

**A Comparative Survey Based Study on Finnish Comprehensive School and Upper Secondary School Students' Motivation and Self-Efficacy in English Classroom**

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## List of abbreviations

L2 Foreign language

SD Standard deviation

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Motivation and self-efficacy have been widely studied during the past decades. Dörnyei (2005) created a new motivational framework, the L2 motivational self-system. Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy as a part of his social cognitive theory has been widely utilized for research purposes. To assess English as L2 learners' motivation and self-efficacy, the above-mentioned frameworks were utilized. In this master's thesis, 39 comprehensive and 41 general upper secondary school students' L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy were studied and compared. Furthermore, because of the strong connection between motivation and self-efficacy, the aim of the present study was to find out whether there was a correlation between the students' perceived motivation and self-efficacy.

The data were collected by using a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire for both assessing the students' motivation and self-efficacy. Taguchi, Magid and Papi's (2009) questionnaire was used as a basis for the parts concerning motivation whereas the self-efficacy part of the questionnaire was carefully designed by the author. The questionnaire consisted of 35 items, the first 10 items were related to ought-to self-motivation, the next 10 items were concerned ideal self-motivation and the remaining 15 items were related to self-efficacy.

Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, which were computed using version 25 of SPSS, were utilized to analyze the data. The results of the study indicated that both groups were motivated more by their ideal self-views than their ought-to self-views. The comprehensive school group had a higher score in ideal L2 self and self-efficacy but there were no significant differences between the variables of the two groups. The results of the correlation analyses indicated that there were no statistically significant correlations detected between ought-to L2 self and self-efficacy, whereas both groups' ideal L2 self and had a statistically significant correlation with all subcategories of self-efficacy. The implications of the present study suggest that teachers should promote reflective learning in order to enhance the learners' ideal L2 selves so they would be more invested in their own learning process.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, the L2 motivational self-system, self-efficacy

# 1 Introduction

There is much evidence on students' active participation in class being an important factor that facilitates their learning. However, not all students are willing to participate in class, for example, in pair or group discussions on foreign language classes. Moreover, based on the author's own experience while teaching, not all students are willing to answer questions proposed by teachers even if the students know that being active in class has a positive effect on their grades as well as learning. In the research field of foreign language learning in Finnish context, it has remained fairly untouched, whether participation in class, or the lack of it, is connected to the representations of self in the field of foreign language motivation.

Psychological factors affecting learning a foreign language, namely motivation, attitudes and language anxiety and self-efficacy have been widely studied in the area of language learning (see e.g. Dörnyei 2015). A great number of studies have been conducted on how different levels of integrative and instrumental motivation affect the learning of a foreign language (see e.g. Gardner and MacIntyre 1991; Hernández 2006; Yu and Downing 2012). In the Finnish context, motivation and self-efficacy have often been studied in relation to L2, meaning foreign language, proficiency (see i.e. Leppänen 2018 and Laitinen 2018). However, in the context of Finnish comprehensive and upper secondary schools, there are few studies on the students' L2 motivation in relation to self-efficacy. This is why an empirical study is implemented to assess the relationship between motivation and self-efficacy of Finnish learners of English as a foreign language. Because many comparative studies focus on the effectiveness of different types of motivation in learning, in the present study, I focus on comparing the relationship between motivation and self-efficacy on students of different ages. Promoting self-efficacy has even been brought up on the Finnish national curriculum: "foreign language teaching should promote the learners' confidence and trust in their capabilities to learn languages and to use them bravely" (Finnish National Agency of Education, 2014, 398).

Previous research in the same field has concentrated mostly on either the L2 motivational self-system or self-efficacy but the present study utilizes both theories. Dörnyei (2005) has created a rather recent motivational theory: the theory of L2 motivational self-system: his works are the basis of the motivation theory presented in this study. With the L2 motivational self-system, the theory of self-efficacy is applied to

assess students' participation in class. Motivation and self-efficacy were chosen as the central framework of the present study because they are so closely connected: according to Bandura (1997, 130), while self-efficacy is related to the person's confidence to participate in tasks, people even with high efficacy might not bother to use their potential if they are not motivated to do so. Self-efficacy refers to a person's beliefs about whether he is capable to succeed in a particular task and was first introduced by Bandura (1997, 11).

The purpose of the present study is to examine, compare and discuss 7-8<sup>th</sup>-grade basic education and 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> year general upper secondary school students' L2 motivational self-system concerning learning English language and their self-efficacy in different classroom activities in a quantitative manner. The participants of the study are basic education and general upper secondary school students from a school situated in South-Western Finland. This study aims to find out whether there is any difference in motivation and self-efficacy between students studying on basic education level and general upper secondary school level. Additionally, I will examine how the students' motivation correlates with their feeling of self-efficacy.

The research questions are:

- 1) How do motivation and self-efficacy differ between comprehensive and general upper secondary school students?
- 2) How do motivation and self-efficacy correlate within the groups from comprehensive and general upper secondary school?

The present study has three hypotheses, one about motivation and the other concerning self-efficacy. The first hypothesis is that the older the students get, the stronger their ought-to L2 motivational self is; the hypothesis is based on the assumption that the general upper secondary school students feel more pressure from authorities (i.e. parents and teachers) as they are preparing for their matriculation examination. The second hypothesis is that the older the students get, the lower their self-efficacy is, because of the author's assumption that the more knowledge the students have, the more they might become aware of their shortcomings in their language skills. The third hypothesis, related to the second research question, is that the learners' ideal self has a stronger relationship with their self-efficacy than ought-to self.

In the following section, the theoretical background regarding motivation, the L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy are presented. Then, the survey used to gather the data as well as the students participating in the study will be introduced. The

material and methods section will be followed by a results section that has been divided into three parts based on the study groups. Lastly, a brief discussion of the numeric results and possible future research ideas are presented.



## **2 Motivation and the L2 motivational self-system**

In this part of the study, the theoretical framework for motivation is presented. First, in section 2.1, the fundamental motivational theory of integrative and instrumental motivation and its limitations are discussed. Then, an overview of the basis for the motivational L2 self-system, self-discrepancy theory is given. Lastly, motivational L2 self-system is presented and its limitations as a newly found theory are acknowledged.

### **2.1 Motivation**

In my experience, motivation is a constantly changing state of mind that helps a person to engage in something he wants to accomplish, for example, learn a second language. Motivation differs from time to time within a person and it can differ vastly when comparing the motivation of two different individuals. Motivation is an affective factor in language learning among, for example, attitudes and empathy (see for example Schumann, 1975, 209). The way I see it, motivation is a key factor in learning: in addition to being exposed to foreign language input, language learners should be motivated in order to be more successful in their learning process. This view is supported by Piniel and Csizér (2013, 524) as they state that in the research field of language learning, motivation is considered to be among the most important factors that have an effect on how successful the foreign language learning is. Gardner (1985, 11) states that there is much evidence on motivation being a parallel determinant of success in second language learning with aptitude. Motivation is associated with learners' willingness to keep on learning even if the content being learned becomes more difficult. Fazel and Razmjoo (2007, 50) phrase motivation in a learning environment well: "motivation is in actual fact the incentive or driving force behind the learner, which stimulates one to embark on and go ahead with the learning process". Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017, 330) claim that motivation is both intentional and directional: "it is intentional since it refers to the persistence of actions and personal choices. It is also directional which implies that there is a driving force to attain a specific goal". The claim mentioned above could be interpreted as such that being motivated in the English classroom learning context could lead to the students being more active in class. This view is supported by the findings of the quantitative study ( $N=210$ ) Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) conducted. In the study of English as a foreign language learners' motivation and self-efficacy, Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) sought to find out if there was a

correlation between self-efficacy and subfactors of L2 motivational self-system, namely ideal and ought-to L2 selves. They (ibid.) found evidence that suggests that all aspects of L2 motivational self-system were significantly related to L2 self-efficacy.

The fundamental theory of motivation in second language learning was first introduced by social-psychological researchers Gardner and his associates (see e.g. Gardner and Lambert 1972). Their most important finding was that integrativeness, which, according to Gardner (1985, 11), is about wanting to identify with the target language group, plays a central role in L2 motivation. Since then, integrative and instrumental motivation have been used in numerous studies concerning second/foreign language learning. As Robert Gardner's motivational theory has been around for many decades, Dörnyei has later aimed to broaden the idea of the key concept in motivation, integrativeness. Dörnyei (2005, 94) criticizes Gardner's idea of integrativeness for possibly being too context-dependent: even if the theory is valid in the context of the multicultural city of Montreal, Canada, where the L2 learners can have contact with L2 speakers, the theory may lack relevance and validity in contexts where there is no real contact available with L2 speakers. He further argues that the concept of integrativeness in second language learning, especially with the English language, has more to do with the idea of wanting to become 'a world citizen' rather than wanting to identify with a specific L2 group (Dörnyei, 2005, 97). I also believe that in the context of Finnish basic education and upper secondary education, Dörnyei's criticism of Gardner's model of integrative motivation is relevant. Finnish language is known by very few people outside Finland and almost all communication with people from foreign countries has to be done with another language than Finnish. Therefore, in my opinion, Finnish learners of English perceive English as a lingua franca that enables language users to communicate with other people across the world. Kormos and Csizér (2008, 330) further elaborate the same phenomenon that the goal of many L2 learners is rather learning to communicate with other non-native speakers than with the native speakers of the L2 and even argue that for a lingua franca like English, the Gardnerian integrativeness has no relevance in today's world.

Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system was chosen as the main motivational theory for the purposes of this study because it offers a more recent and dynamic view to motivation than Gardner's motivation theory. In the theoretical section of their study on motivation and self-efficacy, Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017, 330) argue that: "the L2 motivational self-system represents a major reformation of the previous

motivational thinking and its introduction marks the beginning of a new era in L2 motivation research”. In favor of using the L2 motivational self-system in an educational context, Dörnyei himself (2005, 100) states that “The educational relevance of possible selves has been documented by several studies (e.g., Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002; Oyserman et al., 2004; Yowell, 2002)”. In the following section, Dörnyei’s L2 motivational self-system will be discussed in more detail.

## **2.2 The concept of “self” and the L2 motivational self-system**

Dörnyei’s L2 motivational self-system is based on Higgins’ theory of *self* and *self-discrepancy* (1987). I will begin this section with a brief explanation of the concept of self and then continue to how Dörnyei has combined Higgins’ theory with L2 motivation in his research. The concept of self has three main domains: the actual self, the ideal self and the ought self. Higgins (1987) explains the three main domains as follows: The actual self refers to a mental representation of the actual features one believes to possess, the ideal self, on the other hand, is a representation of the features that one wishes to possess, and the ought self is a representation of features that one believes he ought to possess. The link between Higgins’ theory of self and motivation lies in reducing the discrepancy between the actual and possible selves or between ideal and ought selves: in this paragraph, I will discuss self-discrepancies related to Higgins’ theory of self. A vast discrepancy in a person’s ideal and ought to self might bring an individual discomfort. Let us look at an example: a student might experience conflict if he was expected to, for instance, be successful in languages (the ought self) when he does not have the interest to study them but he would rather be successful in subjects related to science (the ideal self). The feeling of discomfort in situations where such discrepancies occur could motivate a person to try to minimize them. In other words, motivation could arise from a person’s wish or need to minimize or reduce the discrepancy between his actual self (what one is at the present) and ideal self (what one wishes to become in the future). Furthermore, Csizér and Kormos (2009, 99) explain that a person might as well be motivated to narrow the gap between one’s actual self and ought-to self (what one thinks other people would wish one should become).

Dörnyei’s (2005, 29) motivation theory consists of three dimensions:

1) *Ideal L2 self* concerns what a person would prefer to become; if the desired characteristic of the future self is to speak well an L2, the ideal L2 self functions as a

motivator to reduce the discrepancy between the actual and ideal selves. This dimension corresponds to the traditional concept of integrative motivation.

2) *Ought-to L2 self*, which refers to attributes that one thinks a person ought to possess in order to avoid potential unfavorable results. The ought-to L2 self can be a motivator if a person, for example, feels the need to meet the expectations of significant others and thus reduce the discrepancy of one's actual and ought-to selves. This dimension of the L2 motivational self-system could be regarded as instrumental or more extrinsic than the ideal L2 self.

3) *L2 Learning experience* refers to situational motives that are in relation to the immediate learning environment and experience. In the present study, self-efficacy is used to measure students' willingness to participate in class (that accounts for learning experience).

Dörnyei's ideal and ought-to L2 selves are similar to Higgins' (1987) conceptualization of the ideal self and ought to self, whereas the third component represents the possible effect the learning environment has on the L2 learner. According to the L2 motivational self-system, motivation in learning the L2 then lies in reducing the discrepancy of the actual self and the ideal or ought-to self. Dörnyei (2005, 98) explains that utilizing the terms 'possible' and 'ideal selves' that are used in the field of personality psychology, are central in his new conceptualization of integrative motivation. In his book, Dörnyei (2005, 98) discusses that the interest in the progressive, changing nature of the self-system has been on the rise, which has led to personality and motivational psychology gaining common research ground. The way I see it, utilizing the concept of self can give fruitful information in motivational research as future prospects often have an effect on how motivated, for example, the learner is. Markus and Ruvolo (1992, 100–5) studied how positive and negative self-beliefs affected the persistence of the participants in a task. 59 undergraduate students from the University of Michigan took part in their study (ibid.) They were first given an imagery condition, either being successful in the future or a condition of failure (ibid.). From that perspective, the research participants wrote two paragraphs of description about their imagery conditions and then went on to completing a persistency task (ibid.) The results indicated that the research participants with positive imagery were significantly more persistent in comparison to the group who were instructed to describe a negative future state (ibid.).

### 2.3 Possible selves: ideal and ought to -selves

Possible selves are a reflection of one's self in future states that are affected by not only goals but fears as well (Dörnyei 2005, 99). Dörnyei (2005, 100) further elaborates that the possible selves do not only include the learner's positive future prospects but also negative as they "give form, meaning, structure and direction to one's hopes and threats, thereby inciting and directing purposeful behavior". He also states that previous research has revealed that having a feared possible self as an offset for the positive possible self makes the impact of self even stronger (*ibid.*). In other words, for example, if a student's goal is a certain grade on a school subject, he is motivated to work to achieve that grade. However, the fear of not reaching that particular grade can enhance the motivation of the student and make him put even more effort into studying. In terms of the relationship between possible selves and a person's actual thoughts and feelings, in their study 1989 Markus and Ruvolo explain that if the focus is on the possible selves, the researcher is in fact very close to individual's actual thoughts and feelings that they experience in the process of motivated behavior (Markus and Ruvolo in Dörnyei 2005, 99). Then again, judging by what Markus and Ruvolo (*ibid.*) claimed, not being motivated at all might lead to the L2 motivational self not reflecting the actual thoughts and feelings of an individual.

The learner's ideal self can be seen as a personal representation of one's future state; Dörnyei (2005, 99) explains that the possible selves of a learner are mental depictions of their future self that includes the learners' ambition to achieve and what they intend to achieve in the first place. Dörnyei (2005, 101) lists from Higgins' theory of ideal-self that: "the ideal-self guides have a promotion focus, concerned with hopes, aspirations, advancements, growth and accomplishments". When looking at the ideal self from the perspective of integrativeness, in other words, attitudes towards the L2 community, Dörnyei (2005, 102) explains that if, for example, the ideal future state is to master an L2, the person has an integrative disposition. He (*ibid.*) continues to elaborate that the more positive the learner's attitudes towards the L2 community are, the more appealing the idealized L2 self becomes. Moreover, Dörnyei (2005, 103) notes that the learner's ideal self can also be influenced by instrumental motives, which can be seen as: "concrete benefits that language proficiency might bring out" (Dörnyei and Ryan 2015, 76). Those instrumental motives can be related to for example having better career opportunities if a learner reaches his ideal self of being a proficient L2 speaker. Ushioda (2012, 65) calls those instrumental motives that influence the learner's ideal L2 self: "internalized forms of instrumental motivation" as those idealized future states can relate

among personal contexts to professional contexts as well. In their quantitative study of Pakistani undergraduate students (N=975), Muhammad, Lamb and Chambers (2013, 239) came to the conclusion that a strong ideal L2 self can be developed through intended learning efforts. This could further imply that the learner's ideal self and self-efficacy are linked together. In his quantitative study (N=1,011), Papi (2010, 473–47) came to a similar conclusion, as he claimed that the ideal L2 self has a positive effect on the L2 learner's learning experience and intended effort. "I could imagine myself using English language at work in the future" is an example of the statements in the present study's survey that measure the ideal motivational self.

Dörnyei (2005, 105–6) describes the ought-to L2 self well: "ought-to L2 self referring to the attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e., various duties, obligations, or responsibilities in order to ... avoid possible negative outcomes". Dörnyei and Ryan (2015, 87–88) explain that avoiding possible negative outcomes and meeting the expectations of others is crucial for the ought-to self. An example of such duties or obligations in school world could be, for example, studying for a word test: students might feel the need to score high points on a word test and try to memorize the given words as well as possible for example just before taking the test and then they end up forgetting the meanings of different words. Therefore, these more external motives could more possibly lead to short-term benefits rather than facilitating learning in the long run. This view is supported by Dörnyei (2005, 103), who claims that external motives in L2 learning are less likely to generate long-lasting effects in motivation and that the sustained commitment that the successful mastery of an L2 requires might not be reached with solely instrumental motives. This dimension is concerned with instrumental motives in contrast with the more integrative ideal self. In his study, Papi (2010, 474) concludes that unlike ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self did not have much effect on the learners' learning experience and intended effort. "I study English because my parents think it is important" is one example of the statements concerning ought to motivational self.

The L2 motivational self-system is not yet a complete theory taking into account that it is a rather new motivational theory in the field of foreign language learning. Dörnyei (2005, 101) himself states that: "Although I believe that the concept of ideal self may be useful when conceptualizing academic motivation, we should note that the ideal self theory is far from complete". Lamb (2017, 318) criticizes Dörnyei's theory based on its focus on future aspects rather than concentrating on immediate identities. Even if the theory might need some time for it to be adjusted for full applicability, Dörnyei argues

that the theory of L2 motivational self-system has noteworthy similarities with Gardner's original theoretical model of L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2005, 105). Furthermore, Dörnyei (2005, 100) claims that the application of possible selves in education has been used in several studies as they can act as 'academic self-guides' and especially the ideal self has been found to be notably useful. The applicability of the theory as a whole in assessing motivation in L2 learning has also been proven by various studies in various different EFL contexts (see e.g. Henry 2009; Ryan 2009; Busse 2013).

### 3 Self-efficacy

The preceding sections introduced the theoretical framework of motivation in the present study. This section concentrates on self-efficacy and the role it plays in foreign language learning. As mentioned in the introduction, the theory of self-efficacy was created by Bandura, and his work is the main source of this part of the theoretical section. I will begin by defining self-efficacy and explaining the senses of strong and low self-efficacy. Then, the factors affecting self-efficacy beliefs are introduced and lastly, self-efficacy in the field of second language learning is discussed.

#### 3.1 Defining self-efficacy

As Bandura (1977) introduced a new theoretical framework, *the social cognitive theory*, he also introduced the concept of *self-efficacy*. A person's self-efficacy could be described as a situationally specific mental representation of the individual's capabilities. The basis of the concept of self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1997, 1–2), lies in people shaping their life paths to achieve desired results through controlling the events that affect their lives. Bandura (1997, 2) further explains that in human psychological functioning, personal agency is a crucial element while personal efficacy is a key component in personal agency. Through those personal efficacy beliefs about one's capabilities, people control the events of their own lives as discussed before. The belief a person has about his or her capabilities affects the person's goals and the effort he or she is willing to put into achieving those goals even if difficulties occur (*ibid.*). Bandura (1997, 3) underlines that even though people control the events that affect their lives, not all actions lead to desired or intended results. An example of an action that does not lead to the desired result in relation to the present study: a student willing to answer to a teacher's question when the answer is wrong may result in feelings of doubt or shame in similar future situations. However, in the event of failure, one should not be discouraged but rather keep trying because, in my opinion, making effort is crucial in order to achieve any kind of a goal in the first place. This is why I believe that making an effort especially when having a low sense of efficacy is important since it is the sole way to strengthen one's efficacy.

A person's implications about his performance can vary depending on three dimensions, namely *magnitude*, *generality* and *strength*. A task's *magnitude* refers to the difficulty of the task: low-magnitude tasks are easier to perform in comparison to high-magnitude tasks. In relation to the present study, a low-magnitude task could be, for



example, taking part in a pair discussion in English, whereas a higher magnitude task could be answering to a teacher's question in English. When it comes to generality, Bandura (1997, 43) claims that some skills are more generalizable than others: tasks familiar to the individual are completed with more confidence in one's skills. Strength refers to the individual's level of efficacy towards a certain task (ibid.).

In their empirical review of previous studies, Raoofi, Tan and Chan (2012) studied self-efficacy in a foreign language learning context. Their study intended to answer two research questions, the other of which is closely related to the present study: "What are the factors affecting self-efficacy when learning a foreign language". Raoofi, Tan and Chan (2012) chose 32 research articles published between 2003 and 2012 that were divided into two categories on grounds of whether the articles were about factors affecting self-efficacy or the effects of self-efficacy. Related to the scope of the self-efficacy part of the present study, Raoofi, Tan and Chan (2012, 65–66) concluded that in school context, past performance, teacher efficacy and communication in the classroom play a role in how efficacious the learner feels. The results of the study conducted by Raoofi, Tan and Chan (2012, 63) show that self-efficacy is indeed a strong factor affecting how students perform and succeed in learning a foreign language; out of the 12 studies reviewed, 11 had found a statistically significant relationship between the feeling self-efficacy and actual performance.

An important reminder when talking of self-efficacy is that it does not relate to the actual skills one possesses but rather what the person believes they are capable of in different situations. In their study, Hsieh and Kang (2005) conducted a quantitative study on the self-efficacy of 192 ninth-grade students who study English as a foreign language in Korea. They (Hsieh and Kang 2010, 609) explain that self-efficacy beliefs that affect one's future performance are predictions shaped by one's previous experiences, feedback from peers and significant others as well as one's physical reactions to different situations. Similarly, Bandura (1997, 37) claims that a person's performance in a given situation is dependent on his or her beliefs. Therefore, for example, based on their beliefs about their knowledge, two students with similar knowledge of the foreign language might perform very differently in a language use situation. On broader terms, self-efficacy beliefs also affect a person's well-being through cognitive, motivational, affective and decisional processes (Bandura, 2012, 18). As stated earlier, self-efficacy beliefs can either affect people positively, which helps them pursue their goals, negatively and make them doubt their capability in a certain task or situation

(Bandura, 1997, 37). Next, the features of a person with a strong or low sense of efficacy will be discussed in more detail.

According to Bandura (1995, 6), people with strong self-efficacy trust their capabilities and are more likely to take risks even if they not sure whether they will succeed or not. He continues by stating that people with a strong sense of self-efficacy do not see failures as a shortcoming of their knowledge or skills but rather as a result of insufficient effort (Bandura 1995, 7). In other words, if a person's self-efficacy was seen as a mental picture of themselves, a few lapses in an overall good picture do not ruin it. Shih and Chang (2018, 155) argue that bravery and solution-oriented behavior is characteristic to people with a strong sense of efficacy. In the field of learning, Mills, Pajares and Herron (2007, 418) state that students with a strong sense of efficacy have an intrinsic interest in studying; they are more willing to challenge themselves with demanding tasks, are persistent even when facing obstacles, are able to produce accurate self-evaluations of their performance and have lower anxiety levels than those with a low sense of efficacy. The findings of Mills, Pajares and Herron (2007) are similar to my experience teaching in both comprehensive school and general upper secondary school: students that appear as efficacious are usually the ones that actively participate in classroom activities in contrast with the passive students who appear to have a low sense of efficacy. Those students that I have perceived as having low efficacy and therefore do not want to participate in class have explained that they do not dare to take part because of the lack of their perceived pronunciation skills. All in all, I believe that the students participating in class have the possibility to create "a positive circle" of participation strengthening efficacy and a stronger sense of efficacy in turn can lead to the students feeling more at ease when participating in future activities.

In contrast to people with a strong sense of self-efficacy, Bandura (1995, 6) explains that the actions of people with a low sense of self-efficacy are often controlled by self-doubt and potential failure scenarios. Moreover, inefficacious people tend to see failures as a shortcoming of their knowledge or abilities rather than lack of effort like efficacious people do (Bandura 1995, 7). In my experience, younger students often tell that they do not have the knowledge of abilities when facing obstacles or failures during the progress of completing a task which might be a result of low efficacy or motivation. Bandura (1995, 8–9) also discusses the vulnerabilities of inefficacious people as he claims that they are more sensitive to stress, anxiety and depression. An inefficacious person's success might, therefore, be hindered by his or her negative beliefs. In her thesis, Hsieh

(2005, 9) explains that the feeling of anxiety usually causes increased heart rate and sweating, however, if another individual with the same skills or abilities feels more at ease in the same situation, he could be regarded to be more efficacious. In my experience, it often happens in different classes that students with similar skills and knowledge end up performing very differently, which could be the result of previous experiences affecting their efficacy.

### **3.2 Affecting factors in self-efficacy beliefs**

In this subsection, I am going to list and elaborate on the four factors affecting a person's self-efficacy beliefs: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences through social models, social persuasion and physiological and emotional states (Bandura 1995, 3–5).

The first of the four factors affecting self-efficacy beliefs mentioned above was building a strong (or low) sense of efficacy through mastery experiences: whenever a person succeeds in a task, he gets a mastery experience in that particular context which then helps him to create a strong sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995, 3). While succeeding in a task results in a stronger sense of efficacy, failing can weaken it if the person has not yet established a firm sense of efficacy. However, Bandura (*ibid.*) notes that some unfavorable setbacks in establishing a strong sense of efficacy are necessary for one to realize that achievements require effort. To sum up, the more a person succeeds in a particular task, the more he believes in his abilities to succeed in similar tasks in the future while the same applies to failure; even if failures are not desired, they are fruitful for building one's persistence in achieving goals even if some setbacks are faced.

Besides mastery experiences, a strong sense of efficacy can be created through social models, that is, a person witnessing his peer's effort and possible success (Bandura, 1995, 3). Bandura (1997, 87) explains that a person is likely to choose as his model someone that shares similar traits or is perceived to have similar abilities. Depending on whether the model succeeds or fails in the task, the observer may predict the same outcome for himself (*ibid.*). In my opinion, the concept of social models shaping self-efficacy in the school environment is strong because in class students are surrounded by peers that have somewhat similar abilities and goals. Hsieh (2005, 9) claims that as learners observe successful performances of peers, they also develop high self-efficacy levels. She also highlights that as learners who have been convinced by an authoritative figure that they are capable tend to see themselves as capable too, thus developing high self-efficacy.

Another external factor affecting a person's self-efficacy is social persuasion which namely happens through other people convincing a person of his capability to succeed (Bandura 1997, 101). On the other hand, Bandura (ibid.) also notes that social persuasion might create a person unrealistic beliefs about their capabilities to succeed and the person's sense of efficacy might suffer greatly from failures. However, this factor affecting efficacy beliefs is in high relevance when it comes to students because young people often have doubts about their capabilities. Therefore, for example, a teacher can make a vast difference in students' efficacy beliefs by giving them support and positive feedback. By giving a person more confidence, he may put more effort into completing a task and would not be as likely to be discouraged when facing difficulties.

The last factor affecting efficacy beliefs presented in this section is physiological and emotional states. According to Bandura (1995, 4–5), it is not only the conditions that affect a person's self-efficacy beliefs but rather how they perceive and interpret those conditions. If a person has feelings of stress or fatigue while completing a task, he is likely to consider them as signs of weakness, which then can lower his sense of efficacy (ibid.). A mundane example of emotional conditions affecting a person's efficacy could be that if a person is not in a good mood, his emotional state can affect everything he does in a negative way and then it might be more difficult to achieve the best results in such emotional state. On the contrary, a positive attitude can lead to a person having better success in tasks and achieve better results. Bandura (ibid.) makes an important notion that a person is having, for example, emotionally or physically a bad day, he should avoid misinterpreting it as a shortage of abilities or skills related to performing the task. He (ibid.) also points out that being able to avoid those possible misinterpretations can help enhance one's self-efficacy. As the students that participate in the present study are in their teens, physiological and emotional conditions can have a great impact on their self-efficacy as they are at the age period of emotional upheaval.

In conclusion, there are internal as well as external factors affecting a person's self-efficacy beliefs. A person's feelings, the people around them and previous experiences affect the way he predicts his capabilities in completing different kinds of tasks in the future. It has to be acknowledged that the four factors affecting self-efficacy presented above are not directly influencing a person's efficacy but rather they are cognitively processed through *efficacy appraisal* (Bandura 1997, 80). As a result of efficacy appraisal, the individual weighs and considers how these factors affect his sense of efficacy (ibid.). Although this study is not concerned about the factors affecting a

person's efficacy beliefs, it is important to acknowledge them as all of the factors discussed above are a part of students' academic lives and therefore, affect their academic success.

### **3.3 Self-efficacy in the research field of second language learning**

In the present study, the self-efficacy and motivation of comprehensive school and general upper secondary school students will be analyzed and compared. In their quantitative study, Magogwe and Rhonda (2007) analyzed, among other criteria, 480 Batswana learners' age and self-efficacy beliefs. Magogwe and Rhonda (2007, 350) did not find clear evidence on particular patterns with age and self-efficacy: sometimes the younger learners seemed to have a stronger feeling of self-efficacy while at other times the older learners were more efficacious. In my opinion, such beliefs, like self-efficacy, are highly context-dependent and it might be difficult to draw clear cut hypotheses on whether younger or older learners are more efficacious as it could be so that younger learners are not yet aware of their shortcomings and therefore perceive themselves as more efficacious. On the other hand, if younger learners knew they have to face a situation where a deeper mastery of the foreign language is required, they might be more nervous, hence perceive themselves with a lower sense of efficacy than a learner with more knowledge of the language, when the presupposition is that the more years a learner has spent studying the language, the more skilled he is.

For her dissertation, Kaisvuo (2014) conducted a study on 124 first- and second-year general upper secondary school students' self-efficacy beliefs. The aim of her (Kaisvuo, 2014) study was to shed some light on the following questions: according to the students, what factors were linked with self-efficacy, how efficacious the students perceived to be and what factors could develop one's sense of efficacy? Kaisvuo's (2014) study utilized different kinds of methods: questionnaires, essays, network maps and group interviews. It is, to my liking, very important to utilize different methods to collect the data in order to provide more in-depth information about the matter, which is why a qualitative part was implemented also in the present study. Based on the data Kaisvuo (2014, 164–168) collected, the students perceived motivation to be closely linked to self-efficacy: the students were motivated by good grades, future plans and desire to learn. The results of Kaisvuo's (2014, 166–167) study also showed that peer relations had a great effect on a student's self-efficacy. In this paper, factors affecting students' feeling

self-efficacy are not examined, however, based on the results of the study, factors that possibly affect Finnish comprehensive school and general upper secondary school students' self-efficacy beliefs are discussed.

To summarize, motivation and self-efficacy both affect the learning of a foreign language. In this study, Dörnyei's model of L2 motivational self-system is utilized to assess the comprehensive and general upper secondary school students' motivation. In my opinion, the self-efficacy of a language learner not only accounts for the feeling of efficacy in different language use situations but also is connected with motivation. Therefore, Bandura's theory of self-efficacy was implemented in this study. I believe that strengthening a learner's self-efficacy could have a positive effect on his motivation to keep on learning. On the other hand, being motivated might help the learner to overcome his insecurities in using the language and push the limits of efficacy. This view is also supported by Pinell and Csizér (2013, 529) as they argue in their study of L2 motivation, anxiety and self-efficacy that learners with a strong sense of self-efficacy are likely to have a stronger approach motivation whereas they associate a low sense of efficacy with avoidance motivation. In a similar manner, Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) found a significant relationship between motivated behavior and self-efficacy in their study on 210 Iranian university-level EFL learners. In their study, Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) utilized a similar construct to self-efficacy, namely expectancy-value theory which, to my liking, has striking similarities with the motivation - self-efficacy expectancy in the present study. The theory works around the notion that the more likely the learner is to succeed in a given task, the more motivated the learner is to complete the task and completing a task successfully, the learner's motivation increases (Wigfield and Eccles, 2002). Other similar constructs to self-efficacy have been created (see i.e. self-determination theory by Ryan and Deci 2016, attribution theory by Weiner 1974) but as self-efficacy is mostly concerned with how the learner perceives their own capabilities in a given task, it was the most suitable theory for the present study. However, there are three statements in the self-efficacy part of the questionnaire that are not specifically related to the learner's beliefs about being able to complete a certain task but rather reflect on their abilities in comparison to other learners in the group to have evidence on whether the learners' feeling of efficacy in different tasks are related to them feeling inferior or superior compared to others in the group in using the language.

Because of my ever-growing interest in the reasons why people and learners choose to perform different actions, motivation and self-efficacy were factors of great interest to study in the eyes of a becoming teacher of English. Even though motivation and self-efficacy have been widely studied, I believe that the results of this study can help address the most common beliefs of low self-efficacy in a Finnish comprehensive and general upper secondary school classrooms. Knowledge of the most common beliefs that result in low efficacy can help teachers to know how to encourage their students to participate and try to overcome those negative beliefs about their capabilities. This paper also seeks to shed some light on the strength of the relationship between motivation and self-efficacy in different school levels in Finland. Furthermore, it is interesting to see whether there are any differences when comparing groups that are still completing their compulsory education with groups that have chosen to continue their studies in general upper secondary school. After completing their compulsory education, students can opt to study in general upper secondary school that alongside preparing them for higher education, provides them with the general basic knowledge that is needed in life and enabling them to become responsible members of society (Ministry of Education and Culture). As mentioned already in the introduction, the present study's research questions are:

- 1) How do motivation and self-efficacy differ between comprehensive and general upper secondary school students?
- 2) How do motivation and self-efficacy correlate within the groups from comprehensive and general upper secondary school?

## 4 The present study

In this section, I will discuss the methodology used in the present study to give an overview of how the study was conducted. First, I present the sample of the present study followed by the survey used to gather data and lastly, the data analysis methods.

### 4.1 Participants

The sample of this study consisted of a total of 80 students: 39 comprehensive school and 41 general upper secondary school students, both groups study in a multicultural school in South-Western Finland. Dörnyei (2007, 100) mentions that when collecting quantitative data with a survey, the number of research participants should be at least 100. For the purposes of this study and considering the extent of a master's thesis, 80 participants should fulfill the requirements of the number of research participants. Dörnyei (2007, 100) continues that in an ideal situation, the sample of the study should be normally distributed which can be achieved with a minimum number of 30 participants in each group. This requirement for a normally distributed sample was met as the comprehensive school groups had a total number of 39 students and the general upper secondary school groups had a total number of 41 students (see Table 1). According to Table 1, the distribution of students in different groups was as such: 20 7<sup>th</sup>, 19 8<sup>th</sup> grade comprehensive school students, 23 first- and 18 second-year general upper secondary school students participated in the study.

**Table 1** Distribution of students in different groups

School-level	Number of students
7 <sup>th</sup> -grade comprehensive school	20
8 <sup>th</sup> -grade comprehensive school	19
1 <sup>st</sup> year general upper secondary school	23
2 <sup>nd</sup> year general upper secondary school	18
<b>Total</b>	80

When it comes to the ages of students in different grades in Finland, the majority of 7<sup>th</sup> graders are between 13–14, 8<sup>th</sup> graders between 14–15, first-year general upper secondary school students between 16–17 and second-year general upper secondary school students between 17–18 years of age. In addition to the groups mentioned above, one



comprehensive school group of 6th graders also took part in the study by answering the questionnaire, but the data gathered from that group was not considered reliable and therefore they were excluded from the study. This was due to many students filling in the questionnaire multiple times faster than the older students and it appeared that many of the sixth-grade students did not seem to understand all of the questions. The original plan was to further include a group of 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students in the study but as was the questionnaire was acknowledged too demanding for the 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students, the 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students were excluded from the study in order to gain more reliable data by avoiding participant fatigue (Dörnyei 2007, 110). Because this study is concerned with students of different ages, or school levels to be more accurate, the gender of the participants does not play a role in this study and therefore, the participants were not asked to answer whether they were male/female/other. The school in which the research was conducted has a research permit for students under the age of 18 and therefore for the present study, the author only had to apply for permission from one of the headmasters who is in charge of the school's research permits.

## **4.2 Data collection methods**

This study utilizes quantitative research methods. With the use of quantitative research methods, a researcher can gather data that includes many participants and a broad variety of questions (Hirsijärvi, Remes, and Sajavaara, 1997, 190). For the purposes of the present study, quantitative data collection was favored, because, according to Dörnyei (2007), the pros of conducting qualitative research are that it produces reliable data that can be generalized. This would mean that, for example, another researcher could replicate the same study with a different research population and acquire similar results. Consequently, conducting research that can be generalized to other contexts as well saves time when not every researcher has to conduct their own study of the same scope but rather add something new to the field of research with their own, modern piece of research. Mackey and Gass (2005, 92) claim that with the use of questionnaires, the researcher can assess learners' reports about themselves, for example about their beliefs and motivation in learning. For the purposes of the present study that sought to find out students' reports on their motivation and self-efficacy beliefs, using a questionnaire was the evident solution as, according to Dörnyei (2007, 115) it offers anonymity to the participants and is efficient when it comes to preparing and carrying out the data

collection. Hirsijärvi, Remes, and Sajavaara (1997, 190) point out that there are already methods for analyzing and reporting data gathered via a survey and therefore the researcher himself does not have to come up with new methods, which again makes the process of data handling more efficient. However, the cons of quantitative research methods include the fact that quantitative research mainly works with “the average Joe” and evens out individuals that vary from the average (Dörnyei 2007, 35). What is more, Dörnyei (2007, 35) notes that quantitative research does not “do justice to the subjective variety of an individual life” meaning that, for example, even if two students end up choosing the same alternative in a Likert-scale, the reasons behind choosing the particular alternative can be very different.

The Finnish version of the present study’s questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1 and the translated (English) version in Appendix 2. Before the actual data collection, the present study’s questionnaire was first piloted and based on the comments a few alterations were made, mainly to the wording of some of the statements to make them easier to understand. The importance of conducting a pilot test is highlighted by Mackey and Gass (2005, 34, 138) as they claim that to make sure that the research material is set out to find answers to the actual research questions, it is critical to pilot test research material.

The finalized version of the questionnaire was then used to gather the data for the present study. The data collection was carried out during class time during April and May 2019. The students were given information about the present study before beginning to fill in a Google Forms -based questionnaire at the beginning of their English classes. Based on Dörnyei (2007, 109) the introduction of the questionnaire was as follows: first of all, the students were told that taking part in the study is voluntary and that the questionnaire is anonymous, confidential and solely for research purposes. Furthermore, it was highlighted that their teachers will not have any access to the results, which hopefully encouraged the students to answer according to their true feeling rather than thinking about what they thought they were supposed to answer. I also stressed that it is important that the students reflect their actual thoughts and feelings in their answers. Furthermore, I advised all to read the instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire carefully. Lastly, to avoid any misunderstandings caused by not everyone having Finnish as their native language, I advised all the participants to ask for clarifications to the statements or anything related to the questionnaire if needed. Even though many of the research participants were of different origin than Finnish, all participants who took part

in the study studied in Finnish comprehensive school or general upper secondary school, where the main language of teaching is Finnish as opposed to, for example, international comprehensive school or International Baccalaureate Programme, where the language of teaching is English. Therefore, I do not feel that the multiculturalism of the participants or not all having Finnish as their native language affects the results of the present study negatively but rather gives a more modern insight to the state of motivation and self-efficacy of students in a present-day school in Finland.

The questionnaire itself consisted of four parts. The first part included 10 statements concerning the students' ought-to self in L2 motivation, whereas the second part had 10 statements about the students' ideal self in L2 motivation. The third part included 15 statements about self-efficacy in different classroom activities and about their overall evaluation of their capabilities in using English language. The first three parts of the questionnaire were answered using a four-point Likert-scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree). The four-point scale was chosen in order to make it easier for the students to answer the questionnaire: by omitting the neutral answer the students actually had to decide their stand on the matter even if the question was more difficult. Usually with younger students, if the activities in class do not affect their grades, they tend to have low motivation in completing them. This view is also supported by Nemoto and Beglar (2014, 5), who claim that with learners that are young or that have low motivation to answer a questionnaire, four-point scales are easier to understand and it requires less effort from the learners to answer a questionnaire using four-point Likert-scale as opposed to a Likert-scale that includes more options. In the final part of the questionnaire, the students could write down their email address if they were willing to volunteer to answer open-ended questions via email.

Taguchi, Magid, and Papi's (2009) survey was used as a basis for the present study's survey. Many surveys concerning the L2 motivational self-system were very similar but Taguchi, Magid, and Papi's (2009) survey appeared to be the most suitable for the present study. They based their survey on Dörnyei, Csizér and Nemeth's (2006) study's questionnaire that was designed for studying Hungarian students. Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009) modified Dörnyei, Csizér and Nemeth's questionnaire to study Chinese, Japanese and Iranian students and after having read both questionnaires, I thought that the length and the items chosen for the scope of the of Taguchi, Magid, and Papi's (2009) questionnaire were more suitable for the present study. Small alterations to the original survey were made and the statements were translated into Finnish so that the

survey would be more suitable for the purposes of the present study. The same procedure was done by Shih and Chang (2018), as in their study of L2 motivational self-system they also modified Taguchi, Magid, and Papi's questionnaire and then translated the finalized version into the language of the research participants (Shih and Chang, 2018, 152). The statements concerning self-efficacy in different classroom activities were carefully chosen by the author as there were no similar enough studies that would have used a useful set of statements concerning self-efficacy for the purposes of this study. The self-efficacy part of the questionnaire consisted of statements about willingness to answer to questions proposed by teachers, participating in pair- and group discussions and the students' feeling of their capabilities in relation to other students in the same group. It was acknowledged that the students should reflect on their present capabilities rather than what they could be able to do in the future, therefore, the use of "will" that expresses intention rather than current condition (Bandura, 2006, 308, 313), was avoided in the statements concerning self-efficacy.

### **4.3 Data analysis methods**

The questionnaire data were analyzed quantitatively utilizing a computer analysis program IBM SPSS version 25(SPSS). To be able to have the answers in a form they could be counted, the different alternatives were converted to numbers from one to four. The statements that were positive, such as "I study English because my parents think it is important." the alternatives were coded along a scale of 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly agree). On the other hand, when it came to negative statements, for example: "I am uncertain when answering a teacher's question in English." the coding of the four alternatives was reversed. In total, the coding of items 6 and 7 in the first part of the questionnaire and the coding of items 2,4,6,7,11,12 and 14 in the third part of the questionnaire was reversed.

In order to analyze the data efficiently, the statements in the questionnaire were put into six different categories: ought-to self -motivation, ideal self -motivation, self-efficacy as a whole, self-efficacy related to pair/group discussions, self-efficacy related to answering teacher's questions and the students overall feeling of efficacy (see Table 2). The weight of the three subcategories differs because the differences between the three subcategories of self-efficacy were not the most central point in the study, but rather a complementing element that can bring a more in-depth understanding of the

learners' self-efficacy. Table 2 below shows which statements in self-efficacy belong in which category.

**Table 2** Categorization of the self-efficacy statements

Category	Pair/group discussions	Answering teacher's questions	Overall feeling of efficacy
Statement number	1, 3, 4, 10, 12	2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14	7, 13, 15

Motivation – self-efficacy profiles were made for the comprehensive school and general upper secondary school groups. The profiles were made by computing the mean values of each group's answers for the six different parts (ought to self, ideal self and self-efficacy as a whole as well as its smaller subcategories). The mean values of the first three parts were calculated by summing each students' coded answers and then calculating the mean, for example, the ideal self -part of the questionnaire consisted of 10 statements: therefore, the maximum score for a student in that section is 40. Self-efficacy consisted of 15 statements, which means that one student could score a total of 60 in that part of the questionnaire. The values for the three subcategories of self-efficacy were calculated in a different manner because the three categories had an uneven number of statements. Therefore, in order to obtain comparable results, the coded answers of each question belonging to the same category were summed, then the average was counted by dividing the sum by the number of statements. For example, the mean value for statements related to self-efficacy in pair/group discussions for the comprehensive school groups (N = 39) was 58.9, while the general upper secondary school groups' (N = 41) equivalent was 60.8. The descriptive statistics utilized to describe the two groups' motivation and self-efficacy were mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum. The same descriptive statistics have been used in similar studies (see e.g. Mills, Pajares and Herron 2007 and Roshandel, Ghonsooly, and Ghanizadeh 2017).

In the second part of the data analysis, the relationship between the two motivational subfactors, namely ideal and ought-to selves, and the three categories of self-efficacy was investigated. The profiles give an insight to what extent the students were motivated and what their feeling of self-efficacy was and whether the type of motivation they had correlates with their feeling of efficacy. The profiles were then compared with each other in order to investigate whether there was any difference between the two groups. In order to investigate relationships between different values,

correlation analysis had to be run; according to Mackey and Gass (2005, 145), correlations are a much-used tool in the field of survey-based research. Correlations are used, for example, to test the relationship between different variables or within them (Mackey, Gass, 2005, 145). In the present study, Spearman's rho is used to examine whether there is a relationship between the L2 motivational selves and self-efficacy and further, if such relationship(s) exist, to determine the strength of the relationship. Spearman's correlation is used for ordinal variables, such as Likert-scale variables and it does not presume normal distribution of the data (Dörnyei, 2007, 230). Therefore, the normality of the data had to be analyzed using a Shapiro-Wilk test. The *p*-value of the Shapiro-Wilk test indicates whether the data is approximately normally distributed if the value is ( $p > .05$ ) or not approximately normally distributed if the value is ( $p < .05$ ).

Karjalainen (2010, 125, 128) explains that the correlation coefficient (*r*) can range between -1 and +1; the *r*-value 0 indicates that there is no relationship between the two variables, whereas the closer to -1 or +1 the *r* is, the stronger the relationship between the variables is. Karjalainen (2010, 125–126) further elaborates that a positive correlation, meaning that *r* is closer to +1 than 0, indicates that if one of the variables increases, the other increases too. Then again, a negative correlation (*r* is closer to -1 than 0) indicates that if one variable increases, the other will decrease (*ibid.*). One of the present study's hypotheses was that there is a positive relationship between motivation and self-efficacy, indicating that the more motivated the students were, the stronger their feeling of self-efficacy was. The hypothesized relationship can also be the other way around, meaning that stronger self-efficacy results in higher motivation, as according to Karjalainen (2010, 129) the correlation coefficient value *r* only tells the strength of the relationship but not which one of the variables is the cause and which is the effect. While the *r*-value does not yet include information about statistical significance, a function called *p-value* is calculated to report about the significance of the correlation (Karjalainen, 2010, 220–221). I used .05 as a cut-off point when reporting *p*-values to determine whether the correlation is significant or not meaning that in order for the result to be statistically significant, the *p*-value has to be equal or smaller than .05. Dörnyei (2007, 210) claims that in the field of foreign language research, the *p*-value of .05 is often used to indicate the significance of a result.

## 5. Students' perceptions of motivation and self-efficacy

In this section, I will first present the results and the comparison of the descriptive statistics calculations for L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy. Then, the results of the correlation analysis are presented and the results of the two groups are compared.

### 5.1 Descriptive statistics analysis on motivation and self-efficacy

To be able to answer the first research question “How do motivation and self-efficacy differ between comprehensive and general upper secondary school students?” I will present the results of the descriptive statistics analysis based on the answers to the questionnaire. The values in the running text, as well as figures and tables in this subsection, have been rounded to two decimal places.

As discussed earlier in section 2.3, ought-to self refers to what skills and traits one believes he ought to possess. The comprehensive school groups scored higher (28.18) than the general upper secondary school groups (25.66) in ought-to self-motivation (see Table 3).

**Table 3** Descriptive statistics on ought-to self-statements

	Comprehensive school groups	General upper secondary school groups
N	39	41
Mean	28.18 /40	25.66 /40
SD	3.68	3.83
Minimum	18	18
Maximum	36	33

As can be seen in Table 3, it appears that the younger students have more need to meet the expectations of others than the older students. This could be a result of teachers being more explicit with younger learners about what they are expected to learn, for example, during a semester. However, the students in both school levels were fairly consistent in terms of minimum and maximum values, as both of the groups had a minimum score of 18 and their maximum scores were between 33–36. This means that all of the participants of the study took into account the attitudes or views of their significant others or peers which is, in my opinion, very common for most people regardless of age. I do not consider

either of the groups to have a very high score in ought-to self, as both groups' mean was below 30, but the results still lean towards the assumption that both comprehensive and upper secondary school students could be motivated by reducing the discrepancy between their actual and ought-to selves.

The most striking difference, when it comes to individual statements, was found when looking at the mean values of the two groups on statement number 3 "I study English language because I seek acceptance from my teacher". The comprehensive school group had a mean value of 2.56, which was among the lowest mean values for the ought-to L2 self section but the general upper secondary school group's mean value of 1.62 shows that there is a vast difference between how younger students seek the acceptance of their teacher more than the older students. Both groups reported the highest mean values on statement number 6 "I study English language because an educated person has to know English language and to be able to speak in English" (3.15 and 3.59), which implies that both the younger and the older students perceive English language skills as a part of being an educated person.

The learner's ideal self is a mental representation of the learner's future state, for example, whether the learner could see himself, for example, living abroad and having conversations in English. As can be seen below in Table 4, both groups' mean for ideal-self was higher than their ought-to self.

**Table 4** Descriptive statistics on ideal-self statements

	Comprehensive school groups	General upper secondary school groups
N	39	41
Mean	33.74 /40	33.95 /40
SD	4.18	5.86
Minimum	25	17
Maximum	40	40

As Table 4 presents, when it comes to the results of the ideal self -part, the comprehensive school group and the general upper secondary school group were very similar in terms of their mean values (33.74 as opposed to 33.95). There were students in both groups that scored 40/40 on the ideal self -part of the questionnaire but compared to the ought-to self -statements, the minimum scores were further from each other in ideal self as they ranged



from as low as 17 to 25. However, the general upper secondary school groups' low minimum can be explained by a single outlier. The single outlier also partly explains the result of the higher standard deviation of the general upper secondary school group (SD=5.86) as opposed to the comprehensive school groups' equivalent (SD= 4.18). The results indicate that both comprehensive and general upper secondary school students' motivation to reduce the discrepancy between their actual and ideal selves could be stronger than their motivation to reduce the discrepancy between their actual and ought-to selves.

Looking at individual statements in the questionnaire, the students in both groups had the highest mean value in ideal L2 self-statement number 10 "In the future, I could imagine myself being a person who can speak English." with mean values of (3.74/4 and 3.78/4). The lowest mean values were related to statement number 4 concerning studying in a program that is in English (2.82 and 2.88) and statement number 7 (2.92 and 3.02) which had to do with being able to speak like a native speaker of English. Overall, the students in both groups had very positive ideal L2 self-views and based on the results, there was no significant variation between the views of the two groups.

The statements concerning self-efficacy had to do with the students' feeling of efficacy in participating in pair and group discussions, answering their teachers' questions in English and their overall feeling of efficacy. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for self-efficacy as a whole, whereas Table 6 includes the mean values for the three different categories of self-efficacy in the present study.

**Table 5** Descriptive statistics on self-efficacy statements /60

	Comprehensive school groups	General upper secondary school groups
N	39	41
Mean	45.28 /60	43.34 /60
SD	8.71	9.22
Minimum	24	26
Maximum	60	60

**Table 6** Mean values for statements in different self-efficacy categories

	Comprehensive school groups (N = 39)	General upper secondary school groups (N = 41)
Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions	58.9	60.8
Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	57.86	56.71
Overall self-efficacy	61.17	62.5

As Table 5 demonstrates, the comprehensive school students appeared to have a slightly stronger feeling of self-efficacy (Mean = 45.28) than the general upper secondary school students (Mean = 43.34). Regarding other values of the descriptive statistics of self-efficacy, there were almost no differences between the two groups. Table 6 presents the mean values for the subcategories of self-efficacy, which indicates that the comprehensive school groups had a higher value only in answering to teacher's questions, even if the differences were small. Both groups seemed to follow the same trend in terms of how efficacious they perceived themselves in different categories: the lowest values existed in answering teacher's questions (57.86 and 56.71), while the highest efficacy existed in how efficacious the students perceived themselves in comparison to their peers (overall self-efficacy: 61.17 and 62.5).

According to the results of the questionnaire, the least efficacious the students in both groups felt when "In English class, I feel confident when speaking English so that other students of the class can hear me" (2.59 and 2.49). On the other end of the spectrum, the students reported the strongest efficacy in statement number 10 "In English class, I participate in pair discussions in English" (3.31 and 3.34). The findings presented above appeared to be as expected, as students often feel more at ease when practicing with fewer people and with people that often are their friends. This assumption is supported by the results of Kaisvuo's (2014) study, as she concluded that peer relations played a great role in shaping how efficacious the learners felt. The biggest difference in self-efficacy among the answers of the two groups examined concerned item number 8 ("In English class, I volunteer to answer to a question, if I believe I know the correct answer in English") with mean scores of 2.95 and 2.63, which indicates that all in all, the two groups perceived themselves fairly equally efficacious.

## 5.2 Correlation analysis on motivation and self-efficacy

To answer the second research question “How do motivation and self-efficacy correlate within the groups from comprehensive and general upper secondary school?”, I will present the numeric results of the correlation analysis in this section. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the answers of the sample of this study were mostly normally distributed as the Significance values for the different categories for the comprehensive school groups were between  $p = .050$ – $.400$ . The only category, on the comprehensive school level, which did not follow normal distribution was overall self-efficacy ( $p = .003$ ). For the general upper secondary school groups, the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the answers for ought-to self ( $p = .136$ ), self-efficacy related to pair/group discussions ( $p = .166$ ) and answering teacher’s questions ( $p = .223$ ) were normally distributed whereas ideal self ( $p = .001$ ) and overall efficacy ( $p = .013$ ) were not normally distributed. As normal distribution cannot be expected for all the categories, non-parametric tests were utilized to analyze the relationships between the motivational statements and self-efficacy statements. The results of the correlation analysis can be found below.

All tables in this section present the values of the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ), as well as the statistical significance of the correlation ( $p$ ) and the number of participants ( $n$ ). Whether there is a correlation between two variables or not, is determined by using Karjalainen (2010, 122) notion that if the correlation is  $<.2$ , there is no relationship between the two variables whereas if the correlation is  $>.3$ , there is a correlation between the two variables. The comprehensive school groups’ results are presented in tables 7–12. As can be seen in Tables 7–9, none of the categories in self-efficacy had a strong relationship with ought-to self -motivation nor was any of the relationships statistically significant. However, Tables 10–12 show that the motivation to reduce the discrepancy between the learner’s ideal and actual self appeared to have a moderate or strong statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) relationship with all the three subcategories of self-efficacy. The “L2” in the tables refer to “second (foreign) language”.

**Table 7** Results of the correlation analysis of ought-to self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions

<b>Correlations</b>			Ought-to L2 self	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.288
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.075
		N	39	39
	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions	Correlation Coefficient	-.288	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	.
		N	39	39

As Table 7 indicates, there is a weak negative correlation between ought-to self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions. This means that as one variable increases, the other decreases. As mentioned before, correlation analysis only shows the strength of the relationship and whether it is positive or negative, but it does not provide information whether, for example in this case which of the variables decreases when the other increases. The result is not statistically significant with  $p = 0.075 > 0.05$  and therefore cannot be generalized to other contexts.

**Table 8** Results of the correlation analysis of ought-to self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions

<b>Correlations</b>			Ought-to L2 self	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.040
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.811
		N	39	39
	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	Correlation Coefficient	-.040	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.811	.
		N	39	39

Even if the ought-to self -statements in the questionnaire were concerned with how others, such as teachers, perceive the learner, the comprehensive school groups' relationship between ought-to self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions was close to zero. The statistical significance was also relatively low ( $p < 0.811$ ). This finding appears surprising, because, for example, the more the learner who is motivated to show his teacher that he is a good student (to reduce the discrepancy between one's actual and ought-to self) the more efficacious he would perceive himself to be in this category.

**Table 9** Results of the correlation analysis of ought-to self and overall self-efficacy

<b>Correlations</b>			Ought-to L2 self	Overall self-efficacy
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.015
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.930
		N	39	39
		Overall self-efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.015
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.930	.
		N	39	39

As Table 9 presents, the weakest relationship between ought-to self and any of the comprehensive school groups' self-efficacy categories was with the overall self-efficacy as the correlation coefficient was .015, indicating that there is no relationship between the two variables. The overall feeling of efficacy statements was related not to the learner's skills in a particular situation or task but rather their subjective feeling about their skills in relation to their peers in the same group. In my opinion, it is surprising that even if the comprehensive school groups had a higher score in ought-to self-motivation and therefore it could be argued that they are more aware of what their peers and significant others think about them as learners and users of English than the general upper secondary school students, there was close to no relationship between ought-to self and overall efficacy. This could be a result of the younger students feeling more need to meet the expectations of others rather than trying to be better than their peers. If this is the case, I believe that the students are on a good path in their learning if they are more motivated to meet the expectations of others that are related to the learner's own skills and abilities, as well as test scores, instead of being motivated in a competitive manner which would mean that

being better than the other learners in the same group is more important than improving self without much comparison to others. The next three Tables (10–12) present the results of the correlation analysis between ideal self and self-efficacy.

**Table 10** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions

<b>Correlations</b>				
			Ideal L2 self	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.360*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.024
		N	39	39
	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions	Correlation Coefficient	.360*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.
		N	39	39

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient for ideal self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions was .360, which indicates that there is a positive relationship between the two variables (see Table 10). Furthermore, the result is statistically significant as  $p < 0.05$ . This result indicates that unlike between ought-to self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions, there is a relationship between ideal self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions. This finding means that when one variable increases, the other increases as well. As the correlation coefficient does not provide information about which variable affects which, it cannot be said which one of motivation and self-efficacy is the cause and which the effect. Therefore, the aim of the present study is not to give exact cause-effect relationships but rather explore whether there is any interplay between the L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy.

**Table 11** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions

			Ideal L2 self	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.561**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N		39	39
	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	Correlation Coefficient	.561**
Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.
N		39	39	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Karjalainen (2010, 125;128) states that the closer to +1 or to -1 than to 0 the correlation is, the stronger the connection between the two variables examined is. Table 11 above demonstrates that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between the learner's ideal self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions in English. The value of the correlation coefficient is .561 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 12** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self and overall self-efficacy

			Ideal L2 self	Overall self-efficacy
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.358*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.025
	N		39	39
	Overall self-efficacy	Overall self-efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.358*
Sig. (2-tailed)			.025	.
N		39	39	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As Table 12 indicates, a positive correlation existed between ideal self and the overall self-efficacy -category,  $r = .358$ ,  $p < .05$ . All in all, there was no evidence towards a

significant correlation between the comprehensive school groups' ought-to selves and self-efficacy. However, all three categories of self-efficacy showed to have a moderate or strong correlation with the ideal self. The strongest relationship was found between ideal self and answering teacher's questions in English ( $r = .561$ ,  $p < .05$ ) while correlation coefficient and the value significance for the other two subcategories of self-efficacy were almost identical ( $r = .360$  and  $p = .024$  respectively  $r = .358$  and  $p = .025$ ).

Next, the general upper secondary school groups' results of the correlation coefficient are presented in Tables 13–18. The first three Tables (13–15) show the correlation coefficients for ought-to self and the different self-efficacy categories, while the latter three Tables (16–18) present the results of the correlation coefficients for ideal self and the different self-efficacy categories.

**Table 13** Results of the correlation analysis of ought to self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions

			<b>Correlations</b>	
			Ought-to L2 self	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.163
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.307
		N	41	41
	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions	Correlation Coefficient	.163	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.307	.
		N	41	41

As can be seen above in Table 13, a small positive relationship between the learners' ought-to selves and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions was found  $r = .163$ . The result, however, is not statistically significant with  $p > .05$ . The result is to an extent contrary to the comprehensive school group's result as among the younger learners the correlation coefficient was negative.



**Table 14** Results of the correlation analysis of ought to self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions

<b>Correlations</b>			Ought-to L2 self	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.041
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.797
		N	41	41
	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	Correlation Coefficient	.041	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.797	.
		N	41	41

An even weaker correlation was found between the general upper secondary school groups' ought-to self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions in English,  $r = .041$  (see Table 14). This means that there is hardly any correlation between the two variables. Similar to the other correlation coefficient analyses concerning the relationship between ought-to self and self-efficacy above, the result of the analysis is not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ) (Table 14).

**Table 15** Results of the correlation analysis of ought-to self and overall self-efficacy

<b>Correlations</b>			Ought-to L2 self	Overall self-efficacy
Spearman's rho	Ought-to L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.077
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.634
		N	41	41
	Overall self-efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.077	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.634	.
		N	41	41

The relationship between the general upper secondary school groups' ought-to self and overall self-efficacy was stronger than the relationship between their ought-to self and answering teacher's questions in English but only by a margin. The results of the

correlation coefficient were  $r = .077$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , in a similar manner as in the analysis above, there is no notable correlation between the two variables in Table 15. Overall, the general upper secondary school group's correlation analysis seemed to follow the same pattern as the comprehensive school group's analysis: there were no statistically significant correlations between any of the variables. The similarity of the results

**Table 16** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions

<b>Correlations</b>			Ideal L2 self	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.623**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	41	41
	Self-efficacy in pair/group discussions	Correlation Coefficient	.623**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	41	41

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis shows that the general upper secondary school group had a strong positive correlation between the learner's ideal self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions,  $r = .623$ ,  $p < 0.05$  (Table 16). This was the strongest correlation coefficient for the general upper secondary school group between the motivational variables and the self-efficacy variables.

**Table 17** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions

<b>Correlations</b>			Ideal L2 self	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.561**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	41	41
	Self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions	Correlation Coefficient	.561**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	41	41

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 17 shows, the relationship between ideal self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions in English was strong, positive and statistically significant among the general upper secondary school students,  $r = .561$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . The correlation coefficient for ideal self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions was exactly the same for both the comprehensive and general upper secondary school groups ( $r = .561$ ).

**Table 18** Results of the correlation analysis of ideal self-motivation and overall self-efficacy

<b>Correlations</b>			Ideal L2 self	Overall self- efficacy
Spearman's rho	Ideal L2 self	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.512**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	41	41
	Overall self- efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	.512**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	41	41

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 18 presents, there was also a statistically significant strong positive correlation between ideal self and overall self-efficacy  $r = .51, p < 0.05$ . To sum up, the general upper secondary school groups had no significant relationship between ought-to self and the three self-efficacy categories, but similarly to the comprehensive school groups, a significant positive correlation was found between the ideal self and each of the self-efficacy categories. As a result, it could be claimed that the ideal L2 self is a predictor of self-efficacy while ought-to L2 self is not.

All in all, the analysis showed that the comprehensive school group students and general upper secondary school group students had somewhat similar views on their motivation and self-efficacy. The comprehensive school group had a higher mean in ought-to self (28.18) as opposed to the general upper secondary school group (25.66), however, there was close to no difference in terms of ideal self (33.74 and 33.95). As the results indicate, both groups had fairly higher mean in ideal self in comparison to ought to self. The results indicate that the learners in both groups can imagine themselves using English language in their future, for example, as means of everyday communication, in their career or when studying in higher-level education. This sense of future prospects related to English language can motivate the learners to reduce the discrepancy between their actual and ideal selves. This is a very positive finding, as this genuine interest in studying a language because the learner can picture himself using it in the future can be a very fruitful source of motivation. The result could partly be explained by how the Finnish school system works: general upper secondary schools only provide general knowledge that is required in higher education. Therefore, most general upper secondary school students will need their English language skills in their future studies. Another factor that could explain the result is that English is widely used in Finland as means of everyday communication among teenagers in social media. Simply put, most teenagers are in contact with English language almost every time they use their mobile phones whether it is for communication or entertainment.

When it comes to self-efficacy, both groups were relatively efficacious, the comprehensive school group had a slightly higher mean in self-efficacy (45.28 as opposed to 43.34) but the only subcategory of self-efficacy they felt themselves more efficacious than the general upper secondary school group, was answering teacher's questions although the differences between the groups were very small. The correlation analysis showed that the learners in the two groups examined did not differ much in terms of the relationship between L2 motivational selves and self-efficacy. The results of the

correlation analysis for both groups indicate that there is no relationship between ought-to self and self-efficacy, whereas, between ideal self and self-efficacy, a statistically significant relationship was found between each subcategory of self-efficacy and ideal self. In the following section, I will discuss the results of the present study in more detail and ponder how the results of the present study reflect foreign language learning and teaching in today's school world.

## 6 Discussion

In this section, the findings of the previous section are discussed, and I aim to answer the research questions. First, I will discuss the overall differences between the comprehensive school and the general upper secondary school group based on the descriptive statistics and correlation analyses. Then, the findings and their implications will be discussed in relation to the theories of L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy as well as previous studies in the field of L2 motivation and self-efficacy. Lastly, I will bring up some limitations regarding the methods and the participants of the present study.

In order to answer the first research question “How do motivation and self-efficacy differ between comprehensive and general upper secondary school students?”, let us look at the results on Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6. In terms of the L2 self, the comprehensive and general upper secondary school group did not differ from each other but rather showed similar tendencies when comparing ought-to and ideal selves. Both groups had a higher mean in ideal self (33.74 and 33.95) as opposed to the ought-to equivalents (28.18 and 25.66), however, the difference between the two groups was bigger among statements concerning ought-to L2 self. This means that the students had fairly similar views about how they would use for English language in the future: both in their studies/career and personal lives, but in comparison to the younger students, the older students were less motivated to meet the expectations of others. In their study of motivation and self-efficacy, Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) found a similar tendency between ideal and ought-to L2 self motivation: the mean for ideal self was considerably higher whereas the standard deviation concerning ought-to L2 self was higher.

As mentioned earlier in section 2.2, a person might feel discomfort if the discrepancy between a person’s ideal and ought-to self is vast, however, the results of the present study do not implicate that there would be a vast difference between the two motivational selves among the sample groups. I also believe that the aforementioned discomfort would be more likely to arise if ought-to self was stronger than ideal self, which was not the case according to the results of the present study. However, it could bring a learner discomfort if he feels that his own aspirations are not supported by his significant others. For example, a learner might want to picture himself pursuing a career abroad while his parents or guardians do not perceive him as capable of managing such a career and therefore do not expect him to put in any extra effort into learning a foreign language.

When it comes to self-efficacy, the comprehensive school group had a higher mean value than the general upper secondary school group in self-efficacy as a whole (45.28 and 43.34) and a slightly higher mean score in the subcategory of answering to teacher's questions (57.86 and 56.71). In all of the subcategories of self-efficacy, the general upper secondary school group's results did not differ from the younger group's results notably. Nevertheless, looking at the results from self-efficacy as a whole, it could be concluded that the self-efficacy results support the previous assumption that the older the students get, the more they are aware of their shortcomings in their language knowledge and therefore perceive themselves as less efficacious. Both groups were most cautious when it came to item number 3 "In English class, I feel confident when speaking English so that other students of the class can hear me" in self-efficacy, while both groups reported the most efficacious behavior on item number 10 "In English class, I participate in pair discussions in English", which indicates that the more people there are listening, the less efficacious the students perceive themselves.

The correlations between the L2 motivational selves and self-efficacy were examined by using Spearman's rho. As discussed briefly in the results -section, this paper was set out to explore the kind of relationships that exist between the comprehensive and general upper secondary school student groups' L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy because it is not possible to draw clear cut cause-effect conclusions from the results of the correlation analysis. Thus, the focal point of the study was any relationship between the variables could be detected: the following paragraphs intend to answer the second research question "How do motivation and self-efficacy correlate within the groups from comprehensive and general upper secondary school?".

The correlation analysis showed that the learners' ought-to L2 self and the subcategories of self-efficacy did not correlate and none of the analyses were statistically significant indicating that the correlation results concerning ought-to L2 self cannot be generalized. The highest correlation between ought-to self and any of the subcategories of self-efficacy was found between the comprehensive school group's ought-to self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions ( $r = -.288$ ) but according to Karjalainen (2010, 122) there is no correlation if  $r < .3$ , what is more, the result is not statistically significant ( $p = .075$ ). Taking into account that, for example, the comprehensive school students felt more need to meet the expectations of others, their ought-to L2 self-views did not correlate with their perceived self-efficacy. This finding is partly in line with other studies, as most have reported the lowest correlations between ought-to L2 self and other

variables but, nevertheless, there has been a correlation whereas in the present study no correlation was found. For example, Papi (2010), Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2017) and Shih and Chang (2018) have all who come to the conclusion that ought-to L2 self and self-efficacy correlated, even if the correlation was weaker than the correlation between ideal L2 self and self-efficacy.

A possible explanation for ought-to L2 self not showing any correlation with self-efficacy could be due to ought-to L2 self being connected to anxiety (see, i.e. Papi 2010, Shih and Chang 2018). As discussed earlier, (Bandura 1995, 8–9) claims that people with a low sense of efficacy are more vulnerable to anxiety than those equipped with a strong sense of efficacy. Because the students in the present study did not report high ought-to L2 self scores and most of the students perceived themselves as efficacious, they probably did not suffer from the anxiety related to meeting the expectations of others and therefore, no relationship between ought-to self and self-efficacy was found. In order to nurture such an environment in which meeting the expectations of others is less significant than reaching one's own goals and thus avoiding such stress or anxiety with a group of young learners. It is, of course, important that teachers expect their students aim to do their best and strive for best possible results in learning but focal in such goal setting, to my liking, should be the learners' own learning goals that have been set with the assistance of a teacher or other authority.

Ideal L2 self stood out from the ought-to L2 self with positive correlations with all of the subcategories of self-efficacy. The comprehensive school group had a positive correlation with ideal L2 self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions ( $r = .360$ ) and overall self-efficacy ( $r = .358$ ) with both results were significant at the .05 level. The strongest positive correlation was found between the comprehensive school students' ideal L2 self and self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions in English ( $r = .561$ ) reaching significance at the .001 level. The general upper secondary school group had stronger positive correlations than the comprehensive school group between ideal L2 self and the subcategories of self-efficacy. The strongest positive correlation was found between ideal L2 self and self-efficacy in pair/group discussions ( $r = .623$ ), while the other two subcategories had a correlation of  $r = .561$  and  $r = .512$  with ideal L2 self. All of the general upper secondary school groups' correlations were significant at the .001 level, suggesting that the results are generalizable. As discussed before (Markus, Hazel Rose and Ann Patrice Ruvolo in Dörnyei 2005, 99) that in the process of motivated behavior, the L2 ideal self represents the individual's actual thoughts and feelings closely,



which appeared to be the case in the present study. Furthermore, according to Dörnyei (2005, 103), the learner's ideal L2 self can be influenced by instrumental motives as well; in the present study, those instrumental benefits were represented in, for example, item number 4 "In the future, I could imagine myself studying in a study program that is in English" and item number 6 "In the future, I could imagine myself using English as my work language". The scores of those statements concerning the instrumental benefits of learning the language were among the lowest.

In a similar manner, in their quantitative study, Shih and Chang (2018) examined, among other factors, the L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy of 473 Taiwanese high school students using a questionnaire. The participants of the study (Shih and Chang, 2018) were between the ages of 15–19, which is close to the approximate age range of the participants of the present study. Shih and Chang found evidence that supports the present study's findings as they came to the conclusion that the relationship between ideal self and self-efficacy was stronger than the relationship between ought-to self and self-efficacy (2018, 155). This finding is in line with the results of Roshandel, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh's study, as they explain that, among other factors, the ideal L2 self was one of the most powerful predictors of L2 self-efficacy (2017, 340). The findings presented above could mean that the more positive the learners' ideal self is in terms of the foreign language, the more confident, or in other words, self-efficient, they are to use the language. Papi (2013 475) came to a similar conclusion in his study, as he stated that the more intrinsic the motive to study, for example, a foreign language, is, the more impact it has on the effort the learner is willing to make to achieve his goals. In a similar manner, Muhammad, Lamb and Chambers (2013) came to the conclusion that ideal L2 self can be developed through intended efforts in language learning.

Both groups had the highest mean of the three subcategories of self-efficacy in overall self-efficacy (61.17 and 62.5), however, there was no evidence of a correlation between ought-to self and overall self-efficacy. It was already discussed earlier that this could be a result of the learners being motivated by meeting the expectations of others rather than striving to be better than other learners in the same group. I believe that this is something that teachers should promote during their classes, as in their teens, people are likely to compare themselves to others. This comparison of self towards others, however, seldom helps the individual to develop, for example, their skills in an efficient manner. If the teacher would be able to make the learners to focus on themselves, rather than on others, the teacher, to my liking, has succeeded to create a positive learning

environment. On the contrary, if the focus and purpose of learning is to master the subject in question than others, many learners could end up feeling less efficacious, if they feel that they are less skilled or capable than their peers. In my opinion, this aspect of competitiveness and comparison between learners does not belong to the world of education.

Even if the present study was not set out to find answers to the question whether having a strong ideal or ought-to L2 self is beneficial for L2 mastery or proficiency level, I consider evidence on how to improve learners' motivation and self-efficacy related to L2 learning and learning situations just as meaningful. Furthermore, this approach of motivation and self-efficacy in foreign language learning context can help expand our understanding of how to encourage learners to become more active in their learning process rather than being passive "recipients of knowledge" while in school. I believe that changing the above-mentioned phenomenon of learners being passive is an endless discussion and journey, but it should not keep teachers from trying to change those attitudes and thoughts that result in passive behavior in school. According to the Finnish national curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Learning 2014, 398), one of the aims of the foreign language teaching on comprehensive school level is to: "Encourage the student to take part in discussions about various kinds of topics suitable for the student's age and life experience that also include expressing opinions". While the schools are focused on achieving the best possible results in learning, it should be just as essential to provide the students with a strong sense of efficacy, which then enables them to use their acquired knowledge in practice.

Based on the discussion of comprehensive and general upper secondary school learners' L2 motivational self-system and self-efficacy, it can be concluded that the learners in both groups are more driven to learn English language by their ideal L2 self-views. The students felt fairly confident that they will indeed need their skills in English in the future both as means of daily communication and for a career that requires being able to use English language. The students' views on external pressure, namely ought-to L2 self-views, showed that while the comprehensive school students are aware of how their teacher perceives them as learners, general upper secondary school students do not feel pressure to appear as a good student in the eyes of their teacher. A promising finding was that students in both groups viewed being able to use English as a characteristic trait for an educated person and were motivated to learn the language in order to fit into the profile of "and educated person". The majority of the students in both

groups had a rather strong sense of self-efficacy in different areas of using English in the classroom. However, the more people are involved in, for example, a situation where a student has to use English, the less efficacious they perceived themselves.

Like all studies, there are a few limitations concerning the manner this study was conducted. First of all, the number of participants was 80, which is a considerably fair number of research participants for an MA thesis, but in order to gain data that would be normally distributed, a larger sample size would be preferred: with larger sample size, more information of greater accuracy and generalizability could be gathered. Also, when conducting a similar study with many subcategories, the number of statements in the questionnaire should be greater, in a manner that there would be, for example, 10 questions concerning each subcategory of self-efficacy. However, as was discovered when carrying out the questionnaire part of the study, the 6<sup>th</sup>-grade comprehensive school students found the questionnaire long and difficult to understand which is why the data gathered from that group was excluded from the study and the group of 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students that would also have taken part in the present study were not tested at all. Lastly, it has to be acknowledged that the results of the self-efficacy part of the study do not reflect how efficacious the students feel when using English language outside the classroom in a natural context. In her study, Kaisvuori (2014, 166–167) notes that social connections play a role in a student's self-efficacy and that students need a safe study environment. Often, the classroom context is a safe environment for the students and thus they might feel more efficacious using the language in the classroom as opposed to using the language outside the classroom in real-life interaction.

## 7 Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to find evidence on whether there are any differences between the L2 motivational self-system, self-efficacy and their relationship among 41 comprehensive and 39 general upper secondary school students. The first hypothesis related to the first research question was that the older learners are more extrinsically motivated, hence have a higher score in ought-to L2 self, as they feel more pressure to succeed in their studies from authorities, such as teachers, family, and other significant others. Based on the results, the hypothesis was proved to be wrong, as the only clear difference between the two groups was that the comprehensive school group had a higher mean in ought-to L2 self. Even if the hypothesis was proved incorrect, this finding is not unusual when the focus is on learners in their childhood or teens, as based on my own experience, it is common for younger learners to feel the need to please the teacher and therefore feel the need to meet the expectations of authors and significant others. The second hypothesis was that the older learners would perceive themselves as less efficacious due to them being more aware of their shortcomings when it comes to language use. The hypothesis was correct, as the general upper secondary school group had a lower value in self-efficacy, even if the differences were relatively small. The third hypothesis, which predicted that ideal L2 self would have a stronger relationship with self-efficacy than ought-to L2 self, was proved right: according to the analyses concerning both groups' L2 motivational selves and self-efficacy, significant correlations were found between ideal L2 self and all three subcategories of self-efficacy.

I believe it is essential that more studies will be conducted in the field of L2 motivational selves in relation to self-efficacy. Over the years teaching in Finland has steered towards motivation-based learning, which promotes the importance of motivation-based studies in the field of learning. Including self-efficacy in a motivational study is relevant, because motivation and self-efficacy are so strongly connected both affecting the other. Therefore, as the plans for the new Finnish national curriculum are underway, it would be interesting to conduct similar research when the new curriculum has been in use for a while to see if the students feel more motivated to learn, for example, a foreign language. Furthermore, a study in the field of foreign language learning focusing on motivation in relation to self-efficacy in answering teacher's questions and in pair/group activity would be beneficial so that foreign language teachers could utilize the information to create a social environment in class in which the students could more easily

overcome their insecurities in using the language and achieve better learning results through more intended effort to use and practice their language skills.

To sum up, the evidence found in the present study provides important information not only to the language educators but also for other learning contexts. The comparison of the comprehensive school and general upper secondary school students indicated that learners in both groups are, to some extent, learning English as a foreign language in order to reduce the discrepancy between their ought-to and actual selves. As higher levels of ought-to L2 motivational self is often connected with anxiety, it is vital that teachers in different school levels promote the ideal L2 motivational self in learning. This promotion of the ideal L2 self can be done by emphasizing that learners should be active participants of their own learning process: they should set short as well as long term goals for themselves and understand that the work they do to learn a foreign language is a future investment in their own lives. The role of teachers is important in guiding and introducing the learners to a reflective learning style. I believe that after learners understand why they are engaging in the learning situation in the first place, their learning will be more likely to be facilitated by ideal L2 self-views. For younger learners, it might be more difficult to form a mental picture of themselves benefitting from the learning process in the long run, but nevertheless, it should be encouraged. Motivation being a key factor that facilitates learning, the focus of teachers should be on promoting the learners' motivation and aim to provide learners with learning experiences that enhance their feeling of efficacy. As a result, the students could become more willing to embark on new tasks and continue learning even when the content becomes more difficult.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. The questionnaire in Finnish

Tämän kyselyn avulla pyritään selvittämään oppilaiden motivaatiota opiskella englannin kieltä sekä minäpystyvyyden tunnetta erilaisissa luokkatilanteissa.

Vastaa kysymyksiin rehellisesti valitsemalla jokaisesta kysymyksestä yksi vaihtoehto, joka on lähinnä omaa tuntemustasi (Täysin eri mieltä – eri mieltä – samaa mieltä – täysin samaa mieltä).

Kysely on anonymi: yksittäisen kyselyn tuloksia ei julkaista, vaan niitä käytetään opettajan pedagogisten opintojen seminaarityössä sekä englannin kielen Pro Gradu -tutkielmassa.

Kiitos osallistumisesta!

Opiskelen englannin kieltä, koska...

1. Vanhempieni mielestä se on tärkeää.
2. ihmiset ympärilläni odottavat minun tekevän niin
3. haluan saada opettajani hyväksyntää.
4. ihmiset, joita arvostan, pitävät englannin kielen taitoa tärkeänä.
5. koulutetun ihmisen tulee osata englannin kieltä ja pystyä puhumaan englanniksi.
6. muuten ihmiset ajattelevat, etten ole hyvä oppimaan.
7. luulen, että vanhempani pettyvät minuun, jos en opiskele sitä.
8. muuten muiden kuva minusta oppilaana muuttuisi huonoksi.
9. läheisten ystäväieni mielestä se on tärkeää.
10. muut ihmiset arvostavat minua enemmän, jos osaan englannin kieltä.

Voisin kuvitella tulevaisuudessa...

1. itseni asumassa ulkomailla ja käyväni englanninkielisiä keskusteluja.
2. käyttäväni englantia kollegojeni ja kansainvälisten ystäväieni kanssa.
3. itseni kirjoittamassa sähköposteja sujuvasti englannin kielellä.
4. opiskelevani kokonaan englanninkielisessä opinto-ohjelmassa.
5. olevani henkilö, joka osaa puhua englantia sujuvasti.

6. käyttäväni englantia työkielenäni.
7. puhuvani englantia kuin natiivit (englantia äidinkielenään puhuvat) kielenpuhujat.
8. tekeväni asioita, jotka vaativat englannin kielen käyttöä.
9. itseni tilanteeseen, jossa puhun englannin kielellä ulkomaalaisten kanssa.
10. olevani henkilö, joka pystyy puhumaan englantia.

Englannin kielen tunneilla...

1. osallistun englanninkielisiin ryhmäkeskusteluihin.
2. en uskalla viitata, vaikka tietäisin vastauksen opettajan esittämään kysymykseen englanniksi.
3. koen oloni itsevarmaksi, kun puhun muiden ryhmäni oppilaiden kuullen englantia.
4. koen, etten ole riittävän hyvä ottamaan osaa ryhmäkeskusteluihin englanniksi.
5. uskon, että osaan vastata englanniksi hyvin opettajan esittämiin kysymyksiin.
6. minua hermostuttaa, jos joudun vastaamaan opettajan esittämään kysymykseen englanniksi.
7. uskon, että englannin kielen taitoni on heikompi kuin suurimman osan ryhmässäni.
8. viittaaan, jos uskon tietäväni vastauksen opettajan esittämään kysymykseen englanniksi.
9. uskon, että kielitaitoni on riittävän hyvä, kun vastaan opettajan esittämiin kysymyksiin.
10. osallistun englanninkielisiin parikeskusteluihin.
11. olen epävarma, kun vastaan opettajan esittämään kysymykseen englanniksi.
12. annan mieluummin muiden puhua ryhmäkeskusteluissa, sillä en uskalla käyttää englantia.
13. uskon, että englannin kielen taitoni on yhtä hyvä kuin suurimmalla osalla ryhmästäni.
14. en uskalla viitata, koska pelkään, että vastaukseni ei ole oikein tai riittävän hyvä.
15. uskon, että selviän suullisista harjoituksista taidoillani.

## **Appendix 2. The questionnaire in English**

Students' motivation to study English language and their self-efficacy in different classroom activities are studied on grounds of this questionnaire.

Answer the questions in an honest manner by choosing one alternative for each question that resembles your feeling the most (strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree).

This questionnaire is anonymous: the data will be used in a master's thesis and the results of single questionnaires are not be published.

Thank you for participation!

I study English language because...

1. my parents feel it is important.
2. the people around me expect me to do so.
3. I seek acceptance from my teacher.
4. the people that I look up to think English language skills are important.
5. an educated person has to know English language and to be able to speak in English
6. otherwise people will think that I am not a good learner.
7. I think my parents will be disappointed in me if I do not study it.
8. otherwise others' image of me as a student would turn in to negative.
9. according to my close friends, it is important.
10. other people will appreciate me more if I know English language.

In the future, I could imagine myself...

1. living abroad and having conversations in English.
2. using English with my colleagues and with my international friends.
3. writing emails fluently in English.
4. studying in a study program that is in English.
5. being a person that can speak English fluently.
6. using English as my work language.
7. speaking English like the native (those that speak English as their first language) language speakers.
8. doing things that require using English language.
9. in a situation where I speak English with foreigners.
10. being a person who can speak English.

In English classes...

1. I participate in group conversations in English.
2. I do not have the courage to volunteer to answer even if I knew the answer to the teacher's question in English.
3. I feel confident when speaking English so that other students of the class can hear me.
4. I feel I am not good enough to participate in group conversations in English
5. I believe that I can answer to the questions proposed by the teacher in English.
6. I feel nervous if I have to answer a question proposed by the teacher in English.
7. I believe that my skills in English are worse than of those in the same group.
8. I volunteer to answer to a question, if I believe I know the correct answer in English.

9. I believe that my (English) language skills are good enough when answering questions proposed by the teacher.
10. I participate in pair discussions in English.
11. I feel uncertain when answering a teacher's question in English.
12. I rather let other people talk in group discussions, because I do not have the courage to use English.
13. I believe that my level of English is as good as most of the people in the same group have.
14. I do not dare to volunteer to answer to a question because I fear that my answer is false or not good enough.
15. I believe that I can manage oral exercises with my skills.

### **Appendix 3. The Finnish summary**

#### **Suomenkielinen tiivistelmä**

##### **Johdanto**

Oppilaiden osallistuminen opetukseen on tärkeä oppimista edistävä tekijä, siitä huolimatta oppilaat eivät välttämättä osallistu tunneilla esimerkiksi vastaamalla opettajan esittämiin kysymyksiin.

Vieraan kielen oppimisen piirissä on tutkittu paljon oppilaiden yksilölliset eroja, kuten esimerkiksi motivaatiota, ahdistuneisuutta ja minäpystyvyyttä (engl. self-efficacy). Tässä tutkimuksessa vertaillaan yläasteen ja lukion englannin kielen opiskelijoiden motivaatiota ja minäpystyvyyttä luokkahuoneessa englannin kielen opiskelussa. Monet aiemmat tutkimukset keskittyvät motivaation ja/tai minäpystyvyyden vaikutukseen oppimistuloksissa, minkä vuoksi tässä tutkimuksessa keskitytään näiden muuttujan keskinäiseen suhteeseen.

Tässä määrällisessä tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään Banduran (1997, 11) minäpystyvyyden teoriaa sekä Dörnyein (2005) kielenoppimismotivaatioteoriaa (engl. the L2 motivational self-system). Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarkastella ja vertailla kvantitatiivisesti yläaste- ja lukio-opiskelijoiden (N = 80) mahdollista motivaation ja minäpystyvyyden suhdetta toisiinsa korrelaatiotutkimuksen avulla. Opiskelijoiden vastaukset kerättiin kyselylomakkeella, jossa oli väittämiä liittyen heidän L2-omakuviinsa ja minäpystyvyyteensä. Motivaatiota mittaavat väittämät perustuivat Papin (2010) kyselyyn. Tutkimuskysymykset olivat seuraavat:

- 1) Miten yläkoululaisten ja lukiolaisten motivaatio ja minäpystyvyys eroavat toisistaan?
- 2) Miten yläkoululaisten ja lukiolaisten motivaatio ja minäpystyvyys korreloivat keskenään?

Ensimmäiseen tutkimuskysymykseen liittyy kaksi hypoteesia: lukio-opiskelijoiden ryhmällä on korkeampi vaadittu L2-minä on sekä toisaalta alhaisempi minäpystyvyys kuin yläkoululaisilla. Toiseen tutkimuskysymykseen liittyvä hypoteesi on, että toivottu L2—minä korreloi vahvemmin minäpystyvyyden kanssa kuin vaadittu L2-minä. Tiivistelmä esittelee tutkimuksen teoreettisen taustan, aineiston ja toteuttamistavan lyhyesti. Tärkeimmät tulokset ja niiden perusteella tehdyt johtopäätökset esitetään lopuksi.

### **Motivaatio ja minäpystyvyys**

Motivaatiolla tarkoitetaan yksilön halukkuutta ryhtyä ja toisaalta jatkaa jonkun asian parissa, vaikka asian tekeminen olisikin haastavaa. Mielestäni onnistuakseen oppimisessa oppilaan tulee olla motivoitunut. Motivaation sanotaankin olevan yhtä tärkeä tekijä vieraan kielen oppimisessa kuin kyvykkyys (Gardner 1985, 11). Tässä tutkimuksessa motivaatiota käsitellään vieraan kielen oppimisen näkökulmasta Dörnyein (2005) kielenoppimismotivaatioteoriaa hyödyntäen. Dörnyei loi uuden dynaamisen teorian tultuaan siihen tulokseen, että aiemmat teoriat (esim. Gardner & Lambert 1972) eivät tarpeeksi ota huomioon motivaation kehittyvää luonnetta. Uusi motivaatioteoria koskien vieraan kielen oppimista perustuu aiemman motivaatiotutkimuksen lisäksi Higginsin (1987) teoriaan minäkuvista ja niiden ristiriidoista. Minäkuvia on kolmenlaisia, ne voivat olla todellisia (engl. actual self), ideaalisia (engl. ideal self) tai vaadittuja (ought self).

Edellä mainittujen teorioiden pohjalta Dörnyei (2005) kehitti uudenlaisen kielenoppimisteorian, jonka keskiössä on kolme eri ulottuvuutta: ideaali L2-minä (engl. the ideal L2 self), vaadittu L2-minä (the ought-to L2 self) ja L2-oppimiskokemus (engl. the L2 learning experience). Tässä tutkimuksessa mitattiin suoranaisesti ainoastaan ideaalia ja vaadittua L2-minää ja verrattiin sitä minäpystyvyyteen, joka kuitenkin liittyy oppijan L2-oppimiskokemukseen. Ideaali L2-minä viittaa toivottuun kuvaan itsestään L2-kielen puhujana tulevaisuudessa, motivaatio syntyykin siis siitä, että oppija haluaa vähentää ristiriitaa nykyhetken ja toivotun, ideaalin, L2-minän välillä. Ideaali L2-minä koostuu asenteista kohdekielen puhujia kohtaan sekä itseä hyödyntävistä motiiveista (Dörnyei 2005, 103), esimerkiksi kielen ajatellusta hyödystä tulevaisuuden työmarkkinoilla. Vaadittu L2-minä sen sijaan viittaa niihin vieraan kielen puhujan ominaisuuksiin, joita oppija kokee, että hänen odotetaan tekevän tai hallitsevan välttääkseen mahdollisia ei-toivottuja seurauksia (Dörnyei, Ryan 2015, 87–88). Dörnyein (2005) motivaatioteoria on suhteellisen uusi teoria kielenoppimisen alalla ja on saanut

kritiikkiä osakseen. Esimerkiksi Lamb (2017, 318) on kritisoinut teoriaa siitä, että nykyhetken sijaan teorian ideaalinen L2-minä keskittyy tulevaisuuteen. Kuitenkin uutta dynaamisempaa kielenoppimismotivaatioteoriaa on käytetty laajalti tutkimuksessa ja sen on todettu hyödylliseksi monessa eri kontekstissa (ks. Henry 2009; Ryan 2009; Busse 2013).

Minäpystyvyydellä tarkoitetaan yksilön uskomuksia omista kyvyistään suoriutua tietyistä tehtävistä (Bandura 1997, 3) ja sen lähteenä pidetään yksilön yrityksiä hallita omaa elämäänsä ja sen tapahtumia (Bandura 1997, 1). Yksilön minäpystyvyyden tunteeseen vaikuttavat muun muassa aiemmat kokemukset, vertaispalaute sekä palaute auktoriteeteilta ja fyysiset reaktiot (Hsieh and Kang 2010, 609). Minäpystyvyys ei varsinaisesti kuvaa yksilön taitoja, vaan enemmänkin yksilön omaa tuntemusta kyvykkyydestään suoriutua erilaisista tilanteista.

Henkilöt, joilla on korkea minäpystyvyys, luottavat kykyihinsä ja ovat valmiita ottamaan riskejä, vaikka he eivät olisi varmoja onnistuisivatko vai eikö (Bandura 1995, 6). Epäonnistumiset liitetään yleisemmin vajanaiseen yrittämiseen kuin omien taitojen puutteeseen (Bandura, 1995, 7). Minäpystyvyyttä voitaisiinkin kuvata ihmisen mentaalisenä kuvana itsestään, jossa muutama vika ei vielä pilaa kokonaisuudessaan hyvää kuvaa. Koulumaailmassa oppilaat, joilla on korkea minäpystyvyys, uskaltavat tarttua vaativiinkin tehtäviin ja tekevät pitkäjänteisesti töitä haasteiden ylittämiseksi sekä pystyvät arvioimaan omaa suoriutumistansa tarkasti toisin kuin oppilaat, joilla on matala minäpystyvyys (Mills, Pajares ja Herron 2007, 418). Johtopäätöksenä uskon, että osallistumalla oppitunnilla oppilailla on mahdollisuus luoda positiivinen minäpystyvyyden vahvistamisen kehä, jossa osallistuminen vahvistaa minäpystyvyyden tunnetta ja vahvistunut pystyvyys taas madaltaa kynnystä osallistua tulevaisuudessa. Henkilöiden, joilla on heikko minäpystyvyys, toimia ohjaa usein omien kykyjen epäily ja heikko usko mahdollisuuksiin menestyä: tällaiset henkilöt kokevat usein epäonnistumisten johtuvan heidän tietojen tai taitojen puutteesta, toisin kuin korkean minäpystyvyyden omaavat henkilöt (Bandura 1995, 6–7). Matalan minäpystyvyyden omaavien henkilöiden heikko usko kykyihinsä asettaa heidät myös usein alttiiksi stressille, ahdistukselle ja jopa masennukselle (Bandura 1995, 8–9). Tämä saattaa johtaa siihen, että esimerkiksi kaksi oppilasta, joilla on samantasoiset tiedot ja taidot suoriutuvat koetilanteesta hyvin eri tavoin, jos toisella on korkea ja toisella matala minäpystyvyys.

## **Aineisto ja tutkimusmenetelmät**

Aineiston keruu suoritettiin eräässä Lounais-Suomen koulussa kevätlukukauden 2019 aikana. Yhteensä tutkimushenkilöitä oli 80 kappaletta: 39 yläkoulun (perusopetus) ja 41 lukion opiskelijaa, jotka kaikki opiskelivat englannin kieltä vieraana kielenä. Yläkoulun oppilaat kävivät seitsemättä ja kahdeksatta vuosiluokkaa kun taas lukion opiskelijat olivat ensimmäisen ja toisen vuosikurssin opiskelijoita. Ala-asteen viidennen ja kuudennen luokan ryhmiä oli tarkoitus sisällyttää tutkimukseen mutta koska kysely soveltui paremmin vanhemmille oppilaille, rajattiin alakoulu tutkimuksen otannasta pois. Tutkimuksen keskittyessä lähinnä oppilaiden ikään eri luokka-asteiden kautta, ei kyselyn yhteydessä oppilailta kysytty heidän sukupuoltaan.

Kysely pilotoitiin ja muokattiin lopulliseen muotoonsa, minkä jälkeen tutkimusaineisto kerättiin osana englannin kielen oppituntia kullakin ryhmällä erikseen tunnin aluksi. Opiskelijat vastasivat erilaisiin väittämiin koskien heidän motivaatiotaan ja minäpystyvyyttään asteikolla täysin eri mieltä, eri mieltä, samaa mieltä ja täysin samaa mieltä (1–4). Vastaukset pisteytettiin niin, että vastauksista sai yhtä monta pistettä kuin valittu numero osoitti kuitenkin niin, että väittämät, joissa sanamuoto oli negatiivinen, pisteytys suoritettiin käänteisesti. Kyselyn motivaatio-osuuden pohjana käytettiin Papin (2010) kyselyä ja minäpystyvyyttä erilaisissa luokkatilanteissa mittaavat väittämät suunnittelin itse. Opiskelijat vastasivat verkkopohjaiseen kyselyyn anonyymisti. Kyselytutkimukseen päädyttiin, koska siten nuoremmatkin oppilaat voivat suhteellisen vaivattomasti vastata kysymyksiin, jossa he refleктоivat omaa motivaatiotaan oppia tai heidän uskomuksiansa oppimisesta (Mackey ja Gass 2005, 92).

Tutkimuksen data analysoitiin hyödyntäen IBM SPSS ohjelman versiota 25. Analyysin tehostamiseksi, kyselyn väittämät jaettiin kuuteen eri ryhmään, vaadittuun L2-minään, toivottuun L2-minään, minäpystyvyys kokonaisuudessaan, minäpystyvyys pari ja ryhmäkeskusteluissa, minäpystyvyys opettajan kysymyksiin vastatessa ja minäpystyvyyden tunne muut huomioon ottaen. Yläkoulu- ja lukioryhmälle tehtiin tulosten pohjalta motivaatio-minäpystyvyysprofiilit, joiden avulla kahden ryhmän motivaatiota, minäpystyvyyttä sekä niiden suhdetta verrataan. Profiileissa verrataan ryhmiä deskriptiivisen tilastotieteen ja korrelaatioanalyysin avulla. Korrelaatioanalyysissä hyödynnettiin Spearmanin Rho, jota usein käytetään Likert-asteikon antamien tulosten tulkintaan, kun tulosten normaali jakautuminen ei ole oletettavissa. Tulosten normaalijakauman testaamiseen käytettiin Shapiro-Wilkin testiä.

## Tulokset ja pohdinta

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää, että millaisia eroja yläkoululaisten ja lukiolaisten motivaatiossa ja minäpystyvyydessä opiskella englannin kieltä on sekä miten kahden eri ryhmän motivaatio ja minäpystyvyys korreloivat keskenään. Vaaditun L2-minän tulokset osoittivat, että nuoremmilla oppilailla on suurempi tarve täyttää ulkopuolelta tulevat odotukset. Yläkoulun ryhmän ja lukion ryhmän tulokset olivat verrattain lähellä toisiaan; vaaditun L2-minän kohdalla yläkoulun ryhmän keskiarvo oli 28,18/40 kun taas lukioryhmän vastaava 25,66/40. Tulokset eivät tukeneet alkuperäistä hypoteesia, sillä yläkoululaisten vaadittu L2-minä -keskiarvo oli suurempi kuin lukioryhmän vastaava. Toivottu L2-minän kohdalla molempien ryhmien tulokset olivat hyvin toisiaan vastaavat: yläkoululaisten ryhmän keskiarvo oli 33,74/40 ja lukio-opiskelijoiden 33,95/40. Kuitenkin siinä missä vaaditun L2-minän kohdalla ryhmien maksimi-arvot olivat 36 ja 33, toivotun L2-minän maksimi-arvot olivat molemmilla ryhmillä 40. Minäpystyvyys seurasi motivaatiota ryhmien samankaltaisuuden osalta: yläkoulun ryhmän keskiarvo oli 45,28/60 ja lukio-opiskelijoiden vastaava 43,34/60. Ryhmien alimmat minäpystyvyyden arvot olivat 24 ja 26, kun taas molemmissa ryhmissä maksimi-arvot olivat 60. Minäpystyvyyden alakategorioissa erot olivat edelleen hyvin pieniä: lukio-opiskelijoilla oli suurempi keskiarvo minäpystyvyydessä pari ja ryhmäkeskusteluissa sekä minäpystyvyydessä muut huomioon ottaen ja yläkoulun oppilailla oli korkeampi keskiarvo minäpystyvyydessä opettajan kysymyksiin vastatessa.

Korrelaatioanalyysin avulla selvitettiin, että vaaditun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden alakategorioilla ei ollut yhteyttä toisiinsa kummallakaan ryhmällä, kun taas toivotun L2-minän ja kaikkien kolmen minäpystyvyyden alakategorian välillä oli merkittävä positiivinen korrelaatio. Tulos vahvistaa alkuperäisen hypoteesin, jonka mukaan toivotun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden välillä olisi vahvempi korrelaatio kuin vaaditun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden välillä. Vahvin positiivinen korrelaatio oli toivotun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden pari ja ryhmäkeskusteluissa välillä ( $r = 0,561$  ja  $r = 0,512$ ). Korrelaatioanalyysin tulos on osin aiempien tutkimuksien mukainen, sillä aiemmissä tutkimuksissa vaaditun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden korrelaatio on ollut heikompi kuin toivotun L2-minän ja minäpystyvyyden vastaava, kuitenkin niin, että ensin mainitulla parilla on löytynyt korrelaatio toisin kuin tässä tutkimuksessa (ks. Papi 2010, Roshandel, Ghonsooly ja Ghanizadeh 2017 sekä Shih ja Chang 2018). Mahdollinen selitys sille, ettei vaadittu L2-minä ja minäpystyvyys korreloineet tässä tutkimuksessa voi olla se, että suurimmalla osalla tutkituista minäpystyvyys oli verrattain korkea, eli suurin



osa tutkituista ei kärsi hermostuneisuudesta käyttäessään englannin kieltä, kun taas vaadittu L2-minä usein yhdistetään hermostuneisuuteen.

Kuten muillakin tutkimuksilla, myös tällä tutkimuksella on rajoitteita, jotka täytyy ottaa huomioon johtopäätöksiä tehtäessä. Tutkimukseen osallistui yhteensä 39 yläkoululaista ja 41 lukiolaista, joten yleistettävyyden ja tulosten tarkkuuden näkökulmasta tutkittavia oli verrattain vähän. Tutkimuksen korrelaatioanalyysissä käytettyjen minäpystyvyyden eri alakategorioita edustavia väittämiä voisi olla enemmän, esimerkiksi kymmenen väittämää jokaista kategoriala kohden. Tämän tutkimuksen kyselystä olisi tullut kuitenkin huomattavan pitkä, eikä se olisi ollut enää sopiva yläkoulun seitsemättä ja kahdeksaa luokkaa käyville oppilaille. On myös huomattava, että tämän tutkimuksen minäpystyvyys ei varsinaisesti kerro oppilaiden pystyvyydestä käyttää englannin kieltä ylipäänsä vaan ainoastaan erilaisissa luokkatilanteissa, toisin sanoen tutussa ympäristössä enemmän tai vähemmän tuttujen ihmisten kanssa. Täten minäpystyvyyden tulokset saattoivat olla positiivisemmat kuin mitä ne olisivat, jos minäpystyvyyttä mitattaisiin englannin kielen oppituntien ulkopuolella.

Yhteenvetona voidaan todeta, että tämä ja aiemmat tutkimukset ovat osoittaneet, että etenkin toivottu L2-minä ja minäpystyvyys vaikuttavat toisiinsa, mikä on tärkeä huomioida opetuksessa. Huomionarvoisen asiasta tekee se, että opettajan keinot lisätä aktiivisuutta englannin kielen oppitunneilla eivät rajoitu oppilaiden minäpystyvyyden parantamiseen esimerkiksi positiivisen palautteen kautta, vaan oppilaita voi kannustaa osallistumaan rohkeasti myös lisäämällä heidän sisäistä motivaatiotaan. Erittäin positiivinen löydös tutkimuksessa oli se, että yläkoulun ja lukion oppilaat olivat motivoituneita ja heidän minäpystyvyytensä oli suhteellisen korkea. Nykyinen opetussuunnitelma painottaa oppilaiden motivaation tärkeyttä ja uusi opetussuunnitelma, joka on vasta suunnitteilla, jatkaa edellisen tavoin motivaation tärkeyden asialla. Uuden opetussuunnitelman tullessa käyttöön, olisi mielenkiintoista toistaa vastaava tutkimus, jotta voitaisiin verrata kahden eri ajan opetussuunnitelmien vaikutuksia oppilaiden motivaatioon ja minäpystyvyyteen.