A Study of English Learning Motivation for Korean High School Student in a New Town

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I. Introduction

English teaching and learning as a foreign language has been a crucial issue at elementary and secondary schools in Korea. In addition, English teaching and learning have focused on more listening and speaking tasks than grammar or reading tasks since the 6th national curriculum in 1992. English teaching and learning has concerned with the need of the society, where learners should have communicative competency and treat their problems they face. So, students are much more interest in English and take English courses in or out of schools (Shim, 2011: 287).

Learning English is one of the most essential goals for secondary school students. So, students have to take quite a number of English classes to get higher scores of English. More high schools supply much time allocation for English subject and provide students with extra or complementary English classes. Schools

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even require students’ higher scores in English tests. So, the types of motivation that students use are important factors to understand the trend of English education (Shim, 2011: 302).

Motivation is the most frequently used term for explaining the success or failure of successful tasks that students learn (Brown, 2001; Ellis, 1997; Gardner, 1982). The motivation is a crucial aspect for language teachers and students, especially in second language learning. That is, language teachers should provide students with successful and appropriate motivation. Dörnyei (1998) states that in countless studies and experiments in human learning, motivation is a key to learning. Furthermore, teachers and researchers have widely accepted motivation as one of the key factors that influence on the success of second or foreign language learning (Crookes, & Schmidt, 1991). In short, motivation is the primary impetus to initiate learning a second or foreign language.

This study adopted a modified questionnaire of motivation based on Gardner (1982) and Gardean and Lambert (1972). The items of questionnaire were classified into two types of instrumental and integrative motivation. To inspect students’ awareness in English motivation, this study focused on the following research questions.

1. To what extent, the high school students in a new town use motivation towards English learning?

2. To what extent, the high school students use motivation depending on gender?

3. To what extent, the high school students use motivation depending on their English proficiency and interest?

4. To what extent, the motivation that students use is correlated to gender, grade, English interest, and English proficiency?