Significant Motivational Factors in Self-Directed Learning

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I. Introduction

Many researchers (Egbert & Hanson-Smith, 1999; Warschauer & Meskill, 2000; Warschauer, Turbee, & Roberts, 1996) believe that self-directed learning environments that are customized to learners' proficiency levels and pace can facilitate language learning. The issues related to self-directed learning have received a lot of attention in the field of education as well as English language learning. The research findings suggest that several factors can influence the level of self-directed learning, so teachers and researchers are trying to increase learners' levels of self-directed learning in various ways.

However, Kim and Kim (2009) claim that the Korean national language learning curriculum does not provide Korean K-12 students with appropriate environments which could help them to become self-directed

language learners. Moreover, studies about specific factors which influence the level of self-directed learning are under-researched. Research about self-directed learning in language education (Kim & Kim, 2009, 2010; Kim, Kim, Yoo, & Yoo, 1996; Kim & Yoo, 1997) has focused on achievement of self-directed learning, but researchers have paid little attention to the most influential factors. As previous studies have not particularly explored which motivational factor most affects the level of self-directed learning, this study explores the diverse array of motivational factors to find the most influential factor contributing to the level of self-directed learning.

Ⅱ. Literature Review

1. Self-Directed Learning Readiness (SDLR)

Self-directed learning influences learners' academic achievement as well as success in language learning (Kim & Kim, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2009; Lai, 2013). Moreover, self-directed learning is believed to be one of the key factors that can predict successful long-term learning (Kim & Kim, 2009). Knowles (1975, cited in Lai, 2013, p. 100) defined 'self-directed learning' as the "process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help from others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes" (p. 18). Much terminology has been used to refer to 'self-directed learning'; Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992), and Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) used 'self-regulated learning,' while Spratt, Humphreys, and Han (2002) used 'autonomy.' In this study, Knowles'

(1975) definition of 'self-directed learning' is adopted, and 'self-directed learning readiness' is used to indicate participants' readiness for self-directed learning.

Garrison (1997) claimed that self-directed learning was a key element in deciding success in adult education and proposed a theoretical model in order to explain the nature of self-directed learning. The model purported that the concept of self-directed learning integrated self-management (contextual control), self-monitoring (cognitive responsibility), and motivational (entering and task) dimensions.

Guglielmino's (1977, cited in Kim & Kim, 2010) Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) has been widely used or modified in order to measure learners' self-directed learning readiness. In Guglielmino's survey, participants were asked to answer 58 questions, and they were categorized into five different levels depending on their survey scores: 'High' (252-290: 4.35-5.00), 'Above Average' (227-251: 3.92 -4.34), 'Average' (202-226: 3.49-3.91), 'Below Average' (177-201: 3.06-3.47), 'Low' (58-176: 1.00-3.05).

Kim, Kim, Yoo, and Yoo (1996) modified the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) in order to examine the level of self-directed learning among elementary school teachers. The seven factors of the survey questions were "Creative approach," "Inquisitive nature," "Proactive planning," "Acceptance of responsibility for learning," "Love of learning," "Future orientation," and "Self-confidence as a learner." The mean score of self-directed learning readiness of elementary school teachers was 214.50, which is average according to Guglielmino's (1977) categorization, and three factors (their level of education, students' grades they were in charge of, and the amount of participation in teacher workshop programs) influenced their level of self-directed learning. However, their gender, residential areas, and religion were not related to the scores.

In the study of elementary school teachers' self-directed learning readiness, Kim and Yoo (1997) found that Korean female elementary school teachers tended to show strong relatedness to "Acceptance of responsibility in learning" and to "Love of learning," but showed weak relatedness to "Openness to a challenge" and "Inquisitive nature." Their scores were positively related to their educational backgrounds, the degree of participation in autonomous training programs, and whether or not they were homeroom teachers. In contrast, the scores were negatively related to their length of teaching experience.

Kim, Kim, Yoo, and Yoo (1996) and Kim and Yoo (1997) examined teachers' levels of self-directed learning, but it is research findings regarding students' readiness that can help teachers and researchers increase students' achievement of self-directed learning. Kim and Kim (2009) explored Korean elementary school students' self-directed learning readiness in English learning and found that critical factors which affected the participants' level of self-directed learning were region, gender, and motivation. They chose elementary school students as research participants because young learners' attitudes and interest in language learning could affect their future attitudes and interest. They compared three groups' self-directedness, and the results showed that Korean elementary school students' self-directedness became lowered as time went by: 12^{th} graders' levels of self-directed learning were lower than those of 4^{th} graders. Moreover, the level of self-directed learning in English education was significantly lower than those of other subjects. Motivation was positively correlated with the level of self-directed learning, and female students' levels of self-directed learning were higher than those of male students. Furthermore, female students showed more responsibility in learning than male students did.

Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) found students' differences in

self-directed learning readiness; grade, gender and giftedness affected self-efficacy and use of self-directed learning strategy. Girls (5^{th}, 8^{th}, and 11^{th} grade students) tended to use more self-directed learning strategies in record keeping and monitoring, environmental structuring, and goal-setting and goal-planning. Researchers pointed out that self-efficacy could explain the individual differences in learning and motivation (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

In language learning, Kim and Kim (2005) investigated the relationship between level of self-directed learning and practical English skills. They examined the influence of three factors on the level of self-directed learning: responsibility, self-confidence, and use of metacognitive strategy. The results showed that the use of metacognitive strategy accounted for 53.4% of variance in practical English skills, but the other two factors did not account for much variance in practical English skills.

2. Motivation

Language learners' motivation is considered one of the critical factors that influence learning (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Kim and Kim (2009) claimed that the higher the motivation the better the self-directed learning. Nenniger (1999) investigated the role of motivation in self-directed learning and found that motivation played a critical role in self-directed learning in general. While Nenniger investigated the relationship between motivation and general learning readiness, Spratt, Humphreys, and Chan (2002) researched the relationship between motivation and self-directed learning in language learning. They found that motivation played a critical role in influencing learners' autonomous learning readiness: the stronger the level of motivation the greater engagement in outside class activities and autonomous learning. Therefore,

Spratt, Humphreys, and Chan claimed that teachers needed to increase students' motivation to make them to become self-directed learners.

Gan (2009) compared self-directed language learning attitudes, strategies, and motivation between mainland Chinese university students and university students in Hong Kong. The results showed that institutional contexts and social environments were likely to determine students' attitudes and motivation. Both groups showed positive attitudes toward self-directed learning even though Hong Kong students showed greater preference for teacher guidance than Chinese students did.

Lai (2013) investigated students' self-directed use of technology for language learning and found that 'language learning motivation,' 'perceived usefulness of technology for learning,' and 'perceived compatibility between technology use and learning expectancies' were related to the use of self-directed technology. In contrast, Simmering, Posey, and Piccoli (2009) found that "computer self-efficacy was not related to initial motivation to learn and motivation to learn was not related to learning in a self-directed class," (p. 99) while computer self-efficacy was positively related to learning.

However, as these previous studies did not specifically examine the relationship among motivational factors and self-directed learning, it has been unknown which motivational factor contributes to the level of self-directed learning the most. Knowing which factor most affects self-directed learning can help teachers and researchers to encourage language learners to be more self-directed learners. There are several motivational factors; previous studies related to motivation subcategorized motivation into several factors. Gardner and Lambert (1972) divided several attitudinal and motivational factors that contributed to learning success into instrumental and integrative motivation. Deci (1975, cited in Brown, 2007) divided motivation into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic

motivation. Some researchers (Ellis, 1997; Gardner & Lambert, 1972) emphasized the importance of integrative motivation on language learning, while other researchers (Chong & Kim, 2001; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991) emphasized the critical role of instrumental motivation on language learning.

Another factor that may contribute to differences in self-directed learning is learners' willingness to take a course. Most Korean universities require undergraduate students to take at least one or two mandatory English courses before graduation. However, Kim (1996) reported that there was a big motivational difference between those taking mandatory English courses and elective courses. Lee and Oh (2011) examined the relationship between several motivational factors and language learners' proficiency improvement, and found that only interest was correlated to the participants' proficiency improvement. The participants' means for instrumental and integrative motivation were higher than those for intrinsic motivation and interest, and between mandatory and elective courses, the group differences for all four factors were statistically significant.

On the basis of previous research findings (participants' motivation influences their level of self-directed learning), this study aims to investigate the relationship among various motivational factors and the level of self-directed learning; which motivational factor can predict learners' levels of self-directed learning the most? Kim (1996) claimed that taking a mandatory course lowered learners' motivation, and previous research (Gan, 2009; Lai, 2013; Nenniger, 1999; Spratt, Humphreys, & Chan, 2002) claimed that motivation influenced students' levels of self-directed learning. Therefore, it is assumed that participants who take mandatory courses show a lower level of self-directed learning than participants who take elective courses. This study proposes the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Mandatory course group and elective course group will show different levels of self-directed learning.

Hypothesis 2: Mandatory course group and elective course group will show different levels of motivation.

Hypothesis 3: Self-directed language learning readiness will be positively related to the participants' motivational factors, proficiency level, and proficiency improvement.

Ⅲ. Methodology

1. Survey Instrument

The 40 questions on Kim and Yoo's (1997) Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) are composed of six factors: "Love of learning," "Self-confidence as a learner," "Openness to a challenge," "Inquisitive nature," "Self-understanding," and "Acceptance of responsibility for learning." Kim and Kim (2009) modified Kim and Yoo's survey questions in order to meet the needs of English learning. Kim and Kim (2009) reduced the number of questions to 20, and the questions were composed of seven factors. The questionnaire adopted a five-point Likert scale rangeing from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

In this study, Kim and Yoo's (1997) survey questions, SDLRS for elementary school teachers, and Kim and Kim's (2009, 2010) survey questions were modified on the basis of the current research hypotheses. In order to measure the participants' instrumental, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation, and interest, 39 additional items were selected from Kim, Kim,

and Kim (2011), Lee (2006), Lee and Oh (2011), and Yeon and Kim (2010). The first part of the questionnaire was composed of questions related to motivational factors, and the second part was composed of questions related to self-directed learning readiness. At the end of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer questions about their demographic information.

2. Participants

All of the 90 women's university participants had studied English for ten years (four years in elementary school, three years in junior high school and three years in high school). Forty-one students were taking a first-year mandatory English course at the university, and the other 49 participants were taking an elective English course that required at least mid-level proficiency to register for the course. At the university, the mandatory English course was divided into three proficiency levels, and each class had 24 to 28 students. All 41 participants in the mandatory course belonged to the lowest proficient level, and the researcher taught all the participants. Since each class of the mandatory course was divided depending on their English proficiency, students' majors were varied.

TOEIC score were used in order to judge research participants' proficiency (Lee, 2006; Lee, 2009; Nam & Kim, 2009). In this study, the participants' TOEIC scores were also used in order to provide reliable comparable measurement of English proficiency between elective and mandatory groups. The participants were asked to take a TOEIC test twice a semester: once at the beginning of the semester (TOEIC_B) and again at the end of the semester (TOEIC_A).

TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistics of TOEIC Score

Group	N	Score	Mean (SD)	Min.	Max.
Elective	49	TOEIC_B	743.98 (114.37)	445	915
	49	TOEIC_A	786.43 (119.07)	340	960
Mandatory	41	TOEIC_B	378.90 (97.38)	165	690
	41	TOEIC_A	504.27 (143.76)	285	805

At the beginning of the semester, the average TOEIC score for the elective classes was 744, ranging from 445 to 915, and the average in the mandatory classes was 379, ranging from 165 to 690. At the end of the semester, the participants took another TOEIC test, and the average score for the elective classes was 786, ranging from 340 to 960, and that for the mandatory classes was 504, ranging from 285 to 805.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The participants answered the modified questionnaire, which was written in Korean, at the end of the spring semester in 2012. All participants were asked to answer what their majors were, how long their average study hours outside the English classroom were, and other background information at the end of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were computed to analyze the background information.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to examine the internal reliability among the items in each factor. Four motivational factors were selected; (1) instrumental motivation, (2) intrinsic motivation, (3) extrinsic motivation, and (4) interest. Questions that belong to each factor are explained in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: Questions in Each Factor and Reliability

Factors	Question #	Cronbach's Alpha
Instrumental	6, 7, 11	.643
Intrinsic	8, 19, 20, 21, 22	.854
Extrinsic	14, 15	.750
Interest	12, 13, 24, 27, 30, 31	.867

Kim, Kim, and Kim (2011), Lee (2006), Lee and Oh (2011), and Yeon and Kim (2010) used more than four factors, but factors whose calculated Cronbach's alpha was lower than .4 were excluded in the current analysis. After comparing group differences in terms of self-directed learning between the mandatory English course group and elective English course group using T-test, bivariate linear regression analysis was performed in order to explore the relationship among motivational factors and students' levels of self-directed learning and the relationship between the level of self-directed learning and the participants' proficiency improvement.

Ⅳ. Results and Discussions

1. Group Differences on Motivational Factors and Self-Directed Learning

In order to explore the group differences between the mandatory English course (MEC) and elective English course (EEC) on self-directed learning and four motivational factors, five separate independent t-tests were performed. The means for instrumental motivation were higher for both

levels than those for other motivational factors, being 4.58 and 4.54 respectively, but the means for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and interest were not as high as those for instrumental motivation.

The overall means of intrinsic motivation, interest, and self-directed learning readiness from the mandatory group were lower than those from the elective group, while the mandatory group had higher means for instrumental and extrinsic motivation. The following Table 3 illustrates means, standard deviation, the group differences on the four factors and self-directed learning readiness, and their statistical significance.

TABLE 3: Descriptive Statistics between MEC & EEC

	Group	N	Mean (SD)	*t*	Sig.
Instrumental	MEC	41	4.58 (.49)	−.36	.72
	EEC	49	4.54 (.54)		
Intrinsic	MEC	41	3.16 (.82)	3.02	.003**
	EEC	49	3.68 (.82)		
Extrinsic	MEC	41	3.72 (.93)	−1.71	.09
	EEC	49	3.46 (.91)		
Interest	MEC	41	3.22 (.73)	1.08	.28
	EEC	49	3.40 (.79)		
Self-Directedness	MEC	41	3.34 (.36)	.64	.53
	EEC	49	3.39 (.32)		

*p<.05; **p<.01

Group differences on instrumental, extrinsic, interest, and self-directed learning were not statistically significant, while only one factor, intrinsic motivation, showed a statistically significant difference between them. The means for instrumental motivation were noticeably high compared to those for intrinsic, extrinsic, interest, and self-directed learning. Previous research (Kim, 2006, 2009; Lamb, 2007) has claimed that EFL learners

have higher mean scores on instrumental motivation than ESL learners while ESL learners have a higher mean on integrative motivation. The current results also support this.

Among five items, a significant group difference stemmed from three items on intrinsic motivation: Questions 8, 19, and 21. Especially for Question 8 "I am interested in English, and I enjoy learning it," the mean for the mandatory group was 3.20, while that for the elective group was 4.02. Another question, Question 21 "I like English," also showed a group difference: the mean for the mandatory group was 3.12 while that for the elective group was 3.98. The higher the proficiency level the higher the mean for intrinsic motivation. For instrumental and extrinsic motivation, the mandatory group showed higher means than the elective group, contrary to the expectation, which illustrates that the mandatory group participants are all aware of the importance of English, its status as a lingua franca, and its instrumental necessity regardless of their proficiency level.

Even though the group differences on instrumental and extrinsic motivation were not statistically significant at $p<.05$, participants scored high means regardless of their proficiency level compared to other means. Group differences in intrinsic motivation were statistically significant, but the means were lower than those of instrumental and extrinsic motivation.

2. Relationship between Motivational Factors and Self-Directed Learning

In order to examine possible predictors of the participants' self-directed learning, four separate linear regression analyses were performed. Table 4 reports the results of regression analysis between all four factors and self-directed learning readiness. Normality and homoskedasticity were assumed.

TABLE 4: Regression Analysis Results

	R Square	B	Beta	*t*	Sig.
Instrumental	.11	.218	.332	3.303	.001***
Intrinsic	.276	.209	.525	5.792	.000***
Extrinsic	.038	.071	.194	1.855	.067
Interest	.345	.260	.587	6.804	.000***

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Instrumental motivation and self-directed learning readiness are positively related, and the R square is .11, which means that instrumental motivation accounted for 11% of variance of self-directed learning readiness. Even though the regression model between instrumental motivation and self-directed learning is statistically significant, the account percent is not as much as that of intrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation and self-directed learning readiness are positively related, and the R square is .276, which means that intrinsic motivation accounted for 27.6% of variance of self-directed learning readiness. Extrinsic motivation and self-directed learning readiness are positively related, but the R square is .038. The regression model is not statistically significant at $p<0.5$.

Interest and self-directed learning readiness are positively related, and the R square is .345, which means that interest accounted for 34.5% of variance of self-directed learning readiness. The interest regression model explains the variance of self-directed learning readiness the most among the motivational factors. In order to explore the relationship between the three factors whose regression models were statistically significant apart from extrinsic motivation and self-directed learning readiness, multiple regression analysis was performed. Table 5 shows the results of regression analysis among the three factors and self-directed learning

readiness. Normality and homoskedasticity of the self-directed learning levels were assumed. The results show that the regression model accounts for 39.7% of variance of self-directed learning readiness but instrumental and intrinsic motivation do not account as much for variance of self-directed learning readiness as interest does.

TABLE 5: Regression Analysis for Factors Predicting Self-directed Learning

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Instrumental	.111	.170	1.938	.056*
Intrinsic	.085	.214	1.828	.071*
Interest	.172	.390	3.292	.001***

*p<.1; **p<.05; ***p<.01.

As seen in Table 5, the regression analysis shows that interest is a significant predictor for self-directed learning at p<.01. The other two factors are statistically significant at p<.1. In order to explore the relationship among the four factors, multiple regression analysis between three motivational factors and interest was performed. Interest was regressed on only one factor, intrinsic motivation. Table 6 illustrates the results of the data analysis.

TABLE 6: Regression Analysis for Factors Predicting Interest

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Instrumental	.183	.124	1.503	.136
Intrinsic	.598	.666	8.489	.000***
Extrinsic	.011	.014	.171	.865

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

As seen in Table 6, only one motivational factor was statistically significant at p<.001. In other words, participants' interest levels increase as their intrinsic motivation increases. This result indicates that language teachers and researchers need to encourage learners' intrinsic motivation and to maintain their intrinsic motivation levels in order to improve their interest.

In order to examine the relationship between all factors (four motivational factors and the participants' self-directed learning) and their final TOEIC score, five separate linear regression analyses were performed. Table 7 reports the results of regression analysis between all five factors and the final score. Normality and homoskedasticity of TOEIC scores were assumed.

TABLE 7: Regression Analysis Results

	R Square	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Instrumental	.039	73.061	.197	1.881	.063
Intrinsic	.198	100.170	.444	4.654	.000***
Extrinsic	.014	−24.306	−.118	−1.111	.270
Interest	.099	78.143	.314	3.049	.003**
Self-Directed	.087	167.741	.296	2.887	.005**

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Intrinsic motivation, interest, self-directed learning readiness, and the final TOEIC score are positively related. Even though four regression models between the factors and the final score are statistically significant at p<.1, the account percents are not great. The regression model for intrinsic motivation best explains the variance of the final score among the

factors. In other words, participants whose TOEIC scores were better than other participants had a higher level of intrinsic motivation, interest, and self-directed learning readiness.

The final score as well as the improvement is a critical factor that can predict students' long-term learning outcomes. In order to examine the relationship between all factors (four motivational factors and the participants' self-directed learning) and their TOEIC score improvement, five separate bivariate linear regression analyses were performed. The TOEIC score improvement was calculated by subtracting the beginning TOEIC test score from the semester-end test score. Table 8 reports the results of regression analyses between all five factors and TOEIC score improvement. Normality and homoskedasticity of the improvement were assumed.

TABLE 8: Regression Analysis Results

	R Square	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Instrumental	.071	60.374	.266	2.593	.011**
Intrinsic	.018	18.578	.135	1.280	.204
Extrinsic	.008	11.319	.090	.846	.400
Interest	.051	34.922	.225	2.132	.036**
Self-Directed	.042	70.373	.204	1.948	.055*

*p<.1; **p<.05; ***p<.01

As seen in Table 8, instrumental motivation and interest were statistically significant at p<.05, and self-directed learning readiness was statistically significant at p<.1. The R square of instrumental motivation is .071, which means that instrumental motivation accounted for about 7% of

variance of the score improvement. Even though three regression models between the factors and the score improvement are statistically significant at $p<.1$, the account percents are not significant. Among the factors, the instrumental motivation regression model best explain the variance in score improvement.

V. Conclusion

This study explored the most influential motivational factor affecting the level of self-directed learning. The regression models for intrinsic and instrumental motivation, and interest with self-directed learning readiness were statistically significant. However, not all motivational factors were positively related to self-directed learning readiness; extrinsic motivation was not related to the level of self-directed learning readiness, so it can be interpreted that all participants had pressure from parents or teachers to learn English regardless of their proficiency level and their level of self-directed learning.

Separate independent t-tests were performed in order to examine the differences between the mandatory group and the elective group on instrumental, intrinsic, extrinsic, interest, and self-directed learning. The results indicated that one factor, intrinsic motivation, showed a statistically significant difference between the mandatory group and the elective group, while the other four factors were not statistically significant. All group members had similar levels of instrumental motivation, extrinsic motivation, interest, and self-directed learning readiness regardless of their proficiency level. Moreover, the means for instrumental motivation were noticeably high compared to those for intrinsic, extrinsic, interest, and self-directed learning. The participants were all aware of the

importance of English and the necessity of language learning regardless of their proficiency level, but the pressure did not lead to an increase in their intrinsic motivation or interest in English learning.

For instrumental and extrinsic motivation, the mandatory group showed higher means than the elective group contrary to the expectation, which illustrated that the mandatory group participants were all aware of the importance of English, its status as a lingua franca, and its instrumental necessity regardless of their proficiency level. The findings imply that teachers and researchers need to develop more strategies and activities that can enhance students' intrinsic motivation and interest instead of explaining the importance of English as a lingua franca.

The higher the proficiency level the higher the mean for intrinsic motivation; students whose intrinsic motivation was higher than other participants tended to register for more English courses even after meeting graduation requirements, which asked students to take two mandatory courses before graduation. Taking more courses can indicate their voluntary effort to study English more, and this tendency led to higher levels of self-directed learning.

In the linear regression analysis, only one factor, interest, was regressed on the level of self-directed learning. The higher the interest, the higher the level of self-directed learning. In order to explore the factors that influenced the level of interest, separate linear regression analyses between three motivational factors and interest were performed. The results showed that intrinsic motivation was regressed on the level of interest. The higher the intrinsic motivation the higher the level of interest. Also, the results of regression models between the proficiency improvement and all five factors including self-directed learning readiness indicated that learners with great interest and instrumental motivation had a tendency to improve their English proficiency faster than those with less

interest and lower instrumental motivation. Surprisingly, the level of self-directed learning was not as strongly related to proficiency improvement as interest and instrumental motivation.

In sum, intrinsic motivation and interest were related to the level of self-directed learning, and the participants' proficiency levels were related to intrinsic motivation, interest, and the level of self-directed learning. However, only instrumental motivation and interest contributed to the participants' proficiency improvement. Therefore, language instructors and researchers are encouraged to enhance learners' interest in order to increase the level of learners' self-directed learning and in order to facilitate their proficiency improvement.

For further study, exploring the difference between genders is needed. Kim, Kim, Yoo, and Yoo (1996), and Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) claimed that participants' gender influenced the level of self-directed learning. Kim and Kim (2009) found that female students' levels of self-directed learning were higher than those of male students, and female students showed more responsibility in learning than male students did. Therefore, exploring the difference between genders can provide teachers with meaningful ways to scaffold male and female learners.

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Abstract

Significant Motivational Factors in Self-Directed Learning

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In this study, the most influential motivational factor in self-directed learning was explored. The results of previous studies indicated that young Korean learners' levels of self-directed learning were lower than other Asian students' levels. Therefore, it was assumed that Korean university students, adult learners, might not know what to do in order to study English by themselves after spending ten years under the teacher-centered curriculum. This study explored whether or not Korean university students were self-directed learners, and which motivational factors positively or negatively affected their levels of self-directed learning and proficiency improvement. The results showed that the means for the participants' instrumental motivation were higher than those for other motivational factors, but the results of multiple regression analysis indicated that only one motivational factor, interest, contributed to the participants' levels of self-directed learning. However, the final TOEIC scores were regressed on intrinsic motivation, interest, and self-directed learning, while instrumental motivation and interest contributed to the participants' proficiency improvement.

Key Words: self-directed learning, English learning motivation, interest, 자기주도학습, 학습자 자율성, 학습동기

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