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The University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Education

A group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education and

how it contributes to their English language learning

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Education in Language Education (Primary English)
at The University of Hong Kong

26th May, 2014

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has

not been previously submitted to this University or any other institutions in

application for admission to a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

Signature:_____

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Date: _____26th_May, 2014_____

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I would also like to thank my parents and grandmother for their love and support. I am so blessed to have them in my life.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was conducted to investigate a group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education, examine how some elements of shadow education influence students' learning of the English subject, and explore pedagogical implications for English teachers. Fifty students were invited to complete a questionnaire and eight students were selected under purposive sampling to participate in two focus group interviews. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for further analysis. The data were presented and evaluated with the use of a thematic framework. The findings revealed mixed perceptions on shadow education and the elements that contribute to students' English learning between the two groups of students. While students who have been employing private tuition thought that private tuition can facilitate students' English learning, students who have not attended any private tuition expressed completely different opinion. In general, students believed that the quality of private tutors is a significant factor influencing the effectiveness of private tutoring in enhancing their English learning. The findings provided significant insights for English teachers to reflect and improve their teaching pedagogies so as to provide better learning experiences to their students.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Shadow education has been used as a metaphor to describe private tutoring, in which its existence is for supplementing the mainstream education (Bray, 1999; Mori & Baker, 2010; Stevenson & Baker, 1992). Bray (1999) describes private supplementary tutoring as 'shadow' since its size and shape changes in accordance with that of the mainstream education. Shadow education has become a major industry in Hong Kong (Kwo & Bray, 2011). According to a survey about expenditure on tuition 2004/2005 conducted by The Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department (2009), 36 percent of students at the primary level, 28 percent at the lower secondary and 33.6 percent at the upper secondary have received shadow education. Those figures suggest that a significant proportion of primary and secondary students engage in private tutoring in Hong Kong. As reported in Apple Daily (2006), there were approximately 300 thousand students having tuition in Hong Kong and the total amount of money spent on tuition was estimated to be 300 millions every year. All these statistics show that parents and students are spending a significantly large sum of money on tuition. As noted by Ho (2010), "the shady nature of private tutoring has stepped out of the shadows and been put into new light" (p.62). Shadow education has become ubiquitous in Hong Kong (Yung, 2011).

1.2 Background to the study

Shadow education is a by-product of the competitive society in Hong Kong (Kwok, 2002). In order to survive and succeed in the society, one must enhance his/her competitiveness starting from primary school. As suggested by Bourdieu (2002, as cited in Ho, 2010), many parents treat private tutoring services as an educational investment,

which can increase their children's cultural capital such as knowledge and examination skills, and can be eventually turned into economic capital. While working class families regard private tutoring as a way to achieve upward mobility, middle class families treat it as a means to remain their social status (Ho, 2010). Children, who are the end-users of the private tutoring services, may have different perceptions on private tutoring from their parents. In order to have a better understanding of shadow education in Hong Kong, primary students' perceptions on shadow education should be investigated.

According to the Curriculum Development Council and Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (2007), English is 'the language of global communication' (p. 2, as cited in Yung, 2011) and it 'empowers learners with the 'capabilities necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and innovation for adapting to the rapid changes and demands of society' (p. 9, as cited in Yung, 2011). Therefore, English is one of the essential languages in Hong Kong and students should develop English language skills in schools. As Bray & Lykins (2012) suggests, the subjects most in demand for private tuition are those that are most necessary for advancement in the education systems, which usually includes international language such as English. In Hong Kong, English is one of the core subjects that is critical enough to decide whether a student can make a successful transition into the secondary phase of education (Ireson & Rushforth, 2011). Hence, it is valuable to know what elements of shadow education contribute to students' learning of English subject.

1.3 Objectives of the study

Most precedent studies focused on investigating different social, economic and educational factors contributing to the emergence of shadow education in different

cultural contexts and examining the impacts of shadow education (Bray, 1999, 2005, 2009; Bray & Percy, 2003; Bray & Silova, 2006; Chew & Leong 1995; Dang, 2007; Foondun, 2002; Kwok, 2004, 2009; Lee, 1996; Lee, Park, & Lee, 2009). There are few researches conducted on shadow education specifically for English learning and from primary students' perspectives (Yung, 2011). As a prospective primary English teacher, I aspired to conduct a research on students' perceptions on shadow education and acquire insights that can benefit their learning of English subject, which enable me to provide better learning experience to my students and cater for their needs in the future.

The objectives of this research are (1) to investigate a group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education, (2) to examine how some elements of shadow education, namely, learning activities, teaching materials, quality of tutor and learning environment, influence students' learning of the English subject, and (3) to find out pedagogical implications for English teachers in teaching English language.

1.4 Overview of the dissertation

After introducing the background and objectives of this study, the next chapter reviews the literature of parents and students' perceptions on shadow education in different cultural contexts and elements that may contribute to students' English learning. Chapter 3 introduces the research design and procedures, data collection and analysis methods, and the rationale for the research approaches adopted in this study. Findings from the data sources are presented in Chapter 4 while critical analysis and reflection of the findings are discussed in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter which includes the key issues and insights as well as the limitations of this research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature about parents and students' perceptions on shadow education in different cultural contexts and elements of shadow education that may contribute to students' learning of English subject. These researches will be the theoretical foundation of this study and such insights will be used for further analysis of students' perception of shadow education and can inspire the researcher to address the research questions of this study.

2.1 Parents' perceptions on shadow education in different cultural contexts

In England, parents employ shadow education when they do not have the ability and/or time to help their children (Ireson & Rushforth, 2011). Evidence shows that when the parents in England feel there is sufficient support to their children at home and at school, they will not seek for additional help from the tutors. However, the culture of shadow education is so widespread that some parents feel anxious and insecure if their children do not have private tutoring. This is supported by Kim (2007), a Korean mother revealed that, "if a kid is not very good and does not attend a private institute, people say the mother must be either crazy or poor." (p.11, as cited in Bray, 2009).

Bourdieu (2002) suggests that many parents treat private tutoring services as an educational investment, which can increase their children's cultural capital such as knowledge and examination skills, and can be eventually turned into economic capital. In Hong Kong, the societal competition is very keen (Kwok, 2002). Employers highly consider the qualifications of the candidates when they hire employees. They use education as a screening device, which helps them to identify candidates who possess

either superior innate ability or certain personal characteristics, which can in turn help the employers earn more money (Woodhall, 1995). Therefore, the most direct and effective way to prove one's ability is to show the employers a stack of certificates. Since the places in local universities are very limited, only a relatively small group of students can enter university to receive higher education. Hence, parents pay for the private tuition for their children so as to increase their children's chances of getting good grades in examinations and obtaining a university degree, which can ultimately increase the competitiveness of their children in the competitive society. While working class families regard private tutoring as a way to achieve upward mobility, middle class families treat it as a means to remain their social status (Ho, 2010).

2.2 Students' perceptions on shadow education in different cultural contexts

Regarding students' expectations of having private tuition, students from various countries expect to acquire examination skills which enable them to have better academic achievements (Bray, 2009; Ho, 2010; Ireson & Rushforth, 2011; Yung, 2011). As a student points out, "It (private tuition) was for tests, exams, and homework" (p.43). According to the research about private tutoring in England done by Ireson & Rushforth (2011), 68 percent of the responding primary students indicate that they have private tuition to help them pass an exam or entry test for secondary school and nearly half of the respondents think that tutoring can help them learn subjects more quickly and give them extra help with their homework.

Although there are 36 percent of primary students in Hong Kong attending private

tutorial lessons (The Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, 2009), some students point out that they are not voluntarily willing to have private tuition and it was totally their parent's decisions (Yung, 2011). As a student reveals, 'I didn't know much during primary school, so I just went as my family members asked me to go.' (p.42). Since primary students are not mature enough to make their decisions, the decision makers to employ private tuition are often their parents. As a result, many primary students just follow what their parents asked them to do without understanding the purpose of attending the private tuition.

2.3 Elements of shadow education affecting students' learning of English subject

Learning activities

According to Curriculum Development Council (2004), "In order to enable learners to communicate effectively, language learning activities need to be authentic and purposeful, engaging learners in genuine acts of communication. These activities should also be related to learners' needs, interests, imagination and daily life experiences as well as appreciation of other cultures of the world." (p. 95). The major learning activities in shadow education are doing mechanical drills and rote memorizing, which aim at helping students to develop examination skills only (Ho, 2011; Yung, 2011). This kind of learning activities can be demotivating to students but their effectiveness of enhancing students' English learning is uncertain.

Teaching materials

Inadequacy in mainstream schooling is one of the major forces that drive students to seek

for help from shadow education (Bray & Percy, 2003; Ho, 2011). With reference to Bray & Lykins (2012), a large proportion of the students who have employed private tutoring stated that "they had not received sufficient exercises in school, and that the full syllabus content had not been covered…they had difficulty in understanding what was taught in school." (p.26). Bray & Percy (2003) reveals that private tutors often distribute a lot of supplementary exercises and notes, which are designed by themselves, to their students. These supplementary exercises and worksheets provide opportunities for students to do mechanical drills, which enable them to familiarize with different question types and develop examination skills (Bray & Lykins, 1999). Moreover, Sarasin (1999) proposes that visual learners need to interact visually with new information in order to allow them to learn best. The notes and exercises designed by the tutors are often colour-printed and include a lot of pictures that facilitate students' understanding. This can help attract students' attention and lengthen their concentration span (Sarasin, 1999).

<u>Quality of tutor</u>

Bray & Lykins (2012) point out that there is not a consistent, positive correlation between the amount of time spent on tutoring and increased academic performance. The learning gains much depend on the motivation, attitudes, and learning styles of the learners as well as on the motivation, attitudes, and teaching styles of the tutors. In shadow education, the regulations on teaching materials, learning activities and teaching styles are relatively less restricted and highly depend on the private tutors. Therefore, the quality of private tutors seems to be a critical factor that can affect the effectiveness of shadow education on students' English learning. In addition, Lee, Yin & Zhang (2009) found that a positive classroom environment with strong teacher support was positively associated. In

mainstream schools, teachers are often busy with different kinds of school duties so they cannot always be available for helping their students (Bray, 2005). Yung (2011) proposes that students are motivated in learning English if teachers can always provide timely support and feedback in their learning process. Therefore, the quality of the tutors as well as their availability to provide timely assistance are crucial in enhancing students' English learning.

Learning Environment

To facilitate students' literacy learning, teachers should create "a beautiful and inviting literacy setting filled with extensive collections, schoolwide literacy rituals, and ways to keep up with children's literature" (Harwayne, 2000, p. 44). A literacy-rich environment can effectively enhance students' English learning through arousing students' interests in learning English and facilitating their understanding (Curriculum Development Council, 2004). As suggested by Johnson (2008), the physical arrangement of the classroom and the resources made available to students can affect the overall social, intellectual and emotional environment, which eventually influence students' literacy learning. The physical arrangement of classroom in the tutorial centre and mainstream schools shows significant differences, and their influence on students' English learning is yet to be examined.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, some keywords are defined to ensure understanding throughout this research. Then, the research questions, research design, procedures, data collection methods and data analysis methods are presented and justified.

3.1 Operational definitions

A number of previous studies mention different kinds of tutoring (Bray, 2009; Kwok, 2004), however, definitions of various kinds of tutoring have not been clearly stated (Yung, 2011). To facilitate understanding of this research, four keywords are defined as follows. In this research, shadow education is divided into four types, which are "one-to-one private tutoring", "small-class private tutoring", "small-class tutoring in tutorial centre" and "big-class tutoring in tutorial centre". "One-on-one private tutoring" refers to the tutoring between one tutor and one learner, while "small-class private tutoring" refers to the tutoring between one tutor and 2 to 7 students. These two types of tutoring probably took place at the learner's home, the tutor's home, clubhouse and public places like public libraries and cafes.

According to the Education Ordinance (Chapter 279, Education Bureau, 1997), registration as a 'school' is needed when there are 8 students or above in a class at one time. Therefore, tutoring with 8 or more students in a class at one time is considered as big class in this study (Yung, 2011). "Small-class tutoring in tutorial centre" refers to tutoring conducted with 2 to 7 learners at one time in all kinds of tutorial centres, with or without branches. "Big-class tutoring in tutorial centre" refers to the tutoring conducted with more than 8 learners in all kinds of tutorial centres, with or without branches.

3.2 Research questions

In this study, the two major research questions are:

(1) What are the perceptions of a group of key stage 2 students on shadow education?

(2) How did some elements of shadow education, namely, learning activities, teaching materials, quality of tutor and learning environment, contribute to students' learning of English subject?

3.3 Research design and procedure

This study is a qualitative research which aims at investigating a group of primary four students' perception on shadow education and examining how some elements of shadow education contribute to their learning of English subject. Questionnaires were distributed to students during the first week of March and they were collected in the mid of March. After collecting the questionnaires, ten students were selected under purposive sampling (Silverman, 1997). During the last week of March, two semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted, in which four students were invited in each group.

Participants

The data of this research came from 50 primary four students of mixed ability. Students of mixed ability were chosen so as to increase the degree of generalizability of this study and avoid restricting to a particular group of students (Denscombe, 2003). For the questionnaires, 60 copies were distributed to a group of primary four students and eventually 50 copies were collected. As for the focus group interviews, eight students with mixed ability were arranged into 2 groups (Table 1). The participants of group one

were the students who have attended private tutoring lessons whereas group 2 was the students who have never employed private tuition.

Group 1 – Students who have employed private tuition		Group 2 – Students who have not employed any private tuition	
Students' name	Ability group	Students' name	Ability group
Cherry	Average	Jasmine	Average
Sunny	Average	Henry	Above average
Mandy	Low	Paco	High
Isaac	High	Tom	High

Table 1: The ability of the participants for focus-group interviews

Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to collect data. Questionnaire (Appendix XX) was utilized to collect background information and familiarize the participants with the research topic. It mainly focuses on the demographic information of the students, their tutoring experiences and perceptions on private tutoring. The use of questionnaire before the interview can save a lot of time in collecting the background information for further analysis (Denscombe, 2003).

On the other hand, semi-structured focus group interview was utilized to obtain in-depth opinion of the students about shadow education (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to ask for elaborations of the interviewees' answers immediately and follow-up questions based on the participants' answers easily (Silverman, 1997). The interview was separated into three major sections, which focused on students' expectations of shadow education, elements of shadow

education affecting student's learning of English subject and students' overall comment on shadow education. Each focus group interview lasted for approximately 30 minutes and it was audio-recorded for further analysis.

<u>Data analysis</u>

Questionnaires were collected for selecting appropriate participants for the focus group interview under purposive sampling. The questionnaires were further analyzed for generating statistics and graphics. The results of the questionnaires can present a group of primary four students' general perceptions on shadow education. The focus group interviews were transcribed and translated to English by the researcher (Appendix XX). The transcriptions were reviewed, categorized and analyzed for multiple times with a thematic framework so as to relate to the research questions and generate important insights and interpretations for further discussions.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews is reviewed and categorized. Two groups of students' data are presented, which are the students who have attended private tuition (Group 1) and the students who have not employed any private tuition (Group 2). This chapter is mainly divided into three parts, which aim to address the two research questions. This first part is about the tutoring experiences of the participants, which includes the tutoring experiences of the participants and the kind of tutoring services they employed. The second part is about students' perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong, such as students' expectations of having private tuition and the effectiveness of private tutoring in helping their English learning. The last part is the elements of shadow education that contribute to students' English learning, which is about how the learning activities, teaching materials, quality of tutor and learning environment provided by different kinds of private tutoring affect students' English learning.

4.1 Tutoring experiences of the participants

Among the 50 questionnaire respondents, 84% of them indicate that they have attended private tutorial lessons while 16% of them have never had any private tuition (Figure 1). As indicated by the students who have not employed any private tuition, they think paying for private tuition is "a waste of money" and the extra workload from private tuition is heavy and exhausting to them (Table 2). They further explain that they do not employ private tuition because they believe that private tuition is time-consuming and they worry about the quality of the tutor (Table 3). A student even reveals that his

academic performance is good enough so he does not need the support from private tutoring.

T:	***Wasting money***...*because if we pay attention in English lessons at school, we do not need to have extra tutorial lessons. I know that many people do not pay attention in tutorial lessons, so it's just a waste of money.*	Tom/ Turn 2 & 4
P:	***The workload is heavy***...*because the students have to do extra exercises after completing the homework and revisions given by the school teachers. I can imagine how tiring it is.*	Paco/ Turn 6
H:	*My parents can teach me if I have questions on my homework. Also, I prefer to pay more attention at school, rather than paying for private tuition. I don't need to **waste my money**.*	Henry/ Turn 7
J:	*Instead of having private tuition, I think I can seek help from my teachers at school, my parents and sisters at home. I agree with Tom that it's **a waste of money** to pay for private tuition.*	Jasmine/ Turn 9

Table 2. Students' account for not employing private tuition

T:	*I do not want to join because I think private tuition will **use up a lot of my time.** For instance, now I can **play** after I finished all my homework and revisions. However, if I have to attend private tutorial lessons after school, then I will have **less time to do other things**...and **my workload will also increase**.*	Tom/ Turn 11
P:	*I do not want to join because **I think my academic performance is good enough.** I mean... I don't want to afford the time and money for little improvement.*	Paco/ Turn 13 & 15
H:	*...it's **wasting time**...but if it is free, I will attend one lesson to see how it works. However, even if the private tutorial lessons are very useful, **I do not want to spend my time there**.*	Henry/ Turn 17 &19
J:	*I agree with them that attending private tutoring lessons will **use up much of my time**. I also **worry about the quality of the tutors**. If they are not knowledgeable and professional enough, I may not be able to learn anything from them.*	Jasmine/ Turn 21

Table 3. Students' account for not employing private tuition

Among the students who have employed private tuition, a vast majority have tutoring experiences for years (Figure 2). Over one-third of the respondents have 2-3 year tutoring experience. The percentages of students who have attended private tuition for 1-2 years and 3 years or above are similar, which are 24% and 26% respectively. 14% of the respondents have employed private tuition less than a year.
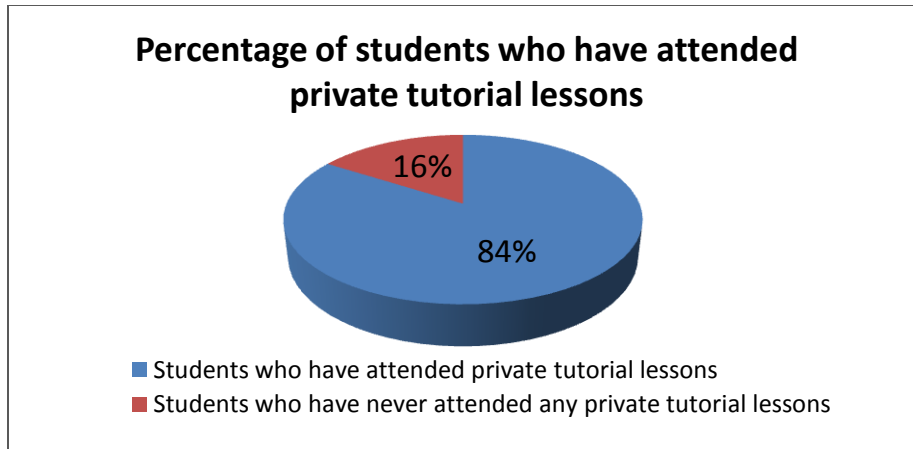
Figure 1. The percentage of students who have attended private tutorial lessons
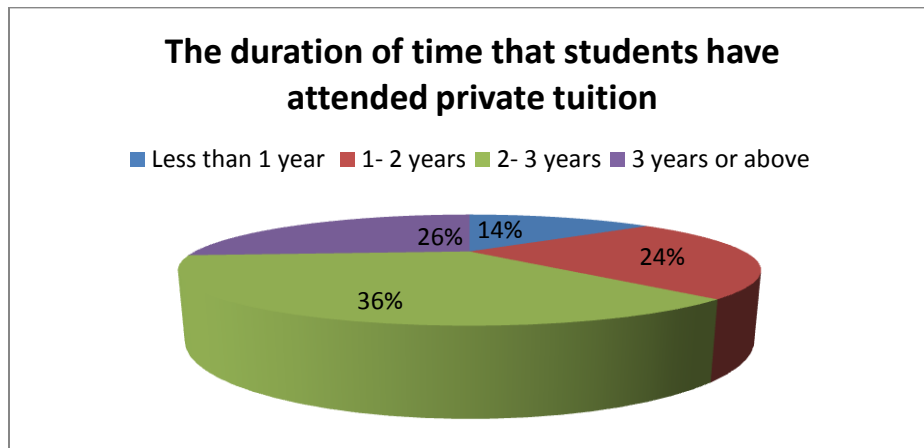
Figure 2. The duration of time that students have attended private tuition
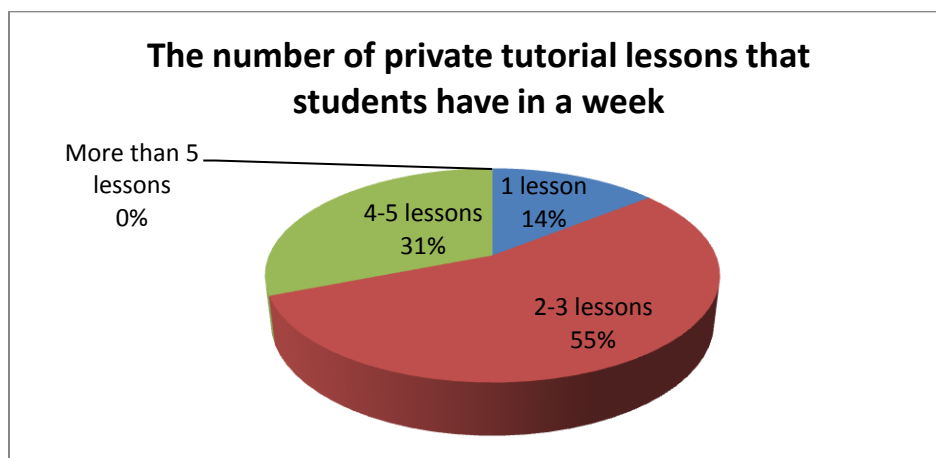
Figure 3. The number of private tutorial lessons that students have in a week

As indicated by the respondents who have attended private tuition, they have 1 to 5 private tutorial lessons in a week (Figure 3). A large majority of the students have 2-3 or 4-5 private tutorial lessons within a week, which involves 55% and 31% of the students respectively. While 14% of the students just have one private tutorial lesson in a week, none of the respondents have more than 5 lessons in a week.

There are different kinds of private tutoring services that students employ. One-on-one private tutoring and big-class tutoring in tutorial centre are the most popular kinds of private tutoring services that students choose, which account for 43% and 38% of the students respectively (Figure 4). 17% of the students employ small-class tutoring in tutorial centre. Small-class private tutoring is the least popular, in which only 2% of the students choose it.
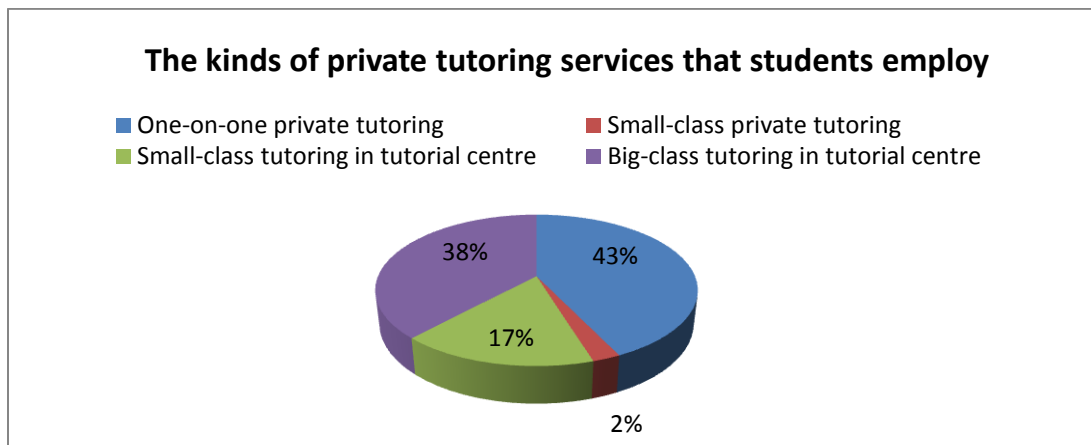
Figure 4. The kinds of private tutoring services that students employ

4.2 Students' perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong

<u>Students' expectations of attending private tuition</u>

When students were asked about their expectations of joining private tuition, 38 out of 42 students (about 90%) chose others, which mainly include assistance in doing revisions

and extra help in learning English (Figure 5). A large proportion of students (about 76 %) also expect private tuition can provide guidance and assistance which enables them to complete their homework. About half of the students indicate that they expect private tutors to teach them additional knowledge about subject content and examination skills which allow them to get better academic results. This is further supported by the interview with a group of primary four students (Table 3), which shows that students are concerned about improving their level of English very much and hence they expect to learn more vocabulary and grammar in private tuition.
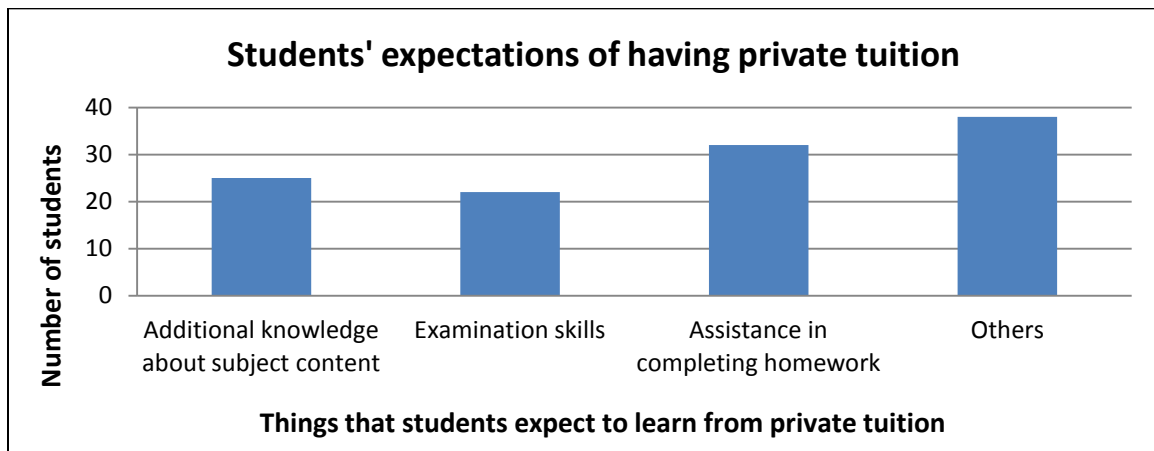
Figure 5. Students' expectations of having private tuition

C:	*I expected to learn more **grammar and improve my English**.*	Cherry/ Turn 2
S:	*I expected to learn **more vocabulary and grammar**, such as simple past tenses and future tenses.*	Sunny/ Turn 3
M:	*Erm...I have English and Maths tutorial lessons because I think they are very challenging to me. I want to learn **more subject knowledge of English** and **improve my grammar**.*	Mandy/ Turn 7
I:	*...I want to learn **more subject knowledge** that has not been taught at school...some extra knowledge that can **help me learn English**...because sometimes teacher may not explain in detail.*	Isaac/ Turn 9 & 11

Table 4. A group of primary four students' expectations of attending private tuition
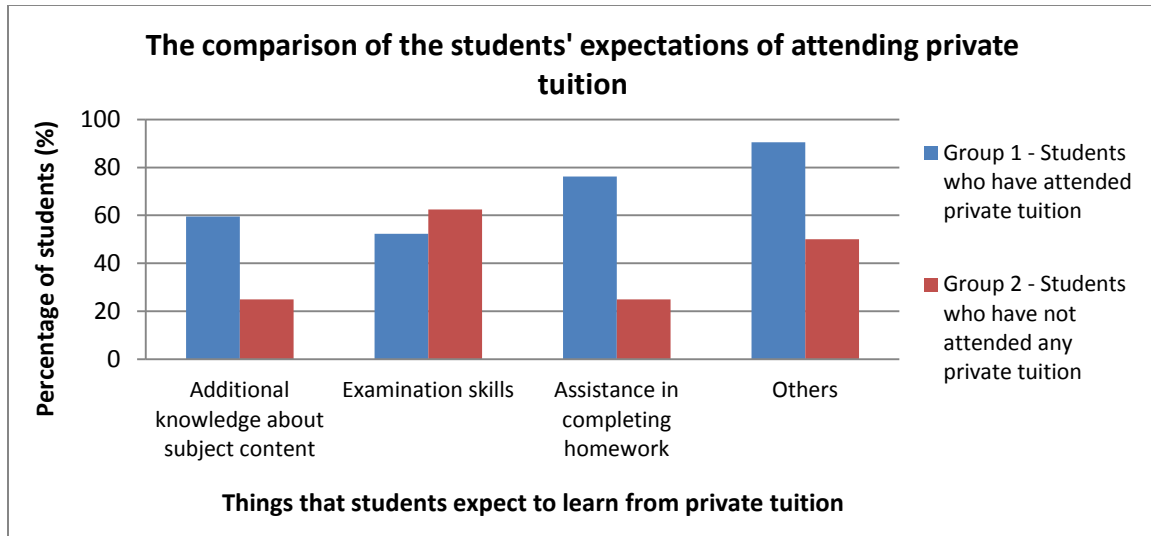
Figure 6. The comparisons between students' expectations of attending private tuition

The expectations of the students who have not attended any private tuition (Group 2), however, are quite different from the students who have attended private tuition (Group 1). If they were given a chance to attend private tuition, over 60% of them expect that they can acquire some examination skills that can help boost their academic performance (Figure 6). This result is contrary to the expectations of the students who have attended private tuition, in which the lowest number of students expect to acquire examination skills from private tuition. The second rank for both groups of students is the same, in which about 50% of Group 2 students also expect that private tuition can help them complete their homework. While 60% of Group 1 students expect to learn additional knowledge about subject content in private tutorial lessons, only 25% of Group 2 students expect to acquire extra knowledge about subject content. There are significant differences in the expectations of joining shadow education between these two groups of students probably because of the students' individual ability. The students who have not attended private tuition are those students with average, above average and high ability (Table 1).

Therefore, they may not need extra assistance in doing their homework and they want to focus on acquiring examination skills which can help them further improve their academic performance.

The effectiveness of private tuition in facilitating students' English learning

Regarding the effectiveness of private tuition in enhancing students' English learning, there are significant differences in the two groups of students' perceptions. For Group 1 students, 86% of them think that private tuition can facilitate their learning of English subject while 14% of them think that it cannot enhance their English learning. In contrast, 88% of Group 2 students believe that private tuition cannot help them enhance their English learning. Only 12% of Group 2 students predict that private tuition can help students learn English.
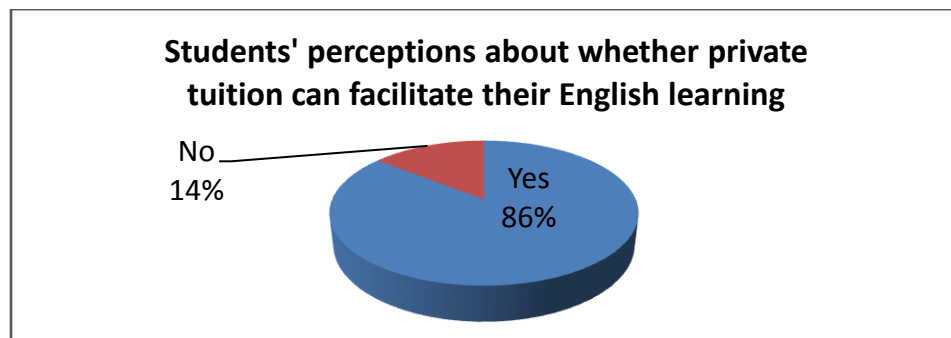
Figure 7. Group 1 students' perceptions about whether private tuition can facilitate their English learning
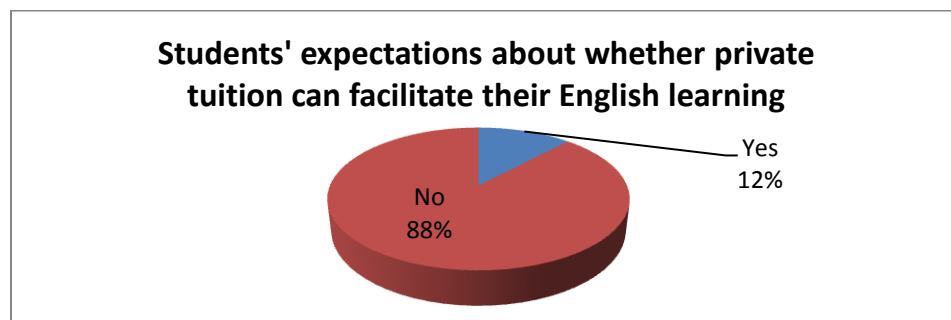
Figure 8. Group 2 students' expectations about whether private tuition can facilitate their English learning

4.3 Elements of shadow education that contribute to students' English learning

Learning activities

According to group 1 students, the most common learning activities in private tutorial lessons are doing supplementary exercises and revisions (Table 5). There are also other learning activities such as doing homework, spelling vocabulary, doing pre-study and playing games. Although group 2 students have not attended any private tutorial lessons, they pointed out that the most common learning activity in the private tutorial lesson was doing supplementary exercises (Table 6).

C:	*I often **played card games** in the private tutoring lessons...my tutor has an i-Pad so we often **played games in the i-Pad**.*	Cherry/ Turn 13 & 15
S:	*My tutor comes to my home and he often gives me **some exercises to do**. Sometimes I need to **spell vocabulary** as well...but generally we often **do revision and drilling exercises**.*	Sunny/ Turn 17
I:	*Erm……...Usually **do revisions, dictations and tests**...I need to **spell vocabulary every lesson**.*	Isaac/ Turn 21 & 23
M:	*I often **do homework**, **pre-study and revisions** during private tutorial lessons.*	Mandy/ Turn 29

Table 5. Group 1 students' descriptions of the learning activities used in private tuition

J:	***Many supplementary exercises***...	Jasmine/ Turn 55
H:	*Doing exercises...**lots of practice**.*	Henry/ Turn 59
P:	*Yes...**many many exercises**...*	Paco/ Turn 61

Table 6. Students' descriptions of the learning activities used in private tuition

Teaching materials

In the private tutorial lessons, the most common teaching materials used by the tutors are supplementary exercises and summary notes (Table 7). Students revealed that most of the notes and supplementary exercises were designed by their tutors or the tutorial centre, but

sometimes the supplementary exercises were just copied from the books and workbooks of different publishers. Two students added that their notes and supplementary exercises were for upper primary levels or even for junior secondary students. Only one student said that her tutor used the apps in the iPad to teach her English.

C:	*I-Pad...for the whole lesson...**no books, no notes, just i-Pad**...* *Usually, I finished the exercises in the i-Pad and then gave it to my tutor.*	Cherry/ Turn 33 &39
S:	*My tutor will give me **some notes** and teach me some vocabulary that I should learn in **primary five**. (Are the notes designed by your tutor?) Yes.*	Sunny/ Turn 43 & 45
M:	*My tutor often gives me **many notes and exercises**...Some of them are (**designed by my tutor**) but some of the exercises are just **copied from the books and workbooks of different publishers**.*	Mandy/ Turn 47 & 49
I:	*My tutor will give me a **booklet**, which includes **notes and exercises** inside. They are all **designed by the tutorial centre**.*	Isaac/ Turn 51

Table 7. Group 1 students' descriptions of the teaching materials used in private tuition

Similarly, group 2 students observed that many of their classmates who have attended private tutorial lessons have lots of supplementary notes and exercises. It is remarkable that they revealed that some of their classmates had done the same reading comprehension exercises in their school test before (Table 8). However, they thought that it was just by chance and it could not increase their willingness to join private tuition.

H:	*Sometimes my classmates said they have done the same reading comprehension exercises in the school test before.*	Henry/ Turn 65
T:	*Me too! I have done some test questions in the exercises given by my father before. My father can teach me...I do not need the tutor.*	Tom/ Turn 67 & 71
P:	*It's just by chance. If I am clever enough, I should know how to do these questions even though I have not done them in the tutorial lesson before.*	Paco/ Turn 72
H:	*If I do more exercises bought by my mum, I may have done these test questions in the supplementary exercises.*	Henry/ Turn 73

Table 8. Group 2 students' perceptions on the teaching materials used in private tuition

The effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials used in private tuition in enhancing students' English learning

For group 1 students, three out of four students think that the learning activities and teaching materials used in shadow education can help them learn English (Table 9). One student thought that he could learn many vocabulary items from attending the tutorial lessons and hence helped improve his writing. However, one student had completely opposite opinion. He indicated that he had to memorize 20 vocabulary items for primary 5 students every week, which was overwhelming and not level-appropriate to him. Some students thought that the supplementary exercises provided by their tutors were useful as they could learn through doing tons of drilling exercises. The pre-study and revisions were also useful in helping students learn English since they could familiarize students with the topic beforehand and consolidate what they have learnt. Cherry, who mainly learned through iPad games during private tuition, thought that she had to apply her English knowledge such as vocabulary and grammar to accomplish different tasks in various games. However, she thought that the effectiveness of playing iPad games to learn English was fair. She explained that the number of exercises was too many for her and the exercises were too difficult.

I:	*Since I need to memorize a lot of vocabulary items every lesson, I think **knowing more vocabulary can help improve my writing**. Sometimes my tutor also gives me **some reading comprehension exercises** and this can **help improve my English**…*	Isaac/ Turn 55 & 57
M:	*Erm...if grammar and reading comprehension, then I think they are useful. It is because there are **many exercises** in my tutorial centre... **practice makes perfect**...i mean, at least improvements.*	Mandy/ Turn 61 & 63
S:	*I think **memorizing vocabulary is not useful**. I have to **memorize 20 vocabulary items for primary five** every week! … Starting from 5 words on Monday, 5 words on Tuesday, and then dictation on 20 words every Friday! **It's too many for me to remember!***	Sunny/ Turn 65 & 67

S:	*I think **pre-study and revisions are helpful**, because I can **consolidate what I have learnt.** When teacher teaches the content at school, I can answer more questions and get more points!*	Sunny/ Turn 72
C:	*Yes, because I have to **memorize vocabulary** in playing the games...It's not just playing. **I need to use my English knowledge, like grammar**. ...you know, one time my tutor downloaded 10 apps for me and I need to finish all the exercises in half an hour...but there were 200 questions in one app! And the exercises are actually for **secondary one level**, not primary four. I think sometimes **not related to the things that I learnt at school**...and ....just **not specifically help me learn something at my level**. ...*	Cherry/ Turn 74, 76, 79, 81 & 83
M:	*Me too, I have the same problem! **My exercises are for primary six**!*	Mandy/ Turn 86

Table 9. Group 1 students' perceptions on the effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials used in private tuition in enhancing their English learning

In contrast to the opinion of group 1 students, group 2 students generally thought that the learning activities and teaching materials used in private tuition were not useful in facilitating students' English learning (Table 10). While some of them believed that more notes and exercises would actually increase students' study pressure, some of them felt that doing drilling exercises was de-motivating. One student thought that the effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials depends on the quality of tutor.

All:	***Not really** (effective)....*	All/ Turn 76
H:	*If the tutors are good, then maybe their notes are useful. In contrast, **if the tutors are not knowledgeable and do not know how to teach, then the learning activities and notes designed by them probably do not work**...*	Henry/ Turn 77
P:	*I think the notes do not really help... **more notes, more exercises, more study pressure.***	Parco/ Turn 78
J:	*I think just **doing exercises in the tutorial lessons is very boring**. If I were the tutee, I would feel **very de-motivated to learn**. It isn't fun at all.*	Jasmine/ Turn 82
T:	*Yes... I think **they are not useful** too.*	Tom/ Turn83

Table 10. Group 2 students' predictions on the effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials used in private tuition in enhancing their English learning

The quality of private tutors

In general, both groups of students had a quite negative image of the private tutors. Group 1 students indicated that their tutors could not clarify their questions, did not understand their needs and always scolded them (Table 11). They used adjectives such as "not nice", "very bad" and "impatient" to describe their tutors. Only one student felt satisfied with his tutor and thought that his tutor could help him to do homework and memorize vocabulary. On the other hand, some of the group 2 students doubted the qualification of the private tutors since some of the private tutors were just secondary students (Table 12). One student also heard that some of the private tutors chose to teach the smart students first and left the other students alone. All these raised the question about the effectiveness of the private tutors in enhancing students' English learning.

S:	*My tutor just gives me many exercises to do. When I have questions, he often **cannot clarify** to me clearly... **He does not know my needs**! Totally!*	Sunny/ Turn 90 & 92
I:	*I think my tutor is **quite good**. He teaches me to do homework…he corrects my pronunciation when I read aloud the words. He helps me memorize the words.*	Isaac/ Turn 94 & 96
All:	*They are **not nice** to us!!!*	All/ Turn 98
M,S	*My tutor **always scolds me**!*	Mandy & Sunny/ Turn 99
M:	*(My tutor is) **very bad**!!! She is so **impatient**…she always **scolds students** only...I think sometimes she **cannot answer my questions**...maybe she **does not know the answers** too.*	Mandy/ Turn 103 & 105

Figure 11. Group 1 students' perceptions on the quality of private tutors

H:	*My mum said some tutors chose to teach the students who were smart first and those who were not smart had to wait for the tutors and left the tutorial centre very late.*	Henry/ Turn 86
T:	*I am **not sure about the qualification of the tutor**...because some of them are just secondary school students...they are not teachers.*	Tom/ Turn 87
J:	*Yes...I agree...**many of the tutors are not teachers**, so they may not know how to teach students.*	Jasmine/ Turn 88

Table 12. Group 2 students' impressions on the quality of private tutors

The effectiveness of private tutors in enhancing students' English learning

While group 2 students believed that the quality of tutors were crucial for students' learning, they were doubtful about the quality of the private tutors as well as their effectiveness in facilitating students' English learning. For group 1 students, three of them thought that private tutors could not really help them learn English. Compared with their school teachers, three of them preferred their school teachers to their private tutors because they thought their school teachers were more knowledgeable, patient and able to clarify their misunderstanding (Table 13). In contrast, one student thought that her tutor could help her learn English as her tutor's notes were useful.

C:	*School teachers, because I think they are **more knowledgeable**.*	Cherry/ Turn 107
S:	*School teachers, because **my tutor cannot clarify my questions** and just asks me to memorize words.*	Sunny/ Turn 108
I:	*School teachers, because they are **more patients** than the tutors in the tutorial centre.*	Isaac/ Turn 109
M:	*Tutor! Because **their notes are useful**.*	Mandy/ Turn 111

Table 13. Group 1 students' perceptions on the differences between
tutors and school teachers

Learning environment

Among the four interviewees in group 1, three students attended tutorial centre while one student had private tutorial lessons at home. Mixed perceptions were found regarding the learning environment in the tutorial centre (Table 14). Both groups of students described that the environment in the tutorial centre was quite crowded and plain, in which many tables and chairs were placed in a single room, without any decorations (Table 14 & 15). Although group 1 students felt that the environment was quite crowded and noisy, they thought that this setting enabled them to discuss questions with their peers easily and

could motivate them to work harder when they saw other students work hard on their homework and revisions. On the contrary, group 2 students thought that the learning environment in the tutorial centre was not desirable for learning, which was too crowded and noisy to be concentrated. As for one-on-one tutoring at students' home, one student indicated that the learning environment was more relaxing. However, it was sometimes so relaxing that made her want to sleep, which lowered her learning efficiency.

M:	*There are **many tables and chairs in a room**. **Four students sit in one table**…I think it's **a bit crowded** as the tables are quite close. However, I can discuss questions with other peers easily with this setting.*	Mandy/ Turn 122 & 127
S:	*There are **several rooms** and I think about **10 students in one room**. There is a bookshelf containing many textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, etc…*	Sunny/ Turn 123
I:	*…my tutorial centre is **very noisy**...**super noisy**...because there are two classes in one room… I think the learning environment in the tutorial centre is bad when other students are **too noisy** there. However, usually I think it is good because I will **push myself to work harder** and **be more concentrated** when I saw other peers are working hard on their homework and revisions.*	Isaac/ Turn 124 & 128
C:	*I think the learning environment at home is **more relaxing**, but sometimes it's so relaxing that makes me **wanna sleep on the bed**.*	Cherry/ Turn 130

Table 14. Group 1 students' perceptions on the learning environment of private tuition

H:	*I know there are many tables in a room…**very crowded**…*	Henry/ Turn 91 & 94
J:	*The students can walk around themselves. They can eat outside the classroom and then go back to do exercises. **It's quite distracting**.*	Jasmine/ Turn 92
T:	*I think there are too many students, **too noisy for studying**.*	Tom/ Turn 93

Table 15. Group 2 students' perceptions on the learning environment of private tuition

Elements of shadow education that can facilitate students' English learning

With reference to the results of the questionnaire, 39% of the respondents thought that the teaching materials such as supplementary notes and exercises could facilitate their English learning (Figure 9). The quality of private tutors and the learning activities were

other two elements that could enhance students' English learning, which account for 26% and 19% of the respondents respectively. Only 16% of the respondents believed that the learning environment could help them learn English.
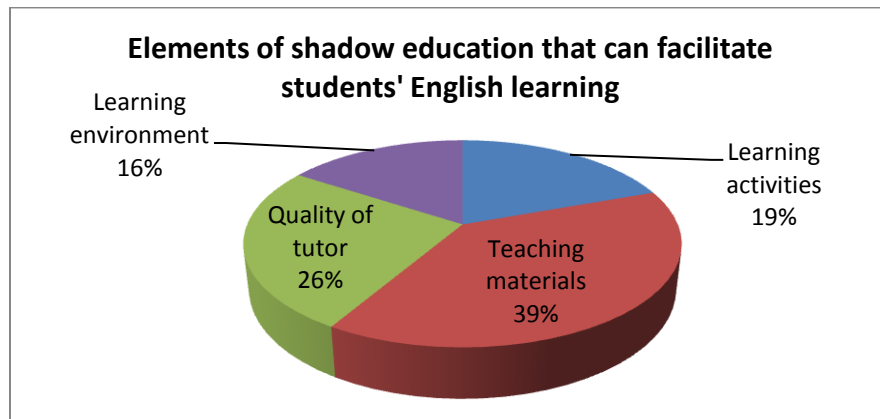
Figure 9. Elements of shadow education that can facilitate students' English learning

As indicated by group 1 students, teaching materials such as supplementary notes and exercises could enhance their learning of English subject because "practice makes perfect" (Table 16). Piles of supplementary exercises could drill them to familiarize with the format and types of questions in their tests. The summary notes could also shorten their time on revision. One student used i-Pad as the only learning material in the private tutorial lessons. She added that the apps in the i-Pad were very attractive and interesting, which could effectively help her learn grammar and vocabulary. Other students believed that the quality of private tutors was important. They elaborated that responsible and approachable tutors could provide timely assistance which effectively enhanced their English learning.

| I: | *Teaching materials! I think the most useful part of shadow education is their **notes and exercises**. As Mandy said, **practice makes perfect**. The summary notes can also shorten my time on revision.* | Isaac/ Turn 139 |

C:	*Teaching materials! I think it's the* **i-Pad** *most useful…there are dictionary, games, grammar exercises and "Angrybird awards" in the iPad...it's not just playing, but it's fun and relaxing in learning English…The apps are* **very attractive, colourful and interesting** *…at least they are much* **more interesting** *than black-and-white notes and exercises.*	Cherry/ Turn 140, 142 & 144
M:	*I think the* **quality of the tutor** *is most crucial in helping me learn English. If the tutor is very not kind and approachable, I dare not ask him/her questions to avoid being scolded. As a result, I cannot learn much from the private tuition. In my tutorial centre, sometimes the tutor may be too busy or they do not want to teach me...I don't know... so they cannot* **provide timely assistance** *to me as well. Sometimes it makes me so frustrated so I just copied the answers from other peers.*	Mandy/ Turn 146
S:	**The quality of tutor***, too. Because I will be* **more concentrated** *if the tutor always keep an eye on me,* **check my progress** *and* **give me timely assistance when I need help***.*	Sunny/ Turn 149

Table 16. Group 1 students' perceptions on the elements of shadow education that can facilitate their English learning

On the other hand, group 2 students felt hesitated in choosing the elements of shadow education that they expect to be effective in enhancing students' learning of English. While two of them thought the quality of private tutor was vital, one student thought the supplementary notes and exercises were the most crucial element in facilitating students' English learning. One student even thought nothing about shadow education could help him effectively enhance English learning. Group 2 students could not give detailed explanation for their choices, probably because they have not attended any private tuition. Therefore, it was just their impressions or predictions about the effectiveness of shadow education in affecting their English learning.

H:	*I* **do not know***, maybe* **tutor***...*	Henry/ Turn 101
T:	**Tutor***, if the tutor can* **clarify some misunderstanding** *and teach some special study skills, they are helpful.*	Tom/ Turn 102
J:	*I don't know...maybe the* **supplementary notes and exercises.**	Jasmine/ Turn 103
P:	*I don't know how to choose…I think* **none of the aspects** *…*	Paco/ Turn 104

Table 17. Group 2 students' perceptions on the elements of shadow education that can facilitate their English learning

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSIONS

This chapter aims to address the research questions by discussing the findings with reference to the literature. Section 4.1 addresses the first question about a group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong. Section 4.2 tackles the second research question which is about the elements of shadow education that contribute to students' English learning. Section 4.3 is about the implications for English teachers in providing better learning experience to their students.

5.1 Students' perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong

Students' expectations of attending private tuition

Students' expectations of attending private tuition are significantly different for students who have and who have not employed any private tuition. While students who have been employing private tuition expected to gain assistance in doing homework and revisions, students who have not attended any private tuition expected to obtain examination skills in private tutorial lessons. Such difference among the two groups of students probably related to the students' English abilities (Yung, 2011). The students who have not employed were generally the students with higher abilities, whose English level were quite high on average. Hence, if they seek for private tutoring, they often wanted to further improve academic results (Ho, 2011). This accounts for why they expected to acquire examination skills from joining private tuition. As proposed by Ireson & Rushforth (2011), private tutors are likely to be employed when students face tests that affect transitions in the education system and act as gateways to higher levels of education. Since the interviewees were just primary four students, they were not yet at the

transitional point to secondary education who aimed at acquiring examination skills. Therefore, students who have been employing private tuition just expected to gain assistance from doing homework and revisions.

The effectiveness of private tuition in facilitating students' English learning

Regarding the effectiveness of shadow education in facilitating students' English learning, two groups of students presented extreme results. For students who have employed private tutoring, most of them expressed positive impact of private tuition on their English learning. As Bray & Lykins (2012) point out, research literature shows mixed findings on the impact of private tutoring on students' English learning, which largely depends on the grade levels and on the specific regional circumstances. Most families believe that tutoring does make a difference on their English learning, and that even when the learning gains are disappointing (Bray, 1999; Bray, Lykins, 2012). In contrast, the students who have never employed any private tuition expected that private tutoring is ineffective in enhancing students' English learning, as they were uncertain and worried about the qualification of the tutors (Bray, 1999).

5.2 Elements of shadow education that contributes to students' English learning

Four elements of shadow education, which are learning activities, teaching materials, quality of tutor and learning environment are found to have different degree of influences on a group of primary four students' English learning.

Learning activities

As suggested by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), learners' motivation is unlikely always to be strong so the learning process has to be motivating and entertaining. However, most of the interview participants revealed that the major learning activities are doing mechanical drills and rote-memorizing revisions, which often de-motivated them from learning English. Curriculum Development Council (2004) states that rote learning of word lists, sentences and passages should not be encouraged in a communicative English classroom. Students' perceptions on the effectiveness of the learning activities are quite contradicting. While they thought doing mechanical drills and rote-memorizing activities can help them familiarize with test questions through "practice makes perfect", they thought this kind of learning activities are boring and demotivating.

Teaching materials

According to Curriculum Development Council (2004), "Teaching resources should be relevant to the learners' needs, experiences, prior knowledge, interests and abilities. The content should be interesting and challenging, and the language used should be accurate, authentic, purposeful and not too difficult for the learners. Resources which involve the use of mechanical drills and decontextualized uses of English will not be beneficial to the learning of English at primary level" (p. 213). For the industry of shadow education in Hong Kong, however, the tutors mainly emphasize on "short-cut" and "effectiveness", and thus focus on developing students' examination skills and producing the correct answers to problems (Bray & Lykins, 2012; Ho, 2011; Kwo & Bray, 2011). In this study, some interview participants thought that the supplementary exercises were useful in the

sense that "practice makes perfect". The drilling exercises enabled them to familiarize with the question type and format of school tests and exams. However, Bray & Lykins (2012) proposes that such rote practice may enhance students' homework performance or term tests that cover only content retention, but may weaken their meaningful construction of English knowledge at primary level. As indicated by some interviewees of this study, the amount and level of the supplementary notes and exercises were often not appropriate for them and could not suit their needs, which sometimes de-motivated them from learning English. Therefore, students' perceptions on the effectiveness of the teaching materials in enhancing their English learning are mixed.

Quality of private tutors

The effectiveness of shadow education in the sense of delivering higher academic grades does not only rely on the motivations and abilities of the students, but also the motivations and abilities of the tutors (Bray & Lykins, 2012). As suggested by Bray (1999), since the tutors have to respond to market needs, they usually make a special effort to find out what students want and then to respond to it. According to Tseng (1998), one Hong Kong tutor revealed that, "I care about my performance in the tuition centre because I regard students as customers, not like in the formal school" (p.62, as cited in Bray, 1999). Therefore, private tutors often try to accommodate their students so as to continue their business. However, the interview participants generally have negative perceptions on the characteristics and quality of their private tutors. They describe their tutors as "irresponsible", "impatient", "very bad" and "unwilling to help". One possible reason is that not all tutors employed in the tutorial centre can share the profits according

to the number of tutees. Therefore, the motivation to work hard and cater for the students'

needs is relatively low for those employed tutors (Bray & Lykins, 2012). For some

interviewees who have not employed any private tutoring, they also doubted the

qualifications of private tutors. In many countries, individuals can easily become tutors

without training, and the effectiveness of some forms of tutoring is doubtful (Bray, 1999).

In Hong Kong, the private tutors can be secondary students, tertiary students, pre-service

teachers, part-time teachers and so on. Therefore, the knowledge and teaching skills of

private tutors are uncertain. The effectiveness of the private tutors in enhancing students'

English learning thus depends on the quality of individual tutors.

Learning environment

As suggested by Johnson (2008), the physical arrangement of the classroom and the

resources made available to students can affect the overall social, intellectual and

emotional environment, which eventually influence students' literacy learning. As

revealed by the interviewees, the physical environment of tutorial centre is quite

crowding and noisy, which hindered them from concentrating on their work. According to

Curriculum Development Council (2004), "learners who are exposed to the use of

English in an attractive and stimulating environment, as well as natural and authentic

situations develop interests and positive attitudes towards learning English" (p.110). The

learning environment in the tutorial centre, however, seems to be demotivating to

students. Nevertheless, one student indicated that the seating arrangement in the tutorial

centre enables students to discuss questions and negotiate meaning easily, which helps

students' English learning to a certain extent.

Overall perceptions

In general, the participants of this study believe that the quality of their private tutors is the significant factor influencing the effectiveness of private tutoring in enhancing their English learning. (Bray & Lykins, 2012). Bray & Percy (2003) point out that apart from the motivation, attitudes, and learning styles of the learners, the effectiveness of shadow education much relies on the motivation, attitudes and teaching styles of the tutors. Although some interview participants doubted the qualification of the private tutors, who may be only university students or secondary students (Bray, 2009), they stressed that the quality of tutors is important as the effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials depends on the quality of tutors.

5.3 Pedagogical implications for English teachers

After analyzing the findings and addressing the research questions, this section discusses the pedagogical implications for English teachers, which enables them to reflect on their current teaching pedagogies, evaluate and improve their teaching skills.

Incorporating fun elements in the learning activities

Bray & Lykins (2012) suggest that a fun learning environment can help generate a desirable English learning experience, which motivates students to learn. According to the Curriculum Development Council (2004), grammar learning is only meaningful and purposeful to young second language learners if it is used in play or in effective communication (p.160). Since many interviewees often found grammar challenging in their English learning, English teachers can design learning tasks which involve more fun

elements such as games and competitions to motivate students to learn English in a meaningful context and sustain their attention span (Hedge, 2000).

<u>Promoting repetitive learning instead of rote learning</u>

Some students thought that the supplementary exercises and notes provided by their tutors are very useful since they can "practice makes perfect" and memorize some "golden rules". Bray (1999) points out that a large proportion of students employed private tutoring because they think the amount of exercises is not enough at schools. In view of this, English teachers can provide more supplementary exercises to students so that they can have more opportunities to apply their subject knowledge and familiarize with different kinds of questions that may appear in their school tests and examinations. However, it should be noted that teachers should encourage students to use repetitive learning, but not rote learning in learning English. Zhang, Biggs & Watkins (2010) explain that repetitive learning which is going over and over something, is often done to facilitate understanding. This is different from rote learning in which students just rote memorize without understanding. As quoted by Tang and Biggs (1996, p.250 as cited in Zhang, Biggs & Watkins 2010), "repetition is a route to understanding". Repetition and practice are particularly important in mastering certain linguistic features and skills. Therefore, teachers should design more learning tasks, supplementary exercises and notes that help students to revise English knowledge in a meaningful and purposeful context. If teachers encourage use of repetitive learning appropriately, it will indeed help develop students' understanding through the process of memorization.

Building good relationships with students & introducing positive reinforcement

'Liking a teacher' can be a crucial factor affecting students' motivation to learn (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Steinberg, Nagata, & Aline, 2001; Yung, 2011). However, the interview participants do not like their tutors as they thought that their "irresponsible", "unapproachable" and "unfriendly" tutors cannot really provide timely assistance and often de-motivate them to learn English. According to Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011), students are motivated to be more attentive in the lesson and willing to seek help from the teacher if the teacher is "nice", "friendly", "approachable" and "helpful". In contrast, students feel frustrated and demotivated if the teacher just always scold them and cannot provide timely assistance in their English learning. Skinner (1938) proposed that positive reinforcement is more effective than negative reinforcement, which helps students increase the value of the learning tasks and thus extrinsically motivate students to learn. Hence, this provides a remarkable insight that school teachers should try to establish good relationship with their students and introduce positive reinforcement.

Creating a learning environment which promotes peer tutoring

A number of interview participants indicated that the seating arrangement in tutorial centre enabled them to discuss questions easily and thus facilitate their learning of English. In light of the students' opinion, English teachers can promote peer tutoring in their classroom to facilitate students' English learning (Lee, 2003). Bowermaster (1986) suggests that children can learn from their peers and teaching other children. As proposed by Greenwood et al (2001), students can have more opportunities to respond to and seek help and encouragement from their peers. This can not only enhance students' English

level, but also improve the interpersonal relationships between students within the classroom (Greenwood, Carta & Kamps, 1990; Maheady & Harper, 1987). Since the demands for teachers help during class work practice become less with peer tutoring, teachers may have more opportunities to observe and monitor individual student performance and provide feedback to them (Maheady & Harper, 1987). This can enable the students in need to receive more teacher support in their English learning.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary of findings

The two groups of interview participants often showed discrepancies in their perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong as well as the elements of shadow education that contribute to their English learning. Regarding students' expectations of attending private tuition, the two groups of students expected to gain assistance in doing revisions and examination skills respectively. While students who have been employing private tuition thought that private tuition can facilitate students' English learning, students who have not attended any private tuition expressed completely different opinion and they were suspicious about the qualifications of private tutors. As for the elements of shadow education that contribute to students' English learning, many of the participants indicated that the quality of private tutors is a significant factor influencing the effectiveness of private tutoring in enhancing their English learning (Bray & Lykins, 2012). They believed that the quality of the learning activities and teaching materials much depend on the quality of tutors.

Students' perceptions on the effectiveness of the learning activities and teaching materials are quite contradicting. While they thought doing mechanical drills and rote-memorizing activities can help them familiarize with test questions through "practice makes perfect", they thought this kind of learning activities are boring and demotivating. As for the teaching materials, students generally thought the supplementary notes and exercises were useful for enhancing their English learning as the exercises enabled them to "practice makes perfect". However, the level of the supplementary exercises was often too challenging for the students, which might demotivate them from learning English.

6.2 Pedagogical implications for English teachers

With reference to the findings and literature, several pedagogical implications for English teachers are presented. To motivate students to learn English, teachers can incorporate fun elements in the learning activities. During private tutorial lessons, games seem to be popular and effective in arousing students' interests to learn English and sustaining their attention span (Hedge, 2000). Since a number of students thought that doing piles of mechanical drills can help "practice makes perfect", English teachers should provide more opportunities for students to practice the knowledge they have learnt and encourage repetitive learning instead of rote learning (Zhang, Biggs & Watkins, 2010). Teachers can design more learning tasks, supplementary exercises and notes that help students to revise English knowledge in a meaningful and purposeful context, which enable students to go through the content knowledge again to enhance understanding. Besides, teachers should build good relationships with students and introducing positive reinforcement within the classroom Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Skinner, 1938). This can encourage students to be more attentive in the lesson and more willing to seek help from the teachers. Lastly, English teachers can promote peer tutoring in their classrooms, which allows students to have more opportunities to respond to and seek help and encouragement from their peers (Greenwood et. al, 2001).

6.3 Limitations of this study

Finally, we need to note a number of limitations in the study which should be addressed in future research. This is a qualitative study which focuses on a group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education in Hong Kong and the elements of shadow

education that contributes to their English learning. Since only 8 students were studied in detail, the sampling size may not be enough for generalizing the elements of shadow education that contribute to students' English learning and generating meaning implications for English teachers to improve teaching as a whole. As noted by Bray & Lykins (2012), apart from the elements of shadow education, the motivation and abilities of students are two of the crucial factors that influence the effectiveness of shadow education in enhancing students' English learning. These factors, however, have not examined in this study and this may affect the evaluation of the effectiveness of shadow education on students' English learning. Lastly, the interview participants were just primary four students, who might not be able to describe the elements of shadow education in detail and express their perceptions on the effectiveness of different elements clearly. It was unavoidable that some students might just rephrase their peers' answers after listening to others' responses.

6.4 Further research

Regarding the limitations of this study, further research can increase the degree of generalizability by increasing the sampling size. Students from different levels of schools can be invited to conduct the research to avoid restricting to a particular group of students. Since the number of researches about the impact of shadow education on students' English learning in Hong Kong is negligible, further research can investigate the effectiveness and impact of shadow education on Hong Kong students' English learning in the context of secondary education.

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Appendix 1_A sample of the consent form for students

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
Faculty of Education

10th January, 2014

Dear students,

A group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to their English language learning

As part of my B.Ed. degree I am required to conduct a small-scale study of my teaching. I would like to invite you to participate in my research about your perception of private tutoring and how it contributes to your English language learning. You would be asked to complete a questionnaire about your demographic information and your perception about tutoring. This process will take around 5 to 10 minutes at school. Based on the data collected from the questionnaires, some of you would be further invited to join a focus-group interview, which will last for 15 to 30 minutes at school.

According to the University's policy on the ethical conduct of research, I am writing to ask your consent for these procedures.

I will make sure that the information you provide to me will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity. The hard copy of the questionnaires collected will be stored in my drawer with a lock at home, while the audio recording will be stored in my personal computer with password protected. Your participation is voluntary. You have the right not to be included in my analysis, and if I find out that you do not wish to be included, I will act according to that wish and not include you. You can also choose to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. As I will audio-record you during the focus-group interviews, you have the right to review and/or erase part of or whole of the audio recording. The information collected will only be used for the dissertation and all the digital and paper-form data will be destroyed by 1st September, 2014.

If you agree to these procedures, please sign one copy of this letter and return it to me. If concerns arise about this aspect of my work, please feel free to contact me (tel. 6050 4184), or my supervisor Dr Simon Chan (tel. 92229526). If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, HKU (tel.2241-5267).

Yours sincerely,

Cheung Tsz Ling
Language Education: Primary English
Faculty of Education
The University of Hong Kong

I agree/do not agree*(Please delete as appropriate) to participate in the research conducted by Cheung Tsz Ling in the Baptist (STW) Lui Ming Choi Primary School.

Endorsed by: Date:

Your name:

The University of Hong Kong

The Faculty of Education

A group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to their English language learning

Questionnaire

I am now conducting a research on a group of primary four students' perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to their English language learning. Please kindly spend 5-10 minutes to read and complete this questionnaire. All personal information collected will be used only for research and analysis purpose and will be destroyed upon completion of the research.

Please tick the appropriate boxes as shown ☑.

Name: _____   Class: _____

1. Have you ever had any private tutorial lessons?
    □ Yes (go to question 2)   □ No (go to question 10)

2. How long have you been having private tutorial lessons?
    □ Less than 1 year   □ 1-2 year(s)   □ 2-3 years   □ 3 years or above

3. How many private tutorial lessons do you have in a week?
    □ 1 lesson   □ 2 lessons   □ 3 lessons   □ Others: _____ lessons

4. What kind of private tutoring services have you employed?
    (You may choose more than 1 answer)
    □ One-on-one private tutoring   □ Small class private tutoring
    □ Small-class tutoring in tutorial centre   □ Big-class tutoring in tutorial centre
    □ Others: _____

5. What do you expect to get from the private tutorial lessons?
    (You may choose more than 1 answer)
    □ Additional knowledge about subject content   □ Examination skills
    □ Assistance in completing homework   □ Others: _____

6. Do you think the private tutorial lessons can enhance your learning of English subject?
   □ Yes (go to question 7)　　□ No (go to question 8)

7. What aspect(s) of shadow education do you think can help your English learning?
   (You may choose more than 1 answer)
   □ Learning activities　　　　　□ Teaching materials　　□ Quality of tutor
   □ Learning environment　　　　□ Others: _____

8. Why do you think shadow education is not effective in helping your English learning?
   Because _____.

9. If you have a chance of attending private tutorial lessons, will you join? Why or why not? □ Yes, because _____.
   □ No, because _____.

10. If you have a chance of attending private tutorial lessons, what do you expect to get from the private tutorial lessons? (You may choose more than 1 answer)
    □ Additional knowledge about subject content　　　　□ Examination skills
    □ Assistance in completing homework　　□ Others: _____

11. Do you expect shadow education can help your learning of English subject?
    □ Yes　　　　　　　□ No

-End-
Thank you very much for your help!

Interview Protocol

For a group of key stage 2 students who have attended private tutorial lessons

General

- What were your expectations of attending private tutorial lessons?

Factors affecting the effectiveness of private tutoring in enhancing students' learning of English subject

Learning activities and teaching materials

- Can you describe or explain the learning activities in the private tutorial lesson?

- What teaching materials are used in the private tutorial lessons? Can you name some of them?

- Do you think these learning activities and/or teaching materials can help you learn English? Why or why not?

Quality of tutor

- Do you think your private tutors can teach you effective skills in learning English?

- Do you like the teaching style of your private tutor? Do you think it can enhance your English learning? Why or why not?

Learning environment

- Can you briefly describe the decoration and setting of the classroom?

- Do you think this learning environment can enhance your learning of English? Why or why not?

Ending

- Since all of you have joined more than one kind of private tutoring services, which one do you find most useful/effective in enhancing your English learning?

- Do you think what you have learnt in the private tutorial lessons meet your expectations?

- Which aspects of private tutoring do you find most effective in enhancing your learning of English subject? Why?

For a group of key stage 2 students who have not attended private tutorial lessons

General

- How do you feel about shadow education?

For students who do not want to join private tutoring

- Why don't you want to have private tutoring if you have a chance?

For students who want to join private tutoring

- Which kind of private tutoring services would you like to join? (e.g. one-on-one private tutoring, small-class private tutoring & big class in tutorial centre) Why?

- Which one do you expect to be most useful/effective in enhancing your English learning? Why?

Factors affecting the effectiveness of private tutoring in enhancing students' learning of English subject

Learning activities and teaching materials

- Do you know any learning activities or teaching materials used in the private tutorial lessons?

- Do you think these learning activities and/or teaching materials can help you learn English? Why or why not?

-

Quality of tutor

- Do you expect private tutors can teach you effective skills in learning English?

- Do you expect the teaching style of private tutor can effectively enhance your English learning? Why or why not?

Learning environment

- Do you think the learning environment of private tutorial centre can enhance your learning of English? Why or why not?

Ending

- Which aspects of private tutoring do you expect to be most effective in enhancing your learning of English subject? Why?

Transcription for focus group 1

Date: 2012-03-28

Duration: 22 minutes

Participants: Cherry (C), Mandy (M), Isaac (I) & Sunny (S)

Facilitator: Miss Cheung (F)

Medium of discussion: Cantonese

1	F:	Welcome and thank you for attending this discussion. Since you have finished a questionnaire about your perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to your learning of English subject in Early March, today I would like to invite you to have an in-depth discussion on this issue. Please share your honest thoughts and feel free to respond to your classmates' comments. If you have no questions, let's start our discussion. So the first question is, what are your expectations of attending private tutorial lessons?
2	C:	I expected to learn more grammar and improve my English.
3	S:	I expected to learn more vocabulary and grammar, such as simple past tenses and future tenses.
4	F:	So, you are the same as Cherry. You want to improve your English, too.
5	S:	Yes.
6	F:	How about you, Mandy?
7	M:	Erm...I have English and Maths tutorial lessons because I think they are very challenging to me. I want to learn more subject knowledge of English and improve my grammar.
8	F:	How about Isaac?
9	I:	I mainly have English tutorial lessons. I want to learn more subject knowledge that has not been taught at school.
10	F:	What do you mean by the knowledge that has not been taught at school?
11	I:	Er...some extra knowledge that can help me learn English...because sometimes teacher may not explain in detail.
12	F:	I know that you have joined different kinds of private tutoring services. Now, I would like to ask you about some elements of shadow education that contribute to your English learning. The first element is the learning activities. So, can you briefly describe and explain the learning activities in the private tutorial lessons?
13	C:	I often played card games in the private tutoring lessons.

14	F:	Card games?
15	C:	Yes, my tutor has an i-Pad so we often played games in the i-Pad. When I behave well, my tutor will play some interesting games with me.
16	F:	How about you, Sunny?
17	S:	My tutor comes to my home and he often gives me some exercises to do. Sometimes I need to spell vocabulary as well...but generally we often do revision and drilling exercises.
18	F:	How about you, Isaac?
19	I:	My tutor just punishes me...
20	F:	Just punish you??? Is there anything else that you tutor does with you during the tutorial lessons?
21	I:	Erm……..Usually do revisions, dictations and tests.
22	F:	No more? Does your tutor teach you anything?
23	I:	Yes...I need to spell vocabulary every lesson.
24	F:	Are these vocabulary items as same as the ones you learnt at school?
25	I:	No...Completely different.
26	F:	Then do you think useful to memorize these vocabulary items?
27	I:	If I know more vocabulary, it will be useful for doing my writing.
28	F:	Okay...how about Mandy?
29	M:	I often do homework pre-study and revisions during private tutorial lessons. The tutors in the tutorial centre do not teach me immediately when I ask them questions about my homework. They often ask me to think it myself.
30	F:	Then, how do you solve your problem? Will they teach you?
31	M:	Usually, I will do with other classmates there but sometimes we still have some questions unsolved. The teacher always teaches the smarter students first and when we say we are going to leave soon, they will immediately teach us and let us go.
32	F:	Can you tell me what teaching materials that your tutors use in the lessons?
33	C:	I-Pad...for the whole lesson...no books, no notes, just i-Pad.
34	F:	Do you mean using some apps in the i-Pad?
35	C:	Yes.
36	F:	So, your tutor downloaded some games for you.
37	C:	No! I downloaded the games myself.

38	F:	What?!
39	C:	Usually, I finished the exercises in the i-Pad and then gave it to my tutor.
40	F:	Okay, so your tutor just uses i-Pad in the lessons.
41	C:	Yes, no pencils, no notes. I do not need to write anything.
42	F:	Then how about Sunny?
43	S:	My tutor will give me some notes and teach me some vocabulary that I should learn in primary five.
44	F:	So, the notes are designed by your tutor?
45	S:	Yes.
46	F:	How about Mandy?
47	M:	My tutor often gives me many notes and exercise.
48	F:	So, are they designed by your tutor?
49	M:	Some of them are but some of the exercises are just copied from the books and workbooks of different publishers.
50	F:	How about Isaac?
51	I:	My tutor will give me a booklet, which includes notes and exercises inside. They are all designed by the tutorial centre.
52	F:	After listening to all of you, most of the learning activities in your tutorial lessons are just doing revisions, dictations and tests. Only Cherry can play games as learning activities for the whole lesson. So, do you think these learning activities are effective and useful in helping you learn English?
53	S &M	No!No!No!!!
54	F:	Wow, it seems that you have many opinions on their effectiveness. Can you share your ideas first, Isaac?
55	I:	Since I need to memorize a lot of vocabulary items every lesson, I think knowing more vocabulary can help improve my writing.
56	F:	Anything else?
57	I:	Sometimes my tutor also gives me some reading comprehension exercises and this can help improve my English. And my tutor will not let me go unless I get all the answers correct.
58	F:	How about you, Mandy? Just now you said no. Are they really not effective in helping you learn English?
59	M:	Erm...not useful for Maths.

60	F:	I mean English only.
61	M:	Erm...if grammar and reading comprehension, then I think they are useful. It is because there are many exercises in my tutorial centre… at least 7 sets reading comprehension exercise and 4 sets of grammar exercise every week.
62	F:	So, you learn through doing tonnes of drilling exercises.
63	M:	Yes, practice makes perfect...i mean, at least improvements.
64	F:	Okay, I understand what you mean. How about Sunny?
65	S:	I think memorizing vocabulary is not useful. I have to memorize 20 vocabulary for primary five every week! II only got one correct out of twenty vocabulary items in the weekly dictation.
66	F:	Oh, because you are not trying to memorize the words?
67	S:	No! Too many words! Starting from 5 words on Monday, 5 words on Tuesday, and then dictation on 20 words every Friday! It's too many for me to remember!
68	I:	But I need to memorize 70 words per week!
69	F:	Wow, then Isaac you should know a lot of vocabulary!
70	I:	Yes!
71	F:	Sunny, how about other learning activities and materials? Do you find them helpful?
72	S:	I think pre-study and revisions are helpful, because I can consolidate what I have learnt. When teacher teaches the content at school, I can answer more questions and get more points!
73	F:	How about Cherry? It seems that you are the happiest one! However, do you think you can learn English effectively from playing the games in i-Pad?
74	C:	Yes, because I have to memorize vocabulary in playing the games. Just take the game "Fun and Friends" as an example, I can get some rewards after I can complete some tasks. It's not just playing, I need to use my English knowledge, like grammar.
75	F:	So, you think the games and i-Pad are useful as you need to apply your English knowledge to accomplish different tasks.
76	C:	Yes...you know, one time my tutor downloaded 10 apps for me and I need to finish all the exercises in half an hour...but there were 200 questions in one app!
77	S,M,I	Wow~~~~~200 questions!!!
78	F:	So, could you finish all?
79	C:	No, of course not. And the exercises are actually for secondary one level, not primary four.

80	F:	So, do you think it's too difficult for you?
81	C:	I think sometimes not related to the things that I learnt at school...and ...
82	F:	And?
83	C:	Er...just not specifically help me learn something to my level.
84	F:	O...you talk about level. You think it's not level-appropriate to you.
85	C:	Yes, too difficult and not very useful.
86	M:	Me too, I have the same problem! My exercises are for primary six!
87	F:	Okay, now shall we move on to the quality of the tutor? Do you think your private tutors can teach you some useful knowledge and effective skills in learning English?
88	S:	NO!
89	F:	Why, Sunny?
90	S:	Because my tutor just gives me many exercises to do. When I have questions, he often cannot clarify to me clearly. And he asks me to memorize 20 vocabulary items for primary 5 every week!!! I don't like it!
91	F:	So, what do you feel about it?
92	S:	He does not know my needs! Totally!
93	F:	How about Isaac?
94	I:	I think my tutor is quite good. He teaches me to do homework.
95	F:	Just because he teaches you homework?
96	I:	Erm...he teaches me 10 words every day and corrects my pronunciation when I read aloud the words. He helps me memorize the words.
97	F:	Some people think that they have closer relationship with tutor than school teachers and hence they like learning with their tutor more? Do you think so? I
98	All:	NO!!! They are not nice to us!!!
99	M,S	My tutor always scolds me!
100	F:	How about Cherry? Do you think your tutor can help you?
101	C:	Yes, of course. When I was in K-1, she taught me vocabulary for primary one already. When I was in primary 1, she taught me words for primary four. So now, she teaches me vocabulary for secondary one. I think I can learn a lot from her.
102	F:	Mandy, you just said your tutor treated you so good...
103	M:	No, very bad!!! She is so impatient.

104	F:	But can your tutor help you learn English?
105	M:	Not really...she always scolds students only...I think sometimes she cannot answer my questions...maybe she does not know the answers too.
106	F:	So, what is the difference between tutors and school teachers? Which one do you prefer?
107	C:	School teachers, because I think they are more knowledgeable.
108	S:	School teachers, because my tutor cannot clarify my questions and just asks me to memorize words.
109	I:	School teachers, because they are more patients than the tutors in the tutorial centre.
110	S:	Yes, I agree!
111	M:	Tutor! Because their notes are useful.
112	F:	So, you like tutors just because you like their notes? Then what if your school teacher can give you similar notes you got in the tutorial centre?
113	M:	Then of course school teacher!
114	F:	Then, can you give me some more details about the notes you want in private tutoring?
115	I:	Vocabulary list with pictures. I think it will be easier to remember the words with pictures. It's time-consuming to look up to the dictionary word by word.
116	S:	Summary notes that I can study and consolidate what I learnt at home. Because I always do not want to study the whole chapter of book.
117	I:	Yes, I agree that summary notes are helpful for revisions.
118	M:	I think some steps in doing grammar. For example, we just learnt forming wh-word questions. In the notes provided by my tutor, it teaches me how to form the questions step by step in a graph. It seems to be easier to understand and follow.
119	I:	Yes, I have some notes like that too. Grammar is quite difficult for me but I can follow the notes step by step.
120	F:	Let's move on to the learning environment. Can you briefly describe the learning environment of your tutoring place?
121	C:	It's my home...hahahaha
122	M:	It's a bit crowded, many tables and chairs in a room. Four students sit in one table.
123	S:	There are several rooms and I think about 10 students in one room. There is a bookshelf containing many textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, etc.

124	I:	Nothing special...similar to their tutorial centre...but my tutorial centre is very noisy...super noisy...because there are two classes in one room.
125	F:	Then, how do you feel about this environment?
126	S:	More relaxing, because I can play cheese after finishing all my homework and revisions.
127	M:	I think it's a bit crowded as the tables are quite close. However, I can discuss questions with other peers easily with this setting.
128	I:	I think the learning environment in the tutorial centre is not bad when other students are too noisy there. However, usually I think it is good because I will push myself to work harder and be more concentrate when I saw other peers are working hard on their homework and revisions.
129	F:	How about Cherry? You are the only one having private tuition at home.
130	C:	I think the learning environment at home is more relaxing, but sometimes it's so relaxing that makes me wanna sleep on the bed.
131	All	Hahahaha... (laughing)
132	F:	Here comes the last few questions. Since all of you have tried different kinds of private tutoring services, which type of private tuition do you think most effective in helping you learn English?
133	I:	Big-class tutoring in tutorial centre, because I will work harder when I see some smart students in the class. When I have tutorial lessons at home, I often want to sleep. It's quite boring to stay with my tutor for 2 hours per day.
134	C:	One-on-one tutoring, because my tutor concentrates on teaching me only and hence can cater for my needs. If there are other students, then sometimes I may need to listen to something that I have already understood. Then my time is wasted in waiting for others. In contrast, sometimes I may need more explanations from the teacher but s/he may not be able to take care of me in a big class.
135	M:	I think both one-on-one tutoring and big-class tutoring have their merits, For one-on-one tutoring, the tutor can concentrate on teaching me and answering my questions. In tutorial centre, the tutor often ignores me and answers my questions lately. On the other hand, I can discuss questions with other peers in tutorial centre. I think sometimes this can help me remember some knowledge.
136	F:	So, do you think the private tutoring services that you employed can meet your expectations?
137	All:	Yes!
138	F:	Here is the last question. We have talked about four elements of shadow education that may contribute to your English learning, which one do you think most effective in enhancing your English?

139	I:	Teaching materials! I think the most useful part of shadow education is their notes and exercises. As Mandy said, practice makes perfect. The summary notes can also shorten my time on revision.
140	C:	I think it's the i-Pad most useful.
141	F:	So, you choose teaching materials.
142	C:	Yes, there are dictionary, games, grammar exercises and "Angrybird awards" in the iPad...it's not just playing, but it's fun and relaxing in learning English.
143	M,S	I want to play i-Pad too!
144	C:	The apps are very attractive, colourful and interesting…at least they are much more interesting than black-and-white notes and exercises.
145	F:	Okay...how about Mandy?
146	M:	I think the quality of the tutor is most crucial in helping me learn English. If the tutor is very not kind and approachable, I dare not ask him/her questions to avoid being scolded. As a result, I cannot learn much from the private tuition. In my tutorial centre, sometimes the tutor may be too busy or they do not want to teach me...I don't know... so they cannot provide timely assistance to me as well. Sometimes it makes me so frustrated so I just copied the answers from other peers.
147	S:	I agree!
148	P:	How about Sunny?
149	S:	The quality of tutor, too. Because I will be more concentrated if the tutor always keep an eye on me, check my progress and give me timely assistance when I need help.
150	F:	So, I think it's about the time today. Do you have anything to add? If not, thanks for joining our discussion today. Your opinions will be very useful in helping me understand students' perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to your English learning. Thank you.

Transcription for focus group 2

Date: 2012-03-29

Duration: 20 minutes

Participants: Jasmine (J), Henry (H), Paco (P) & Tom (T)

Facilitator: Miss Cheung (F)

Medium of discussion: Cantonese

1	F:	Welcome and thank you for attending this discussion. Since you have finished a questionnaire about your perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to your learning of English subject in Early March, today I would like to invite you to have an in-depth discussion on this issue. Please share your honest thoughts and feel free to respond to your classmates' comments. If you have no questions, let's start our discussion. So the first question is, how do you feel about shadow education?
2	T:	Wasting money.
3	F:	Why do you say so?
4	T:	Because if we pay attention in English lessons at school, we do not need to have extra tutorial lessons. I know that many people do not pay attention in tutorial lessons, so it's just a waste of money.
5	F:	How about Paco?
6	P:	The workload is heavy...because the students have to do extra exercises after completing the homework and revisions given by the school teachers. I can imagine how tiring it is.
7	H:	My parents can teach me if I have questions on my homework. Also, I prefer to pay more attention at school, rather than paying for private tuition.
8	F:	How about Jasmine?
9	J:	Instead of having private tuition, I think I can seek help from my teachers at school, my parents and sisters at home. I agree with Tom that it's a waste of money to pay for private tuition.
10	F:	If you are given a chance of attending private tutorial lessons for free, all of you revealed in the questionnaire that you do not want to try them. Can you tell me your reasons in detail?
11	T:	I do not want to join because I think private tuition will use up a lot of my time. For instance, now I can play after I finished all my homework and

		revisions. However, if I have to attend private tutorial lessons after school, then I will have less time to do other things...and my workload will also increase.
12	F:	So, you think private tutoring will use up a lot of your time. How about Paco?
13	P:	I do not want to join because I think my academic performance is good enough.
14	All:	Hahaha…(laughing).
15	P:	I mean… I don't want to afford the time and money for little improvement.
16	F:	How about Henry?
17	H:	I agree with Tom, it's wasting time...but if it is free, I will attend one lesson to see how it works.
18	F:	Will you continue if it is useful?
19	H:	Even if the private tutorial lessons are very useful, I do not want to spend my time there.
20	F:	Okay, so you just wanna try...broaden your horizon. How about Jasmine? What's your idea?
21	J:	I agree with them that attending private tutoring lessons will use up much of my time. I also worry about the quality of the tutors. If they are not knowledgeable and professional enough, I may not be able to learn anything from them.
22	F:	So, you also worry about the quality of tutors.
23	T:	Tutors are unkind to students.
24	P:	Yes, many of our classmates said that. Isaac said his tutor always scolded him.
25	F:	Yes...Isaac told me that, too. Now, let's imagine. If you really have to join one kind of private tutoring, which of the following private tutoring services, one-on-one private tutoring, small-class private tutoring, small-class tutoring in tutorial centre and big-class tutoring in tutorial centre, would you like to join?
26	J:	One-on-one tutoring! Because if there are other students, the tutor may not be able to take care of me all the time...and probably I often need to wait.
27	F:	Then, what are your expectations of joining private tutoring?
28	J:	To help me get higher marks...better academic results.
29	F:	How about Henry?
30	H:	One-on-one tutoring at my home. Because I do not need to waste my time on

		travelling and I think the tutor will treat me nicer at my home.
31	F:	Is it because your mum is at home?
32	H:	Yes, my mum can monitor the tutor and see if he/she treats me badly. I think the tutor will scold me less in front of my mum.
33	F:	So, what are your expectations of joining private tutoring?
34	H:	To teach me to do my homework...because I always encounter many difficulties when I do my homework.
35	F:	How about Paco?
36	P:	I choose small-class tutoring in tutorial centre...because I will always look at my toy cars if I have tutorial lessons at home.
37	H:	Yes, you can also eat something when you are hungry.
38	P:	Yes, but the environment at my home is too relaxing… I cannot concentrate on my work.
39	F:	What are your expectations of joining private tutoring?
40	P:	English writing.
41	F:	Anything else?
42	P:	I want to learn some examination skills too.
43	F:	How about Tom, which one would you choose?
44	T:	One-on-one tutoring...because in tutorial centre, there are usually many students. If some students behave badly, the tutor will scold them...erm...it's noisy and disturbing. It also wastes my time if the tutor stops teaching to scold them.
45	F:	Then what are your expectations of having private tutoring?
46	T:	Examination skills...I think I do not need the tutor to teach me extra subject knowledge because my father will teach me. My father often asks me to watch English movies to learn English and teaches me new vocabulary.
47	F:	O...because your father has already taught you.
48	T:	Because he is a teacher.
49	F:	Do you know how many of your classmates have employed private tutoring services?
50	All:	No.
51	F:	25 out of 30. So, you are the four of the students who have not attended any

		private tutorial lessons.
52	All:	Woo...
53	F:	Now, I want to ask you more about the learning activities, teaching materials, quality of tutor and learning environment of shadow education. Since a majority of your classmates have employed private tuition, do you know any learning activities and teaching materials used in the private tutorial lessons?
54	T:	I know! English writing.
55	J:	Many supplementary exercises. I remember Marcus (the boy sitting next to Jasmine) often brings a thick booklet to school and he secretly does the English exercises under the table during different lessons.
56	T:	Yes, Amelia often does the exercises during lesson, too!
57	P:	I saw that Justin had a super thick notes given by his tutor...there are many exercises inside.
58	F:	How about you, Henry? What learning activities and teaching materials used in the private tutorial lessons do you know?
59	H:	Doing exercises...lots of practice.
60	T,J, :	Yes.
61	P:	Many many exercises...
62	F:	So, the most common learning activity you know is doing supplementary exercises.
63	All:	Yes...
64	F:	Last time, your classmates said they thought the notes given by their tutors were useful. What do you think about the effectiveness of the notes?
65	H:	Sometimes my classmates said they have done the reading comprehension exercises in the school test before.
66	P:	They said completely the same.
67	T:	Me too! I have done some test questions in the exercises given by my father before.
68	F:	So, when you heard about that, do you want to employ private tutoring services?
69	All:	No!
70	F:	Why?
71	T:	My father can teach me..I do not need the tutor.

72	P:	It's just by chance. If I am clever enough, I should know how to do these questions even though I have not done them in the tutorial lesson before.
73	H:	If I do more exercises bought by my mum, I may have done these test questions in the supplementary exercises.
74	J:	Yes, I agree with them. I think it's not really related to the tutor.
75	F:	So, do you think the learning activities and teaching materials used in the private tutorial lessons can help students learn English?
76	All:	Not really….
77	H:	If the tutors are good, then maybe their notes are useful. In contrast, if the tutors are not knowledgeable and do not know how to teach, then the learning activities and notes designed by them probably do not work. For example, my classmates told me that some tutors just to finish tutoring quickly and leave earlier. They are not passionate about teaching.
78	P:	I think the notes do not really help...it depends on the students. If we are lazy and do not read the notes and do the exercises, then shadow education cannot really help. Some students may feel great pressure from the increased workload in the private tutorial lessons and even commit suicide.
79	F:	But I just ask about the learning activities and teaching materials.
80	P:	Yes… more notes, more exercises, more study pressure.
81	T:	Yes...
82	J:	I think just doing exercises in the tutorial lessons is very boring. If I were the tutee, I would feel very demotivated. It isn't fun at all.
83	T:	Yes… I think they are not useful too.
84	F:	How about the quality of tutor? Do you think it is important?
85	All:	Of course important!
86	H:	My mum said some tutors chose to teach the students who were smart first and those who were not smart had to wait for the tutors and left the tutorial centre very late.
87	T:	I am not sure about the qualification of the tutor...because some of them are just secondary school students...they are not teachers.
88	J:	Yes...I agree...many of the tutors are not teachers, so they may not know how to teach students.
89	F:	Then how about the learning environment? Have you ever seen the environment in a tutorial centre?

90	P:	I have never seen the environment in a tutorial centre.
91	H:	I know there are many tables in a room.
92	J:	The students can walk around themselves. They can eat outside the classroom and then go back to do exercises. It's quite distracting.
93	T:	I think there are too many students, too noisy for studying.
94	H:	Yes, very crowded.
95	F:	So overall, do you think private tutoring services can help primary students like you learn English?
96	All:	NO!
97	P:	If I want to learn English, I can find you!
98	H:	The teachers at the school are much more professional.
99	T:	If I have any problems about my homework, I prefer to find my English teacher.
100	F:	If you have to choose one aspect of private tutoring, which one do you expect to be most effective in enhancing students' learning of English subject and why?
101	H:	I do not know, maybe tutor...
102	T:	Tutor, if the tutor can clarify some misunderstanding and teach some special study skills, then they are helpful.
103	J:	I don't know...
104	P:	I don't know too...maybe … I don' know.
105	F:	Okay, never mind. I think it's about the time today. Do you have anything to add? If not, thanks for joining our discussion today. Your opinions will be very useful in helping me understand students' perceptions on shadow education and how it contributes to your English learning. Thank you.