

## Revisiting Intercultural Communicative Competence of Korean EFL College Students: With a Reference to their Motivation and English Ability

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**Park, Hyesook.** “Rethinking Intercultural Communicative Competence of Korean EFL College Students: With a Reference to their Motivation and English Ability.” *Studies in English Language & Literature* 47.2 (2021): 233-256. This study explores how Korean college students perceive their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and how their ICC is related to their motivation and English ability. A total of 307 college students of a university located in a southwestern medium-sized city participated in the study. An online questionnaire was administered to collect data on their background information, ICC, motivation, and English ability. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation, and regression analysis were conducted to address the research questions. The findings showed that they had a moderate level of ICC, with their “intercultural awareness” and “intercultural interaction willingness” relatively higher than the other two components of ICC, “intercultural skills/strategies” and “intercultural attitudes.” Further results indicated that the participants’ motivation, in particular, integrativeness and ideal L2 self were much stronger correlated with their ICC than their English ability, and that motivation and English ability were found to be a significantly predictive power for ICC. From the results, practical suggestions were given.

**Key Words:** Intercultural communicative competence, motivation, English ability, English language teaching, Korean EFL college students

## I. Introduction

With the global spread of English and its predominant function in the international events and activities, English has been labelled as different terminologies such as “English as a global language” (Crystal, 1997), “English as an international language” (Jenkins, 2000; McKay, 2002), “English as a lingua franca” (Seidlhofer, 2001, 2011). This indicates that English is no longer the native language of English speaking countries, but “a language of wider communication among individuals from different countries and between individuals from one country” as McKay defines English (McKay, 2002, p. 5). In the era of globalization, as McKay states, the primary function of English is to enable speakers of different first languages to communicate their ideas and culture with others. With the extended functions of English, in recent years, scholars and educators have had a growing interest in “intercultural communicative competence” (ICC) in English language teaching, which is “an ability to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself” (Fantini, 2009, p. 458).

Given that Korean learners of English are likely to be exposed to opportunities to communicate with native or nonnative English speakers from various cultures, they are required to develop proper ICC for a successful communication with others. They should be educated to be a competent English speaker who can accomplish communicative goals through the negotiation with interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds.

Meanwhile, in Korea, with the introduction of the present national curriculum (the revised 7th curriculum), it has been recognized and adopted as an important goal in English education in Korea to foster English speakers who are able to interact in English with people from different cultural and national backgrounds as well as with native English speakers (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology 2007).

With such expansion of the educational goal of ELT, research on ICC in Korea

has been steadily conducted over the last few years, especially with a focus on the enhancement of Korean students' ICC (Choi, 2019). However, there have been relatively few studies that explored the factors of ICC of Korean students and relationships of Korean learners' individual differences such as motivation and English proficiency with ICC (Hong & Park, 2016; Kim, 2004; Kwon, 2018).

Against this background, the present study attempted to examine how EFL Korean college students perceive their ICC, in particular, how their learning motivation is related to their ICC, and how their perception of ICC varies depending on their English ability.

## **II. Background of the Research**

### **2.1 Intercultural Communicative Competence**

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has been developed with the expansion of communicative competence by different scholars. The concept of communicative competence was initially proposed by Hymes (1972) to explain the ability to appropriately use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations, as a sociolinguistic concept to corresponding to Chomsky's linguistic competence. It was then developed by Canale & Swain (1980) and van Ek (1986) in terms of grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, strategic competence, socio-cultural competence, and social competence. Taking communicative competence as a starting point, Byram (1997) modeled the concept of ICC by integrating recognition of cultural knowledge and differences into communicative competence of foreign language learners. Byram's ICC is composed of 5 domains: attitude, knowledge, discovery/interaction, interpreting/relating, and awareness. Thus, according to Byram (1997), successful intercultural speakers have the following abilities: intercultural attitudes, which is related to curiosity, openness, or "readiness

to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about ones' own" (p. 50); intercultural knowledge of "social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction" (p. 51); skills of interpreting and relating, which involves "the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from own's own" (p. 52); skills of discovery and interaction, which refer to the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (p. 52); and critical cultural awareness, which indicates the ability to critically evaluate their own and others' perspectives, practices, and products.

According to Chen & Starosta (1996), ICC consists of three dimensions: intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural effectiveness. Intercultural awareness is a person's cognitive ability to know about their own and other's cultures, while intercultural sensitivity refers to an individual affective ability to know about an interlocutor's different behaviors, perceptions, and feelings, as well as to appreciate and respect them as well. Intercultural effectiveness involves intercultural speakers' behavioral aspect which indicates "the ability to get the job done and attain communicative goals in intercultural interactions" (Chen, 2009, p. 3).

In a similar vein, Fantini (2009) claims intercultural competence is a construct of complex abilities including following components: attributes, three areas, four dimensions, target language proficiency, and developmental levels. The attributes are personal traits such as flexibility, humor, interest, curiosity and tolerance for ambiguity. As for the three interrelated areas, Fantini states they are "the ability to establish and maintain the relationships, the ability to communicate with minimal loss or distortion, and the ability to cooperate to accomplish tasks of mutual interest or need" (p. 469). The four dimensions includes knowledge, attitudes, skills, and awareness. In particular, Fantini (2009, 2012, 2020) puts an emphasis on the central role of language proficiency in the development of intercultural competence, stating

that it “helps expand and transform our habitual view of the world” (2009, p. 459). In addition, Fantini states that intercultural competence grows over time, sometimes with periods of stagnation or recession.

On the other hand, in a developmental view of intercultural competence, Bennett (1993) proposed a “Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, which describes the intercultural sensitivity as a developmental process of six stages such as denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Bennett’s model focuses on how L2 learners’ intercultural sensitivity changes and develops as they adapt to and integrate with other cultures. Above all, Bennett emphasized that an individual’s cultural sensitivity is not static, but a dynamic or ongoing process. Based on German participants’ responses on the intercultural sensitivity scale, Fritz, Mollenberg & Chen (2001) revealed five subcomponents of intercultural sensitivity: interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.

Likewise, from the scholars’ definitions, ICC can be summarized as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with other speakers, both linguistically and culturally (Fantini, 2009). Such ICC is an important valuable ability in an era of an increasingly globalized world where Korean learners of English are more likely to communicate with people from different cultures shaped by different experiences, values, and environments. Thus, they should be equipped with ICC, or a linguistic, social knowledge and skills mediating cultural differences.

## 2.2 Motivation

Motivation has been extensively examined to understand L2 language learning. Motivation is assumed to be “what moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2011, p. 3). Earlier studies in motivation of L2 language learning were launched by the influential work of Gardner and Lambert (1972) in a Canadian context. Gardner and

Lambert's model has two distinctive motivational components: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to the reason to learn a foreign language for some practical goals, such as passing exams and getting a job, while integrative motivation refers to learning a second language through contact with target language speakers to achieve personal growth and enrich culture. It reflects the learners' desire to integrate into the target language community as "positive non-ethnocentric" (Gardner, 1985, p. 134). Learners with this motivational orientation are more interested in the target language community and more willing to learn the language of the target language community.

More recently, based on the psychological theories of the self, Dörnyei (2005, p. 66) proposed the "L2 Motivational Self System" (L2MSS) as a motivation model to better explain EFL learning in the Asian EFL contexts. Dörnyei's L2MSS includes three dimensions: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experiences. Ideal L2 self represents "the L2-specific facet of one's ideal self" including their hopes, ambitions, and desires, which would generate a powerful driving force to narrow the gap between their current L2 proficiency and the ideal L2 proficiency. In contrast, ought-to L2 self refers to "the attributes that one believes one ought to possess" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 105), including obligations, duties, and responsibilities to avoid possible negative outcomes. L2 learning experience refers to the immediate learning experiences and environment, including the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, and experience of success (Li & Park, 2019, p. 158).

To date, Gardner's theory of integrative/instrumental motivation and Dörnyei's model of ideal L2 self/ought-to L2 self have been predominantly used to investigate L2 language learning home and abroad (Kim & Kim, 2012; Lamb, 2013; Li & Park, 2019, to name a few). Previous studies have empirically validated the constructs, showing that each motivational component explains their own different motivational characteristics in L2 learning contexts.

### 2.3 Previous studies

Previous research on ICC has mainly examined how instructional intervention such as telecollaborative activities and collaborative experiences with international students affects students' ICC in different educational contexts within Korean ELT. Yet, there has been relatively little research on the principal factors of Korean learners' ICC and the relations among learners' ICC, motivation and English ability.

As an earlier study which was conducted before the adoption of the current national curriculum or the revised 7th curriculum, Kim (2004) illustrated the relationships between motivation and intercultural sensitivity in English achievement, indicating that Korean college students highly extrinsically motivated to learn EFL, and that motivation and intercultural sensitivity are important factors in learning L2. More recently, Hong & Park (2016) found that intercultural sensitivity had a positive connection with college students' English ability, and that significant differences was found in the college students' intercultural sensitivity depending on their majors. To gauge the participants' intercultural competence, these two studies used Chen & Starosta (2000)'s Intercultural Sensitivity Scale with five components: Interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.

On the other hand, with undergraduates majoring in English and English teachers, Kwon (2018) examined EFL adult learners' ICC and its relation to their English proficiency centering on the comparisons between the student group and the teacher group by using the modified version of Fantini's Assessment of Intercultural Competence. The study reported that the factor "openness and willingness to learn about other cultures" was found to be at a higher level than the other three factors of ICC, such as knowledge of intercultural context strategies, acceptance in intercultural situations, and importance of ICC. In addition, the group difference between the university student (N=112) and teacher group (N=62) was reported regarding the means of the factors of ICC, with a lower score of the student group

and a significant correlation between ICC and English proficiency of the participants.

### **III. Method**

#### **3.1 Research Questions**

With the background in mind, the present study was designed to answer the questions below:

- 1) What are the general characteristics of Korean college students' ICC and motivation?
- 2) What correlations are there between ICC, motivation and English proficiency of Korean EFL college students?
- 3) What effects do motivation and English ability have on ICC?

#### **3.2 Participants**

A total of 307 Korean college students of different majors (including English and non-English majors) from one university participated in the present study. The majority of the participants, 239, were freshmen (77.9%), 29 sophomores (9.5%), 16 juniors (5.2%), and 23 seniors (7.5%). One hundred six students (50.8%) had never traveled to any foreign countries, the rest of the students (49.2%) had experiences in visiting foreign countries for activities such as traveling, language training and exchange programs. Twenty-one of them had experienced staying in foreign countries for more than one months. One hundred forty six students (47.6%) had never taken a course related to foreign cultures, while one hundred sixty one students (52.4%) had taken such a course before.



### 3.3 Instrument

The questionnaire in the present study included three distinct sections: questions on background information, a questionnaire in motivation and a questionnaire on ICC. The motivation and ICC questionnaire was carried out using a 5-point Likert scale ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The background section was composed of seven questions targeting the participants' college, grade, experiences of studying or living in foreign countries, experience of taking cultural courses, and English levels. To measure participants' English ability, they were asked to check their own self-assessment of English level among very poor, poor, mid, good, very good, which ranged from below 400 score of TOEIC to 800 and over.

The motivation questionnaire consisted of 17 items covering the following concepts: Dömyei's ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self, Garden & Lambert's integrative and instrumental orientations. Twenty-nine items were selected and adapted from Kwon (2018) which was based on Fantini's Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC) tool (2006) to measure the participants' ICC. The internal consistency was verified with reliability statistics, respectively: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .86$  for motivation items, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .96$  for ICC items)

### 3.4 Data collection and analysis

All the students took part in the present study on a voluntary basis in the fall semester of 2020. They were told that all their responses would be used only for the purpose of research before sending the survey. Then they were provided with the web link where the survey questions were presented, and they completed and submitted them online.

Descriptive statistics was used to examine the participants' background information and general features of the participants' motivation and ICC. And then factor

analysis was conducted to determine the main components of Korean college students' motivation and ICC. Correlation and regression analysis were conducted to identify if there were any relationships among motivation, ICC and English ability.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 General Features of Motivation and ICC**

Descriptive statistics were performed to figure out the general characteristics of the participants' motivation and ICC. The mean scores of motivation items ranged from 2.48 to 4.29, and the average score of total items was 3.32, which indicates that they were moderately motivated in general (Appendix 1). Items 6, 7, 8, 9 showed the lower mean scores than 3.0, which represented ought-to L2 self such as "I learn English because my close friends think English is important," and "I learn English because my parents consider English important for my future." On the other hand, item 1, 10, 15 displayed the top 3 highest mean scores, greater than 4.20, which includes items like "I want to be a fluent communicator in English," item 10 "I want to learn British and American cultures through learning English," and item 15 "Learning English is important for me because it helps me get a good job." Extrinsic motives like meeting others' expectations were rated lower than communication need, cultural enjoyment, and their need for employment. From these responses, it seems that the participants perceived communication, culture and practical use as their vital intentions of learning English, but parents' expectation and peers' thinking did not appear to be regarded as meaningfully influential for their English learning.

As for ICC, the average mean score was 3.44 (S.D.=.62920), at a moderate level, and the mean scores of each ICC item ranged from 2.87 to 3.96 (Appendix 2). Item 5, "I can demonstrate a capacity to interact appropriately with other foreign people

in a variety of different social situations in other cultures,” showed the lowest mean score overall, 2.87 (SD=1.075), and item 31, “I think I am a communicator, facilitator, and mediator in an intercultural situation” was the second lowest mean score, 3.02 (SD=1.094), which was followed by item 1, “I can have flexibility when having a conversation with person from other cultures” (means=3.08, SD=1.084). However, Item 17, “I try to understand differences in the behaviors, values, attitudes of people from other foreign cultures”, was the highest score, 3.96 (SD=.854). This can be interpreted as the participants had more willingness to interact with and understand other people from different cultures, though they perceived their skills and strategies were not enough to appropriately interact with foreign people from different cultures.

Then factor analysis was conducted to determine the main components of motivation and ICC. The KMO value of motivation questionnaire is .86 (sig. < .001), indicating that the motivation questionnaire had good validity and the data could be used for research. As a result, four principal factors were extracted with varimax rotation, based on eigenvalue greater than 2, which accounted for 64% of the total variance (See table 4.1). Four factors and their items are shown in Table 4. 2.

Table 4,1 Total variance explained of motivation questionnaire

Components	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	% of Cumulative Variance
1	3.29	19.34	19.35
2	2.99	17.58	36.93
3	2.46	14.49	51.42
4	2.17	12.80	64.22

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4.2 Four factors and items of motivation questionnaire

	Factor	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha
1	Ideal L2 self	1,2,3,4,5	3.16	.721	.854
2	Intergrativeness	10,11,12,13,14	3.13	.752	.837
3	Ought-to L2 self	6,7,8,9	2.20	.807	.749
4	Instrumentality	15,16,17	3.09	.601	.724

The factors were named as ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, integrative motivation, and instrumental motivation, in order, based on their concepts the items represented.

As for the ICC questionnaire, the KMO value was 0.957 (sig.= 0.000), which showed a measure of the good validity of the questionnaire. Four factors were extracted with varimax rotation method, which accounted for 62.8% of total variance. Each factor had an eigenvalue greater than 3.0, and a factor loading value and communality of more than 0.5, except for item 30, which had .443.

Table 4.3 Total variance explained of ICC questionnaire

Components	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	% of Cumulative Variance
1	6.33	21.82	21.82
2	4.96	17.09	38.91
3	3.89	13.41	52.32
4	3.03	10.44	62.78

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4.4 5 Factors and items of ICC questionnaire

	Factor	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha
1	Intercultural skills and strategies	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 10,30,32	3.22	.743	.924
2	Intercultural interaction willingness	11,12,13,14,15, 16,17,20	3.63	.755	.916
3	Intercultural awareness	21,26,27,28,29	3.67	.693	.847
4	Attitude Flexibility	2,18,19,22,23	3.39	.751	.804

Factor 1 is composed of item 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 30, and 32, which accounted for 21.82% of total variance. Factor 1 included items like “I can demonstrate flexibility when interacting with persons from other cultures,” “I can use strategies for learning other languages and cultures,” “I can demonstrate a capacity to interact appropriately in a variety of different social situations in other cultures,” “I can use appropriate strategies for adapting to other cultures and for reducing stress”, “I can use strategies to adapt myself to my own culture.” These were related to the capacity and strategies to interact appropriately in different intercultural situations, and Factor 1 was named as “Intercultural skills and strategies”. The average response score of the items was 3.22, which suggests that they seemed to have a lower confidence in their cultural skills and strategies in intercultural situations.

A total of eight items, item 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, were converged on Factor 2 which accounted for 17.09% of total variance. Factor 2 contained items like “I am willing to interact with people from other cultures,” and “I am willing to learn from foreign friends their languages and cultures,” and thus it was labeled as with “Intercultural interaction willingness.” The means of factor 2 was relatively higher than that of factor 1, 3.63, showing that they were more likely to learn about foreign languages and cultures and to interact with foreigners from other cultures while they appeared to have a weak confidence in skills and strategies in intercultural situations.

Item 21, 26, 27, 28, 29 were related to factor 3, which accounted for 13.41% of total variance. Factor 3 covered statements like “I know well how my values and ethics are reflected in specific situations,” “I am aware of the importance of my attitudes toward foreign cultures and their consequences which make me more, or less, acceptable to other cultures”, and thus it was labeled as “Intercultural awareness.” The means of factor 3 was 3.67, similar to that of factor 2.

Item 2, 18, 19, 22 and 23 belonged to factor 4, which accounted for 10.44% of total variance. Factor 4 was identified with “Attitude flexibility” as it contained

items like “I am aware of how people from other cultures view me and why,” and “I can adjust my behaviors, dress as appropriate to avoid offending foreigners”, which involved modifying behaviors and attitudes in consideration with other people from different cultures. In particular, item 2 “I can adjust my behaviors, dress as appropriate to avoid offending foreigners” was the lowest means, 3.13, suggesting that they might have had little experience in encountering and interacting with other people from different cultures.

As a result, four factors or “Intercultural skills and strategies”, “Intercultural interaction willingness”, “Intercultural awareness” and “Attitude flexibility” were vindicated to be principal components of Korean college students’ ICC. Referred to the means of four factors, “Intercultural interaction willingness” and “Intercultural awareness” were relatively higher than “Intercultural skills/strategies” and “Attitude flexibility”, which indicates that they were more likely to interact with other peoples from different cultures and to have awareness about what differences their attitudes toward foreign cultures make in social situation with people from different cultures.

#### 4.2 Correlation between ICC, motivation and English ability

Pearson correlation analysis was employed to see the relations between ICC and motivation.

Table 4.5 Correlations between ICC and motivation

	M Total	Ideal self	Ought-to	Integrative	Instrument
ISS	.613**	.538**	.242**	.486**	.329**
IIW	.696**	.607**	.191**	.643**	.385**
IA	.560**	.496**	.169**	.463**	.369**
AF	.454**	.277**	.330**	.358**	.264**
ICC Total	.709**	.594**	.253**	.601**	.401**

\*\* : correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

ISS Intercultural skills and strategies

IIW Intercultural interaction willingness

IA Intercultural awareness

AF Attitude flexibility

A significant correlation was found between ICC and motivation. The correlation coefficient between ICC total and motivation total was .709 (sig.=.01), indicating that there was a strong correlation between ICC and motivation in Korean learners' learning English. In addition, all ICC subcomponents showed strong correlations with 4 subcomponents of motivation. Among four subcomponents of motivation, Ideal L2 self, Ought-to L2 self, Integrativeness, Instrumentality, ICC showed higher correlations with Ideal L2 self and Integrativeness ( $r=.594$  for Ideal self,  $r=.601$  for Integrativeness), while ought-to L2 self was lowest correlated with ICC ( $r=.253$ , sig.<.01). In terms of subcomponents of motivation and ICC, the correlation between Intercultural interaction willingness and Integrativeness showed the highest ( $r=.643$ ), and then the second was between Intercultural interaction willingness and Ideal L2 self ( $r=.607$ ), suggesting that Integrativeness, Ideal L2 self and ICC were strongly connected.

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted on ICC and English ability as well. As shown in Table 4.6, the participants' English ability was correlated with their ICC, but it was lower compared with motivation ( $r=.301$ , sig.=.01), showing that they were moderately correlated to some extent.

Table 4.6 Correlations between ICC and English ability

	ICC Total	ICC 1	ICC 2	ICC 3	ICC 4
English	.301**	.333**	.268**	.267**	.158**

When it comes to the subcomponents, the factor 1, or "Intercultural skills/strategies" displayed the highest coefficient, .333; and then the factor 2,

“Intercultural willingness to interact”, .268; the factor 3, “Intercultural awareness”, .267; the factor 4, “Attitude flexibility”, the lowest .158. This indicates that Intercultural skills/strategies was more strongly correlated to English ability than any other subcomponents.

### 4.3 Relationships between ICC and English ability

As ICC was found to be correlated with motivation and English ability, a multiple regression analysis was conducted with ICC as a dependent variable and four motivational subcomponents and English ability as independent variables. The results showed that the adjusted R square was 0.501, with an F value of 55.322 (df=276, sig.=.000), which means that motivation and English ability accounted for 50.1% of the total variance in the participants’ ICC.

Table 4.7 Effects of Motivation and English ability on ICC

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	26.865	5.252		5.115	.000
1					
Ideal L2 Self	8.176	1.555	.297	5.259	.000
Integrativeness	8.522	1.436	.324	5.935	.000
Ought-to Self	3.626	1.111	.145	3.263	.001
Instrumentality	4.473	1.584	.134	2.823	.005
English ability	2.408	.818	.133	2.942	.004

As shown in Table 4.7, all motivational subcomponents and EP had statistically predictive powers for ICC. Among motivational subcomponents, Ideal L2 self and Integrativeness has significantly greater predictive effects on ICC in the model (t=5.259, Beta=.297, sig.=.000 for Ideal L2 self, t=5.935, Beta=.324, sig.=.000 for Intergrativeness). This implies that Korean learners’ motivation and English ability,



in particular, Ideal L2 self and Integrativeness, can contribute to promoting their ICC. Therefore, it may be implied that Korean college students should be recommended to enhance their motivation and to develop into converging on integrative orientations and molding their positive ideal self image, which could lead them to get synergy benefits in ICC. At the same time, it can also be inferred that L2 learners' English ability could be helpful for improving their ICC, which could allow L2 learners to gain confidence to interact with foreigners from different cultures.

## V. Conclusions and Implications

The present study aimed to examine the components of motivation and ICC of Korean college students and the relationships among motivation, ICC and English ability. It was found that participants generally had a medium level of motivation and ICC, and that four motivational subcomponents, or Ideal self, Integrativeness, Ought-to self and Instrumentality were principal components of motivation, while four ICC subcomponents, Intercultural skills/strategies, Intercultural interaction willingness, Intercultural awareness, Attitude flexibility, were composed of ICC of the participants. The participants' ICC was statistically significantly correlated with all the motivational components and English ability. In particular, Ideal L2 self and Integrativeness, were more strongly connected with ICC. Finally, the results of regression analysis revealed that motivation and English ability were significant predictors of Korean college students' ICC, and that motivation was more strongly connected with their ICC.

The findings of the study provide practical insights to the researchers and English teachers especially for classroom teaching. First, the present study suggests that Korean university students' ICC needs to be more promoted though they have been taught English based on the revised national curriculum which has adopted

cultivating “intercultural speakers” as one of educational goals of English learning and teaching. Thus, above all, an increased effort should be made to better understand the current state of Korean students’ ICC including their perception and attitudes toward foreign cultures to assist them to become competent intercultural speakers. Simultaneously, various cultural activities and tasks should be implemented according to different educational settings, so that students may have awareness of differences in cultures and reflect their cultures in relation to others to enhance a deeper understanding of other cultures as well as their own culture.

As Liddicoat (2011) claimed that language educators should “prepare language learners for meaningful communication outside their own cultural environment and to develop in language learners a sense of themselves as mediators between language and cultures” (p.837), it is highly recommended that teachers make an effort to incorporate cultural awareness in the classroom. For Korean learners of English, like most other learners in EFL learning contexts, authentic use of English with others, inside or outside classroom, is relatively limited. However, with the help of technology and the Internet, a variety of ICC pedagogy could be provided through well-organized cross-cultural programs and activities such as synchronous and asynchronous telecollaborative activities with English users from different cultural backgrounds (Han, 2016; Lee, 2020). In a simpler way, movies, animations, and dramas could be a good gateway to understanding other different cultures and enhancing intercultural awareness for Korean learners of English (Choi, 2003)

Second, the finding of the study showed that ICC was closely connected with motivation, in particular, Ideal self and Integrativeness. It is suggested that a variety of teaching strategies to promote L2 learners’ Ideal self and Integrativeness could lead to an increase in ICC. Thus, more attention and effort should be given to induce Korean learners of English to have more integrative learning motivation and to confidently create their ideal L2 images of the future.

Third, the study showed the connection of ICC and English proficiency, which again confirmed the indispensability of incorporating cultural awareness in the

language classroom. In the era of globalization, the gravity of understanding and awareness of different cultures in teaching English as an international language cannot be overemphasized. Teachers are well advised to help the learners to raise intercultural awareness through readings, films, games and other cultural activities in the classroom.

In the end, it has to be mentioned that this study has a few limitations. First, an online self-reported questionnaire with a 5 point Likert scale was used for data collection. Though it was convenient to collect data through distributing a questionnaire online, it might not reflect learners' actual learning behaviors, perceptions and English proficiency. Studies with qualitative approach would provide comprehensive and deeper insights on the nature and dynamics of the relationships among Korean students' ICC, motivation and English proficiency. Second, as the participants of the study studied within the context of a medium-sized regional city of Korea, so the findings should be generalized with caution. Future research targeting college students from different regions with a large sample size needs to be conducted to revalidate the subcomponents of Korean college students' ICC and their relations with motivation and English proficiency.

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Received: March 31, 2021/ Revised: May 17, 2021 / Accepted: May 17, 2021

## Appendix 1 Motivation Questionnaire Items

## Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max	Mean	SD
M 6	306	1	5	2.48	1.215
M 9	306	1	5	2.51	1.237
M 7	307	1	5	2.81	1.224
M 8	306	1	5	2.91	1.227
M 12	305	1	5	3.16	1.303
M 3	307	1	5	3.42	1.144
M 5	306	1	5	3.57	1.112
M 2	307	1	5	3.66	1.023
M 16	307	1	5	3.69	1.016
M 10	307	1	5	3.70	1.103
M 4	307	1	5	3.72	1.075
M 11	306	1	5	3.78	1.105
M 17	307	1	5	4.03	.916
M 13	306	1	5	4.15	.994
M 15	306	1	5	4.23	.858
M 14	306	1	5	4.25	.987
M 1	307	1	5	4.29	1.040

## Appendix 2 ICC Questionnaire Items

## Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
ICC-5	307	1	5	2.87	1.075
ICC-23	307	1	5	3.04	1.121
ICC-1	307	1	5	3.08	1.084
ICC-32	305	1	5	3.11	1.026
ICC-2	306	1	5	3.13	1.069
ICC-6	306	1	5	3.13	1.043
ICC-7	307	1	5	3.21	.922
ICC-4	306	1	5	3.21	.966
ICC-9	305	1	5	3.23	1.003
ICC-14	307	1	5	3.27	.989
ICC-30	306	1	5	3.40	.919
ICC-8	307	1	5	3.42	.982
ICC-3	306	1	5	3.43	.911
ICC-10	305	1	5	3.50	.900
ICC-21	306	1	5	3.51	.921
ICC-19	307	1	5	3.54	.964
ICC-16	306	1	5	3.55	1.052
ICC-20	307	1	5	3.55	.871
ICC-18	307	1	5	3.56	.953
ICC-13	307	1	5	3.58	.898
ICC-29	307	1	5	3.60	.848
ICC-11	307	1	5	3.63	1.022
ICC-27	307	1	5	3.65	.886
ICC-22	305	1	5	3.66	.881

ICC-15	307	1	5	3.68	.944
ICC-28	307	1	5	3.74	.827
ICC-12	306	1	5	3.79	.953
ICC-26	307	1	5	3.86	.918
ICC-17	306	1	5	3.96	.854