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学位論文要旨

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) (2008) announced a newly formulated curriculum for use nationwide from 2011: elementary school English instruction would be conducted once a week for fifth and sixth grades. The new curriculum formulation emphasized autonomous and self-motivated learning. A theoretical approach that specifically addresses autonomy is self-determination theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). SDT specifies three psychological needs related to intrinsically motivated processes: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Contexts that are supportive of autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster greater self-motivation than those contexts that thwart satisfaction of these needs.

In the field of educational psychology, issues related to students of middle grades (third and fourth grades) and higher grades (fifth and sixth grades) have received much attention because of the changes that children undergo in terms of educational environments and developmental changes. More attention must be devoted to differences between middle-grade and higher-grade students and to examination of their differences, which might imply how we can differentiate teaching strategies between those used for middle-grade and higher-grade students. Furthermore, according to Deci and Ryan (2000, 2002), the psychological processes and constructs embraced by SDT are universal: they exist in all cultures, across genders, and throughout developmental periods. Therefore, it can be proposed that the motivational processes and constructs are invariant, but that some developmental differences are apparent between middle-grade and higher-grade students. Consequently, this study examines a motivational model of English learning and explores how differently middle-grade and higher-grade students are motivated in English classes from the perspective of SDT.

This study is divided into three sections: Study 1 (pilot study), Study 2 (quantitative research), and Study 3 (qualitative research).

Study 1

The purposes of Study 1 were to develop valid and reliable instruments for use in Study 2. In June 2009, 505 students from fifth and sixth grades in three public elementary schools in Tokyo, Japan were selected as participants. First, an exploratory factor analysis of motivational orientations for learning English produced three factors, suggesting that Japanese elementary school students seem to consider introjected and identified regulations comprising one construct. Second, adjacent subscales of motivational orientations for learning English were more strongly and positively correlated with each other than with distant subscales. Finally, the perceived teacher autonomy support and psychological needs were positively correlated with self-determined forms of motivation, providing support for the construct validity of these scales. Consequently, the results probably provide ample evidence of reliability and validity of the instruments of perceived teacher autonomy support and psychological needs as well as motivational orientations for learning English.

Study 2

Using the instruments developed in Study 1, Study 2 examined the proposed motivational model of English education, which assesses the motivational responses of students (third through sixth grades) in a Japanese elementary school. Study 2 was conducted in July 2009: 271 students comprising 63 third, 62 fourth, 75 fifth, and 71 sixth grade students in one public elementary school in Tokyo, Japan were selected to participate in Study 2.

Study 2 had two purposes. First, Study 2 tested a motivational model of English learning based on SDT. According to this model, social factors influence intrinsic motivation through student perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Second, Study 2 explored how differently middle-grade and higher-grade students were motivated in English classes from the perspective of SDT.

Study 2 supports the revised model of English learning in Japanese elementary school, which demonstrated that perceived teacher autonomy support significantly predicted student perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, meaning that students feel more autonomous, competent, and mutually related when they perceive an autonomy-supportive climate from teachers.

Results of the multi-sample invariance analysis across middle-grade and higher-grade students reveal the model to be partially invariant, with two paths differing between groups: from perceived teacher autonomy support to intrinsic motivation and from student perceptions of competence to intrinsic motivation.

The path from perceived teacher autonomy support to intrinsic motivation was higher for middle-grade students than for higher-grade students. These findings suggest that middle-grade students, when they perceive teacher support for autonomy, are more intrinsically motivated to learn English than higher-grade students are. Furthermore, the coefficients of determination of perceived teacher autonomy support on intrinsic motivation were higher for

middle-grade students than for higher-grade students. Results show that, probably more than higher-grade students, middle-grade students need teacher support to enhance their intrinsic motivation, implying that teachers of middle grades should give younger students more positive feedback, encourage them to learn English more, and strive to help them when they are unable to understand English.

The path from student perceptions of competence to intrinsic motivation was higher for higher-grade students than for middle-grade students. This finding reflects that, when they feel competent in English classes, higher-grade students are more intrinsically motivated to learn English than middle-grade students are.

Study 3

In Study 3, our attention was devoted to how the students are feeling (likes and dislikes) during English classes, which would supplement and explore the results of Study 2. Study 3 was conducted in July 2009. Students who participated in Study 3 (125 middle-grade students and 146 higher-grade students) answered two open-ended questions one week after the day on which they answered the closed-ended questions in Study 2. Study 3 analyzed data of open-ended questions using PASW Text Analytics for Surveys.

Results showed that middle-grade and higher-grade students liked playing games and speaking activities, reported teachers as 'liked', felt frustrated when they did not understand English and English classes were noisy, and felt nervous when they made a presentation. The Fisher's exact test results indicated that, more than middle-grade students, higher-grade students enjoyed playing games and memorizing English. The test results also showed that higher-grade students felt more frustrated than middle-grade students when they did not understand English.

General Discussion

Results of this study provided support for the revised model of English learning in Japanese elementary school, which demonstrates that perceived teacher autonomy support positively predicts intrinsic motivation through student perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Consequently, results of this study emphasized the importance of teacher autonomy support and student perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness during English classes.

Furthermore, this study demonstrated that middle-grade students are more intrinsically motivated to learn English than higher-grade students when they perceive teacher support for autonomy. The results also demonstrated that higher-grade students are more intrinsically motivated to learn English than middle-grade students are when they feel competent in English classes. We infer that children are influenced less by teachers as they develop, but that feeling competent in English classes becomes a key factor in enhancing their intrinsic motivation for learning English. Therefore, it can be inferred that, particularly in middle-grade classes, English teachers must give positive feedback, encouragement, and help. In higher-

grade classes, it is more important to offer activities that are challenging but reasonable in terms of student capabilities and learning environments where necessary instructional support and evaluations emphasizing self-improvement are adopted.