

## **PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EARLY ENGLISH EDUCATION IN SOUTH KOREA: A FOCUS ON ENGLISH KINDERGARTENS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to investigate parents' perceptions and experiences of early childhood English education in South Korea based on their children's private English kindergarten education. It aims to explore parental opinions about early English language learning. In addition, the study intends to discover key factors that influence their decisions in selecting private English kindergartens. Finally, it attempts to determine their level of satisfaction with their children's English kindergarten experiences and language learning outcomes. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods were used in the study. The data were collected through a questionnaire given to 30 participants and semi-structured interviews with 8 participants. As a result, participants perceived that learning English at an early age is beneficial for children's future academic and career success. The findings suggest that the current trend of private English kindergartens, highly accessible only to children from wealthy families, reflects the strong demands of parents for early English education as the Korean education system does not allow teaching English in kindergartens. To provide equal opportunities for all children to learn English in the current era of globalization, it is necessary to integrate English education into the national kindergarten curriculum.

*Keywords:* early English education, second language learning, private English kindergartens in Korea, academic-oriented learning, play-based learning

As English has become the modern-day lingua franca, early childhood English education has been gaining much attention in South Korea (Korea hereafter). There is a widespread belief among parents that young learners can acquire a second or foreign language better than adults do, and more and more Korean parents want their children to start learning English early.

However, despite parents' demands for early English education, the national kindergarten curriculum does not include English language education. The Korean curriculum mandates that English must be taught from the third grade in public education in order to normalize public education and to prohibit teaching ahead of the regular public curriculum. Nevertheless, Korean parents continue to provide English-learning opportunities for their children through private English education, an emerging market today.

The present study introduces a unique educational institution called 'English kindergarten,' a private institution that specializes in teaching English to young children in Korea. Private English kindergartens are run by either individuals or educational companies, not bound by the regulations of the Ministry of Education. A growing number of parents enroll their children in private English kindergartens with high aspirations and expectations for their children's English language learning. In particular, early English learning through private English kindergarten education is an upward trend among parents in Gangnam and Seocho Districts, the most affluent parts of Seoul, the capital of Korea.

Nevertheless, there is little research that examines the effectiveness of early English education on young learners' English language learning or that explores parents' experiences. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate parents' perceptions of early English education and analyze in-depth their perceptions and opinions based on their children's English kindergarten education, particularly focusing on the need and goals for English language learning, factors that influence parents' decisions in selecting English kindergartens, and parents' satisfaction with the English kindergarten programs and their children's English language outcomes after completing the programs.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Social Background of Early English Education in Korea***

**English Education Fever in Korea: Historical Background.** Rising from one of the poorest countries in the world with almost no natural resources to a developed, high-income country in just a few decades, the Republic of Korea has overcome several national crises and shown rapid economic development since its first establishment in 1948. It is important to note that education was one of the few ways to gain status and power in society at that time and has

played a significant role in the development of Korea. Based on these social and cultural factors, education has been valued for centuries in Korea. The importance of education grew into Korean parents' educational aspirations, a so called 'education fever', or "the national obsession with education (Seth, 2002, p. 9)," for their children's future lives. Korea ranked 9th in the 2020 global gross domestic product (GDP) rankings (Choi, 2020) with one of the world's highest-educated labor forces among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (OECD, 2018). The historical background of Korea's economic development explains the current pursuit of education in Korea.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Koreans who left for study abroad in English-speaking countries returned to Korea and became the mainstream of politics, economy, and society, leading to an increase in the study abroad population for university degrees in the 1980s (Park, 2009). This phenomenon contributed to the process in which English was recognized as an important social resource in Korean society. In the 1990s, when the Korean government decided to include English Language as a mandatory subject for the national college entrance exam, College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT), along with Korean and Mathematics, English education emerged as a serious social issue (Kwon et al., 2017).

With an aim to develop students' communicative competence by fostering their interest in English language and culture, the Korea National English Curriculum also included English in regular curriculum for primary English education in 1997 (Korean Ministry of Education). Since then, the number of Korean students going abroad to English-speaking countries for early English education rapidly increased. This trend of early study abroad even created a new form of "wild-geese family," in which children study overseas, accompanied by mothers to take care of them, and fathers stay in Korea to work and provide financial support for the family (Koo & Lee, 2006).

**The Emergence and Growth of Private English Kindergarten Market in Korea.** In today's Korean society, English proficiency is acknowledged as a key to success in academics and jobs, as a decent job or high social position requires a good educational background and a strong professional network of colleagues and coworkers. Thus, most Korean students desire to enroll in elite universities such as Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University (collectively referred to with the acronym 'SKY'), the top three universities in Korea. In the study of Lee et al. (2020), Korean mothers indicated that the most important reason for

their children's English education is to get a good score on the CSAT. As a result, English proficiency has been regarded as a critical asset for academic achievement that led to occupational success in Korea and created a huge private English education market. According to the data compiled by Statistics Korea (2021), the total expenditure on private education for English language amounted to around 6.14 trillion Korean won (\$5.2 billion US dollars).

However, despite the 'English education fever' and a high demand for early English education among Korean parents, the Ministry of Education does not allow teaching English in kindergartens and in the first and second grade curricula in public education due to the concern that teaching young learners Korean and English simultaneously could hinder their development of Korean proficiency (Jung, 2019). However, while there are parallel debates about the benefits of early foreign language education (Muñoz, 2014), there is very little evidence to support the idea that learning a second language early has a negative effect on the first language development. Nevertheless, the current Korean curriculum mandates that English must be taught from the third grade in public education. The governmental ban on English education for young children and parents' concerns about their children's future led to the emergence of a unique educational institution system called 'private English kindergarten' in the early 2000s.

The so-called English kindergarten is a private institution that specializes in teaching English to young children without being bound by the regulations of the Ministry of Education. The number of English kindergartens has been rapidly increasing over the past 20 years, especially in the past decade. In 2009, there were 181 English kindergartens across the country and 66 of them were located in Seoul, the capital city of Korea. As of January 2020, there are about 558 English kindergartens nationwide,<sup>1</sup> and 84 out of 288 in Seoul are located in Gangnam and Seocho Districts, the most affluent parts of the city (The World Without Concerns for Private Education, 2020). These private English kindergartens require tuition fees that are higher than the average college tuition fee.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, access to this type of education is very limited and depends on the socioeconomic status of the family. It is generally available to children from middle- and upper-class families, as well as children whose parents are white-collar workers or entrepreneurs.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The number of Korean kindergartens is 8,659 (Korean Educational Statistics Service, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> The average of monthly tuitions for private English kindergartens in Gangnam and Seocho Districts is \$1,882 (The World Without Concerns for Private Education, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> In fact, among the participants who indicated the current occupations of both parents in this study, there were 11 homemakers (36.7%), five professional workers (16.7%), and two entrepreneurs (6.7%) among mothers, and six office workers (20%), five professional workers (16.7%), and nine entrepreneurs (30%) among fathers.

Despite criticism that private English language early childhood education disrupts the starting line of compulsory education and creates a learning gap between children from wealthy and low-income families (Jeon, 2012), the demand for early English education continues to grow.

Although kindergarten education is not compulsory in Korea, its importance has been increasingly recognized in recent years (Kwon et al., 2017). Children usually enter kindergarten at the age of 3 and continue for three to four years before entering the first grade of elementary school. Since the Ministry of Education does not allow teaching English in kindergartens, English kindergartens are not classified as kindergartens, but as private institutions, known as 'hagwons.' English kindergartens typically run a full-day kindergarten program – an average of 5 hours a day – targeting children between the ages of 2 to 6 years. The class size is usually small, with 10-15 children in a class. Two teachers, a native English-speaking teacher and a Korean teacher fluent in English, guide students' day using only English. Private English kindergarten operators set their own curriculum. Some create their own and others use curriculum drawn from the US, Canada, UK, etc. For instance, one English kindergarten in Gangnam applies the Common Core State Standards of the US and another English kindergarten in Seocho applies the British National Curriculum of the UK. Most private English kindergartens use English textbooks and materials imported from the countries listed above.

There are three types of private English kindergartens in Korea: academic-oriented, play-based, and mixed. The academic-oriented program is teacher directed and managed. This means that teachers present students with new learning material and transmit information in an explicit, direct way. It offers a wide range of academic subjects<sup>4</sup> taught in English and students typically learn content beyond their age level. With an aim to prepare students for higher-level English education in the future through repeated practice in a structured setting, it has very high academic standards focusing on the development of literacy. For instance, students learn everything from basic grammar to more complicated writing techniques to improve their writing quality and memorize a set number of vocabulary words each week for weekly vocabulary tests. An academic-oriented English kindergarten often creates a competitive atmosphere with an emphasis on academic achievement.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, the subjects taught in one English kindergarten in Gangnam District included reading, writing, speaking, storytelling, vocabulary, grammar, art, math, science, social studies, etc.

Meanwhile, the play-based program promotes play as central to children's growth and development based on the idea that children learn through play. This type of kindergarten aims to help students grow into independent human beings by developing the creativity and problem-solving skills necessary for entering elementary school. Classes are taught in English and include a variety of activities, such as creative play, dramatic play, and arts and crafts. The goal is to enable students to learn English in a fun and enjoyable environment by communicating with each other and expressing themselves creatively.

Lastly, the mixed-type program combines the two styles of teaching approaches mentioned above. They set goals for students' English language development while pursuing a play-based approach. Nevertheless, the curriculum of the mixed-type program is more closely related to that of an academic-oriented program and thus often classified as an academic-oriented English kindergarten. However, these classifications are not strictly pedagogically based, but rather terms used by English kindergartens to promote themselves. Therefore, although statistics are not reported, it would appear that there are far more English kindergartens that are academic-oriented than play-based.

### ***Previous Studies on Early Childhood English Education***

The value of play in children's learning and development has been widely recognized by developmental psychologists (Piaget, 1962; Vygotsky, 1978). As young learners tend to have a lot of physical energy but short attention spans, many language researchers support the use of gross motor activities as effective language learning tools (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). According to Paterson (2020), more recent studies have demonstrated that the inclusion of play and playful activities within school settings supports and enhances various aspects of children's development and academic performance, such as self-regulation, language, creativity, cognition, and social skills.

Drawing inspiration from the American National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1986), Korean early childhood education emphasizes developmentally appropriate practices for young children where knowledge can be constructed through authentic child-centered experiences (Shim & Herwig, 1997). The current national kindergarten curriculum also emphasizes a child-centered, play oriented, integrated teaching approach focusing on children's holistic development (Korea Institute of Child Care and Education, 2019).

However, academic-oriented English kindergartens often focus on building students' academic skills through teacher-directed subject teaching to meet parents' demands driven by the pragmatics of preparation for formal schooling and children's later success (Sharpe, 2002). Moreover, the teacher-centered, knowledge and skills-based approach has been long embraced in the Korean context, which makes it difficult for teachers to adapt to the more child-centered emphasis of Western philosophies in early years education (Lim & Torr, 2008).

Studies on early English education show that activities conducted at the private English kindergartens are inappropriate according to the Early Childhood Education Act. In the study of Kwon (2002), Korean preschool educators criticized many aspects of academic-oriented programs as inappropriate for early years education, such as teacher-directed, highly structured, and paper-and-pencil tasks using workbooks and worksheets. Nevertheless, it shows that the private kindergartens are influenced by parental demands when planning lessons, because the institutions are dependent on the high tuition fees paid by parents. Therefore, despite the discrepancies between the beliefs of Korean teachers and the actual practices in academic-oriented English kindergartens (Kwon, 2002), parents tend to choose programs based on their perceptions of effective educational practices for improving their children's English language skills.

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of research on the early childhood English education in the field of early childhood education in Korea. The study of Yi and Yang (2009) reviewed previous research on the current situation and awareness of early English education in Korea. Prior studies on early English education at Korean English kindergartens investigated the influence of early English education on children's first language development, bilingual language development, and social development (Ma, 2003). Although there is still controversy about the effectiveness of early education, some studies have pointed out the issues of excessive early English education in Korea (Shin, 2002; Woo et al., 2002).

In contrast, studies by Seo et al. (2003) and Yoon (2008) have shown the positive effects of prior learning in English kindergartens on the acquisition of English in elementary schools. The study of Hwang (2004), which examined the influence of early English education on children's bilingual language development, has also indicated that early exposure to English improved children's English language development. However, there are few prior studies that investigated the long-term effects of early English education on the development of young learners in the

second language environment and how various contextual factors affect young learners' English learning, thus evidence is insufficient to draw conclusions about the influence of early English education on children in Korea.

Moreover, there is little, if any, research that looked into parental perceptions of need for early English education in the EFL environment and in-depth analysis of their experiences through the unique English programs of private English kindergarten in Korea. In Korea's education system, where English language education is not included in the national kindergarten curriculum, this study examines why parents want their children to start learning English early, what type of kindergarten education they prefer, and whether their expectations are met through the English education. In other words, the current study aims to analyze the education market that facilitates and supports the implementation of early childhood English education by investigating Korean parents' perceptions and experiences of early childhood English education based on their children's private English kindergarten education experiences.

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate South Korean parents' perceptions of the need for early English education and their goals for their children's English language education
2. To investigate factors that influence parents' decisions in selecting English kindergartens, such as learning types and qualifications of English teachers.
3. To investigate parents' satisfaction levels with private English kindergarten programs and their children's English language outcomes after completing the programs

## **METHOD**

**Participants.** The participants of this study are 30 Korean parents who enrolled their children in private English kindergartens in Korea. Twenty-seven mothers and three fathers participated in the survey and eight of the mothers participated in follow-up interviews. The ages ranged mainly from 30s to 50s; 22 participants in their 30s, seven in their 40s, and one in her 50s.

Considering the sensitivity of the questions, some respondents skipped two background questions related to occupations and education. As a result, 19 participants (63.3%) responded to the item regarding occupation and 25 participants (83.3%) indicated the highest level of



education they have completed. The occupations of the participants are homemakers (10 participants), professional workers (five participants; one lawyer, one judge, two instructors, and one freelancer), and entrepreneurs (four participants). In terms of education, all 25 participants who responded to the item appeared to be highly educated, with a bachelor's degree or higher: 18 participants have obtained a bachelor's degree, and seven participants have earned a master's and/or a doctorate degree. Of the total participants, 13 participants (43.3%) had study abroad experience. The level of English proficiency the participants rated themselves for indicated that 10 participants (33.3%) were 'good,' 14 participants (46.7%) were 'average,' and six participants (20%) were 'poor.' As a result, 80% of the participants indicated their English proficiency as at least average.

Analysis of the type of English kindergarten that the participants enrolled their child in showed that 20 participants (66.7%) sent their child to an academic-oriented English kindergarten, five participants (16.7%) to a play-based English kindergarten, and the remaining five participants (16.7%) to a mixed-type English kindergarten. As for the locations of the English kindergarten the participants' children attended, 23 English kindergartens (76.7%) were in Seoul and seven (23.3%) were in different cities. In particular, 18 out of 23 English kindergartens in Seoul were located in the Gangnam District. Lastly, with regard to English kindergarten education tuition, 66.7% of the participants spent more than 1.5 million won (\$1,300 US dollars) per month; five participants (16.7%) spent between 2 and 2.5 million won (\$1,700 - \$2,100 US dollars) per month, 15 participants (50%) spent between 1.5 and 2 million won (\$1,300 - \$1,700 US dollars), seven participants (23.3%) spent between 1 and 1.5 million won (\$850 - \$1,300 US dollars), and three participants (10%) spent 1 million won (\$850 US dollars) or less.<sup>5</sup>

**Instruments.** This study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods including an online survey using Google Forms and semi-structured interviews via phone call. The survey was used to investigate Korean parents' perceptions of early English education in general (see Appendix A) and the interviews were carried out with selected participants to examine the in-depth thoughts and opinions based on their experiences (see Appendix B). The survey consisted of four background questions, 30 six-point Likert scale

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<sup>5</sup> The researcher converted Korean Won (KRW) to US Dollar (USD) according to the dollar exchange rate in October 2021.

question items, and eight demographic questions. The Likert scale items asked participants to indicate their level of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, on six items about the need and goals for early English education, 15 items about reasons for choosing an English kindergarten and factors that influenced their decisions, and nine items about their satisfaction after their children completed the program. The survey was given in the native language of the participants, Korean. The interview was semi-structured with four open-ended questions about participants' perceptions of early English education and several questions based on responses to the survey. The researcher conducted each interview over the phone and interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. For accuracy and convenience of the communication, interviews were conducted in Korean and audio-recorded with the consent of the participants.

**Data Collection and Analysis.** Prior to primary data collection, a pilot study was held in early June 2021 with two people to improve the quality of the outcome of the present study. No major problems were found in the questionnaire and several individual interview questions were developed after the pilot test. As for the main study, the researcher first contacted several parents with whom she had personal relationships and knew had sent their children to English kindergartens in Seoul and requested their participation in the online survey with a brief background information about the purpose of the survey. After the initial round of recruitment, the participants introduced the researcher to other parents. The data were collected from a total of 30 participants from mid-June to the end of June through this snowball sampling approach. After the survey, the researcher contacted eight of the participants who answered "yes" to the question "Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview?" and carried out in-depth individual interviews with them. To ensure participants' ability to respond meaningfully, the subjects were parents of children who attended English kindergarten for more than one year and graduated from English kindergarten within the last three years. The interviews were conducted during July.

Data analysis in this study involved quantitative analysis to measure participants' perceptions, experiences, and satisfaction, and qualitative analysis to understand the background of their perceptions, experiences, and opinions. The quantitative data were collected through the questionnaire with 30 Likert-scale items conducted with 30 participants. Responses to these items were numerically coded; strongly disagree = 1, moderately disagree = 2, slightly disagree = 3, slightly agree = 4, moderately agree = 5, strongly agree = 6. The qualitative data were

collected through the responses to the four open-ended questions in in-depth interviews with eight participants drawn from the total of 30. The interviews were first transcribed and then translated into English by the researcher. These translated transcripts were organized into patterns for analysis as the researcher generated codes based on the topics and applied them to sections relevant to the research objectives.

## RESULTS

### *Parents' Perceptions of Early English Education*

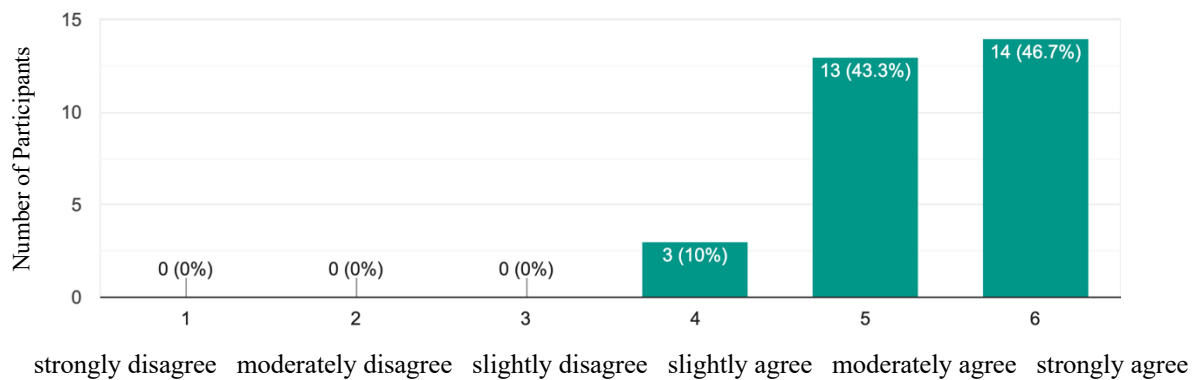
With an aim to investigate the perceptions of Korean parents about early English education, the first section of the questionnaire included items focusing on the need for early English education and their goals for their children's English language learning. The responses to the items revealed both general and specific beliefs about the importance of learning English from infancy.

**Need for Early English Education.** First, there was a general belief among participants that English skills are necessary in the era of globalization, in which all 30 participants selected the positive items on the 6-point Likert scale. As shown in Figure 1, 14 participants (46.7%) responded, 'strongly agree,' 13 participants (43.3%) said, 'moderately agree,' and the remaining three participants (10%) chose 'slightly agree.' Participant C, who has a 4-year-old son, described English language skills as "a necessary social communication tool whether traveling or doing business," and already expressed concern about the disadvantages her son would face if he does not speak English well in the future.

Participant's perceptions of the need for early English education are based on the popular belief that 'the younger the better' when it comes to learning a second language. The vast majority of participants (90%) believed that starting early yields linguistic advantages. According to the demographic data, 20 of the participants' children (66.7%) started attending English kindergartens at the age of 4 or earlier; two children (6.7%) at the age of 2, nine (30%) at the age of 3, and another nine (30%) at the age of 4. Of the remaining ten (33.3%) who started after the age of 4, four (13.3%) started at the age of 5 and six (20%) at the age of 6. The following quote is from a participant who enrolled her 2-year-old daughter in an English

**Figure 1**

*English Proficiency is Necessary in the Era of Globalization.*



kindergarten and responded ‘strongly agree’ to all three items related to the need for early English education.

I think English is a critical component to living in a globalized world as it is the common language for travel, commerce, and technology. By learning English, my children will develop an excellent understanding of cultural diversity and be capable of communicating with people from all around the world. I also think that learning English is easier for young children because they soak up languages like sponges, so they should be able to learn it effortlessly. (Participant A)

Participants also commonly believed that young children learn English easily and accent-free. For example, Participant E said, “Children are less anxious and less inhibited than older language learners and thus learning English can be easy and fun for them” and Participant F said, “Children who receive early English education become confident in speaking English with native-like pronunciation and intonation.”

More importantly, the high hopes of Korean parents for their children’s academic well-being in the competitive education system and their wish to contribute to that success are noted as part of the reasons participants enroll their child in English kindergartens. Participant C, who described early English education as a “trend” among parents of preschool children, said, “everyone in Gangnam starts learning English early these days, so I could not help but join the trend for my child’s academic success.” On the other hand, Participant H criticized Korea’s

current English education situation as “crazily overheated” and expressed concern that her son might fall behind his peers academically at school due to his lack of English skills.

**Goals for Early English Education.** Another common belief among participants was that learning English from an early age will help their children thrive academically and eventually lead to greater success in a variety of ways in their lives in the future. Participants overwhelmingly perceived early English education as essential in Korean society and viewed good English language skills as the key to academic success, university success, and career success. On each item asking about the relationship between early English education and future success, 29 participants (96.7%) answered that it would help them achieve academic excellence and get good grades in primary and secondary school, 23 participants (76.7%) responded that it would help them get a good score on the college entrance exam, and 25 participants (83.3%) marked that it would help them find a job they want in the future.

Follow-up interviews showed that these responses of the participants come from their past experiences in college and work. Participants shared their opinions along with personal stories related to English and how they felt that poor English skills could be “a hindrance” to their studies and careers. Participant D, who attended college in the mid-2000s, when many Korean universities had begun to establish and implement English-medium instruction (EMI) policies,<sup>6</sup> saw English skills as “critical linguistic tools” to survive in the college.

When I was in college, half of my lectures were taught in English, and I assume that most courses will be in English by the time my child goes to college. I hope that my child will be able to speak English fluently and confidently so that he can keep up with English classes in the future. (Participant D)

Even after graduating from college, participants continued to spend a significant amount of time studying English to prepare for the Test of English in International Communication (TOEIC) and strived to improve their English proficiency to obtain competitive occupations such as white-collar professions.

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<sup>6</sup> For example, Korea University was one of the first universities to offer EMI in 1999 (Kang, 2018), mandating that all departments offer at least one course in English (Jon et al., 2020); Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), one of Korea’s most prestigious universities, started incorporating EMI in 2003 and began offering all undergraduate courses in English. This trend was spurred by the media-initiated university rankings, such as ‘QS World University Rankings,’ and the globalization policy of Korean universities (Cho, 2012).

From my work experience, I learned that lack of English language skills often becomes a hindrance and hampers one from gaining a higher position in workplace. English language skills are absolutely necessary in career advancement, especially in this era of globalization. (Participant E)

### ***Factors That Influence Parents' Decisions in Selecting Kindergartens***

Participants chose private English kindergarten education to provide opportunities for their children to learn English as naturally and unconsciously as their mother tongue and to set a path toward success in primary school and later in life. Participant F said, “while parents can facilitate all the activities that toddlers need to learn and do at home, learning English is a specialty that can only be done in an English kindergarten.” The second section of the questionnaire examined specific factors that affect parents’ decisions in choosing English kindergartens, such as the learning type and qualifications of English teachers.

**Learning Type: Play-based vs. Academic-oriented.** Since private English kindergartens in Korea are largely divided into two types,<sup>7</sup> the parents selected English kindergartens in consideration of what kind of learning they would like to provide to their children. To explore participants’ opinions about the two types of English kindergarten, participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of the two learning styles in the second section of the questionnaire.

As shown in Figure 2, the highest response to the effectiveness of academic-oriented learning style was ‘moderately agree’ with 10 (33.3%) participants, followed by ‘slightly agree’ with nine (30%) participants. From a broader view, 20 participants (66.7%) responded positively, and 10 participants (33.3%) responded negatively, showing that most participants perceived academic-oriented learning as an effective way to learn English.

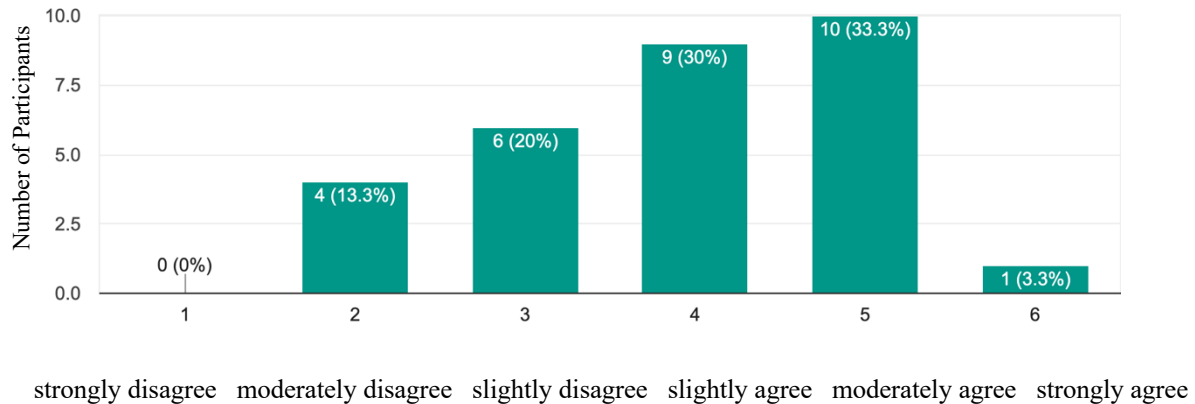
As to the effectiveness of play-based learning style in Figure 3, in contrast, the total number of participants who selected positive items was 16 (53.5%), slightly higher than the number of participants who selected negative items, 14 (46.7%). However, ‘slightly disagree’ was chosen by the highest number of participants with 11 (36.7%), and ‘slightly agree’ was the next with nine participants (30%), representing contradictory views of parents’ perceptions and experiences.

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<sup>7</sup> The curriculum of the mixed-type program is more closely related to that of an academic-oriented program and thus often classified as an academic-oriented English kindergarten.

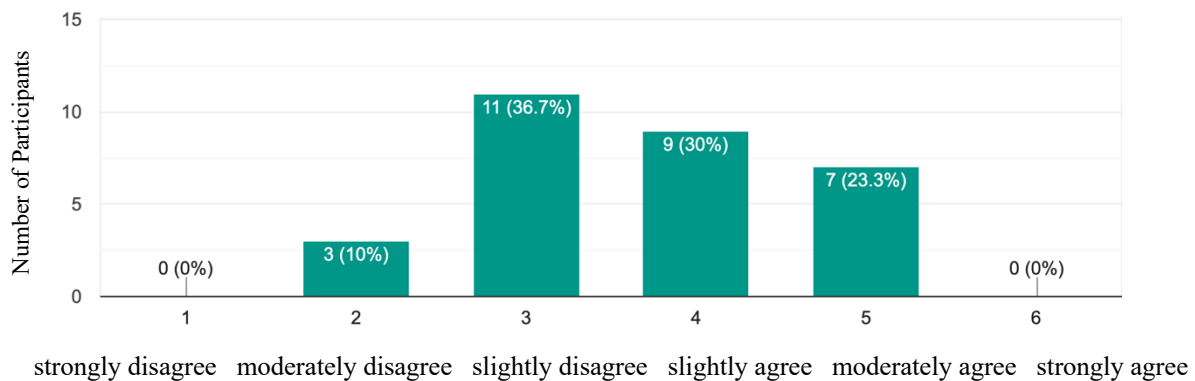
**Figure 2**

*Academic-oriented Learning is the Most Effective Way to Learn English in Korea.*



**Figure 3**

*Play-based Learning is the Most Effective Way to Learn English in Korea.*



Comparing the most common response of the two items, it was found that the participants had clear perception that academic-oriented learning is the more effective way to learn English in an EFL environment. Yet, they were not heavily negative about the play-based approach. Many participants (86.7%) believed that English language learning is effective when it is integrated into everyday life, such as physical activity, art, and play (Question #16). An ambivalence in participants' perceptions between the two learning styles were found in follow-up interviews. Participant F, who recently moved to Hawai'i with her 5-year-old twins, strongly believed that learning English naturally is the best way to learn English. However, she said that if she had

lived in Korea, she would have enrolled her children in an academic-oriented English kindergarten.

The interviews also revealed different goals between the participants who chose the academic-type English kindergarten and of those who chose the play-type English kindergarten. For example, Participant A, who sent her two daughters to an academic-oriented English kindergarten when they were two, expressed a strong preference toward academic-oriented learning.

I had never considered a play-based English kindergarten for my children because I think that a child's first learning experience determines his or her attitude toward school for years to come. Once they get used to play, it would be difficult to develop study habits later when they enter elementary school. (Participant A)

In contrast, the following quote is from Participant G, who enrolled her twin daughters in a play-based English kindergarten to learn English through a "joyful experience."

When I learned English, I had to sit down and memorize vocabulary lists and learn how to conjugate verbs. I certainly did not want my children to go through that. Rather, I wanted them to have a fun joyful experience learning English and that is why I sent them to a play-based English kindergarten. (Participant G)

However, despite what she had hoped for, she said she regretted her decision after the program ended. She added that if she could choose again, she would send her children to an academic-oriented English kindergarten for the "better English language learning outcomes."

Participants C, D, and E, who enrolled their children in academic-oriented English kindergartens, shared similar opinions that despite paying the same tuition and spending the same amount of time in both types of kindergarten, students who learn English at the academic-oriented English kindergarten demonstrate better English language proficiency. These participants also had clear expectations and goals for their children to be able to "read, write, understand, and speak English fluently by the end of the program so that they can pass the exam to enter one of the best English language academies in Gangnam" (Participants C, D, & E).

**Professionalism: Program Quality and Teacher Expertise.** Parents' perspectives on criteria of a good quality of English kindergarten were shown as closely related to program quality and professionalism of teachers. The responses to the questionnaire showed that 27 participants (90%) indicated that the program quality is an important factor and 28 participants



(93.5%) expressed that the teacher expertise is an important factor that would influence their choice of English kindergarten. However, the interviews revealed an ambivalence between parents' perceptions of professionalisms and factors that actually affect their decision.

Participants defined a high-quality program of an English kindergarten as: whether it “utilizes imported English textbooks” (Participant D), whether it “provides activities necessary for children’s growth and emotional and personality development” (Participant B), whether it “promotes appropriate learning to facilitate further learning” (Participant G), etc. However, it appears that there is no objective basis for measuring the overall quality of the English kindergartens and the programs. Rather, it was shown that participants gained evaluations of the kindergartens from other parents or at online forums called “Mom Cafes,” which are online communities where mothers share parenting tips and updates with each other. In fact, half of the participants (50%) selected ‘moderately agree’ to the item regarding the importance of the reputation, nine participants (30%) chose ‘slightly agree,’ and four participants (13.3%) picked ‘strongly agree.’ The reason why the participants depended heavily on reputation was that there was no way to accurately identify the quality of the English kindergarten education program.

Another discrepancy related to factors affecting participants’ choice of English kindergarten was found with respect to their perceptions of professionalism of English teachers. Participants defined highly qualified teachers with such objective qualifications as having “a good educational background” (Participant D), “a love for children” (Participant C), and “passion for teaching” (Participant E). They also showed a strong preference for teachers with a relevant degree to early childhood education or TESOL certification, who can understand the challenges young learners may experience while learning a second language. However, there was a more powerful belief that dominated participants’ perceptions of a competent language teacher: ‘native-speakerism,’ the belief that native speakers of English make better English language teachers.

Despite the various factors presented to define the professionalism of teachers, 23 participants (76.6%) believed that learning English from a native English-speaking teacher was more effective than from a Korean English teacher and preferred a native speaker as their child’s kindergarten teacher. Below is a quote from one of the participants who preferred foreign teachers to Korean English teachers.

In my opinion, the presence of both the native teacher and Korean teacher is important especially in an EFL classroom environment. Native English teachers can teach students cultural aspects, accurate English expressions, good pronunciation and intonation, and Korean teachers can support children's emotional needs and explain cultural differences in more detail that foreign teachers cannot. Still, I think the reasonable ratio of the native English-speaking teacher to the Korean teacher for teaching English lessons is 8:2.

(Participant C)

Though this participant expressed the need for both a native English teacher and a Korean English teacher in a kindergarten English classroom, she emphasized the role of a native English-speaking teacher as the primary teacher and the Korean teacher as an assistant teacher. In addition, Korean English teachers were recognized as serving as a bridge between children and foreign teachers, regardless of their professionalism and English proficiency.

### ***Parents' Satisfaction After Completing the Programs***

The last section of the questionnaire explored whether participants' expectations for the English kindergarten program and their children's English learning outcomes were met after completing the programs. The responses showed that 28 participants (93.3%) were satisfied overall with the curriculum of the English kindergartens their children attended. Regarding their children's English learning outcomes, eight participants (26.7%) were highly satisfied, nine participants (30%) were moderately satisfied, eight participants (26.7%) were slightly satisfied, four participants (13.3%) were slightly unsatisfied, and one participant (3.3%) was moderately unsatisfied. Overall, participants showed high levels of satisfaction with their children's four English language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and were especially satisfied with the improvement of their English communication skills and confidence. In particular, participants often valued the ability to speak in English confidently and mentioned it during the interviews. For instance, Participant D, who was highly satisfied with her child's English learning outcome, said she was proud to see her son speaking English to her after returning home from English kindergarten and not feeling shy about making mistakes while speaking English. In contrast, Participant G said when she saw her child running away from a native speaker, she felt that her child lacked confidence in her English skills and thought it would have been better if she had sent her to an academic-oriented English kindergarten.

More importantly, the results revealed that parents who enrolled their children in an academic-oriented English kindergarten had greater satisfaction with their children's English skills at the end of the program than parents who enrolled their children in the play-based English kindergarten. Of the 20 participants in the academic-oriented group, 17 participants selected positive responses, showing that 85% of parents were satisfied with their child's English language learning outcomes. Moreover, 13 out of the 20 participants (65%) selected 'moderately agree' or 'strongly agree,' indicating a particularly high level of satisfaction. Of the five participants in the mixed group, four participants (80%) said 'moderately agree' or 'strongly agree,' and one (20%) participant said 'slightly agree.' In contrast, none of the participants in the play-based group chose either 'moderately agree' or 'strongly agree'; three participants (60%) responded, 'slightly agree,' and the remaining two reported dissatisfactions.

## **DISCUSSION**

This study revealed Korean parents' beliefs that early English education is beneficial for children's future academic and career success. They also perceived that academic-oriented learning is more effective in children's English language learning than play-based learning. Most of the parents who chose the academic-oriented English kindergartens for their children's English education were highly satisfied with the English language learning outcomes. In line with Korean parents' strong demands for early English education, studies have shown the benefits of learning a second language at an early age. Unfortunately, however, in Korea, English education for young children is excluded from the national curriculum in order to normalize public education and to prohibit teaching ahead of the regular public curriculum. Since the current education system fails to meet the demands of parents, more parents want to send their children to private English kindergartens.

The current trend of private English kindergartens and parents' high preference for academic-oriented programs reflect Korea's cultural values in education and competitive college-entrance-oriented education system. Although the results showed that parents who chose academic-oriented English kindergartens were highly satisfied with their children's English language learning outcomes, it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of education based on parental satisfaction alone. The overall and long-term effects of intensive foreign language education

have not been well studied, and more importantly, it is necessary to reconsider whether it is appropriate to provide English education to young children and to examine whether they enjoy learning English and whether early English education is linked to long-term learning outcomes. Thus, more studies on both sides are needed to determine the effectiveness of academic-oriented learning and play-based learning in various aspects.

The findings imply that despite parental demands for early English education, the national kindergarten curriculum does not support English language education, and thus parents choose to enroll their children in private English kindergartens. English kindergarten education is attractive to many Korean parents as it aligns with their beliefs about what supports language acquisition and concerns about academic and professional success in Korean society. Especially, English proficiency is directly related to students' academic success and college admissions in Korea, and thus it is understandable that parents have high demands and aspirations for early English education. However, it is necessary to reflect on whether English kindergarten education is academically appropriate for young children. Because private English kindergartens are owned and operated by individuals or companies, they tend to prioritize profit over the needs of parents (academic excellence, good grades, etc.).

In addition, most private English kindergartens are concentrated in the affluent area of Gangnam District. They tend to be more expensive than general kindergartens, making them inaccessible to children from families with low socioeconomic status. If only children of economically and culturally – with study abroad experience – wealthy parents continue to receive an early English education, the educational gap will widen. In order to prevent educational disparities, it is necessary to provide equal opportunities for all children to learn English in an era of globalization. Based on this implication, this study suggests that English language education needs to be integrated into public education, either by including English kindergartens as a type of general kindergarten and reducing tuition or by incorporating English education into the national kindergarten curriculum.

### ***Limitations and Future Directions***

The findings of this study must be seen in light of some limitations. First, this study involved a small sample size (n=30). Moreover, there were too few participants in the play-based and the mixed-type groups. As different sample sizes may limit the generalizability of comparisons

between groups, data from a greater number of participants is suggested for future research. Second, although participants in the academic-oriented group indicated higher levels of satisfaction regarding their children's English language learning outcomes, more research is needed to examine the long-term effects of early English education on young learners in an EFL environment (i.e., whether parents' perceptions match actual gains in language development). Although some studies have investigated long-term benefits of an early start in instructed learners (Larson-Hall, 2008; Muñoz, 2011), the number is very small and show mixed findings. Thus, longitudinal studies that include a measurement of proficiency may offer a more complete picture about the effectiveness of early English education on children's later English and academic and career success. Third, there is a lack of prior studies on early English education in the EFL context. Many second language acquisition studies to date have focused on the acquisition of children or adults learning English in a bilingual setting (Montrul, 2005), but there is little research on young learners' English language acquisition in an EFL context. The field could benefit from more research examining the dynamic process of children's second language learning and analyzing the effectiveness and weakness of language teaching approaches and methods used for young second language learners of English. This type of study will provide evidence in support of parents' perceptions of early English education and the effectiveness of academic-oriented learning and play-based learning. Additionally, it is suggested that future studies probe English language learning focusing on children's perspectives by exploring their experiences of learning English, such as whether children enjoy the learning process and how various contextual factors affect their English learning in an EFL environment.

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## APPENDIX A

### Survey Questionnaire

#### Background Questions

*\*If you have more than one child who attended a private English kindergarten, please fill out this form based on the experience of the younger or youngest child.*

*\*If your child attended more than one English kindergarten, please fill out this form based on the kindergarten attended the longer or longest.*

1. Please indicate the type of English kindergarten your child attended.

☐ Academic-oriented ☐ Play-based ☐ Mixed-type

2. Please indicate the location of the English kindergarten your child attended.

3. Please indicate the age at which your child first entered English kindergarten.

4. Please indicate the length of time your child attended English kindergarten.

*(\*If your child attended more than one English kindergarten, please indicate each period.)*

#### Research Objective 1: Perceptions

5. English proficiency is necessary in the era of globalization.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

6. Early English education is very important in English education.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

7. Early English education will be helpful for academic excellence and getting good grades in primary and secondary school.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

8. Early English education will be helpful for getting a good score on the college entrance exam in the future.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

9. My child's English skills will be helpful for finding the job s/he wants in the future.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
10. Learning English is easier when a child starts it at an early age.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

**Research Objective 2: Factors**

11. I sent my child to English kindergarten because it provides professional English education.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
12. I sent my child to English kindergarten because it provides an excellent environment and care system for young children.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
13. Academic-oriented learning is the most effective way to learn English in Korea.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
14. In English language classrooms for young learners, it is important to focus on the four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
15. Play-based learning is the most effective way to learn English in Korea.  
☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree
16. English language learning is effective when it is integrated into everyday life, such as physical activity, art, and play.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

17. It is more effective to learn English from native English-speaking teachers than Korean teachers fluent in English.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

18. The professional expertise of the English education program is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

19. The professionalism of the teachers is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

20. The number of classes taught by native speakers of English is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

21. The reputation of the kindergarten is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

22. Small class size is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

23. Tuition is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

24. Inclusion of after-school classes is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

25. Distance from home is an important consideration when choosing my child's English kindergarten.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

### **Research Objective 3: Satisfaction**

26. I am satisfied overall with my choice of English kindergarten for my child.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

27. I am satisfied with the curriculum of the English kindergarten that my child attended.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

28. I am satisfied with my child's English language learning outcomes.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

29. My expectations for my child's English reading skills development were met.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

30. My expectations for my child's English writing skills development were met.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

31. My expectations for my child's English listening skills development were met.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

32. My expectations for my child's English speaking skills development were met.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

33. My expectations for my child's basic English communication skills were met.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

34. My child has become more confident in English.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Moderately disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Slightly agree ☐  
Moderately agree ☐ Strongly agree

#### **Demographic Questions**

35. What is the gender of your child?

☐ Female ☐ Male

36. How old is your child?

37. How old is the mother / father?

38. What is the mother's / father's occupation?

39. What is the highest level of education that the mother / father has completed?

☐ High school graduate ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐ Master's degree and/or doctorate  
degree

40. Does the mother / father have study abroad experience?

☐ Yes ☐ No

41. What is the mother's / father's English proficiency level?

☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

42. How much was the monthly tuition fee for the English kindergarten that your child  
attended?

☐ 1 million won or less ☐ 1 – 1.5 million won ☐ 1.5 – 2 million won ☐ 2 – 2.5  
million won ☐ 2.5- 3 million won

43. Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview?

☐ Yes ☐ No

44. If you are, please leave your phone number or email address where you can be reached.

### Survey Questionnaire (Korean-translated Version)

#### Background Questions

\*만약 영어유치원에 다닌 자녀가 두 명 이상인 경우, 가장 어린 자녀의 경험을 기준으로 응답해 주십시오.

\*만약 자녀가 2개 이상의 영어유치원에 다닌 경우, 가장 오래 다닌 영어유치원의 경험을 중심으로 응답해 주십시오.

1. 자녀의 영어유치원은 어떤 종류입니까?

☐ 학습식 ☐ 놀이식 ☐ 혼합식

2. 자녀의 영어유치원이 소재한 지역은 어디입니까?

3. 자녀는 몇 살에 영어유치원에 처음 등록 했습니까?

4. 자녀가 영어유치원에 다닌 총 기간을 기입해 주십시오.

(\*만약 자녀가 2개 이상의 영어유치원에 다닌 경우, 각각의 기간을 기입해 주시기 바랍니다.)

#### Research Objective 1: Perceptions

5. 영어 능력은 세계화 시대를 살아가는데 필수적이다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

6. 영어교육에서 조기교육은 매우 중요하다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

7. 유아 영어학습은 향후 학업과 성적에 도움이 될 것이다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

8. 유아 영어학습은 향후 대학 입학시험에서 좋은 성적을 거두는데 도움이 될 것이다.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>9. 자녀의 영어 실력은 미래에 원하는 직업을 갖는데 도움이 될 것이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>10. 영어교육은 어린 나이에 시작할수록 효과적이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p>
<p><b>Research Objective 2: Factors</b></p> <p>11. 내가 자녀를 영어유치원에 보낸 이유는 전문적 영어교육에 최우선을 두었기 때문이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>12. 내가 자녀를 영어유치원에 보낸 이유는 영어유치원의 교육 환경과 돌봄 시스템이 우수하기 때문이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>13. 한국의 유아 영어교육 환경에서는 학습식 영어교육이 가장 효과적이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>14. 유아 영어학습에서 읽기, 쓰기, 듣기, 말하기 등 영어 능력 성취에 초점을 맞추는 것이 중요하다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>15. 한국의 유아 영어교육 환경에서는 놀이식 영어교육이 가장 효과적이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p>



16. 유아 영어학습은 신체활동이나, 미술, 놀이 등 일상생활 속에서 배우는 것이 효과적이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
17. 한국에서 유아 영어는 이중언어 교사(한국인 영어교사)보다 원어민(영어권 출신) 교사에게 배우는 것이 더 효과적이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
18. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 영어교육 프로그램의 전문성이 중요한 고려 사항이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
19. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 교사들의 전문성이 중요한 고려 사항이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
20. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 원어민 교사의 수업 비중이 중요한 고려 사항이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
21. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 유치원에 대한 주위 평판이 중요한 고려 사항이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
22. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 소규모 학급 운영이 중요한 고려 사항이다.  
☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다
23. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 수업료가 중요한 고려 사항이다.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>24. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 방과후 수업 유무가 중요한 고려 사항이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>25. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 선택 시 등/하원에 걸리는 시간이 중요한 고려 사항이다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p>
<p><b>Research Objective 3: Satisfaction</b></p> <p>26. 나는 자녀를 위한 영어유치원 선택에 전반적으로 만족한다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>27. 나는 자녀의 영어유치원 교육과정(커리큘럼)에 만족한다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>28. 나는 자녀의 영어학습 결과에 만족한다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>29. 자녀의 영어 읽기 (reading) 능력 발달에 대한 나의 기대가 충족되었다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>30. 자녀의 영어 쓰기 (writing) 능력 발달에 대한 나의 기대가 충족되었다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p> <p>31. 자녀의 영어 듣기 (listening) 능력 발달에 대한 나의 기대가 충족되었다.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 전혀 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 별로 그렇지 않다 <input type="checkbox"/> 어느정도 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 그렇다 <input type="checkbox"/> 매우 그렇다</p>

32. 자녀의 영어 말하기 (speaking) 능력 발달에 대한 나의 기대가 충족되었다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

33. 자녀의 기본적인 영어 의사 소통 (communication) 능력에 대한 나의 기대가 충족되었다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

34. 내 자녀는 영어유치원에 다닌 후 영어에 대한 자신감을 갖게 되었다.

☐ 전혀 그렇지 않다 ☐ 그렇지 않다 ☐ 별로 그렇지 않다 ☐ 어느정도 그렇다 ☐ 그렇다 ☐ 매우 그렇다

#### Demographic Questions

35. 자녀의 성별은 무엇입니까?

☐ 여자 ☐ 남자

36. 자녀의 현재 나이는 만 몇 세입니까?

37. 어머니 / 아버지의 현재 나이는 만 몇 세입니까?

38. 어머니 / 아버지의 현재 직업은 무엇입니까?

39. 어머니 / 아버지의 최종 학력은 무엇입니까?

☐ 고등학교 졸업 ☐ 대학교 졸업 ☐ 대학원 졸업

40. 어머니 / 아버지는 유학 경험이 있으십니까?

☐ 예 ☐ 아니오

41. 어머니 / 아버지의 영어 능력은 다음 중 어디에 해당된다고 생각하십니까?

☐ 상 ☐ 중 ☐ 하

42. 자녀의 영어유치원 월 원비는 얼마입니까?

☐ 100만원 미만 ☐ 100-150만원 미만 ☐ 150-200만원 미만 ☐ 200-250만원 미만 ☐ 250-300만원 미만

43. 귀하는 만약 연구자가 추가 질문을 위해 인터뷰를 요청하는 경우 응해 주시겠습니까?

☐ 예 ☐ 아니요

44. 연락 가능한 전화번호 혹은 이메일 주소

## APPENDIX B

### *Semi-structured Interview*

#### **Open-ended Questions**

1. Why did you choose to enroll your child in a private English kindergarten and not general Korean kindergarten?
2. Why did you choose to enroll your child in an academic-oriented program / play-based program?
3. Why do you think that English proficiency is necessary in the era of globalization?
4. Why do you think that it is important to start learning English at an early age?
5. How would you define the professional expertise of the English education program?
6. How would you define the professionalism of the teachers?
7. Why do you think that it is more / less effective to learn English from native English-speaking teachers than Korean teachers fluent in English?
8. What skills did you expect your child to have mastered by the end of the kindergarten year?
9. Do you feel that expectations were met? If not, please explain in what way your expectations were not met.
10. If you could choose again, would you like to enroll your child in the same type of English kindergarten? Why or why not?

### *Semi-structured Interview (Korean-translated Version)*

#### **Open-ended Questions**

1. 귀하가 일반유치원이 아닌 영어유치원을 선택한 이유는 무엇인가요?
2. 귀하가 자녀를 학습식 / 놀이식 영어유치원에 보낸 이유는 무엇인가요?
3. 세계화 시대에서 영어 능력이 필수라고 하셨는데 개인적으로 그런 생각을 하시게 된 배경이나 계기가 있으신가요?
4. 영어 조기교육의 중요성에 대한 생각을 갖게 된 계기는 무엇인가요?

5. 영어유치원 프로그램의 전문성이라고 할 때, 귀하는 구체적으로 어떤 요소를 생각하시나요?
6. 영어유치원 교사들의 전문성을 고려할 때, 귀하는 구체적으로 어떤 요소를 생각하시나요? (예, 관련 전공, 자격증 취득 등)
7. 유아 영어교육에서 원어민 교사 / 한국인교사에게 배우는 것이 더 효과적인 이유는 무엇인가요?
8. 영어유치원 교육을 통해서 어느 정도의 영어능력 성취를 기대하셨나요?
9. 선택 및 학습 결과에 대한 만족도가 기대치에 충족했나요? 만족스럽지 못한 이유는 무엇인가요?
10. 다시 선택을 한다면 같은 유형의 영어유치원에 자녀를 등록시키고 싶으신가요? 그 이유는 무엇인가요?