EFL Task Motivation in the Process–oriented Framework

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This study addresses EFL task motivation in the process–oriented framework. There has been little research of the developmental process of L2 motivations in the formal classroom contexts, even though a substantial body of research has investigated L2 motivations cross-sectionally. As a follow–up application of Kang (2013), this study investigates the relationships between EFL college students' task performances and motivations in the three phases of formal classrooms using questionnaires: pre–actional, actional, and post–actional. The findings showed that motivations were not influential on task performances during the pre–actional phase, but motivational intensity and WTC (Willingness To Communicate) were significantly correlated with task performances such as noticing and successful uptake during the actional phase. The task performances positively influenced L2 achievement at the end of the grammar instructions through mediating L2 motivations during the actional phase. The findings suggest that we need more research in the areas of the task types and motivational factors in the formal classroom contexts in the future.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social psychologists such as Gardner and his colleagues proposed that L2 learners' positive attitudes toward the target community lead to the success

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of the target language (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992, 1993; Gardner & Tremblay, 1994). In the socio-psychological framework, the second language was viewed as mediating factors between different cultural communities and thus L2 motivation to learn the target language was considered as a primary force responsible for enhancing or hindering intercultural communication and affiliation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, cited in Dornyei, 2005).

However, it is inevitable that learning a foreign language in the classroom is apparently different from learning the second language in the social contexts. Many researchers have claimed that language learning motivation in the social psychological framework was too broadly defined as "integrative motivation" (Dornyei, 1990; Schmidt, Borai, & Kassaggy, 1996). Dornyei (1994) suggested that L2 motivation in the foreign language learning contexts should include cognitive aspects of motivation as well as socio-cultural aspects.

In addition, it has been argued that most of the L2 motivation research has focused on motivation at a given moment—in time so far synchronically or cross-sectionally, but L2 motivation researchers have seldom investigated developmental change of the same individuals (Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Boekaerts (1988) argued that investigating L2 learners' motivations in one type of learning situation was not enough to predict their motivations for all learning situations. Similarly, L2 learners were not likely to be motivated to study a foreign language for the same reasons and their motivations were likely to be affected by situational factors such as task types and instructional time. Therefore, motivation research in EFL contexts need to investigate L2 learners' developmental processes of motivations in the micro-level, especially in the formal classroom.

relate motivational factors to specific task performances in the time framework such as pre-actional, actional, and post-actional phases. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how EFL college students' task performances in Korea were related to their motivations over time in the process-oriented framework.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dornyei (2005) provided a brief history of motivation research in L2 literature. According to Dornyei (2005), L2 motivation research can be divided into three periods: (1) The social psychological period; (2) The cognitive-situated period; and (3) The process-oriented period. First of all, the social psychological period can be characterized by the work of Gardner and his associates in Canada. The social psychological approach examined second language learning motivations in the socio-cultural environments (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992, 1993). The basic idea was based on the finding that learner attitudes toward the linguistic-cultural community of the target language influence success in second language achievement. It has been found that integratively motivated learners succeeded in second language achievement because they were more active learners (Gardner, 1985).

The cognitive-situated period can be characterized by the research drawing on cognitive theories from educational psychology (Dornyei, 2005). Many researchers in foreign language learning contexts have questioned whether the socio-educational approach could be generalized to formal classroom learning contexts (Schmidt et al., 1996; Dornyei, 1990, 1994; Clement, et al., 1994; Kraemer, 1993; Clement & Kruidenier, 1983; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Recent research showed that the socio-educational model was not likely to apply to all language learning settings (Au, 1988; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Schmidt, Borai, & Kassabgy, 1996). In response to these concerns, Dornyei (1994) proposed that foreign language motivation should include details on cognitive aspects of motivation to learn. Several researchers found new cognitive and affective variables in the foreign language learning contexts such as intrinsic/extrinsic motivations, goal
salience, WTC (Willingness To Communicate), etc. (Dornyei, 1990; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Conrad, 2001; Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000; Schmidt et al., 1996; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

Current research in L2 language learning motivation recognized the importance of the intrinsic motivation (Dornyei, 1990; Julkunen, 1989; Schmidt et al., 1996). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations have originally developed from the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to the self-determination theory, there are two types of motivation, one based on intrinsic interest in the activity and the other, based on rewards extrinsic to the activity itself (Noels et al., 2000). MacIntyre et al. (2001) found that five orientations, job, travel, friendship, knowledge, and school achievement, were highly correlated with WTC with a junior high school students in Canada.

The process-oriented period was characterized by an interest in motivational change (Dornyei, 2005). Oxford and Shearin (1994) pointed out that there might be developmental aspects as well as definitional aspects of motivation. Julkunen's (1989) cross-sectional study with 6th and 8th grade students indicated this kind of motivational change in secondary schools. Julkunen's (1989) study showed that 6th grade students were more intrinsically motivated, while the 8th grade students developed more internal criteria for success/failure than 6th grade students. Kang's (2001) longitudinal study in Korea also showed that Korean students' motivations developed from extrinsic to intrinsic motivations when they moved from middle schools to high schools.

Furthermore, Dornyei (2001) proposed the process-oriented approach of L2 motivation to explain classroom-based motivation. According to the process model of L2 motivation (Dornyei, 2001), the motivated behavioral process can be divided into three main phases: 1) pre-actional phase; 2) actional phase; and 3) post-actional phase, each of which can be influenced by different motivational factors (Dornyei, 2001, p. 85). The pre-actional phase, corresponding to "choice motivation", was associated with intrinsic/extrinsic motivations (Noels, 2001; Noels et al., 2000) and goal setting (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). The the actional phase, relating to "executive motivation" that energizes action while it is being carried out, was
likely to be associated with motivational behavior, such as attention, motivational intensity, and persistence (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), and WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 1998). The post-actional phase, involving critical retrospection after action, is related to attributional factors and L2 achievement (Weiner, 1985, 1986).

Kang (2010) conducted an exploratory factor analysis study of foreign language learning motivations in the process-oriented framework. The findings showed that students with the more self-determined motivations during the pre-actional phase were more willing to communicate and pay attention to L2 classes during the actional phase, which in turn positively influenced L2 achievement. However, this study did not addressed the actual relationships between specific task performances and motivations over time. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine EFL students’ developmental motivations in both pre-actional and actional phases and the relationships with their task performances in the formal classroom.

III. METHOD

1. Research Questions

The present study addressed the process-oriented L2 motivation in the EFL college classrooms by investigating L2 motivations during the three phases. The following research questions have been proposed:

(1) What relationships are there between tasks and motivations during the pre-actional?
(2) What relationships are there between tasks and motivations during the actional phase?
(3) How do motivations and L2 task performances influence L2 achievement in general?

2. Research Design

The current study was a follow-up application of Kang (2013) to investigate the relationships between task performances and motivations in
the process-oriented framework. Twenty eight students taking an English grammar course in Kang (2013) participated in the current study. To introduce Kang’s (2013) research design briefly, the students were first pre-tested using the dictogloss asking the target grammar features before treatment in Stage 1, as shown in Table 1 below. For the purpose of the current study, they completed the motivation questionnaires such as intrinsic/extrinsic motivations and goal specificity during the pre-actional phase at the beginning of the grammar course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1. Research Design</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
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<td>Stage 2</td>
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<td>Stage 3</td>
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<td>Stage 4</td>
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</table>

Then, the students were taught the target English grammar forms, *English conditional clauses* and *English relative clauses* in Stage 2 (Kang, 2013). As a following step, they were shown their original first drafts written during the pre-test and asked to revise them in Stage 3. The revision of their own texts provided the degree of noticing and uptake of the target form. After performing the tasks, the students completed the motivation questionnaires such as motivational behaviors (motivational intensity, attention, and persistence), anxiety, and WTC to see if there were any relationships between task performances and motivations during the actional phase for the current study. Finally, the participants were post-tested using dictogloss for the same one as the pre-test in Stage 4 in Kang (2013).

3. Research Instrument

The researcher investigated the participants’ motivations in the formal classrooms by using the questionnaires below. Students were asked to indicate the item responses on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement (1) to strong agreement (5). All instruments were administered in Korean.
(1) Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were adopted from Noels et al. (2000): amotivation, external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation, and three types of intrinsic motivations: Knowledge, Accomplishment, and Stimulation (21 items; three items each).

(3) Goal specificity (5 items) was adapted from Tremblay and Gardner (1995) to assess the degree to which learners have specific goals associated with studying English.

(4) Motivational behavior was assessed using three sub-scales, Motivational Intensity, Persistence, and Attention (4 items each), which were adapted from Tremblay and Gardner (1995).

(5) L2 anxiety was assessed using Anxiety in Class (5 items), which was adapted from Tremblay and Gardner (1995).

(6) WTC in class was assessed using four sub-scales, Willingness To Comprehend in Class (.700), Willingness To Speak in Class, Willingness To Comprehend outside Class, and Willingness To Speak outside Class (4 items each), which were adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001).

IV. RESULTS

1. L2 Task Motivation during the Pre-actional Phase

Table 2 below showed the correlations between task performances and motivation during the pre-actional phase. There were no statistically significant correlations between tasks and motivation except amotivation and intrinsic motivation—stimulation. This finding indicated that motivational factors at the beginning of the semester were not influential in the situated task-based framework such as L2 classroom contexts rather than in the more macro-perspective motivation framework.
More specifically, the negative correlation between amotivation and successful uptake indicated that students failed to revise their errors in the pre-test without motivation to study the second language \((p=-0.491<0.01**)\). But it was not expected that there was a negative correlation between intrinsic motivation and task performances \((p=-0.391<0.05**)\). One can postulate that students in the foreign language learning contexts might not be stimulated to study L2, as shown in the questionnaire items, that is, feeling great "when they hear L2," "experiencing speaking L2" or "hearing L2 spoken by the native speakers outside." In other words, the ideal intrinsic motivation such as stimulation seemed to be too remote to Korean EFL learners.

2. L2 Task Motivation during the Actional Phase

Table 3 below revealed whether there were some correlations between motivations and task performances after performing the tasks in the classroom. Unlike the pre-actional phase, the statistics showed there were significant correlations between motivations such as *motivational intensity* and WTC and task performances during the actional phase.
First of all, there were the significant correlations between willingness to speak in class \((p=.427<.05*)\) or comprehend in class \((p=.534<.01**\)) and the pre-test score. This result explained that the more students were willing to communicate in L2, the better they performed in L2 in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3. Correlations between Tasks &amp; Actional Motivation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTS in class</td>
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<td>WTC in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTS outside class</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTC outside class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: WTS and WTC indicate willingness to speak and to comprehend respectively. \(p<.05^*\) & \(p<.01^{**}\).

On the other hand, the task performances such as successful uptake and post-test were significantly correlated with both motivational intensity and WTC. During the actional phase, the students with high motivational intensity positively influenced their performances \((p=.456<.05^*)\). In other words, the more students spent efforts and time on tasks, they were more likely to correct their errors successfully. In addition, the students who were more willing to speak either inside \((p=.448<.05^*)\) or outside \((p=.494<.05^*)\) class performed better on the post-test.

3. L2 Task Motivation in the Process–oriented Framework

To summarize the L2 task motivations in the process–oriented framework, Table 4 below showed the statistically significant correlations between motivations and task performances.
### TABLE 4. Correlations between Motivations & Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N=28</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Noticing</th>
<th>Successful Uptake</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.138</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticing</td>
<td>-.138</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.726**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.419*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Uptake</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.726**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.526**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>.419*</td>
<td>.526**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amotivation</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>-.236</td>
<td>-.491**</td>
<td>-.145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.456*</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTS in class</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.448*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTC in class</td>
<td>.534**</td>
<td>-.150</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTS outside class</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.494*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: WTS and WTC indicate willingness to speak and to comprehend respectively. p<.05* & p<.01**.

First of all, noticing was significantly correlated with both successful uptake (p=.726<.01**) and post–test (p=.419<.05). This indicates that the more students were likely to notice the target features, the better chances they had to revise their own errors, which in turn led to the success of L2 learning. On the other hand, it was not surprising that there was the negative correlation between amotivation and successful uptake (p=-.491<.01**). Motivational intensity and WTC among the motivational variables were significantly correlated with either successful uptake or post–tests. It suggested that students’ time and efforts on task performances and their willingness to speak or comprehend L2 seemed to be very influential on L2 task–based classroom language learning.

### V. CONCLUSION

This study provided the valuable information of L2 task motivations in the formal classrooms in terms of the process–oriented framework, as shown in Figure 1. The findings showed that the more motivated L2 learners are to study at the beginning of the instructions, the better they are prepared to learn the target language during the pre–actional phase. In addition, the correlation analyses showed that WTC and Motivational intensity were significantly correlated with noticing and uptake during the actional phase. In
other words, when students are more willing to comprehend and speak either in or outside class and spend more time and efforts on L2 language learning, they are more likely to notice the target forms and further to revise their own errors while performing the classroom tasks. Those motivated behaviors in turn lead to the success of the target language performances at the final stage.

As Gardner (1985) pointed out, orientations were no more than reasons for studying a second/foreign language without motivations or motivated behaviors such as spending time on L2 tasks and efforts and willingness to communicate in the classroom or outside. The current study supported the previous research findings about WTC (Kang, 2010; MacIntyre, et al., 2001) and motivated behaviors (Kang, 2010; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). These studies showed that WTC and motivated behaviors such as motivational intensity, attention, and persistence among all the motivations were directly related to L2 achievement. For example, in Kang's (2010) study, students who value L2 learning for their personal development are more willing to communicate by paying attention to L2 class, which leads to L2 achievement. Therefore, this study indicates the important mediating roles of WTC and motivational intensity through noticing and successful uptake of task performances in the final success of the target language in the formal classrooms.

Although this study revealed important points in the process-oriented L2
task motivation of formal classroom learning, there remain several issues to be examined in future research. First, the present study did not examine the differential roles of the task types with corresponding motivational factors in the classroom. Considering the important roles of types of tasks (e.g., input-based vs. output-based grammar instructions) in the developmental motivation, future research must directly include the relationships between motivations and types of tasks in the classroom. Due to the small sample size of the current study, it is also necessary to consider the generalizability of the present findings to other types of language students such as primary and secondary schools, proficiency levels, gender, etc. For example, the comparison between L2 proficiency levels or males and females could provide valuable resources for L2 task motivations in the process-oriented framework.

REFERENCES


Examples in: English  
Applicable Languages: English  
Applicable Levels: Secondary & Tertiary  
Key words: task, motivation, process-oriented, WTC, motivational intensity

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