, and consolidation of basic English knowledge. The curricula for the A and B groups were more rigid and demanding than the mainstream curriculum. Students in the C and D groups were mainly trained to find answers faster with skills, while students in the A and B groups were not only trained to develop exam skills but were given more difficult examination papers to help them practice the skills they had learned. The A and B groups were instructed only by the “star tutors”, who

graduated from prestigious graduate schools in English-speaking countries or were master's graduates from top-ranking Taiwanese universities.

The large-scale institution mentioned above provides tutoring services to train students to become high-achievers in their academic performance, and creates a backwash effect on mainstream education. This institution provides not only learning with hierarchical levels but also the opportunities to learn ahead of the mainstream curriculum. The interviewees reported that teachers would not teach foundational knowledge in class because teachers would confirm with students whether they had learned it from EPT. Instead, teachers would suggest non-tutored students ask tutored students for help after class. This phenomenon forced non-tutored students to seek EPT in order not to fall behind and feel ashamed to learn from their peers.

Some parents expressed their worries over this phenomenon and figured the only solution to this was to send their children to undertake EPT so that they could keep up with peers cognitively and emotionally. Otherwise, "my child would give up learning and fall to the bottom of the class", one father said. One mother stated that "if it happened, I would definitely transfer her to another school or another class and let her study with those low-achievers". When the teachers were asked about how to help those parents with this concern, they indicated that it is very difficult to make a decision between "majority rules" and "minority rights". Most teachers from the top-ranking schools reported that they were "kindly" reminded by the parents to speed up their teaching pace to catch up with their children's EPT schedules. However, some teachers complained that those tutored high-achievers were less engaged in class because they considered school-based learning too easy and a waste of time. Some high-achievers and their parents believed and respected the tutors more than their teachers.

6.4.4.2 Ability Tracking in Mainstream Education

Aside from the tracking in EPT, mainstream education also had ability tracking classes in elite schools with collaboration between schools and national universities. This occurred in advanced mathematics and physics class, advanced language and arts class, and advanced science class. Despite the fact that the tracking was prohibited in most of the high schools, MOE set up advanced classes with advanced curricula in elite schools. The lessons were designed for advanced students to complete three-year high school programs within two years so that they could take courses at national universities as soon as they finished their high school programs.

Most of the teachers indicated that de-tracking in schools had impeded the competition amongst students, and teachers were not allowed to group students and offer PT after school. Therefore, advanced EPT classes were provided for those high-achievers through tutors.

Some elite students from advanced classes required PT institutions to customize the courses for them to synchronize with the curricula of their advanced classes in schools because they believed such customized courses could help them catch up or be ahead of the school schedule and ultimately achieve the goal of entering top-ranking universities. Therefore, in order to study at these intensive tailor-made courses, some elite students' parents remarked that they even had to recruit top students not only from their child's school but also from other elite schools to "EPT courses only for top students" based on students' academic performance and parents' financial affordability. The PT institutions screened those students through the name of schools, parents' recommendation, and a placement test, which intensifies the competition among those top students for getting into "EPT courses only for top students".

These strategies privileged not only gifted students from affluent families but also ones with social connections. Some students excluded from advanced classes felt disadvantaged in school, while other students thought such EPT classes were far from reach because these students, ranging from different socioeconomic backgrounds, had internalized their perception that they were of ordinary ability and from middle-class families.

6.4.4.3 English Private Tutoring and Hidden-tracking in Schooling

As previously mentioned, some schools followed the de-tracking reform suggested by MOE, while others invented preventive measures to re-track students. Those schools either offered classes for high-achievers with no labels or arranged for high-achievers to study academic subjects with the best teachers in a specific classroom during school hours. In order to be admitted to such classes, students had to undertake PT to meet the requirement to enter the corresponding schools. After being admitted to such classes, most students had to keep up their performance by receiving PT.

The student interviewees implemented the use of PT and benefited from hidden tracking in schooling. They explained that once they entered this advanced class, they had to take PT to keep up with the competition. One teacher added that “students in advanced classes learned much ahead than of those in other classes. If we mix them together, low-achievers cannot catch up with the pace in class”. Similar comments were echoed by other teachers from different schools. When teachers’ perception was taken into account, EPT, to a certain degree, reinforced the practice that tracking was acceptable and desirable.

6.4.4.4 Curriculum Tracking between English Private Tutoring and Schooling

Curriculum tracking was associated with students' academic performance because it involved the choice of curriculum content and students' ability. Amongst different dimensions of EPT, two dimensions were worthy of being discussed because they were closely related to the selection process in schooling.

6.4.4.4.1 Undertaking English Private Tutoring for Intensified Competition

Apart from the students in advanced classes in elite schools undertaking EPT, the curricula in these advanced classes were entirely different from school curricula. Only top students from advanced classes were qualified to take them. Interviewees described those top students from advanced classes as “smart,” “outstanding”, “diligent”, “motivated”, “confident”, and “extraordinary”. They were respected by their peers and received much attention from their teachers, tutors, parents, and even relatives. One mother expressed her high expectation for her child and said: “You are the only hope in our family. You should climb up the academic ladder and bring honor to our family”. Another teacher stated that “those gifted students were born with talent. They should take EPT to advance further. Regular schooling is not sufficient for them”. Those students showed their confident attitudes towards their academic performance, and some of them considered that other students should work harder to catch up with them. They took ownership of their academic paths and set a clear goal of entering a prestigious university, which was also expected by their teachers, tutors, parents, and relatives. Most of them felt the pressure of living with a label of “gifted”.

The main purpose of EPT was to enable students to be admitted to prestigious top-ranking universities. With the newly multi-phased entrance program (i.e., alternative methods for entering universities), families pushed their children to attend PT to learn some skills and

obtain as many prizes and certificates as possible. In order to prepare the application packet for the interviews of entrance exams, most of the gifted students got a perfect or almost perfect score on the English examinations such as GEPT, TOEIC, TOEFL, GRE (Graduate Record Examinations), or IELTS. All of the English examinations noted above were so challenging that regular schooling would not help much because they require a set of skills beyond what students learn in the formal curriculum. However, interviewees indicated that with the help of EPT, they were one step closer to their dream university.

6.4.4.2 Tutorial Classes (*Fudaoke*) in Schooling

The special tutorial classes called *Fudaoke* (the eighth period class after school) also played an important role in tracking students in mainstream education. According to MOE, parental consent was required for students to participate in *Fudaoke*, and school teachers were not allowed to teach new content ahead of the official school schedule in these classes (MOE Taiwan, 2008). The curriculum in *Fudaoke* focused on reviewing what students had learned during school hours, and it was fee-charging. Almost 80% of the students in the study received *Fudaoke* after school, while some never took it. All *Fudaoke* tutors were the students' original schoolteachers, and the student-teacher relationship was changed by *Fudaoke* in the schools. All the schools that I visited operated such practice in collaboration with school teachers and with the support from their school principals. Students who chose *Fudaoke* received more attention than those who did not. Some students indicated that their relationship with the teachers became closer, while those who did not showed dissatisfaction with their teachers.

Fudaoke was usually arranged by teachers and principals, and they were heavily

involved in it. Students were tracked through their academic performance in Fudaoke. One teacher said that “we placed students of the same ability level together in Fudaoke, which made teaching easier.” Another student further stated that “most of the low-achievers in my class were not interested in Fudaoke because it was fee-charging and grouping was based on their ability; I was once assigned to another class with students of similar ability.” While schools de-tracked students during school hours, tracking was widely practiced in the placement of students qualified for Fudaoke in schools.

As noted above, tracking in EPT labelled the students based on their academic ability and SES. Thereafter, high-achievers obtained the best resources and their admission to prestigious top-ranking universities was facilitated. Those PT institutions designed the tailor-made curriculum to secure high-achievers to uphold their status within the school hierarchy. The practice of tracking in EPT and in schooling through Fudaoke also intensified the competition among students and reinforced the examination culture in mainstream education. Thus, the transmission of PT values has forced schools to go through the process of tracking/segregation, de-tracking/desegregation, and re-tracking/resegregation.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter summarizes and concludes the findings on the effects of EPT on students' academic performance, stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections toward EPT, and stakeholders' (parents', schoolteachers', and tutors') practices in EPT in Taiwan. Suggestions for how to alleviate EPT problems, as well as the implications for theoretical debate, practices, and future research are provided.

As mentioned in Chapter One, this dissertation explored the effects of EPT on students' academic performance of secondary high school students in Taiwan by investigating how stakeholders perceived EPT and how EPT was practiced in the context of Taiwan. This study was designed to answer the following research questions: Did private tutoring have an effect on students' academic performance in English, a subject that most senior high school students took and that was highly valued in Taiwan, and if so, how large was its effect? What were stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections toward English private tutoring in secondary education? How did stakeholders (parents, schoolteachers, and tutors) practice English private tutoring to improve students' academic gains?

Through quantitative research, the dissertation found that differences in the effect of EPT on students' academic performance between the tutored and non-tutored groups decreased in magnitude after considering the students' individual characteristics, family SES, school type, and self-study practices. Furthermore, the findings from qualitative research on the stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections toward EPT revealed that the participants had complex, inconsistent, and contradictory attitudes toward EPT. Although the interviews revealed the students' needs that could be met by the PT institutions, the students' reflections on EPT indicated that students were negatively affected in terms of

language learning, educational experience, pressure, and values. Third, the significant effect of PI in the activities related to EPT on students' academic achievement may raise a concern for the potential problem of educational inequality. Finally, students' tendency for undertaking PT to maintain or improve their academic gains may exacerbate social inequalities through the stakeholders' (parents', schoolteachers', and tutors') practices in EPT.

7.1 Summary of the Findings

In this section, I report a summary of the findings on the analysis of effects of EPT, stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections toward EPT, and stakeholders' (parents', schoolteachers', and tutors') practices in EPT in Taiwan. As mentioned earlier, the findings correspond to the research questions developed for this dissertation.

7.1.1 Effects of English Private Tutoring on Students' Academic Performance

For the first research question, I investigated the effectiveness of EPT for improving academic performance among Taiwanese learners while taking into account the students' individual characteristics, family SES, school type, and amount of time invested in self-study activities. First, EPT had a clear, positive effect on students' GSAET performance. The subjects who participated in EPT exhibited a significant improvement in their GSAET scores, receiving higher scores overall than those who did not participate in EPT. The results of the *t*-tests show that students in the tutored group exhibited significant score gains between the pretest and posttest. Second, students from high-income families had better scores than those from low-income families. Students' scores were associated with family income, parental

education and father's employment status. Third, private school students made more significant academic gains than public school students. These findings may indicate that well-educated parents are more willing to invest in their children's education to improve their children's academic performance, and these findings echo certain aspects of previous studies (Liu, 2006; Liu, 2012). It should be emphasized, however, that the effect size of PT became minimal when the self-study variables were added to the research model. The results show that time spent on self-study activities had a significant and positive effect on students' academic performance. Furthermore, this finding implies that the process of how PT affects students' academic performance may be complicated, and self-study factors may serve as a mechanism to reduce the time spent in PT. These results shed new light on the role of self-study activities, which can reduce the inequality between advantaged and disadvantaged students in terms of academic achievement and the time and family resources invested in PT.

7.1.2 Stakeholders' Perceptions and Reflections toward English Private Tutoring

The second research question focused on Taiwanese learners' language learning experiences based on their investment in EPT and in self-study activities. The findings showed that the participants had complex, inconsistent, and contradictory attitudes toward the investment of learning examination skills in EPT in the hopes of securing a place in higher education, pursuing a better job, and escaping poverty.

The findings of this study indicate that both affluent families and low income families used EPT in Taiwan, where high-stakes examinations prevail and academic results play an important role in students' future. PT may exacerbate educational inequalities because higher SES families tend to spend more on PT services (Bray & Kwo, 2013; Guo, Huang, &

Zhang, 2019; Zhang & Xie, 2016), although lower SES families may use PT to reduce the inequalities in the educational system and society. Through the practice of EPT, low-achievers from low-ranking schools whose teachers may teach them slowly based on their abilities can receive tailor-made learning from tutors to catch up. They can also expand their social connections with students from elite schools and become involved in a community where they can study, compete, and be motivated. Students' self-esteem may also be promoted through EPT because they can hide their identity that is either individually or socially constructed as a disadvantaged or underperforming learner. Students desire an "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006) where they are provided with "possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future" (Norton, 2013, p.3), such as higher SES and self-esteem.

It should be noted, however, that not all students from financially deprived families, such as T9, can capitalize on their social resources to borrow money to pay the tutoring fees. To this end, self-study activities may serve as an important method in which students can engage. In this research, students exhibited a number of behaviors to build a learning environment that catered their needs and preferences. They took steps to modify the learning process and deal with their emotions toward language learning. Successful self-study learners carefully constructed their learning goals and even scheduled artificial deadlines ahead of time. When learners had negative feelings toward studying, they employed alterable techniques to alleviate these affective reactions. In addition, they could step away from the negative emotions, thoughts, and feelings and readjust their emotions and motivation.

7.1.3 Stakeholders' Practices in English Private Tutoring

The last research question aims at an empirical investigation of the stakeholders'

(parents', schoolteachers', and tutors') practices in EPT. From the perspectives of parents' practices, the overall result showed a substantial extent of PI in PT— activities related to EPT. Taiwanese parents extensively collect information from private tutors about children's academic performance. On the contrary, the level of PI in contact school is considerably low. One possible reason for this phenomenon is the transparency of the standardized Taiwanese education may limit the space for parents to intervene in the children's mainstream schooling. However, regardless of the high degrees of standardization in education, parents try to find an alternative to engage in children's formal learning. That is, parents purchase PT services and arrange tailor-made courses to meet the specific needs of their children in the hope of helping them attain better examination results and securing them a seat at top universities.

The positive relationship between students' academic performance and PI may echo certain aspects of previous studies (Chen et al., 2016; Kung & Lee, 2016; Jhang, 2019). The participants whose parents contacted the school less and collected more information about their children's academic progress from tutors exhibited significant score gains on GSAET. Controlling the PT variables, however, does not completely remove the effects of PI on students' academic performance. Contacting school and activities related to EPT are significantly associated with GSAET performance. A higher level of PI among higher SES parents does yield more gains in students' academic performance, which may raise a concern for potential educational inequality. It should be emphasized, however, after taking students' individual characteristics, family SES, tutoring variable, self-study practices, and PI variables into account, the results show that time spent on self-study activities, contacting school, and activities related to EPT had a significant effect on students' academic performance. Furthermore, this finding implies that the process of how PT affects students' academic performance may be complicated, and self-study factors may serve as a mechanism to reduce

the time spent in PT. These results shed new light on the role of self-study activities, which can reduce the inequality between advantaged and disadvantaged students in terms of academic achievement and the time and family resources invested in PT.

Owing to growing social concerns about the inequality in PT services, the Taiwanese government launched several educational reforms to prohibit the expansion of PT such as a multi-phased entrance program (Liu, 2012). Despite the educational reforms embarked upon by the government, however, students and parents' needs are not fully satisfied, but instead, students undertake PT much earlier in order to learn exam skills. Furthermore, this multi-phased entrance program requires seven major fields of study in which the training teachers have received is insufficient. This inadequacy of mainstream education has created a phenomenon where Taiwanese students and parents heavily rely on PT. This, to some extent, also challenges the authority of formal education because both parents and students regard PT as an organized and effective strategy for students to achieve higher achievement in the school system. The neoliberalism practiced through PT substantially restricts the control and intervention from the government. Nonetheless, given the growing popularity of PT, the policymakers and educators should devise a more well-rounded approach to effectively inhibit the prevalence of PT and further reduce the inequality in education.

This work concentrates on the quantitative analysis of PI in students' academic performance. It may be beneficial for future research to explore the extent of activities parents tend to participate in to improve their children's academic outcome through qualitative research. The frequency, diversity, comparison, and choice of parents' participation in PT activities can be taken into account when investigating the effects of PT on students' academic performance. This may provide a fuller and unbiased picture of the impact of PI in students' academic performance.

By focusing on activities related to EPT as a dimension of PI in the context of Taiwanese education, this dissertation may contribute some implications to this educational system. The expansion of shadow education in much of the world reflects parents' interests in securing children's academic outcomes, which has become the most important determinant of social mobility. Therefore, this phenomenon suggests that activities related to EPT have become an important method widely used by parents to participate in children's educational progress and improve their cognitive outcomes. While this research is limited to the context of Taiwan, future research can extend its scale to international contexts such as Japan, South Korea, or China sharing the similar standardization in formal education to investigate whether self-study has a more significant and positive effect on English performance than undertaking PT in other settings.

While the quantitative research focuses on PI, the qualitative analysis concentrates on the parents' practices in making decisions for their children to undertake EPT. The findings showed that some parents constantly changed their needs, sought more or less tutoring, and purchased, retained, replaced, or terminated the PT services based on their demands. During this process, the decisions that parents made regarding EPT were not one-off events but rather recursive processes. Parents took a number of factors into consideration, such as timing for tutoring, courses, instructions, tutors, types, schedules for lessons, and classmates. Although the Taiwanese government has embarked on several educational reforms to reduce the prevalence of PT among students, Taiwan's cultural and institutional dimensions change parents' mindsets about seeking the help of PT like many other parts of the world. Through unpacking parents' practices in EPT, it improves the understanding of the expansion of PT and recursive cycles of the phenomenon.

The EPT practices in mainstream education and PT institutions have counteracted

school equalization policies through the uneven access of EPT and through sorting mechanisms. Tracking through placement examinations in schooling has long been prohibited by MOE. Because of children's unknown academic tracks, advantaged families and elite school students have turned to using PT as a strategy for securing their academic future. The PT institutions then filled in the gap by operating their own tracking systems and placement examinations to recruit students, and therefore the students labelled as high-achieving were favored in the recruitment exercise.

Although the equality policies launched in Taiwan are similar to those in other contexts, higher SES families and high-achievers were more likely to undertake PT to retain advantages in the education system (Bray, 2009). Higher achievers in elite schools maintained or strengthened their academic positions by receiving PT and by encouraging them to take PT. Tutoring institutions further intensified the competition among students by ability tracking. The tutoring labels may change the relationships among classmates, teachers, and families, which pressures disadvantaged low-achievers but promoted high-achievers' academic gains. Those forces created "multiplying inequalities" proposed by Oakes (1990) that students without tutoring were labelled and the stereotype of them as low-achievers was reinforced in schools.

7.2 Reconsidering English Private Tutoring

The deconstruction of the formation of the effects of EPT through examining students' academic performance, stakeholders' (students' and parents') perceptions and reflections, and stakeholders' (parents', schoolteachers', and tutors') practices in EPT was to elucidate that EPT no longer merely meant that parents sent their children in PT institutions to

study for the examinations. Rather, the effects behind students' academic performance, stakeholders' perceptions and reflections on EPT, and the practices in EPT were shaped by multidimensional aspects. The discussion sections in previous chapters illuminated that EPT may cause inequality in educational opportunities, opposing attitudes to language learning, and inequality practices through stakeholders, which mismatch the social and educational development in Taiwan. Meanwhile, the findings of this dissertation also raise several new aspects on EPT.

7.2.1 English Private Tutoring: As a Result of Inequality in Educational Opportunities

This dissertation provides insights for policymakers, parents, and educators not only in Asian contexts with deep-rooted, high-stakes examinations but also in Western settings, which are gradually becoming more examination-oriented (Bray, 2009). As Asian schools have placed greater emphasis on quantifiable, measurable, and standardized examinations in language education, students have begun to learn for examinations, leading to the expansion of EPT. If national policy aims to reduce inequality in educational opportunities, then English language education may need to be addressed to reduce the learning gap between mainstream education and EPT. To improve academic achievement, students should spend more time on self-study activities instead of relying on investments in private institutions because increasing self-study time is one mechanism for enhancing academic performance. Panel survey data collected by the Taiwan Youth Project on participation in PT among grade 12 students showed that over 70% of students participated in EPT (Chang, 2012). This may indicate that English curriculum designers have been unsuccessful in their goal to some extent. It is necessary to re-examine and adjust the mainstream system in order to develop

effective mechanisms for English language learning, English teaching skills, and the design of English examinations that focus mainly on reading and writing.

7.2.2 English Private Tutoring: Oppositional Attitudes to Language Learning

However, notably, in this dissertation, the tutored participants accepted their passive roles because their needs could be met. This finding reveals the students' ambiguous attitudes toward EPT and the contradictory nature of EPT. First, students were encouraged to perceive their school teachers as having outdated knowledge of entrance exams and inadequate information about the examination criteria. One student refused to do homework assigned by the school teacher, as it was not the approach suggested by the tutor, and when the content was covered by the tutor, the student began to study other subjects in class. From a positive perspective, PT did meet some students' needs that were not met by the schools. In addition, tutors never adopted negative approaches. They assisted students with examination skills, provided them with supplementary materials, and increased some students' confidence.

Second, most of the tutored students interviewed in the study admitted that the examination-skills they learned in EPT were only beneficial for the GSAET, which they did not like. It is common for students to invest time and effort in learning examination-skills for high-stakes examinations. In a society in which academic results are encouraged for upward social mobility, English learning tends to emphasize performance on high-stakes examinations rather than learners' English proficiency for authentic communication (Yung, 2015). This may explain why T3 and T9, who were both from low-SES families, used EPT to climb the academic ladder. Therefore, they invested in the EPT community where they imagined they could form social relationships and were perceived to be financially, cognitively, socially, and emotionally equal to their tutoring classmates (Anderson, 2006).

Within this imagined community, they could share the same goal of obtaining good academic results, hide their identities as being from low-SES status families and low-ranking schools, and study with classmates from elite schools because all the tutored students received the same teaching content and learning materials and were treated equally regardless of their SES and schools.

7.2.3 English Private Tutoring: Inequality Practices through Stakeholders

The significant effect of PI in PT activities on the academic performance of students, the substantial association of the practices of stakeholders (parents, schoolteachers, and tutors) in EPT with SES of parents raises concerns about the potential for educational inequality. The higher SES parents with more economic and human capital tended to provide PT for their children than lower SES parents. Therefore, these factors influence their children's academic outcome. The relationship between both PT and PI in PT activities reinforces educational inequality. Moreover, intensified competitions in schools and in societies change parents' mindsets about pursuing PT through a series of recursive decision-making processes. Parents' strategic adjustment of PT based on children's needs over time can significantly promote the academic growth of their children. Therefore, with widespread PT, children's education increasingly relies on their parents' resources and desires instead of their own ability and efforts, which is consistent with the discourse of parentocracy (Brown, 1990; DeWiele & Edgerton, 2016; Tan, 2017). Meanwhile, EPT practices had a backwash effect on mainstream education. High-achievers with tracking in EPT were less involved in schooling because they considered the learning in school unchallenging. The tutors were trusted and respected by some parents and students. The Fudaoke teachers were students' existing school teachers, and tutoring practice in schools changed teachers and students'

relationships. Low-achievers, particularly those without EPT, were labeled and regarded as unsuccessful ones in the academic track. High-achievers had more pressure to achieve academic successes, and were forced to receive more tutoring.

7.2.4 Self-study as a Mediator between English Private Tutoring and Students' Academic Performance

The most salient finding regarding the relationship between EPT and students' academic performance is the mediating role of self-study. Self-study appeared to be a mechanism to reduce students' and parents' investment in time and effort through EPT. The results show that time spent on self-study activities, including doing English homework and previewing and reviewing English learning materials, may have positive and statistically significant effects on students' academic performance. To deeply understand the reason why self-study activities influence students' academic gains, it is necessary to understand the factors regarding how students engage in self-study activities. Although the quantitative findings reveal that participants who spent more time on self-study activities tended to achieve higher scores, they acted more metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally during the self-study process than the self-study activities I analyzed in the research model. From the participants interviewed, in the self-study process, learners trained themselves to be highly self-disciplined and able to take responsibility for their own learning. They set learning goals regarding where to study, what time to study, and how to study. Through goal setting, learners could monitor their learning progress and further motivate themselves. They created an acquisition-rich environment for language learning and utilized other beneficial resources, such as print and digital media, to practice using authentic English during self-learning.

However, learners can experience negative feelings such as anxiety and frustration

during self-study. They developed strategies to deal with their negative feelings, such as avoidance of situations or positive self-talk. If learners could not find a way to alleviate negative feelings during the self-study process, such feelings might cause some negative effects on the effort and time that learners invest. Through passive temporary avoidance of situations or positive self-talk, they could maintain their motivation after a short break and encourage themselves in the process of self-learning.

Self-disciplined learners tended to manage their self-learning activities with beliefs based on their capabilities. They could take responsibility for their own learning and evaluate their behaviors to monitor whether they had met the standards or not. However, not all participants who engaged in self-study activities could become the self-disciplined learners they expected to be and could concentrate on the learning materials in a self-study environment. Some learners might experience isolation when they become involved in self-study activities. Therefore, these learners found an alternative method to modify their study approach through the context of the EPT community, which they used to motivate themselves, escape the sense of isolation, and receive encouragement from EPT peers. Positive relationships among tutors, learners, and peers may help learners who feel lonely during self-study activities to become motivated, while negative relationships can damage the learning process.

The learners' self-study experiences were shaped by setting goals, creating their learning acquisition environment, dealing with negative feelings, having self-discipline, and receiving tutors' and tutoring classmates' help and support in the EPT community context. Highly self-disciplined learners were conscious when engaging in self-study activities, creating rich language learning environments and responding positively to negative feelings. The learners constructed their own learning experiences through interactions with the learning

conditions based on the affordance of having their needs met. When finding that the actual learning conditions could not satisfy their needs, they would resort to creating an alternative learning environment through the help of EPT. There were several factors explaining the students' academic gains. If we do not take into account the time, effort, motivation, decision making, environment, or EPT community of self-study, we may be unable to precisely interpret students' academic achievement outcomes.

7.3 Implications for Future Research

This dissertation focused on quantitative analysis of the effectiveness of EPT in enhancing academic performance and with PI. Future quantitative research could explore topics such as school characteristics (e.g., high or low SES) and how they are related to the intensity, quantity, and quality of EPT. Meanwhile, although activities related to EPT in PI showed significant effects on students' academic performance, my measure of the extent to which parents collect EPT information may not completely cover the extensiveness and comprehensiveness of parents' EPT activities. It would be beneficial to increase the sample size to include a wider range of schools, tutoring institutions, and parental activities. Although the current study contributes some useful insights into language education, the complex intertwining relationship among mainstream, PT, and PI should be investigated in an international context. This dissertation may raise stakeholders' awareness that the contextual realities of high-stakes examinations and an overemphasis on academic achievement should not replace the aim of education in students' language learning process.

Given the popularity of EPT, it is highly unlikely that students or parents will be dissuaded from the idea of attending PT in Taiwan. Noting the existence of both positive and negative dimensions of EPT, this study may provide insight for policymakers and educators

in deeply rooted high-stakes examination-oriented Asian contexts as well as Western settings, which increasingly emphasize assessment. The expansion of shadow education in much of the world has raised concerns among policymakers and educators regarding how to regulate PT activities, as they may negatively influence the equity and quality of mainstream education (Bray, 2009; Bray, 2011). The first thing that policymakers need to do is “to recognize the existence, nature, and implications of shadow education” (Bray & Lykins, 2012, p.71) and consider the methods that could reduce students’ reliance on PT and de-emphasize the focus on learning for assessment, which has led to the popularity of EPT. The profit-making purpose of shadow education, where learning has been dominated by a utilitarian approach, may have subverted language learning in mainstream education. As the students viewed some dimensions of EPT positively, teachers, policymakers, and other stakeholders should develop innovative ideas to meet students’ needs as outlined in this dissertation: clarify the GSAET criteria, consider the impact of EPT on students’ language learning, and take the existence of EPT into consideration for curriculum planning and development. Although the current research contributes some useful insights into language education, the complex intertwining relationship between mainstream, PT, and PI should be investigated in an international context. This dissertation may raise stakeholders’ awareness that the contextual realities of high-stakes examinations and an overemphasis on academic achievement should not replace the aim of education in students’ language learning process.

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