

# Korea TESOL Journal

Volume 13, Number 1  
2017



Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

# **Korea TESOL Journal**

**Volume 13, Number 1**



**Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages**



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# Korea TESOL Journal

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**Volume 13, Number 1**  
**The Official Journal of**  
**Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages**  
**(KOTESOL / Korea TESOL)**

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**Production Layout:** Media Station, Seoul

**Printing:** Myeongjinsa, Seoul

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ISSN: 1598-0464

## About KOTESOL

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Korea TESOL, Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (KOTESOL) is a professional organization of teachers of English whose main goal is to assist its members in their self-development and to contribute to the improvement of ELT in Korea. KOTESOL also serves as a network for teachers to connect with others in the ELT community and as a source of information for ELT resource materials and events in Korea and abroad.

Korea TESOL is proud to be an Affiliate of TESOL (TESOL International Association), an international education association of almost 12,000 members with headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, USA, as well as an Associate of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), an international education association of over 4,000 members with headquarters in Canterbury, Kent, UK.

Korea TESOL was established in October 1992, when the Association of English Teachers in Korea (AETK) joined with the Korea Association of Teachers of English (KATE). Korea TESOL is a not-for-profit organization established to promote scholarship, disseminate information, and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among persons associated with the teaching and learning of English in Korea. In pursuing these goals, Korea TESOL seeks to cooperate with other groups having similar concerns.

Korea TESOL is an independent national affiliate of a growing international movement of teachers, closely associated with not only TESOL and IATEFL, but also with PAC (Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies), consisting of JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching), ThaiTESOL (Thailand TESOL), ETA-ROC (English Teachers Association of the Republic of China/Taiwan), FEELTA (Far Eastern English Language Teachers' Association, Russia), and PALT (Philippine Association for Language Teaching, Inc.). Korea TESOL is also associated with MELTA (Malaysian English Language Teaching Association), TEFLIN (Indonesia), CamTESOL (Cambodia), and ACTA (Australian Council of TESOL Associations).

The membership of Korea TESOL includes elementary school, middle school, high school, and university-level English teachers as well as teachers-in-training, administrators, researchers, material writers, curriculum developers, and other interested individuals.

Korea TESOL has nine active chapters throughout the nation: Busan–Gyeongnam, Daegu–Gyeongbuk, Daejeon–Chungcheong, Gangwon, Gwangju–Jeonnam, Jeonju–North Jeolla, Seoul, Suwon–Gyeonggi, and Yongin–Gyeonggi, as well as numerous international members. Members of Korea TESOL are from all parts of Korea and many parts of the world, thus providing Korea TESOL members the benefits of a multicultural membership. Approximately thirty percent of the members are Korean.

Korea TESOL holds an annual international conference, a national conference, workshops, and other professional development events, while its chapters hold monthly workshops, annual conferences, symposia, and networking events. Also organized within Korea TESOL are numerous SIGs (Special Interest Groups) – Reflective Practice, Social Justice, Christian Teachers, Research, Professional Development, Young Learners, and Multi-Media and CALL – which hold their own meetings and events.

Visit <https://koreatesol.org/join-kotesol> for membership information.



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# Korea TESOL Journal

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The *Korea TESOL Journal* is a peer-reviewed journal, welcoming previously unpublished practical and scholarly articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with the teaching of English as a foreign language. The Journal particularly focuses on articles that are relevant and applicable to the Korean EFL context. The Journal publishes two issues annually.

As the Journal is committed to publishing manuscripts that contribute to the application of theory to practice in our profession, submissions reporting relevant research and addressing implications and applications of this research to teaching in the Korean setting are particularly welcomed.

The Journal is also committed to the fostering of scholarship among Korea TESOL members and throughout Korea. As such, classroom-based papers, i.e., articles arising from genuine issues of the English language teaching classroom, are welcomed. The Journal has also expanded its scope to include research that supports all scholars, from early-career researchers to senior academics.

Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Classroom-Centered Research
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- Assessment
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For additional information on the *Korea TESOL Journal* and call-for-papers deadlines, visit our website: <https://koreatesol.org/content/call-papers-korea-tesol-journal>



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# **Research Papers**

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## The South Korean National Curriculum for English: Problems of Transparency and Coherence

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As in a number of other countries, problems associated with the teaching and learning of English in South Korean schools have been widely attributed to three main factors – teachers' lack of an adequate level of oral proficiency in English, inconsistency between the general direction of teaching reforms and the national examination system, and student and community resistance to communicatively oriented teaching. These problems are very real ones. It is argued here, however, that there is an equally serious problem that has received very little attention. It is the nature of the national curriculum for English itself. The analysis of South Korean curriculum documentation reported here reveals internal contradictions and inconsistencies. It also indicates confusion and/or misunderstanding concerning some key aspects of developments in language teaching and learning. There is, furthermore, evidence to suggest that national curricula for English in a number of other countries are similarly flawed. This is of very considerable significance because it presents teachers and textbook writers with a wide range of problems and dilemmas that cannot be resolved unless their source is recognized and acknowledged, and unless the curricula concerned are redesigned in a way that is coherent, consistent, and transparent and, above all, capable of effective implementation. We therefore recommend that the Korean national curriculum for English be reviewed, with particular attention being paid to the advisability of ensuring that there is transparency and consistency in the area of achievement

objectives, syllabus type and content, and teaching approaches and methods. In addition, any recommendation relating to the use of the target language as the language of instruction needs to be accompanied by both clarification and advice.

## INTRODUCTION

As is the case in many other parts of the world, globalization and, with it, the widespread use of English as a common language have had a profound impact on South Korean society where English is now being used increasingly in many areas of public life, including television and radio programs, commercial advertisements, and popular music (J. S. Lee, 2004). English is taught from third grade in elementary schools and is a required subject in university entrance examinations. English language proficiency, as evidenced by high scores in a range of English language tests, has become a key component of the job market. What we are experiencing in South Korea has been described as “English fever” (Krashen, 2003). English language kindergartens are increasingly popular in spite of high tuition fees; many school students (both junior and senior) attend English camps run by native English speakers; thousands of children are sent overseas to study English every year, and there has been a huge increase in the number of “split families” in which one parent stays in Korea while the other lives with the children in a predominantly English-speaking country in order to secure an English-medium education for them (J. Lee, 2010). In addition, the vast majority of school-aged students are enrolled in private educational institutes (*hagwon*), one of the main aims being to improve their English language proficiency.

The official South Korean response to the increasing influence of English worldwide has been multifaceted. There has, for example, been a plan to create three “special economic zones” in the west of Seoul with English as the official language (Shin, 2007). In 2008, the Presidential Transition Committee for Lee’s administration put forward a proposal (the English Education Roadmap) that all public schools should move to English immersion education within the next five years (at an estimated cost of US\$4.25 billion). This proposal was withdrawn within five days as a result of vigorous public opposition on the grounds that it was

unrealistic (J. Lee, 2010). Also withdrawn was a plan to replace, by 2016, the very traditional English section of the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) with a National English Ability Test (NEAT) that would have had a strong focus on speaking and writing. This withdrawal followed years of development (at a cost of approximately US\$41 million). Among the reasons given for the failure to go ahead with the implementation of the NEAT was the fact that teachers were not ready to teach speaking and writing skills adequately and the fact that the new test could lead to a rise in private tuition costs as parents/caregivers sought to prepare their children adequately. Concerns were also raised about the validity and reliability of the test instrument (*Korea Times*, 2014).

One of the most influential of the official responses to the increasing globalization of English has been contained in the 6th and 7th South Korean National Curriculum Revisions (Ministry of Education, 1992, 1997; Ministry of Education, Science, & Technology, 2008), which demonstrated a fundamental change in attitude to the teaching and learning of English. That change has been widely characterized as involving a shift away from a behaviorist-oriented, grammar-centered, and teacher-dominated approach associated with grammar translation towards a rationalist-based, communicatively oriented, and learner-centered approach characterized by what is generally referred to as “communicative language teaching” (CLT; see, for example, the discussion in B. M. Chang, 2009). The 7th Curriculum revision was initially released in 2007, with a version in English appearing in 2008. These versions have remained largely in place, providing the framework and fundamental content in relation to which subsequent amendments (also referred to, however, as “curriculum revisions”) are located. However, since it was first introduced, the curriculum has been slightly revised every few years, the last revision being in 2015. In the discussion of the English component of the curriculum below, reference is made to the text of the English version of the 7th National Curriculum (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2008), designed for implementation between 2009 and 2011. The only significant amendments to that text were made in the 2009 and 2015 revisions. The 2009 revision

- includes only one set of achievement standards for first through third grades (whereas there had been a separate set for each of these grades earlier);

- adds two statements indicating that the study of English should (a) develop students' aesthetic sensibilities, creativity, and imagination through exposure to literature and the arts and (b) develop students' knowledge in the humanities, arts, and social and natural sciences;
- slightly alters some aspects of the document's appendix headed Examples and Functions of Communication.

The 2015 revision refers to the introduction of a “free semester” at intermediate school level, the focus in that semester being on creative activities that are not bound to the curriculum and are not subject to an examination process.

## THE STUDY

The study reported here was part of a larger research project that included textbook and lesson analysis, questionnaire-based surveys, and semi-structured interviews (Oh, 2015). This part of that study focuses largely on the application of content analysis to the South Korean national curriculum for English and is underpinned by the following research question:

What recommendations are made in the national curriculum for the teaching of English in schools in South Korea in relation to (a) syllabus content, and (b) teaching approach and methodologies, how consistent are these recommendations when the document as a whole is taken into account, and what assumptions (about teachers, teacher training, and language teaching and learning) underpin these recommendations?

There are many different approaches to content analysis depending on the nature of the material to be analyzed (see, for example, Porter, 2002). In this case, the approach adopted was designed specifically for application to foreign and second language curricula. The initial stage of the process involved conducting a search for published material that was intended to provide, in whole or in part, an overview of major changes, proposals, and developments in language teaching and learning that could impact on the curriculum, including, for example, proposals

concerning approaches to the design of syllabuses. The final list contained over 200 publications. That list was then given to three academics, each involved in training second/foreign language teachers. They were asked, working independently, to select what they regarded as the ten most influential and highly respected items on the list. In each case, the same six items were selected by all three. These items were removed from each of their lists. They were each then asked to select whichever one of the remaining items they considered to be most useful and reliable as a source of information about developments in language teaching and learning. The three items selected were then added to the initial six, yielding a final list of nine works (Brown, 2014; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004; Kelly, 1976; Knapp & Seidlhofer, 2009; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Long & Doughty, 2009; Richards & Rogers, 2001; Stern, 1983; Ur, 2000).

Instead of a potentially vast range of published literature on ELT covering every proposal and development since the end of the 18th century, we now had a list of nine publications. Even so, it seemed unlikely that all of the proposals and developments discussed in these works had proved to be equally influential. We therefore needed to identify those proposals and developments to which reference was most frequently made. Thus, the content lists and indices of the nine books referred to above were cross-referenced and a list made of keywords representing themes or topics, each of which was found in at least six of the books. That list was then divided into five major, but sometimes overlapping, areas (*approach, syllabus, method(ology) and assessment, movements, and general concepts*). Each of the keywords identified was then listed under one or more of these themes/topics. Thus, for example, *grammar translation* was listed under *approach, structural* under *syllabus, audiolingual* under *method(ology) and assessment, reform* under *movements, and achievement objective* under *general concepts*. What we had at this stage was a list of keywords relating to a range of what appeared to be widely recognized proposals and developments in the area of ELT since the end of the 18th century. The next stage was to review material in each of the nine books, noting, in particular, information referring to details of the various proposals and developments identified in the keyword list. Where further detail about specific proposals or developments (e.g., the notional-functional syllabus) was required, publications that related specifically to them were consulted. Thus, for example, for details relating to the notional-



functional syllabus design proposal, reference was made to works in which the proposal was outlined (e.g., Wilkins, 1976) and works in which it was critiqued (e.g., Crombie, 1988; Widdowson, 1998). Finally, the South Korean curriculum documentation was searched for evidence of the proposals and developments that had been identified, particular note being taken of the extent to which the treatment of them was (a) internally consistent and (b) consistent with the usages found in the works consulted, that is, the nine books and supplementary materials to which reference has been made.

A summary of the main proposals and developments recorded in the works consulted is provided in the first part of the literature review (below); the second part focuses on literature in which specific reference is made to the South Korean curriculum for English itself. Following the literature review, a report of the findings of our curriculum analysis is provided under five main headings: teaching approaches/methods and assessment; proficiency targets and achievement objectives; the syllabus: teaching/learning content; medium of instruction; and cultural content.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Some Major Developments in ELT Since the End of the 18th Century**

#### **Teaching Approaches, Methods, and Assessment**

Around the end of the 18th century, what is now referred to as “grammar translation” began to emerge in European grammar schools (Howatt, 1984, pp. 17–31, 131). As exemplified in the works of Meidinger, published in Germany at the end of the 18th century, grammar translation involved “a series of separate lesson units, each with a few grammatical rules and paradigms, plus vocabulary lists for use with exercises in the form of sentences to translate into the foreign language” (Howatt, 2009, p. 472).

Grammar translation began to be challenged in the late 19th century by members of what has come to be referred to as the “Reform Movement” who were attempting to develop an approach to the teaching of languages that prioritized spoken interaction and was relevant to the needs and interests of contemporary learners (Howatt, 1984, p. 169).

This required some fundamental changes. Thus, for example, Nock (2014) observes that

Beginning with those involved in the Reform Movement, a wide range of concept introduction and concept checking strategies which do not rely on translation have been developed. These include, for example, the use of real objects (realia), pictures, drawings, gestures, mime, timelines, and concept questions. They also involve ensuring that new structures are introduced in the context of familiar structures and vocabulary and that there are also opportunities for students to attempt to use the language to which they have been introduced (and for teachers to observe them doing so). (p. 186)

It was not, however, until the mid-20th century that language professionals began to develop a methodology (audiolingual methodology) that seemed to be genuinely different from that of grammar translation. That methodology prioritized imitation, practice (in the form of repetitive drilling), feedback, and habit formation (see discussion in, for example, Chastain, 1976, pp. 102–127; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, pp. 58–65; and Larsen-Freeman, 2000, pp. 35–42). By the 1970s, that methodology had itself begun to be seriously challenged as a new approach began to develop. That approach, often referred to as “communicative language teaching” (CLT) has been described by Nunan (1991, pp. 279–295) as involving

- an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language;
- the introduction of authentic texts;
- the provision of opportunities for learners to focus on the learning process itself;
- attention to the learners’ own personal experiences; and
- relating language learning inside the classroom to language activities outside the classroom.

Tasks and activities, often involving pairs or groups of students, are fundamental to CLT. Within that context, students are encouraged to be involved in “communicative activities,” that is, in activities that involve genuine communication. There are many different types of activities that can be described as being communicative in this sense (such as activities involving an information gap). However, there are also many types of

activities that cannot, including, for example, the formulaic gap-filling type of activity that is typically associated with audiolingual methodology. In connection with this, Littlewood (2004, p. 322) has provided a useful classification of activity types:

- *Non-communicative*: Activities that focus wholly on the structure of language
- *Pre-communicative*: Activities that pay some attention to meaning but do not involve the exchange of new messages
- *Communicative*: Activities that involve practicing language in a context where new information is exchanged.

Communicative activities may involve *structured communication* (involving situations intended to elicit pre-taught language) or *authentic communication* (involving situations in which it is not possible to predict what language will be used).

Communicative language teaching tended, in the earliest stages of its development, to be associated with the total avoidance of any reference to language structure (the “strong version”). Later, however, its proponents became more relaxed about this, encouraging an inductive approach in which structural rules are taught implicitly, with learners being encouraged to make structural inferences on the basis of input (the “weak version”; Howatt, 1984, pp. 296–297).

The approaches and methods used in language teaching and learning have an impact on those used in assessment of learning. As Johnson (2000) argues,

One measure of the effectiveness of a national awards system that relates to the assessment of international languages in school contexts is . . . the extent to which it reflects the way or ways in which the relevant curriculum objectives are conceived and articulated. (p. 269)

### **Proficiency Targets and Achievement Objectives**

Language proficiency has been defined by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages as involving “a hierarchy of *global* characterizations of integrated performance” (ACTFL, 1999). Currently, proficiency tends to be defined in a way that is consistent with the development of a focus on communicative competences and

communicative language teaching. Often, it is also described in a way that is in line with the proficiency scales and descriptors developed within the context of the Council of Europe and specified in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001) where there are six common reference levels (CRLs) or proficiency bands. Furthermore, achievement objectives are now often specified in terms of general proficiency targets, which echo the CEFR's global proficiency descriptors and/or the more "specific constellation[s] of activities, skills, and competences" that make up these global descriptors" (p. 179) and indicate what learners can do with the target language (e.g., greet, bid farewell to, and thank people).

### **The Syllabus: Teaching and Learning Content**

There are many different ways in which the content of language programs can be specified (for an overview, see Fester, 2014, pp. 8–56). In the mid-1900s, designers of syllabuses for the teaching of additional languages generally adopted a structural approach to syllabus design, one that is based on "a theory of language that assumes that the grammatical or structural aspects of language form are the most basic or useful" (Krahnke, 1987, p. 15). However, shortly after the mid-point of the 20th century, alternatives to the structural syllabus had been developed or were in the process of development. These included *situational and topic-based syllabuses*, in which situations and/or topics provided the organizing principle, with lexical and grammatical aspects of the language being introduced where it was felt that they were likely to occur in the context of the particular topics and/or situations that were in focus (Ur, 2000, p. 178). Two well-known examples of syllabuses based on a situational approach are *Situational English* (Commonwealth Office of Education, 1967) and *New Concept English* (Alexander, 1967).

By the 1970s, the *notional-functional syllabus* was gaining widespread popularity. This syllabus type includes, as outlined by Wilkins (1976), notions, functions, and modal meanings. The first of these (notions) are propositional meanings that can be expressed through grammatical systems (e.g., location as expressed by prepositional phrases); the second (functions) outline what utterances actually do (e.g., greet, warn, insult); the third (modal meanings) relate to the ways in which propositional meanings can be modified (e.g., a proposition may be possible, probable, or certain). Attempts to implement this syllabus type were common in the latter part of the 1970s and in the 1980s, an

example being the *Strategies* series (Abbs & Freebairn, 1977, 1979). However, it soon became apparent that there were problems associated with the implementation of this syllabus type. In practice, the notional component was often neglected (Breen, 1987, p. 90) and, with it, important grammatical aspects of linguistic communication. Furthermore, attempts to specify functions, often in terms of decontextualized phrases and sentences, proved, at best, to be problematic. As Crombie (1988) noted in the 1980s,

Almost any utterance can have almost any illocutionary force [function] depending on the context in which it is used. ... It is precisely because this is the case that a list of function labels (e.g., “suggestion,” “threat,” “warning,” “insult,” “compliment,” etc.) can be of little use to a course writer. (p. 284)

In connection with this, it is relevant to note that Skehan (1998) has made reference to the dangers associated with placing over-reliance on pre-digested chunks of language and, in doing so, prioritizing a memory-based system over a rule-based one. Encouraging teachers and textbook designers to associate particular chunks of language (decontextualized phrases and sentences) with particular functions may, furthermore, promote a type of phrasebook approach to teaching and learning.

Another syllabus type developed around the same time was the *lexical syllabus*, proposed by Sinclair and Renouf (1988) and developed by Willis (1990). The primary focus of such a syllabus is vocabulary that has been shown in corpus-based studies to occur frequently with particular meanings in particular contexts. The belief here is that patterns of lexical chunking are fundamental to language use since, it is argued, “lexis is complexly and systematically structured and ... grammar is an outcome of this lexical structure” (Hoey, 2005, p. 1). In fact, however, this approach to language content specification proved to have little traction, with a very few exceptions, such as *The Collins COBUILD English Course* (Willis & Willis, 1989).

A further syllabus type, initially proposed by Prabhu (1987), was the *procedural syllabus*, later further developed by a number of others and subsequently referred to as the *task-based syllabus*, in which course content is made up of tasks graded in various ways (see, for example, Breen, 1987; Robinson, Ting, & Urwin, 1996; Foster & Skehan, 1996).

An objection to this, however, has been that tasks are defined in very different ways by different writers (Kumaravadivelu, 1993) and that they can include almost “anything the learners are given to do (or choose to do) in the language classroom to further the process of language learning” (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 167). In fact, a distinction is now commonly made between a *task-based* approach, in which tasks constitute the syllabus, and a *task-supported* one, in which tasks simply feature as part of the learning cycle, accompanying rather than constituting the syllabus (Loschky & Bley-Vroman, 1993, pp. 154–156).

In view of all of these developments, it is not surprising to find that there have been many attempts to reach some sort of compromise that involves some combination of the various approaches that are available. One of these is the *core and spiral syllabus* proposed by Brumfit (1980) in which the grammatical system forms the backbone of the syllabus, with notions, functions, and situations relating to that grammatical backbone moving into and out of focus at various points in language programs. Another compromise syllabus type is the *proportional syllabus* proposed by Yalden (1983) in which there are a number of phases, including an initial structural phase, a later communicative phase (that focuses on, for example, functions and/or rhetorical structuring), and a final specialized phase.

### **Medium of Instruction**

Teaching exclusively through the medium of English (the “direct method”) was not advocated by all of those who belonged to the Reform Movement that began in the late 19th century, nor is it regarded as a prerequisite by all of those who advocate CLT. Indeed, there are many language teaching professionals who, while certainly not favoring the type of bilingual method recommended by Dodson (1972), nevertheless, believe that there is an important place for the native language in the language classroom (see, for example, Antón & DiCamilla, 1999).

### **Cultural Content**

One of the impacts of globalization has been an increasing recognition of the dangers of cultural stereotyping and increasing awareness of the need for language learners to develop cross-cultural and intercultural competencies (Hu & Byram, 2009, p. vii) and, in doing so, to adopt a multi-layered perspective, avoiding polarizing, dichotomizing

constructs (see, for example, the promotion of a multicultural perspective by the Council of Europe (2001). As Parchwitz (2015, p. 80) argues, this “should lead to a situation in which teachers and students have a heightened awareness of the relativity of their own positioning and the importance of avoiding problematic stereotyping based on contrastive methodology.”

## **The South Korean National Curriculum for English in Schools**

As in a number of other countries, problems associated with the teaching and learning of English in South Korean schools have been widely attributed to three main factors: teachers’ lack of an adequate level of oral proficiency in English, inconsistency between the general direction of teaching reforms and the national examination system, and student and community resistance to communicatively oriented teaching (see, for example, Jeon, 2009). Rarely has the curriculum itself been seen as a barrier to effective reform.

Writing in the mid-1990s with reference to the 6th South Korean National Curriculum, I.-D. Kim (1994) noted that it was innovative in the sense that it placed comprehension before production, strengthened vocabulary, did not include grammatical structures, and suggested examples for communicative functions. He maintained that this was positive in the sense that it could “strengthen understanding of communicative functions and lead to inductive learning of grammar” (p. 4). Chang (2009) agreed with the general direction of Kim’s thinking, noting, with reference to the 6th and 7th National Curricula, that “the policies of English education in Korea [had] developed in the direction of cultivating the communicative competence of Korean learners” (p. 83). He referred to the 7th National Curriculum as introducing a “proficiency-based system” in which, at elementary school, students “are taught in the same class or grade, but [are] divided into an intensive or supplementary group according to their achievement levels” (pp. 88–89). In his view, the 7th National Curriculum was intended “to foster accuracy and fluency by presenting communicative functions and example sentences” (p. 89).

Whereas both I.-D. Kim (1994) and Chang (2009) express positive views about the nature, intent, and impact of the 6th and 7th Curricula as they relate to the teaching of English, Chang (2003), Kwon (1995), and Li (1998) are more sceptical. Chang (2003) has argued that “it is

not sufficient to present the list of communicative functions and expressions which have [sic.] been presented since the 6th National Curriculum” (p. 41). Instead, what is needed is the development of a more multi-layered syllabus than is currently in evidence. For Kwon (1995), critical issues, so far as the 6th and 7th National Curricula for English are concerned, are (a) an absence of research to support their theoretical positioning, (b) a failure to take account of the work of local researchers, and (c) the lack of any attempt to Koreanize (한국화) the proposals (p. 125). Also sceptical about curriculum and curriculum-related developments in South Korea as they relate to English is Li (1998), who has noted that “research suggests that curricular innovations prompted by the adoption of CLT in EFL countries have generally been difficult” (p. 677). He has argued that the difficulties experienced in attempting to adopt a communicative approach in Korea have related largely to differences between the underlying pedagogic perspectives of Asian and Western teachers and learners. This is an argument that has been forwarded by a number of scholars (see, for example, Butler, 2011) and refuted by a number of others (see, for example, J. S. Lee, 2004).

It is now almost two decades since the 6th and 7th Curriculum revisions were introduced, and there has been time for those involved in English language education in South Korea to begin to come to terms with the fundamental changes that these curriculum revisions signalled. Even so, many problems that emerged in the very early stages of the attempt to implement the curriculum recommendations have persisted in spite of the very considerable efforts made by the Ministry of Education to provide an adequate level of support (Jung, 2001; H. S. Kim, 2000; B. Lee, 2009; Min & Park, 2013). In fact, there are some indications that teacher support for the approach to teaching English outlined in these curriculum documents is actually decreasing rather than increasing (Jeon, 2009).

## Analyzing the Curriculum

We begin here by focusing on the introductory section of the English part of the 7th National Curriculum documentation. We then go on to discuss the curriculum documentation as a whole under the following headings: teaching approaches, methods, and assessment; the syllabus: teaching and learning content; medium of instruction;



achievement objectives; and cultural content. At the end of each section of the analysis, there is a short paragraph that provides an overview of the section content and highlights one or more of its implications.

### **The Introduction of the English Section of the Curriculum**

In the short introductory section of the curriculum for English (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (Korea), 2008, pp. 41–43), it is noted that

For elementary and secondary school students who must live in the future, the ability to communicate in English is an essential skill that they must learn at school. (p. 41)

In the case of both elementary and secondary schooling, it is considered important to help students to

- develop the ability to communicate in English (p. 41).

It is also considered important to focus on “basic English used in everyday life” (p. 41) and to

- take account of the different learning ability of individual students; and
- conduct in-class activities that enable students to carry out self-initiated study (p. 42).

In the case of elementary students, specific reference is made to using “real life activities” and “interesting educational media”; in the case of secondary students, however, it is simply noted that “teaching and learning methods that stress the acquisition of language should be applied” (p. 42).

Overview: The introductory section of the South Korean national curriculum for English is worded in such a way as to suggest a broadly communicative orientation, something that has implications for each of the areas outlined below, including, in particular, teaching approaches and methods.

### **Teaching Approaches and Methods**

One section of the curriculum documentation is headed “Teaching

and Learning Methods” (pp. 58–61). That section is divided into two sub-sections: the first referring to elementary schooling, the second to secondary schooling.

So far as elementary schooling is concerned, it is recommended that teaching and learning methods should include games, chants, and songs, and should make use of multimedia materials in order to motivate students and promote a sense of achievement. Reference is also made to the desirability of (a) attending to students’ “levels” through “individual and cooperative education” and (b) ensuring that students “have confidence to participate actively” (p. 59). All of this is consistent with CLT. Also consistent with CLT is the instruction that teachers should organize learning groups according to activities in order to achieve student-centered classes.

With reference to secondary schooling, there are also some entries that are consistent with CLT. It is recommended that teachers should

- plan a student-centered class, where students can actively participate and teachers can cooperate with them;
- develop a variety of activities in order to achieve lively interaction between teacher and students, and among students;
- use various appropriate strategies to enable students to effectively communicate;
- focus on communication activities to enhance fluency and precision, and guide students in such a way as to increase their ability to apply the language learnt in real circumstances;
- harness various multimedia materials and ICTs in order to motivate students to become involved in learning activities that promote a great sense of achievement; and
- according to students’ abilities, interests, and knowledge, use various methods to induce motivation and allow for a student-centered class.

Overview: What is included in the curriculum document under the heading of “Teaching and Learning Methods” is, in common with the introductory section of the curriculum documentation, broadly consistent with CLT.

### **Achievement Objectives**

In the curriculum documentation, the section headed Achievement Standards (pp. 46–58) (i.e., achievement objectives) provides lists

indicating what students are expected to achieve at each grade (grade 3 through grade 10). These are, however, often too general to be amenable to genuinely meaningful assessment (e.g., “understand basic conversations about personal daily life”). Furthermore, the exact same standard may appear at different levels (e.g., carry on/out a simple telephone conversation” appears at both grade 5 and grade 6). Likewise, discrimination among levels often relies on readers being able, somehow, to make sense of the intended distinctions among words such as “basic,” “simple,” and “easy” (e.g., “understand basic conversations about personal daily life” appears at grade 3; “understand simple conversations about personal daily life” appears at grade 4). In addition, some of the specifications linked to particular grades could be applied with equal relevance to almost any other grade (e.g., “write a sentence using correct spelling and punctuation,” grade 7, p. 52).

In many cases, achievement standards relate not to students’ capacity to use English accurately and/or appropriately at different grades but, somewhat oddly, to teaching and learning strategies (e.g., “participate in simple games,” grade 3, p. 47). In fact, these strategies often appear to be inconsistent with CLT (e.g., “copy the dictation of a studied sentence,” grade 7, p. 52; “complete a sentence by inserting a word or phrase,” grade 7, p. 52). Sometimes the achievement standards are even expressed in ways that are characterized by tautology (e.g., “write a sentence about a daily life story with words and phrases,” grade 6, p. 51).

Even in those few cases where the achievement standards seem to be broadly consistent with a communicative approach (e.g., “listen to a simple speech or dialogue and understand the order of events,” grade 5, p. 48), there is no link between the standards themselves and language indicators, that is, ways in which they can be expressed (encoded) in English at different stages or levels of learning. Take, for example, achievement standards such as the following:

- “listen to and understand simple speeches about the past” (grade 3, p. 47)
- “listen to what will happen and understand it” (grade 6, p. 50)

Standards such as the two above could be associated with a wide range of very different linguistic encodings. Thus, for example, the first standard above could be associated with the use of the simple past tense

(e.g., he danced) and/or present or perfective aspect (e.g., he has/had danced). There is, however, no clear indication in this curriculum of what type of language students might generally be expected to understand and exhibit in association with particular achievement standards. This means that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to link them in any principled way to assessment and, hence, to determine whether the desired standards have been reached or, perhaps, exceeded.

Overview: The achievement objectives/standards included in the Korean national curriculum are not expressed in a way that makes them amenable to assessment. They have little in common with, for example, the type of “can do” statements that are associated with CLT in landmark publications such as, for example, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001).

### **The Syllabus: Teaching and Learning Content**

In spite of all of the developments relating to language syllabuses to which reference was made in the literature review, there is very little in the main body of the South Korean curriculum documentation that is clearly indicative of a particular syllabus type or of particular syllabus content.

There are some general references to syllabus content in the achievements standards section (e.g., “listen to what will happen and understand it,” grade 6, indicating future time reference). However, these do not provide specific guidance in relation to the language content of the syllabus. Rather, they suggest a range of possible structure types, (e.g., modal auxiliary (*will*) + base form of verb; simple present + future adverbial; modal auxiliary + progressive aspect (*will be \_ing*); modal semi-auxiliary (*BE going to / BE about to*) + base form of verb; simple present + future adverbial). There is no indication of how teachers or textbook writers should decide among different structural possibilities at the stage to which the achievement standard applies or, indeed, whether, or at what stage, the other structural possibilities should be introduced.

In addition to the few achievement standards that have implications, however general, for language forms, there is little in the main part of the curriculum documentation that is indicative of syllabus content apart from a chart that specifies the expected number of words to be introduced in each grade (e.g., “within 520 words” from grades 1 to 6) and the expected sentence length associated with grades 3 and 4

combined and grades 5 and 6 combined. Otherwise, so far as language content is concerned, readers are referred to the document's appendices that are headed as follows:

Appendix 1: Subject Matter

Appendix 2: Examples and Functions of Communication

Appendix 3: Guide to Basic Vocabulary and Basic Vocabulary List

Appendix 4: Linguistic Form Needed for Communication

At first sight, the headings of these four appendices suggest that what we may have here is a situationalized and lexicalized notional-functional syllabus, the situational/topical contexts being indicated in the first appendix, the vocabulary in the third, the functions in the second, and the notions (i.e., meanings that can be expressed through grammatical forms) in the fourth. However, closer examination of the appendices indicates that this is not, in fact, the case.

The third appendix (Guide to Basic Vocabulary and Basic Vocabulary List) includes a basic vocabulary list made up of 2,315 words. Of these, 736 are signalled as being recommended for elementary school lessons. Readers are advised that at least 75% of words presented at all schooling stages should be selected from this list, including, at elementary school level, at least 375 from words marked as being appropriate for elementary levels. The list makes no clear distinction between word classes. In addition, it is noted (oddly) that where identical words are different in meaning, they are treated as a single word. Even so, teachers and textbook writers are provided in this appendix with some helpful guidance as to the lexical content of the syllabus.

The first appendix (Subject Matter) includes 19 entries, all of which are concerned with topic types. This provides a range of contexts in relation to which language content could be situationalized. The first seven of the topic types relate to the day-to-day experiences of learners (e.g., personal, family, and school life; habits, health, and hobbies; animals, plants, and weather). The others are subject-related (politics, economics, history, etc.) or relate to emotional and intellectual development, culture, and customs (own and those of others), morality and patriotism, democracy and individual well-being, environmental conservation, and aesthetic appreciation.

Potential problems begin to emerge when the second and fourth appendices are examined in detail. The second appendix (Examples and

Functions of Communication) is intended as a guide to communicative functions. It includes forty-seven headings (e.g., Greetings, Introducing, Making an Appointment, Offering Food). Under each of these headings is a list of decontextualized phrases and sentences that are treated as functional exponents. Treating decontextualized phrases and sentences as functional exponents is, however, problematic. This is because functions are almost always determined on the basis of the interaction between linguistic content and context. Thus, with the exception of highly formulaic functions (such as certain greetings), context is fundamental to functional specification. It is, no doubt, for this reason that many of the examples provided are, in fact, highly formulaic and/or idiomatic (e.g., greeting expressed by *Hello!*). This situation is further complicated by the fact that

- Some of the “examples” occur under more than one functional heading and could equally well have been included under others. Thus, for example, *Why don't you ...* is listed under the headings “Proposing and Inviting” and “Making an Appointment.” It could, however, depending on what follows, have also been included under any of the following headings: “Offering Food,” “Expressing Discontent,” “Persuading,” “Advising,” and “Ordering.” In fact, in the absence of contextualization, it could be associated with almost any function.
- Communicative functions (e.g., requesting information) and context are sometimes confused. Thus, for example, *Who's calling, please?* is listed as a function under the general heading of “Calling and Answering on the Telephone,” although its function, in the context of one of the initial segments of a telephone conversation (the context) is a request for personal identification.
- Communicative functions and the core meanings of lexical items are sometimes confused. Thus, for example, *What a surprise!* is listed under the functional heading of “Expressing Surprise,” although it is the word *surprise*, forming part of the core meaning of the construction, that is indicative of something being unexpected.
- While a few two-part functional categories (e.g., “expressing cause and effect”) are included, the vast majority (e.g., “means-purpose,” “grounds-conclusion”) are omitted.
- There are several instances where it is evident that the examples provided are wholly inappropriate, as in the case of the inclusion

of *Cheer up* and *Look on the bright side* being listed under the heading of “Consoling a Grieving Person.”

The fourth appendix (Linguistic Form Needed for Communication) is said to be made up of “[the] linguistic forms ... [that] should be used together with the communication examples in Appendix 2” (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2008, p. 119). It is, however, impossible to determine what the relationship between these two appendices is intended to be. Clearly, the linguistic forms in this appendix are not intended to be exponents of the functions listed in the second appendix since they are not directly associated with any of these functions. In any case, the second appendix already includes what are intended to be examples of exponents of these functions. Equally, the linguistic forms included in the fourth appendix cannot be intended as encodings of particular notional meaning (such as, for example, past time) in that no notional meanings are listed. It would appear, therefore, that what we have in the fourth appendix is simply a list of phrases and sentences, each of which includes a structure that might be introduced at some point in a language program (e.g., *He takes a walk every day*). It is, thus, simply not possible to determine precisely what relationship these structures are intended to have with (a) the achievement standards included in the curriculum documentation (which are associated with particular stages of learning) or (b) the functional meanings listed in the second appendix (which are not associated with particular stages of learning).

What we actually have in the fourth appendix is a curious list of decontextualized sentences in thirty-six groups. Although none of the thirty-six groups is labelled, it is generally possible to detect at least part of the rationale that underpins the actual grouping itself. Consider, for example, the group below:

He **takes** a walk every day.  
He **went** on a picnic yesterday.  
She **is going (to go)** abroad next year.  
The next test **will** probably **be** a little more difficult.

Here, the contrast between present, past, and future time reference appears to be the intended focus. However, if this is the case, it is difficult to determine why a sentence in which the simple present tense

is associated with habits or routines (e.g., *He takes a walk every day*) is included rather than, for example, one in which it is associated with present truths and, therefore, present time (e.g., *He lives in Korea*).

The type of grouping we find in this fourth appendix may have been intended simply as a substitute for linking structures explicitly with structure-related meanings (e.g., associating *BE going to* plus the base form of a lexical verb with an intention or future plan). In fact, however, employing the type of listing and grouping we find in this appendix does little, if anything, to help teachers and textbook writers to make principled decisions about what language to include at particular stages of learning.

The last of the thirty-six groups that make up the fourth appendix is the only one that is accompanied by some type of linguistic specification (provided in square brackets). Why this should be the case is not possible to determine. What is, however, possible to determine is the fact that adjective complementation (e.g., *He is happy*) has been omitted for no apparent reason:

- The baby cried. [SV]
- She stayed in bed. [SVA]
- He is an English teacher. [SVC]
- I like *gimbap*. [SVO]
- You can put the dish on the table. [SVOA]
- He gave me a present. [SVOO]
- Why did they elect him chairman? [SVOC]

The titles of the appendices and the suggested link between the second appendix (Examples and Functions of Communication) and the fourth one (Linguistic Form Needed for Communication) suggest that the curriculum writers believe that what they are specifying is consistent with a notional-functional syllabus type. They may even have believed that the fourth appendix is equivalent to the type of notional specification that complements functional specification in the notional-functional syllabus or they may have believed that it provided an effective substitute for it. Clearly, this is not the case.

Overview: The way in which the language content included in this curriculum document is dealt with is problematic, being likely to encourage a sort of “pick and mix” phrasebook-style approach to teaching and learning. In the absence of any principled guidance,



teachers and textbook writers can do little other than select topics, vocabulary, and example sentences from the lists provided in the four appendices in ways that, they hope, will be consistent with very general, and often overlapping, achievement standards statements. The reality is that there is little in this curriculum document that is likely to be of any genuine use to teachers or textbook writers who are seeking some guidance in relation to what to include at particular stages of language programs and, equally important, why certain things should be included or omitted.

Although it seems, at first sight, that the authors of the curriculum documentation may have believed that their presentation is consistent with the notional-functional syllabus design concept, there is no coherent notional specification. Furthermore, communication functions are presented in a way that ignores the role played by context in functional specification.

### **Medium of Instruction**

There are only two references to the language of instruction in relation to the teaching of English in the South Korean national curriculum. One of these is in a section dealing with elementary schooling; the other in a section dealing with secondary schooling. In both cases, readers are advised that classes should be carried out in English “wherever possible.” It is unclear what is intended here by the phrase “wherever possible.” What is clear is the fact that no reasons are provided for this recommendation, and no advice is provided about how to conduct English classes through the medium of English.

Overview: The curriculum documentation contains a single sentence, which appears twice, that indicates that English should be used as the language of instruction as much as possible. There is, however, no indication of what might determine the extent to which instruction in English is actually possible or what problems teachers might encounter in attempting to put this recommendation into practice.

### **Cultural Content**

There is very little in the curriculum documentation that relates to culture. In fact, the only references to culture, apart from those in the introductory section, are in the section headed “Teaching and Learning Methods,” where it is noted that

Along with language education, English-speaking and non-English-speaking cultures should be appropriately introduced so they can be naturally understood. (Elementary Schooling, p. 59)

[Teachers should aim to] increase the appreciation of foreign cultures and cultivate an understanding perspective of them by introducing various English-speaking and non-English-speaking cultures. (Secondary Schooling, p. 60)

While there is the implicit recognition that English is spoken as a *lingua franca* all over the world and should not, therefore, be exclusively associated with countries in which it has traditionally been the dominant language, there is no discussion of cross-cultural hybridity, of the potential dangers of cultural stereotyping, or of how the culture component of English language programs is to be assessed.

Overview: In the area of culture, teachers and textbook writers are left to work out for themselves how they are going to cope with the expectation that they should deal with a wide range of cultural representations.

## CONCLUSION

While there has been much negative criticism in recent years of the teaching and learning of English in South Korea, little of that criticism has been directed at the national curriculum documentation. In fact, that curriculum has been widely praised for its innovative approach (see, for example, I.-D. Kim, 1994) and, in particular, for its development in the direction of “cultivating the communicative competence of Korean learners” (Chang, 2009, p. 83). Negative views about the curriculum itself appear to be both rarer and, in general, more muted than are negative views concerning its implementation.

Overall, what we find in the South Korean national curriculum is a disjunction between the short introductory section and the section headed “Teaching and Learning Methods,” both of which signal an approach that is broadly communicatively oriented, and other parts of the document, including the achievement standards. Although the initial section of the curriculum appears to promise a communicatively oriented approach, there is little in the remainder of the document to support this

except, possibly, (a) two sentences that indicate that English should be used as much as possible in class, (b) the avoidance of any type of syntactic specification, and (c) the inclusion of an appendix relating to linguistic functions. However, none of these things does, in fact, necessarily indicate communicative orientation. There are, for example, many advocates of CLT who believe that there is an important place for native languages in additional language teaching. Furthermore, while in the very early stages of the development of CLT, syntactic specification was sometimes avoided altogether in language classes, there has never been a time when language professionals were not themselves expected to be able to understand and use syntactic classification, a use and understanding that can effectively underpin the implicit teaching of grammar. Finally, although there are communicative functions that are generally expressed in formulaic ways, most communicative functions emerge out of the interaction between language and context, and so a list of examples of functions in the form of decontextualized phrases and sentences (Appendix 2) makes little pedagogic sense. Nor does it make pedagogic sense to offer groups of decontextualized phrases and sentences as exemplars of linguistic forms needed for communication (Appendix 4) without any clear indication of the structures and structure-related meanings that these phrases and sentences are intended to exemplify.

The problems we have highlighted in connection with the national curriculum for English and its implementation are by no means confined to South Korea. Thus, for example, Her's (2007) analysis of the Taiwanese national curriculum for English reveals problems relating to a lack of proficiency benchmarking (p. i), the ways in which aims and objectives are specified (p. 89) and the nature of the attempted functional classification (p. 125). Although she found that the Taiwanese curriculum documentation indicated "an intended move away from rote learning and towards communicative language teaching," she also found that there was "little guidance in relation to the communicative outcomes and proficiency achievements expected at different stages" (p. 142). Similarly, Umeda (2014), following her review of the Japanese national curriculum for English, reaches the following conclusion:

While clearly influenced by developments in the areas of communicative competence and communicative language teaching and by research in the area of discourse analysis, the Japanese

curriculum includes many features that are reminiscent of a considerably more traditional approach and is, in places, internally contradictory. While explicitly proscribing a grammar translation approach and recommending, in places, that instruction should be largely conducted through the medium of English, it provides no genuinely useful guidance in relation to methodologies that could usefully replace those associated with grammar translation. ... In providing lists of “typical” examples of language associated with different functions ... it risks encouraging an approach in which formulaic uses are prioritized over creative, productive, and contextually motivated engagement with language. (pp. 84–85)

What, then, are the options available in a situation where the curriculum that teachers are expected to implement constitutes, in itself, one of the barriers to making effective changes to English language programs? The first stage of the process must be acknowledgment that there is a problem. If those responsible can be convinced of the need for fundamental redesign of the English language curriculum, their first task will necessarily be to review all of the options available to them. This will provide them with the type of information they will require in order to make their underlying theoretical positioning explicit; to ensure that there is transparency and consistency in the areas of achievement objectives, syllabus type, and content; and to recommend teaching approaches and methods, and language(s) of instruction. An objection to this might be that doing all of this would involve very considerable expense. However, not to do it is likely to be considerably more expensive in the long run, impacting negatively, as it inevitably would, on national economic progress.

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## Linguistic Imperialism: A Korean Perspective

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Linguist Robert Phillipson has written widely on the notion that ELF is imperialist. His paper “Lingua Franca or Lingua Frankensteinia” (2008) described the spread of English as a “tool” of modern-day U.S. and U.K. cultural and social imperialist policies, akin to physical colonization under the British Empire or U.S.-occupation of the Philippines. This paper reviews support and criticism of Phillipson’s ideas, before considering them from an active TESOL teacher’s experience and the present-day geopolitical perspective of the post-Brexit Trump presidency, suggesting that Phillipson’s views appear comparatively outdated and “academically imperialist” in relation to learner agency. These perspectives are then applied to the role of English in Korea: firstly, the history of English education in Korea and the developing relationship between Korea and the U.S., then examining Korea’s complex present-day geopolitical situation and globalized outlook. The paper ultimately concludes that, from a South Korean perspective, Phillipson’s claims of linguistically based U.S. cultural imperialism seem untenable, especially in comparison with the physical colonization experienced by South Korea at the hands of Japan.

### INTRODUCTION

Considering the idea that “English is imperialist,” this paper responds to Robert Phillipson’s (2008, 2010) perceptions of the linguistic hegemony of English in present-day global politics, economics, and education. Drawing comparisons between his work and fellow sociolinguist Braj Kachru’s, this paper considers Phillipson’s views that the spread of English is simply a tool in an American, and “blindly supportive of the U.S.,” and British empire-building project (2008, p.

254) from a present-day viewpoint in geopolitics.

Focusing on Phillipson (2008), which developed ideas from Phillipson (1992) and reviewing both supporting and critical literature, this paper concludes that English continues to grow exponentially in social and political importance despite its purveyors declining power and influence. Countering Phillipson's divisiveness (Hannam, 2010), this paper believes instead these uncertain times of conflict-driven mass migration call for a *lingua concordia*.

## Reasoning for Addressing This Question

Reading Phillipson's work can be shocking. Not only the historical accounts of colonial brazenness, destroying indigenous cultures and histories through assimilation language policies (Wardhaugh, 2002), but his assertions that this policy is still active worldwide today, both politically and, consequently, in TESOL classrooms.

Phillipson (2008) considers the spread of English synchronized with destruction of culture, economic exploitation, and justification of war. However, from the perspective of an experienced TESOL teacher, the suggestion that English subordinates "users to the American empire project" (p. 265) does not resemble my various work environment experiences, what my many students have reported, or what is happening in present-day economic and military geopolitical events.

I began teaching in London, mostly to E.U. high school children. I have since worked with children and adult students in Taiwan and Japan; university students in Chile; European, Latin American and Asian adult ex-pats in Australia; and presently, refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland. The need to discover if the work I had been proud of was genuinely facilitating further global destruction and danger inspired my undertaking this assignment.

## ESSAY AIMS

Phillipson (2008) argues that English is not a modern-day *lingua franca*, but a "lingua frankensteinia" comparing English to Frankenstein's monster from Mary Shelley's famous novel, he suggests that English has been responsible for monstrous deeds in the past and, crucially, present.

This paper aims to demonstrate that, in light of 2016 and early 2017's global events and contemporary geopolitical situations, Phillipson's views on English as an ongoing tool of imperialism carry less weight. Though it would be certainly unreasonable to assume Phillipson could predict the future, this paper seeks to help facilitate future discussion on using English as a tool of future harmony and opportunity, not a historical wound dividing us in the present.

Taking a macro perspective of the English language's present-day global position, this paper first defines "lingua franca" and reviews research into English as a lingua franca (ELF), before giving an overview of the spread of English from 15th century departure from Britain to continued worldwide expansion today. The "world Englishes" (WE) field is then addressed, reviewing Kachru's (1985) "three circles" model and Bruthiaux's (2003) resulting criticism, parallels are highlighted between the ground-breaking yet contentious nature of both Kachru's and Phillipson's work.

Phillipson's work is then addressed, reviewing both supported elements of his work and the criticisms and conflicts he has created (Hannam, 2010). His claims of continued U.S. and U.K. economic, political, cultural, and military dominance are then analyzed from a present-day perspective. In post-Brexit times of Britain voting to leave the E.U. and in doing so, sacrificing any position of internal E.U.-influence (BBC, 2016a) and the U.S.'s newly elected president, Donald Trump, promising "America-first" policies (*The Guardian*, 2017) of re-negotiating and extricating the U.S. from international trade deals, closing off political, economic, and defense links and influence with other nations (Trump, 2016). The focus of both declining superpowers has seemingly turned inwards. This contradicts Phillipson's (2008) claim that spreading cultural and economic influence in the E.U. and globally, through international linguistic imperialism, is their goal.

Finally, the resulting theories and conclusions are tested with a case study of South Korea. A country with a long history of influence by the U.S. (Stueck & Yi, 2010) and vast interest and investment into English education (Kim, 2008a). South Korea is a highly appropriate test case to ascertain if Anglophone powers are seeking to spread cultural imperialism, or if their realm of influence is indeed declining.

The unprecedented nature of global events in 2016 and 2017 indicate the fractious nature of much present-day politics in the U.S., the U.K., the U.E., and beyond: Americans rejecting neoliberalism and

globalization (Churchwell, 2016); a rise in right-wing nationalist politics, and economic and security crises in the E.U. (Adler, 2016; Shuster, 2016); worsening relations between Russia and the West (Marcus, 2016); and continuing conflict and mass migration from the Middle East (BBC, 2016b). The future of global politics seems uncertain; this paper, therefore, hopes to focus on the opportunities English has in uniting, not separating, communities.

## **ELF AND WE**

Sociolinguistic rivalry exists between ELF and WE followers (Jenkins, 2006). Although Phillipson (2008) specifies “lingua franca English,” suggesting the term “seems to imply” (p. 250) neutrality, his focus in this debate is the general and “monstrous” (p. 251) spread of English. This is, therefore, this paper’s focus also. Both ELF and WE are summarized here as each is relevant to worldwide English spread and its historical and present-day presences.

### **Meaning and Purposes of a Lingua Franca**

Steeped in historical and political significance, Mackey (2003) suggests the term “lingua franca” etymologically originated from 5th century German Frank migration; Brosch (2015), however, believes few details of its beginnings are known.

Seidlhofer (2005) defines a lingua franca as a “contact language,” for communication among peoples without a common language; Brosch (2015) similarly considers it a “vehicular language,” Barotchi (2001) offers Greek and Latin as early lingua franca examples, used by disparate peoples as the Greek and Roman empires spread.

Despite these relatively neutral definitions, scholars’ personal views indicate alternative lingua franca purposes exist depending on contemporaneous societal and political situations. Though for some, historical lingua franca realities are colonial dominance and cultural destruction (Nahina 2013; Tupas, 2001). Quirk (1988) views lingua franca membership positively, allowing global communicative access. Phillipson (2008) suggests, among others, administrative and educational uses for pushing cultural agendas.

## ELF

Although a centuries-old communicative means for speakers of disparate languages, English has only been identified and studied as a lingua franca for around twenty years (Jenkins, 2012). Most ELF exchanges occur between non-native speakers (NNEs), giving it distinction as a modern “contact” language (Seidlhofer, 2005); only twenty-five percent of English users are native speakers (Crystal, 2003). Jenkins (2012) concurs that native English speakers (NESs) are a “small minority” in intercultural ELF communications, so they must adjust their communications to become effective ELF users, meaning ELF requires mastering by NESs and NNEs alike.

Seidlhofer (2005) suggests NNEs influence English development as much as NESs, indicating user equality and neutrality; she identifies NESs as “custodians” of English, however. Though Quirk (1988) supports learning standard English, Jenkins (2012) counters, while EFL teachers still predominantly seek near-native standards in students, learners can often effectively communicate versatile and resourceful ELF distinct from NES standards.

Of course, not all English is learned in TESOL classrooms. English has been taught, absorbed, assimilated, and imposed in various ways worldwide, as the next section explores. Although every learner’s English journey is unique, scholars like Kachru have undertaken important work in categorizing students, as will be demonstrated below.

## The Spread of English

The spread of English covers a considerable geographical area and centuries-long timeframe, imbued with political and emotive consequence too vast for adequate coverage here; space allows only for brief contextual summary.

Crystal (2003) considers two factors key to English spreading globally: (a) British international exploration leading, ultimately, to Anglophone colonization of large sections of the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, later continued in the U.S.-dominated Philippines (Phillipson, 2008) and (b) recent global sociocultural dependence on ELF in political, technological, and business life, resulting from the sheer geographical coverage English attained during colonial times.

The former forcibly announced English on the global linguistic stage, often spread by brutality from a colonial master to colonized subjects (Phillipson, 2008); the latter molds ongoing Anglophone growth today. The post-colonial, present-day existence of a politically and economically powerful language group consisting of both colonizers and the formerly colonized, with vast populations, resources, and geographical areas, greatly interested a third faction: governments, businesses, and peoples removed from the Anglophone colonial melee. Aware of the economic and political benefits of ELF membership, and generally linguistically and historically disparate of each other, this group formed a new frontier in ELF expansion (Bruthiaux, 2003).

Ethnologue (2015) quotes 942 million total English users; 339 million NESs and 603 million NNEs in 106 countries. The English-speaking domain is too large to be ignored and, subsequently, exponential growth continues; no longer by dominance and violence, but by political and economic influence. Whether this influence is a tool of Anglophone imperialism shall be addressed later. First, the “Englishes” utilized by the three groups mentioned above shall be explored.

## **WE and Kachru’s Model**

The term “World Englishes” (WE), defined either as umbrella terminology for all worldwide English variations or, specifically, the “new Englishes” of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean (Bolton, 2004), has been used for around five decades (Kachru, 2012). Braj Kachru’s work, internationally contextualizing the different sociolinguistic forms of English (“Englishes”) used worldwide, has been amongst the most influential and contentious in developing the field (Bolton, 2009). Before his “three circles” model (1985), non-standard forms were paid little attention and believed to be corrupted or “wrong” (Canagarajah, 1999). This model categorized English varieties spreading worldwide and their attainment methods into three distinct groups: the “inner,” “outer,” and “expanding” circles.

Britain and Ireland, together with first English-speaking diaspora nations the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, constitute the inner circle; Kachru (1985) describes these standard-English speaking countries as “norm-providing” for other circles. The complex outer circle represents nations formerly under second diaspora Anglophone colonization, including diverse examples like Zimbabwe, Pakistan, and

the Philippines. A colonial remnant carrying great historical significance and spread generally involuntarily by force or coercion, outer-circle “Englishes” are usually second languages within a multilingual context and perform numerous international, intranational, official, legal, and educational functions, varying from country to country. Thus, outer-circle Englishes contrast greatly in formality and form, often far-removed from NESs – in Kachruian terminology, “norm-developing” from standard inner-circle English (Kachru, 1985).

The expanding circle is simply all other countries not represented by inner- and outer-circle descriptions, like Denmark, South Korea, and Brazil. Often studied for personal development and work opportunities, the historical implications affecting outer-circle English do not tarnish the expanding circle. Therefore, where the language is taught and learned, by whom, for what purpose, and the independent cultures and attitudes of the people learning it can all greatly affect the “norm dependent” forms of the English acquired (Kachru, 1985).

While the inner circle comprises only six countries, with closely shared cultural history, the other two circles encompass vast varieties of cultural, ideological, and geographical contexts, dwarfing the inner circle’s geographical size and population (Kachru, 1985). Dividing all peoples into three groups is clearly a controversially broad system of categorization that has not escaped criticism, as the next section describes. However, Kachru’s model provides a sound, if overgeneralized, basis for this paper’s most pertinent arguments; indeed, many works owe this ground-breaking model gratitude (Bruthiaux, 2003).

## Criticisms of Kachru

Advocating universally standardized English, Quirk (1990) believed Kachru’s model would lead to confused acquisition and eventual unintelligibility of fractured forms; while research favors ELF and WE, more TESOL classrooms continue to reflect Quirk’s vision than Jenkins’ or Kachru’s (Jenkins, 2009).

Though complimentary of Kachru’s honorable objectives and trailblazing sociolinguistic impact, Bruthiaux (2003) dismisses Kachru’s contribution to understanding worldwide English as “minor,” lacking depth, inconsistent, and providing an overly generalized, nation state-based focus on specific historical-political events unrepresentative



of the modern climate.

ELF proponent Jenkins (2012) considers Kachru's pluralistic "world English(es)" view as prioritizing "standard" English, suggesting that ELF spreads more equality than Kachru's deifying model. Bruthiaux (2003) echoes that Kachru's inner circle reinforces the "monolithic" English forms it sought to challenge by ignoring the varying dialects existing between and within inner-circle countries. Addressing this, Jenkins (2009) maintains "old world English" of Britain and Ireland is distinct from forms developed in first diaspora migration countries like Canada. As a Glaswegian, I contend this goes further: Scottish movies are subtitled in neighboring England and re-dubbed for American audiences (Kelbie, 2002; Sarris, 2003). Likewise, I personally struggle to understand northeastern Scotland's Doric dialect, demonstrating Kachru's excessively broad classifications. In South Africa, where first diaspora English is spoken to inconsistent standards and for various purposes, none, some, or all Kachru's labels are arguably appropriate (de Kadt, 2000).

Bruthiaux's (2003) further criticisms include the hazy, unsystematic outer-circle model, encompassing hordes of different countries with deeply divergent histories, cultures, populations, ethnic balances, and societal structures. Similarly, endonormative standards of English within parts of the expanding circle make this group equally unsuitable for solitary classification. Though conceding that Kachru succeeded in removing some negative stigma from WE forms, Bruthiaux ultimately concludes Kachru's model is outdated and more focused on political history than linguistic reality – a theme revisited later in comparison to Phillipson (2008).

## PHILLIPSON'S "LINGUA FRANKENSTEINIA"

Nominally examining the neutrality of the term *lingua franca*, Phillipson (2008) focuses on the darker, self-serving sides of ELF's, and its purveyors', influential growth, including exploitation, linguistic, and warmongering. Believing that *lingua franca* "generally seems to imply" linguistic neutrality, Phillipson dismisses suggestions of ELF neutrality as "simply false"; he accepts, however, it "manifestly opens doors for many" (p. 250).

Following the contention that ELF lacks neutrality, Phillipson offers

a diverse range of more specific terminology defining, what he perceives to be, Anglophone imperialist English purposes: *lingua economica*, regarding a corporate neoliberalist agenda; *lingua emotiva*, promoting pop culture consumerism; *lingua academica*, English as the dominant higher education medium; *lingua cultura*, integrating Anglophone culture into education; *lingua bellica*, the language of war; *lingua Americana*, worldwide American influence; *lingua divina*, taught as the language of god (conversely *lingua diabolica*); *lingua frankensteinia*, compared to Frankenstein's monster, committing monstrous acts while simultaneously "marketed" as exclusively commendable; *lingua tyrannosaura*, from Swales (1996), suggesting ELF's linguicidal tendencies; *lingua cucula*, replacing local languages within the E.U. (2008).

Phillipson (2008) asserts U.S.-led aggressiveness, military might, and educational influence is causing ELF imposition, and ongoing culturicide and linguicide within the E.U. Referencing a cultural disconnect of modern-day Native Americans, U.S. policies of linguistic imperialism dating back to 1780, unscrupulous missionary practices, and the U.S.'s ELF-incorporated domination of the colonized Philippines, Phillipson warns the E.U. expanding circle to protect their future by learning from the outer circle's past. After reviewing support for Phillipson, however, the following sections seek to demonstrate, as Bruthiaux (2003) did of Kachru, that Phillipson's ideas are increasingly outdated and broad-brushed.

## Support for Phillipson

Many of Phillipson's (2008) contemplations on ELF's historical spread and the often-horrific legacy of colonialism are valid and nobly motivated; the enduring prejudice in India and cultural disconnect among Native Americans, he reports, represent a fraction of the many millions affected by centuries-old linguicide and culturicide (Sutherland, 2002). Tupas (2001) considers decolonization to be legitimization of linguistic and cultural controls used to dismantle societies; Ngũgĩwa Thiong'o (1993) notes that English has prospered by its own linguicidal nature. Rubagumya (2004) likens English purveyors to economically and militarily powerful village chiefs forcing English on powerless, subjugated villagers. Similar situations widely reported throughout Anglophone-colonized nations, like the Philippines (Phillipson, 2008), Sri Lanka (Canagajarah, 1999), and India (Chamaar, 2007), certainly indicate

patterns justifying Phillipson's stance.

From a historical-political perspective, the moral and factual accuracy of Phillipson's views seem convincing. His observations that some E.U. members, like France, dislike the prominent role of English E.U. proceedings (Robinson, 2016) are also merited; though unbalanced ELF influence hardly equates to violent linguicide. However, his insistence that "Englishization" currently perpetuates the same evils as colonial times, is strongly disputed by some, as we shall see now.

### Countering Phillipson

Phillipson does not receive universal support from outer-circle scholars. Suggesting that many post-colonial relationships are more complex than the one-way "evil" Phillipson suggests, Canagarajah (2004, p. 116), a noted critic of imperialism, contends that learning English does not necessarily mean sacrificing cultural identity, and it requires learner agency and motivation. Educationally, Bobda (1997) rejects notions of linguistic imperialism, demonstrating that English can be "appropriated" to suit local needs. Bisong (1995) asserts that many in outer-circle countries, like Nigeria, learn English for similar reasons as expanding-circle peoples: for the benefits that bilingualism brings. For Phillipson to suggest otherwise is manipulating evidence "to suit a preconceived thesis" (p. 125). Rajagopalan (1999) contends that EFL teachers' feelings of historical responsibility are misguided as views like Phillipson's have created an undeserved "guilt complex."

Phillipson's (2008) claims that ELF's spread within the E.U. and worldwide today makes learners subservient to a U.K.-backed, U.S.-led empire-building initiative have similarly rankled scholars. Echoing my teaching experience of hundreds of learners from various outer- and expanding-circle nations, Pennycook (1994) considers Phillipson's focus overly structural, detached completely from local and individual level learners. The *Legal Dictionary* (2016) defines *consent* as "an act of reason and deliberation," made when mentally capable people make "intelligent" agreements based on another's recommendations, without threat or deception. All my individual students, without fail, learned *consentingly* (except perhaps, some lethargic teenagers of well-meaning parents). This suggests, as Bruthiaux (2003) observes of Kachru, that Phillipson's backward-looking opinions and broad-brush claims of modern-day English learners seem to emerge from an academic ivory

tower far from “the coalface” of TESOL instruction.

Assuming choice is a factor for learners, especially within the E.U., where no history of Anglophone outer-circle colonization exists, it is a very popular one. English proficiency statistics (EF, 2016) show that, of the top ten English-proficient nations, eight are E.U. countries, Norway (4th) and Singapore (6th) being the exceptions, indicating that, far from fearing the ELF linguicidal monster, many within the E.U. see ELF as a beneficial, voluntary educational opportunity. To suggest that educated individuals and stable governments in these nations are mere drones to invisible imperialists, incapable of making their own linguistic decisions, is *academic imperialism*. Positioned 12th, outer-circle Malaysia excels in English due to an export-dependent economy, not due to kowtowing to former colonial overlords (Economist, 2011) – a clear example of educational and economic *choice*.

While Davies (1996) derides Phillipson’s ELF conspiracy theories, Widdowson (1998), referencing the lingua frankensteinia analogy, questions the far-fetched suggestion that language can exert cultural control completely independently from its purveyors.

## PERSPECTIVES OF PHILLIPSON

This section contextualizes Phillipson’s claims in two ways: from my personal experience as an EFL teacher and English user, and from a modern geopolitical perspective.

### Personal Perspectives

In my first EFL teaching position, I taught mainly E.U. teenagers at a London summer school. Far from seeming under attack by linguistic monsters, they appeared (mostly) keen to participate and enthusiastically communicated in English with children from other countries. I observed the beginnings of solid friendships, interests in international travel, holiday romances, and even verbal disagreements that would have been impossible without the commonality of English. Teenage cynicism aside, I felt part of important, formative experiences in several young lives; it was not like children were being linguistically extracted from their individuality and culture. I heard plenty of free-thinking criticism of

British culture, food, and personality.

This experience of freedom of cultural and linguistic participatory choice was not an E.U.-only phenomenon; Shane Schools (Shane English Schools, 2016), my Taiwanese employers, market themselves as British English-only, meaning that any cultural influence exerted was knowingly and readily accepted. Every teacher's experiences are different; however, Phillipson's problematic, broad-brush academic perspective is largely disconnected from individual students, as Pennycook (1994) attests.

Phillipson (2008) mentions Gaelic's "extermination" by the spread of English; in Scotland, possibly *the* original English colony, despite historical animosity with England, I have *never* met anyone who regrets speaking English over Gaelic, as Dorian (1981) would support. Despite ongoing Scottish government initiatives to grant Gaelic equal national language standing with English and promoting Gaelic use, national records indicate Gaelic remains of little relevance to the general populace, spoken by only two percent of Scots (Campsie, 2015). I am not defending linguistic (which Scotland has certainly suffered), but languages, like English in the E.U., cannot be simply spread by willpower; without perceived learning benefits and student willingness, learners will not participate. For Phillipson to speak for all historically colonized peoples in the same broad-brush manner seems arrogant; Scotland learned English by *force*, it maintains English by *choice* (Dorian, 1981).

## Geopolitical Perspectives

Building on both support and criticism for Phillipson, this section brings commentary on his work (2008) geopolitically up to date. The U.K.'s "Brexit" vote to leave the E.U. (BBC, 2016a); Donald Trump's presidential election based on U.S.-first, internally focused policies of renegotiating and overturning international trade agreements (Trump, 2016; *The Guardian*, 2017); and Trump's assertions that Russia has become stronger militarily and in leadership than the U.S. (Lawler, 2016) leaves Phillipson's claims of English as a tool of international political, economic, and cultural conspiratorial-colonization by these two nations appear outdated; as EFL's continued growth (British Council, 2013) in spite of its two major purveyors' apparent international retreat indicates.

The U.S.'s influence globally, and the U.K.'s historically, remain indisputable. However, as the U.S.'s declining international leadership

role is deprioritized to concentrate on domestic growth, and the U.K. surrenders its influential E.U. role, Phillipson's accusations of continuing surreptitious cultural colonization, in lands they are gradually politically and economically distancing themselves from, now seem tenuous; these are not Hollywood supervillains but world leaders with pressing priorities. In fact, the U.S.'s main economic rival, China, seems increasingly to be globalization's most fervent promoter, taking advantage of the U.S.'s more inward-looking policies to further its own influence globally (Ahmed, 2017). Logically, therefore, the governments, educational bodies, and individuals of English-learning nations have made autonomous, educated, *consenting* decisions that they will benefit from acquiring these skills; as Erling's (2007, p.119) study concludes, German (E.U.) students "seem to enjoy" access to English media and "profit" from material unavailable in German.

As Phillipson (2008) rightly reports, these findings are not unanimous. For some outer-circle scholars, ELF's colonial past still haunts users; it certainly may well *have been* a lingua frankensteinia, a tool of imperialist imperialism. However, Bisong (1995) notes many outer-circle users learn English voluntarily, and for many, it provides economic freedom, not dependency (Economist, 2011). Believing ELF continues to be a lingua frankensteinia, means deluding ourselves that Frankenstein's peasants (English learners in Phillipson's analogy) invited, participated, and even paid handsomely for the monster (ELF) to terrorize them. Despite a U.S. and U.K. international political retreat and diminished influence and power, ELF spreads nonetheless, not as a tool of imperialism, but as an independent means of international communicative unity. In the E.U., proficiency statistics (EF, 2016) show English not as a linguicidal or culturicidal threat, but as an educational opportunity consumed in huge numbers by the same users Phillipson (2008) believes it is conquering. However, as the U.K., the E.U.'s major English-speaking nation, has chosen to leave the E.U. and surrender its influence, fully publicly supported from the U.S.'s then president-elect (MacAskill, 2016). This claim now seems improbable.

Under scrutiny, Phillipson's claims reflect neither my personal experience nor the apparent contemporary geopolitical situation. My views of *Lingua Franca or Lingua Frankensteinia* (2008) mirror Bruthiaux's (2003) reflections of Kachru – both seminal works which, when analyzed, are commendably accurate political-historically and ground-breakingly raise awareness; however, present-day perspectives

uncover tired, vague, and questionable ideas relying on highly debatable broad-brush claims. Given the contentious nature of these works, perhaps it is time to seek a brighter sociolinguistic future.

## LINGUA FRANCA/FRANKENSTEINIA CONCLUSIONS

This paper has sought to demonstrate that, in adopting a present-day geopolitical approach and an active EFL teacher's perspective, many of Phillipson's (2008) claims seem no longer viable, as the following case study demonstrates in the South Korean context. Phillipson's controversial work, likening EFL's spread to a monstrous tool wielded by Anglophone imperialists, has divided sociolinguistics communities and caused guilt among EFL practitioners (Rajagopalan, 1999).

If these theories are indeed losing relevance, it could now be time for sociolinguists and TESOL practitioners to focus on the opportunities and potential good English can realize, freed from the guilt of the past. I have seen first-hand the possibilities for English in bringing disparate peoples together; in these times of mass migration, war, and political unrest (BBC, 2016c), communication could be a great force for understanding and compassion. I am presently researching the needs and problems faced by refugee and asylum-seeker students arriving and surviving in Glasgow, some from formerly colonized outer-circle countries, all in need of language skills to move their lives positively forward. I hope, in my own limited way, to make English programs better for people in such situations and access to English a pathway to inclusivity – a *lingua concordia* that can help leave many forms of frankensteinia far behind.

## SOUTH KOREA: A CASE STUDY REVIEW OF LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE ON CULTURAL COLONIZATION

This section provides a case study of the linguistic and cultural relationship between the U.S., the “cultural colonizer” in Phillipson's view, and South Korea, as part of the global community, the potentially “colonized.”

## Reasoning for Studying South Korea

Though Bruthiaux (2003) warns against a historical-political nation state-based focus, this is largely the path that Phillipson's (2008) claims follow, highlighting linguistic threats posed to learners in Denmark, Slovenia, and India among others. Therefore, exploring the situation, historically and in contemporary geopolitical terms, of an "expanding-circle" country whose cultural and linguistic futures are "at risk" from Phillipson's supposed modern-day Anglophone empire-building process seems appropriate to test Phillipson's theories and the conclusions drawn earlier in this paper.

As observed earlier, Phillipson identifies U.S. military force, historical missionary practices, and governmental linguistic imperialism policies as major causes of ELF imposition, and ongoing linguicide and culturicide as the result. With a history intertwined with U.S. influence and dependence pre-dating the creation of the modern South Korean state (Stueck & Yi, 2010), thus exposed to various U.S. linguistic, cultural, economic, and military pressures, South Korea fits these parameters even more adequately than some of Phillipson's own E.U. suggestions, having been robustly exposed to direct American influence, as demonstrated below.

### Case Study Aims

Firstly, the history of English language education in Korea, to gauge the extent of external pressure exerted, from introduction in the Joseon Dynasty until the present day, shall be explored, followed by an overview of the general impact of American influence on education, life, and culture in Korea. A modern geopolitical view of the effects of the Trump presidency on Korea is then offered, before the opinions expressed earlier in this paper and by Phillipson are assessed, and concluding that Phillipson's views, though historical-politically accurate, are indeed outdated in relation to modern geopolitics and broad-brushed in overlooking educated individual choice in the South Korean context.

### History of English Language Education in Korea

This section studies four key periods in the development of English



language education in South Korea: the Joseon Dynasty; under Japanese imperial rule; in a developing post-war alliance with the U.S., contextualized with historical-political circumstances; and returning to Korean self-determination.

### **Joseon Dynasty**

Opening a language school for interpreters, the Joseon government introduced English education to Korea in 1883 (Kim, 2008a) to meet the growing communicative need for international trade and diplomacy (Lee, 1978) as Korea began to develop relations with countries like England and the U.S. (Chang, 2009). By 1893, English education was available to “every citizen” in Korea at the public foreign language school.

Although NES teachers were used, allowing for a degree of foreign Anglophone influence, the decision to learn about foreign languages and cultures seems to have been made exclusively at the Korean governmental level (Kim, 2008a; Chang, 2009) to expedite modernization of the nation. However, as Phillipson (2008) warned, during this same Joseon dynastic period, unscrupulous missionary schools were also teaching English in Korea. Their agenda was quite different: With untrained missionaries acting as teachers, classes conducted primarily in Korean, and the Bible as the main teaching resource, these classes were more concerned with proliferating Christian beliefs and lifestyles than language education (Chang, 2009).

### **Under Japanese Rule**

In 1905, while a Japanese protectorate, the advancement of English education in Korea stalled (Kim-Rivera, 2002). Koreans were forced to adopt the Japanese language during the resulting 1910 to 1945 occupation, with English education being considered “degenerative” and mostly taught by Japanese educators using non-communicative methods (Chang, 2009). By 1938, the Japanese imperial government banned the import of western books, usage of English language signs in schools, and study or travel in English-speaking nations (Kim, 2008b), with only Japanese-published textbooks, written in Japanese and dealing solely with grammar and structure used (Kwon, 1995). In 1939, English was declared an enemy language, with Britons and Americans removed from official roles and missionaries deported (Kim, 2008b). Continuing to decline, English education effectively ended during the war years, with

all education in Korea ceasing in 1945 as Korean youth were mobilized into the Japanese war effort (Kim-Rivera, 2002).

### **American Influence in Korea**

The “shaky,” over 70-year-long, political alliance between the U.S. and South Korea has endured so many social, public opinion, economic, and military fluctuations that, in many ways, it can be viewed today as “the natural order of things” (Stueck & Yi, 2010, p. 178). U.S. influence is strong enough for Park (2009, p. 51) to believe South Korea has been in a process of “Americanization” since the 1950s, while neighboring North Korea have long accused the south of being a U.S. “puppet regime” (Harress, 2015).

After Japan’s defeat signaled the end of World War II, the U.S. occupied the southern section of the Korean peninsula until the formation of the Republic of Korea in 1948; this formation did not signal peace, however, as the U.S.S.R.-backed Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s 1950 invasion from the north led to the tumultuous Korean War (Stueck & Yi, 2010). The U.S. military fought alongside the R.O.K. until the 1953 armistice and have backed the nation militarily ever since (Glaser, 2014), with around 28,500 U.S. troops still stationed to deter North Korean aggression (*Korea Times*, 2016). Post-armistice, South Korea was one of the world’s poorest nations, relying heavily on U.S. financial support to rebuild their war-ravaged society (Park, 2009). This apparently brotherly relationship of military and financial cooperation was troubled beneath the surface, however, while Stueck and Yi (2010) describe U.S. “condescension” and “disdain” towards the Koreans, prioritizing protecting their international reputation and interests over protecting their allies, causing Korean “resentment” and “outrage.” Park (2009) views apparent U.S. benevolence as a means of “spreading U.S. modernization theory,” combatting the dispersion of communist ideology in the developing world, and leading to the “Americanization” of Korean culture and, importantly for this study, education.

In rebuilding the country, the new South Korean government had to rebuild the education system, too. Breaking from Japanese imperial times, and strongly U.S.-influenced, South Korea adopted American English as the standard educational English form, and American pedagogical philosophies were implemented in classrooms post-Korean War (Chung & Choi, 2016).

## **Return to Korean Self-Determination**

President Park Chung-hee's military dictatorship in the 1960s and 1970s established policies of modernization and economic growth through developing the population's skills, with English education largely communication-based; however, this reverted to a grammar focus as authoritarianism intensified. After Park's assassination, the subsequent post-coup d'état government's increased focus on individual autonomy and creativity allowed opportunities for skills development using non-government textbooks. When the Democratic Liberal Party took power in the 1990s, globalization was considered a national aim, with increased focus on fluency, more hours dedicated to English learning, and the procurement of NES foreign teachers characterizing the approach to the millennium (Chung & Choi, 2016). Notably, this was South Korean governmental policy, during a period of strong national economic growth, from one of the world's poorest countries in the 1960s to the world's eleventh largest economy in 1995 (Cumings, 2005), dramatically lowering South Korea's external dependence and, hence, susceptibility to external influence.

Since then, the popularity, importance, and normalization of English into curricula, colloquially titled "English fever," has reached "extraordinary status" in Korea (Kim, 2008a). By 2008, Koreans were spending over US\$15 billion per year on English education and a quarter of a million Koreans were traveling abroad to study English, with Kim attributing "crucial roles" in this progress to government educational policies. Chang (2009, p. 83) concurs, stating that governmental English education policies were "appropriate for the globalized world"; hence, less dependent on, influenced by, and subjugated to the U.S., as a thirty-five-fold increase in trade developed in just twenty years with China, Korea's current largest trading partner, evidences (Han, 2012). Park (2016) even calls for a debate on making English Korea's second official language.

Of course, this boom in popularity for English in Korea was not met with universal approval, as the next section explores.

## **Degree of U.S. Cultural Colonization in Korea**

Adopting similar language to Phillipson (2008), Park (2009) compares the physical, forceful Japanese colonization of Korea with the

dominant political, economic, and cultural influence of the U.S., while Cohen (2002) equates globalization with “Americanization” in East Asia generally. Highlighting “knowledge,” a disproportionately large number of *lingua academica* U.S.-educated PhD’s in Korean universities and government, and “life and playfulness,” Koreans imitating socialization habits from the *lingua emotiva* of imported U.S. television programming, Park (2009, pp. 51–52) sees Korean society “internalizing U.S. values” at the expense of Korean distinctiveness; an extreme example being “Westernizing” plastic surgery (Lah, 2011).

These views certainly chime with Ngũgĩwa Thiong’o (1993), Canagajarah, (1999), and Rubagumya (2004) in their opposition of cultural imperialism, whether imposed by force or influence. However, unlike Phillipson (2008), Park balances his outlook on the Korean situation, illustrating Korea as exercising *choice* and *defiance* in their relationship with their U.S. “cultural colonizers,” not merely as passively oppressed. Describing Korean adoption of “Americanization” as a “strategy for wealth and security,” Park (2009) indicates that, far from subordination, Korea has made shrewd, and economically successful, *decisions* to cooperate with the U.S. in return for opportunity. Korea’s involvement in the Vietnam War in return for U.S. financial aid, for example (Park, 2009), and military support in a genuinely dangerous geographical location (Harress, 2015). Cohen (2002) expands that such cooperation succeeds due to willing adoption of cultural influence, not value imposition. Park (2009) further demonstrates that the “anti-Americanization” movement in Korea has grown parallel to increased relative wealth and democratic freedom, from no public anti-American sentiment in the 1970s’ poorer, authoritarian times (Lee, 2004) to outspoken public criticism, protests (Huer, 2008), and conspicuous anti-American feeling in Korean cinema in recent, wealthier times. Koreans may be gradually feeling less “need” for the U.S. (Hahm, 2005; Stueck & Yi, 2010) except as a military deterrence, especially considering growing economic, political, and cultural ties with China (Han, 2012).

## The Korean Wave

Korea’s relationship with China may be more complex than a simple trade partnership; *hallyu*, or “the Korean wave,” is the ongoing increase in popularity of South Korean popular culture as it is exported

worldwide, particularly to China (Lee, 2014). Adeptly fitting Phillipson's *lingua emotiva* terminology, and echoing Park's (2009) allusion to Korean women's "Americanized," "brunch behavior," it seems Korean food, music, and television exports are "Koreanizing" overseas nations, earning the country \$5 billion in 2014 and speculatively double that this year (Economist, 2014). Though "Americanization" of Korean culture is conspicuous, it seems the "colonized" have learned the techniques of their "cultural masters" well: cooperation superseding imposition (Cohen, 2002). Far from a passing fad, the mass-exportation of Korean culture is government-funded policy, with tax breaks, start-up funding, and billions of dollars in investment (Cohen, 2002) – an international, political "soft-power" tool, using culture instead of force (Nye, 1990) to open and influence large, potentially lucrative markets, like China (Lee, 2014). An extreme example of full-circle Chinese "Koreanization" is "plastic surgery tourism": Chinese undergoing plastic surgery in Korea to resemble Korean celebrities (Kim, 2012; Park, 2015).

Though South Korea may lack U.S. military capabilities, their aggressive soft power "attack" (Hong, 2014) has influenced copycat policies in Japan (*The Economist*, 2014) and become a threat to U.S. global cultural dominance (Park, 2015) increasingly more culturally colonizing rivals than colonized subjects. U.S. universities have reported "astounding growth" in applications to learn Korean, prompted by increasing popularity of Korean culture (Brown, 2015), a trend diametrically opposed to a sizeable drop in learning more "common" foreign languages (Gordon, 2015). From my own personal perspective, I was surprised to hear that my Chilean former student was part of a dance troupe regularly performing as a K-pop tribute act in Santiago. Korean culture is far-reaching and showing increasing influence linguistically. As Shim (2006) indicates, globalization is no longer a "one-way flow" of American or Western influence, and while many Koreans may grudge wholesale importation of American culture, there is little doubt that Korean cultural exports represent globalization on Korean terms, even influencing U.S. culture (Cohen, 2002). However, while South Korea strives to create its own political, economic, and influential future, it cannot avoid being affected by ongoing geopolitical events.

## **Modern Geopolitical Perspective in Korea**

As noted above, the major geopolitical events of 2016 and early 2017 have made it increasingly unlikely that the major Anglophone nations are pursuing a global, English language-driven cultural colonization project. As this case study focuses exclusively on South Korea, we can observe the direct impact that these events have had on the nation, and whether this does indeed indicate a continued Anglophone campaign of clandestine colonization or retreat from realms of influence.

Most relevantly for South Korea, new U.S. president Donald Trump (2016) has openly talked of reassessing international agreements and alliances to put American needs first. His views on the military alliance with South Korea have been controversial, first suggesting that the U.S. would be “better off” if their troops were removed from Korea and replaced with nuclear weapons, leaving South Korea to protect themselves unless they pay more for protection (Hancocks, 2016). Trump later assured South Korea that U.S. military protection would remain but renegotiating the cost of defense remained likely (Kim & Park, 2016) – Trump seemingly prioritizing military profitability over political and military influence, suggesting this is actually burdensome.

In his inauguration speech (2017), Trump stated that America “would not seek to impose our way of life on anyone”; on having “subsidized the armies of other countries” and “defended other nation’s borders.” He concluded, “But that is the past.” Although no individual country was mentioned, given his earlier statements on South Korea and campaign promises to put America first at all costs, it seems the military alliance between the two countries is in uncertain, *negotiable* times.

Korea’s economic bond with China is unlikely to help the situation, as Trump (2016) has been notably critical of China. As China positions itself as the new champion of globalization (Ahmed, 2017), this seems more concurrent with South Korea’s globalized aspirations (Chang, 2009; Chung & Choi, 2016). Korea’s continued military relationship with the U.S. has been an obstacle to relations with China (Kim & Park, 2016), as China’s alliance with North Korea has been for South Korea (Han, 2012); yet some, perhaps optimistically, hope that South Korea’s “soft power” influence on China could result in Chinese-moderated Korean reunification (Lee, 2014), in turn, meaning less South Korean need for U.S. protection.

It seems that as South Korea, increasingly part of a complicated political triangle, has options, not strict deference to the U.S., whose

indifferent, inconsistent, and profit-driven policies certainly do not verify cultural empire-building. The drive for ELF adoption is equally beneficial in relations with China and other trading partners as with the U.S., a *lingua concordia*, creating opportunity. As Seidlhofer (2005) and Jenkins (2012) indicate, most ELF exchanges occur between NNESSs.

## REVIEW OF PHILLIPSON'S CLAIMS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this case study is ascertaining if, when focusing on South Korean linguistic and cultural circumstances, assertions made by Phillipson hold up to scrutiny and if conclusions reached in the first five sections of this paper reflect the South Korean situation.

Four main areas will be explored: choice in Korean English consumption, cultural colonization in Korea, present-day Korean geopolitical circumstances, and the comparison of cultural colonization in Korea with physical colonization.

### *Choice in English Education in Korea*

Koreans spend billions of dollars on English education, and hundreds of thousands of Koreans go abroad to study English every year. The democratically elected Korean government has made globalization and bilingualism key priorities to the future of Korean wealth; not surprising, given that the CIA (2017) ranks South Korea as the world's fifth largest exporting nation, echoing the Malaysian example above (Economist, 2011).

As Pennycook (1994) suggests, individual choice is an important factor in analyzing linguistic and cultural imperialism. South Korea is one of the most educated countries in the world (De Marco, 2011), rebuilding from an impoverished fledgling nation to the world's eleventh largest economy (IMF, 2016). Surely, this well-educated nation of people with forward-thinking governance, defying Phillipson-proposed Anglophone pressure, have their own best interests somewhere in mind when *consentingly* spending billions on English education; just as their pre-U.S.-influenced, Joseon-era ancestors had.

### **“Americanization” of Culture**

Phillipson's (2008) observations of the spread of Anglophone culture are certainly valid in Korea. As Cohen (2002) indicates, American lifestyles are viewed as fashionable by many Koreans, and U.S.-educated Koreans hold many important positions (Park, 2009).

However, these situations require contextualization. Koreans are not defenseless as U.S. culture is forced upon them: Globalization policies have led to profitable non-Anglophone nation relationships and opportunities, and the promotion and export of Korean culture globally, generating billions of dollars. This is not justification for Americanization, but evidence that globalization and international influence is not merely a one-way exchange (Canagajarah, 2004; Shim, 2006). Educationally, it is not uncommon for major leaders to be educated abroad: former U.S. president Bill Clinton studied at Oxford University, and current South Korean (impeached) president Park Geun-Hye briefly studied in France, a country noted by Phillipson (2008) for its strong anti-Englishization stance, so *lingua academica* influence is, likewise, not exclusively American.

Other forms of U.S. influence were beneficial to South Korea, with active cooperation; American economic support proved invaluable during the rebuilding period, as did military assistance from the Korean War to the present day (Cumings, 2005). Agency of trade and choice exist here that simply do not in colonization by force.

## **Present-Day Geopolitical Situation**

As expressed earlier, a disconnect exists between what Phillipson views as a linguistic-cultural imperialism program and the present global geopolitical situation. U.S. president Trump has delivered mixed messages about South Korea, and the actual level of cooperation remains unclear, which certainly do not appear to be the actions of one country intent on increasing its cultural influence on the other.

Yet despite this uncertainty, the billions continuing to be spent on "English fever" in Korea indicates that the vision of a globalized, bilingual future, developing relationships with other world powers, extends linguistically beyond cooling U.S. international influence.

## **Linguistic Imperialism Compared to Physical Colonization**



Phillipson (2008) emotively uses accounts of violently colonized peoples, like Native Americans and Kenyans, to warn the non-colonized of the threat ELF poses, drawing comparisons with, what he perceives as, modern-day linguistically driven “cultural colonialism.” South Korea, as a huge consumer of English education and in the realm of U.S. influence since the end of World War II, is a unique test case as, for 35 years prior to the end of the war, Korea had been the victims of colonization by Japan, meaning that eras of physical colonization and “cultural colonization” can be compared.

Although English is a booming industry today in Korea, this has only relatively recently become the case; perhaps surprising, given the 1945-48 U.S. occupation and the U.S. honing linguistic imperialism policies since 1780 (Phillipson, 2008). The 1993 *Segyehwa* policy (independently initiated by the South Korean government) ushered in an era focused on globalized markets, desiring a bilingual workforce. Prior to this, bilingual staff to fill important diplomatic positions or execute international business were in short supply (*The Diplomat*, 2014). Despite three years of occupation and a further forty-five years of direct military and economic influence in this society, the supposed U.S. international linguistic imperialism campaign Phillipson (2008) warns of had practically no success, yet a Korean government-actioned policy was the catalyst in creating a multi-billion-dollar educational industry and 50 percent of Koreans under 40 understanding basic English (*The Diplomat*, 2014), not to mention increasing trade and ties with U.S. rival China, while anti-U.S. sentiment swelled in Korea (Huer, 2008; Park; 2009). If the U.S. had intended to use ELF globally as part of an empire-building project, it has failed at almost every level in Korea.

Compare this situation with the period of physical Japanese colonization: By 1937, Korean culture and identity were being systematically destroyed and assimilated into Japanese culture, including religion, military, and language. Education was exclusively in Japanese and the use of Korean inside or outside of class was forbidden – the goal, a Korean society who spoke only in Japanese, as their own language was gradually eradicated (Kim, 2008c). Culturicide and linguicide were certainly practiced in Korea and a *lingua frankensteinia* existed: Japanese. This is the startling difference between Phillipson’s “culture imperialism” and tangible, violent colonization: the voluntary choice to spend your own salary on a form of education championed by your own democratically elected government, or the gradual annihilation

of a culture thousands of years old through threat, repression, and violence. There really is no comparison.

## CASE STUDY CONCLUSION

Reflecting on conclusions made earlier in this paper about Phillipson's work, I believe they hold true in this case study. Demonstrating Phillipson's accurate historical-political observations, South Korea indeed suffered terribly at the hands of imperialism, and after decades of Japanese colonization and years of U.S. occupation, the nation was broken socially, economically, and culturally. U.S. influence on the weakened South Korea's educational system, including English, was undeniable immediately following the Korean War; however, since the 1960s, Korean education, including the incredible "English fever" boom period, has been entirely locally decided, making Phillipson's historically correct views seem outdated.

Phillipson's beliefs on the Americanization of global culture seem accurate in the Korean context, as Cohen (2002) and Park (2009) attest. However, his stance that this is due to an Anglophone linguistic imperialism campaign seem antiquated for modern-day South Korea with a self-determined, globally motivated, export-driven future and forthcoming ties with Trump-led America far less certain than in previous years. At an individual level, a highly educated populace is making informed choices to study, pay handsomely, and travel for English education. Phillipson's proposed linguicidal tendencies of ELF are not visible in Korea, where Korean today is the first and only official language, and Korean culture, far from endangered by culturicide, is influencing the world and generating billions for the country.

The only real threat posed to Korean language and culture was during the Japanese colonial times, and this is the most striking weakness I can see in Phillipson's arguments. As noted earlier, Phillipson's claims are broad-brush in nature, and the major problem caused by such generalizations is that in a situation like South Korea's, equating the horrors of Japanese imperialism, or those suffered in Kenya or India by British imperialism, for example, with Anglophone linguistic and cultural influence seems, at best, needlessly insensitive.

## THE AUTHOR

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## Strategies That Promote English as an Intercultural Language (EiCL) in the Korean University EFL Classroom

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In recent years, discussions among linguists and language educators related to World Englishes (WE) and English as an international language (EIL) have begun to focus more on what Lee (2012) and Sifakis (2004) call “English as an intercultural language” (EiCL). In this case, English usage and education is viewed as a universal, dynamic, and multidimensional means of communicating local cultural values and meanings, and is less dependent on standardized forms of the language as used in Kachru’s (1992) inner circle. EiCL promotes intercultural communication that is constructive, functional, inductive, critical, and comparative in nature. While several studies regarding theoretical aspects of EiCL have been conducted, less has been written about the practical application of teaching and learning strategies that can promote EiCL in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to discuss a number of activities that can enhance learners’ awareness of and ability to use EiCL.

### INTRODUCTION

Although Kachru’s (1992, 1998) “concentric circles of English,” which was introduced over thirty years ago, has been called oversimplified and no longer representative of all the varieties of English that currently exist worldwide (Canagarajah, 2006; Martin, 2014), it is hard to deny the impact that this model has had in generating awareness and discussion about World Englishes and the global use of the language in the postmodern world. In Kachru’s model, the English-speaking countries of the world are classified into three spheres: the *inner circle*, where English is used as a native language (e.g., the U.K., Australia, the U.S.); the *outer circle*, where English has become institutionalized, often

due to extended periods of colonialization (e.g., India, the Philippines); and the *expanding circle*, where English is used as a foreign language (e.g., China, Russia, Saudi Arabia). While Canagarajah (2006) contends that “Kachru’s circles have now started leaking outside their borders” (p. 199), Kachru and Nelson (2006) remind us of the importance of this conceptualization when they write that “it is an interpretation that rests not only on a valid historical view of the spread of English but also on sociolinguistically viable interpretations of the status and function of English in its many contexts” (p. 27).

Kachru’s model, as well as more recent interpretations that examine the diversity of English varieties as they are presently used throughout the globe, has particular relevance in light of the fact that there are now almost twice as many non-native speakers (NNSs) of the language than native speakers (NSs) of English – 603 million and 339 million, respectively (Ethnologue, 2015). This has meant an explosion in the assortment and multifariousness of Englishes as they are learned and used in different regions of the world and has led to rapid growth in the study of World Englishes, English as an international language, and English as a lingua franca. In particular, much interest has been generated about the language as it is used by NNSs in the outer and expanding circles as opposed to focusing solely or primarily on native forms of inner-circle English.

This growing interest has become more apparent in the Republic of Korea, a so-called expanding-circle country. According to many researchers, there has been a long-standing focus on inner-circle English, particularly from the U.S. and U.K., in Korea (Green, 2015; Jung, 2010; Kim, 2007; Nicholson, 2015; Rousseau, 2012). However, recent studies (Green & Lee, 2015, 2016; Shim, 2002) have indicated that there are changing attitudes among learners and educators related to the focus of English education and usage, a growing awareness of the concept of World Englishes, an interest on the part of Koreans to have exposure to and learn World Englishes in the EFL classroom (Green, 2015; Green & Lee, 2015; Tanghe, 2014), and even a desire to learn what has been called “English as an Intercultural Language” (EiCL; Green & Lee, 2016; Lee, 2012, 2013).

In Korea, Kang Young Lee (2009, 2012, 2013) in particular has helped bring the notion of EiCL to the forefront. Lee defines EiCL as having four main components: (a) English is considered to be “universal in that it has become a heterogeneous language with multiple norms and

grammars” (Lee, 2013, p. 292); (b) it is user-dependent and comprehensible-oriented (i.e., it rejects the notion that competency as determined by native speakers of the language is the primary goal); (c) it is empathetic: it promotes an active understanding of and empathy for other cultures; and (d) “it aims to create interculturally multidialectical users with intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitude in interaction” (Green & Lee, 2015, p. 30). It is Lee’s contention that the promotion of these principles should be one of the primary concerns of EFL instructors in Korea and other countries (Lee, 2012).

With this in mind, the purpose of this study is to investigate and introduce a number of activities and strategies that can be used by instructors in the Korean university EFL classroom to promote awareness of and competence in the use of EICL. While there has already been some discussion about the integration of World Englishes and EICL into the EFL classroom in Korea, less has been written about practical means of accomplishing this task. In particular, the author will describe several concepts that underlie EICL pedagogy as well as classroom activities aimed at enhancing students’ awareness of issues related to both World Englishes and EICL, understanding of the intrinsic relationship between culture and language, ability to speak about their own cultural values as well as investigate and discover several *small-c* and *big-C* (Choudbury, 2013) aspects of other cultures, and develop the ability to show empathy towards those cultures.

In order to achieve the purposes of this study, the author will first examine previous research that has been conducted along these lines and then introduce a number of EICL-related activities that the author himself has used with EFL students in Korea. It is hoped that the study will add to the growing body of literature about EICL pedagogy as well as provide inspiration and motivation for instructors to incorporate EICL learning into their own teaching and learning environments.

## WHAT IS “ENGLISH AS AN INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE”?

In introducing various concepts of language for the purposes of language teaching, Liddicoat & Scarino (2013) discuss the concept of language as social practice (p. 13). In this case, “communication is not

simply a transmission of information, it is a creative, cultural act in its own right through which social groups constitute themselves” (p. 13). As opposed to language seen as a structural, prescriptive system that focuses on the dissemination of a standardized form of the language and is often used as a gate-keeping device, or language as a communication system, in which communication is seen as “the straightforward transfer of thoughts from one mind to another” (p. 13), language as social practice sees “language as a vehicle for the expression of the self” (p. 14). In other words, language is not simply a tool for describing the world; it is an integral part of acting and being in the world and “a system of personal engagement with a new world, where learners necessarily engage with diversity on a personal level” (p. 15).

This view of language constitutes one of the key elements and perspectives of EICL. Similar to the reconceptualist notion of Giroux’s (2005) border pedagogy, which recognizes the important role that culture plays in teaching and learning, stresses a demystification (Freire, 2003) of the forces that promote hegemony and subjugation in the educational process, strives to empower individuals and enrich lives, and facilitates dialogue (Freire, 2003), EICL enables its users to integrate their own cultural values into the intercultural communicative process and create meaning without a reliance on competency as defined by NSs of the language. Other important aspects of EICL are that it helps develop the natural ability of users to overcome obstacles of speech variability through an inductive, heuristic process, rather than through the implicit teaching of those differences, and encourages individuals to suspend judgements of other cultures (Lee, 2012; Sifakis, 2004).

How does EICL differ from English as an international language (EIL)? Sifakis (2004) distinguishes between these two by writing that the latter focuses on *N-bound* comprehensibility while the former on *C-bound* communication. The N-bound perspective, he explains, is concerned with “regularity, codification, and standardness” as defined by NSs of the language (p. 239). In this case, he states that “all aspects of the NNSs’ own L1 are, in principle, looked down upon as obstacles that can hinder communication” (p. 239). In Sifakis’ eyes, EIL implies or emphasizes this perspective. EICL, on the other hand, adopts the C-bound approach, which “prioritizes the process of cross-cultural comprehensibility between learners as a communicative goal in itself rather than on notions of accuracy and standards” (p. 239). Although there are a number of different interpretations and disagreements about

the meanings and implications of the term “EIL” (Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2004; Nicholson, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011) and other terms such as “English as a Lingua Franca” and “English as a Global Language” that are often used in its stead, Sifakis’ definition provides a clear framework that highlights the importance of teaching, learning, and using English in a manner that refutes the notion of “us versus them” and constitutes the space for individuals to “glocalize” the cross-cultural communicative process, to cross borders (Giroux, 2005), and to interact in an environment of mutual respect.

## EIcL AND KOREA

In the 2008 Revised Korean National Curriculum, the need for English language education to focus on English as an international language (EIL) and to foster intercultural speakers of English in the nation’s school system was officially recognized by the government of the Republic of Korea. This pronouncement was widely seen as an attempt to promote the country’s economic standing in the global market and facilitate the internationalization of Korea (Nicholson, 2015; Park Jin-Kyu, 2009; Park & Kim, 2014).

The implementation of this lofty goal, however, has proven to be anything but smooth. According to Park and Kim (2014), several issues that have emerged are (a) a reliance on native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), which has often marginalized qualified non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) and brought with it an implied “hidden agenda that the untold and unheard culture of other English-speaking groups are not important, second-class, and not worthy of recognition or appreciation” (p. 53); (b) a negative impact on the perception of Korean English teachers about their abilities and understanding of the English language; and (c) a one-sided focus on language and culture of Anglo-Americans as represented in commonly used textbooks. Park Joo-Kyung (1999) and Lee (2009) in particular have drawn attention to this latter issue. In a survey of eleven high school English conversation textbooks used in Korea, Lee (2009) found that “there was a strong sense of a hierarchical representation of the Anglophone world in which the US culture served as the supreme source” (p. 76) as well as a lack of recognition of the small-c aspects

of culture, that is, “the invisible, deeper sense of a target culture” (p. 78).

Other educators, such as Park KS (2009), contend the 2008 national curriculum changes have also led to an over-concentration on the use of communicative language teaching (CLT) methods, which Park contends is not necessarily appropriate in the Korean cultural context. The NESTs have brought and disseminated their teaching techniques, CLT being one of the most popular, and in Park’s words, “CLT in its original form is a solution that was designed to fit into the post-industrial system of the Western countries, whereas ours (Korea’s) is still a system for the mass-production of intellectuals and technicians” (Park KS, 2009, p. vi). Some English language educators have reported difficulties with implementing the CLT approach in the Korean EFL classroom and others have questioned its effectiveness in fostering truly intercultural speakers of English (Jeon & Hahn, 2005; Lee, 2012, 2013; Park Joo-Kyung, 1999).

A number of studies have pointed to the fact that the primary focus of English language education in Korea, since its official inception in 1997, has traditionally been on inner-circle English, particularly as it is used in the U.S. and U.K., and that the majority of Korean English users have become more familiar with these forms of the language than with varieties as used in the outer and expanding circles (Green, 2015; Jung, 2010; Kim YS, 2007; Rousseau, 2010). An issue related to this is raised by Shim (1999), who maintains that although Korean students are expected to demonstrate proficiency on exams such as TOEIC that feature inner-circle English, the English that students are actually exposed to in English language classrooms is often a codified form of Korean English. “The major consequence of learning codified Korean English is that Korean students go through the education system learning one variety of English, but are tested on another variety of English when they become members of the working society,” she writes (Shim, 1999, p. 255).

Additionally, Jambor (2013), Nicholson (2015), Song (2011), and others have maintained that English education in Korea plays a functional role in maintaining the status quo and keeping the scales tipped in favor of the powerful, privileged elite. Since English proficiency as quantified on standardized high-stakes exams, which are mostly designed in the West, is a requirement for entrance into prestigious universities and well-paying jobs, and those from higher-income families can afford to spend up to 12,000 USD annually on

English education for their children (Oh, 2014), English education, as heavily influenced by the inner circle, supports what Song (2011) calls the “continuation of the reward system that gives a great advantage to those with ‘good education’ over those without” (p. 47).

There are signs, however, that awareness of and interest in WEs and concepts associated with EICL are increasing in the nation. Shim (2002) has reported a growing openness on the part of Korean English language professionals to the introduction of WEs into the EFL classroom, and educators such as Kim HK (2015) have been proponents of incorporating WEs into language teacher education. Others such as Park Joo-Kyung (1996, 1997, 1999) and Park and Kim (2014) have written extensively about the integration of culture into the Korean EFL classroom, and calls for the use of critical pedagogy in this arena as well as in teacher education have also been made (Green, Ahn, & Bae, 2015b; Shin, 2004; Shin & Crookes, 2005). More specifically, recent studies have indicated positive perceptions on the part of Korean university students regarding the incorporation of WEs and EICL into their EFL classroom learning (Green & Lee, 2015, 2016; Tanghe, 2015) as well as involvement in study abroad experiences that expose them to outer-circle English (Green, Ahn, & Bae, 2015a; Nam & Park, 2013).

## **STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING EICL**

### **What Constitutes EICL Pedagogy?**

Having a grasp of the general principles and goals of EICL, of course, is only the beginning, particularly for EFL instructors who are interested in facilitating EICL learning experiences for their students. Before looking at specific EICL classroom activities that might be used in an EFL context, however, an examination of a few pedagogical approaches that have been associated with EICL is in order. To begin with, it has been pointed out that EICL strategies should not be equated or confused with CLT. Lee (2013) maintains that “unlike the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in which language is seen as a primary means of exchanging information...the EICL curriculum focuses less on tasks/exercises for information exchanges and more on those to explore how we construct a sense of cultural identity”



(p. 297). McKay (2004) also contends that CLT, which has been commonly seen as a desirable methodology for English-language teaching in Western cultures, may not be appropriate in some countries. “Language should be taught in a manner consistent with local cultural expectations,” she writes (McKay, 2004, p. 19). Although it is possible that several aspects of the CLT approach might be incorporated into EicL teaching and learning, the mere exchange of information through a communicative process is not its final goal.

What then constitutes EicL pedagogy? Three pedagogical concepts that have been associated with EicL are that (a) it is constructivist in nature, (b) it facilitates a critical approach to teaching and learning, and (c) it seeks to promote intercultural awareness and competence (Byram, 1988). It should be pointed out that these three concepts are not mutually exclusive; they are intrinsically related and can be interwoven when put into practice.

A centerpiece of the constructivist approach is the premise that learning is a creative, cultural act in which individuals construct meaning. As opposed to what Freire (2003) labels the *banking model of education*, in which educators merely deposit or transmit knowledge and values to learners, constructivism allows the space for students to individualize the learning process, make their own interpretations, build on previous knowledge, and connect what they have learned through interactions with others. As applied to language learning, Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) write, “learners are from the beginning of their learning users of language...through which they present themselves and construct and explore their worlds” (p. 14). Mack (2010) is one educator who has explicitly attempted to integrate the constructivist approach into the teaching of Global English in an EFL setting.

Secondly, there is clearly a critical aspect to the teaching and learning of EicL, in which learners are not only asked to be active and equal participants in the educational process but also encouraged to unveil the “hidden curriculum,” and take active steps towards self-empowerment and the creation of democratic and just societies. The application of critical pedagogy to the field of ESL/EFL is certainly not new; a significant number of studies have been conducted regarding this subject over the past few decades, so there are a fair amount of resources available. One example of an approach that has been written about in this regard is Freirian pedagogy; a brief look at this methodology can provide an illustration of what critical pedagogy in a

language learning context can look like. Wallerstein (1983) in particular has provided a detailed rationale and practical suggestions (including lesson plans) for the adaptation of Freire (2003) in an ESL setting, Shin (2004) has called for a Freirian approach in EIL teacher training in Korea, and Green, Ahn, and Bae (2015b) have examined the perceptions of Korean university students to an EFL classroom activity designed using Freire's problem-posing approach.

As Souto-Manning (2010, p. 32) reports, there are five steps to Freire's *problem-posing education*: (a) generative themes, (b) problem-posing, (c) dialogue, (d) problem-solving, and (e) action. According to Freire (2003), the process begins with the identification of issues, perceived problems or contradictions (which Freire calls *generative themes*) that emerge from learners' everyday lives and concerns. Of vital importance is the fact that these themes come from the learners' lived experiences, not from the instructor; this coincides with Sifakis' (2003) belief that EIL-inspired education should determine learners' attitudes, that the syllabus should be created with the active help of students, and that learners should be prompted to write and speak about themselves and their cultural backgrounds (p. 245). In Green, Ahn, and Bae's (2015a) study, the generative theme that was identified was students' concerns about the need for and pressure to learn English in Korea; other studies have used the issue of WEs itself as an issue of relevance (Green, 2015; Tanghe, 2014). In fact, Mack (2010) writes, "One way to synthesize critical pedagogy and language education is by using the very issues related to English as a world language as the content through which English language students learn to acquire critical reading, debating, and writing skills" (p. 202).

Following the identification of the generative theme, the instructor designs a *codification*, a learning activity that is meant to promote thought-provoking dialogue and critical thinking about the theme. Wallerstein (1983) and Souto-Manning (2010) suggest that this codification, which might take the form of pictures, words, dialogues, stories, or other representations, should be easily identifiable to students, presented as an open-ended problem with no solution provided, and not be overwhelming. In Green, Ahn, and Bae's (2015b) study, clips from a Korean movie were used. After the codification is introduced comes an inductive and dialectic process that facilitates dialogue and leads learners from the concrete to the analytical level. Wallerstein (1983) suggests the following five-step questioning strategy: Students (a)

describe what they see, (b) define the problem(s), (c) share similar experiences, (d) question why there's a problem, and (e) strategize what they can do about the problem(s) (p. 38). The end goal of this process is action related to the possible solutions that have been proposed.

A final element of the EICL approach is, of course, the integration of the concept of culture into the learning process and the development of skills to create intercultural users of the language. This begins with a definition of what the "cultural" in *intercultural* means to all those involved in the educational process. Essential to EICL are the premises that culture is a dynamic, contextual, and multi-dimensional process, not a fixed set of rules, values, and behaviors, and that language and culture are inherently intertwined and inseparable (Choudhury, 2013; Lee, 2009; Paige, Jorstad, Paulson & Klein, 1999). In fact, states Choudhury (2013), "Language teaching *is* cultural teaching" (p. 21).

Paige, Jorstad, Paulson, and Colby (1999), Lee (2009), and Choudhury (2013) also stress the importance of recognizing both the big-C domain and the small-c domain in cultural language learning. In Lee's (2009) words, "The big 'C' domain represents a set of facts and statistics...easily seen and readily apparent to anyone," whereas the "small 'c' domain" contains deeper aspects of culture that are hidden and more difficult to see or comprehend (i.e., the submerged part of the iceberg, as it were) (p. 78). A key component of EICL is that culturally enlightened language learning must examine both of these domains, that learners must be encouraged to explore, discover, and take into account the obscure, less visible aspects of culture.

Another significant component of EICL is the development of what Byram (1988) calls "intercultural competence." Vital to this concept is the notion of *saviors*, which Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) define as "knowledge of self and others, of their products and practices, and the general processes of interaction" (p. 49). Lee (2013) explains that there are four mainstreams of saviors (knowledge, behavioral, attitudinal, and critical awareness), all of which are essential to the development of intercultural competence.

Other authors, such as Paige, Jorstad, Paulson, and Colby (1999) have written about the importance of integrating the following elements into the cultural learning process in order to develop intercultural competence:

1. Learning about the self as a cultural being;

2. Learning about culture and its impact on human language, behavior, and identify (including culture-general learning, which focuses on universal intercultural phenomena, including cultural adjustment and culture-specific learning, with a focus on a particular language and culture;
3. Learning how to learn about language and culture. (Lee, 2012, p. 197)

Important skills to develop in this regard, states Choudhury (2013), are “the ability to ask questions, to listen and seek clarification, to negotiate and identify common ground, and to avoid prejudging or stereotyping” (p. 23). Lee (2012) also writes that common features of theories related to intercultural competence are that they contain elements of “cultural exploration, cultural comparison, cultural acquisition, and negotiation of one’s own third place between cultures” (p. 198). In introducing activities that teachers can use to accomplish these tasks in the language classroom, Fantini (1997) divides these activities into the following areas: language-culture exploration, sociolinguistic exploration, culture exploration, and intercultural exploration.

### **Previous Studies on EIcL Teaching and Learning Strategies in Asia**

With the above elements of EIcL pedagogy in mind, it is then up to the language/culture instructor to design and implement specific teaching and learning activities that can be used in the classroom. Several studies have been conducted with this goal in mind for EFL instructors at universities in other Asian countries besides Korea (Dai, 2011; Fang, 2011; Honna, 2005; Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Mack, 2010; Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2004; Sung, 2015), while others specifically apply principles of EIcL to the Korean university EFL context (Green, 2015; Green, Ahn, & Bae, 2015a; Lee, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013; Park Joo-Kyung, 1997, 1999; Park & Kim, 2014; Rousseau, 2012; Shim, 1999; Tanghe, 2014; Yook, 2011). Although most of these works state that they focus on the teaching of WEs, EIL, or English as a Global Language, many of the activities described contain elements that directly relate to EIcL pedagogy and might be applied to the practical application of EIcL in the EFL classroom (see Table 1 and Table 2).

**TABLE 1. Summary of Suggested EICL Classroom Strategies for Asian EFL Settings**

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Use authentic teaching materials (of target, local, and international cultures) including multimedia, literature, music, movies, online sources, plays, interviews, photographs, newspapers, magazines, etc. (Dai, Kachru, & Nelson; Mack; Matsuda; McKay)
Use pair, group, and class discussions, and debates related to critical issues of culture. (Dai, Fang, Mack)
Use “interesting” discussion questions that allow students to “construct meaning.” (Mack)
Use activity logs (reflective journals) and writing workshops. (Dai, Mack)
Use activities that develop learners’ prediction skills (so that they can build on previous learning). (Dai)
Use research-based learning/surveys (so that students can investigate and report on areas of personal interest). (Dai, Mack)
Use activities that allow students to speak or write about themselves and their cultural identities. (Dai)
Use activities that introduce the concept of WEs and EIL, including verbal guise tests, listening comprehension exercises, readings, and critical class discussions. (Matsuda, Sung)
Use activities highlighting commonly shared Asian customs that promote understanding between members of the outer and expanding circles without a reliance on inner-circle forms of English. (Honna)
Have students rewrite inner-circle text into a localized version of English. (Kachru & Nelson)
Use activities that enable students to better understand and accept local codified forms of English. (Kachru & Nelson)
Use roleplays. (Fan)
Create student-centered curriculum and lesson plans. (Mack)
Use pair work (think-pair-shares, spectrum activities, information gaps, and jigsaws). (Mack)

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*Note.* These strategies are from Asian EFL studies not specifically related to Korea.

Of note is the fact that the most commonly mentioned strategy from this review of the literature was the use of authentic teaching materials that represent a diversity of cultural voices (Dai, 2011; Mack, 2010; Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2004). Mack (2010), in an EFL class that emphasized Global English in Japan reported, “It is also important to choose authors representing many different perspectives and ethnicities. I wanted to highlight both the negative and positive impact of the spread of English in the world” (p. 207).

In addition to the above suggested strategies, Dai (2011) discussed the importance of creating a comfortable learning environment so students will feel empowered to express their honest opinions. Matsuda

(2003) also mentions the crucial role of feedback and assessment in this process by suggesting that instructors should “evaluate students on their communicative effectiveness rather than solely on grammatical correctness based on the American or British norm” (p. 723) and goes on to discuss the importance of integrating WE training into EFL teacher education as well as educating the public about matters related to the global spread of English.

**TABLE 2. Summary of Suggested EicL Classroom Strategies for the Korean EFL Classroom**

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Use activities that introduce the concept of and generate critical discussion about WEs, EIL, and EicL, including verbal guise tests (e.g., <i>21 Accents</i> clips, ELLLO.com postings); online videos; case studies (e.g., Tanghe’s <i>Challenging the native speaker fallacy</i> ); and pair, group, and class discussions (e.g., Tanghe’s <i>Re-designing Kachru’s Concentric Circle Model</i> ). (Green, Lee, Rousseau, Tanghe)
Use authentic instructional materials (that integrate Korean-specific topics and aspects of a wider diversity of cultures) that address both big-C and small-c domains of culture as well as elements that promote intercultural competence. (Lee, Park, Park & Kim, Rousseau)
Use pair, group, and class discussions and debates related to critical issues of culture. (Green, Lee, Park, Tanghe)
Use movies and video clips (e.g., Green, Ahn, & Bae’s <i>Please Teach Me English</i> ) as a starting point for critical discussion. (Green, Ahn, & Bae; Lee; Tanghe)
Use activities that promote awareness of codified forms of Korean English. (Lee, Shim)
Rely on various teaching techniques when introducing culture (not just lectures). (Park)
Invite guest speakers from a variety of cultures (individually or on panel discussions). (Lee)
Use activities that develop learners’ prediction skills (so they can build on previous learning). (Lee)
Use roleplays and simulations (“critical incidents”). (Lee)
Use intercultural drama. (Park & Kim)
Use written and voice blog postings to give students a “voice” in the class. (Tanghe)
Create a student-centered curriculum and lesson plans. (Green, Ahn, & Bae)
Use cultural contexts for language-practice activities. (Park)
Group target vocabulary into culture-related clusters and present cultural topics with related thematic units. (Park)
Heighten student awareness of certain culturally loaded words. (Yook)

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Related to the development of more authentic, diverse instructional materials, Park (1999) suggests promoting more cooperation between

textbook authors, instructors, and publishing companies. Park and Kim (2014) also add that more consideration of Korean students' specific learning environment and culture needs to be made on the part of NS instructors in particular. "More instruction should be given for Korean students so as to use strategies for compensating their specific learning difficulties, establishing rapport, and minimizing cultural differences" (p. 57).

## **SAMPLE ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE EICL IN THE KOREAN EFL CLASSROOM**

In an attempt to incorporate as many pedagogical components of EICL as possible, the following classroom activities were designed and have been used in classrooms by the author of this study, a fulltime faculty member in the Department of English at a Korean public university. A brief description of each activity and its purpose follows; more detailed lesson plans for some activities can be found in the appendixes. It should be noted that the following activities have been used in the context of Korean EFL classes aimed at improving the English speaking skills of either graduate students or undergraduate juniors and seniors, cross-cultural training workshops, and teacher training programs. In most of these cases, English was used as the language of instruction; it is possible that other instructors might find it preferable to use some Korean and/or allow their students to do the same.

### **Activity 1: Four Countries**

**Type of Activity:** Roleplay and class discussion

**Purpose:** To provide students and instructors an opportunity to learn and speak about big-C/small-c aspects of other cultures by asking questions and making observations, to speak about and demonstrate customs from one's own culture, to work with others to make conclusions/inferences about other cultures based on interactions with those cultures, to consider the possible negative impacts of making judgements of other cultures, to explore the role that culture plays in the communication process as well as the connection between language and culture, to gain a better

understanding of the difference between big-C and small-c domains of culture, to brainstorm skills necessary for successful intercultural interactions, to apply learning to lived experiences, to improve English speaking, listening, note-taking, and reporting skills, and to have fun.

**Description:** Students are divided into four groups; each group is given a role sheet about a make-believe country (Appendix A). Students are told that they are citizens of this country and that they should read and become familiar with their country's information and customs. After verifying that each group comprehends its role sheet, the instructor asks every country to choose an ambassador, someone who will represent their country by traveling to other countries. The ambassador's job is to spend time with members of the other countries (5-10 minutes per group) in order to find out as much about that country as they can; ambassadors are allowed to take notes during their visits. After visiting each of the other countries, the ambassador returns to their home country to report their findings. Before beginning, students are informed of three important rules: (a) everyone, including ambassadors, must follow their country's customs, (b) no one can tell anyone from another country what their country's customs are, and (c) no one can ask what another countries' customs are.

After the ambassadors have visited all three other countries, they report what they have learned to their fellow citizens. Then, all members try to guess what the other countries' customs are. (Another option for larger classes is not to have ambassadors – to have each student walk around the room and interact with students from other countries). The instructor then leads a debriefing session by having students discuss what they learned about the other countries and what they believe their customs are. In many cases, students will have a hard time identifying the customs of other countries and may make assumptions about people in that country, like “they are shy” (when the custom is not to look at people when speaking to them or speaking quietly) or “they are rude” (when the custom is to speak loudly or wink or stare). At other times, students may assume that one person's actions represent the customs of everyone in another country. This leads to the opportunity to speak about misconceptions about other cultures based on observations of the big-C domain. In closing, the instructor leads the class in a discussion using the debriefing questions (Appendix A). Instructors may also want to conclude by discussing the big-C/small-c theory of culture.



## Activity 2: Korean Culture Cards

**Type of Activity:** Small-group discussion

**Purpose:** To enable students and instructors to explore and speak about certain aspects of Korean culture in English, to consider ways of explaining one's culture as well as what misconceptions others might have about that culture, to critically analyze the meaning of culture and how it is often represented in the media, to discuss what constitutes successful intercultural interactions, and to exchange opinions.

**Description:** The instructor prepares several sets of index cards that have pictures from the Internet representing some typical aspects of Korean culture (e.g., a classroom, a restaurant or coffee shop, a public bathhouse, a *PC-bang*, KakaoTalk emoticons, ROK soldiers, a sport stadium, a beach or mountain, a K-pop group or *hallyu* star, a *hanbok*, food, a wedding ceremony, a temple or church). The class is then divided into small groups, and a set of these cards is placed face-down in the center of each group. Next, the instructor mentions that an important part of intercultural communication is being able to speak about one's own country, culture, and customs to those from other cultures. The students are then informed that they are going to practice doing this by pretending that they are meeting someone from another country who knows nothing or very little about Korea. Students are told to take turns turning over the index cards and explaining or talking about some aspect of the pictures to their group members (imagining their group members are from a different culture); it is suggested that the instructor walk around the classroom to help students as needed. To make this into a game, students can be told that if they are able to speak in English for up to two or so minutes about a picture, they can keep that card; the student with the most cards after a certain amount of time is the winner.

It is recommended that the instructor conclude by leading a class discussion using some or all of the following debriefing questions: (a) Were there any pictures that were more difficult to describe than others? If so, why do you think they were more difficult to describe? (b) What did you do if you had trouble describing or thinking of an English word to describe certain Korean words (e.g., food, clothing, feeling, or cultural concept)? (c) What is the best way for those who don't know about your country and culture to deeply understand it? (d) What's the best way for you to learn about other countries or cultures? (e) Do you think any of

these pictures are not accurate representations of Korean culture or might lead others to have misconceptions, misunderstandings, or even negative ideas about Korea? Please explain. (f) Do you think the media accurately portrays Korea to those in other countries? In general, do you think those in other countries have an accurate idea about what Korea is “really like?” Why or why not? (g) What influences are there on the way Korea is portrayed in the media? In other words, who decides what image of Korea is shown in other countries? (h) Is there anything you haven’t spoken about that is important for those from other cultures to understand about your country and culture?

### Activity 3: Time Machine Discussion

**Type of Activity:** Roleplay, class discussion

**Purpose:** To enable students and instructors to explore and discuss Korea’s past, present, and future; to speak about certain aspects of Korean culture in English; to critically consider the dynamic nature of culture; to practice using critical thinking skills and exchanging opinions.

**Description:** In groups or individually, students are given role cards that represent Koreans from the past, present, and future. (e.g., a *yangban* during the Joseon Dynasty, a monk during the Koryo Dynasty, a commoner during the Silla Dynasty, a high school student in the 1930’s, an employee of an IT company today, a university student in the year 2025). Students are then asked to create an identity for that person to consider what his/her daily life, values, beliefs, perceptions, customs, and worldview are like. After an appropriate amount of preparation time, the instructor (or a designated student) leads the class in a discussion. Possible discussion items include introduce yourself; tell us about your daily routine, job, family, hobbies, interests, etc.; what is important to you; what do you think about your country; what do you think about other countries; what are some customs or beliefs that you think are important; what dreams or hopes do you have?

Following an appropriate amount of discussion time, the instructor leads the class by asking some debriefing questions: (a) What did you learn about Korea from this discussion? (b) What are some important ways that you believe your country has changed in the last few centuries? What has brought about or influenced some of these changes? (c) Are there some things about Korean culture or beliefs that you believe have not changed much in the last few centuries? Why do you

think these haven't changed much? (d) How do you imagine Korea in the future? (e) Do you believe culture changes or remains the same? Please explain. (f) What, if anything, does this discussion tell you about understanding other cultures?

#### **Activity 4: What's in a Sentence?**

**Type of Activity:** Pair-work and class discussion

**Purpose:** To enable students and instructors to critically consider the connection between language and culture, to discuss some aspects of culture that might be embedded in both Korean and English, to brainstorm ways in which learning a second language might impact an individual's cultural perspective and worldview, to get an understanding of the concept of *loanwords*, to examine the possible impact that learning EFL has had on Koreans and Korea, to practice translating sentences and exchanging opinions.

**Description:** Students are put in pairs or small groups, given copies of the handout (Appendix B), and asked to follow its instructions. (Note: Instructors might need to do a bit of scaffolding with students at first; comparable items that might be brought to their attention include honorifics, personal pronouns such as *our* vs. *my*, vocabulary to describe family members, word order, use or non-use of subjects, articles). After an appropriate amount of time for each pair to complete the handout, the instructor can conclude by asking groups to summarize their discussions and then asking a few debriefing questions such as (a) What are some other differences between English and Korean (vocabulary, grammar, word use, form, etc.) that you think might represent different cultural values? (b) How can speakers of both English and Korean try to reduce cross-cultural misunderstandings that might occur because of different cultural values embedded in the languages? (c) Do you think that English has affected the Korean language? Please explain. (d) Has learning English changed the way you think about and view the world? Do you think it has an impact on Korean people and culture? Please explain.

#### **Activity 5: Konglish!**

**Type of Activity:** Game, class discussion, small-group work

**Purpose:** To enable students and instructors to deepen their understanding and awareness of codified forms of Korean English, to exchange opinions about issues related to the use of codified Korean English versus native forms of the language, to highlight some differences between inner-circle English and Korean English, to gain a better understanding of the concept of World Englishes and EICL, to have fun with the differences between languages.

**Description:** This activity has three parts. To introduce students to the notion of and generate discussion about Korean English, instructors can start by leading students in a short quiz show game in which the instructor says a sentence in so-called “NS English” and students think of a Konglish expression that represents a similar idea. For example: They had a blind date (“They did *so-getting*”); The student was caught cheating on a test (“He was *cunning*”); Most of my classmates love chicken and beer (“Most of my classmates love *chi-maek*”).

Secondly, the instructor puts students in pairs or small groups and gives each group a handout with several sentences taken from an English language textbook that features inner-circle English. Ask students if they can work together and translate the sentences from NS English to Korean English. The instructor should encourage students not to worry about using English in a so-called correct way but to have fun and think of typical ways a Koreans might express the same ideas represented in the first sentence. The use of Korean words in some cases is acceptable.

Finally, the instructor leads the class in a discussion. Some possible discussion questions are (a) What do you think about Konglish, or Korean English? Should you never use it? Is it okay to use sometimes? (b) Are there some times when it’s okay to use Korean English? If so, when or when not? (c) What are some possible problems with using Korean English when speaking with non-Koreans? How can you overcome these problems? (d) Is it important to only learn and use native speaker English? Why or why not? (e) If you are speaking with another non-native English speaker (for example, in China), is it important to try and use native-speaker English? Why or why not? (f) Do you think there is too much pressure to learn native-speaker English in Korea? Please explain. (g) What, if any, are some possible influences that learning native-speaker English might have on Korea and Koreans?

The instructor might also choose to conclude with a discussion of Kachru’s concentric circles and the concept of World Englishes and EICL.

## Activity 6: Model UN Project

**Type of Activity:** Research project, roleplay, class discussion

**Purpose:** This project is one commonly used in both EFL/ESL and other educational settings to enable students and instructors to synthesize many of the concepts of EICL, to conduct research and learn about different aspects of other countries and cultures, to practice asking questions to and gathering information from people representing other cultures, to practice English presentation skills and exchanging opinions about world issues, to contemplate the meaning of culture, to think deeply about differences and similarities between cultures as well as about ways in which countries of the world can interact in a peaceful, constructive manner and cooperate to solve global problems.

**Description:** Students are told that they will be representing different countries of the world in a number of class projects and activities, and must conduct some research to find out as much information about their countries as possible beforehand. (It's best if students have the opportunity to choose the countries they represent but also important that most regions of the world be represented. Dividing the class into world regions and then letting them choose countries is one way of accomplishing this). Giving students general topics or areas to look at in their research is recommended (e.g., geography, people, food, entertainment, customs). After students have had sufficient time to do this research, a number of classroom activities are possible: (a) International Coffee Hour – students mingle in order to learn about each other's countries. (b) International Expo – students set up booths with visuals from their countries and share information with visitors to their booths (preferably students from other classes or outside visitors). (c) Presentations – students give short in-class speeches about their countries. (d) Discussion/Debate of World Issues – students take part in a discussion of several world issues led by either the instructor or another student. In this discussion, students are reminded that they are representatives of their respective countries and that they should try to think from their culture's point of view. (e) To conclude, an International Quiz Show – This tests what students have learned about each other's countries. It is also recommended that instructors conclude with a critical debriefing session in which students are asked what they learned from this project about themselves and others.

## FINAL COMMENTS

One of the dilemmas for the EICL instructor is that they should try, on the one hand, to adapt learning to the local culture, that is, attempt to integrate aspects of learning that students are familiar and comfortable with, as McKay (2004) suggests, and on the other hand, to encourage learners to push their boundaries, re-conceptualize, and create new identities, and explore and acculturate themselves to new worlds. In the case of this study, the author struggled to create activities that were in tune with Korean culture yet still challenging in that they attempted to get students to try new things. Upon review of the strategies described in this paper, it is clear that, while some of them make an effort to adapt aspects of so-called traditional learning methods in Korean EFL (e.g., the grammar/translation method utilized in *What's in a Sentence?*), many if not most of the activities make use of CLT, task-based learning, and critical pedagogy. Using these activities in a meaningful way assumes that instructors have familiarized Korean EFL students with these techniques and have created a learning environment in which students feel comfortable about and confident in sharing their thoughts with others in English. For those with concerns about this practice, perhaps there is comfort in the constructivist notion that learning begins with what individuals already know and expands into frontiers they may never have imagined. What is essential is that this process emerges from and is guided by the students' experiences, perceptions, and concerns – not from the instructor alone.

This brings to mind one final aspect of EICL teaching and learning that is crucial for readers to keep in mind: the role of the instructor in this process. For truly liberating and meaningful intercultural education to take place, Freire's (2003) belief that "the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students" (p. 80) is valid. This interpretation sees the teacher as more of a facilitator than a dispenser of information. While it is also understood that this perspective makes certain cultural assumptions and has possible ramifications, it is nevertheless a concept that constitutes a key element of EICL pedagogy.

In order to put this study into perspective, it should be noted that the purpose of this study was not to identify the perceptions of students to the EICL strategies that were described; the author recommends that

future studies related to this subject attempt to do this. Another consideration that should be taken into account is the fact that the researcher/instructor was a native English speaker (from the U.S.) who had been a professor at the university where these activities took place for approximately six years. He was therefore familiar with and had previously taught most of the students who participated. It is reasonable to assume that the design and implementation of these activities as well as reactions of students involved might vary in different circumstances and with different instructors.

The literature and findings of this study clearly suggest that there is a growing awareness of and interest in the incorporation of both WEs and EICL into the Korean EFL classroom; in fact, the demands of our increasingly complex and interconnected world make this task imperative. With this knowledge in hand, it is now up to individuals and institutions to make the creation of highly trained intercultural communicators both a priority and a reality by continuing to push for more research in this regard and by developing more feasible pedagogical strategies that both enlighten and empower all those involved in the educational process.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This work was supported by a 2016 Gyeongnam National University of Science and Technology grant.

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## APPENDIX A

Role cards and debriefing questions that can be used for *Four Countries*:

### Role Card 1

Country Name: Paradise

#### Information

Your country is very old (over 4000 years old).  
It's one of the largest countries in the world.  
It has very beautiful scenery with mountains and coastlines.  
Your citizens love to eat meat, especially goat.  
Your country has many different religions.  
The most popular sport in your country is rugby.  
It has four seasons.

#### Customs

You like to speak quickly.  
You scratch your chin when you ask someone a question.  
It's polite to talk about the weather a lot.  
It's polite to close your eyes when someone is speaking to you.  
It's polite to yawn a lot.

### Role Card 2

Country Name: Utopia

#### Information

Your country is 1000 years old  
You have many rich people in your country  
It's very hot in the summer and very cold in the winter.  
You have many mountains – skiing and snowboarding are popular.  
You have no coast.  
There aren't many religions in your country.  
Fruit is very popular in your country.  
Most citizens love to stay home and watch TV at night.

#### Customs

When someone asks you a question, it's polite to ask them a different question.  
When introducing yourself, you like to clap your hands three times.

It is polite to smile a lot.  
It is common to wink at someone when you ask a question.  
If someone asks how old your country is, you say, “We don’t really like to talk about that.”

### **Role Card 3**

Country Name: Wonderland

#### **Information**

Your country is only 100 years old.  
Your country is very flat – there are no mountains.  
You have lots of coastline.  
People do a lot of fishing and farming.  
You have a queen.  
You have a warm and wet climate.  
You like to eat fish and lots of vegetables.  
Swimming is very popular; your country has some of the best swimmers in the world.

#### **Customs**

It is polite to cough before you answer a question.  
It is not polite to smile; in other words, don’t smile much.  
It’s polite to say “ummm” a lot.  
When you first meet someone, it’s polite to look up at the ceiling for 5 seconds.  
When you say goodbye to someone, it’s polite to blow them a kiss.

### **Role Card 4**

Country Name: Perfection

#### **Information**

Your country is 500 years old.  
It’s located in the northern hemisphere.  
It has a long coastline, but it’s too cold to swim in the ocean.  
There are many factories in your country.  
There’s a lot of snow.  
Most people are Buddhist.  
Drinking alcohol is a popular hobby in your country.  
You like eating very spicy food.

### Customs

It is polite to speak loudly.

It is polite to giggle.

When meeting someone for the first time, it's polite to rub your hands together.

When someone asks you a question, it's polite to run your hands through your hair.

Staring is polite.

### Sample Debriefing Questions

1. What information did you learn about each other's country? What do you think their customs are?
2. Was it easy or difficult to determine what other countries' customs were? Why or why not?
3. How did you determine what another country's customs were? What's the best way to understand another country's customs?
4. Did you make any mistakes or have some misunderstandings about the customs of other countries? If so, why do you think you made those mistakes?
5. Did other countries misunderstand or make any mistakes about your country? If so, why do you think they made those mistakes?
6. Was communicating with the people from other countries easier or more difficult because of their customs? Why do you think this was so?
7. Once you learn another country's customs, do you think it's polite to try to follow their customs? Why or why not? Are there some situations where you would follow another country's customs and other situations where you would not? Please explain.
8. Have you personally experienced misunderstanding with people from other countries because of their culture or customs? Please explain.
9. In the future, what can you do to try to understand people from other countries?

## APPENDIX B

Worksheet that can be used for *What's in a Sentence?*

### Part One

Look at the pairs of English and Korean sentences below. Although they may not be literal translations of each other, they are meant to represent similar ideas. Do you notice any differences in grammatical structure or word usage that might represent the different cultural values of those using the languages? If so, what are these differences? What do you think the differences mean?

- 1) My father works in an international trading company.  
우리 아버지는 국제 무역회사에서 일합니다.
- 2) There are many things I like about my country.  
나는 우리 나라에 대하여 좋아하는 것들이 많이 있습니다.
- 3) Where do you live?  
어디 사십니까?
- 4) This is my brother.  
이 사람이 우리 형입니다.
- 5) I put the dishes on the table.  
식탁에 그릇을 놓았다.

### Part Two

Translate the following sentences from English to Korean, and then compare your translations to another student's. After that, discuss the questions below with your partner.

- 1) How do you know that guy?
- 2) My family's been living in my hometown for many generations.
- 3) Would you like a cup of ice coffee?
- 4) My sister knows a lot about computers.
- 5) She had a cold so she couldn't come to class.

Questions

- Were your translations the same? If not, how and why do you think they were different?
- Looking at your translations, are they exactly the same (grammar, vocabulary, word order, etc.) as the original English text? If not, do you think there are any differences that have to do with different cultural values represented in the two languages?
- Are there any words you used in Korean that are the same as the English words? If so, why do you think they are the same?
- Can you think of other Korean words that are *borrowed* from English?

**Part Three**

Translate the following sentences from Korean to English, and then compare your translations to another student's.

- 1) 우리 학교 선배들은 영어를 잘 한다.
- 2) 이 곰탕은 좀 싱겁다.
- 3) 마음이 좀 착잡하다.
- 4) 텔런트가 되고 싶어요.
- 5) 그 남자의 마음이 왔다 갔다 한다.

Questions

- Again, were your translations the same? If not, how and why do you think they were different?
- Looking at your translations, do you think they are exactly the same (grammar, vocabulary, word order, etc.) as the original Korean text? If not, do you think there are any differences that have to do with different cultural values represented in the language?
- Were there some words that were very hard to translate into English? If so, what were they and why do you think they were hard to translate?
- How is it possible to explain certain Korean words that represent specific Korean cultural concepts (like 후배 or 한)?





## EFL Motivation in Primary Education: A Case Study in Seoul's Gangnam District

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Set within the context of a Korean middle school in Seoul's affluent Gangnam District, this study reports on some of the unique pedagogic challenges within this setting and the actions taken by a native English teacher to encourage student motivation in the language classroom. Interview data from fellow teachers in the district was used to identify relevant motivational factors. Next, the teacher recorded observational notes throughout the semester followed by a survey of 3rd-grade middle school students ( $N = 132$ ). Through the theoretical lens of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) socio-contextual framework, the findings show more students gravitate towards the instrumental orientation (91%), learning English to achieve an objective, as compared to the integrative orientation (76%), learning English to integrate into an English-speaking culture. Over half of the students reported that extrinsic reward systems encouraged motivation in the language classroom. Though qualitative data shows that such reward systems can help address pedagogic challenges unique to this context, the paper concludes with a discussion on limitations and suggestions for further research.

### INTRODUCTION

Towards the southern end of Seoul's Gangnam District sits a public middle school adjacent to a number of luxurious high-rise apartments that happen to be within walking distance of older, decrepit apartment complexes that were constructed in the 1980s. Walking through this neighborhood, it becomes clear that significant gaps in prosperity exist among the students who attend this school. Students from the affluent block attend expensive afterschool programs at private academies (commonly referred to as *hagwons*), and in some cases, they have spent

extended time abroad. Not surprisingly, their skills to communicate in English tend to be at a higher level than those from the less prosperous side of the tracks. These students often feel defeated when they compete against their fellow classmates on (entrance) exams and admission tests to prestigious high schools. The variance in English proficiency creates an uncomfortable dynamic in the classroom. Less proficient students seem to lack confidence in their ability to answer questions while the proficient students are reluctant to flaunt their skills in front of their fellow classmates for fear of social alimentionation. Similar findings were reported in Dweck (1999) and Peterson, Maier, and Seligman (1993).

Hired by the Gangnam Office of Education, a constituent member of the English Program in Korea (EPIK), I was assigned to this school to work as a native English instructor (NEI). The contractual obligations included 24 teaching hours per week and the requirement to develop teaching materials and curricula alongside local Korean English teachers. This school housed three grades of middle school students. Students in Grade 1 (ages 10–12) and students in Grade 3 (ages 14–15) were required to study each week three 45-minute classes with a Korean English teacher plus one 45-minute class with the NEI. The head teacher mentioned that content covered in the Korean teacher's classes focused on reading and listening comprehension largely taught by means of grammar–translation and audiolingual methods, whereas the NEI was to teach classes in speaking and listening skills. Different from the content covered in the classes from the Korean English teachers, content of the NEI's classes would not be included in any of the exams. When students eventually learned of this problem, many responded by arriving late to class often without their books and stationary supplies. Those who were in attendance would often complete the speaking tasks and listening activities in disdain or direct their attention to homework assigned from other classes.

While there has been a substantial body of research on EFL motivation within the context of tertiary institutions (e.g., Kilic-Cakmak, 2010; Lim & Kim, 2003; Riaz, Rohaya Rambli, Salleh, & Mashtaq, 2010; Wu, Yen, & Marek, 2011), which Yim and Yu (2011) rightly point out, leaves gaps in our understanding of affective factors at primary levels of education. This is somewhat surprising since pre-adolescent language learners tend to have higher degrees of language learning success than adult learners (Newport, 1990). Further investigation cannot appeal to only NEIs in EPIK; those employed as

assistant language teachers (ALTs) in the Japan Exchange Teacher Program (JET) and other teachers find themselves in similar working conditions as those highlighted in the opening paragraphs of this paper. This is not a small audience of teachers. The most recent statistics available for public viewing revealed that as many as 7,500 teachers were employed through EPIK in 2013 (*Korea Herald*, 2013); over 4400 teachers were employed as ALTs in Japan in 2014 (Japan Exchange Teacher Program, 2015). In an attempt to address this gap in the literature, this study draws from interviews, observational notes, and student surveys to investigate relevant motivational factors within the context of a Korean middle school setting.

## BACKGROUND

Derived from the Latin verb *movere* meaning “to move,” motivation is an affective factor that examines “what *moves* humans to make certain choices, to engage, expend, and persist in action or behavior” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 3). Within the context of language learning, students who are *moved* to participate in class, invest hours of study, and show genuine interest in the subject matter are characterized as *motivated* and tend to enjoy greater degrees of language learning success (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Teachers can encourage such behaviors by fostering a supportive learning environment and developing content that is interesting and relevant to the student’s age and level of ability (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Though the methods I used were seemingly clear on the surface, a number of students were unresponsive to them in class. These students’ lack of motivation seemed to disrupt others, further deteriorating the kind of supportive atmosphere needed to foster language learning. To investigate this, nine teachers (5 Korean English teachers, 4 NEIs) employed by the Gangnam Office of Education were interviewed to identify relevant motivational factors to learn English as a foreign language. Some of the teachers commented on individual student attributes such as attitude (e.g., Kim, 2010) and self-confidence (e.g., Clément, 1986; Clément & Kruidenier, 1983), but an overwhelming majority consistently referenced socio-contextual factors.

## Socio-contextual Factors: Integrative and Instrumental Orientations

Socio-contextual factors are the larger scale forces within cultures and societies that affect the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals. Some of the socio-contextual factors in the Gangnam District middle school have been mentioned above (e.g., socio-economic status, regional location, buildings' age and appearance, and education system), yet there are a multitude of other larger factors within Korea that form the complex socio-contextual landscape. These socio-contextual factors influence the orientation students have to learning English.

These interview excerpts from the teachers participating in the study reveal the orientation to learning English:

If a student doesn't get a good grade, he can't apply for a good school. (Grace, Korean English teacher)

[The high school entrance exam] is the biggest day of their lives. (Aera, Korean English teacher)

The best students want to learn English. They watch [...] English TV [and] movies. (Mina, Korean English teacher)

They participate in the English club and go to the English camps (Nathan, NEI)

These observations draw relevance to the pioneering work of Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972). They were working within a bilingual context, and their findings suggest that EFL motivation can be characterized into two distinct orientations. The *integrative* orientation is a positive disposition towards the target language community and the desire to become a member of that community. This could account for Mina's description of students who watched English television and movies, whereas students who Aera and Grace's comments focus on seem to align with the *instrumental* orientation: pragmatic gains from acquiring a second/foreign language, such as obtaining a job or seeking a promotion (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Gardner and Lambert's (1959) findings suggest that students who gravitate to the integrative orientation tend to enjoy greater degrees of language learning success. Esther's

comment could be cataloged as either integrative; that is, the students have a desire to use English for communicative purposes, or as instrumental in that membership in this club could facilitate academic scholarship.

Kachru's (2006) concentric circles model that classifies global use of the English language can offer insight into the integrative/instrumental paradigm. The model is depicted through a series of circular rings. At the center are inner-circle countries: native English-speaking countries such as the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Next are outer-circle countries, which refer to former colonies where English remains a major presence: examples include Singapore, India, Malaysia, and parts of Africa. On the exterior are expanding-circle countries such as much of Eastern Europe, South America, and Asia. In these parts of the world, contact with native speakers or opportunities to use English for communicative purposes are rare. In outer-circle countries, English is often learned as a second language (ESL) whereas, in expanding-circle countries, English is often learned as a foreign language (EFL). Though people often use these term interchangeably (Forman, 2016), it is important to recognize the difference to better understand how language is taught in the classroom.

In EFL countries, such as Korea, English is often treated as an academic subject. Teaching skills in speaking and writing tend to be avoided because it is time-consuming and subjective, which can put teachers in an uncomfortable position when marks have to be objectively justified to students. As an alternative, students are tasked to memorize phrases, grammar rules, and sometimes reading passages in preparation for standardized tests (i.e., entrance exams), which are mainly comprised of multiple-choice questions focusing solely on skills of listening and reading. There is little room for interpretation: a question is either answered correctly or incorrectly. Recognizing that so much is at stake, students invest long hours of rigorous study at private academies (i.e., *hagwons*) in which one student confided in me that a good portion of the content includes specific strategies to excel on multiple-choice exams. The variance in English proficiencies in this context could challenge this hypothesis; that is, there are a number of students at this school who have had exposure to English-speaking culture so it would be worthwhile to investigate whether their language learning motivation is integratively or instrumentally orientated.

### NEI Pedagogy: Extrinsic Rewards

The socio-contextual environment influences how teachers approach increasing motivation. In Korea, and in this Gangnam middle school, the presence and function of NEIs influences the dynamics in the classroom and the means of affecting motivation.

Interview excerpts related to rewards from NEIs participating in the study follow:

My co-teacher and I use stamps. It's perfect. [The students] are crazy for stamps. (Nathan, NEI)

I use poker chips. At the end of the class, students return their poker chips, and I record that for their participation score. (Jackie, NEI)

I tell the students exactly what I expect from them. If they break one of these rules, they lose points on their daily score. (Thomas, NEI)

I avoid reward systems. It is not my job to motivate them. If [a student] doesn't try he'll get a low grade; that's his problem. (Erin, NEI)

The use of tangible reward systems was a reoccurring theme among the NEIs interviewed. On the one hand, Nathan, Jackie, and Thomas all viewed using tangible-item reward systems favorably, describing them as a necessary means to motivate students to do activities in the textbook. One NEI remarked, "How could the students have any motivation to learn about dialogues that contain grammar no native speaker would use in real conversation?" (Thomas, NEI). Nathan, Jackie, and Thomas also commented that using reward systems gave students an incentive to learn since their autonomy over student assessment (e.g., grading projects or contributing exam questions) was greatly constrained. Erin, on the other hand, responded hastily, disagreed with reward systems as a pedagogic strategy to encourage motivation. In her view, reward systems require a great deal of effort to administer and can be a "victim of their own success" (Erin, NEI), meaning that students will be reluctant to participate unless they know their actions will be rewarded.

Ryan and Deci's (2000) Taxonomy of Human Motivation offers an explanation in how the NEIs perceive motivation in the EFL classroom. The model catalogs motivation into three categories: *amotivation* – the

lack of desire to perform an activity; extrinsic motivation – when an activity is done to attain some separable outcome; and intrinsic motivation – when an activity is done for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. The perceptions of the NEIs suggest that extrinsic motivation is an important component in the Korean middle school classroom. In Ryan and Deci’s (2000) model, the key difference is the locus of control. For Erin, extrinsic motivation is externally controlled through the students’ desire for scholastic achievement; whereas others – Nathan, Jackie, and Thomas – assumed internal control over the student’s motivation through their use of reward systems.

Drawing this section to a close, how middle school students in an affluent area of Seoul conceptualize motivation in relation to concepts of integrative/instrumental motivation remains unclear. While some scholars (e.g., Forman, 2016) would hypothesize that students in EFL countries have a tendency to be instrumentally motivated given limited exposure to native speakers and opportunities to use English for communicative purposes, it is not exactly clear whether this assertion would hold true at this particular middle school in Seoul, a teaching context comprised of a significant number of students who have traveled to or resided in countries abroad for extended periods of time. Additionally, the need to intervene with some kind of extrinsic reward system was apparent. The extent to which extrinsic rewards could be used as a pedagogic tool to address motivational issues in this teaching context remained unclear.

## METHODS

Dörnyei (2007) observes the benefits of research that incorporates qualitative and quantitative data, sometimes referred to as “mixed-methods,” suggesting that “words can be used to add meaning to numbers and numbers can be used to add precision to words” (p. 45). Qualitative methods in this study included interview data from students, journal entries from class observations, and photos. The quantitative data included scores from the class and individual reward systems recorded at the end of each class, and a short student survey that was completed at the end of the semester.



## Participants

The participants in this study included seven teachers: Four of the teachers were employed as NEIs. The other three teachers were Korean teachers who taught English in the public school system. All names are listed as pseudonyms. The student participants included sixty-eight (68) male and sixty-four (64) female Korean middle school students ( $N = 132$ ), ages 14–15. The participants all had previous education in English in the Korean school system, of which thirty-nine (39) had resided in a foreign country for six months or longer.

## Teacher Interviews

None of the teachers were willing to have their voices audio-recorded, but did grant permission for the researcher to hand-write notes. The interviews took place during break periods, lunch times, and after school. Each teacher was interviewed individually twice. In the first interview, the teachers were asked to comment on “what are the relevant motivational factors to learning English as a foreign language in South Korea?” During this time, the researcher paraphrased and transcribed verbatim by writing notes into a notebook. Next, the researcher coded the teacher’s notes into relevant themes. In the second interview, the researcher presented a summary of his notes from the first interview and asked clarifying questions.

## Student Surveys

At the end of the semester, students were asked to complete a seven-item survey that evaluated their perceptions of the integrative/instrumental motivation and extrinsic reward systems. With approval from the Korean English teachers, the survey was distributed to the students during class time towards the end of the semester. The design of the survey included twenty items that were translated into Korean and piloted to first-grade students to identify any errors in interpretation and ambiguity. One problem was that the survey took too long to complete, which agitated some of the Korean English teachers. Therefore, seven questions were deleted, while the ones that remained were worded similarly to the survey items in Kang (2000).

Like Hernandez (2008), the survey included two parts: Part 1 included demographic criteria (students' gender, age, GPA, language experience abroad); Part 2 included a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) survey. The responses from the surveys were grouped into two categories. Responses that were checked as "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were broadly categorized as "disagree." Responses that were checked as "agree" and "strongly agree" were categorized as "agree." Some of the students chose not to reply to certain questions while others checked more than one response to a question; therefore, these responses were not counted in the data.

## Reward Systems

The design of the reward systems was modeled similar to the ideas from the NEIs in the district: Nathan, Jackie, and Thomas. The first reward system, *Stampfest*, recognizes exemplary individual performance such as completing homework, volunteering in class, demonstrating quality work, or finding ways to practice English outside of the classroom. When such behaviors were observed, a stamp was placed in the back of the student's textbook. At the end of each year, the student with the most stamps is awarded with the *Top Student* certificate<sup>1</sup> and a gift card to the Kyobo Bookstore to be spent on an English book. To recognize the performance of other students in the class, other certificates were made to recognize the *Best Speaker*, *Most Improved*, and the *Student's Choice* award – a certificate award determined by the students themselves through a class vote.

The second reward system, *The Horserace*, is a competition where each class is awarded a daily score out of ten. Designed in collaboration with the Korean English teachers, the daily score was comprised of four categories that served as necessary elements of a successful class:

- Participation and Speaking (40%) – completing the speaking tasks with enthusiasm and interest
- Respectful Behavior (30%) – showing respectful behavior towards the teacher and classmates
- Preparation (20%) – arriving to class on time with the appropriate textbook and stationary items
- Listening Comprehension (10%) – carefully following the teacher's instructions

The daily scores were awarded at the end of each class. Towards the end of the class, usually, while the students were completing a speaking task, I would consult with the Korean English teacher to determine the daily score. At the end of the class, the daily score would be presented by reviewing the criteria in the four categories, then immediately written down on a large printout at the front of the class. On days when classes were canceled (as denoted by an “X”), the next scheduled class would be worth double points. After seven weeks, the class with the most points would be awarded a pizza party after the midterm exams in week 9. Table 1 shows the daily scores through seven weeks of the first semester for all twelve classes.

**TABLE 1. Daily Scores Through 7 Weeks of the First Semester**

Class Section	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Total
303	10	7	9	9	10	9	10	64
308	10	9	8	8	9	10	10	64
305	9	9	8	9	10	9	9.5	63.5
301	10	10	8	10	9	7	9	63
304	8	9	9	8	9	8	9	60
306	8	9	9	8	9	8	9	60
302	8	9	10	8	10	10	8	63
307	8	9	10	8	10	10	8	63
309	9.5	8.5	9	6	7	8	9	57
311	9	7	6	7	10	8.5	8	55.5
312	7	8	7	6	9	8	7.5	52.5
310	6	7	8	6	6	x	16	49

For illustrative purposes, each class’s horse was displayed at the front of the class above the whiteboard, so students could have a visual representation on how their class ranked against other classes.

### Research Journals

Research journals can be a valued source of data (Dörnyei, 2007). The researcher can help show the development of ideas and provide

avenues for future research (Silverman, 2005), and can constitute internal dialogue that is the essence of reflexive ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Throughout the semester, observational notes were written in a journal by the author that logged the class, date, and observations that served to justify the class’s daily score. Comments were made on the criteria listed in the class reward system: participation and speaking, respectful behavior, preparation, and listening comprehension.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The theoretical framework for this study derived from interviews of Korean English teachers and fellow NEIs employed in the Gangnam District Office of Education. The results presented below comment on socio-contextual factors (integrative/instrumental motivation), and pedagogy (use of individual and class reward systems). The sections that follow begin with the quantitative data followed by the qualitative data.

### Socio-contextual Factors

The first part of this study examined EFL motivation through Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) concepts of integrative and instrumental motivation. Through this framework, EFL motivation is a construct that can best be described as exogenous, something that is shaped not by one individual student or teacher but rather by members of society as a whole. Through this framework, the motivational agent pertains to the sociolinguistics of English and its place in the Korean education system. The results of the student survey on these two motivational factors are presented in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. Survey Results of Socio-contextual Factors**

Motivational Agent	Motivational Factor	Survey Item	Result (Agree)
Socio-context	Integrative Orientation	If given the choice, I would like to live in an English-speaking country.	76% (90/118)
	Instrumental Orientation	I study English so I can score well on the high school entrance exam.	91% (109/120)

A noticeable majority (76%) of the students reported their desire to live in an English-speaking country. Language is at the core of one's identity (Barker & Galasinski, 2001), so it is understandable that there would be a population of students, 24% in this case, who would not want to live in an English-speaking country. Conversely, more than three-quarters of the students agreed that they would like to live in an English-speaking country. Gardner and Lambert (1972) would characterize these students as having a desire to use English as a means to integrate into an English-speaking culture.

It is uncommon for students in EFL countries to be driven by the integrative orientation because of scant opportunities to interact with foreigners or use the language for communicative purposes (Forman, 2016). The findings presented above, however, challenge this assertion. As a medium of communication, English has some appealing characteristics. It functions as a lingua franca: Wardhaugh (2010) suggests that it promotes neutrality between non-native speakers from various cultures. It is also characterized as democratic, Crystal (2003) observes, for its limited use of formal discourse (i.e., honorifics and dependence on prefixes/suffixes to govern appropriate levels of formality).

In this study, however, there is no qualitative data that would support either scholar. Instead, a number of students expressed their desire to escape the rigors of Korea's education system: "I'd leave on the next plane; I hate my life here" (female student, Class 302, 2011 November 4); "In America, I could play soccer, watch TV, or just relax after school. Here, I have to go to an academy right after school every day" (male student, Class 312, 2011 September 30). These two excerpts are representative of a broader audience of student discontent with the rigors of learning EFL in Korea's education system. Though premature to draw any firm conclusions, the students' motivation to learn EFL for the purposes of cultural integration does not derive from a desire to become a member of the target language community but rather from a desire to be removed from the stresses in their life in Korea (see F. Lee, 2011; Kim, 2006; Park, 2009; Kim, 2012; J. Lee, 2011; Lee & Lamers, 2013).

Much of this stress is derived from a boundless pursuit of scholastic achievement in Korea's hyper-competitive education system. In this study, an overwhelming majority of students (91%) responded that they are instrumentally motivated to learn English. As Choi (2008) observes,

English proficiency remains a valuable asset in almost all walks of life. Scoring poorly on the English section of the high school entrance exam could impede a student's chances of being admitted into a reputable high school. The process again repeats itself when students compete for admission to prestigious universities, and ultimately for many prestigious jobs in both the public and private sector following graduation (Park, 2009). The Korean English teachers recognize what is at stake:

2011 October 10, Class 301

The Korean English teacher informed me that class would be cancelled today because last Monday was a holiday, and she needed extra time to cover all of the contents in the textbook before the final exam, which for some reason, takes place in the first week of November for students in the third grade. (Author, observational note)

Evidently, contents from my class are second in priority to the Korean English teachers, which is understandable given the heightened stakes for scholastic achievement. Yet, Gardner and Lambert's (1972) socio-contextual framework is somewhat incomplete because it conceptualizes EFL motivation as an exogenous factor – something that is presented as a given, beyond the control of the teacher. It does not offer any suggestions on how to address behavioral issues and demotivated students in the language classroom, let alone challenges specific to this context: frequent class cancellations, limited teacher autonomy (i.e., contributions to exams and evaluations). To cope with these challenges, the second part of this study examines the impact of extrinsic reward systems on the students' motivation to learn English.

## **Extrinsic Rewards**

In contrast to socio-contextual factors mentioned above, extrinsic rewards are an endogenous motivational factor in that decisions made by the teacher (i.e., motivational agent) can influence student behavior to encourage motivation in the classroom. Results from the student survey are shown in Table 3.

Overall, these findings suggest that the teacher can have a positive impact on the student's motivation: The majority of students responded favorably to individual group rewards (*Stampfest*), group rewards

**TABLE 3. Survey Results of Extrinsic Rewards**

Motivational Agent	Motivational Factor	Survey Item	Result (Agree)
Teacher	Individual Rewards (Stampfest)	i) I was motivated to obtain one of the certificates at the end of the year.	i) 62% (78/125)
		ii) I wanted to obtain the most stamps in the class.	ii) 75% (88/119)
	Group Rewards (Horserace)	i) I participated in the horserace because I wanted to go to the pizza party at the end of the year.	i) 82% (100/122)
		ii) Hearing the daily scores at the end of each class motivated me for the following class.	ii) 80% (92/115)

(*Horserace*), and pedagogic delivery. For individual rewards, just under two-thirds (62%) of the students reported that they were motivated to get one of the certificates at the end of the year, whereas three-quarters of the students (75%) agreed that they enjoyed receiving stamps in recognition of their effort. Since the stamps were awarded throughout the semester, this difference suggests that process-based or on-going feedback has a stronger motivational impact than product-based awards (i.e., receiving a certificate at the end of the year). From an observational standpoint, implementation of the individual reward systems seemed to have a profound impact on the students' behavior:

2011 September 27, Class 304

During one speaking task, I could see Minsu<sup>2</sup>, a student known to have behavioral problems, participating with much enthusiasm. At the end of class, I stamped the back of his textbook and complimented him on his effort. Despite a significant language barrier, the smile on his face gave the impression he understood my message. (Author, observational note)

2011 October 19, Class 311

The students are crazy for stamps. Even after the class ended, a crowd of some ten students gathered around my desk with their books open wanting to receive a stamp in the back of their textbook. For students who will enter high school in a few months, it seems juvenile, but things are going much better compared to last year. (Author, observational note)

In order to receive a stamp, each student was required to bring his/her book to class. Evidently, using stamps had such a profound impact that students not only arrived at class with their books and stationary supplies but also participated with evident enthusiasm. In particular, the number of occurrences where students were observed to be doing homework from other classes had decreased dramatically. In contrast to the previous semester where it, at times, felt as if I had to plead for participation, students appeared comfortable and were not afraid to answer questions in class, do the speaking activities, and participate in impromptu conversation with the teacher. Through this level of classroom engagement, it became easier to identify errors in the students' speech; accordingly, I could make more informed pedagogic decisions on adding supplementary content tailored to student interests and level of difficulty.

For group rewards, the majority of students (82%) agreed that they were motivated to participate in the Horserace for the pizza party; slightly less (80%) agreed that the daily scores for the Horserace were a factor in encouraging motivation. Whereas individual rewards were conceptualized to be process-based, this finding shows that students are slightly more motivated for the end product (i.e., pizza party) as compared to the process-based rewards (i.e., daily score). Since this margin of difference is only 2%, it would be more appropriate to conclude that there is a stronger consensus over group rewards as compared to individual rewards. From an observational standpoint, much of the qualitative data indicates that this group reward system had a positive impact on the students' motivation:

2011 September 7, Class 307

At the end of class, I awarded the students a score of 10/10 for the horserace. To my surprise, they erupted in cheers and applause. It was a nice feeling of jubilation. (Author, observational note)

2011 December 14, Class 306

The winter vacation is only a few weeks away, and yet, the majority of the classes are still eagerly vested in the horserace. In this class, for example, it does not seem mathematically possible for them to win, but most still pay attention at the end of the class when I give the daily score. (Author, observational note)



Throughout much of the semester, the combination of individual and group rewards had a profound impact on ten of the twelve course sections I was assigned to teach. However, there were two classes in which both reward systems were ineffective. The students in Class 304 and Class 310 were not unlike the other classes: The average class size was 35 students, and there were vast differences in the proficiency and interest in learning English. Unlike the other classes, however, these two classes had a collection of male students who were particularly disruptive during the classes. In addition to often arriving late and unprepared, they often mocked and ridiculed others who participated in the class. Without mentioning any of the students' names, I mentioned how such behaviors deducted from the class's daily score in the *Horsrace*. I intuit that the students with behavioral issues interpreted this as a form of public shame, a cardinal sin in Confucian-based culture. Midway through the semester, students in these classes came to realize that it would not be mathematically possible to catch up to the other classes in the *Horsrace*. I had no choice but to abandon both reward systems in these classes.

Despite the shortcomings in these two classes, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that reward systems can be an effective pedagogic strategy for teachers employed as NEIs in Korea's EPIK program or the JET program in Japan. The data presented above supports this claim, though further research into how and why such reward systems had a negative effect on two of the twelve classes would provide more clarity in the literature. At this juncture, it would seem as though the extent to which students are comfortable with each other plays a critical role in determining their level of motivation to participate in classroom activities. In place of reward systems for these two particular classes, perhaps the focus should be solely on creating activities where students interact with each other. In doing so, they would get to know each other on a more personal basis and may perhaps then be more motivated to participate in classroom activities. Because the classroom dynamics were so toxic at the beginning of the semester, I was reluctant to employ these methods in class. Interestingly, when these methods were employed at the end of the semester, the classroom atmosphere showed some signs of improvement. How these methods shape classroom dynamics and foster supportive learning provides interesting avenues for further research.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper explored EFL motivation at a Korean middle school from the perspective of a native English instructor (NEI). The paper began by outlining the working challenges for NEIs employed in the public school system in Korea. To better understand the topic, interview data from Korean English teachers in the district was used to identify relevant motivational factors. Though some acknowledged individual attributes, such as attitude and self-confidence, the majority of teachers referenced the sociolinguistics of English and its place in the Korean education system. This drew parallels between Gardner and Lambert's (1972) seminal work on integrative and instrumental motivation. Though helpful, this framework fell short in addressing motivational issues specific to teachers employed as NEIs in Korea's EPIK program. Specifically, these teachers are confronted with constraints that include frequent class cancellations, large class sizes with various levels of English proficiency, and limited teacher autonomy. To that end, the second part of this study evaluated the students on motivation with respect to extrinsic reward systems.

Through the theoretical lens of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) socio-contextual framework, the findings show that more students gravitate towards the instrumental orientation (91%), learning English to achieve an objective, as compared to the integrative orientation (76%), learning English to integrate into an English-speaking culture. Over half of the students reported that extrinsic reward systems encouraged motivation in the language classroom. For individual rewards, quantitative data shows that more students (76%) agreed that receiving stamps throughout the semester had a stronger effect than receiving a certificate at the end of the semester, which 62% of the students agreed that their participation was orientated towards. For group reward systems, on the other hand, 82% of students agreed that the pizza party (i.e., product-based) encouraged motivation as compared to 80% of students who agreed that the daily feedback (i.e., process-based) encouraged motivation. This would indicate that the students in this study were individually motivated through on-going positive reinforcement (i.e., receiving stamps) for their efforts, whereas students slightly favored group rewards that were production-based. The qualitative data presented in the study shows that the implementation of the reward systems had

a profound positive impact on student behavior in the classroom, though two of the twelve classes continued to have behavioral issues. The data presented in this study falls short in providing a thorough explanation, though preliminary observations indicate that task-based activities that call on students to interact with all members of the class (i.e., cooperation over competition) can be an effective pedagogic strategy.

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## **FOOTNOTES**

<sup>1</sup>Certificates were made from [www.123certificates.com](http://www.123certificates.com). This website offers an array of templates that can be customized to the teacher's delight. The certificates were made to look official with the support of the Korean English teachers; they were printed on linen paper and came pressed with the personal seal from the head teacher of the English Department, which was offered on a volunteer basis.

<sup>2</sup>This is a pseudonym to protect the student's identity.

## The Effect of the TOEIC on Willingness to Communicate in Korean Learners

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Oftentimes, the ability to learn a second language comes down to a learner's willingness to communicate (WTC). WTC theory is an attempt to map out all the factors that can influence whether a second language (L2) learner actually uses the L2 when given the opportunity to do so. Within WTC theory, many of the factors deal with learners' confidence, and it is evident that an L2 learner's confidence, both in general and specific to L2 ability, will have a large impact on whether the learner will utilize the L2 when the chance arises. The TOEIC is arguably the premier test of English proficiency in Korea. With such a strong emphasis placed on the TOEIC and the results of the test, it is possible that taking the TOEIC will have at least a temporary impact on the confidence of an English learner. Data was collected in an attempt to prove this hypothesis via surveys given to learners at different times: at the beginning of the semester, at a midpoint, and after taking the TOEIC. After analysis of the data, a correlation was found with lower confidence levels after taking the TOEIC. However, more data must be collected to show possible causation and to further understand the influence of the TOEIC on learners' confidence.

### INTRODUCTION

Learning another language as a foreign language learner is difficult. The many hours it takes to learn grammar and vocabulary can make learning an L2 seem like a Sisyphean task. It is no wonder that our egos often recoil at the thought of such an effort and protest when an attempt is made to speak in an L2. The lack of ego is a major benefit to young learners of language, and the existence of ego poses a real challenge to beginner (low-level) L2 learners, particularly among adult L2 learners. This is often the case among learners of basic English in the Korean

college system.

The school of study and theory regarding this dynamic is called willingness to communicate (WTC). There has been a multitude of literature on WTC in an L2 and a growing pool of quantifiable research on the subject. The challenges brought up in regards to WTC, particularly confidence and ego, are known to be a major hurdle when taking up the difficult task of learning an L2. The difficulty is multiplied in Korea, where learners of English have few opportunities to practice actual dynamic conversation and are most often stuck learning and practicing English in an EFL classroom environment with their Korean classmates. This can be a challenge, as low-level students with low confidence are often inclined to code-switch, or slip back into their native language when given the opportunity to do so. Given that this is the case, a major focus for beginner or low-level Korean EFL students and educators should be students' confidence levels. It is more beneficial to emphasize positive influences on confidence, while keeping negative influences to a minimum.

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is one of the most influential tests in Korea. Its scores are used by government organizations and businesses for hiring and promotion purposes, and by some universities for student enrollment purposes. Regarding motivation for EFL learners, there is no doubt that there can be some positive washback from the existence of a test like this: Students may feel more motivation to learn English in order to land a specific government position, or get a raise or promotion. But, does the TOEIC pose any negative effects on students' English learning experience? Specifically, can the TOEIC negatively impact an EFL learner's confidence level, making him or her less likely to speak up in an English-speaking situation?

This paper will briefly review WTC theory and then apply it to in the Korean beginner-level EFL college student situation, introducing new research in the form of surveys in order to further understand Korean students' perceived English confidence and willingness to communicate in English, and then will analyze the research in an attempt to understand more deeply the challenges faced by Korean learners of English as an L2. This paper posits a couple of original hypotheses:

1. The taking of the TOEIC will have a negative effect on Korean English learners' perceived confidence, lowering that

confidence, and thus having an adverse effect on WTC.

2. Taking the TOEIC will negatively affect a Korean English learner's perceived English ability. Survey-takers will report lower levels of fluency after taking the TOEIC in comparison to before.

Through multiple surveys, both before and after administering the TOEIC, this study analyzes various aspects of Korean students' perceived confidence to shine some light on WTC in the Korean L2 education system. Data that supports the hypotheses will also provide support for the argument of fluidity of some characteristics within the WTC model.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

WTC models and WTC theory are attempts to map out the influences that affect a second language learner's likelihood of communicating in the second language in the moments between being given the opportunity to communicate in a language up until the moment of actual L2 usage. To the layperson, WTC can be thought of as a map of what affects the mind of a potential speaker of L2 in the time between being asked a question and the moment of response.

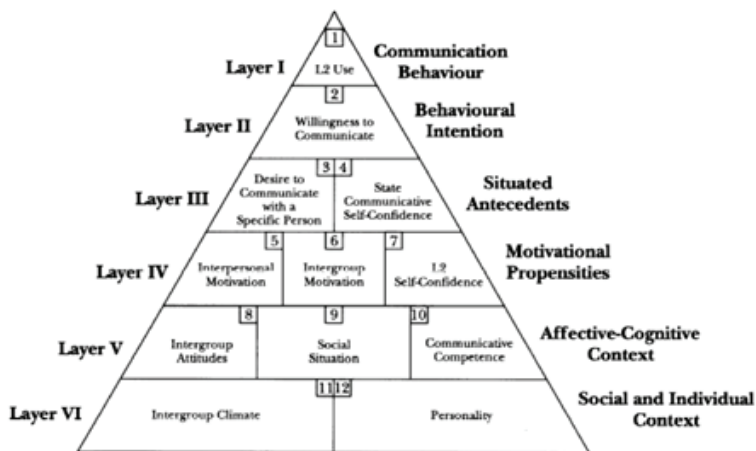
*Willingness to communicate* was originally coined as a theory to predict a person's probability of speaking up in their native language (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). While first acknowledging the situational factors influencing communication, McCroskey and Richmond (1990) refined the definition of WTC to deal specifically with constant personality traits:

Willingness to communicate, then, is to a major degree situationally dependent. Nevertheless, individuals exhibit regular willingness-to-communicate tendencies across situations. ... Such regularity in communication behaviors across interpersonal communication contexts suggests the existence of the personality variable we choose to call "Willingness to Communicate" (WTC). (p. 72)

At this point, WTC was seen more as a constant personality trait than a set of varying influences. MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels



(1998) adapted this theory to the psychology of second language learning and further broadened the scope to include the situational fluidity of WTC: “It is not necessary to limit WTC to a trait-like variable, and in the present discussion, we treat it as a situational variable with both transient and enduring influences” (p. 546). They continued to graph out a heuristic model of influences on second language learners, diagramming not only the constant traits affecting one’s inclination to speak or remain silent in a given situation (such as the importance placed on learning English in the Korean culture, or a person’s predisposition to speaking up) but also the constantly shifting contextual variables in a second language speaking opportunity (i.e., the relationship between the questioner and the L2 learner, or the confidence in knowing the correct answer to the particular question asked).



**FIGURE 1. Pyramid Model of Willingness to Communicate (WTC).** (From MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998, p. 547)

In the heuristic model (Figure 1), there are a few things to note. Firstly, Layers I and II, Communication Behavior and Behavioral Intention, are not actual influences, but post-influence actions. Layer I is actual L2 use, and Layer II is the commitment to L2 use. In MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998), the difference between the two is expressed in a telling example: “Students raising their hands to answer a teacher’s question commit themselves to a course of action indicating that they are willing to attempt an answer if called upon, that is, if given

the opportunity” (p. 547).

The second factor to take note of is that in the heuristic model, the influences from Layer III down to Layer VI are more fluid in the upper layers (III & IV), and become more rigid in the lower ones. Thus, Layer III, Box 4, State Communicative Self-Confidence, deals with a L2 learner’s confidence of being able to communicate effectively in a situation-by-situation basis, whereas Layer VI, Box 12, Personality, is more of a permanent or fixed trait. In addition, factors higher on the model (Layers III & IV) have a stronger influence than the lower layers (V & VI): “We regard the intergroup context and the personality of the learner as variables that set the stage for L2 communication, but that are less directly involved in determining a learner’s WTC at a given time” (MacIntyre, et al., 1998, p. 558).

As previously mentioned, although McCroskey and Baer’s (1985) original concept of WTC was strictly personality trait-driven, the above model acknowledges the largely contextual influences on a person’s likelihood of speaking up. This major shift invited further exploration on positive and negative reinforcement on the “language ego”: What situational and temporary influences affect our WTC, and to what extent? There have been many studies documenting quantifiable research on WTC. Researchers in Pakistan (Bukhari, Cheng, & Khan, 2015) measured EFL students’ WTC in a variety of situations (i.e., with a single stranger versus among a group of acquaintances). Motivations and WTC were used as predictors of L2 use in a study on Japanese students (Hashimoto, 2002). In Korea, a survey-based study (Park & Lee, 2013) linked Korean university students’ oral communicative competence with WTC and motivation, concluding that “motivational strategies should be emphasized in order to improve Korean students’ WTC” (p. 263) and finding secondarily that “students prefer to speak to strangers outside the classroom” (p. 264).

Of particular interest to the present study are Box 4 of Layer III, State Communicative Self-Confidence, and Box 7 of Layer IV, L2 Self-Confidence. As previously mentioned, Box 7, L2 Self-Confidence, is a broader confidence in one’s overall command of the L2, whereas Box 4, State Communicative Self-Confidence, is the confidence that one has the ability to communicate their needs in the specific context, for example, a confident understanding of the question posed, a confident knowledge of the answer, and the confidence to communicate the answer with proper syntax.

While the washback effect oftentimes is understood to deal with how the mere existence of a test can have an effect on the teaching of the parameters of the test (i.e., English classes concentrating on honing test-taking skills instead of increasing fluency; Alderson & Wall, 1993), this paper is more concerned with the direct effects of taking an English proficiency test with the cultural importance that the TOEIC has on a language learner’s WTC. My hypothesis is that the act of taking the TOEIC will have an adverse effect on a speaker’s self-perceived competence in English, thus lowering their L2 self-confidence. This in turn can negatively affect the intergroup climate, interpersonal and intergroup motivation, and intergroup attitudes.

## METHOD

In order to best quantify students’ WTC, a survey was conducted three times per class throughout the 15-week semester: once at the beginning, once in the middle (before the TOEIC was administered), and once as soon as possible after the test. The first phase, conducted in the spring and fall semesters of 2013, contained the questions in Table 1.

**TABLE 1. Survey Questions: Phase 1**

P1	Questions	Answer Choices
Q1	How comfortable would you feel speaking 1-on-1 with a native English speaker?	(not comfortable) 1 2 3 4 5 (very comfortable)
Q2	How comfortable would you feel speaking with a native English speaker with your friends present?	(not comfortable) 1 2 3 4 5 (very comfortable)

This paper survey was given to 135 first-year nursing students in March 2013. The second round, in April 2013, was given to 113 first-year nursing students, and the final round was given to 134 first-year nursing students in September 2013, as soon as possible after administering the TOEIC. Due to the make-up of the major, the vast majority (about 90 percent) were female. The average age was 20 years old. These surveys were given during English class. It should be noted

that both English class and the TOEIC were mandatory requirements for all students.

The second phase of the research, conducted in the spring and fall semesters of 2015, contained the questions in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. Survey Questions: Phase 2**

P1	Questions	Answer Choices
Q3	On a scale of 1–10, 1 being “beginner” and 10 being “fluent,” what is your English level?	(beginner) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (fluent)
Q4	Would you feel comfortable speaking 1-on-1 with a native English speaker?	Yes / No
Q4	Would you feel comfortable speaking with a native English speaker with your friends present?	Yes / No

This survey was given to first-year nursing students three times: The first round was given during English class the first week of March 2015, and 193 students responded. The second round, in November 2015, was given to 171 first-year nursing students during English class the week before taking the TOEIC. The third and final rounds were also given in November 2015, directly after administering the TOEIC. For this phase of the research, the survey was conducted online: [www.socrative.com](http://www.socrative.com). Once again, English class and taking the TOEIC are both requisites for completion of the nursing major.

An initial review of the survey led a critic to comment on questions 4 and 5: Why is it necessary to include the term *native English speaker*? Is speaking with a native speaker necessarily a part of EFL learning? This is a valid criticism of the survey, and it allows for a further analysis of the methodology: A shortage of native English speakers in the Korean language learning context is certainly not a pitfall to becoming fluent in the language. Indeed, research has shown that modern L2 English learners tend to speak English more often with other Asian L2 English speakers (McKay, 2002). What was meant by the term *native English speaker* was the hidden insinuation that code-switching from English (L2) to Korean (L1) would not be an option.

## RESULTS

**TABLE 3. Data Results: Phase 1**

Phase 1	R1 (Mar. 2014)	R2 (April 2014)	Percent Change	R3 (Sept. 2014: Post-TOEIC)	Percent Change
Q1 Avg 1:1 WTC: Higher is better (1-5)	1.87	2.25	+20%	2.22	<-1%
Q2 Avg Group WTC: Higher is better (1-5)	2.76	2.95	+7%	2.83	-4%

For analysis purposes, Phase 1 answers were kept at their numerical value, thus maximum possible value for both Q1 and Q2 for each round would be 5.00 (Table 3).

**TABLE 4. Data Results: Phase 2**

Phase 2	R1 (Mar. 2015)	R2 (Nov. 2015: Pre-TOEIC)	Percent Change	R3 (Nov. 2015: Post-TOEIC)	Percent Change
Q3 Avg Perceived L2 Competence: Higher is better (1-10)	3.57	4.21	+18%	4.15	-1%
Q4 Avg 1:1 WTC: Higher is better (0-1)	0.26	0.25	-4%	0.14	-44%
Q5 Avg Group WTC: Higher is better (0-1)	0.31	0.38	+23%	0.35	-8%

For analysis purposes, Phase 2, Q3 was kept at its numerical value. Students were asked to assign a number (1–10) to their English competency level. Maximum possible value for Q3 for each round would be 10.00. For Q4 and Q5, as the questions were binary *yes/no*-questions, a value of 1.00 was given to affirmative (*yes*) answers, and 0 was given to negative (*no*) answers. The results show the percent of affirmative answers, and the maximum possible value is 1.00 (Table 4).

## DISCUSSION

The data supports both hypotheses. In both Phase 1 and Phase 2, students' perceived competence rose from the first to the second round, given before the TOEIC, and then dropped after, supporting the hypothesis that taking the TOEIC can have an adverse effect on WTC. In Phase 2, students' perceived competence rose during the school year, and then dipped after the TOEIC, although the percent change was near negligible at a little over 1 percent. In addition, it should be noted that, although the data shows a slight negative impact on both perceived competence (Phase 2, Q3) and perceived confidence (Phase 1, Q1 and Q2; Phase 2, Q4 and Q5), overall, the effect of English education between the first and second rounds had a greater positive impact. The fluctuations in students' answers for all questions support the initial theory of MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998) – that WTC is a constantly changing set of influences.

## CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are numerous limitations to the present study. Apart from the standard limitations inherent in self-report studies, these surveys were given during a mandatory English class, and again after a mandatory TOEIC test, calling into question students' motivation for learning English. This should be viewed as a preliminary study, or as a small part of the overall body of theory and research regarding WTC. Thus, it is recommended that this study be replicated by another party in order to add authority to the hypotheses.

However, if the data is to be accepted as accurate, it should be recommended that the TOEIC not be administered as a requisite for continuing education. For further studies, it would be interesting to see how long it takes for a student to recover perceived confidence/competence after taking the TOEIC, and how students with different scores react to taking the TOEIC, or how viewing TOEIC score results can affect perceived confidence/competence.

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# **I'm Glad It's Correct, but Does It Make Sense? Formulation of Meaning in Compositions of South Korean EFL Learners**

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While educators in South Korea have identified a need to change outdated practices of language pedagogy, continued utilization of the grammar–translation approach has perpetuated communication problems in a South Korean EFL context. To provide clinical analysis needed for effective reform, literal, figurative, and discursive aspects of formulaic language were studied in Korean EFL compositions from the Gachon Learner Corpus (GLC). Frequency values for 43 collocations related to the verb *make* were tallied by proficiency level and examined for patterns in usage. Most formulaic elements, with the exception of speech formulas for causation or force, were poorly represented, revealing little figurative or discursive expression of meaning. Results suggest that, at all levels, small lexical chunks are pieced together to form larger collocations via an overly simplistic (and literal) process of form-to-meaning mapping. Overemphasis of the grammar–translation method appears to produce compositions with long chains of information, loosely related by “fuzzy” semantic connections to adjacent lexical features.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, South Korea has become known for academic excellence. In 2009, Korean students dominated the subject areas of reading and math, earning top scores on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). In 2012, Korean achievement continued to be impressive, being well above the global average in reading, math, and science (Center on International Education Benchmarking, 2015). Despite tremendous achievement in primary academic subjects, performance outside the core has been lackluster. Extreme expenditures on foreign language education, for example, have failed to boost English ability.



Global rankings of English proficiency have continued to slip, dropping from 24th place in 2012 to 27th in 2015 (English Proficiency Index, 2015; Kwaak, 2014). It appears that a singular focus on core subject areas has left students ill-equipped to effectively communicate in English. This perspective is exemplified by South Korean college students: Despite having at least six years of English education in primary and secondary school, students are often unable to maintain rudimentary conversations with native English speakers (Niederhauser, 2012).

Although overemphasis of core subject areas has an impact on English proficiency, cultural and historical influences also affect the acquisition process. Traditional forms of English education in Asian countries like South Korea prepare learners via rote memorization, grammar–translation, and verbal drills. Classes utilize a teacher-centric paradigm in which learners are “fed” knowledge by the teacher, who serves as a content expert (Rao, 2002). While congruent with autocratic Confucian paradigms, which delineate asymmetrical social positions based on status, the use of drills and grammar–translation are ineffective means of developing communicative competence (Wong & VanPatten, 2003). The methods emphasize grammatical structures at the expense of purposeful communication, precluding the development of oral and written discourse (Kim & Kim, 2005).

While educators in Asian contexts like South Korea have identified a need to change outdated practices of language pedagogy, ineffective curricula, unsupportive management, and examination pressure hinder efforts to change (Lee, 2014). Traditional teacher-centric forms of English instruction continue to inculcate grammar and vocabulary through rote memorization. Issues associated with this approach are illustrated by a Korean author who writes, “You can see it these days at nearly every home in Asian countries, including Korea and China: young prodigal kids, sitting at a desk studying English or mathematics by themselves, accompanied by a dutiful parent or private tutor as they take mock tests” (Park, 2012, para. 3). With authoritative parents and teachers who strictly control student behavior, learners have little opportunity or motivation to work in collaborative peer groups. Thus, they lack meaningful experiences in English needed to communicate through either verbal or written media.

## Efforts to Facilitate Communication

Despite governmental policy advocating communicative language development in schools (Dailey, 2010; Kim, 2004), lack of authentic communication, due primarily to overemphasis on receptive learning, has had a detrimental impact on English proficiency (Moodie & Nam, 2016). Students understand definitions of vocabulary and grammatical structures, yet lack the knowledge of discourse needed to converse or write effectively (Niederhauser, 2012). To address this issue, several resources that utilize authentic English structures have been suggested. English corpora, such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), have been proposed to provide more meaningful input (Carlstrom, 2014). Via handouts or guided tasks, students can become the researcher, discovering how grammatical features are used in real life. While potentially useful, the efficacy of such media has yet to be concretely established (Carlstrom, 2014; Schenck & Cho, 2012). Problems realizing efficacy may rest in communicative limitations of such approaches. While corpora or online dictionaries give students information about simple grammatical forms, they do not often provide pragmatic information needed for utilization in specific contexts. Consider the following statement:

The boss is headed your way. Better *make a run for it*.

Lacking extensive information about context of the collocation for *make*, a foreign language learner may not recognize the negative connotation of the target expression, which means “to avoid or escape.” Learners may also misinterpret the pronoun *it*, believing it to be something that must be retrieved. Essentially, limited contextual input within a corpus encourages second language learners to interpret words more literally through bottom-up analysis. More extensive input that encourages top-down processing of discourse may be needed to enhance communication.

In order to promote language learning from a top-down perspective, researchers and educators have called for a critical approach to literacy. They identify the importance of promoting authentic and meaningful language use by considering multiple perspectives (Lee, Ardeshiri, & Cummins, 2016; Shin, 2007). Through critical examination of various texts, which depict both global and local issues, a better understanding

of language may be cultivated. As in corpus-based approaches to pedagogy, critical literacy may be problematic in a Korean context. Research suggests that learning in teacher-centric, authoritarian classrooms leaves students unable to critically analyze issues external to their own lives (Niederhauser, 2012). Due to a singular focus on Korean concepts within high school curricula and college entrance exams, learners cannot view situations from unconventional perspectives, precluding identification of figurative meanings in discourse.

Although Korean educators now understand the need to cultivate better understanding of communicative processes, namely, the means to convey meaning in spoken or written form, curricular reform continues to be a daunting task. Thus far, efforts to implement authentic curricula in Korean public schools, via assessments like the National English Ability Test (NEAT), have failed (Moodie & Nam, 2016). Within higher educational contexts, efforts to implement English-medium instruction have had some positive outcomes, yet they lack a support system for learners or teachers who are not prepared for such an approach (Byun et al., 2011). Failures at implementing innovative reforms in a Korean context may be caused by improper identification of learner needs (Byun et al., 2011; Moodie & Nam, 2016). Concerning this issue, Moodie and Nam (2016) state that researchers must “(re)consider learning objectives to reflect how Koreans encounter English (outside the classroom) in order to bring a more practical approach to language education” (p. 91). Without such inquiry, students will continue to use receptive skills learned for the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT), which prevents use of English for any meaningful purpose.

While efforts have been made to increase quality of English instruction, reforms have not significantly changed the highly receptive nature of Korean EFL learners. As suggested in prior research, improper preparation for innovative new solutions is a primary factor perpetuating the problem (Dailey, 2010; Kim, 2004). One major hindrance to the preparation process is an unclear understanding of how traditional Asian approaches to language pedagogy impact the learning process. Due to perpetuation of the notion that grammatical accuracy, rather than production of meaning, is the key to effective writing, both educators and researchers in a South Korean context continue to emphasize syntax, rather than figurative, pragmatic, and discursive aspects of writing. Such a one-sided approach to instruction has, in turn, produced a gap in understanding that impedes educational reform. Essentially, more holistic

research of semantic development in a Korean context is needed to accurately identify how communicative ability may be enhanced. Using a clinical evaluation of Korean EFL learner issues associated with the formulation of meaning, information about current challenges to communicative competence may become more salient, leading to more practical solutions. Reforms may then be considered alongside cultural and educational traditions prevalent in South Korea, ensuring that new learning techniques can be effectively adapted to a Confucian context.

### **Formulaic Language as a Gauge of Communicative Competence**

As suggested by Hymes (1972), communicative competence is much more than an ability to use grammar; it is the power to convey meaning in a variety of social situations. Research suggests that communicative competence systematically develops as formulaic aspects of language are encoded with literal, figurative, or discursive connotations. Initially, literal meanings are mapped to small lexical features like nouns, verbs, and adjectives (VanPatten, 2004). Because these features contain foundational information concerning agents, actions, and qualities of a sentence, they are essential for basic communication. Following acquisition of lexical features, meaning is developed through use of grammar (VanPatten, 2004). First, morphology emerges to enhance the meaning of adjacent lexical features. The progressive *-ing* and past *-ed*, for example, add semantic sophistication to verb phrases, while articles and the plural *-s* add meaning to noun phrases. As semantic complexity increases, links to multiple lexical phrases become expressed through features like the possessive *'s*, which connects an object with its owner, and the third person singular *-s*, which connects an action to its agent (Cook, 1993; Dulay & Burt, 1973; Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Like inter-phrasal morphology, syntactic features constraining word order also reveal growing complexity of relationships between lexical elements. Questions, phrasal verbs, *can*-inversion (e.g., *Can* you tell me where the subway is?), and tag questions all require semantic understanding, linking multiple phrasal and sentential elements. Thus, it is no surprise that these features emerge late in the process of grammar acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 2009; Pienemann, 1999, 2005).

In addition to the literal development of meaning, figurative and discursive competence develop as learners become more proficient. Initially, discourse becomes organized into distinct segments using

formulaic connectors, such as conjunctions or transitions (Hoey, 1996, p. 5). The transition, “to make matters worse,” for example, links past discussion of negative experiences with illustration of a more serious calamity. Research suggests that features connecting discourse, like their morphological and grammatical counterparts, develop systematically as proficiency increases (Evers-Vermeul, 2009; Spooren & Sanders, 2008). In addition to discursive linguistic features, figurative language appears to be acquired systematically. Research of avoidance, for example, reveals that figurative phrasal verbs develop after their literal counterparts (Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004).

Despite evidence that literal, discursive, and figurative aspects of language develop systematically as proficiency increases, few studies examine each of these features concurrently. Kecskes (2007), however, has examined these features collectively, placing them on one formulaic continuum (Table 1):

**TABLE 1. Formulaic Continuum**

Grammatical Units	Fixed Semantic Units	Phrasal Verbs	Speech Formulas	Situation-Bound Utterances	Idioms
Be going to	As a matter of fact	Put up with	Going shopping	Welcome aboard	Kick the bucket
Have to	Suffice it to say	Get along with	Not bad	Help yourself	Spill the beans

(Kecskes, 2007, p. 3)

On the left side of this continuum (Table 1), grammatical units have a simple form–meaning mapping. The syntactic feature “have to,” for example, generally signifies a compulsory action. Like grammatical units, fixed semantic units like “As a matter of fact” have literal form–meaning mappings, which may be discerned through consecutive and cumulative interpretation of component parts. These features, however, may also be imbued with discursive meaning, serving to link ideas within conversation or text. Categories to the right of fixed semantic units in Table 1 tend to be more figurative. In the case of phrasal verbs and idioms, for example, meaning cannot often be construed by simply

adding the definitions of individual words. Meaning must be gleaned by looking at the words or expressions collectively. In the case of Situation-Bound Utterances (SBUs), context is required to facilitate understanding. Collectively, the formulaic continuum outlines importance of not only bottom-up form-meaning mappings and the accumulation of meaning, but top-down figurative interpretation of larger expressions and compositions.

Due to literal, figurative, and discursive meanings associated with formulaic language, it serves as an ideal gauge for communicative competence. Whereas individual words and grammatical features reflect literal form-meaning mappings from a bottom-up perspective, fixed semantic units, phrasal verbs, and idioms expose figurative or discursive understanding, as well as top-down linguistic processes. Because formulaic language is so versatile and semantically sophisticated, it may be used to evaluate Korean learners, who exhibit problems communicating in both oral and written discourse. Clinical analysis of language could reveal key gaps in literal, figurative, and discursive understanding not inculcated through either the grammar-translation or audiolingual approach. Consequently, quantitative and qualitative analysis of formulaic language was utilized within this study to evaluate communication of Korean EFL learners, as well as the impact of Asian language pedagogy.

## Research Questions

Traditions of language pedagogy, which promote grammar-translation and drill through teacher-centric inculcation, have hampered the degree to which Korean EFL learners can communicate. Despite a clear understanding of vocabulary and grammatical structures, learners have difficulty utilizing these constituents to compose meaningful texts. While a need to enhance communicative competence in South Korea is now clearly evident, inadequate understanding of problems caused by traditional Asian language pedagogy has masked identification of essential reforms. More clinical analysis of learner communication, interpreted in the context of historical and cultural educational traditions, is needed to find more effective pedagogical techniques.

Due to a need for further research on communication in a Korean EFL context, the following questions have been posed:

1. How is meaning produced in Korean EFL learner compositions?
2. How does formulation of meaning develop as English proficiency increases?
3. What problems with the formulation of meaning are reflected by errors in the use of formulaic language?

## METHOD

### Data Resource

To analyze the communicative competence of Korean learners, the Gachon Learner Corpus (GLC) was utilized (Carlstrom, 2013). The corpus contains 16,111 texts (1,824,373 words) from Korean EFL learners at university. In addition to information about English proficiency level (TOEIC, TOEFL, or IELTS score), each text contains metadata concerning the writer's languages learned in high school, years of English study before college, and university major. Information was accessed via the CQPweb, which is a new web-based corpus analysis system that allows for keyword searches and analysis of collocations (Hardie, 2012).

### Scope of Examination

To assess the communicative competence of Korean learners, a systematic means of evaluating formulaic language was designed. First, the verb *make* was selected from a list of the top one hundred most common words in the English language (Fry & Kress, 2012). Unlike other features included in the list (e.g., *the*, *and*, *from*, *if*, etc.), the word *make* is lexical in meaning. It may be used to express the idea of production, as in the expression "make dinner." While there is a simple form-meaning mapping at the micro level, the word may also be imbued with discursive or figurative qualities at the macro level. *Make sense*, for example, is an idiomatic expression that can signify a useful thing to do, as in the sentence, "Marrying him right now just makes sense." In addition to idiomatic expressions, *make* may be used as a figurative phrasal verb; the term *make up*, for example, may be used to signify the creation of false information (e.g., make up a lie). Yet another use of

the verb *make* is as a speech formula that signifies either cause or force (e.g., makes me angry / make my brother clean his room). Finally, the verb *make* has discursive functions, serving to summarize (e.g., to make a long story short) or intensify (e.g., to make matters worse). Due to semantic complexity and frequent usage within the English language, the verb *make* was selected for analysis of Korean EFL learner competence.

To systematically evaluate different forms of *make*, a list of collocations was obtained from the English Vocabulary Profile (n.d.). This profile contains information about English language development (e.g., expressions, CEFR levels in which the expressions emerge, and meanings conveyed by expressions), which has been obtained from the collaborative study of researchers, academics, corpus linguists, teachers, testers, ministries of education, and other specialists (English Profile, n.d.). Using the profile for American English, 43 different forms of the word *make* were discovered (see Appendix A). Organized based upon the CEFR level in which they usually appear, expressions served as indicators of Korean EFL learner proficiency.

### **Gachon Learner Corpus (GLC) Frequency**

GLC frequency denotes the number of times a target collocation appears in the Korean EFL corpus. To discover issues with communication of meaning, expressions with *make* were located through using the search and collocation functions of the GLC (see Appendix for search strings). Expressions resulting from the search were then examined for congruence to one of the 43 categories of *make* in the English Vocabulary Profile (n.d.). Before expressions could be included within a frequency count, usage of a target collocation within the text had to satisfy the following two criteria:

1. The writer attempts to use the target expression (collocations associated with the feature are present even if there are grammatical errors that do not interfere with meaning).
2. The writer attempts to convey meaning associated with the target collocation.

Sometimes, a writer would attempt to use expressions, yet they would have grammatical errors. One learner, for example, wrote about getting a massage and stated “it is hard to *go make a time*” [sic]. Because



grammatical errors do not impede understanding of the expression, which signifies a personal desire to set aside time, it was included in the tally.

In other circumstances, grammatical errors or differences in meaning were not clear, obscuring understanding. One learner, for example, described beauty treatments by saying, “I know I have to facial and I want. But it must *make a time* and spend money” [sic]. In this context, the pronoun *it* appears to refer to the word *facial*, which suggests that the learner meant to communicate *take time*. Due to a grammatical ambiguity, the expression was eliminated from the tally. In another case, a learner used the expression, “I will make up for my appearance” [sic]. While grammatically accurate, proximity near a discussion of beauty care products revealed an intended meaning (put on make-up) different from the phrasal verb *make up for*. Thus, the expression was eliminated from the tally. In order to be included within frequency counts, all collocations had to be congruent in both grammatical form and meaning.

## Procedures

To address the research questions, which examined development of communicative competency, each form of *make* was systematically searched and tallied (see Appendix for search strings). Searches for causation (e.g., “make me happy”) and force (e.g., “make him go”) focused on personal pronouns that denoted people (*it* was excluded). Since these pronouns are not generally used with the word *make* to “produce” a person, they were deemed an adequate reflection of the target meanings. Other formulaic expressions were located using the keywords in the Appendix. Expressions resulting from all searches had to satisfy criteria for form and meaning before they could be included within the tally.

Tallies for expressions were separated into nine TOEIC proficiency levels (from 100–199 to 900–999). To provide additional information for the evaluation of semantic development, tallies were also collated with the student’s CEFR level, which was obtained by converting the TOEIC score (Table 2).

**TABLE 2. Mapping of TOEIC Scores to CEFR Level**

CEFR Level	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1-C2
TOEIC Score	120–224	225–549	550–784	785–944	945–

(Tannenbaum & Wylie, 2007)

Despite some issues of equivalence between standardized assessments (Harsch, 2014), conversion of scores provided a means to track learner development along universally delineated proficiency levels.

Speech formulas (causation and force) and other formulaic expressions were summarized in a table, which depicted the total number of target features at each level. Since the number of texts at each TOEIC proficiency level varied, a percentage was needed for comparison across levels. Thus, percentages were calculated by dividing the number of target features by total usage of *make* for each level in the GLC. Within the second stage of analysis, frequency of other formulaic expressions, which were much less common than speech formulas for causation or force, were depicted in a table. Qualitative analysis was conducted in the final stage. Utilization of meaning and form, along with notable errors, were examined within writing contexts for presentation within research findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of formulaic language development in Korean EFL texts revealed several key insights (Table 3). Speech formulas for causation or force (e.g., “make me happy” / “make him go”) emerged early in Korean EFL learner compositions, appearing in the A1 and early A2 stages. This finding did not match the CEFR vocabulary level predicted by the English Vocabulary Profile (n.d.), which was B1. These speech formulas were also used much more frequently than any other type of formulaic language, often surpassing 20% of overall use of the word *make* for each level. While meaning of such expressions is not literal (they do not retain the meaning *produce* or *create*), they are small and highly systematic. Furthermore, they are easily mapped to semantic concepts. The expression “make me happy,” for example, can simply be mapped to *cause* + *me* + *happy*. Collectively, small, systematic, and semantically simple attributes of speech formulas can explain high frequency values in the Korean EFL corpus. Such attributes are highly consistent with the grammar–translation approach, which promotes memorization of small lexical units that are formulaically pieced together. In effect, speech formulas provide a systematic “replacement” for semantic concepts conceived in the mother tongue.

As with frequency of speech formulas for causation and force, utilization of pronoun types with speech formulas appeared to represent traditional Korean language pedagogy. The pronoun *me*, which represented 50% or more of the pronouns at each proficiency level, revealed overemphasis of personal experience in Korean EFL compositions. Like systematic use of speech formulas, absence of critical inquiry concerning diverse subject areas may reflect inculcation through the grammar–translation approach. Dictation of learning exercises via an autocratic teaching style limits student exploration of alternative opinions, reflection on global issues, and collaboration with peers, which subsequently hinders diversification of written content. Like overutilization of the pronoun *me* in speech formulas, a lack of other formulaic language types, which are imbued with a variety of figurative, discursive, and rhetorical meanings, suggests issues with diversification of meaning in Korean EFL learner texts.

**TABLE 3. Frequency of Speech Formulas for Causation and Force According to Proficiency Level**

TOEIC SCORE	100-199	200-299	300-399	400-499	500-599	600-699	700-799	800-899	900-999
CEFR LEVEL	A1		A2		B1		B2		C1
<b>+Pronoun</b>									
make me	1	12	25	82	166	89	60	16	1
make you	1	2	2	11	49	9	5	0	0
make them	0	4	5	9	32	14	10	2	0
make us	0	1	2	11	21	11	3	1	0
make her	0	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	0
make him	0	0	1	1	5	6	0	1	0
<i>N</i>	2	19	35	114	275	132	79	21	1
%	66.67%	27.14%	15.77%	16.52%	21.86%	17.23%	21.88%	26.25%	22.22%
<b>Other Formulaic Language</b>									
<i>N</i>	0	0	8	14	24	13	9	1	0
%	0%	0%	3.60%	2.03%	1.91%	1.70%	2.49%	1.25%	0%

*Note.* Percentage values represent use of target expressions divided by total usage of the verb *make* in each proficiency level.

Further analysis of Table 3 suggested that formulaic language use is more prevalent in the early stages of proficiency. Percentages of use within the GLC were highest at early stages. Speech formulas, for example, were used 66.67% and 27.14% of the time in the earliest two proficiency levels, respectively; these values were higher than those at any other level. Likewise, other forms of formulaic language were used most prevalently in early stages. At the A2 proficiency level (the third TOEIC proficiency level), the highest percentage of use was revealed (3.60%). Rather than an increase in use of formulaic language as learners developed semantic sophistication, usage appeared to decrease and level off as proficiency increased.

Evaluation of idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs revealed very little clear developmental patterning (Table 4). More literal and fixed semantic units emerged earliest. *Make sure*, *make friends*, *to make matters worse*, *make fun of*, and *make way for* each appeared in the third TOEIC stage, which ranged from 300-399. Other than this finding, appearance of formulaic elements seemed sporadic. *Make fun of*, for example, which emerged early, did not appear again until a later stage of proficiency. *Make way for*, which normally emerges in stage C2 (English Vocabulary Profile, n.d.), was frequently used in early proficiency levels, yet was not used at higher proficiency levels. Relatively inconsistent and infrequent utilization of formulaic language across levels may further reflect language learning via the grammar-translation approach, which “feeds” students simple form-meaning mappings. Without awareness of contexts, connotations, or purposes associated with formulaic expressions, learners may be unable to utilize them consistently, explaining their random appearance in the corpus.

Like examination of frequency, qualitative analysis of formulaic expressions revealed seemingly random patterns of usage, supporting the idea that contexts, connotations, and purposes associated with formulaic language were not known to the students. Learners tended to chain small lexical combinations together, as in the following example:

\*know, it is not cheap and some time hard to go *make* a time. so  
i take the massage once in a 3 month (TOEIC 500)

In the excerpt, all constituents appear to be “pieced” together. Incorrect insertion of the article between the collocation *make time* also appears to suggest a bottom-up process, whereby individual words of the target

expression are chained together by an overly simplistic syntactic encoder. Very little top-down semantic processing of lexical features appears to be occurring. Instead, basic form-meaning mappings for individual words are utilized. Without a top-down semantic understanding of relationships between lexical elements, the learner may be unable to identify how figurative or idiomatic expressions can be grammatically modified.

**TABLE 4. Formulaic Language Use According to Proficiency Level**

Learner Proficiency (TOEIC Score)	100- 199	200- 299	300- 399	400- 499	500- 599	600- 699	700- 799	800- 899	900- 999
CEFR LEVEL	A1	A2			B1		B2	C1	
Make From			1						
Make Sure			1	3	6	1	2		
Make Up My Mind						1			
Make Friends			1	3	6	1	1		
Make Up For				1	1	2			
Make Into					1				
Make A Living				1			2		
Make One's Bed						1			
Make The Most Of					1				
Make A Big Difference				1	2	2	1	1	
To Make Matters Worse			1		1	1			
Make Fun Of			1				1		
Make Sense				1		2	1		
Make Time				2	2				
Make It (Be Successful)						1	1		
Make Ends Meet						1			
Make A Point Of					1				
Make Do					1				
Make Way For			3	2	2				

While some formulaic expressions were combined word by word, other expressions appear to have been constructed through lexical retrieval of small two-word units. Consider the following sentences from the GLC:

1. \*I am good at *make from* paper. (TOEIC 325)
2. \*In many cases of famous CEOs and celebrities, we can know that they couldn't *make it* their success without their practice and effort. (TOEIC 700)

In each example, errors suggest that two-word units are being lexically retrieved. In the first example, *make from* is utilized “as is,” without inserting a direct object (e.g., “make things from paper”). In the second example, *make it* is lexically retrieved and utilized with a direct object (“their success”), which suggests cognitive mapping of the two-word unit to a verb meaning *produce*. Neither example reveals semantic sophistication. In both cases, the verbs appear to be imbued only with a simplified semantic conception of *produce* or *yield*. Collocations do not reveal a heightened understanding of semantic relationships between words, nor do they reveal top-down cognitive processing of meaning.

Utilization of formulaic language tended to be isolated to piecing together one or two words, yet larger formulaic expressions were used on a limited basis by more advanced learners. As in the use of other formulaic expressions, collocations did not show a clear conception of meaning or connotation. In the expression “make light of me as a pig,” the phrasal verb is used to mean ridicule, rather than treating something as unimportant. In another example, which used “make a living,” meaning was not even clearly discernable (TOEIC score 460):

\*if you have to fix unpack fixes Humanbeing *make a living* with thought

In the excerpt, elements seem, once again, to be chained together without careful regard to meaning. Due to an apparent lack of semantic understanding, the learner is providing an overly simplistic, vague mapping of concepts through “daisy chaining” small lexical and grammatical elements.

Although grammatical accuracy tends to increase as TOEIC scores increase, overly simplistic form–meaning mapping remains evident. Even at higher levels, the encoding of meaning appears to be a bottom up process, whereby small lexical utterances are chained together. Refer to the following paragraph from one of the most proficient learners in the GLC (TOEIC score 925):

so i decided to use beauty products as mask packs and ample..something else i think that using personal care and beauty products can **make** people who use those more fascinating **making** one's image better is good for themselves so i will use those things to make my image more fascinating it's a trend so i am just a man who is simply affected by human society i'll follow the trend. [sic]

While the learner tends to use grammatical features more accurately than lower-level learners, meaning of sentences appear to change and drift with no regard to organization of ideas or purpose. Writing appears focused on the local lexico-grammatical units being written, rather than the overall pragmatic purpose of the writing. The text reflects little understanding of higher-order processes needed to organize discourse or communicate for a specific purpose. Collectively, quantitative and qualitative analysis appears to reveal issues with the grammar–translation approach, which emphasizes learning through translation of individual words and grammatical features. Without contextual understanding, learners appear unable to effectively use expressions for any practical purpose. As a result, formulaic language is used sporadically and erroneously according to a simplistic orientation, which is framed in individual experience.

### **Implications for Pedagogy**

Analysis of formulaic language has yielded several insights concerning the development of communicative competence in a South Korean EFL context. Although formulaic expressions are indeed utilized, they have many semantic and grammatical errors, remnants of small language segments inculcated via the grammar–translation method. Because learners have acquired linguistic structures through rote memorization rather than authentic input and communication, they appear to lack figurative, discursive, and rhetorical knowledge required to speak or write for a distinct purpose.

Deficiency in understanding of meaning has given learners a unique form of language construction. Small lexical units, usually one or two words, are retrieved and pieced together using an overly simplistic understanding of form–meaning mappings. Utilization of this learning style influences language in two ways. First, several grammatical and semantic errors emerge when lexical units are pieced together

incorrectly. Because meaning is not considered from a top-down perspective, relationships between lexical features are not identified, precluding correction of errors. Second, long chains of information, only loosely related to adjacent words or phrases, are developed when lexical and grammatical features are combined. At the level of discourse, this technique creates a generic composition, devoid of coherent rhetorical devices for specific communicative purposes. There is little diversification of writing to express diverse ideas or serve different purposes.

To overcome the “daisy-chaining” effect, students must learn to make larger semantic connections between words, phrases, and sections of text. More extensive use of summary skills is one means of correcting this issue. Summary compels learners to examine discourse and negotiate meaning of key points. It also promotes top-down understanding, which is essential for purposeful writing. In addition to summarization, skills for synthesizing information from multiple sources are needed to facilitate top-down interpretation of meaning as well as mapping of larger lexical phrases to semantic concepts. Due to years of education via the grammar–translation approach, which supports bottom-up linkage of individual words and grammatical features, Korean students may have difficulty utilizing top-down linguistic skills to summarize, evaluate, or cite multiple sources.

Despite a tendency in Korean EFL contexts to promote similarities of essay type, differences in discourse are often given much less coverage, resulting in an all-purpose, generic essay structure (Kim & Kim, 2005). Via a “universal” form of discourse, thesis statements and key points are utilized regardless of genre. In reality, differences in discourse must be stressed if learners are to write for a particular purpose. While teaching commonalities between genres is indeed important, when overemphasized, learners obtain a false notion of discursive simplicity. Essentially, teaching one universal framework leaves students ill-equipped to write texts for a specific purpose. This issue may be addressed by developing a purpose-driven syllabus for formulaic language. Table 5 outlines how a pragmatic syllabus might be designed for the target form, *make*, to promote effective use of formulaic language.

In contrast to the grammar–translation method, which promotes utilization of grammar and vocabulary in contextual isolation, pragmatic presentation of features reveals a distinct communicative purpose for the



target language. If learners lack clear knowledge of purpose, they will have little motivation to use new idioms, expressions, or grammatical features. Thus, pragmatic syllabi like that in Table 5 are needed. These syllabi may promote top-down processing of target expressions, thereby helping learners identify semantic relationships between words, phrases, and sections of texts.

**TABLE 5. Pragmatic Syllabus for Formulaic Language Use**

Purpose	Example
1. Intensify	To make matters worse...
2. Justify	It just makes sense.
3. Put into larger perspective / Summarize	To make a long story short...
4. Refute	Many people make light of smoking in public places, yet it is a significant problem.
5. Add negative connotation	I have to make do with the life I have.
6. Convince the reader	This story will make your blood run cold.
7. Describe controversy	The new technology is making waves in the music industry.
8. Defend a position	We must make allowances for student issues which affect their learning.

While summary, synthesis, and analysis of textual differences are all essential components promoting comprehension and, thereby, the ability to write, learners in a Korean context will need more cognitive development. Teacher-centric, authoritarian classes have hampered facilitation of critical-thinking skills necessary to look at similarities or differences between sources. As revealed by emphasis of the pronoun *me* with *make*, simplistic descriptions related to the author’s experience predominate. Traditional teacher-centric, authoritarian classrooms may have left students with an inability to examine issues external to South Korea. Without a way to critically analyze novel subject matter, learners may have difficulty cultivating the skills necessary to write effectively.

Because years of teacher-centric learning have limited the extent to which learners may critically process the meaning of English texts, systematic pedagogical interventions are needed. Reading annotation may be one successful means to promote deeper understanding of meaning as well as more structured analysis of readings (Chen & Chen, 2014; Nor,

Azman, & Hamat, 2013). Annotation can be used to promote higher-level cognitive skills like analyzing, summarizing, and evaluating. It can also promote the identification and utilization of different literary genres. While annotation represents an ideal means to facilitate cognitive processing of meaning needed to become an effective writer, the tool will need to be carefully scaffolded. Since Korean learners lack the foundation from which to utilize the technique, they will first need to annotate materials more closely related to their lives. Through providing step-by-step analysis of issues that move from local to global, critical-thinking skills may be developed. Learners may also systematically move away from egocentric views of experience toward more critical evaluation of global issues.

## CONCLUSIONS

Results of formulaic language analysis suggest that small grammatical formulas are utilized, yet they are created using overly simplistic form-meaning mappings. Overall, there seems to be little figurative, discursive, or rhetorical language at any proficiency level. Deficiencies in communicative competence appear to rest with overemphasis of the grammar-translation approach, which does not provide authentic input or opportunities to exchange ideas. Lacking a clear purpose for the writings created, Korean EFL learners appear to compose texts as a mere academic exercise, chaining lexical chunks together. This language style has resulted in the following problems within Korean EFL compositions, regardless of proficiency level:

1. Chains of small lexical chunks that are only loosely related to adjacent features
2. A universal, generic form of discourse with no clear purpose
3. Writings without figurative, discursive, and rhetorical devices
4. Sporadic use of formulaic language, which reflects little understanding of nuances associated with the language
5. Little change of content-based upon context or situation

To reduce issues with communication and increase writing proficiency, learners must be provided with pedagogical techniques like

summary or synthesis, which promote top-down semantic processing. Through such techniques, learners can identify relationships between words, phrases, and sections of text. In addition, teachers need to emphasize differences in discourse to promote more meaningful communication. This may be accomplished through stressing the pragmatic functions of formulaic language. While bottom-up semantic processing (basic form–meaning mapping) is indeed necessary, top-down semantic processing must also be encouraged, ensuring complete acquisition of tools necessary for communication. Ultimately, learners must be given writing exercises with a clear communicative objective, not an academic one. Without having a salient purpose for writing, Korean EFL learners may have little motivation to develop content, perpetuating problems with communication.

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## APPENDIX

## Search Strings for Formulaic Features

Formulaic Feature (CEFR LEVEL)	Search String (GLC)	Formulaic Feature (CEFR LEVEL)	Search String (GLC)
Make From (A2)	mak* + Colloc. (from)	Make Yourself At Home (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (home)
Make Sure (A2)	mak* + Colloc. (sure)	Make A Note (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (note)
Make Up My Mind (B1)	mak* + Colloc. (mind)	Make Way For (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (way)
Make A Face (B1)	mak* + Colloc. (face)	Make Do (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (do)
Make Friends (B1)	mak* + Colloc. (friends) mak* + Colloc. (friend)	Make A Splash (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (splash)
Make A (Big) Difference (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (difference)	Make Light Of (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (light)
Make Sense (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (sense)	Make Allowances For (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (allowances)
Make A Living (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (living)	Make Your Blood Run Cold (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (blood)
Make The Most Of (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (most)	Make Your Blood Boil (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (blood)
To Make Matters Worse (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (matters)	Make My Day (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (day)
Make Fun Of (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (fun)	Make A Name For Yourself (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (name)
Make Up For (B2)	mak* up + Colloc. (for)	Make Your Presence Felt (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (presence)
Make Into (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (into)	Make A Run For It (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (run)
Make One's Bed (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (bed)	Make Waves (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (waves)
Make The Best Of (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (best)	Make Your Way (Succeed) (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (way)
Make A Fool Of Yourself (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (fool)	Make Understood (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (understood)
Make For (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (for)	Make Of (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (of)

Make A Fool Out Of (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (fool)	Make Sense Of (C2)	mak* + Colloc. (sense)
Make Out (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (out)	make me (B1)	mak* me
Make Up (e.g., Lies) (B2)	mak* + Colloc. (NN)	make you (B1)	mak* you
Make It (Be Successful) (C1)	mak* it	make them (B1)	mak* them
Make Time (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (time)	make us (B1)	mak* us
Make Ends Meet (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (ends)	make her (B1)	mak* her
Make A Point Of (C1)	mak* + Colloc. (point)	make him (B1)	mak* him





# Effects of Pronunciation Instruction for Japanese University English Learners

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While researchers have identified the lack of English pronunciation instruction in Japanese education as a problem, pronunciation teaching strategies and materials are not yet standardized at any level of English education in Japan. This research aims to present, first, the process of implementation of tailored instructional materials for Japanese university learners of English, and second, the results of its implementation on participants' pronunciation performance. The evaluation of the pronunciation performance is especially focused on ten segmental features, consonants that do not exist in Japanese and are often cited as causing communication problems: /l/, /r/, /w/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, and /ʃ/. Student performance was evaluated at two levels, at the phoneme level and at the word level, with the target sound located at the beginning of each word. These results suggest that the instruction is effective in improving pronunciation for university-level students; however, it was revealed that not only is there a difference between achievement at the phoneme and word levels of performance but that the level of improvement varies among the targeted instructed phonemes.

## INTRODUCTION

English language proficiency has become more important than ever for people to communicate in English with others, whether those others have English as their first language (L1) or whether their L1 is another language. In this respect, Japanese university students, without exception, need to participate in the global community using their English language as a communication tool.

However, when exposed to real-life English speaking situations, Japanese students frequently encounter difficulty with simple

conversation. They soon come to realize that their English ability, usually acquired via formal instruction in school, is not sufficient and/or cannot be easily applied in actual communication. The causes of these communication breakdowns vary, but it is well known that a major issue in this regard is pronunciation, that is, the inability to produce English speech sounds with adequate proficiency at the level of the phoneme, which is the smallest unit of speech sound in a given language. Because students are not provided with enough opportunities to learn correct pronunciation by means of an explicit approach, or to practice correctly articulating newly introduced foreign sounds, they often remain uncertain about the pronunciation of those sounds. As a result, in some instances the speaker's English is not understood at all. It is unfortunate that, in many cases, Japanese students do not have enough phonetic knowledge to analyze the reason for the communication breakdown or to take corrective measures in order to improve subsequent attempts. With experience, they may come to realize that there are problems with their pronunciation and, to some degree, to understand the underlying causes.

Compromised communication is not the only issue that emerges from a lack of proper pronunciation instruction: Inadequate instruction also contributes to a negative attitude, poor confidence, and low motivation for students to improve their overall English ability. Experiences affected by this lack of understanding can make students hesitant to speak in English and can lead them to label themselves as poor English learners. This adverse self-image negatively affects their emotions, lowers their confidence, and gives them a negative overall image of their English skills. As a result, they are hesitant to speak and may even be afraid of attempting to produce utterances in English. Thus, a lack of adequate English pronunciation instruction directly affects their oral English production throughout their years of English learning and use. If learners are encouraged to develop this aspect of their language proficiency and move beyond the fear and hesitation it arouses, they may be better able to utilize and strengthen their English grammar and vocabulary skills through actual language use, and may develop more confidence in their overall English ability and stronger motivation to polish their English language skills. In this respect, pronunciation instruction is crucial for language learning.

To tackle the current situation, Chujo (2010, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2015) created an instructional design to teach pronunciation. Fifteen key principles formed the basis for the decisions on teaching

strategy and actual design of the instructional materials. It has been finalized as an easily implementable pronunciation coursebook (Chujo, 2017) for professors and instructors in Japanese university English classes for university students whose L1 is Japanese and is now available. The purpose of the coursebook is to help students attain the basis of internationally intelligible English pronunciation while fostering their affective domain. A class size of 30 to 40 students is common in a Japanese university setting, so the developed materials needed to be effective when implemented in a large-sized classroom.

This research presents the implementation of the tailored instructional design and the results of its implementation on participants' pronunciation performance. It especially focuses on providing an answer to the research question, "Does providing Japanese university learners of English with phonetic training in large-group instruction improve their actual articulation of selected segmental features (consonants) when using a reading script with rehearsal opportunities?" Two items are clear from this examination. First, beneficial pedagogical implications for pronunciation teaching for Japanese adult learners using this particular material can be derived. Second, methods beneficial for the entire field of pronunciation instruction can be determined.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

While it is widely accepted today that pronunciation plays a significant role in successful oral communication, its treatment historically has experienced a pendulum movement, viewed alternately as more important or central to language learning or more peripheral.

In a well-referenced teacher education coursebook, *Teaching Pronunciation* by Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2010), the authors give an overview of the history of English pronunciation teaching. They show that teachers' positions towards pronunciation, the dominant approaches, and the phonetic elements focused on have shifted back and forth at different times in history.

Pronunciation has been seen as the "Cinderella of language teaching" (Kelly, 1969, p. 87), in that, as Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, and Griner (2010), citing Kelly, explain, while many teachers have neglected it, its importance has gradually come to be recognized. Goodwin,

Brinton, and Celce-Murcia (1994) also state that

The teaching of pronunciation has at times been considered almost a luxury in the ESL/EFL curriculum, unlike reading, writing, listening, and general speaking fluency. But in recent years pronunciation has come to be recognized as an essential component in most ESL/EFL instructional programs. (p. 3)

Regarding instructional styles for pronunciation teaching, Naiman (1992) favors the idea of teaching pronunciation as its own class or as its own section of a general English class. He feels that doing so not only ensures that pronunciation instruction does not get omitted but leads students to give pronunciation the importance that it deserves. Naiman further reports that when he provided instruction that was communicative, learners were engaged and felt that the instruction was fun. When they began to realize the importance of pronunciation through actual communication experiences, they were eager to learn more.

In the field of material development as well, the tendency has often been to set pronunciation instruction aside or to neglect it altogether. Marks (2006) reported that even when pronunciation is included in coursebooks, it is as a side note or afterthought. Although the message that pronunciation instruction is a key element for building communicative competence seems largely to have been received, teachers and material developers, on the whole, still have not capably put it into actual practice.

In discussing English instruction of speaking skills in the EFL setting, it should be noted that Asian countries such as Korea and Japan share similar features. One such feature is that speaking practice itself (including but not limited to pronunciation alone) is not considered a focus in terms of socio-educational background in the English language classroom. Lee (1987) reports on Korean English classrooms and the attitudes and behavior of students. The report states that because of the large class sizes, students are “not used to speaking in class” (p. 340). Korean and Japanese students also share a similar attitude toward speaking in front of others. Just as with Korean students, “Japanese do not care to be ‘put on the spot’ in public; getting it wrong can be a cause of real shame, especially in front of classmates who are younger or socially inferior (in the Japanese sense)” (p. 309). For this reason “an impersonal treatment of an error, which turns it into a positive teaching

point without reference to the person who made the mistake, is expected and valued” (p. 341). Another shared trait is that both cultures emphasize grammatically based learning. “Koreans learn English with a strong emphasis on grammar” and both the students’ learning style and the teachers’ teaching styles depend on “spoon-feeding followed by learning by heart” (p. 340). In Japan, at least 90% of students learn English in order to prepare for the university entrance examination on which “English looms large” (p. 309). For this reason, “teacher-dominated lessons where much heed is paid to the ‘correct’ answer, learning of grammar rules, and item-by-item (rather than contextualized) vocabulary” (p. 309) is the norm in the Japanese classroom.

Even among professionals in related fields, there are varying opinions regarding the importance of English pronunciation instruction within Japan. Some state that pronunciation is not worth learning since it is a trivial aspect of overall communication. For instance, Torikai (2011) states that there is no need to correctly pronounce English /l/ and /r/ as different sounds, since the interlocutor will infer what is meant from the content of the utterance. (The English and Japanese “r” sounds are different. The English is presented in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) with the symbol /ɹ/ and the Japanese with /r/. For simplicity, the symbol /r/ is used here.)

An opposing argument has been expressed by researchers such as Shizuka (2009), who claims that pronunciation teaching is a fundamental aspect of English instruction and that pronunciation is the basis on which all other English skills are built. Another opinion frequently heard via personal contacts from university instructors in the teaching field is that teaching pronunciation is a waste of time since students could never learn correct pronunciation and instructional efforts would not improve learners’ pronunciation.

As Hewings (2004) states, the accurate production of consonants is more important in regards to pronunciation than the production of vowels: “Substituting one consonant with another is more likely to lead to communication breakdown than when a wrong vowel is used” (p. 15). In this regard, Korean and Japanese learners of English share similar negative influence from their L1. Lee (1987) states that on the segmental level, the noticeable problem for communication breakdown in both Korean and Japanese is the pronunciation of /l/ and /r/. They are represented by the same character and pronounced the same.

Simple examples of pronunciation-based misunderstandings that may

occur among Japanese speakers are ordering coffee and receiving Coke, or ordering vanilla ice cream and receiving banana ice cream instead. Of course, these miscommunications do not happen only between Japanese learners and English speakers; they can occur between speakers of any two languages if one or both of the speakers have not mastered intelligible pronunciation in the language being used. Japanese students learn English for at least six years before reaching the university level, and thus, they generally have enough English knowledge in areas such as grammar and vocabulary, but the small amount of attention devoted in class to oral communication skills, especially pronunciation, creates a deficit in this area and an imbalance in overall English ability.

A nationwide survey on English teaching focusing on frequency of pronunciation practice was recently conducted by MEXT (2013); 218 high schools responded. Questions were answered on a five-point Likert-type scale. The survey results indicated that pronunciation practice is generally done in Oral Communication I and II classes. (These classes focus on oral communication, as compared to English I and II, which focus on grammar and vocabulary. The teachers may be Japanese or English native speakers, and the classes may be offered in any of the three years of high school).

Further, regarding frequency of pronunciation practice in these classes, 64% of administrators answered “frequently” and 25% “sometimes” for Oral Communication I, and 38% answered “frequently” and 38% “sometimes” for Oral Communication II. If learners are actually practicing as these responses suggest, their pronunciation achievement should be relatively good. However, the data might be misleading and, thus, may need further analysis. Teachers who claim that they are conducting pronunciation instruction may misunderstand or misinterpret the definition of pronunciation instruction given in the survey. On the basis of concerns like these, Arimoto (2005) analyzed what was actually happening during “pronunciation teaching” in junior high school and high school language classrooms in Japan. Arimoto identified three typical characteristics of so-called pronunciation instruction in the actual Japanese English classroom, namely, that (a) there was no explicit, systematic teaching with IPA, (b) teachers would play model sounds on a tape or CD to students (or speak themselves), and (c) students would repeat what they heard. Arimoto pointed out that what these students were typically doing did not amount to real accent correction but simply the passive repetition of words, like parrots, with

questionable results for learning. As can be seen from Arimoto's (2005) points, pedagogical approaches to and priorities for English pronunciation are not well developed in Japan, even at the compulsory education level. This is one of the challenges for pronunciation instruction.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

A tailored instructional design (ID) developed to teach pronunciation in a systematic manner for Japanese university learners of English was implemented in two freshman English classes at a national university in Japan. Both classes were compulsory electives, meaning that they were required for most students, but students were able to choose from different instructors under the same course title. The classes were general English classes that took place during the fall semester of 2013. The class sizes were 29 (12 male, 17 female) and 31 (10 male, 21 female), yielding a total of 60 students. All were students in the faculty of Human and Social Sciences; their majors were international studies, humanities, law, education, economics, and regional development studies. All had been receiving English education under the Japanese English education system for the previous six years. No overseas returnees or graduates from international schools were in these classes. Among the 60 students in these classes, 59 agreed to participate in the research; no data are presented for the sixtieth.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES**

Using the teaching strategies with the instructional materials developed (Chujo, 2012b), the instruction took place during the fall semester, from September 30, 2013, to February 10, 2014. The class met once a week for 16 weeks with one week off for winter break. Each class session was 90 minutes. The present author, who was also the developer of the ID, served as instructor for both classes. The entire instruction process was held in English with the exception of written handouts explaining the procedures for recording and monitoring, the questionnaires, and the final pronunciation knowledge achievement



check. Attendance rate for the course averaged 99.75%. A detailed course schedule is presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1. Instruction Timeline and Implemented Activities**

Week	Date of Session	Instruction Items, Classroom Activities	Assignments
1	September 30, 2013	Course orientation Pre-instruction questionnaire Consent forms Pre-pronunciation recording	Assignment Unit 1 Pre-pronunciation recording
2	October 7, 2013	Preparatory Introduction Unit (pp. 1-5) Unit 1: /l/, /r/ (pp. 8, 9, 11, 12)	Assignments Unit 1: Memorization of tongue twisters and chants
3	October 21, 2013	Unit 1 (p. 10, p. 13, p. 14, pp. 16-20, (pp. 1-5))	Exercises 1-3, Topic dialogue 1 (Retry)
4	October 28, 2013	Unit 2: Consonants	Assignments Unit 2
5	November 6, 2013	Unit 3: Consonants (p. 45)	Assignments Unit 3, Memorization of tongue twisters and chants
6	November 11, 2013	Units 3-4 (pp. 46-53) Review of Units 1-4 Midterm examination announcement (pp. 1-82) Distribution of answers for assignments 1-3	Assignment Unit 3, Topic dialogue (pp. 46-48)
7	November 18, 2013	Units 4-7 (pp. 54-67)	Assignments Unit 4
8	November 25, 2013	Unit 5 Distribution of answers for assignments 4, 5 Unit 6	Assignments Unit 5
9	December 2, 2013	Midterm examination (paper-based; main section, pp. 1-82; Assignment section, pp. 141-152) Midterm recording	Midterm recording
10	December 9, 2013	Unit 6 (pp. 84-87) Unit 7: Monitoring activities 1 (Self- & peer evaluation,	Assignments Units 6, 7, 8

			comparison of pre- and mid-term recordings) File 1: (10 consonants, phoneme level) Midterm questionnaire	
11	December 16, 2013		Unit 6 (p. 87), Unit 8 (pp. 90–102, consonants)	Assignments Units 6, 7, 8
12	January 6, 2014		Unit 9 (pp. 104–115), Pronunciation structures, rhythm, stress, intonation	Assignments Unit 9
13	January 20, 2014		Unit 10 (pp. 116–125), Vowels 1	Assignments Unit 10
14	January 27, 2014		Unit 11 (pp. 126–135, Vowels 2) Unit 12 (pp. 136–140, pp.163–166)	Assignments Unit 11
15	February 3, 2014		Monitoring activities 2 (Self- & peer evaluation, Comparison of pre- and post-term recordings) File 1: (10 consonants, phoneme level), File 2: (10 consonants, word level) Post-instruction questionnaire, final recordings	Final recordings
16	February 10, 2014		Final examination (paper-based) Individual pronunciation evaluation and practice (with requests) Notification of pronunciation performance results for the final recordings	

Each class session was completed as laid out in Table 2, except for the session covering explicit suprasegmental features in Unit 9, for which a different instructional approach was adopted (see Table 2).

**TABLE 2. Order of Activities and Approximate Allotted Time**

IO	1		2		3		4		5
AT	6	→	4	→	10	→	8	→	3
A	Review		Tongue twister(s) (1)		Articulation (modeling, pictures and drawings, Japanese description)		Rhythmic reading of phonemes (creating an exercise)		Monitor with mirror (self- and peer monitoring)

IO	6		7		8		9		10
AT	5	→	15	→	3	→	10	→	6
A	Tongue twister(s) (2) (marking and counting)		Dictation of words and phrases (marking and slow reading)		Reading with dictated words and phrases with background beat		Exercises (minimal pair listening and reading aloud with rhythm, confusing sentence dictation with picture, etc.)		Chants (marking and counting)

IO	11		12
AT	17	→	3
A	Topic dialogue (1): Emi's story (dictation, marking, reading aloud, comprehension questions)		Discussing reasons for communication breakdown

Note. IO = instruction order, AT = activity time (in minutes), A = activity. One class = 90 minutes.

The allotted instruction time for each activity differed slightly depending on the number and difficulty of the target sounds. If all the planned activities could not be covered within a class, the instructor could omit the travel tips and topic dialogue activities, which the participants then completed as take-home assignments.

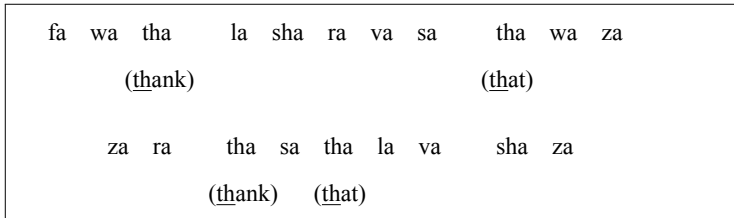
A minimally equipped university classroom was used for the instruction; it contained a blackboard, desks, and chairs. The instructor brought a laptop computer to every class to play the required CDs. Each participant was required to bring the coursebook and a recording device with microphone and earphones, such as a laptop, tablet, or cellular phone. Participants were provided a microphone and earphones for monitoring if they did not have their own.

The participants were assigned seats in the front of the classroom so that the instructor could check their articulation more closely. This also allowed them to better see the instructor's modeling. Participants were assigned to the same seats for the entire session.

## EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND RESULTS

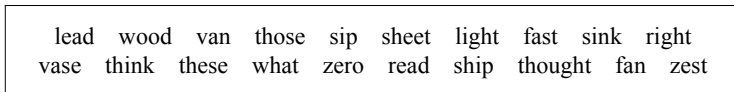
Among the three pronunciation performance recordings during the instruction, the pre- and post-instruction recordings were selected for pronunciation performance evaluation. These had been recorded as part of the prescribed monitoring activities in class and sent to the instructor. The same 10 target consonants used for knowledge evaluation were recorded for performance evaluation: /l/, /r/, /w/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, and /ʃ/. These sounds had been taught explicitly in the instruction.

Participants recorded two scripts for each recording (see Figures 1 and 2). The first script (the “phoneme-level” script) included each of the 10 target consonants followed by the vowel /a/. Each sound was randomly presented twice in the script (see Figure 2). Participants were instructed to read the items at one-second intervals.



**FIGURE 1. Video-Recording Script (phoneme level).**

The second script (the “word level” script) presented the same set of consonants, but each as the initial sound of a word. Each sound was presented in two different words placed in random order (see Figure 2).



**FIGURE 2. Video-Recording Script (word level).**

The participants’ productions of each sound at both the phoneme and word levels were evaluated by two female American English speakers in their 30s. One was a speech-language pathologist who had experienced a short stay in Japan; the other had had some exposure to theoretical linguistics as an English literature and Spanish major, and spoke fluent Spanish. Both had an MA degree and both grew up and lived in the

Pacific Northwest region of the United States (known for having a relatively standard accent).

For the evaluation procedure, these evaluators were presented with two sets of video files labeled “Phoneme level” with a student number and “Word level” with a student number, respectively. These files were edited versions of the original clips from the student assignments. Pre- and post-performances of each sound (or word) were randomly presented first or second, with the total number of first-sound-first and second-sound-first presentations balanced. Evaluators were asked to mark the sound (first (a) or second (b)) that sounded most like a comprehensible English sound with an “X.” They were not informed of which set of files was from the pre-instruction recording and which from the post-instruction recording. Both phoneme-level and word-level recordings were evaluated. For both levels, evaluators were instructed to assess only the initial target sound, not subsequent sounds or the overall word pronunciation. If the two presented sounds sounded the same or were indistinguishable, evaluators marked them either EC (equally comprehensible) or EI (equally incorrect, no change). Figure 3 shows a sample of a completed evaluation form.

Phoneme Level

	1 fa	2 wa	3 tha /θ/	4 la	5 sha	6 ra	7 va	8 sa	9 tha /ð/	10 wa
a		EC	EI					X	EI	EC
b	X	EC	EI	X	X	X	X		EI	EC

Word Level

	1 lead	2 wood	3 van	4 those	5 sip	6 sheet	7 light	8 fast	9 sink	10 right
a		EC			EI	EC			EI	
b	X	EC	X	X	EI	EC	X	X	EI	X

**FIGURE 3. Sample Pronunciation Performance Evaluation Form.**

The total number of recorded sounds was 960 (48 participants × 20 sounds) on the phoneme level and 900 (45 participants × 20 sounds) on the word level. The number of participants in this part of the study was affected by the fact that some students did not send recorded files, and some recorded files could not be played by the instructor. Each participant’s pre- and post-instruction performances were categorized into one of four categories: (a) sounds close to the English sound pre-instruction but not post-instruction, implying that instruction

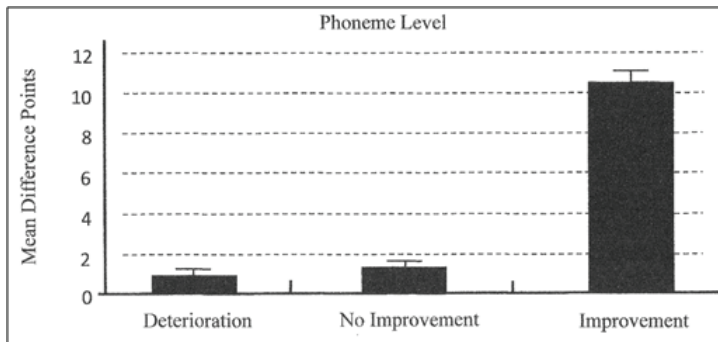
influenced it negatively (labeled *Deterioration* in Table 3); (b) sounds like the English in both pre- and post-instruction, implying that pre-instruction pronunciation was already correct (labeled *Both equally correct* in Table 3); (c) neither pre- nor post-instruction sounds like English, implying that the pronunciation was not acceptable at either time and instruction had no influence (labeled *No improvement* in Table 3); and (d) only sounds correct in post-instruction, implying that instruction had a positive influence (labeled *Improvement* in Table 3). This categorization was intended to differentiate between sounds that were improved through the instruction and sounds that were not. The statistics reflecting the pronunciation performance results for the phoneme and word levels are presented in Table 3.

**TABLE 3. Statistical Analysis of Pronunciation Performance Evaluation**

Categories	Phoneme Level (n = 48, Total 960 sounds)			Word Level (n = 45, Total 900 sounds)		
	TSA	M	SD	TSA	M	SD
1 Deterioration	40.50	0.84	1.10	43.00	0.96	0.84
2 Both equally correct	344.00	7.17	3.58	319.00	7.09	2.91
3 No improvement	66.50	1.39	1.72	86.50	1.92	1.81
4 Improvement	509.00	10.60	3.92	451.50	10.00	3.15

Note. TSA = Total sounds average across two evaluators, M = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

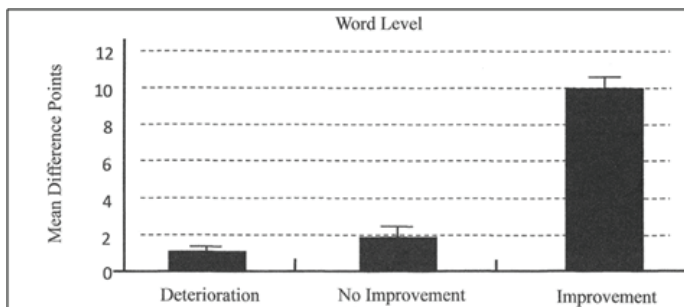
Figure 4 shows the three relevant categories of pronunciation performance evaluation results at the phoneme level in a bar graph.



**FIGURE 4. Mean Difference Points for Pronunciation Performance Evaluation (phoneme level).**

These results suggest that the instruction had a positive effect on participants' pronunciation performance on the phoneme level.

Word level pronunciation performance was also examined. Figure 5 shows the three relevant categories of pronunciation performance evaluation results on the word level in a bar graph.



**FIGURE 5. Mean Difference Points for Pronunciation Performance Evaluation (word level).**

These results suggest that the instruction had a positive effect on participants' pronunciation performance at the word level, as reported above for the phoneme level.

These statistical results clearly indicate that the participants achieved the kinetic instructional objectives and thus suggest that the instruction has an effect on improving the English pronunciation of Japanese university learners on both the phoneme and word levels in the context of reading a script presenting an initial consonant with practice opportunities.

To more closely examine achievement on individual sounds, the participants' pronunciation performance at the phoneme level was evaluated sound by sound. These results are shown in Table 4, ordered in terms of achievement ranking.

Participants' initial pronunciation proficiency for each sound differed, as did the degree of improvement for each. The sounds with the highest degree of improvement were /z/, with an improvement rate of 99%, followed by /w/ and /ʃ/, each with an improvement rate of 98%, and then /l/, at 97%. The three least improved sounds were /r/ at 76%, /v/ at 81%, and /ð/ at 86%.

**TABLE 4. Pronunciation Improvement for Individual Sounds at the Phoneme Level**

Phoneme Level ( $n = 48$ )					
Ranking	The Number of Sounds Required (a)	Unchanged Sounds (b)	Improved Sounds (c)	Improvement Rate (c) / (a) $\times$ 100	
1	/z/	22.75	0.25	22.50	99%
2	/w/	25.00	0.50	24.50	98%
3	/f/	26.00	0.50	25.50	98%
4	/l/	29.25	0.75	28.50	97%
5	/s/	14.75	0.75	14.00	95%
6	/f/	34.25	3.50	30.75	90%
7	/θ/	38.50	4.50	34.00	88%
8	/ð/	39.75	5.50	34.25	86%
9	/v/	35.25	6.75	28.50	81%
10	/r/	42.25	10.00	32.25	76%
Average		30.77	3.30	27.47	89%

Table 5 presents the pronunciation performance results at the word level, also listed by percentage ranking, with the most improved sound at the top of the list and the least improved at the bottom.

**TABLE 5. Pronunciation Improvement for Individual Sounds at the Word Level**

Word Level ( $n = 45$ )					
Ranking	Number of Sounds Required (a)	Unchanged Sounds (b)	Improvement Sounds (c)	Improvement Rate (c) / (a) $\times$ 100	
1	<i>fast</i>	24.0	1.0	23.0	96%
2	<i>fan</i>	26.0	1.5	24.5	94%
3	<i>what</i>	21.0	1.5	19.5	93%
4	<i>zest</i>	16.0	1.5	14.5	91%
5	<i>vase</i>	27.0	3.5	23.5	87%
5	<i>wood</i>	37.5	5.0	32.5	87%
7	<i>think</i>	37.5	6.0	31.5	84%
8	<i>light</i>	23.5	4.0	19.5	83%
9	<i>thought</i>	33.5	6.0	27.5	82%



10	<i>these</i>	35.5	7.0	28.5	80%
10	<i>sheet</i>	30.0	6.0	24.0	80%
10	<i>van</i>	32.0	6.5	25.5	80%
13	<i>lead</i>	29.5	6.5	23.0	78%
13	<i>zero</i>	18.0	4.0	14.0	78%
15	<i>those</i>	37.5	8.5	29.0	77%
16	<i>right</i>	34.0	9.5	24.5	72%
17	<i>read</i>	36.5	10.5	26.0	71%
17	<i>ship</i>	29.5	8.5	21.0	71%
19	<i>sink</i>	22.0	12.0	10.0	45%
20	<i>sip</i>	35.0	21.0	14.0	40%
Average		29.27	6.5	22.77	78%

The three sounds with the highest improvement rates at the word level were /f/ as in *fast* and *fan*, at 96% and 94%, respectively; followed by /w/ as in *what*, at 93%; and /z/ as in *zest*, at 91%. The three least improved sounds were /s/ as in *sip*, at 40%; /s/ as in *sink*, at 45%; and /ʃ/ as in *ship*, at 71%.

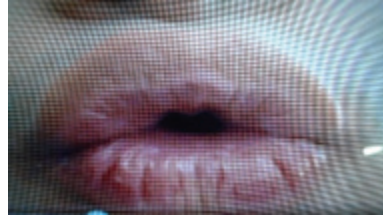
Pronunciation performance rates varied between the phoneme and word levels for each sound. For example, the improvement rate for the sound /s/ was 95% at the phoneme level but only 40% for *sip* and 45% for *sink*. A close examination of these results identified certain sound combinations that may require extra focus and attention. Specifically, the improvement rates for the consonants /s/ and /ʃ/ were low compared to those of other sounds. In particular, it was noted that /s/ followed by the vowel /ɪ/ presented more difficulties than /s/ followed by /a/, as pronounced at the phoneme level. The consonant /z/ followed by /ɪ/ showed a similar pattern compared to /za/.

Screenshots comparing the participants' pre- and post-instruction performance in Figure 6 give visual examples of the positive change in learners' manner of articulation. In each case, picture A represents the pre-instruction image and picture B the post-instruction image.

<1>

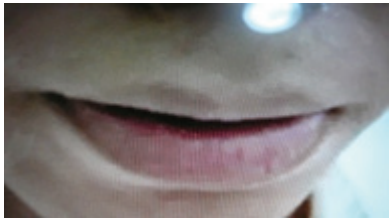


A. /w/ Pre-instruction

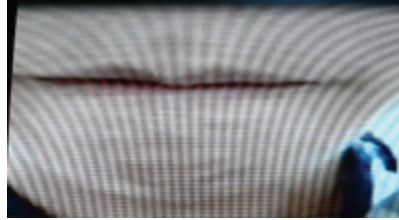


B. /w/ Post-instruction

<2>

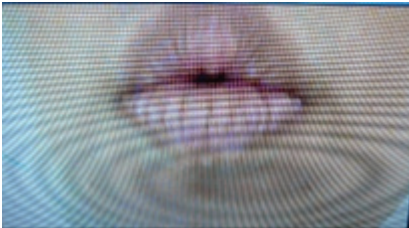


A. /f/ Pre-instruction

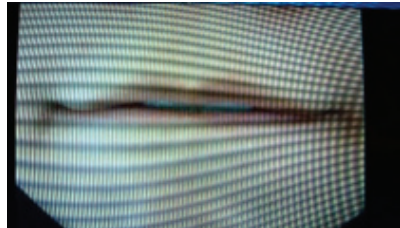


B. /f/ Post-instruction

<3>

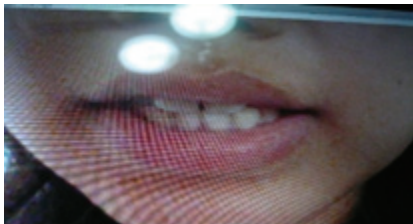


A. /ʃ/ Pre-instruction

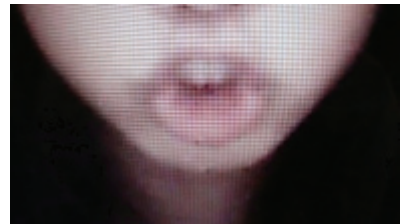


B. /ʃ/ Post-instruction

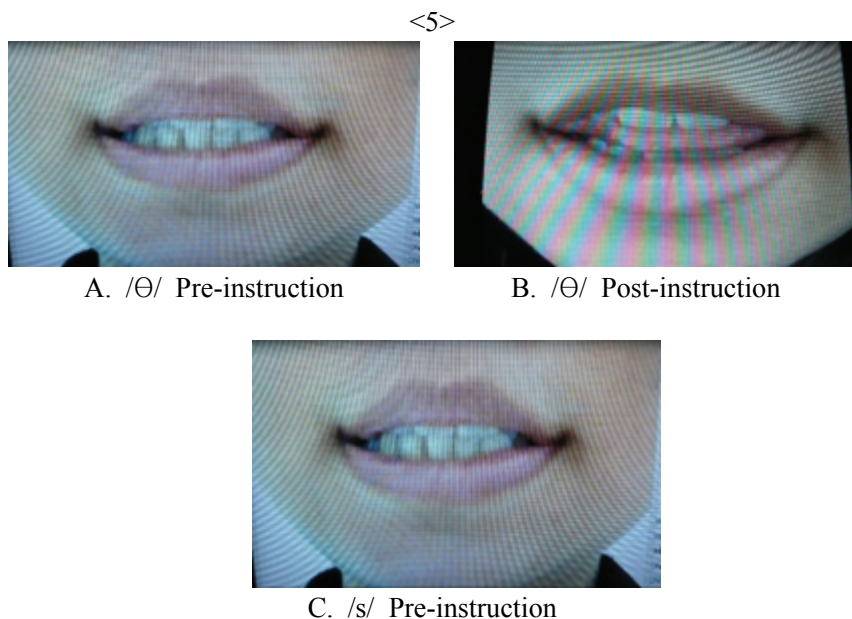
<4>



A. /ʒ/ Pre-instruction



B. /ʒ/ Post-instruction



**FIGURE 6. Examples of Changes in Articulation Before and After Instruction.**

The pre-instruction picture in 1A shows a participant incorrectly pronouncing /w/ with compressed lips. The picture in 1B shows the same participant's post-instruction improvement using the correct articulation with rounded lips. Pictures 2A and 3A illustrate two different ways Japanese students commonly, but incorrectly, pronounce the sound of /f/. Pictures 2B and 3B show the same two participants' post-instruction, correctly placing their teeth on their lower lip to pronounce /f/ as a labiodental. Pictures 5A and 5C show how some participants pronounced /θ/ and /s/ prior to instruction. As shown in the figure, these participants were pronouncing these sounds in the exact same way. However, by the time of the post-instruction recording, as seen in Pictures 5B and 5C, the articulation differences can be clearly detected.

## PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The examination of this pronunciation evaluation was set on a basic

pedagogical goal, which was to achieve actual performance of selected target segmental features at the phoneme and word level by reading a rehearsed script as the first step in the achievement of an internationally intelligible level of English. In this regard, this study presented the implementation process and the examination and analysis of the students' pronunciation performance differences between pre- and post-instruction. Then, from the results, the progress of each sound was analyzed.

The results presented above provide an answer to the research question, "Does providing Japanese university learners of English with phonetic training in large-group instruction significantly improve their actual articulatory skills for selected segmental features (consonants) when using a reading script with rehearsal opportunities?" The short answer is that participants were able to improve their articulation skills for consonants in which they were trained.

On the phoneme level, the most improved sounds were /z/, with an improvement rate of 99%, followed by /w/ and /ʃ/, each with an improvement rate of 98%. The phonemes with the least degree of improvement were /r/ at 76%, /v/ at 81%, and /ð/ at 86%. It is important to note that even the phonemes with the least improvement showed an improvement rate of over 75%. These statistics suggest that the instruction was effective in improving the pronunciation of the instructed phonemes.

The results show a difference between the achievement at the phoneme level and word level. The example showing the greatest difference occurred in the sound /s/, which had an improvement rate of 95% at the phoneme level, but only 40% for *sip* and 45% for *sink* at the word level. The fact that the phoneme level presented a greater level of improvement suggests that students may still be at different levels of progress. Some students may have mastered the phoneme level but have not yet mastered the word level. The high rate of improvement at the phoneme level over the word level also suggests that a step-by-step method of instruction is best to achieve a positive influence on pronunciation. Starting with phonemes gives students the opportunity to focus on a single sound. In one semester, the improvement rate of all sounds at this level exceeded 75%. Because a phoneme is a smaller unit, students had a higher degree of mastery. The word level is more complex, and as such, had a lower degree of improvement in one semester. Nevertheless, the improvement rate of certain sounds at the word level scored as high as 96%, showing great improvement based on

a successful method of instruction.

Through the instruction and evaluation process, it was observed that being able to pronounce even a single word correctly and smoothly using a combination of unfamiliar foreign sounds requires multiple steps. Therefore, setting realistic goals is very important, especially considering Japanese students' generally novice level of English pronunciation. The views introduced by the personal contacts in the earlier theoretical background section, which claimed that pronunciation instruction is not worth doing, come from the experience of setting the instructional goal too high for one semester/quarter. Indeed, the training by the instructor, who must give consistent reminders to the students regarding the target sounds, requires patience, but it is key to the success of the instruction. So also is the patience of the students, who must constantly give careful attention to their own pronunciation. With the instructor's consistent, repetitive reminders through practicing appropriate instructional materials, students will become able to gradually produce more intelligible sounds, with less unnecessary tension in their articulatory organs. It will then be possible to move to the next phase.

To detect further beneficial findings for improving Japanese university English learners' pronunciation, this research could have examined further questions. These unanswered questions serve as a limitation of this research.

This study evaluated only 10 consonants. The first unanswered question has to do with whether examination of other consonants, vowels, and suprasegmental features is likely to reveal further pedagogical implications. In this regard, instruction in and extended evaluation of other phonetic features will be integrated into the author's subsequent research efforts in this area.

A second unanswered question concerns the differences that were detected in the performance results across individual consonants, even though they were instructed using the same materials and in the same way. The question remains whether causes for these differences include different amounts of practice, the phonetic distance and differences between (L1) Japanese and (L2) English, the appropriateness of the instructional activity for each particular sound, the appropriateness of the explanation of the manner of articulation and the word explanations, and the different sound environments. A clear answer regarding which of these are relevant causes cannot be drawn from this study.

A third unanswered question concerns the persistence of the effects

measured here. This study covered only one semester of English pronunciation instruction, which is a relatively short amount of time in which to make lasting changes to what are often fossilized pronunciation habits. The question remains as to whether the positive changes the participants made in a single semester due to the implementation of the ID will remain with them in the long term.

A final point remaining for future research is that, as this material design was at entry level in terms of the English pronunciation knowledge and ability of the participants (Japanese university freshmen), the educational goal was set at a basic level. For that reason, the performance evaluation was done by reading scripts. Determining how the achieved level of pronunciation skill can be developed to become automatic or near automatic would necessarily involve consideration of further levels of materials and evaluation.

Due to increasing internationalization across the globe, English has come to play a more crucial role in communication than ever before. With this in mind, students need to have at least an intelligible level of oral communication skills in English. This will ease communication with any native speaker anywhere in the world without frustrating or making them uncomfortable. In spite of the limitation mentioned above, this research shows that the presented material given in large-class instruction can improve Japanese university students' pronunciation. This ID can be applied to other EFL classrooms that share similar traits in terms of socio-educational background in the English language classroom and linguistic background. It is the author's hope that the results will encourage educators and material designers to incorporate pronunciation instruction in English language education so that students' future English oral communication attempts will be both intelligible and successful.

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# Challenges Encountered by Thai University Students in Understanding Scientific Content Courses Taught by Native Speakers of English

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This mixed methods study investigated the difficulties and the causes of difficulties Thai students at Suranaree University of Technology (SUT) faced while taking content-based instruction (CBI) courses taught by native speakers of English. The study also explores strategies employed by these students in coping with the difficulties. Two lecturers and 37 students from two classes participated in the study. Based on their previous academic achievements in English and subject content courses, the students were classified into three different groups: high achievers, moderate achievers, and low achievers. Three sets of data from a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and class observations were collected and analyzed. The results indicate that students' low proficiency in English caused the most problems with comprehension during lectures. As for their strategy use, paying attention to the lecture and using keywords were employed most by the students in class. Reviewing lessons was a common strategy used outside of class to gain understanding of the lesson content. There were no significant differences in strategy use among students to deal with difficulties that stemmed from CBI courses. Limitations and recommendations for future research are discussed.

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching both language and content has been a topic of interest for researchers and educators worldwide for some time. Traditionally, language was taught separately from subject content. Therefore, language students learned foreign language as a separate subject to some degree in isolation. Possibly incidental or explicit foreign language culture was included, but academic subject matter was not integrated into foreign language curricula. However, Barwell (2005) explains that recently

linguists have seen “language as a resource for participation in human activities,” and he provides a broad general definition of language and content integration as issues relating to language and content integration in teaching and learning both language and subject areas in the same classroom and at the same time (Barwell, 2005, as cited in Freeman & Freeman, 2009, p. 174).

Learning a foreign language and using a foreign language to learn subject matter can be a challenge for students, especially university students using English as a second language or a foreign language to understand academic lectures by native speakers of English (Ekanjume-Ilongo, 2015; Wu, Garza, & Guzman, 2015). In this study, challenges refer to the difficulties or problems the students might encounter while studying the subject content taught in English by native speakers. CBI is defined as “the integration of particular content with language-teaching aims” (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003, p. 2). In the literature, CBI and content and language integrated learning (CLIL) are two terms that are often used interchangeably. According to Coyle, Hood, and March (2010), in the European setting, CBI is known under the term CLIL. The term was adopted in 1994 to describe school practice where an additional language is used as a medium of teaching and learning. In this study, the term CBI is used as it better suits the nature of the current research. Students in the study attended university academic subject courses with English as the medium (EMI) of instruction for the academic lectures taught by native speakers of English. The course’s academic lectures were not solely EMI courses as they were taught by all faculty (native and non-native speakers of English) for both a domestic and international student body. The academic lectures were taught by native speakers of English to a domestic student body with some level of international students. However, Thai universities are currently just opening up to internationalization of higher education. Therefore, the aim of the lectures was “the integration of particular content with language-teaching aims” (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003, p. 2). Therefore, CBI has been selected for reference in this study as opposed to CLIL or EMI.

CBI is becoming a popular practice in many educational institutions of all levels. Knowing both the advantages and disadvantages of this method, teaching professionals should provide all parties concerned with better judgment on how to implement the approach. Understanding the difficulties encountered by students attending CBI university courses will

help both teachers and school administrators adjust and modify the programs and/or the subject content in order to support greater academic achievements among the target students. Thus, the aims of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the difficulties encountered by Thai students at Suranaree University of Technology (SUT) when learning subject matter content from native speakers of English.
2. To investigate how these students cope with the difficulties and the strategies used.
3. To describe the relationship between students' previous/current grades and the strategies used in coping with the difficulties encountered.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Beneficial Characteristics of CBI

Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (2003) state that there are at least five different rationales for integrating the teaching of language and content that are implicit in CBI approaches: (1) with the awareness of the need for the use of the second language (L2), the learner will make meaningful use of the target language at his/her level; (2) with the context relevant to the learner's interests or needs, the learner is assumed to have increased motivation; (3) with the existing knowledge of the subject content and L2, the learner is better prepared to learn (i.e., learner readiness is increased); (4) with the contextualized use of the L2, the learner will become aware of the larger discourse level features and the social interaction patterns that are essential to effective language use; and (5) with the comprehensible "input" in the L2, the learner will be prepared to understand the subject content taught.

Krashen's (1982, 1998) second language acquisition (SLA) research further confirms that students can learn both language and content at the same time, if students know how to use strategies to make the subject matter content comprehensible. In order to help language learners gain comprehensive input, Krashen's input hypothesis also suggests that the input or the subject matter content can be introduced first with simple

codes and caretaker speech (i.e., teacher language and scaffolding). He points out that if foreigner-talk and teacher-talk are roughly tuned to the level of the acquirers, he then says helpful native speakers find their own ways to make input comprehensible (Krashen, 1982).

Another good reason for using CBI is that students can achieve more by learning language and subject content simultaneously. With the nature of the CBI courses focusing on the subject content that learners are particularly interested in or have a need to be specialize in, it is believed CBI can increase student motivation to learn and pay greater attention to the lessons and work to find strategies to cope with the L2 input. Due to the exposure to real or authentic use of the language, matched with scaffolding and adjusted delivery to offer comprehensible input, learners can make use of their background knowledge to engage with the L2 input. Learners can also transfer both the subject content in the L1 to cope with the L2 input, using the notion of transferable knowledge. With CBI, students can acquire vocabulary naturally and in context. Students do not have to memorize words for tests or examinations. Instead, students need to predict the meaning of words in context and use the words as they listen to lectures, talk with classmates, read books, work on projects, and write reports in CBI courses. Freeman and Freeman (2009) say that if students learn keywords in their academic subjects this way, they can also come to understand these words when encountered in different contexts.

## **Concerns with CBI**

Although CBI has its advantages, Warrington (2008), raises some concerns for learners. Warrington argues that students exposed to the CBI approach may lack the L2 environment to develop their language proficiency from such an approach. They may only have receptive exposure to grammar and vocabulary, and not sufficient productive opportunities to use what is learned to fully integrate these elements into their language proficiency. Students may also face difficulty with concepts and linguistic forms present in authentic materials used. He notes that students may also not have the L2 proficiency to understand lectures, lessons, and reading materials, leading them to confusion and demotivation. If students are underprepared and the lectures and course work are not within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), they will not be able to successfully use strategies to cope with L2 input. As

students' language ability is sometimes limited, students may seek translation into L1 in order to understand lectures or lessons. As a result, students may not use the L2 to learn the subject matter, which is the objective of CBI: to develop language proficiency through content learning.

In Asia, Warrington (2008) raises the concerns with CBI relating to Asian EFL students, EFL teachers, concept learning, and the research supporting CBI. Content instruction is believed to provide the necessary comprehensible input for effective language learning to take place (Short, 1991). However, many students do not seem to have the appropriate background knowledge of the English language and its culture to effectively deal with content in English (Twyman, Ketterlin-Geller, McCoy, & Tindall, 2003, as cited in Warrington, 2008). Students appear to have little to no experience with the subject content taught and, as a result, they do not have the cognitive preparation necessary to learn the subject content in English. Research also shows that if students cannot understand the subject content taught, they will not be able to solve new problems (Hestenes, Wells, & Wackhamer, 1992) aimed at developing higher-order thinking skills needed in university courses. Butler (2005) also adds that if students have very limited exposure to the target language, they might not be able to deal with content that is compatible with their cognitive levels and tend to fall back on the advanced linguistics development of their L1 to understand the subject content in the L2.

As EFL teachers are often expected to use authentic materials in the CBI classroom, and if the materials have not been simplified for pedagogical purposes, this may cause additional difficulty in understanding the subject matter content (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003). Many EFL teachers are simply not trained in how to integrate language and content in their classrooms (Crandall, 1992; Freeman & Freeman, 1998). EFL teachers are often hired for their native-speaker status and/or academic subject content specialization, and may not be trained in fundamental ELF teaching approaches nor in CBI. This results in students suffering unnecessarily in their CBI courses. Therefore, CBI success in Asia is still in doubt. Furthermore, little or no research, or curriculum development efforts, in EFL regions has been conducted that helps guide Asian EFL teachers in their CBI courses (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005). This is the same for native-speaking EFL teachers in Asia. Research into CBI in Asian EFL contexts either appears to

contradict its “positive implications” or is essentially inconclusive. Despite CBI success in ESL contexts, the research behind it has continued to be heavily qualitative in form, and thus, remains suspect and questionable (Warrington, 2008) for EFL contexts.

### **Previous CBI Studies in ESL & EFL Contexts**

A number of studies on CBI have been conducted. A study by Song (2006) found that students who were in a content-linked ESL program achieved higher pass rates and better grades in the ESL course, and performed better in subsequent ESL and developmental English courses as well. A study conducted by Valeo (2013) in Canada showed significant gains on most of the language measures for both learner groups taking a language course but significant advantages for the form-focused group on the content knowledge tests.

In Korea, Kang’s (2010) investigation of the contribution of both L1 cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and L2 proficiency for successful CBI experiences suggested that L1 CALP be taken into account as an advantage serving as a springboard for CBI course achievement. It also indicated that general reading skills (i.e., in the L1) may be more critical to student survival and success in CBI courses. In China, a study by Trube (2012) confirmed that content-area classes provide natural environments for L2 education and CBI motivated English language learners. In Thailand, a case study conducted by Burrows (2013) suggested that a content-and-language integrated program was beneficial for the participants in that it supported the results presented in CLIL literature, which suggests that CLIL has a positive effect on language acquisition. Since CLIL is often interchanged with CBI, it can be said that Burrow’s study presents leverage for the use of CBI.

A study by Kung (2013) in Taiwan found that instructors played a crucial role in students’ learning results in an EMI program. Thus, it could be ineffective and even frustrating for students to learn with teachers who teach them academic subjects using EMI without having undergone professional training for teaching in EMI programs. Kung said teachers who have to teach EMI courses are advised to get a qualification in EMI instruction that includes language, and methodological and presentation skills in L2 along with a suitable certification system. A study by Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ (2013a) in

Turkey found that students' had positive feelings towards an EMI course; however, understanding terminology was a big challenge for them. Some students felt no improvement and some even expressed a sense of regression in their productive skills. It was also suggested that the CBI instructors cooperate with language teachers to become more aware of the students' language problems and seek linguistic advice. Another study by Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ (2013b) found negative effects of CBI in classes that were instructed in English and the written exams were given in English as well. The students were reluctant to participate in such classes and their written responses were limited. Additionally, West's (2013) study discovered that many of the CBI materials, which would be considered manageable for native English speakers, were simply too difficult for the target students to handle. Many students in the study lacked not only the language and lexical knowledge, but also the background knowledge to understand the ideas presented in the courses. The use of authentic materials, a hallmark in many language-based courses, hindered the students' learning process.

From the review of literature and previous studies presented above, CBI can be seen as a promising path to successful L2 learning. Several studies of CBI in practice in many places around the world have showed positive results. Some studies, however, reflected unsatisfactory results from the students. Thus, there is still some room for doubt whether CBI or at least EMI is truly beneficial for EFL learners and under what conditions. In Thailand's educational setting in particular, this issue has not yet been adequately investigated.

## The Present Study

SUT is the first autonomous university in Thailand. It is designated to be a science and technology-oriented university. Courses are generally taught in the Thai language. However, with the university's vision and effort to open itself up to the wider world, it has attracted a number of foreign professors to work on campus as well as students from abroad to study. In semester 1 of the academic year 2014, there were two courses offered in which English was used as a medium of instruction as the courses were taught by native speakers of English, one from Australia and the other from Canada. The students in these two courses were Thai students with various backgrounds and levels of English proficiency. It was thought interesting to investigate how these two



groups of students experienced the courses they were taking.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What difficulties do the students have in understanding subject content taught by native speakers of English?
2. What strategies are used most frequently by the students in coping with these difficulties?
3. What is the relationship between previous academic performance in terms of language and content knowledge and the strategies applied in dealing with the difficulties in understanding the courses?

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study employed a mixed-method approach using both qualitative and quantitative means of collecting and analyzing data. The participants of this study were 37 students from two classes: 22 graduate students from Mechanics and 15 undergraduate students from Process Equipment Design and Operation III. The two lecturers of the two courses also provided data for this study. Three instruments were employed: a questionnaire, classroom observations, and a semi-structured interview with students and lecturers.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

After permission had been granted, the researchers introduced themselves to the classes and gave an overview of the study to the students and the lecturers. This was followed by a focus group interview as well as a talk with lecturers to gain some information on the difficulties of studying subject content with native speakers of English. The information obtained was then used to generate a set of questionnaire questions.

The first class observation was administered in the early weeks of the semester. The information gained from observations was used to conduct and inform the semi-structured interviews that were to follow. The set of questionnaires was distributed at this time. The second class observation was conducted a few weeks later. The semi-structured interviews with the students were conducted in Thai and then translated

into English, while the interviews with the English native-speaker lecturers were in English.

## Data Analysis Procedures

According to the information gained from the distributed questionnaire (Appendix A), students were classified into four groups according to their grades obtained from previous courses taken in both English subjects and related content subjects. Students with high grades in both English and content courses were assigned to Group 1, students with low English but high content grades were assigned to Group 2, students with high English but low content grades were assigned to Group 3, and those with low grades in both English and content courses were assigned to Group 4.

For the purpose of statistical analysis regarding strategy use, these four groups, after having been put into the SPSS statistic program, were renamed and regrouped as follows: “High achievers” were those from Group 1, “moderate achievers” were those from Groups 2 and 3, and “low achievers” were those from Group 4. The strategies used by the students that were in the four rated scales were transformed into two groups: “High use” represents *often* and *always*, and “low use” represents *sometimes* and *never*.

The data gained from the semi-structured interview (Appendix B) were grouped according to their level of achievement. The data were used to triangulate with the results gained from the questionnaire and class observations. The two course lecturers were also interviewed using the questions adapted from the questions used with the students (Appendix C). Their opinions on each issue were then used to triangulate with those of the students. The data from class observations were shared and cross-checked by the two researchers. The data gathered were also used to triangulate with the data gained from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews.

## RESULTS

### Difficulties in Understanding the Lecture

**RQ1:** What difficulties do the students have in understanding subject content taught by native speakers of English?

Answers from the questionnaire, and students' and lecturers' interviews show there are some common difficulties that the target students of this study faced when learning with native speakers of English. These difficulties are

1. Being unable to understand the whole lecture or merely understanding some parts of the lecture or the lesson being taught,
2. Having difficulties with their listening skills,
3. Having difficulties with vocabulary from the subject content,
4. Having problems in communicating with the lecturers in English,
5. Lacking in notetaking skills.

In terms of subject content, answers from the questionnaire and student interviews revealed that the students from the two classes could not understand the whole lecture when they listened to the lecturers due to the new and advanced content. Students said they had difficulties in understanding difficult topics or difficult parts of the lesson. When asked how much of the lecture they understood, answers varied from 25 to 85 percent. One of the students from the Moderate Achievers Group said they had 50 percent understanding, one said 70 to 80 percent, and one replied 90 percent understanding of the lecture. Some students from the Low Achievers Group said they understood 80 percent of the lecture while the other two said they understood 60 and 70 percent, respectively.

In terms of difficulties in language proficiency, this study found that the students also had problems when they listened to lectures. Most students from both classes said they could not understand the lecture due to their poor listening skills. When students listened to lectures, they said they could not figure out the meaning of the vocabulary the teachers used. Their limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to understand the whole lecture. Students also had problems with the teacher's accent and lecture speed.

In addition, the students in this study also faced additional difficulties such as lacking in notetaking techniques and lacking in confidence in spoken English to communicate with their teachers to clarify unclear points or to ask the teachers questions.

## Strategies Used In Class

**RQ2:** What strategies are used most frequently by the students in coping with these difficulties?

The results of chi square tests on the use of strategies within levels of achievement revealed that for strategies used in class, the most used strategy was “pay more attention to the lecture” with the average percentage of high use for all groups being 91.9. The use of this strategy was also found during the class observations. The second-most used strategy was “use keywords to understand questions the lecturer asked” with the average percentage of high use at 81.1. The third-most used strategy was “recall previous knowledge” with the average percentage of high use at 78.4. The fourth-most used strategy was “use keywords to answer questions” with the average percentage of high use being 75.7. The fifth-most used strategies were “ask classmates” and “use keywords to write and take notes.” The least used strategy was “ask the lecturer to slow his speech down” with the average percentage of high use at 16.2. The details are displayed below in Table 1.

**TABLE 1. Percentage of Strategies Used in Class According to Levels of Achievement**

Strategies Used (In class)	% of High Use (3 & 4) Within Level of Achievement			Average %	Observed $\chi^2$ (Pearson chi square value)  $p < .05$
	High	Moderate	Low		
5. Pay more attention to the lecture	100	85	100	91.9	$\chi^2 = 2.775$ (P = .250)
7. Use keywords for questions asked	66.7	80	100	81.1	$\chi^2 = 3.101$ (P = .212)
6. Refer to what I learned before	100	75	62.5	78.4	$\chi^2 = 3.808$ (P = .149)
8. Use keywords to answer questions	100	70	62.5	75.7	$\chi^2 = 3.997$ (P = .136)
1. Ask classmates for help	44.4	80	87.5	73.0	$\chi^2 = 5.071$ (P = .079)
10. Use keywords in writing, notetaking	33.3	80	87.5	73.0	$\chi^2 = 7.921$ (P = .019)

3. Ask the lecturer to repeat the point	66.7	50	25.0	48.6	$\chi^2 = 2.975$ (P = .226)
9. Use dictionary to help understand	44.4	40	50.0	43.2	$\chi^2 = .240$ (P= .887)
2. Ask the lecturer to clarify the point	33.3	45	37.5	40.5	$\chi^2 = .390$ (P = .823)
4. Ask the lecturer to slow down his speech	0	15	37.5	16.2	$\chi^2 = 4.431$ (P = 109)

### Strategies Used Outside of Class

The chi square tests on the use of the strategies within levels of achievement revealed that the most used strategies were “review lessons individually” and “go back and read materials again” with the average percentage of high use for the groups being 83.8. The third-most used strategy was “review lessons in group” with the average percentage of high use at 73. The fourth-most used strategy was “use dictionary to help understand” with the average percentage of high use at 70.3. The least used strategy was “read similar topic in Thai” with the average percentage of high use at 29.7. The details are displayed below in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. Percentage of Strategies Used Outside of Class According to Level of Achievement**

Strategies Used (Outside of class)	% of High Use (3 & 4) Within Level of Achievement			%	Observed $\chi^2$ (Pearson chi square value) <i>p</i> < .05
	High	Moderate	Low		
1. Review lessons individually	100	75	87.5	83.8	$\chi^2 = 2.959$ (P = .228)
3. Go back and read materials again	100	75	87.5	83.8	$\chi^2 = 2.959$ (P = .228)
2. Review lessons in group	66.7	80	62.5	73.0	$\chi^2 = 1.127$ (P = .569)
5. Use dictionary to help understand	66.7	70	75.0	70.3	$\chi^2 = .142$ (P = .931)
6. Prepare for lessons before attending class	77.8	40	25.0	45.9	$\chi^2 = 5.370$ (P = .068)

7. Translate English into Thai	33.3	40	37.5	37.8	$\chi^2 = .118$ (P = .943)
4. Consult similar content written in Thai	33.3	30	25.0	29.7	$\chi^2 = .142$ (P = .931)

**RQ3:** What is the relationship between previous academic performance in terms of language and content knowledge and the strategies applied in dealing with difficulties in understanding the lesson?

The ANOVA results revealed no significant differences among groups of different levels of achievement based on their previous academic performance in strategies used to cope with difficulties in understanding the lecture and its lessons. (See Tables 3 and 4 below.)

**TABLE 3. Variation in Strategy Use in Class by Students' Level of Achievement**

Strategies Used (In class)	Level of Achievement						<i>p</i> < .05
	High		Moderate		Low		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1. Ask classmates for help	2.78	.972	3.15	.745	3.38	.744	n.s.
2. Ask the lecturer to clarify the point	2.22	.667	2.45	.945	2.13	.835	n.s.
3. Ask the lecturer to repeat the point	2.44	.882	2.40	.940	1.75	.886	n.s.
4. Ask the lecturer to slow down his speech	1.67	.500	1.75	.851	2.13	1.126	n.s.
5. Pay more attention to the lecture	3.67	.500	3.50	.761	3.50	.535	n.s.
6. Refer to what I learned before	3.78	.441	3.30	.865	2.88	.835	n.s.
7. Use keywords for questions asked	3.11	.928	3.10	.852	3.25	.463	n.s.
8. Use keywords to answer questions	3.33	.500	3.00	.918	3.00	.926	n.s.
9. Use dictionary to help understand	2.33	.707	2.50	.946	2.50	.926	n.s.
10. Use keywords in writing, notetaking	2.22	.972	3.00	.928	3.13	.641	n.s.

**TABLE 4. Variation in Strategy Use Outside of Class by Students' Level of Achievement**

Strategies Used (Outside of class)	Level of Achievement						<i>p</i> < .05
	High		Moderate		Low		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1. Review lessons individually	3.67	.500	3.35	.875	3.25	.707	n.s.
2. Review lessons in group	2.56	.726	3.15	.745	2.88	.835	n.s.
3. Go back and read materials again	3.22	.441	3.30	.865	3.13	.641	n.s.
4. Consult similar content in Thai	2.22	.972	2.25	1.070	1.88	.835	n.s.
5. Use dictionary to help understand	2.89	.782	3.00	.918	2.75	1.165	n.s.
6. Prepare for lessons before class	3.00	.707	2.40	.821	2.13	.641	n.s.
7. Translate English into Thai	2.11	.782	2.30	.801	2.38	1.188	n.s.

## DISCUSSION

Data gained from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews with students and lecturers, and class observations revealed that there are three factors contributing to students' difficulties in understanding CBI lectures. These three main factors are subject content, language, and other factors.

In terms of subject content, the unfamiliarity of the content seemed to cause difficulty for students in all groups. The low achievers found that more advanced content caused difficulty for them. As a result, they admitted they had difficulties in understanding the whole lecture, especially "difficult parts" or some "difficult topics" of lessons. Students said they could not understand subject content due to their lack of subject matter background. One student said the lessons were "difficult and unclear" and only short explanations were provided from the lecturers. Students also mentioned difficulty in understanding the reading materials and that they needed more time to process the content of the

lectures. It may be interpreted that reading materials, despite being simplified by the lecturers, were still found to be too complicated for students. Some students could not understand lectures because, according to the lecturers, some of them came from “completely different fields of study.” Therefore, their background subject knowledge was weak; they could not understand basic subject content although most parts of the lesson lectures should not have been new. Other students did not understand lessons as they could not refer back to knowledge they learned before due to a lack of clarity in the content when learned in class.

In terms of language, problems in students’ listening skills directly affected their ability to comprehend the lectures, which were clearly stated in both the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire. Students’ listening proficiency was not at a level for receiving academic lectures in English. The students said they “could not catch what is said” or “I have trouble with listening. I cannot figure out the meaning of the vocabulary.” One student acknowledged that she had difficulties with “the teacher’s unfamiliar accent” and the “fast speed of the lecturer’s speech.” Students said a limited vocabulary repertoire also caused difficulty in making sense of what they heard. Lack of confidence in spoken communication is another difficulty students had. One student said, “Language barrier limits my communication with the teacher.” He said he did not know how to ask the teacher questions to clarify unclear points from the lesson. Another student admitted that when “trying to take notes, I missed out some parts. I cannot catch important words or important points.” In this regard, the low achievers also faced even more difficulty caused by the accent and the speed of speech of the lecturers, feeling too uncomfortable to ask questions because of the lack of confidence to speak, and having to listen and take notes simultaneously. West (2013) said students of CBI courses had to do multi-tasks and this makes it difficult for students to acquire new vocabulary and comprehend subject content at the same time. Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ (2013a) also confirmed this idea. They stated that it is difficult for students to concentrate on both language and content meaning at the same time; therefore, these authors suggest CBI teachers need to pay much attention to comprehensible input and keep their language as simple as possible, and help students feel comfortable with their linguistic mistakes.

In addition, Skehan and Forter (1999) stated that lack of confidence



seems to be a reason for students not wanting to speak in class. Both lecturers also think their students are “less confident in speaking.” Students from Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ’s (2013a) study encountered the same problems as those students expressed their insecurity and low confidence during lectures. These authors suggest that schools increase teaching hours for students to be more greatly exposed to language in order for them to gain language fluency and confidence. Participants in this study mentioned that causes of difficulties in understanding subject content can be overcome if students prepare well before attending class. They should read the teachers’ notes, feel confident to communicate with the teachers, ask questions to clarify unclear points in the lectures, and refer to similar materials in Thai to understand the subject content. Difficulties in reading materials could be also overcome if Thai students use dictionaries to look up meanings of new terminology as Turkish students in Bozdoğan and Karlıdağ’s study recognized the importance to memorizing vocabulary and becoming familiar with subject terminology. Some of them even advocated for the need to use three kinds of dictionaries: a bilingual dictionary, a English monolingual dictionary, and a content dictionary. They pointed out that the wider their vocabulary repertoire was, the more successful and confident they felt. However, translating essentially word for word from the L2 to the L1 using a dictionary does not necessarily build efficient L2 reading skills. Students need to be able to predict words from context, use word roots and morphology to predict unknown word meaning in addition to using a dictionary. Approaching an L2 text’s comprehension solely through word-for-word translation from a dictionary may suggest a low level of learner proficiency, but not necessarily. A dictionary needs to be used effectively.

Regarding strategies used in coping with difficulties and helping students understand the lecture, as the nature of the two courses requires a knowledge of English, which is not the students’ first language, students believe that paying extra attention to the lecture is a means to understanding the input clearly. Keywords were employed not only to understand the point the lecturer asked about during the lecture or in homework but also to answer questions and to write or take notes. This reflects the low English proficiency of the students English. They could not process the language in its entirety. The use of keywords was perceived to be a good strategy for reducing concentration on other elements, assumed as less meaningful, within the language input that

students were required to process. Referring back to the students' background knowledge of the content, it is reasonable for students to rely on recall of their existing knowledge when presented with learning new and more advanced content matter. It is believed that students relied on the transfer concepts known in the L1 and present in the L2 class to negotiate meaning of the lectures in the L2. This corresponds with Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis and schema theory. However, West's (2013) study suggests that background knowledge may not be helpful if students have too little background knowledge in the subject matter area, which was often the case with the participants.

Students rarely asked the lecturer to slow his talk down. This reflects classroom culture and a reluctance to acknowledge a lack in language ability. In terms of culture, it is normal that Asian students tend not to interrupt and communicate their needs in class. In terms of language ability, this reveals students' lack of confidence and ability to use the language orally. This is in agreement with the concluding thoughts of Warrington (2008) that Asian EFL learners often appear to lack the necessary knowledge of the English language and related culture to effectively deal with the content they encounter within contexts with native speakers of English.

To gain an understanding of the lectures, students reviewed lessons individually and read materials again independently in the L2. These outside class strategies were perceived to be more convenient for them to do than others. This is supported by Kang's (2010) study that reading skills may be more critical to survival and success in CBI courses. Reviewing lessons in groups occurred among groups of close friends. Dictionaries were tools needed to help them understand reading materials. The students rarely consulted similar content written in Thai (i.e., their L1). This is because the exact subject content in their L1 was not readily available. Also for those students who were proficient enough in both English and the content, they did not need to consult materials in their L1. Surprisingly, those students who had difficulty with the content also felt reading in their L1 would not be of any help.

The use of strategies both in class and outside of class were not significantly different among the student groups. This indicates that the use of strategies is not prescribed by the level of L2 proficiency or by course achievement.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Though the students were more or less familiar with the subject content taught as both courses were in their specific fields, the students evidently struggled not only with the language, but also with the subject content. The students did not have the fundamental background knowledge for the subject matter courses, even if they were in the L1. This could be due to previous foundational courses being delivered through CBI or due to the nature of the foundational L1 curriculum. The answer to this is beyond the scope of this study.

The difficulty concerning English language proficiency, however, seems to be more problematic than the issue of a lack of background knowledge within the field of study. Limited listening ability and vocabulary seem to be the most common challenges for the students. Thus, for CBI courses to be more successful, students should be well-equipped with listening skills and the essential vocabulary necessary for the course of study in advance. This could be offered within the existing courses, were there is a familiarization module of study to prepare students for the main units or modules of study. Another alternative would be to take general English courses offered at the university; that is, elective courses can be taken that are field-specific courses within the school (e.g., the department of engineering, the department of bio-medicine, etc.) or such courses could be offered through the school of education, or as general English electives for field specialization. The organization and delivery of such courses would be determined by the university. Other skills needed, such as notetaking and communication skills, should also be provided. The course materials for such courses should be designed to allow students to follow and digest the lesson effortlessly. This may be achieved by adding parts such as exercises and technical terms for each unit. Additionally, universities could offer faculty training courses for native and non-native English-speaking faculty as professional development on how to best deliver CBI, or EMI, courses.

Despite challenges students faced while taking these courses, evidence from the questionnaire on the advantages of the course, the semi-structured interview, and the class observations show that the students were happy with the course. One reason is that the students realized this as a good opportunity to become familiar with real use of

the language from native speakers. Another reason could be that if they could not fully understand the lecture, they could gain a better understanding of the lesson outside of class by reviewing the lessons either individually or in groups. Though some students commented on the accent and the fast speed of the speech of the lecturers, the class observations found that the lecturers' speed – particularly in the undergraduate class – was slower than that of normal speed. The use of pictures and diagrams, and by writing and illustrating on the board may also help students find it less demanding to follow the lectures.

### **Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research**

Despite the fact that the authors of this study tried to perform their best to obtain information supporting CBI instruction at SUT in particular, and Thailand's similar educational settings in general, the current research still has its limitations. First, the research was conducted within a relatively short period of time. The development of students on how they progress through the course could be seen clearer if there had been more time for data collection. Second, the CBI courses taught by native speakers of English available for students were limited in numbers. If there were more CBI classes available, a larger number of participants would have been available for the study. Third, the present research merely focused on science-related subject content; therefore, the results and findings are still limited to only one field of study. Future research on CBI can be implemented in other fields. This should produce more interesting results and findings that can help students and teachers who are struggling with their CBI programs. Future studies could also investigate student achievement in taking CBI courses compared to normal courses taught in their L1 for both the subject content and English language, particularly in relation to listening comprehension skills in academic lectures and/or the improvement of non-native students in their spoken English communication with native speakers of English in academic settings.

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## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is an attempt to investigate challenges you encountered while studying with native speakers of English and the learning strategies you used to cope with the challenges.

Your participation in this study and honest responses to the questionnaire items are highly appreciated. Please be assured that your information will remain strictly confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of this research project.

#### I. Personal Information

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Level of study:       PhD       Master's       Bachelor's  
Major of study: \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Language Performance and Content Knowledge

3. What are the names and the grades of the courses you have taken?

English Courses	Grade Obtained
1. English I	
2. English II	
3. English III	
4. English IV	

Content Courses	Grade Obtained
1.	
2.	
3.	

4. Have you stayed or studied abroad for over three months? Yes. No.  
If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_ How long? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Have you taken any English proficiency test? Yes. No.  
If yes, which one? IELTS TOEFL TOEIC  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Score \_\_\_\_\_
6. Have you taken any course(s) taught by a native speaker of English before? Yes. No.  
If yes, how many courses? \_\_\_\_\_  
What are they? \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Course**

7. What do you find as advantages and disadvantages of the course?  
Please write your opinion in the boxes provided below.

Advantages of the Course	Disadvantages of the Course

**IV. Difficulties and Causes**

8. What do you find difficult in understanding the lesson?

Level of Seriousness of Difficulty	The Difficulties	Causes of Difficulties
1. Very Difficult		
2. Difficult		



3. Partly Difficult		

**V. Strategies Used to Solve the Difficulties in Understanding the Lessons**

9. What do you do to help you understand the lessons?  
 Please read each statement carefully. Then, next to each statement, make a check mark (√) in the answer box that tells how often you used it.

**1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Always**

*When I don't understand the lesson, I...*

9.1	Strategies I used to cope with difficulties (in class)	1	2	3	4
	1. Ask classmates for help				
	2. Ask the lecturer to clarify the point				
	3. Ask the lecturer to repeat the point				
	4. Ask the lecturer to slow down his speech				
	5. Pay more attention to the lecture				
	6. Refer to what I learned before				
	7. Use keywords to understand the point the lecturer asked				
	8. Use keywords to answer the lecturer's question				
	9. Use a dictionary to help understand the reading materials				

	10. Use keywords to help with writing and notetaking				
	Others: (Please specify) 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____				

9.2	Strategies I used to cope with difficulties (outside of class)	1	2	3	4
	1. Review lessons individually				
	2. Review lessons in a group				
	3. Go back and read materials again				
	4. Consult similar content written in Thai				
	5. Use dictionaries to find vocabulary to understand the reading materials				
	6. Prepare for lessons before attending class				
	7. Translate the subject content from English to my first language				
	Others: (Please specify) 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____				

## APPENDIX B

### Student Interview

1. How much of the lecture do you understand?
2. What affects your understanding of the lesson more between the language and the content taught? In this class, what is more problematic to you, the language or the subject content?
3. Why is language/content problematic? What makes the content difficult?
4. How can it be fixed?
5. Is the subject content taught totally new to you?
6. Are you happy with the way the teacher teaches?
7. How could he do it better? What do you want him to improve?
8. What is the best method you use to help you understand the lesson?

## APPENDIX C

### Teacher Interview

1. How much of the lecture/lesson do you think your students can understand?
2. What do you think is more problematic to your students: language or subject content?
3. What makes language/content difficult?
4. How can it be fixed?
5. Is the subject content you taught totally new to the students?
6. Are you happy with the ways your students learn your subject?
7. In your opinion, how could your students learn the subject better?  
(= What do you want your students to improve in?)
8. What would you recommend to students of next year's course?
9. What is the best way you think you can help your students understand the lecture/lesson?

## Reading Strategy Use: A Case Study in a Tertiary Institution in Vietnam

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Reading is a necessary way to accumulate knowledge in contemporary society. Reading without comprehension or understanding is not reading. Many people can pronounce the words in a reading text fluently, but when asked about what they have just read, they are unable to respond. This is because they lack certain knowledge and skills including reading comprehension strategies. As an attempt to promote students' reading proficiency, the present study explores the use of reading strategies by successful readers and less successful readers in a public university in Vietnam. The two research instruments were questionnaires and retrospective reports. The results showed that both groups of readers utilized almost every reading comprehension strategy and preferred metacognitive strategies to cognitive ones. In addition, the successful readers were superior to the less successful readers in the use of both the strategy categories and nearly all of the individual strategies. From these findings, implications for the reading classroom are that teachers should provide students with explicit instruction on reading strategies and apply think-aloud reports in the curriculum.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, the issue concerning the question of why some learners shine in language learning while others do not has widely been discussed. Little empirical research, however, has been conducted to uncover reading comprehension strategies in the Vietnamese context, especially with the student demographic in this study. In the English program designed for the students in this study, reading is an essential language skill for them to support their professional studies as most of the compulsory courses are delivered in English and require a lot of

study of English reading materials. However, many students find their reading skill below the required level, and therefore, it is challenging to keep up with course readings, especially when they deal with academic texts. Students have voiced their concern about having little understanding of the documents they read and unsatisfactory studying results despite significant time invested. As an English teacher with two years of experience in teaching English reading skills to university students, the author is well aware of students' problems and has been attempting to support them in dealing with such obstacles. As part of the effort to better support students, this study, hence, primarily focused on identifying the differences in strategy use between successful readers and less successful readers and to draw some implications to promote student reading proficiency in future instruction.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Reading Strategies

Empirical research has been done to define reading strategy in different ways. Research in second language learning suggests that learners use a variety of strategies to assist themselves with the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information. Brantmeier (2002) defined reading strategies as “the comprehension processes that readers use in order to make sense of what they read” (p. 1). This process may involve skimming, scanning, guessing, recognizing cognates, utilizing word families, reading for meaning, predicting, activating general knowledge, making inferences, following references, and separating main ideas from supporting ones (Barnett, 1988).

According to O'Malley and Chamot's definition (1990), reading strategies can be understood as “special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them to comprehend, learn, and retain new information from the reading text” (Reading Strategies, para. 2). These strategies are therefore both observable and unobservable, and vary from individual to individual. In their view, reading strategies can be classified into three main types: metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies. Based on the second language learning strategy framework proposed by the two researchers, a categorization scheme of these

strategies can be adapted as follows:

**TABLE 1. Reading Strategy Framework**

Category	Reading Strategy	Definition
<b>Metacognitive</b>	Advance organizers (AO)	Previewing the main ideas and concepts, often by skimming the text for the organizing principle.
	Directed attention (DA)	Deciding in advance to attend in general to a reading task and to ignore the irrelevant distracters.
	Selective attention (SA)	Deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of input, often by scanning for keywords, concepts, and/or linguistic markers.
	Self-monitoring (SM)	Checking one’s comprehension during reading while it is taking place.
	Self-evaluation (SE)	Checking the outcomes after it has been completed.
<b>Cognitive</b>	Resourcing (RE)	Using target language reference such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, or textbooks.
	Grouping (GR)	Classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their attributes or meaning.
	Deduction (DE)	Applying rules to understand the text.
	Imagery (IM)	Using visual aids (either mental or actual) to understand or remember new information.
	Elaboration (EL)	Relating the new information to prior knowledge, relating different parts of new information to each other or making meaningful personal associations with the new information.
	Transfer (TRF)	Using previous linguistic knowledge or prior skills to assist comprehension.
	Inferencing (IN)	Using available information to guess meanings of new items, predict outcomes or fill in the missing information.
	Notetaking (NT)	Writing down keywords or concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form while reading.

Summarizing (SUM)	Making a mental, oral, or written summary of new information gain through reading.
Translation (TRL)	Using L1 as a base for understanding L2.

(Adapted from O'Malley & Chamot, 1990)

In this adapted framework, some significant changes are made to suit the current study. Firstly, two strategies (i.e., functional planning and self-management) in the metacognitive strategy group and four strategies in the cognitive strategy group (i.e., repetition, auditory presentation, recombination, and keyword) are omitted due to the author's hypothesis that these are more frequent in skills other than reading. Additionally, the group social/affective strategy is excluded as within the scope of this study, neither could the author observe how readers cooperated with their peers to achieve reading comprehension, nor did the author have enough opportunities to elaborate on how readers accommodated themselves to affective changes. This is beyond the scope of this study and research article. This newly adapted framework presented above is used as the theoretical framework for the entire research project, especially as the coding framework for analyzing data.

### Previous Studies on Reading Strategy Use

A number of studies examine the comprehension strategies that second language readers utilize to process a text. In these studies, the participants are quite diverse with some from elementary, secondary, and university levels, while others come from remedial reading classes or enroll in courses taught at non-university language centers. Obviously, the participants are of different ages and backgrounds. Furthermore, the investigators use a variety of research methods and tasks to examine strategy types and frequency of strategy use, including think-aloud reports, interviews, questionnaires, observations, and written recalls (Bernhardt, 1991). Table 2 provides a comprehensive look at these studies.

The findings of those studies have revealed that there are indeed differences between successful readers and less successful readers in terms of strategy use. Generally, successful readers use top-down in combination with bottom-up reading strategies, but tend to use more of the former than the latter. Those studies provided detailed descriptions



**TABLE 2. Summary of Previous Reading Strategy Studies**

	<b>Hosenfeld (1977)</b>	<b>Carrell (1988)</b>	<b>Block (1992)</b>
<b>Participants</b>	Ninth graders studying French; 20 SRs and 20 LRs	75 native English speakers learning Spanish, 45 Spanish speakers in an intermediate ESL course	16 proficient readers of English, 9 non-proficient readers of English
<b>Methodology</b>	Think-aloud reports for each sentence they read	Questionnaires of RSs, multiple choice reading comprehension questions	Think-aloud reports at sentence level
<b>Coding Framework</b>	Main-meaning line and word-solving strategies	Global or top-down strategies; local or bottom-up strategies	Two different codes: Meaning-based (global) and word-level (local)
<b>Results</b>	SRs kept meaning of passage in mind while assigning meaning to sentence; LRs focused on solving unknown words or phrases	+ Spanish as a foreign language group at lower proficiency levels used more bottom-up strategies + ESL group at advanced levels used top-down strategies	+ Less proficient readers used local strategies + More proficient readers relied on global strategies

(Adapted from Nguyen, 2006, p. 17)

of the characteristics of successful readers as well as a firm foundation to develop more studies on reading strategies. Despite a thick body of empirical research on reading strategies, little research has been done using the comprehensive framework proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Moreover, there has not yet been any research investigating reading strategies employed by learners in the current research population. This study, therefore, tries to bridge that gap by using O'Malley and Chamot's scheme to investigate the reading strategies used by successful readers and less successful readers among first-year university students in an honors program at a public university in Vietnam who take content courses often through English-medium instruction. The findings will be expanded to address implications for university-level reading instruction both in Vietnam and Korea, as their public higher education systems share some common characteristics.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Questions**

- Question 1: How do successful readers use reading comprehension strategies?
- Question 2: How do less successful readers use reading comprehension strategies?
- Question 3: How does the use of reading comprehension strategies by successful readers differ from that of less successful readers?

### **Participants**

Eighteen non-English-major, first-year university students in an honors program at a public university in Vietnam were the participants of the study. The eighteen students were enrolled in the author's English class. They were selected on the basis of their reading test scores throughout the first semester at the university together with the author's observations. The students with the most outstanding performance results and the students with the poorest results were categorized into the successful reader group and less successful reader group, respectively. The participants' English proficiency levels were certified through an entrance exam for the honors program administered by the university. Up to the time of the study, they were at Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Language Level A2 or above. Level A2 is characterized as the ability to deal with simple, straightforward information and begin to express oneself in familiar contexts. For example, an individual can take part in a routine conversation on simple predictable topics. The students had been studying English reading at the university for nearly 150 periods (approximately equivalent to 150 hours of instruction). In their first year, they have to attend intensive English courses, which are the bases for them to study professional subjects (e.g., often the courses in their study major) delivered in English and using a great amount of English reading material. Therefore, required general English courses play a vital role in preparing and supporting students' overall English proficiency but have a crucial role in developing students' reading skills for their study at the university. There are

specific reasons for choosing these freshmen as the participants of this study. Firstly, the training quality of these students is always of great concern to both the administration and teachers at the university. The findings of the study could provide essential information for teachers to adjust instruction to improve their students' reading proficiency and, hence, contribute to enhancing the overall training quality of these students. In addition, as these students were those who the author had already been directly teaching, this was an additional favorable condition for carrying out the research across a variety of levels.

## **Research Instruments**

Data on which language learning strategies learners utilize can be collected in several ways such as through interviews, verbal reports, learning strategy inventories, diaries, observation, and dialogue journals. This study specifically was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods, using questionnaires and think-aloud reports.

## **Questionnaires**

According to Parrot (1993), the questionnaire is an important tool that is often used to examine the learners' response to specific factors in their learning process. The questionnaire in this research was designed to investigate students' use of reading strategies when they do reading comprehension tasks. This questionnaire was adopted from Phakiti (2003) and adjusted by the author. There are two reasons for the adjustments. First, several statements proposed by Phakiti are similar to each other, so they were excluded from this study. Second, some statements were added in the present study with reference to O'Malley and Chamot's classification (1990) of learning strategies. In order for the participants to understand thoroughly, the questionnaire was written in Vietnamese. The English version of this questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. The questionnaire was concerned with the students' self-assessment of their reading strategy use and contained 18 statements related to metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies. In the questionnaire, a 5-point Likert scale was used. So, five choices were offered for each statement. Participants were asked to choose the option that best represented their opinions. Among the statements, 8 items were

coded as metacognitive reading strategies, and the other 10 items as cognitive reading strategies. The 8 metacognitive reading strategy items were further divided into five subcategories: advanced organization, directed attention, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Similarly, the 10 cognitive strategy items were also grouped into 10 subcategories, namely, resourcing, grouping, deduction, imagery, elaboration, transfer, inferencing, notetaking, summarizing, and translation. The details are shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3. Questionnaire: Reading Strategy-Coding Categories**

<b>Learning Strategy</b>	<b>Questionnaire Item</b>
Advanced Organizers	Item 2: I skim through the text to understand the main ideas of the texts before focusing on details.
	Item 4: I preview the headings and illustrations to get the main idea of the text before reading.
Directed Attention	Item 1: Before reading, I read the comprehension questions to decide important information that should be noted.
	Item 3: I skip the words that are not essential for comprehending the texts while reading.
Selective Attention	Item 5: I scan for keywords or concepts that are closely related to the questions in order to answer them.
	Item 9: I choose reading strategies according to my reading purposes.
Self-Monitoring	Item 10: Sometimes, I stop reading and consider whether I comprehend what I have read.
Self-Evaluation	Item 18: I check if my answers to the questions are correct or wrong after reading.
Resourcing	Item 6: I use a dictionary to look up words when encountering a new word while reading.
Grouping	Item 11: I can determine the function of a word in a sentence while reading.
Deduction	Item 7: I often read the first line of every paragraph to understand the whole text.
Imagery	Item 8: I look at illustrations or create pictures in my mind while I read.
Elaboration	Item 13: I relate my prior knowledge to the information of the texts I am reading.
Transfer	Item 12: I use my knowledge of grammar or vocabulary to help understand difficult parts in reading texts.
Inferencing	Item 14: I guess meanings of new words using the available information.

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Notetaking	Item 16: I write down keywords while reading.
Summarizing	Item 17: I mentally summarize the main ideas of the texts after reading.
Translation	Item 15: I translate the reading text into Vietnamese to understand it more clearly.

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(Adapted from O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 119)

## Think-Aloud Reports

The think-aloud report, one of the three types of verbal report described as “stream-of-consciousness disclosure of thought processes while the information is being attended to” (Cohen, 1998, p. 34), was used to obtain information about reading strategies employed by the participants in this study. There were several reasons for the author of this study to use this method. Firstly, the think-aloud approach was adopted as a major source of data for several reading researchers (Hosenfield, 1977; Block, 1986). Secondly, “the think-aloud approach would be suitable for receptive tasks” (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 90). Another reason is that think-alouds “are, in fact, valuable and thoroughly reliable sources of information about cognitive processes” (Cohen, 1998). According to Kuusela and Paul (2000), think-alouds can be carried out either concurrently (at the time the subject is solving the problem), when completing the task (known as a “live” report), or retrospectively (after the event). In this study, retrospective reports were used.

## Reading Comprehension Tests

A test, according to Carroll (1968) is “a procedure designed to elicit certain behavior from which one can make inferences about certain characteristics of an individual.” In this study, a reading test accompanied retrospective reports for eliciting verbal data from the participants.

## Data Collection

After the administration of the questionnaires, the retrospective reports were conducted. The participants received instruction about how to do the think-aloud retrospective reports. About three to five minutes

after finishing the reading test, they were required to report what they were thinking while reading. They could choose to verbalize in either Vietnamese or English. Such questions as “What (else) are you thinking?” were asked, when necessary, to stimulate the participants’ responses. The reports were tape-recorded and then transcribed.

## Coding of Data

After the think-aloud reports were tape-recorded and transcribed, the author followed four steps in coding the protocols (Young, 1997): (a) read the think-aloud reports carefully, (b) underline the corresponding verbalization, (c) classify the strategies used in the excerpt, and (d) record the strategy code. The frequency can be high use (*always* – a score from 4.5 to 5.0, or *often* – a score from 3.5 to 4.4), medium use (*sometimes* – a score from 2.5 to 3.4) or low use (*rarely* – a score from 1.5 to 2.4, or *never* – a score from 1.0 to 1.40).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Research Question 1: How Do Successful Readers Use Reading Comprehension Strategies?

#### Metacognitive Strategy Use

As can be seen in Table 4, the successful readers reported that they always used metacognitive strategies with  $f = 4.56$  for the whole category. The table also shows that the successful readers used every metacognitive strategy listed in the framework. Four prominent strategies with high frequency of use were *advanced organizer*, *directed attention*, *selected attention*, and *self-evaluation* ( $f = 4.78, 4.67, 5.00,$  and  $5.00,$  respectively).

**TABLE 4. Successful Readers’ Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Metacognitive Strategies	AO	DA	SA	SM	SE	Average
Questionnaire	4.83	4.72	5.00	3.29	5.00	4.57
Retrospective Report	4.72	4.61	5.00	3.39	5.00	4.54
Average	4.78	4.67	5.00	3.34	5.00	4.56

In processing the reading text, the successful readers always skimmed through the text to understand main ideas of the texts before focusing on details, scanned for keywords or concepts that are closely related to the questions in order to answer them, previewed the first sentences to get the main idea of the text, and checked the outcomes after completing. In other words, the results revealed that the successful readers were both active planners and evaluators in the reading process. With  $f = 3.34$  for *self-monitoring*, the successful readers were believed to often check their comprehension during the reading process. In general, these participants had high use frequencies for all metacognitive strategies.

**Cognitive Strategy Use**

Table 5 shows that the strategies in the cognitive category were not used as frequently as those in the metacognitive category. Like metacognitive strategies, the successful readers reported a high frequency of use for cognitive strategies with  $f = 3.91$ . Among the ten cognitive strategies, eight strategies, namely resourcing, grouping, deduction, elaboration, transfer, inferencing, notetaking, and summarizing had high use frequencies with  $f = 3.89, 4.62, 4.50, 4.00, 3.78, 4.78, 4.84,$  and  $3.61$ , respectively.

**TABLE 5. Successful Readers’ Cognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Cognitive Strategies	RE	GR	DE	IMG	EL	TRF	IN	NT	SUM	TRL	Average
Questionnaire	4.78	4.67	4.44	1.56	4.67	3.56	4.67	4.89	4.11	3.33	4.07
Retrospective Report	3.00	4.56	4.56	1.78	3.33	4.00	4.89	4.78	3.11	3.44	3.75
Average	3.89	4.62	4.50	1.67	4.00	3.78	4.78	4.84	3.61	3.39	3.91

These figures indicate that the successful readers always or at least often applied these strategies in aiding their comprehension. *Translation* received a medium frequency of use with  $f = 3.39$  and *imagery* received a low frequency of use with  $f = 1.67$ . This is to say that these participants sometimes used *translation* and rarely used *imagery*. This fact may have resulted from their lack of knowledge about these strategies or their unawareness of the importance of these strategies.

## Research Question 2: How Do Less Successful Readers Use Reading Comprehension Strategies?

### Metacognitive Strategy Use

The data in Table 6 reveals that less successful readers' frequencies of using metacognitive strategies were considerable. With  $f = 3.5$  overall, these participants were considered to often use metacognitive strategies. Regarding individual strategies, the less successful readers used all of the strategies within the category; however, the frequencies for each strategy are different. The four strategies that received medium use frequencies were *advanced organizer*, *directed attention*, *self-monitoring*, and *self-evaluation* ( $f = 3.22, 2.78, 3.22, \text{ and } 3.25$ , respectively). The remaining strategy, *selected attention*, received a high frequency of use with  $f = 5.00$ .

**TABLE 6. Less Successful Readers' Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Metacognitive Strategies	AO	DA	SA	SM	SE	Average
Questionnaire	3.33	2.56	5.00	3.44	3.28	3.52
Retrospective Report	3.11	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.22	3.47
Average	3.22	2.78	5.00	3.22	3.25	3.50

This indicates that the less successful readers showed themselves to be “selective-attention readers,” always deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of input, often by scanning for keywords, concepts, and/or linguistic markers.

### Cognitive Strategy Use

As shown in Table 7, the less successful readers showed a medium use frequency of cognitive reading strategies at  $f = 3.09$ , which is clearly lower than that for metacognitive strategies. A significant finding was that a high frequency of use could be seen in only four out of ten strategies in the category, namely *grouping*, *imagery*, *inferencing*, and *translation* ( $f = 3.84, 4.5, 3.61, \text{ and } 3.5$ , respectively). Especially, among the ten strategies, only *imagery* was seen to be always used ( $f = 4.5$ ). These participants sometimes used *deduction* ( $f = 3.17$ ), *elaboration* ( $f = 3.17$ ), and *transfer* ( $f = 3.22$ ). Moreover, they almost never used *summarizing* ( $f = 1.22$ ) and rarely used *resourcing* ( $f = 2.22$ ) to support



their reading comprehension. It is also interesting to note that *deduction* and *elaboration* received the same frequency of use ( $f = 3.17$ ).

**TABLE 7. Less Successful Readers' Cognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Cognitive Strategies	RE	GR	DE	IMG	EL	TRF	IN	NT	SUM	TRL	Average
Questionnaire	2.11	4.56	3.44	4.78	3.11	3.33	3.78	2.33	1.33	3.67	3.24
Retrospective Report	2.33	3.11	2.89	4.22	3.22	3.11	3.44	2.56	1.11	3.33	2.93
Average	2.22	3.84	3.17	4.5	3.17	3.22	3.61	2.45	1.22	3.5	3.09

**Research Question 3: How Does the Use of Reading Comprehension Strategies by Successful Readers Differ from Use by Less Successful Readers?**

Data used for research questions 1 and 2 are now compared to find the differences in the use of reading strategies by the two groups of readers: the successful and the less successful readers. Focusing on the metacognitive and cognitive categories, it can be seen from Table 8 and Table 9 that the figures for the successful readers were higher than those for the less successful readers. In other words, the successful readers employed both metacognitive and cognitive strategies with greater frequency than their counterparts. This supports the findings of some previous research, which claimed that good readers make use of strategies with higher frequency, in terms of both metacognitive and cognitive strategies, than do less proficient readers.

**TABLE 8. Successful Readers and Less Successful Readers' Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Metacognitive Strategies	AO	DA	SA	SM	SE	Average
Successful Readers	4.78	4.67	5.00	3.34	5.00	4.56
Less Successful Readers	3.22	2.78	5.00	3.22	3.25	3.50

With regard to individual strategies in the metacognitive category, a noticeable feature from Table 8 is that the successful readers showed higher strategy use frequency in all of the strategies. Interestingly, the

two groups had the same pattern for *selected attention* ( $f = 5$ ). However, while the successful readers were considered both active planners and self-evaluators in reading process, the less successful readers were not. This is because the former always utilized *advanced organizer* ( $f = 4.78$ ), *directed attention* ( $f = 4.67$ ), and *self-evaluation* ( $f = 5$ ), while the latter only sometimes used these strategies ( $f = 3.22, 2.78, \text{ and } 3.25$ , respectively).

**TABLE 9. Successful Readers and Less Successful Readers' Cognitive Strategy Use Frequency**

Cognitive Strategies	RE	GR	DE	IMG	EL	TRF	IN	NT	SUM	TRL	Average
Successful Readers	3.89	4.62	4.50	1.67	4.00	3.78	4.78	4.84	3.61	3.39	3.91
Less Successful Readers	2.22	3.84	3.17	4.50	3.17	3.22	3.61	2.45	1.22	3.50	3.09

In terms of individual strategies within the cognitive category, the successful readers reported using eight out of the ten strategies more frequently than the less successful readers. These were *resourcing*, *grouping*, *deduction*, *elaboration*, *transfer*, *inferencing*, *notetaking*, and *summarizing*. For the other two strategies, *imagery* and *translation*, the successful readers received a lower score than the less successful readers. In sum, the successful readers were more outstanding in the use of almost all of these cognitive strategies.

## CONCLUSIONS

In short, the results of this study show that among the fourteen strategies in the framework adapted from O'Malley and Chamot (1990), both groups of participants applied almost all of the strategies with quite considerable frequency, except *summarizing* by the less successful readers (never used) and *imagery* by the successful readers (rarely used). With reference to the use of strategy categories, both groups of readers preferred using metacognitive strategies to cognitive strategies, and the successful readers reported utilizing metacognitive and cognitive categories more frequently than the less successful readers. Also, higher strategy use frequencies were seen in the former group than in the latter

one for all individual strategies, except *imagery* and *translation*.

As for individual metacognitive strategies, the prominent finding from the research was that the successful readers tended to be active planners and self-evaluators while the less successful readers were not. For individual cognitive strategies, the successful readers were also superior to the less successful readers in the use of almost all of these strategies.

As shown in the study, the significant point is that the ineffective readers used metacognitive and cognitive strategies with lower frequency. This indicates that the lack of reading strategies could affect the students' reading proficiency; in other words, there may exist a causal link between the use of reading strategies and reading achievements. This result also confirms the results of previous research with EFL Korean students. Park (2010) examined reading strategy use among 115 Korean EFL university students when they read authentic expository/technical texts in English. The results revealed that the students' reading comprehension ability was related to their reading strategy use to some extent. In other words, the higher their reading comprehension ability, the more they used sophisticated reading strategies. Similarly, Park (2015) stated, "It is, however, noteworthy that reading proficiency as measured by the reading comprehension test showed a positive correlation with the frequency of reading strategy use reported by the students" (p. 68).

Therefore, it is necessary for English language teachers in Korea, and possibly throughout Asia where English-medium instruction is increasingly more common at the university level, to be aware of this fact and find ways to improve their students' reading proficiency by providing them with explicit instruction on reading strategies. Another implication is that think-aloud procedures should be used as a tool in reading classrooms in any context, including in the Korean context. A thick body of literature and results from experimental research prove that think-aloud reports have a significant impact on language learners' performance inside the classroom (Carroll & Payne, 1977; Johnson & Russo, 1978, as cited in Ericsson & Simon, 1993; Karpf, 1972; Roth, 1965; Walker, 1982). As either the teacher or excellent students in a language classroom can stand up and model how they complete a reading task, less proficient readers can see what good readers do, apply it to their own reading process, and make it their own reading strategy. Moreover, think-aloud activities also help turn reading classes into active

and dynamic social experiences, that may also reduce boredom.

## THE AUTHOR

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## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire on the Use of Reading Strategies

*Directions:* Listed below are statements about what you do when you are dealing with reading comprehension texts. Each statement is followed by the numbers from 1 to 5 and each number means the following:

- 1 – I never do this.
- 2 – I do this only occasionally.
- 3 – I sometimes do this.
- 4 – I usually do this.
- 5 – I always do this.

After reading each statement, put an X in the box corresponding to the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that applies to you. Please note that there are no right or wrong responses to any of the items on this survey.

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Before reading, I read the comprehension questions to decide important information that should be noted.					
2	I skim through the text to understand the main ideas of the texts before focusing on details.					
3	I skip the words that are not essential for comprehending the texts while reading.					
4	I preview the headings and illustrations to get the main idea of the text before reading.					
5	I scan for keywords or concepts that are closely related to the questions in order to answer them.					
6	I use a dictionary to look up words when encountering a new word while reading.					
7	I often read the first line of every paragraph to understand the whole text.					
8	I look at illustrations or create pictures in my mind while I read.					
9	I choose reading strategies according to my reading purposes.					
10	Sometimes, I stop reading and consider whether I comprehend what I have read.					
11	I can determine the function of a word in a sentence while reading.					

12	I use my knowledge of grammar or vocabulary to help understand difficult parts in reading texts.					
13	I relate my prior knowledge to the information in the texts I am reading.					
14	I guess meanings of new words using the available information.					
15	I translate the reading text into Vietnamese to understand it more clearly.					
16	I write down keywords while reading.					
17	I mentally summarize the main ideas of the texts after reading.					
18	I check if my answers to the questions are correct or wrong after reading.					

**Personal Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_.

Years of studying English (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_year(s)

## APPENDIX B

### Reading Tasks for Think-Aloud Reports

Read the passage and complete the tasks below.

It is almost impossible to write of the Arts in Australia without mentioning the building that first put the country firmly on the world cultural map – the Sydney Opera House. Completed in 1973 after 14 years of much heated discussion and at a cost of almost £60 million, it is not only the most well-known Australian building in the world but perhaps the most famous design of any modern building anywhere.

Its distinctive and highly original shape has been likened to everything from the sails of a sailing ship to broken eggshells, but few would argue with the claim that the Opera House is a major contribution to world architecture. Set amidst the graceful splendor of Sydney Harbour, presiding like a queen over the bustle and brashness of a modern city striving to forge a financial reputation in a tough commercial world, **it** is a reminder to all Australians of **their** deep and abiding love of all things cultural.

The Opera House was designed not by an Australian but by a celebrated Danish architect, Jorn Utzon, whose design won an international competition in the late 1950s. However, it was not, in fact, completed to his original specifications. Plans for much of the intended interior design of the building have only recently been discovered. Sadly, the State Government of the day interfered with Utzon's plans because of concerns about the escalating cost, though **this** was hardly surprising – the building was originally expected to cost only £5.5 million. Utzon left the country before completing the project and in a fit of anger vowed never to return. The project was eventually paid for by a State-run lottery.

The size of the interior of the building was scaled down appreciably by a team of architects whose job it was to finish construction within a restricted budget. Rehearsal rooms and other facilities for the various theatres within the complex were either made considerably smaller or cut out altogether, and some artists have complained bitterly about **them** ever since. But despite the controversy that surrounded its birth, the Opera House has risen above the petty squabbling and is now rightfully hailed as a modern architectural masterpiece. The Queen officially opened the building in 1975 and since then, within its curved and twisted walls,



audiences of all nationalities have been quick to acclaim the many world-class performances of stars from the Australian opera, ballet and theatre.

**Part A**

**Answer the following questions**

1. Which is the best title for the passage?
  - a. Utzon Quits Australia
  - b. An Architectural Disaster
  - c. History of a Queen
  - d. A Dane in Our Lives
2. What is the main point of the second paragraph?
  - a. to describe the Opera House visually
  - b. to tell the history of the building
  - c. to state where the Opera House is located
  - d. to say why the building was built
3. Which is (are) the topic sentence(s) of the third paragraph?
  - a. Sentence number one
  - b. Sentence number two
  - c. The last sentence
  - d. Sentences number one and two
4. To what do the bold and underlined pronouns in the passage refer?
  - a. "it"
  - b. "their"
  - c. "this"
  - d. "them"

**Part B**

**Do the following statements agree with the information in the passage?**

**Write:**

- YES**                    **if the statement agrees with the information**  
**NO**                      **if the statement contradicts the information**  
**NOT GIVEN** **if there is no information on this in the passage**

1. The building is possibly the most famous of its type in the world.
2. The Opera House drew world attention to the Arts in Australia.
3. Utzon designed the roof to look like the sails of a sailing ship.
4. A few people claim that it is a major architectural work.
5. According to the author, Sydney is a quiet and graceful city.
6. The cost of construction went more than £50 million over budget.
7. Utzon never returned to Australia to see the completed building.
8. There is only one theatre within the complex.
9. The Government was concerned about some artists' complaints.
10. Australian artists give better performances in the Opera House.

**Part C**

**Find the single words in paragraphs 1 and 2 that mean the following:**

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. angry              | 2. excited activity      |
| 3. permanent, lasting | 4. (to) advance steadily |
| 5. trying hard        | 6. rashness              |

**Next, find the words in paragraphs 3 and 4 that mean the following:**

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 7. made smaller  | 8. limited       |
| 9. known as      | 10. considerably |
| 11. (to) promise | 12. money plan   |

**Part D**

**Read the summary of the text, then complete the gaps in it using words from the box below. There are more words than you need.**

The Sydney Opera House is one of the most famous (1) ... buildings in the world. Officially opened in (2) ..., its eye-catching and (3) ... shape was the dream of a Danish (4) ... called Utzon. Unfortunately, his design for the (5) ... could not be completed for financial reasons. Nonetheless, the building was finally ready after (6) ... years of (7) ... and argument, and is now (8) ... as a (9) ... of modern architecture. World-class performances are regularly given in the Opera House by Australian (10) ... from the worlds of opera, ballet and theatre.

architecture	1973	famous	queen	controversy
£5.5 million	interior	artists	modern	hail
acclaimed	exterior	originally	14	petty
architect	1975	rehearsals	masterpiece	distinctive
star	curve	£60 million	the 1950s	

## APPENDIX C

### Sample Think-Aloud Reports and Sample Coding

S1: I skimmed through the reading passage. I think that it is necessary to do it because it helps me know what the text is about and think about the issues around it. (1) After skimming through the text and the questions, I reread the questions carefully and decide what the key information is being mentioned and where it should be found in the text. (2)

S10: I translated but not all the text, sometimes just the sentences that i think they are need for the question. (1) “Do you often underline keywords during reading process?” No, I rarely do it because it’s waste of time. (2)

Participants	Sentences	Strategies	Frequency
S1	1	Advanced organizer	5
	2	Directed attention	5
S10	1	Translation	3
	2	Note-taking	2

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# How School Culture and School Contexts Influence Teacher Professional Development: A Review of the Literature

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This paper is a review of 16 past studies, comprised of 12 research papers and 4 academic papers, on how school culture influences the professional development of general teachers and English teachers from different corners of the globe. After carefully examining the papers, it was found that they share nine common themes related to school culture that have an important role in teacher professional development. These themes are, namely, (a) school contexts and professional development, (b) types of school cultures, (c) classroom culture and professional culture, (d) school culture, institutional constraints, and instructional practices, (e) collaboration and school culture, (f) barriers to a healthy school culture, (g) reculturing, (h) school leaders, and (i) school culture and professional development of English teachers. Also, there is an in-depth discussion on how each of these themes can impact the professional development of general teachers and English teachers in Korea and Asia.

## INTRODUCTION

The term “teacher professional development” is related to all the efforts and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge and skills of teachers, which in turn, can result in better learning performance in students (Guskey, 2000). As one of the important aspects of teacher professional development, school culture can affect the teaching and learning of a particular school or organization. According to previous studies, school culture refers to the norms, values, practices, beliefs, activities, ceremonies, or even stories shared or adhered to by the members of a particular school or organization – all of which play crucial roles in teacher professional development (Peterson, 2002; Stodolsky, Dorph, & Nemser, 2006; Stoll, 1998). Therefore, in the

review of the literature, there is an attempt to compare research papers and academic articles related to the relationship between school culture, school contexts, and teacher professional development from different parts of the globe. To be more specific, the major common themes regarding school culture and professional development for general teachers and English teachers alike – both overseas and in Korea – will be discussed in the paper. In addition, some discussion and personal viewpoints towards how school culture can influence teacher professional development are provided herein.

The common themes found in the literature review include (a) school contexts and professional development, (b) types of school culture, (c) classroom culture and professional culture, (d) school culture, institutional constraints, and instructional practices, (e) collaboration and school culture, (f) barriers to a healthy school culture, (g) reculturing, (h) school leaders, and (i) school culture and professional development of English teachers. Each of these themes will be discussed at length in the following section (see Appendices A–C).

## **SCHOOL CULTURE, SCHOOL CONTEXTS, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

As mentioned in the very beginning, school culture – a major component of school contexts – plays a vital role in teacher professional development. It refers to beliefs, norms, practices, and activities strongly shared and practiced by a particular school community (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Indeed, school contexts can affect the teacher's career decisions, teacher retention rates, and also instructional quality of schools (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, & Wychoff, 2011; Harris, Rutledge, Ingle, & Thomson, 2010). As described in Shin (2012), with collectivist cultures in South Korea, novice English teachers in both middle schools and high schools there have to conform to the norms of senior teachers who rely so much upon teaching English through Korean and the teacher-centered approach; otherwise, they are likely to get into trouble. This may affect the quality of teaching English, resulting in low teacher professional development. Nevertheless, when the school contexts and school cultures are pleasant and supportive, teachers are likely to develop positive attitudes and have positive feelings towards their school contexts

and school cultures, which may result in more efficient teaching and learning, and improved professional development (Rauf, Ali, Aluwi, & Noor, 2012; Sullivan, 2010). As described in Wang and Zepada (2013), with a healthy school culture or context, teachers gain trust from their peers and principals, which contributes to teachers' positive attitudes and willingness to participate in school activities and meetings. From this perspective, school contextual factors can influence the minds and behaviors of teachers, other staff members, and students. If school culture is negative or unpleasant (e.g., few collaborative efforts among teachers, a high level of teacher isolation, teachers dividing themselves into sub-groups), it is unlikely that teachers will improve themselves academically or professionally. This can result in low teacher professional development, and in turn, affect students' learning outcomes in various ways.

## TYPES OF SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture can come in different forms and types depending on school contexts (Hongboontri & Keawkhong, 2014; Kane, Sandretto, & Health, 2002). In other words, each school has its own unique cultural characteristics. Researchers have found different types of school culture in different settings. For example, Kleinsasser (1993) found two types of school culture: certain/non-routine technical culture (learning-enriched) and uncertain/routine technical culture (learning-impoverished). Teachers at schools with the first type of technical culture tend to learn from each other and collaborate on school activities or tasks. They are certain of what they are doing, take pride in their students, get feedback from each other and supervisors, and use different types of teaching methods and materials in addition to textbooks used in classrooms. On the other hand, teachers working at the schools with the latter type of school culture tend to work in isolation, neither talking nor collaborating with one another. Additionally, little feedback is received from supervisors. Due to their uncertainty of what they are doing, they are likely to depend very much on textbooks and the same familiar teaching method, that is, grammar–translation. So, authentic materials are rarely used by teachers working at these schools. Likewise, Hargreaves (1994) highlighted four existing teaching cultures: individualism (e.g., autonomy, isolation, and

insulation), collaboration (teachers working together), contrived collegiality (insincere collaborative efforts among teachers), and balkanization (sub-groups among teachers). From this viewpoint, when compared to one another, the concepts of Kleinsasser (1993) and Hargreaves (1994) share some similarities. Kleinsasser's (1993) first technical culture (certain/non-routine technical culture) can be matched with the second teaching culture of Hargreaves (1994), which is collaboration, because teachers working at schools with this type of culture are likely to collaborate with each other. As for Kleinsasser's (1993) second type of technical culture (uncertain/routine), it could be matched with individualism, contrived collegiality, and balkanization because teachers working at schools with this type of culture tend to work individually and are not fully willing to cooperate on school activities.

The typology of school culture has also been defined by other researchers. For example, Stoll and Fink (1996) proposed a typology of school cultures comprising the stages of *moving* (effective and improving), *cruising* (effective but declining), *strolling* (something in between effective and ineffective, and improving and declining), *struggling* (ineffective but improving), and *sinking* (ineffective and declining). Some of the components of this model can be matched with Kleinsasser's (1993) and Hargreaves' (1994). For example, "moving" can go with the first type of Kleinsasser's (1993) school technical culture and Hargreaves's (1994) culture of collaboration. Also, "sinking" can belong to Kleinsasser's (1993) second type of school culture. However, from this point of view, Stoll and Fink's (1996) model is rather complex and difficult to be applied when compared to Kleinsasser's (1993) and Hargreaves' (1994). In addition, school cultures can be classified as positive or toxic cultures (Peterson, 2002). Teachers working at schools with positive cultures share a sense of purpose and values, have norms of continuous learning and improvement, are committed to the students' learning, have collegial relationships, and possess opportunities to reflect and share opinions and experiences (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Fullan, 2001; Hord, 1998; Lambert, 1998; Stein, 1998). On the contrary, teachers working at schools with toxic norms tend to lack a clear sense of purpose, have hostile relationships, do not encourage students' learning, and do not want to collaborate with other teachers (Peterson, 2002). From a personal perspective, this model is practical and clear, since it can be used together with the models discussed earlier. For

example, *positive cultures* can be matched with Kleinsaasser's (1993) first school technical culture and Hargreaves' (1994) culture of collaboration.

## CLASSROOM CULTURE AND PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

School culture or organizational culture is a broad term covering all aspects of a particular school. Classroom culture (culture of the classroom) and professional culture (workplace culture experienced by all the personnel at a school) can be considered subsets of school culture (Kardos, 2004). Both of these cultures can influence the teachers' professional development at a particular school. It is possible that either the classroom culture or the professional culture of a particular school can affect the pedagogical practices of some teachers, which in turn, result in ineffective student learning outcomes. For example, the presence of a mentor can affect the student teachers' teaching performances and the vagueness of the pre-service teachers' status can have negative effects on the teaching performances of student teachers attending a elementary school teacher education program in Turkey (Altun, 2013). Supovitz and Turner (2000) found that classroom culture in some elementary and secondary schools in the USA is hard to change, and investigative classroom culture varies according to the kinds of teacher professional development in the schools. Stodolsky, Dorph, and Nemser (2006) suggested that the professional culture of Jewish schools should improve through a focus on pedagogy equipped with specific contents. Also, to further improve professional culture, thus leading to more effective teacher professional development, they suggested that the schools should encourage their teachers to engage with other teachers through informal professional conversations, sustained exchanges about teaching and learning, and classroom observations. From a practical viewpoint, it is challenging to change either the classroom culture or professional culture of a particular organization. However, through some effective professional development initiatives from a school, it is very possible to change the existing toxic cultures and transform them into healthy or positive ones.



## SCHOOL CULTURE, INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS, AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

School culture can have either positive or negative effects on instructional practice. For example, routine or uncertain teaching culture can affect the foreign language teachers' teaching practices (Kleinsasser, 1993; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Similarly, the instructional practices of the English teachers working at the Thai university in the study conducted by Hongboontri and Keawkhon (2014) were affected by the teachers' main focus on grammar points, over-reliance on textbooks, low interaction with their colleagues and students, teacher-centered classroom activities, and grammar-translation activities. Likewise, in Shin's (2012) study, novice English teachers in South Korea had to work under institutional constraints. For example, they had no freedom to include their own teaching materials, but they had to cover the same material and conduct classes in the same way as the other teachers. To prepare students for exams, lecture-style instruction using Korean was mainly used to teach vocabulary, grammar, translation, and reading. From the school's perspective, novice English teachers in South Korea need to act as school change agents who can utilize creative teaching materials by following the learner-centered approach. In doing so, they need to collaborate with existing teachers and have supportive mentors who have proper perspectives towards teaching English. Also, they need to be able to demonstrate to administrators and senior teachers that learner-centered instruction is far more effective than the conventional one, that it can help improve the students' English communication skills, and can boost their test scores, which will ultimately make the country's Teaching English Through English policy (TETE) successful.

In another example, teachers working at poorer schools in rural American communities were likely to have lower levels of classroom investigative culture. Their teacher professional development experiences were also shorter in length and in intensity when compared to those of teachers working at urban schools (Supovitz & Turner, 2000). With these shortcomings, the instructional practices of these schools were deemed likely to be of lower quality when compared to those of schools in urban communities. In short, school culture and institutional constraints can have an impact on instructional practices, and they are both important factors that greatly influence teacher professional development.

## **COLLABORATION AND SCHOOL CULTURE**

As one of Kleinsasser's (1993) nine social variables for exploring technical cultures, collaboration plays a very important role in strengthening the culture of a particular school. When a school has a collaborative culture, teachers can benefit from reduced teacher isolation, sharing of professional practices, observing of each other in the classroom, and discussions of their work (Lortie, 1975). School initiatives can help promote a collaborative culture in the school. According to Dickerson (2011), the Appreciative Inquiry Initiative contributed to the process of building a collaborative culture for all school levels in Canada by providing new connections, encouraging reflection, and engaging stakeholders. From this point of view, if a school has an unhealthy culture, it is possible that there will be little collaboration among teachers and other staff members, as described in Hongboontri and Keawkhong (2014) and Stodolsky, Dorph, and Nemser (2006). To sum up, collaboration is one of the major predictors of a healthy school culture, which can lead to successful teacher professional development.

## **BARRIERS TO A HEALTHY SCHOOL CULTURE**

According to Ross (1995), there are five main obstacles to professional development: cultural clashes, weaknesses in professional development networks, lack of time, conflicts with outside agencies, and university reward structures. In addition, when teachers divide among themselves or form sub-groups (balkanization) within their organizations, it is possible that these sub-groups have different viewpoints – some of which can conflict with each other. It is important to note that each school culture is likely to have sub-cultures whose primary concerns are privacy, autonomy, and resistance to change (Dickerson, 2011; Little, 1990), so this can be a great challenge to school leaders who would like to transform their school cultures into positive, collaborative ones.

Another thing to remember is that bringing about a collaborative culture at a school requires a lot of time and patience (Dickerson, 2011). Furthermore, barriers to a healthy school culture can be explained by using the iceberg metaphor by Plant (1987), which has been used to

convey the difference between the surface aspects (e.g., organization, roles, and responsibilities) and those below the surface (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and norms). Therefore, it is crucial for any school to truly understand the aspects below the surface, (e.g., teachers' and students' beliefs and attitudes about the best teaching and learning English methods; Shin, 2012), since these aspects can be problematic to the organization. In other words, negative beliefs or norms of teachers can in some ways hinder the success of a healthy school culture.

## **RECURTURING**

When a school culture is unhealthy and causes barriers to successful professional development, it is necessary to reshape it by following the concept of reculturing. Reculturing is the process of transforming values, beliefs, norms, visions, paradigms, metaphors, and so on (Morgan, 1997; Stoll, 1998). Not only does it involve teacher cultures, reculturing is related to pupil and community cultures (Stoll, 1998). To promote learning communities, leaders can help shape school culture by reading and assessing culture, reinforcing positive aspects, and transforming negatives aspects of the culture. A wide variety of techniques for shaping a school culture include celebrating success, telling success stories, using clear and shared language created during professional development to foster a commitment to staff, student learning, sharing goals and responsibilities, working collegially, lifelong learning, risk-taking, support, mutual respect, openness, and continuous improvement (Peterson, 2002; Stoll & Fink, 1996). To sum up, all of the school's stakeholders share a responsibility to reculture or reshape the existing culture of the school to transform it into a healthy one, which can promote a more effective teaching performance and better learning outcomes from the students.

## **SCHOOL LEADERS AND SCHOOL CULTURES**

As a school contextual factor, school leaders can influence different aspects of teacher profession development, such as teacher attrition (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Glaser, 2003; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, &

Luczak, 2005) and instructional quality of schools (Harris, Rutledge, Ingle, & Thompson, 2010). Furthermore, school leaders and school culture are interrelated. For example, in Wang and Zepada's study (2013), the principal of KM Middle School in China empowered teacher leaders to create different kinds of curricular and instructional activities, which resulted in better professional knowledge and skills, and also the emergence of teacher leaders. In addition, school leaders could also help shape school cultures by installing new values and beliefs. Therefore, it is important that every change agent or leader needs to know their school cultures and contexts very well (Dickerson, 2011; Stoll, 1998). In order to promote collaborative professional cultures, school leaders or school administrators should share their power and responsibilities through delegation (Leithwood, 1992). Also, to achieve the desired school culture, school leaders or school administrators must provide resources, structures, and facilities necessary for transforming their schools' existing cultures (Hargreaves, 1994; Peterson & Deal, 1998). To conclude, school leaders or school administrators have the authority to transform their school cultures into collaborative ones by sharing their power and providing to their teachers all that is necessary.

## CONCLUSIONS

As discussed above, school culture, school contexts, and teacher professional development are inextricably linked to one another. As a powerful school contextual factor, school culture can have either positive or negative effects on teachers, other staff members, and students. If it is a positive effect, school culture can help strengthen teacher professional development, which results in better learning for students. School culture can be classified into two main types: certain/non-routine technical culture (learning-enriched) and uncertain/routine technical culture (learning-impoverished; Kleinsasser, 1993), and it can also be divided into four types: individualism, collaboration, contrived collegiality, and balkanization (Hargreaves, 1994). Classroom culture and professional culture are smaller parts of school culture, which can have either positive or negative effects on teacher professional development. A positive or collaborative school culture can help enhance the quality of instructional practices, whereas a negative or toxic one, as well as

institutional constraints, such as requiring the teachers to cover the same material at the same rate across the grade level and using teacher-centered instruction to teach grammar and vocabulary, can definitely hinder the development of instructional practices (Shin, 2012). Barriers to a healthy school culture include balkanization, cultural conflicts, weaknesses of professional development networks, not enough time, conflicts with outside agencies, university reward structures, conflicting attitudes or beliefs – all of which are either visible (surface aspects) or invisible (aspects under the surface; Plant, 1987; Ross, 1995). Correct understanding of these effects is needed to overcome these issues. Indeed, reculturing is needed to reshape a negative or uncertain/routine technical culture (Morgan, 1997; Peterson, 2002; Stoll, 1998). Also, since school leaders play vital roles in shaping their school cultures, they should have a true understanding of their school cultures and school contexts (Dickerson, 2011; Stoll, 1998). In addition, they should share their authority by delegating some teachers to take some important roles in the schools and provide them with necessary means for school cultural transformation (Hargreaves, 1994; Peterson & Deal, 1998).

Out of the 16 articles that have been reviewed, only five of them are related to school culture and the professional development of English teachers; the rest focus on general teachers (see Appendix A). In particular, only a few studies about school culture and teacher professional development have been conducted in Asian countries. As shown in Appendix A, only one study each was conducted in mainland China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand. All of the studies that have been reviewed are somehow related to how school culture influences teacher professional development. Interestingly, most of the studies focused on school leaders as change agents who can transform school cultures into positive and collaborative ones. Therefore, there should be more research on the relationship between school culture and the professional development of English teachers in Asia, including in Korea, so that Korean English teachers will be able to improve themselves professionally and academically, and Korean students learning English will, in turn, have significantly better learning outcomes.

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## APPENDIX A

### Themes and General Information of the Sixteen Reviewed Papers

Paper No.: 1

Author(s): Crozier & Kleinsasser (2006)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): School culture and native English teachers

Focus: English teachers (native and non-native)

Type of School: Not specified

Paper No.: 2

Author(s): Kleinsasser (1993)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): Types of school culture (technical culture)

Focus: English teachers

Type of School: High school

Paper No.: 3

Author(s): Kleinsasser (1999)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): Technical culture

Focus: General teachers

Type of School: Secondary school

Paper No.: 4

Author(s): Sato & Kleinsasser (2004)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Japan

Main Theme(s): Technical culture (relationship among school contexts, teachers' beliefs, and interactions)

Focus: English teachers

Type of School: High school

Paper No.: 5

Author(s): Boyd, D., et al. (2011)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): School contextual factors and school educational policy

Focus: School leaders (school administrators)

Type of School: All school levels

Paper No.: 6

Author(s): Wang, F., & Zepada, S. J. (2013)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): China

Main Theme(s): School culture and teacher leadership

Focus: School leaders

Type of School: Middle school

Paper No.: 7

Author(s): Rauf, P. A., et al. (2012)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Malaysia

Main Theme(s): School culture, management, and professional development

Focus: General teachers

Type of School: Secondary school

Paper No.: 8 (review paper)

Author(s): Stoll, L. (1998)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Not specified

Main Theme(s): Types of school culture, barriers to school culture, leadership, and reculturing

Focus: Not specified

Type of School: Not specified

Paper No.: 9 (academic paper)

Author(s): Peterson, K. D. (2002)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Not specified

Main Theme(s): Reculturing

Focus: Not specified

Type of School: Not specified

Paper No.: 10

Author(s): Hongboontri, C., & Keawkhong, N. (2014)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Thailand

Main Theme(s): School culture, teachers' beliefs, and instructional practices

Focus: English teachers

Type of School: Public university

Paper No.: 11 (review/academic paper)

Author(s): Leithwood, K. A. (1992)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Not specified

Main Theme(s): Transformational leadership and school culture

Focus: School leaders

Type of School: Not specified

Paper No.: 12

Author(s): Altun, T. (2013)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Turkey

Main Theme(s): Classroom culture and professional development

Focus: Pre-service teachers (student teachers)

Type of School: Elementary school

Paper No.: 13

Author(s): Dickerson, M. (2011)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): Canada

Main Theme(s): Collaboration and school culture

Focus: School's stakeholders

Type of School: All school levels

Paper No.: 14

Author(s): Supovitz, J. A., & Turner, H. A. (2000)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): Effects of professional development on teaching, instructional practices, and classroom culture

Focus: Science teachers

Type of School: Elementary school and secondary school

Paper No.: 15

Author(s): Stodolsky, S., et al. (2006)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): USA

Main Theme(s): Professional culture and professional development

Focus: General teachers (Jewish subjects)

Type of School: Elementary school, high school, and after-school programs

Paper No.: 16

Author(s): Shin, S. (2012)

Country of Origin (where the research was conducted): South Korea

Main Theme(s): Instructional constraints, school culture, teachers' and students' beliefs about the best teaching and learning method

Focus: Novice English teachers in South Korea

Type of School: High school, middle school

## APPENDIX B

### Additional Details of the Research Papers

Paper No.: 1

Researchers: Crozier & Kleinsasser (2006)

Objective: To study educational and sociocultural advice home country teachers offer non-home country teachers in instructing English

Methodology

- Written questionnaire
- Provide advice on the personal qualities and L1 abilities of non-home country teachers

Participants: 30 native and non-native participants representing 14 countries

Main Findings:

- Non-home country teachers should have patience in the classroom and have knowledge of teaching English.
- They should be aware of language and cultural differences.
- They should also learn about the local language and the attitudes and behavior expected in the host country.

Paper No.: 2

Researcher: Kleinsasser (1993)

Objectives

- To explore foreign language teachers' beliefs about their schools and their teaching
- To help understand how to refine and improve teaching and learning in school contexts

Methodology

- Following the methodological logical considerations of Rosenholtz
- Survey, interview, and observation

Participants: 37 U.S. high school foreign language teachers

Main Findings

- Certain: Non-routine technical culture
- Non-certain: Routine technical culture

Paper No.: 3

Researcher: Kleinsasser (1999)

Objectives

- To explore instructors' perceptions of teaching and learning in a secondary school context at the initial stage of becoming a

professional development school

- To offer a framework to investigate the technical culture of a professional development school
- To suggest ways to develop learning communities

Methodology: Survey based on Rosenholtz (1989) and Kleinsasser (1993), and written documents based on Clark (1992)

Participants: 30 teachers and administrators in a private, religious secondary school in southeastern USA.

Main Findings

- The school has strong collaboration and cohesiveness. Their technical culture supports teacher certainty and instructional practices.
- However, it may need additional perspectives from stakeholders and a longitudinal study.
- Practical and empirical observations that more clearly describe school contexts are needed.

Paper No.: 4

Researchers: Sato & Kleinsasser (2004)

Objectives

- To discover the beliefs, practices, and interactions of EFL teachers working at a high school English department in Japan
- To discover how their technical culture influences individual EFL teacher's beliefs, practices, and interactions

Methodology: Survey, interviews, observations, and documents of teachers from the English department of a Japanese high school

Participants: 19 teachers (15 Japanese and 4 native English speakers)

Main Findings

- Lack of communication regarding instructional issues
- No in-depth discussion of issues
- No collaboration
- Use of grammar–translation teaching method
- No time for informal workshops
- No sharing of experiences from in-service workshops
- Not feeling a practical need to attend workshops
- Heavy emphasis on grammar–translation method
- Not discussing instructional issues
- Individualism and balkanization found in this school's technical culture
- The school's technical culture influencing an individual's beliefs, practices, and interactions

Paper No.: 5

Researchers: Boyd, D., et al. (2011)

Objective: To explore the relationship between school contextual factors and teacher retention decisions in New York City

Methodology: Survey, follow-up surveys, and administrative data on teachers and schools

Participants: 4,360 first-year teachers in New York City in 2005

Main Findings

- Working conditions affect teacher's career decisions.
- Teachers are more likely to leave schools with a higher proportion of Black and Hispanic students, both to transfer or to leave the district.
- Principals or school leaders can affect the instructional quality of schools through the recruitment, development, and retention of teachers (Harris, Rutledge, Ingle, & Thompson, 2010).

Paper No.: 6

Researchers: Wang, F., & Zepada, S. J. (2013)

Objective: To gain an understanding of the interrelated relationships between school cultures and teacher leadership development by comparing the experience of teacher leaders from two middle schools in China

Methodology

- Qualitative methodology
- Multi-data collection methods: Consent forms, demographic sheets, interviews, observations

Participants

- Groups of teacher leader, peers, and principals with differing school environments
- Two schools: KM Middle School, which is the top middle school in the QP District, and SY Middle School, which is a low-performing school in the QP District

Main Findings

- At KM Middle School, there is a healthy culture with collaboration. Teachers obtain trust of their peers and principal. They attend regular meetings and participate in activities. Teachers have positive attitudes.
- At SY Middle School, the school culture there is not as healthy. Teachers prepare their lessons alone. There is less collaboration at the school. Discussions and feedback are rare. Teachers would laze away and not have much desire to learn new things.

Paper No.: 7

Researchers: Rauf, P. A., et al. (2012)

Objective: To explore the influence of school culture on the management of professional development in secondary schools in Malaysia

Methodology: Survey questionnaire

Participants: 560 participants based on random sampling

Main Findings

- When teacher perceive their school culture as positive, they are more likely to have positive attitudes towards the management of professional development in schools.
- Teachers should be encouraged by their principals to work collaboratively on the management of school professional development.
- There should be research on the influence of school culture on students' learning.
- A longitudinal study with qualitative data is needed.
- Research on the influence of school culture on professional development in Malaysia is limited.

Paper No.: 10

Researchers: Hongboontri, C., & Keawkhong, N. (2014)

Objectives: To explore the school culture of Hope University's Language Institute and the relationship between the school culture and the instructional practices of EFL teachers in the institute

Methodology

- Mixed methods: Questionnaire, semi-structure interviews, classroom observations, written documents and artifacts, participants and data collection, and participation consistency
- Quantitative and qualitative data

Participants: 62 teachers completed the questionnaire; 14 participated in semi-structured interviews; 2 allowed to be interviewed without class observations.

Main Findings

- Individualism and balkanization were found in the institute, which was compatible with the findings by Hargreaves (1994).
- Marginalization between the institute and teachers
- Low teacher collaboration
- The teachers at the institute work in isolation, not discussing instructional issues in depth and not conversing about work complaints and non-performance-related issues.
- The director of the institute should play attention to school culture.

- Teachers at the institute mainly focus on grammar points and grammar-translation. There is low interaction between teachers and students. Activities have little relevance to teaching content. Most of the activities in the classroom are seat-work exercises. Students do not have opportunities to use English for real communication. The teaching skills are pre-determined and inflexible.
- Teachers have an over-reliance on textbooks. There are no communication-oriented activities. Most of them are grammar-translation activities.

Paper No.: 12

Researcher: Altun, T. (2013)

Objective: To examine primary student teachers' perceptions on the effects of pre-formed classroom culture on their professional development

Methodology: Mixed-method approach: Preliminary questionnaire, semi-structured interview

Participants: 190 fourth-year student teachers who attend a primary teacher education program at the Faith Faculty of Education at Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey

Main Findings

- Classroom culture has influence on student teachers in many ways. Student teacher faced issues such as the presence of the mentor and peers in the class, pupils changing behaviors, insufficient adaptation to the classroom, and the teaching of being a temporary teacher.
- Teachers have revealed that the presence of the mentor had some negative effects on the student teachers' teaching experiences in the classroom.
- There is a relationship between classroom culture (classroom climate) and student teachers' professional development. The presence of the mentor affects student teachers' performances. The vagueness of pre-service teachers' status is an issue.

Paper No.: 14

Researchers: Supovitz, J. A., & Turner, H. A. (2000)

Objectives

- To examine the relationship among high-quality professional development and inquiry-based teaching practices and investigative classroom culture
- To discover the influence of several aspects of the school



environment on the relationship

Methodology

- Survey data
- Sample: Responses from teachers and principals in 24 communities from across the United States

Participants: 4,903 teachers (plus principals) from 787 schools in 1997

Main Findings

- The higher the amounts of TPD, the higher the use of inquiry-based practice and investigative classroom culture.
- Teachers' content preparation and attitudes towards reform had the most influence on teaching practices and investigative culture.
- Teachers supported by their principal had greater use of reform approaches than others.
- Teachers in poorer schools have lower levels of both investigative culture and inquiry-based practices.

Paper No.: 15

Researchers: Stodolsky, S., et al. (2006)

Objective: To report a study of professional culture and professional development in Jewish schools

Methodology: Survey of teachers and other staff and interviews of principals

Participants

- All the teachers from ten participating schools
- 178 respondents (78%). Day school teachers ( $n = 89$ ) were 57% women and 43% men; afternoon school teachers ( $n = 89$ ) were 80% women and 20% men.

Main Findings

- Regular collaboration was found in only a few schools.
- Most teachers were generally helpful to one another and trusted each other. They showed positive feelings towards one another.
- A shared understanding of the goals for student learning is a crucial element of a successful school.
- Only half of the respondents had informal professional conversations with their peers. This could be attributed to their different schedules.
- Regular professional conversation around the content of teaching and learning is rare. No sustained conversation about teaching and learning. It happened infrequently.
- Teacher observation is still low.
- Many teachers feel that they did not get recognition by principals.

- In terms of PD activities, there were not enough.
- The activities were too short. There were not enough PD sessions.
- The courses and workshops for teachers were not quite relevant to what they were teaching.
- A focus on pedagogy that is devoid of specific content is ineffective.
- Pedagogy and content should go together.

Paper No.: 16

Researcher: Shin, S. (2012)

#### Objectives

- To study the process of novice English teachers in Korea who have adopted the practices of existing teachers
- To find out why novice English teachers in Korea who are fluent in English and believe in TETE came to adopt Korean as the medium of instruction

#### Methodology

- Triangulation of data: (1) Online questionnaires with closed and open questions, (2) critical incident analysis (describing what happened, self-awareness, and self-evaluation), and (3) interview (to find out why novice English teachers have shifted towards teaching in Korean)
- Data analysis: Frequency and percentages for closed response items, content analysis for open questions, and constant comparative method used to identify themes

Participants: 16 Korean English teachers working in Seoul and Gyeonggi, South Korea, who have less than three years of teaching experience

#### Main Findings

- English was mainly used in the early part of the class.
- Teaching listening involved a high level of English use, whereas reading instruction required a low level of English use.
- As for speaking, it was taught in English first, and it was repeated in Korean.
- The reasons why teaching English through English is difficult were (1) students' inability to understand, (2) setbacks to progress through coursework, (3) difficulty in classroom control, and (4) difficulty in preparing for school exams.
- Reasons for stopping teaching English through English include institutional constraints, school culture, students' and teachers' beliefs about the best English learning and teaching method (namely, teacher-centered approach), students' being accustomed to

conventional teaching.

- Korean was mainly used in grammar and reading instruction. Students were accustomed to conventional teaching. They did not like group work. No cooperative learning. Lecture preferred.
- To make teaching English through English successful, there should be cooperation among teachers at the same grade level and changes in teachers' attitudes.
- A high ratio of English was used in listening and speaking instruction, while a low ratio of English was used in teaching reading and grammar. In other words, Korean was mainly used in grammar and reading instruction.
- In order to make TETE more successful, novice English teachers in Korea should act as change agents who adopt teaching English through English, using the learner-centered approach and having a proper attitude towards teaching English.

## APPENDIX C

### Additional Details of the Reviewed Academic Papers

Paper No.: 8

Researcher: Stoll, L. (1998)

Topics of discussion: Definition of school culture, what influences school culture, characteristics of school culture, different types of school culture, barriers to school culture, sub-groups, and reculturing

Paper No.: 9

Researcher: Peterson, K. D. (2002)

Topics of discussion: Definition of school culture; types of school culture (positive and toxic); staff development; learning communities; and reading, assessing, and shaping the culture

Paper No.: 11

Researcher: Leithwood, K. A. (1992)

Topics of discussion: Transformational leadership, maintaining a collaborative culture, fostering teacher development, and improving group problem-solving

Paper No.: 13 (academic paper)

Researcher: Dickerson, M. (2011)

Topics of discussion: Benefits of collaboration, collaboration among stakeholders, and limits of collaboration

## The Use of Test-Wiseness Strategies on Vocabulary Tests Among Intermediate EFL Learners

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This paper investigates test-wiseness strategies among EFL learners in order to identify the most frequent test-wiseness strategies and to compare high-level with low-level test-takers regarding their use of strategies. To achieve these purposes, 115 intermediate EFL learners were selected to take part in this study. The Nelson English Language Test was administered, the results of which allowed the researchers to exclude eleven students who were not within the intermediate proficiency level. Afterwards, a vocabulary test and a 14-item questionnaire on test-wiseness strategies were given to the selected participants. It was found that some strategies were used more frequently than others by learners. The results also indicated a relationship between learners' level of proficiency and the use of these strategies, and that high-level test-takers employed test-wiseness strategies more than low-level test-takers. Teachers must take this potential of test-wiseness strategies into account and realize that their learners' performance, one way or another, will be affected by them.

## INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that students make use of certain skills and strategies in testing situations in order to enhance their performance as well as to compensate for their shortage of language knowledge. Therefore, their performance is not wholly determined by their language ability but is also affected by the extent to which students employ certain test-taking

strategies. Test-wiseness strategies have been defined as a test-taker's capacity to not only make use of the target language characteristics but also the formats of both the test and the testing context in order to achieve a higher score (Millman, Bishop, & Ebel, 1965). In a more recent definition Bachman (1990, p. 114) refers to test-wiseness as

a set of individual characteristics related to the amount and type of preparation or prior experience with a given test. They include the conscious pacing of one's time, reading questions before the passage upon which they are based, and ruling out as many alternatives as possible in multiple-choice items and then guessing among the ones remaining.

Although test-wiseness strategies and test-taking strategies have been used interchangeably, they are not necessarily the same. Cohen (1998), in fact, draws a distinction and argues that in contrast to test-wiseness strategies that are more dependent on testees' knowledge of test-taking rather than their language knowledge, test-taking strategies involve the test-takers' capacity to make use of their language knowledge in language testing tasks.

Recently, the concept of test-wiseness has attracted extensive attention among language testing researchers. This growing interest owes much to the recognition that test-wiseness strategies have been found to be a source of variation in individuals' performance on language tests. That is, test-takers' performance is not solely the result of their language ability but also related to other factors, such as the strategies that they employ to arrive at the right answers. Such strategy use might lead to variation in test-takers' performance and is worthy of investigation. Taking this into account can help test designers to better analyze test results and more effectively aim for validating language tests. As Cohen (2006) stated, validation of language tests has been one of the major emphases of test-taking strategy research.

Furthermore, studies conducted on this matter have provided evidence for a positive relationship between test performance and skills in taking tests (Amer, 1993). The possession of test-wiseness can be viewed as test-takers' winning card, helping them through a task and enabling them to perform more efficiently, regardless of the fact that they may not have the adequate language knowledge. In contrast, students with low test-wiseness will be at a disadvantage every time they

take a test (Rezaei, 2005).

Two other factors regarding the growing concern with test-wiseness strategies merit consideration. One, as reported by Watter and Siebert (1990), is the evidence affirming that students enjoying a high level of test-wiseness feel more relaxed and collected in testing situations, use their time more effectively, and thus, receive higher points. Previously conducted investigations have regarded test-wiseness as a significant correlate of test anxiety, suggesting that generally test-wise test-takers tend to view tests as less threatening (Sapp, 1999).

Nam (2015) explored Korean EFL learners' strategy use in gap-fill test items on English academic texts. Demands for academic reading proficiency (Park, 2010) and demands for discrimination of answer selection on the Korean College Scholastic Aptitude Test (CSAT) have long differentiated test-takers' scores (Nam, 2015). As a consequence, such strategies are often practiced through the "teaching to the test" approach (Bachman & Palmer, 2010) in high school classrooms, and even earlier, across Korea. Even after-school *hagwon* classes are dedicated to certain test-question types. Despite the test-prep focus across Korean classrooms and the focus on test-taking strategy instruction, sufficient research has not clearly identified what kind of strategies students use to answer reading comprehension items on the CSAT English subtest and whether developing those strategies is beneficial for reading comprehension abilities (Oh, 1999). So, by extension, it could be argued that if a specific national standardized test has not had sufficient data on a particular skill set, how could general English language skills on a range of nationally and locally developed skills be clearly understood.

Nam (2015) reports that most domestic studies have employed quantitative methods to ascertain the overall patterns of Korean EFL learners' strategy use (Choi & Chang, 2013; Hamm, 2006; Hwang, 2009; Joh, 1999; Kim & Chon, 2014; Lee, 2002, 2004; Maeng, 2006; H. Park, 2013; Y.-H. Park, 2010, 2011; H. Song, 1998; M.-J. Song, 1999), only a few studies have used qualitative methods to investigate when, how, and why those strategies were used (Jeon, 2009; Lee & Ku, 2005; Oh, 1999; Suh, 2012, 2013). Therefore, Nam (2015) calls for more research to better understand test-takers' strategic behavior that can be applied to assist Korean EFL learners' approaches to test-taking in the very competitive climate that they face.

In view of the discussion above, this paper examines test-wiseness

strategies in an EFL context in order to discover what effects employing them can have on EFL test-takers' performance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Since its introduction into the language testing field over sixty years ago by Thorndike (1951, as cited in Rezaei, 2005), test-wiseness has been on the radar of language testing researchers and there have been a great deal of studies into their possible effects on test-takers' performance.

Amer (1993) attempted to discover whether instruction in test-wiseness strategies had any effect. He trained a group of middle school students to use a number of test-wiseness strategies, including reading instructions carefully, managing time effectively, delaying answering difficult questions, and so on. The results added support to the positive effect of instruction in using test-wiseness strategies. Amer concluded that lacking these skills could be one of the reasons for some test-takers' poor performance.

In another study on test-wiseness instruction, Vattanpanah and Jaiprayoon (1999) trained Thai EFL students to make use of 22 test-taking strategies on English reading comprehension tests. The findings indicated that the instruction was effective and helped students enhance their scores. It was also reported that students had a positive attitude in relation to the instruction of test-taking strategies.

Seeking to examine the relationship between test-takers' characteristics, their test performance, and their use of test-taking strategies, Yien (2001) studied a group of Taiwanese EFL test-takers and found that test-taking strategies benefited test-takers by mediating between their characteristics and their performance on tests.

Rezaei (2005) investigated the effects of test-taking strategies on the language test performance of 90 Iranian TEFL majors, using a 60-item language achievement multiple-choice test. The results of data analysis pointed to a significant correlation between the subjects' performance and their use of test-taking strategies. Furthermore, it was found that subjects employed different test-taking strategies in the more difficult sections of the test.

In a recent study, Tavakoli and Hayati (2014) set out to identify the



most frequent test-wiseness strategies that Iranian EFL test-takers employ in a multiple-choice grammar test. The researchers were also interested in comparing higher-level and lower-level test-takers regarding their use of test-wiseness strategies. The results revealed no significant difference in the employment of test-wiseness strategies between test-takers. Moreover, “Reading instructions carefully” and “revising answers to correct misspellings” were found to be the most and the least frequent strategies, respectively.

Although the majority of studies on test-wiseness strategies have concentrated on multiple-choice tests, some studies have turned their attention to the use of these strategies in writing tasks, such as integrated writing (Plakans, 2008) or picture-prompt writing tasks (Xu & Wu, 2012).

A great deal of studies, as the literature indicated, have pointed out the positive impact of test-wiseness strategies, but there are also studies (such as Song, 2004), referring to some strategies that have proved not to be very effective for test-takers. Song (2004) found that while strategies such as synthesizing previously acquired knowledge and the new knowledge were effective, some other strategies such as mechanically repeating or confirming information were not.

It is to be noted, however, that little attention has been paid to test-wiseness strategies in the Iranian EFL context. In addition, the previously conducted studies have been mainly concerned with grammar or reading comprehension tests and little attention, if any, has been paid to vocabulary. Taking these into consideration, the following study aims to investigate test-wiseness strategies in an EFL context in order to see how they impact test-takers’ performance on vocabulary tests.

The following questions were addressed in the current study:

1. What are the most frequently used test-wiseness strategies among intermediate EFL learners on vocabulary tests?
2. Is there any difference between higher-level test-takers and lower-level test-takers regarding the use of test-wiseness strategies on vocabulary tests?

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Taking into considerations the facts that test-takers employ certain strategies to improve their performance and obtain a higher score in testing situations (Rezaei, 2005) and that there is a relationship between students' proficiency levels and their use of test-wiseness strategies (Phakiti, 2003), the current study targeted test-wiseness strategies in order to identify the most frequently used strategies among Iranian EFL learners. It was also concerned with comparing higher-level and lower-level test-takers of vocabulary tests regarding their use of test-wiseness strategies.

## METHOD

### Participants

A total of 115 EFL learners enrolling in English language courses in a number of language institutes were selected to take part in this study. Based on the placement policy of the institutes, their level of proficiency was believed to be intermediate. However, in order to assure the researchers of the homogeneity of the participants, the Nelson English Language Test was administered. The results allowed the researchers to exclude 11 students who were not within the intermediate proficiency level. Consequently, this study was carried out with 104 participants.

### Instruments

For the purposes of this study, the following materials were used.

#### Nelson English Language Test

Prior to the treatment, a proficiency test, namely, the Nelson English Language Test 200 A, devised for intermediate level was employed in order to assure the researcher of the homogeneity of the groups (see Appendix A). The Nelson test for the intermediate level contained 50 items; 14 were cloze test items, and the other 36 were multiple-choice items.

### **The Vocabulary Test**

A multiple-choice vocabulary test containing 20 items was employed. This test was extracted from a proficiency test designed by the Cambridge University Local Examinations Syndicate. It must be mentioned that the specified vocabulary test served two purposes in this study. First, in order to provide an opportunity for students to apply their test-wiseness strategies and second, to divide students into high-level and low-level test-takers based on their performance on the vocabulary test (see Appendix B).

### **The Questionnaire**

A questionnaire on test-wiseness strategies developed by Water and Siebert (1990) was employed in this study in order for students to report their application of strategies while performing on a vocabulary test. It is to be noted that the aforementioned questionnaire contained 18 items extracted from Tavakoli and Hayati (2014). After omitting 4 items from this questionnaire that were considered incompatible with the purposes of this study and the format of a multiple-choice vocabulary test, the remaining 14 items were utilized in this study (see Appendix C).

### **Data Collection Procedure**

A total of 115 intermediate-level EFL learners participated in this study. Having administered the Nelson English Language Proficiency Test and excluding 11 participants who did not belong to the intermediate level of proficiency, this study continued with 104 participants. Afterwards, a vocabulary test consisting of 20 items was given to the participants. Immediately after the test, they were given a questionnaire on test-wiseness strategies that they were required to complete in order to report the strategies that they had used in answering the items on the vocabulary test. Prior to the completion of the questionnaire, participants were reminded of the fact that they were supposed to select only those strategies that they had already used in the vocabulary test. Based on their performance on the vocabulary test, the participants were divided into two groups of high-level test-takers and low-level test-takers. Those participants who scored above the mean in their standard deviation were considered as high-level test-takers ( $n = 53$ ), and those whose standard deviation was below the mean were considered as low-level test-takers ( $n = 51$ ).

Having obtained the data, the frequencies of the employed strategies were obtained in order to identify the most frequent strategies among the participating EFL test-takers. In addition, the frequencies of the strategies used by the two specified groups – high-level and low-level test-takers – as well as the *t*-test were computed in order to find out whether there was any difference with respect to the use of test-wiseness strategies between higher- and lower-level test-takers. It needs to be mentioned that a translated version of the questionnaire was given to the participants in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

## RESULTS

This study was concerned with the use of test-wiseness strategies among EFL test-takers in order to identify the most frequent strategies that they applied to vocabulary tests. Also, it was concerned with comparing test-takers of different levels of ability in their use of test-wiseness strategies.

### First Research Question

The first research question of this study was “what are the most frequently-used test-wiseness strategies among intermediate EFL learners in vocabulary tests?” Table 1 displays the test-wiseness strategies used by the participants of this study in an ascending order of their frequency.

As the table shows, “reviewing and checking answers after finishing all the questions” with 72 instances of occurrence was the most frequent test-wiseness strategy in this study. “Answering questions in chronological order,” “underlining key words,” and “budgeting time” were found to be the other more frequent test-wiseness strategies with 58, 58, and 55 instances of occurrence, respectively.

Regarding the least frequent strategies, according to Table 1, “using other questions to get help,” with only 5 instances of occurrence, and “immediately writing what comes to mind,” with only 13 instances of occurrence, were reported to be the least frequently used test-wiseness strategies among the participants. In relation to the very low frequency of strategy number 14, it can be said that in the test types whose items are not interdependent on each other, such as multiple choice, getting

help from other questions would not prove to be effective. It is believed that this strategy would be more useful on interdependent tests like cloze tests or dictation.

**TABLE 1. The Frequency of the Test-Wiseness Strategies**

Strategies	Freq.	%
1. Reviewing and checking the answers after answering all the questions	72	69
2. Answering questions in chronological order	58	55
3. Underlining key words	58	55
4. Budgeting time	55	52
5. Thinking about how to answer each question before answering it	54	51
6. Using all the available test time	52	50
7. Answering all the questions even though you are not sure	47	45
8. Translating first and choosing the best answer based on meaning	40	39
9. Answering all the questions even though you do not know the answer at all	36	34
10. Checking and revising answers immediately after answering each question	33	31
11. Reading all the questions to start first with the easy ones	31	29
12. Avoiding last-minute changes	30	28
13. Immediately writing what comes to mind	13	12
14. Using other questions to get help	5	4

In a study conducted on the use of test-wiseness strategies in grammar tests, Tavakoli and Hayati (2014) found “immediately writing what comes to mind” and “checking and revising answers after answering each question” to be the most recurring strategies. This is in contrast with what was found in the current study in that these two strategies were among the least frequently employed ones ( $f = 5$ ;  $f = 16$ ). This difference in the preference of strategies is probably rooted in the nature of the tests employed in these two studies. Vocabulary tests and grammar tests may pose different challenges on the learners and thus require them to make different use of the resources at their disposal, including test-wiseness strategies. Tavakoli and Hayati also reported that “reading all the questions to start first with the easy ones” was the least used test-wiseness strategy.

Regarding frequency of the strategies used in this study, mentioning a few other points is in order.

- Test-takers preferred to check their answers after finishing all the items, rather than checking and revising right after each item.
- Test-takers did not tend to jump to answering the questions immediately after seeing them. Instead, they were likely to spend a few moments thinking about how they were going to answer before writing anything on the paper.
- More than half of the students opted for answering the questions in the order that they appeared in the test.
- Although the test used in this study was a vocabulary test and it was assumed that the participants would make more use of the translation strategy, unexpectedly only 39% of the participants took advantage of this strategy. In explaining this, it can be said that the items might have been either too easy or too difficult for the participants that it obviated the need to answer them based on their meaning.
- Another unexpected finding was the relatively high frequency obtained for Strategy 8 (Table 1), according to which 45% of the test-takers participating in the current study attempted to answer the questions even though they were not sure about their answers. Tests with multiple-choice format give test-takers a 25% probability of getting an item correct regardless of whether they know the answer. This probability can even go higher if test-takers manage to eliminate one or two of the options. Therefore, in most of the cases, individuals preferred to answer a question even though they are not confident in having the right answer.

## Second Research Question

The second research question of this study was “is there any difference between higher-level test-takers and lower-level test-takers regarding the use of test-wiseness strategies on vocabulary tests?” On the basis of their performance on the administered multiple-choice vocabulary test, they were divided into two groups of high-level test-takers and low-level test-takers. Afterwards, the frequency with which these two groups have used test-wiseness strategies was calculated.

Generally, as Table 2 shows, test-takers who scored higher in the test made use of test-wiseness strategies more than those who have scored lower. In order to determine whether this difference in the use of strategies has been significant, the independent *t*-test was measured and

is displayed in Table 3.

**TABLE 2. The Frequency of the Strategies in the Specified Two Groups**

Group	Frequency
High-level test-takers ( <i>n</i> = 53)	358
Low-level test-takers ( <i>n</i> = 51)	312

**TABLE 3. Independent Sample *t*-test Results for the High- and Low-Level Test-Takers**

	T	F	Sig.
High-level vs. low-level test-takers	2.96	4.34	.004

Table 3 shows that there was a statistically significant difference in the employment of test-wiseness strategies between high- and low-level test-takers, indicating that there could be a relationship between test-takers' performance and the employment of strategies. This is consistent with the previous studies, which confirmed the positive impact of test-wiseness (test-taking) strategies on students' performance. Amer (1993) found test-wiseness strategies to be effective for students and attributed the poor performance of his participants to a lack of these strategies. Moreover, Yien (2001) reported that test-taking strategies were beneficial to students and helped them attain a better score. In another study on the relationship between students' performance and the use of test-taking strategies, Rezaei (2005) obtained a significant correlation between the students' performance and the use of these strategies.

Table 4 indicates the frequency of the test-wiseness strategies applied by the specified groups (high-level and low-level).

**TABLE 4. The Frequency of the Strategies Used by High- and Low-Level Test-Takers**

Strategies	High-Level	Low-Level
1. Reviewing and checking the answers after answering all the questions	46	26
2. Answering questions in chronological order	33	25
3. Budgeting time	35	20
4. Underlining key words	31	27
5. Answering all the questions even though you are not sure	25	22

6. Thinking about how to answer each question before answering it	33	21
7. Using all the available test time	25	27
8. Translating first and choosing the best answer based on meaning	28	12
9. Answering all the questions even though you do not know the answer at all	17	19
10. Reading all questions to start first with the easy ones	11	20
11. Checking and revising answers immediately after answering each question	25	8
12. Avoiding last-minute changes	21	9
13. Immediately writing what comes to mind	2	11
14. Using other questions to get help	3	2

Comparing the number of test-wisness strategies used by high-level and low-level test-takers shows that these two groups made different use of the strategies at their disposal. Out of a total of fourteen test-wisness strategies, considerable differences were found among eight of these strategies between the two groups. These strategies were as follows:

- Reading all questions to start first with the easy ones
- Thinking about how to answer each question before answering it
- Budgeting time
- Checking and revising answers immediately after answering each question
- Immediately writing what comes to mind
- Translating and choosing the best answer based on its meaning
- Reviewing and checking after answering all the questions
- Avoiding last-minute changes

It is important to refer to some of these differences in more detail. Firstly, higher-level test-takers tended to answer the items in their order of appearance, while lower-level test-takers had a greater tendency to start with the easy ones.

Secondly, high-level test-takers seemed to apply much more thinking before starting to answer each question. Besides, they were more likely to check their answers either immediately after each question or after finishing all of them.

Thirdly, in attempting to answer the items of the given vocabulary



test, students of the higher-level group resorted to translation and arriving at correct answers through meaning more than the students of the lower-level group.

The aforementioned differences add support to the idea that there is a relationship between proficiency level and test-wiseness strategies, and as pointed out by Phakiti (2003), test-takers of different levels of language proficiency employ these strategies differently. Cohen (2006) also referred to this relationship between proficiency and test-taking strategies, and mentioned that students of different proficiency levels utilize certain strategies. He distinguished between the purposes that test-takers at different levels of proficiency have in employing strategies, suggesting that weaker students tend to resort to test-wiseness strategies with the purpose of compensating for deficiencies in their language knowledge. Acknowledging that test-takers exploit test-wiseness strategies to make up for their language deficiencies, Rezaei (2005) made the point that this is not always the case and that students may take advantage of these strategies as a way of achieving higher scores on the tests.

## DISCUSSION

Nam's (2015) work and the cited literature (Choi & Chang, 2013; Park, 2010, 2011, 2013) show the value of test-taking strategies for Korean learners' on a particular national exam for a particular skill (i.e., reading comprehension) being tested that does not align directly with the test-taking skill being studied here (i.e., vocabulary gap-fill), which in part does require and reflect reading comprehension to select the correct response.

Like in most Asia countries, English instruction, including reading that entails vocabulary instruction, essentials begin from birth but formally begin in kindergarten and is formalized from third to twelfth grade. Park (2010) explains that the classroom environment in Korea is focused on reading in English from non-authentic texts in a traditional grammar-translation approach mostly from day one. Students are seldom exposed to authentic texts and only work with English textbooks prior to university. Students do not gain an opportunity to develop reading proficiency nor communicative competency, as they focus mainly on standardized test preparation. However, the question is what are test

preparation instructors teaching and are those skills effective. If they are, how are we measuring them and understanding them?

Korean students may have English reading skills on standardized tests, but they still lack academic English reading skills for the reasons mentioned above. Thus, it is critical for EFL educators in Korea to improve students' academic English reading proficiency, specifically at the university level. Durkin (1993) states that reading comprehension is the "essence of reading." Accordingly, development of reading comprehension is also the essence of reading strategies for test-taking. Park (2010) cites substantial research (Song, 1999) to explore what skilled readers do (Zhang, 2001; Zhicheng, 1992).

So, the significance for teachers is that test-takers who scored higher possessed more test-wiseness strategies. This may seem logical, but the value in the findings is that it is quite possible that teachers, and parents, postpone the use of test-wiseness strategies until middle school, high school, and university. Elementary school students, in Korea, are well versed in standardized testing. Introducing test-wiseness skills early on is beneficial in that such skills are not finite but are cognitive skills that evolve with time, experience, and age. Introducing test-wiseness even in elementary school, in contexts like Korea where standardized testing is ubiquitous, may not only be beneficial for test achievement scores but also for the cognitive development of the young child or adult.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the use of test-wiseness strategies among EFL learners with the purposes of identifying the most frequent test-wiseness strategies as well as comparing high-level and low-level test-takers regarding the employment of these strategies on a vocabulary test.

It was discovered that learners employ certain strategies more frequently than others. These include (a) "reviewing and checking answers," (b) "underlining key words," and (c) "budgeting time." The findings also pointed to the fact that there is a relationship between language proficiency and the use of test-wiseness strategies as acknowledged by previous studies (Cohen, 2006; Rezaei, 2005) in the sense that higher-level test-takers are more likely to apply strategies.

Seemingly, learners take advantage of test-wiseness strategies so as to compensate for their lack of knowledge and to achieve a higher score.

It should be noted that this study has examined test-wiseness strategies only among learners at the intermediate level of proficiency. In order to arrive at more substantive conclusions regarding the use of test-wiseness strategies, it is imperative to focus on all proficiency levels. Moreover, the current study addressed the question of what strategies EFL learners make use of, not addressing the question of why they employ some strategies more frequently than others. Further studies are suggested to provide more insight into the use of test-wiseness and test-taking strategies by using techniques such as interviewing, thinking-aloud, or immediate recall.

The results of this study can have two implications for language teachers, including those in the Korean context. The first one is that learners' performance on tests is not wholly determined by their language knowledge. There are other factors, including test-taking and test-wiseness strategies, involved that impact on the way learners approach a test. Therefore, teachers need to be more aware of the fact that students' poor or excellent performance cannot be necessarily attributed to their linguistic proficiency. The second implication is that by training learners in test-wiseness strategies and teaching them how to use them effectively, teachers can assist learners in benefiting more from test-taking strategies. This does not imply that language teachers should put everything else aside and become obsessed with making their learners better test-takers. They must bear in mind that their predominant role is to generate better learners, and other aspects of teaching such as test-wiseness strategies must be subordinate to this goal.

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## APPENDIX A

### Nelson English Language Test 200 A

**Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.**

Last June my brother ...1... a car. He had had an old scooter before, but it ...2... several times during the spring. “What you want is a second-hand Mini,” I suggested. “If you give me the money,” he said, “...3... one tomorrow.” “I can’t give you the money, but what about Aunt Myra. She must have enough. We ...4... her since Christmas but she always hints that we ...5... go and see her more often.”

We told our parents where we were going. They weren’t very happy about it and asked us not to go. So ...6... . But later that same day something strange ...7... . A doctor ...8... us that Aunt Myra ...9... into hospital for an operation. “...10... go and see her at the same time. You two go today but don’t mention the money,” said my mother.

When we ...11... Aunt Myra ...12... “I’m not seriously ill,” she said, “but the doctor insists that ...13... to drive my car. You can have it if you promise ...14... me to the seaside now and again.” We agreed, and now we quite enjoy our monthly trips to the coast with Aunt Myra.

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. A wanted to buy     | B wanted buying   |
| C liked to buy         | D liked buying    |
| 2. A was breaking down | B was breaking up |
| C had broken down      | D had broken up   |
| 3. A I get             | B I’m getting     |
| C I’m getting to get   | D I’ll get        |
| 4. A are not seeing    | B haven’t seen    |
| C didn’t see           | D don’t see       |
| 5. A should            | B shall           |
| C would                | D will            |
| 6. A that we haven’t   | B that we didn’t  |
| C we haven’t           | D we didn’t       |
| 7. A occurred          | B took the place  |
| C passed               | D was there       |
| 8. A rang for telling  | B rang to tell    |
| C rung for telling     | D rung to tell    |

- |                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 9. A had gone                   | B had been                |
| C has gone                      | D has been                |
| 10. A We may not all            | B We can't all            |
| C All we can't                  | D All we may not          |
| 11. A have come here            | B were arriving           |
| C got there                     | D came to there           |
| 12. A was seeming quite happily | B was seeming quite happy |
| C seemed quite happily          | D seemed quite happy      |
| 13. A I'm getting so old        | B I'm getting too old     |
| C I get so old                  | D I get too old           |
| 14. A taking                    | B bringing                |
| C to take                       | D to bring                |

**Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.**

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 15. Can this camera ..... good photos?                              |                            |
| A make  | B to make                  |
| C take  | D to take                  |
| 16. Who was the first person ..... today?                           |                            |
| A spoke to you  | B you spoke to             |
| C you spoke   | D whom you spoke           |
| 17. I can't find the book ..... .                                   |                            |
| A nowhere   | B everywhere               |
| C anywhere  | D somewhere                |
| 18. There was a house at ..... .                                    |                            |
| A the mountain foot   | B the foot of the mountain |
| C the feet of the mountain  | D the mountain's foot      |
| 19. A person who talks to ..... is not necessarily mad.             |                            |
| A himself   | B oneself                  |
| C yourself  | D itself                   |
| 20. I'll be 13 tomorrow, ..... ?                                    |                            |
| A am I  | B aren't I                 |
| C won't I   | D will I                   |
| 21. Did you hear ..... Julie said?                                  |                            |
| A what  | B that                     |
| C that what   | D which                    |
| 22. Spanish people usually speak ..... than English people.         |                            |
| A quicklier   | B more quicklier           |
| C more quickly  | D more quicker             |
| 23. That old lady can't stop me ..... the tennis match on my radio. |                            |
| A to listen   | B listening                |











- A match  
C game
- B play  
D party
18. She obviously didn't want to discuss the matter, so I didn't.....the point.  
A maintain  
C follow
- B chase  
D pursue
19. This new magazine is.....with interesting stories and useful information.  
A full  
C thick
- B packed  
D compiled
20. The restaurant was far too noisy to be.....to relaxed conversation.  
A conducive  
C practical
- B suitable  
D fruitful

## APPENDIX C

### Test-Wiseness Questionnaire

#### Before answering the questions

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Reading all questions to start first with the easy ones        | Yes | No |
| 2. Thinking about how to answer each question before answering it | Yes | No |
| 3. Budgeting (allocating specific time to each question)          | Yes | No |
| 4. Underlining keywords in questions                              | Yes | No |

#### While answering the questions

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Answering questions in chronological order                                    | Yes | No |
| 2. Checking and revising answers immediately after answering each question       | Yes | No |
| 3. Using all the available test time   | Yes | No |
| 4. Immediately writing what comes to mind  | Yes | No |
| 5. Answering all the questions, even though one is not sure about his answer     | Yes | No |
| 6. Translating each question first and choosing the best answer based on meaning | Yes | No |
| 7. Answering all the questions, even though one doesn't know the answer at all   | Yes | No |
| 8. Using other questions to get help and answering the questions                 | Yes | No |

#### After answering the questions

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Reviewing and checking the answers after answering all questions | Yes | No |
| 2. Avoiding last-minute changes                                     | Yes | No |

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## **Book Reviews**

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## From Trainee to Teacher: Reflective Practice for Novice Teachers

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*Thomas S. C. Farrell*  
*Sheffield, UK: Equinox Publishing, 2016.*  
*Pages: 144. (ISBN: 978 1 845553195 9)*

**Reviewed by Stewart Gray and Bryan Hale**

### INTRODUCTION

Thomas S. C. Farrell is a legend in English language teaching, internationally and perhaps especially in Korea, where he spent his early career and where he continues to be a cherished guest at conferences and Reflective Practice (RP) events. He is one of the world's leading advocates of RP: teachers reflecting on their teaching and committing to making improvements. His book, *From Trainee to Teacher: Reflective Practice for Novice Teachers*, deals honestly and in detail with the dilemmas faced by English language teachers in their first year. To help these teachers through their challenges, Farrell advocates the inclusion of RP in pre-service training courses and the support of RP by employers. RP is, regrettably, not widely encouraged by Korean educational institutions, which renders some of the book's recommendations perhaps unfeasible for the Korean context, at least for now. However, within Korea there is plenty of grassroots interest in RP, as well as several active RP groups, and to those interested teachers, trainers, and researchers in Korean ELT, this book represents a valuable resource.

### SUMMARY

The problem is stated grimly in Chapter 1: New ELT teachers receive inadequate preparation in training courses and insufficient



support from schools after starting work. Pre-service courses often lack a module on the first year of teaching, so newly employed teachers are unprepared for the severe shocks of a real teaching context. Moreover, these contexts often lack mentors or support mechanisms for newcomers; in contrast to other professionals, teachers are often expected to dive head-first into work from day one. Consequently, new teachers abandon the profession in droves after a short tenure. Hence, Farrell's apt use of Halford's expression, "a profession that eats its young," for TESOL (pp. 1-2) and his own call for TESOL professionals to begin confronting these issues.

After discussing methodology in Chapter 2, the book largely details the meetings of an RP group involving four people: three novice ESL teachers in Canada, and the author himself, the group facilitator. At these meetings, the three new teachers share stories of their experiences, seek to understand their position, decide what to do, adapt, and survive. Issues facing the novices may be familiar to experienced teachers: Chapter 4 describes the shock of arriving at school to find the atmosphere unwelcoming, staff meetings non-existent, and the onus on the novices themselves to learn how to survive, and later, to be effective teachers. In Chapter 5, we get a picture of the school's professional culture: Disorganized and lacking in communication, the teachers must take the initiative to figure out what is going on. In Chapter 6, the teachers describe the challenges of managing students' behavior, and trying to meet them at their own level. Chapter 7 details the teachers' *role identities* ("motivator," "friend," etc. [p. 86]), and the tension between identities the teachers claim and those the school expects them to adopt. Finally, in Chapter 8, the author uses the teachers' statements to highlight factors that influence teaching style; the most influential is "personality" (p. 98) and the least is the "established (teaching) practice" (p. 103) of their school.

The author presents in great detail both the problem and solution: All of the book's data was collected in RP sessions that provided the three teachers with vital support that allowed them to navigate through their first year; so, the author argues, more teachers should be encouraged to do this. Reflective practice should be taught to pre-service teachers as part of a new course entitled "Teaching in the First Year." Particularly, they might be taught to reflect upon the five areas identified in Thomas Farrell's own framework:

- *Philosophy*: How our backgrounds influence our teaching.
- *Principles*: What we believe/assume about teaching.
- *Theory*: How plans and activities are used to turn principles into practice.
- *Practice*: Experiences in the classroom.
- *Beyond Practice*: The broader social implications of teaching.

The author recommends novice teachers participate in RP groups with peers. Not to absolve educational institutions of responsibility, the author proposes reduced workloads for new teachers, and an experienced reflective mentor (possibly paid) to be provided by schools to lead reflective groups. Such groups should be supportive, confidential, and “evaluation-free.” Meetings would require about an hour, and participants would share experiences, examine their beliefs about teaching, and seek to understand how these are relevant to practice. Through reflection, novice teachers would be empowered to become knowledge generators; they would get a sense of “professional efficacy” (p. 130), which would positively influence their students’ learning; they would be less isolated than they tend to be; and they would be prepared to face future challenges. All this may serve to reduce the number of novices fleeing the profession.

## EVALUATION

We agree with the diagnosis of the TESOL profession’s problems and with the author’s case for RP as a countermeasure, and we agree that ideally institutions would support novice teachers’ engagement in RP. However, this may not be feasible in Korean contexts. In almost all cases we have encountered, teachers who practice RP are doing so on their own time outside of their workplace. Indeed, professional socialization of novice teachers in Korea can involve great pressure to conform with senior colleagues, and it can even involve being told to ignore initial teacher training (Shin, 2012). This is in contrast to the author’s informants in Canada, who had more autonomy and flexibility even if established practice was a factor in their work (pp. 103-104). In such contexts as Korea, RP might be empowering, and more valid, conducted outside of institutions. While novice teachers could benefit

from having an experienced RP mentor/facilitator (especially one such as Farrell!), to position this as a “critical component” (pp. 133–134) may be impractical for teachers seeking out RP independently, and perhaps risks making RP exclusionary.

Though we have these reservations about applying the author’s recommendations to Korean contexts, we have no doubt about the book’s great value to various groups in Korean ELT. The first of these is researchers, who could use this book profitably as a methodological guide to conduct research on novice teaching and RP, as the author has rightly argued is necessary.

For teacher trainers, the book may serve to inform and remind them of the challenges novice teachers face; the fact that its descriptions of these challenges are based on data makes the book especially useful for strengthening and legitimizing the instincts and perspectives of trainers. Meanwhile, the book convincingly argues for using RP with novices to empower them to face their challenges. It is easy to see how the book could provide the foundation for an introductory RP course of the sort the author is suggesting. One minor issue is that many of the reflective questions assume teaching experience, which might create awkwardness for teacher trainers introducing RP to pre-service teachers. However, in many cases the questions are open to more predictive or hypothetical discussion.

For in-service, novice teachers who are meeting together for RP without a facilitator, the book’s middle chapters will be particularly interesting. These chapters are so rich in valuable, experiential data that each section and its following reflective questions could be the basis of a stimulating RP meeting. After thinking about the challenges they are currently facing in their practice, novice teachers might select relevant sections, follow the author’s suggestion (p. 10) and generate reflections based on the topic, and then compare and discuss their reflections in relation to those recounted in the book.

By contrast, novice teachers without access to RP groups might want to read the book in a more linear way (even if they want to skip the theoretical and methodological information in Chapter 2 and possibly the broader discussion of teacher training in Chapter 3). It is likely that novices will find much that is relevant to their own experiences. Reading this book might help them to make sense of what they are going through, to understand that their challenges are common and survivable, and to realize that RP can be a useful tool for teachers in their position.

To teachers who have nobody on hand to support them, this book may make a fine companion.

On a personal note, although we are both (perhaps) no longer novice teachers, we found this book surprisingly emotionally affecting. Although our teaching contexts have been quite different from the participants in Canada, we related to their experiences and challenges in many ways. Having the opportunity to reflect on our own professional paths and, frankly, traumas was highly affirming for us. While it would have been wonderful to have this book at the time, it is nonetheless valuable to look back now, to remember, and reflect. With this in mind, whether you are a new or longstanding teacher, a trainer, a researcher, or an employer, we recommend this book to you.

And if you happen to know a novice teacher, please, give them a copy.

## THE REVIEWERS

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## REFERENCE

Shin, S. K. (2012). "It cannot be done alone": The socialization of novice English teachers in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(3), 542–567. doi:10.1002/tesq.41



## Pedagogy of the Oppressed

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*Paulo Freire.*

*New York, NY: Continuum International. 2005.*

*Pages: 183. (ISBN 0-8264-1276-9)*

**Reviewed by Maria Lisak**

### INTRODUCTION

Paulo Freire of Brazil is one of the most influential educators of the 20th century. An iconic work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, created a movement around the world to break out of industrial-style education systems. Well-known for his teaching practices with adults and teachers, any social justice or action research approach will inevitably reference Freire. Freire is a forerunner of student-centered learning practices by introducing a problem-posing praxis that still influences frameworks such as inquiry stance in action research circles.

Perhaps you've heard of Freire or the title of his most famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. But while many have heard of him and his book, fewer have taken the time to read this book, originally written in Portuguese in 1968 and translated into English in the 1970s. Most have familiarity with the influence of his philosophy rather than with actually having read the original work.

This is not an easy or light read. You will not find activities or lesson plans in this book. Instead you will connect with a canonical philosophy that shapes everything from qualitative and social research, naturalistic inquiry, experiential learning, evaluation practices, and the language and power nexus, to social linguistics and literacies of all sorts. Read just about any andragogy, action research, or social justice teaching practice article or book and you will bump into reference of Freire.

## SUMMARY

Paulo Freire uses the self–other philosophical gap to talk about justice and injustice by showing what oppression is and how to move towards overcoming it. The oppressed and the oppressors must enter into a mutual process of liberation together.

The first chapter is about a justification for a pedagogy of the oppressed. This chapter gives Freire’s explanation of what oppression is, its emergence, and how it has entrenched society as a whole. This chapter also introduces his ideas of liberation from oppression and the mutual process that is required for it to occur.

Chapter 2 identifies and explains the “banking concept of education.” This concept, a deficit view of education, holds the learner to be empty and in need of filling. Freire links how this banking concept is an oppressive system. An alternative view, a problem-posing concept, is offered for educators and learners. This problem-posing concept depends on the world to mediate learning, not a particular person or institution to lead it.

Chapter 3 is a dense explanation where Freire uses terminology from Marxist thought to give extended examples of oppression and methods to initiate liberative practices. Freire introduces and explains key concepts of his liberation pedagogy: dialogics, dialogue, and generative themes. This chapter’s discussion invokes a critical literacy approach to living and learning. By learning through “generative themes,” themes of query and inquiry, learners become conscious of oppressive practices and institutions. This chapter introduces the Freirian legacy of “praxis,” or action and reflection as simultaneous domains of thought that are engaged to do the work of overcoming oppression.

Chapter 4 provides more examples and contexts of the oppressor–oppressed dichotomy. By giving more examples of anti-dialogics, a better understanding is gained about the different kinds of oppression that can emerge on the path to freedom. Dialogics within cultural action, Freire explains, is about praxis–reflection and action together. He explicitly outlines the theory of anti-dialogical action as conquest, divide and rule, manipulation, and cultural invasion. This is contrasted with the theory of dialogical action that was introduced in Chapter 3. Freire expands on how to continue to engage in dialogical action through cooperation, unity, organization, and cultural synthesis.

## EVALUATION AND REFLECTION

### Evaluation

Historically, this book as well as Freire have had a strong impact on liberation theology and social justice educational practices. As a book of philosophy and politics, it is not an easy read. Contextualization beyond the footnotes is often needed to understand references and unpack the terminology that is not commonly used today. Overgeneralizations in the examples given can separate the reader from the actual intense experience of the author and his learners. However, remembering that this book was written in the 1970s yet could describe the worldwide impact of neo-liberalism and the rise of fascism in several countries helps to value and appreciate its deep impact and importance for educators of transmigrants, as well as educators who are transmigrants themselves, in today's world.

While reading, it is easy to judge the work as overly optimistic and passé. Yet it is worthwhile to read and re-read this text in order to deconstruct and apply its lessons to current opportunities for learning. The concept of problem-posing is a powerful and non-dominating way to engage with problems in students' lives. This method lets students direct their own inquiries.

### Reflection

This text addresses the deep issues of politics as they affect education. It shows how dominant players in the political economy are controlling the discourse of education and how a more humane theory and practice are possible. This is an important read if an educator is looking to link their teaching practice to social change. It is also relevant to today's emerging education spaces and challenges such as video games, social networking, and the ethics of participatory culture. These are important learning environments today that need to be the focus of problem-posing praxis by learners.

While this is a formative text for adult literacy by addressing the political aspects of learning, the discourse can be too political, some criticize it as too Marxist, and examples can be seen as too generalized. This may be due to the time period when it was written. This canonical



book would be more accessible to readers today if more examples of applications of problem-posing or examples of successful dialogic action were given. Even the concept of praxis – reflection and action – can be read as too theoretical, and some guided discovery of this practice in more depth would be helpful to readers today. However, this dialogic theory can be an extremely personal pedagogy for learning and teaching. The learner is always in dialogue with and in assessment of exchange, giving them power and agency in their learning circumstances.

## CONCLUSIONS

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is a philosophical foundation that speaks to everyone wanting to break out of structures and systems that no longer serve the learner. In a world where we continually need to question why one should study English as a lingua franca in South Korea and how students can be in charge of their own learning, Freire's problem-posing pedagogy and his critique of education systems helps with a framework where agency and power take center stage for the learner.

*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as a title is intimidating. Yet, Freire set out to liberate, not intimidate. The path of liberated learning is not a prescriptive route of mechanized learning. Reading this canonical book in light of world events helps today's English teacher in South Korea, not only become a more connected teacher, but helps as a cross-disciplinary study to enrich teachers' own learning practices, contributing to a wider body of professional development learning.

A Twitter feed might be able to summarize his theories in a bite-sized snack, but to understand Freire is to do the work of reading him and applying him to your context. You will need to do the action AND the reflection to create your own praxis in your teaching pedagogy.

## THE REVIEWER

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# Korea TESOL Journal

Volume 13, Number 1

2017

