CONTEXTUAL AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSROOMS:
A CRITICAL REVIEW OF ENGLISH TEACHING METHODS
IN SOUTH KOREA

DISsertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
2001

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ABSTRACT

English has become the lingua Franca, the primary language of international communication of the world (Phillipson, 1992). The spread of English as an international language has tremendously impacted on foreign countries and their English education. Recently, researchers have argued that the dominance of English has created structural and cultural inequalities between developed and developing countries (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994). Traditionally, English education in EFL countries has heavily relied on teaching methodologies developed in the Center countries, but problems related to adopting teaching methodologies originated from other countries have been rarely investigated.

The purpose of the study is to suggest contextually based approaches to EFL teaching through exploring a notion of contextual autonomy. Using surveys and interviews with English teachers in South Korea, the researcher explored issues related to reasons to reconsider the current English teaching methodologies, particularly, of communicative language teaching, which has been widely accepted and used as a fundamental concept for language teaching. Traditional grammar teaching was reviewed compared to CLT to suggest contextually responsive language teaching methods in local EFL classrooms.
To suggest reasons for contextually responsive language teaching, the study identified the origin of the dominant discourse, which has contributed to build a certain form of ideology regarding English teaching practice and its consequences, from the voices of English teachers in South Korea. The study, further, explored ways to empower EFL teachers by identifying their perceived reasons of powerless in their professions due to accepting contextually irrelevant teaching approaches from the Center countries. The goal of the study, therefore, was threefold: (a) to challenge the ideology related to language teaching methods, particularly about the dominant notion of CLT and its impacts on English teaching practice in EFL countries, (b) to suggest ways to find and practice contextually based language teaching methods, (c) to empower EFL teachers to be equal partners in the field for contextually responsive language teaching to be made.
Dedicated to my parents,

Kye-Ja Kim and Chang-Ki Eun
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my advisor, Dr. Keiko Samimy for her constant encouragement and advice, which made this study possible. Her guidance tremendously influence on my academic growth during my doctoral study at the Ohio State University. I also thank Dr. Larry Miller for his advice on statistical analysis of the study and thoughtful comments on the earlier drafts. I would also like to thank Dr. Diane Belcher, who patiently read all my drafts and always offered insightful comments and support for the study.

The study would have been unsuccessful without help of my friends, family, and colleagues who cooperated with me for the survey and interview data collection, and provided valuable feedback on the study. I also wish to thank the Korean English teachers who generously gave me their time, opinions and, above all, their trust in the study.

Most of all, I want to thank my husband, SoonYung Jun, and four year old son, Edward Jun, for their unconditional love and support. Without their support, the completion of the study would have been impossible.
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Analysis Of the Reading Process In FL/SL Education
Qualitative Research In Education
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

English has become the Lingua Franca, the primary language of international communication of the world (Kachru, 1992; Phillipson, 1992; Widdowson, 1994). The spread of English as an international language has tremendously impacted on the periphery countries and their English education. Particularly, the advancement of global communication has increased the dissemination of ideological assumptions, originated from the Center countries, about English teaching methodologies in terms of what is preferable, more modern, more scientific although the theories and practices that have been imported from the Center countries necessarily carry on ways of thinking and behaving that are still a part of Western cultures. As a result, English teachers have been constant advocates of certain teaching practices representing a particular way of life and a particular understanding of the worlds. In a certain extent, English language teaching may be less about the spread of English than about the spread of certain forms of culture and knowledge through very practices of English language teaching that have become a part of discourse of EIL (English as an International Language, Pennycook, 1997).
In particular, it is important to notice that the field of ELT (English Language Teaching) has promoted the discourse which supports a dominant and universal language teaching approach as scientific, neutral and beneficial, thus dichotomized different language teaching approaches as either of new or old, modernized or backward. It is necessary, then, to identify an origin of the dominant discourse and its impacts on language education.

To discuss ways to overcome the dominant discourse promoting a certain cultural construction regardless of contexts of language teaching, the study questions the validity of a notion of universal language teaching approaches, which have been applied without a critical examination of particular cultural contexts. Particularly CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), which has been widely accepted as a dominant language teaching approach (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994; Kubota, 1998; Kachru, 1992, 1996), is investigated to promote ways that English teachers in periphery countries to find appropriate English language teaching theories and practices in their own classroom contexts. Indeed, English teachers in periphery countries have been disempowered in creating new possibilities in their professions by just accepting ideologies related to teaching practices, so the proposed study investigates reasons of their powerlessness, which have prescribed their limited role as passive recipients of theories and practices developed in the Center countries, and explores ways to engage themselves to be equal partners for contextually responsive teaching to be made, from the voices of EFL teachers in South Korea as a case study.
In essence, the study investigates reasons to have contextually based English language teaching models, and factors that have interfered with English teachers' efforts to find and practice appropriate English teaching methods in which teachers and students feel confident and meet their goals of language teaching and learning, by exploring a notion of 'contextual autonomy'.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The constitutive definition of autonomy is "the ability to make own decisions about what to do rather than being influenced by someone else or told what to do" (Webster's Dictionary, 1999). Benson (1997; p.14) identified three versions of autonomy in language teaching: technical, psychological, and political autonomy. The technical version of autonomy concerns learning strategies and learner training as an object knowledge while psychological version emphasizes an internal psychological capacity of learners to self-direct their own language learning. Those two are a micro version of autonomy, which understands autonomy as an individual and psychological term (Pennycook, 1997). Being different from the micro perspective, the current study focuses on a macro version of autonomy, which particularly concerns socio-cultural contexts of language classrooms, to promote a notion for contextually appropriate language teaching methods.

It is important to notice that the concept of individual autonomy (micro autonomy), which has been an unquestionably desirable goal in language education, is indeed a construction of western cultures. As a result, the micro autonomy has moved
into the field of ELT theory and practice associated with the notions like independent learners and student-centeredness. One of the problems in promoting the individual autonomy for L2 teaching is that this notion may have a limited applicability to other contexts because it is a product of a discourse of western culture (Pennycook, 1997). Within the narrow and individualized understanding of autonomy, language educators become preoccupied with certain types of strategies, materials and technologies while disregarding the broader cultural contexts in which language learning takes place. Indeed, to accept the central notion of individual version of autonomy is another version of dependence, which interferes with the self-conscious efforts to find appropriate language teaching and learning for language classrooms. Therefore, the contextual autonomy presented in the study is a political version of autonomy, which concerns cultural and political contexts embedded in language classrooms as a whole, based on the belief that appropriate language teaching and learning should be understood in more than narrow technical or individual learners’ psychological terms.

Within the concept of contextual autonomy, language learners are not understood as individuals but as members of socially constituted groups. Pennycook (1997) has pointed out the importance of critical awareness as an essential element to develop autonomy since it is fundamentally concerning about authoring one’s world. In particular, he claimed an importance of being aware of cultural, political and economic contexts of local classrooms, since autonomy should be seen not as learning how to learn as an individual learner, but as learning how to struggle for cultural alternatives as a
group. Within the struggles, the language educators’ role is to help learners develop their own voices in order to transform their cultural contexts through their understandings of society (Pennycook, 1994).

Related to the notion of contextual autonomy for English education, the proposed study mainly challenges that the idea that teaching methodologies developed by the Center countries and native speakers of the language are either intrinsically superior or appropriate to learners all over the world regardless of different contexts. In particular, the study challenges that English language teachers need to critically examine their teaching practices related to dominant language teaching methodologies that they have adopted, and its influence on their language teaching practice.

One of many English teaching approaches developed in the Center countries, which have been widely accepted and used as a fundamental concept for language teaching, is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Since the 1960s, CLT has been popular as an alternative to structure or grammar based approach. It, particularly, grew out of dissatisfaction with earlier methods (top-down linguistic skills), which were based on conscious presentation of grammatical structures or lexical items. Researchers claimed that those traditional methods did not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of language in a natural communication (Krashen, 1985; Brown, 1994; Swain, 1985). Dissatisfaction with the traditional approaches, particularly grammar teaching, led to a widespread support for CLT all over the world. However, it is important to know that language-teaching methodologies need to be considered within classroom contexts, and several difficulties in implementing CLT in different classrooms have been
reported in previous studies (Li, 1998; Anderson, 1993). That is particularly true in EFL classrooms where language input to learn and practice the target language is rarely provided. Based on the understanding that language teaching is a cultural practice, the primary focus of the study was, therefore, to uncover the existence of ideology in English teaching approaches, and investigate its impacts on EFL classrooms as a case study of South Korea.

Recently, the ministry of education in South Korea published a new curriculum to introduce CLT into all elementary and secondary schools with the hope that it will help to develop learners’ communicative competence in English (Kim, 1998; South Korean Ministry of Education, 1992a). In particular, early in 1990s, the new curriculum clearly stated that CLT should replace the traditional audio-lingual method in middle schools and the grammar translation in high schools in Korea (South Korean Ministry of Education, 1992a, 1992b). The researcher assumes that current reform for English education in South Korea, which has adopted and practiced CLT, will clearly show reasons to practice a context-based language teaching approach.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the widespread adoptions of CLT approaches all over the world, recently, some researchers have reported that CLT approaches have been difficult to implement in EFL classrooms for various reasons, such as teachers’ deficiency in spoken English, large class size, learners’ resistance to class participation, and lack of training in CLT (Li,
1998; Gethin, 1997; Thompson, 1996; Anderson, 1993; Burnaby & Sun, 1989). They concluded that main sources for those difficulties arose from misunderstanding and uncritical adoption of CLT.

To expand the previous studies further, which have shown mismatches between CLT and the contexts of EFL classrooms, the present study proposes the notion of contextual autonomy, which suggests that language teaching methodologies should be developed imbedded in each country’s own social cultural contexts rather than uncritically accepting it. The goal of the study is, therefore, twofold: (a) to challenge the ideology related to language teaching methods, particularly about the dominant and universal notion of CLT and its impact on the language teaching practice in EFL classrooms, (b) to suggest ways to find and practice contextually based language teaching methods by empowering EFL teachers. More specifically, the study will explore the notion of contextual autonomy with discussions followed.

First, the study will suggest an importance of being aware of ideology in language teaching approaches. Commonly accepted everyday teaching practice is not neutral and natural. Therefore, it is important to know the ideological origins and consequences related to English language teaching, which is tied up with the spread of English and the discourse of EIL, because on the one hand it occurs as a result of the global spread of English and the applied linguistic theories that accompany, and on the other hand because discourse of EIL constantly promotes the view that both spread of English and teaching of English are natural, neutral, and beneficial (Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992; Kubota,
1998). In particular, the present study investigates the ideological underpinnings of communicative language teaching approach, which has been the most dominant and popularized approach in the current field, compared to grammar teaching, one of traditional language teaching approaches that have been widely practiced in the vast majority of English language classrooms in the world. Second, the present study suggests flexible or alternative implementation of mainstream approaches which enables students acquire necessary language skills. The study questions an assumption supporting certain pedagogic approaches, which have been understood without critical examinations. For instance, related to the learner-centered approach to language teaching promoted by CLT, the study questions how teacher-centered, authoritarian teaching becomes an old-fashioned, thus, bad pedagogue. It seems true that the field has been dichotomized different language teaching approaches in terms of new and old, modernized and backward. Rather than polarize teaching methods as black and white, which is indeed impossible to do so, we need to be cautious about both in dichotomizing teaching methods as either one, and in accepting the universal, unquestionable, dominant language teaching approach as scientific, neutral and beneficial regardless of the contexts of language classrooms. In fact, our knowledge is often constructed by and reinforces a dominant discourse or ideology, which privileges some and oppresses others although there is no perfect language teaching approach for all classrooms over the world. In sum, the study examines impacts of ideological views of teaching methodologies on EFL teaching practices as a case study of South Korea.
Third, the study suggests context-based language teaching approaches. The basis for the suggestion is that language teaching should be responsive to students’ needs and classroom environments. Particularly, understanding between ESL and EFL contexts suggests that different teaching approaches need to take into account rather than simply accepting a popularized teaching approach as a scientific and better term. Therefore, the study encourages English teachers to question toward mainstream approach like CLT, authenticity, and learner-centered, which are all based on language education in western societies (Pennycook, 1997, p.40), thus irrespective of different social and cultural contexts in which it is applied. It is true that a lack of awareness of social, cultural, and political context of language classrooms will interfere with finding appropriate pedagogies but lead to cultural impositions.

Fourth, the study searches for ways to empower EFL teachers whose voices have mostly been silenced in the field in creating new practice for language teaching. Rather than accepting universalized teaching methodology in applied linguistics, the teachers need to struggle to find teaching methods working in their classroom contexts. By empowering themselves, teachers become truly committed to help students gain language skills that they need to have. In particular, it is important for EFL teachers to understand that they do not give their students a false impression about their language ability or dependent attitudes on native language speakers, rather they help students acknowledge that they are equally capable language learners within their educational environments.

Raising critical consciousness of language teachers parallels to taking critical actions for creating new possibilities. The teachers who engage in critical pedagogy, thus,
challenge and question the knowledge that is taken for granted, and explore a creation of new knowledge. Therefore, the present study encourages English teachers to find and practice ways to improve their teaching in their own ways. In this view, the teachers can perform intellectual roles who critically aware of power and discourse related to their language teaching as a social and political practice, rather than taking technical roles who merely transmitting information to students (Grioux, 1983).

1.3 Research Questions

The present study is based on the assumption that the global spread of English and related discourses of English language teaching do not serve many English language classrooms around world. It is also important to notice that the dominant English language teaching methodology has been constantly understood as neutral, modern, and often beneficial while ignoring a range of social, cultural, and political issues related to language teaching practice. Related to L2 teaching methods, an important issue is not only of inappropriateness, but also about language teaching practices which are connected in a complex reciprocal relationship with the expansion of English and other forms of cultural practice and knowledge that occur within specific discourses implying particular understandings of language, of students and teachers roles, and so on (Pennycook, 1997).

If we say that the goal of education is to create a better society for all people in the global society, we need to make an effort to listen to what other people say, and open ourselves to different voices rather than holding certain ideas. Thus, mutual respects
toward different points of view are necessary. I believe that contextually responsive teaching is made possible through an open dialogue and understanding among all parties involved in education. Particularly, we need to notice that views of EFL teachers have not been well taken, and it has not only limited the development of our knowledge but also of responsive education for all concerned body. In order to avoid prejudice against different teaching philosophies and approaches, but to engage educators in a genuine dialogue, the study claims the notion of autonomy which promotes the efforts to find and practice appropriate teaching methods in their own classroom contexts.

As one of EFL contexts, the study examines how English teachers in South Korea respond to adoption of Western methods, particularly CLT, in their English teaching. To explore EFL teachers’ views in implementing western teaching methods in their classrooms, Korean English teachers’ perceptions related to CLT were investigated compared to the traditional grammar teaching. Thus, the study discusses reasons to have appropriate language teaching methodologies based on contexts of language classrooms, which can benefit people involved in language teaching and learning. Further, the study will uncover how English teachers have modified or adjusted their teaching practices responsive to their classroom contexts, and factors that have interfered or facilitated their efforts. To explore the notion of contextual autonomy, the study employs five fundamental questions.

1. What are Korean English teachers’ perceptions about CLT?
2. What are Korean English teachers’ perceptions about grammar teaching?
3. What factors interfere with Korean English teachers in practicing English teaching methods of their choice?

4. What factors can facilitate Korean English teachers to practice English teaching methods of their choice?

5. What are voices of Korean English teachers reflected in the existing English curriculum and policy?

1.4 Definitions of Terms

**Autonomy:** The constitutive definition of autonomy is “the quality or state of being self-governing, especially, the right of self-government” (Merriam Webster dictionary, 1999). It further refers to the ability to make own decisions about what to do rather then being influenced by someone else or told what to do”(Webster’s dictionary, 1999). The concept of autonomy can be interpreted with two different meanings: one referring to group autonomy, the other referring to the autonomy on individual basis (Benson & Voller, 1997, p.25). The autonomy that the present study focuses on is the group autonomy, particularly, a self-rule based on socio-political contexts of language classrooms, which is concerned of social and political implications of language education for their own classrooms.

**CLT (Communicative Language Teaching):** It is a language teaching approach, which emphasizes on promoting learners’ communicative competence in the target language using communicative activities (Brown, 1994, p.71). CLT focuses on learners’ ability to
understand and communicate real information each other, so the activities are involved in real communication such as carrying out meaningful tasks or sharing negotiation of meaning and interaction (Riggenbach & Lazaraton, 1991, p.125). CLT approach has been understood as emphasizing meaning (fluency or communicative effectiveness) of the target language rather than form (accuracy of the language use). Thus, the teaching of speaking skill becomes increasingly important in CLT. In the CLT approach, students are considered successful if they can communicate effectively in their L2.

Context: the constitutive definition of context is “the interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs” (Merriam Webster dictionary, 1999). In SLA, it refers to a situational context in which an utterance is produced (Ellis, 1994 p. 698). In the present study, context refers to socio-cultural environments surrounding language classrooms.

Contextual Autonomy: It focuses on the cultural contexts of language use, which emphasizes voices as a struggle (Pennycook, 1994). Being different from the concept of learner autonomy, an individual learner based psychology, the contextual autonomy in language education is understood in terms of cultural voices or struggles to find their own ways of language teaching and learning (Pennycook, 1997).

EFL (English as a Foreign Language): English is taught in counties, such as Japan, Egypt, or Korea where English is not a major language of commerce and education (Brown, 1994, p.4). In EFL contexts, English is used in educational situations where instruction in other subjects is not normally given in English (Prator, 1991, p. 21) thus, English is typically taught as a foreign language inside the classroom as one of school subjects in the
school curriculum. In EFL contexts, most students don’t have enough chances to contact with the target language (English) in their everyday lives outside of classrooms.

**ESL (English as a Second Language):** English is taught in countries, such as the USA, the UK, or India where English is a major language of commerce and education (Brown, 1994, p.4). Although English is not the first language that students learn, English is studied or taught as a partial or universal medium of instruction for other subjects. For instance, people like Nigerians or Filipinos receive most of their education through the medium of English and use it extensively in their everyday life even though it is not their mother tongue (Prator, 1991, p.19). Therefore, in ESL contexts, most students have plenty of chances to contact with English language both inside and outside the classrooms.

**Ideology:** A constitutional definition of ideology is ‘a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture’ (Merriam Webster dictionary 2000). In the present study, the notion of ideology refers to a tendency or thought regarding certain types of language teaching methods, which are uncritically accepted as beneficial and neutral to every classroom regardless of contexts surrounding language classrooms. Consequently, it promotes the absence of self-regulating autonomy in teaching by depending others’ methods rather than finding appropriate ways of teaching.

**Grammar Teaching (Form- focused Approach):** As an analytical approach to language teaching, it has been called as a ‘classical teaching approach’ to language instruction (Brown, 1994). It is characterized as focusing on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary, and translations of texts of the target language rather than using the language.
A typical exercise of grammar teaching is to translate sentences from the target language in the first language. In this approach, a teacher does not have to be able to speak the target language, thus the result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of the students to use the language for communication (Celce-Murcia, 1991, p.3).

**Triangulation:** It is assumed that at least two perspectives are necessary to obtain an accurate picture of a particular phenomenon being studied. Triangulation can be interpreted with four different forms (Denzin 1970, p. 472). Data triangulation means using a variety of sample strategies. Investigator triangulation means that more than one observer contributes to the findings. Methodological triangulation refers to using different methods to collect data. Theoretical triangulation demands that the researchers approach the data with more than one perspective on possible interpretations (Allwright & Bailey, 1991, p.73). In the present study, it refers to the methodological triangulation, which combines more than two methods for data collection to increase trustworthy of the data.

### 1.5 Basic Assumptions

Recently, the ministry of education in South Korea has changed its policy and curriculum for English education to implement CLT in all levels of secondary English education, aiming to gain communicative competence of English language learners. The researcher assumes that contexts of English classrooms in South Korea, as one of EFL countries, clearly show reasons to practice context based language teaching approach related to CLT that have been practiced and implemented widely over the world.
Particularly, opinions of English teachers in South Korea were collected based on the assumption that the voices from English language teachers who can speak from their experiences of classroom teaching will uncover the problems associated with implementing teaching methods which are not based on the classroom contexts, thus propose reasons to practice teaching methods responsive to local contexts. It is also assumed that the teacher will be in a position to derive useful techniques or principles and methods for their teaching since teachers are in a better position to determine appropriate teaching methodologies because they are familiar with classroom contexts. Particularly, it is important to notice that during the last decades, the research centering on teachers was pushed to the periphery in the field of TESOL mainly due to its emphasis on learners and learner-centered approaches to L2 classrooms. The primary reason that the researcher gathers opinions from EFL teachers rather than learners is to suggest a crucial role of teachers in language classrooms, who bring insights in practicing and implementing teaching methodologies to be successful.

Among many traditional teaching methodologies, grammar teaching, which has been widely used in English classrooms in South Korea, was chosen to discuss ways to find appropriate language teaching methodologies compared to CLT. To do so, the researcher collected data from middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. South Korea has a national curriculum applied to all schools regardless of school sizes, locations, regions, and types of schools. Further, Seoul is a capital city, the center of culture, commerce, and education in South Korea. Thus, the researcher assumed that the English education in Seoul, South Korea will show clear features of English teaching
regarding implementation of CLT and associated problems. The middle schools in South Korea have more practices of CLT compared to high schools. The high school curriculum is oriented more to college entrance examinations, which focus on reading and grammar rather than speaking skills. Therefore, the study has a target population of English teachers in middle schools rather than in high schools in South Korea.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The primary goal of the present study is to suggest that English teaching methodology in EFL contexts should be substantially reconsidered based on contexts of language classrooms. The current study, fundamentally, questions the universal relevance of communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in EFL classrooms in the view of cultural conflicts arising from an introduction of predominant Western language teaching approaches to different contexts. The relevant studies and theories to discuss the argument for culturally appropriate language teaching methodologies are followed.

2.1 Contextual Autonomy

2.1.1 Ideology in Language Education

Language teaching is not value free because it is not culturally, socially, and politically neutral (Penneycook, 1997). In other words, it is always involved in cultural practices. In a broad perspective, education itself is ideological. Shor (1992) asserted that “there can be no neutrality in education because it is a contested terrain where people are socialized and the future of society is at stake” (Shor, 1992, p.13). Similarly, Simon
(1992) discussed that education is an expression of a society's vision of future, but the visions are never neural: they are always someone's dream and to the degree that they are implicated in organizing the future for others, thus, they always have a moral and political dimension. (p.141). Similarly, the way to teach language is never natural and neutral because pedagogy is interrelated in ideology regarding the assumptions about what is necessary, what is good, and what is possible.

Accordingly, pedagogical choices, such as teaching methods, curricular, often reflect the perspectives and beliefs of powerful segments of our social collectivity (Apple, 1990, p.8). Being unaware of the political implications of one's choices, or claiming that those choices are neutral, does not mean that one's pedagogy is free of ideology. Rather, it means that they ignore the political nature of schooling in favor of the status quo. Related to the ideological nature of education, we need to be aware the ideal nature of language teaching, because what and how we teach reflect our attitudes to society in general. For instance, our own educational practice is an implicit statement of power relationships in terms of how we see authority in the classroom as well as in society outside the classrooms.

Given the relationship between the spread of English and the spread of applied linguistics, particular language teaching methods based on Western contexts are constantly being supported as the newest and best way to teach English. In particular, by the spread of English along with the dominant teaching methodologies like CLT approach, the Western based teaching methods are viewed as scientific, modern, new, and better (Penneycook, 1994, p.168). Kachru (1990) strongly argued that the Western view
of teaching methodologies has been presented to the outer circle countries with indifference to the sociological, educational, and economic contexts of those countries. In fact, those western based teaching methodologies are clearly grounded in certain contexts, such as relatively small number of students in a class, focusing on learners’ self-motivated learning, teachers’ informal approach to teaching, easy access to teaching aids, and freedom from outside pressure, etc. Consequently, language classrooms in different contexts have become a battle over social and cultural practices within a context of English language teaching by the introduction of teaching methodologies based on different contexts (Kubota, 1998; Burnaby & Sun, 1989). In particular, regarding the implementation of CLT in EFL classrooms, a challenging task is to consider an ideology involved in a particular language teaching practice.

2.1.2 Ideology in English Language Teaching Approach: Is the West better?

It is important to view how language teaching has often been infused by an ideology of development and modernization. Related to English teaching, the dominance of Western philosophy in language teaching has led into language teaching theory and practice around world. Accordingly, it has been reported that the export of applied linguistics theory and of western-trained language teachers constantly promote inappropriate teaching approaches to diverse settings (Kubota, 1998; Ellis, 1996; Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Thompson, 1996). It is not surprising that conflicts occur when western teaching methodologies are applied to different contexts, and the conflicts are related to particular views on what is developed, modern, and efficient, as opposed to what is
backward, traditional, and inefficient. The problem is, then, that the western-based teaching methods are viewed as developed, modern, and efficient over the world (Pennycook, 1994, p.19).

Sampson (1984) discussed three fallacies related to importing western methodology to EFL contexts. The first fallacy is that everything exported from developed countries is advanced. By assuming technical superiority in some domains in western countries, EFL teachers believe that the methodologies that they are using are old-fashioned and, therefore, should be replaced (p.22). The second problem comes from confusion between educational theories and practices. It refers to a dominance of inapplicable educational theories in language teaching especially in contexts outside Europe and North America. As a result, those teaching approaches have been regarded as irrelevant to educational practice in EFL countries. The third fallacy is related to the claim that new methods from the western countries are value-free, scientific and modern, therefore, appropriate for all contexts while treating local teaching practice as backward or old-fashioned. This discourse not only supports the continued spread of English, but also assures a range of teaching practices, which have their ideological underpinnings firmly based on western methodologies.

The effects of uncritical attitudes toward the Center countries for their EFL teaching are unintentionally harmful. English education, thus, has not only contributed to the construction of an ideal image of English and the related culture, but also has failed to question the existing problems in English teaching and find ways to practice English language teaching responsive to their own classrooms. In particular, this ideology is
clearly evident in ELT professions and TESOL teacher education since those fields are presently dominated by a methodological dogmatism, which widely promotes certain types of methodologies developed by the Center countries, particularly those entitled communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches, while condemning many traditional methods as old and backward although those are still practiced in many parts of the world.

2.1.3 Contextual Autonomy in Language Education

The constitutive definition of autonomy is "the ability to make your own decisions about what to do rather than being influenced by someone else or told what to do" (Webster's dictionary, 1999). Related to language education, the notion of autonomy that the present study emphasizes is a contextual autonomy, which claims that language education should be based on social, cultural, and political contexts of classrooms.

Pennycook (1997) proposes the notion of autonomy moving from the mainstream of applied linguistics that understands autonomy as an individual, psychological version (micro autonomy). Being different from the micro autonomy, the proposed study focuses on and explores a macro version of autonomy, which particularly concerns of socio-cultural contexts of language classrooms, to find and practice contextually appropriate language teaching methods. It is important to be aware that the concept of individual autonomy (micro autonomy), which has been an unquestionably desirable goal in language education related to the notion of learner-centered or independent learners, is indeed a construction of western cultures. This micro autonomy has moved into the field
of ELT theory and practice, and claimed a major ground like CLT or student-centered approach in the field although the concept of the individualized autonomy, which is central to western liberal thought, is a very particular and historical product emerging from the western philosophy. (Pennycook, 1997).

One of the problems in promoting the individual autonomy for L2 teaching regardless of classroom contexts is that this notion may have a limited applicability to other contexts because it is a product of discourse of western culture. Within the narrow and individualized understanding of autonomy, language educators become preoccupied with certain types of strategies, materials and technologies while disregarding the broader cultural contexts in which language learning takes place. In short, an uncritical acceptance of the central notion of the individual version of autonomy is another version of dependence, which interferes with the self-conscious endeavors to find appropriate language teaching and learning for their own right.

Pennycook (1997) pointed out the importance of critical awareness as an essential element to understand contextual autonomy since it is fundamentally concerning about authoring one’s world. He pointed out the importance of being aware of cultural, political and economic contexts of local classrooms, and claimed that autonomy should be seen not as learning how to learn, but as learning how to struggle for cultural alternatives. Within the struggles, the language educators’ role is to help learners develop their own voices in order to transform their cultural contexts through their understandings of society. In a certain point of view, the autonomy that Pennycook argued is aiming at a socially liberating education similarly found in the work of Freire (Shor, 1993).
According to Freire, the goal of education is to help learners develop tools for engagement in social struggles. Within the concepts, autonomy is not the issue about individual learners, rather it is the issue that whether education supports or threatens the liberation of the social and cultural groups to which they belong.

2.1.4 Contextual Autonomy and CLT

Currently, the most popular and dominant language teaching approach in the field is CLT. CLT began popular from the late 1960s as an alternative to structural or grammar translation models of language teaching, but rapidly became an axiom of language teaching methodology (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Ellis, 1998; Fotos, 1994). As a part of this paradigm shift, other concepts such as authenticity, learner-centered, and group work began to cluster around the CLT approach. However, being the most dominant approach doesn’t mean that it is an absolutely complete language teaching methodology. Nobody can say how long CLT approach will be accepted as a dominant method of language teaching, and some researchers already began to expect that a return of structures and grammar teaching might be inevitable, but equally inevitable is the re-emerged communicative approach.

Another reason that CLT became popular is a rapid growth of English language learners and their needs to use the language. Consequently, CLT that emphasizes language use for communication has been a dominant model in ELT. However, it has been found that many teachers in the world still do not have a clear idea of what exactly CLT is (Li, 1998; Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1996; Anderson, 1993). CLT has been
explained with its emphasis on communication using a target language with a number of particular activities like pair work or problem solving activities, etc. However, many discrepancies between theory and actual classroom practice have already been reported when implementing CLT in EFL contexts (Li, 1998; Anderson, 1993; Burnaby & Sun, 1989).

If we define the concept of autonomy as "authorizing one’s own world without being subject to the will of others" (Pennycook, 1997), a relevant question would be "How can language educators become authors of their own teaching?" In particular, related to contextual autonomy for EFL classrooms, the reasons to find their own approach to language teaching are many. Most of all, the dominant concepts or notions, taken for granted, should be challenged. For instance, the well-known concept of student-centered education has become tied to a very particular version of progressive education. It, in fact, relies on a dichotomy between student-centered and teacher-centered education, and there is an assumption that teacher-centered education is inherently old as well as bad. If this notion is accepted around the world as a universal norm, there is a danger that the promotion of learner autonomy becomes another version of de-contextualized education ignoring local classroom contexts where teacher-centered approach has been practiced and valued. Since the notions of student-centered, autonomy, and individualism are, in general, products from particular cultural contexts, which are structured and valued differently in other cultural contexts, the uncritical acceptance of those views will apparently lead to inappropriate pedagogues as well as cultural impositions.
2.2 English Teaching Methodologies: CLT vs. Form-focused approach

As a *lingua franca* of the twentieth century, English is one of the most important means for intercultural communication. (Kachru, 1992; Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1994). As a result, there has been a huge need to learn English in non-English speaking countries including EFL countries (Kachru, 1990, 1992). However, researchers and practitioners in the field of SLA have not drawn a critical attention to how to teach English for different classrooms in the world. Instead, TESOL professionals have emphasized the importance of adopting Western approaches in language classrooms by giving away their traditional ways of language teaching and learning, which seemed inefficient to produce proficient speakers of the target language. To seek appropriate English teaching methodologies for each classroom, first, it is necessary to understand the background of how CLT appeared to the field.

2.2.1 CLT (Communicative Language Teaching)

(1) Introduction of CLT

As the field of second or foreign language has developed and introduced various approaches toward language teaching and learning over the past few decades, we have experienced a number of reactions and counter-reactions in methods and approaches to language teaching. If we characterize language teaching method in the present era, it would be CLT (Celce-Murcia, 1997). Historically, in the 1970s and 1980s, there was a dramatic shift in the focus of the language teaching paradigm away from a primary
attention to what was being taught toward how teaching and learning takes place (Celce-Murcia, 1991). As a result, the discussion of how students can be helped to acquire the target language to enable them to communicate in it takes a primary place in L2 teaching methods.

Basically, CLT focuses on the process rather than the product in language learning, and it came from a response to a failure of previous audio-lingual approach, which was unable to help students to speak English beyond the controlled environment of the language lab (Prator, 1991). To remedy this audio-lingual failure, CLT appeared by claiming the goal of language learning as to gain an ability to use of the target language in a wide range of communicative situations (Savignon, 1983, p.23-24). Consequently, CLT stresses the importance of what students must know about the target language in order to be able to use it effectively for their own communicative purposes. Particularly, CLT focuses on the use of language in meaningful discourse involving who says what, to whom, how, why, when, and where (Yalden, 1987). Thus, an ability to have free, spontaneous interaction, and communicative competence has become a goal of language learning in CLT approach (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 378).

CLT also appeared against grammar translation method, which emphasizes conscious, monitored learning and rule-analyzing processes (Celce-Murcia, 1997). CLT identifies new pedagogical orientations that have grown out of the realization that knowledge of grammatical forms and structures alone does not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of the language that they are learning. This inevitably increased attention to language use has been a reason to claim the
communicative approaches. Therefore, in CLT approach, grammar teaching is useless in
gaining communicative competence of language learners. However, a few researchers,
recently, began to claim that intra-personal interaction, which is gained through analytical
process of language learning, is equally important as inter-personal interaction is in
language learning (Ellis, 1998; Fotos, 1994). They argue that more synthesis-oriented
(form-focused) activities will promote a development of critical thinking strategies, thus
encourage an individualizing of language learning.

(2) The Notion of CLT

Although CLT has been a generally accepted norm in the field (Brown, 1994), it is
difficult to synthesize all of the various definitions that have been offered to CLT. The
general characteristics of CLT are classrooms goals focusing on components of
communicative competence, not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence
(Canale & Swain, 1980). Contrasted to the structurally (grammatically) sequenced
curriculum, which was a mainstream of language teaching for centuries, CLT suggests
that grammatical structure might better be subsumed under various functional categories.
In CLT, teachers pay considerably less attention to the overt presentation and discussion
of grammatical rules than traditionally they did. Also, use of authentic language becomes
important in CLT as attempting to build fluency. Spontaneity is encouraged in
communicative classrooms, thus students deal with unrehearsed situations under the
guidance, but not control, of the teacher. Therefore, the role of teacher has come to be
seen as a facilitator rather than a knower and director of the classroom activities.
Nunan (1991, p. 75) offers five features of characteristics of CLT as following.

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process.
- An enhancement of the learners’ own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

According to Nunan (1991), CLT approaches were designed to engage learners in pragmatic, authentic, functional use of the target language for meaningful purposes. Thus, organizational language forms are not a central focus but rather less important aspects of language learning that enable the learners to accomplish those purposes. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. Therefore, fluency may have to take more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use. It indicates that in the communicative classrooms, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts.

(3) Communicative Competence

Researchers have defined and redefined the construct of communicative competence, which has been called as a primary goal of CLT approach to gain. For instance, Canale and Swain (1980) explained that CLT was designed to develop
communicative competence by promoting grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence, and strategic competence. It indicates that CLT approach is underpinned by the notion that communicative competence means both linguistic knowledge and the skills in using this knowledge (Canale & Swain, 1980). It addresses the way in which a learner can bridge the gap between underlying competence and actual performance, and the ability to apply knowledge in actual situations. Thus, the instrumental goal of CLT approach is to produce students who can communicate both orally and in writing with native speakers in appropriate ways (Savignon, 1983). Although pronunciation, grammar, and spelling have been played an important role in language teaching and learning, those are regarded as meaningless in CLT if those are not aimed to communicate with. Thus, the major characteristics of CLT approach can be characterized as to focus on use, appropriateness, fluency-focused rather than simply language form and accuracy-focused activities. Therefore, communicative competence that CLT aims can be achieved through using language rather than simply exercising on correct use of language, so an emphasis is placed on students’ initiatives and interactions rather than teacher-centered directions on the language use (Anderson, 1993).

2.2.2. Ideology and Monolingual Approach

English language education has been a place that reflects a dogmatic belief in a dominant approach to language learning. CLT approach of the 1980s and 1990s, like the audio-lingual approach of the 1950s and 1960s did, has maintained as a dominant teaching methodology in the language classroom. It has an assumption that language
teaching should be natural rather than controlled, contextualized rather than isolated, student-centered rather than teacher-centered, focus on meaning and fluency rather than emphasize form and accuracy, thus, the language taught is authentic and functional. As a result, teachers’ role becomes facilitators who guide their students through communicative activities such as dialogue, discussion, and peer learning rather than authority figures directly teaching students. Further, teachers are expected to provide anxiety free learning environments rather than a controlled atmosphere to facilitate students’ language learning process. Accordingly, currently accepted norm in SLA is that EFL or ESL teaching methods should be student-centered, communicative and authentic. Hence, the traditional teaching methods, which emphasize teaching language forms rather than meaning, discrete linguistic items rather than the whole, accuracy rather than fluency in the target language, have been regarded not useful and backward to help students’ language learning.

The problem in the current dominant methodology in the field of EFL and ESL teaching is that it validates CLT approach over other traditional teaching methods, in which it tends to dismiss other ways of thinking, and dichotomizes concepts as “black and white” making a certain type of knowledge or approach legitimate while rejecting others. In fact, CLT approach, which is a complete shift from previous approaches such as audio-lingual approach and grammar translation approach, has been understood as a panacea for all problems in language teaching. The popular approach is often not only perceived as panaceas but also implemented in a mechanical way. However, Prabhu (1987) rejected the idea that there are objectively either good or bad methods, and
proposed that good language teaching is dependent on the degree to which teaching is real, not mechanical and routinized. Indeed, it has been found that EFL teachers' understandings of CLT are different from what CLT originally intended (Ellis, 1996; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999) and it indicates that different goals, needs, classroom environments, cultural practice in EFL contexts involve different interpretations of CLT mainly due to difficulties in implementing this western teaching method in non-western contexts. Therefore, the real teaching is the teaching responsive to the context of classrooms, and it accordingly leads to the notion of contextual appropriateness of language teaching methods rather than neither dichotomizes nor follow them in a mechanical way.

2.2.3 Difficulties in Implementing CLT in EFL Classrooms

CLT has brought several related concepts in language teaching such as learner-centered approach, group work, and authentic language (Ellis, 1997). For instance, CLT promotes learner-centered approach in language teaching to help students gain a native-speaker competence in target language, so an availability of authentic learning materials becomes a crucial factor to determine successful language learning. Further concepts related to CLT, such as comprehensible input, natural learning, authentic language, communicative competence, and standard English have become symbols of modern language teaching, but those concepts have been taking for granted without further inquiry. For instance, CLT approaches have been known as focusing on meaning rather than on form to gain communicative competence, but it is not clear in terms of how to gain communicative competence, what communicative competence should be aimed, and
how to measure it in various classroom contexts. As a result, number of aspects in CLT which makes it unsuitable for EFL classrooms have been found, and several problems in using CLT in EFL classrooms have been reported (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Anderson, 1993; Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Gethin, 1997; Thompson, 1996).

(1) CLT and EFL Contexts

First, in many EFL countries, teachers are regarded as authority figures and are expected to teach directly in class. As a result, most students are in favor of explicit instruction of correct grammar and use of L1, so the teachers who use student-centered approach, which the CLT claims, are understood as not responsive to the needs of majority of EFL learners (Li, 1998). In other words, understanding of EFL classrooms draws an attention to a mismatch between instrumental aims of CLT approach and the contexts of EFL classrooms. In EFL classrooms, teachers might be a sole provider of target language input (L1, 1998), and most students feel communicative activities as an entertainment, thus become very skeptical using those tools in the classrooms (Anderson, 1991).

Second, CLT might be useful for EFL or ESL teachers whose primary goal of language teaching is to help students develop necessary skills to communicate in the target language. However, the goals of language learning and teaching are diverse. According to Burnaby & Sun (1989), one of advantages in using CLT in EFL classrooms might be for the students who will study in English speaking countries, and those who will interact in any way with English speakers in future. In general, EFL students have
had little exposure to native speaking environments, which causes deficiencies in using the target language (Medyes, 1994), and their purpose of language learning is not to communicate but to learn (Cook, 1999). Thus, many EFL learners do not have a greater need to communicate in English comparing to ESL learners who live in English speaking environments (Anderson, 1993).

**Third,** CLT emphasizes process as opposed to content of language learning, and meaning rather than form (Ellis, 1997). However, such an orientation ignores the classrooms where traditional classroom teaching has been used, and the attitudes towards the mastery of linguistic forms (Li, 1998). Further, difference between process and content of language learning is not clear, rather it should be understood as a whole.

**Fourth,** CLT encourages students to participate in open-discussions and spontaneous communicative activities. Yet, there is a reluctance to participate in open-discussions aimed at improving communicative ability among students due to their fear of losing face by making mistakes (Burnaby & Sun, 1989).

**Fifth,** Apparently, EFL contexts have very few opportunities available for learners to experience authentic contexts, and students have rare chances to contact with them. It is reported that CLT is generally difficult to practice in EFL classrooms which have a large number of students who will never visit English speaking counties or interact with English (Li, 1998).

**Sixth,** it has been known that most EFL classrooms have a rigid curriculum and methods of assessments. In spite of the fact that most EFL students have rare chances to use the target language outside classrooms, they have so much pressure on learning
English. In many EFL contexts, college entrance exams are absolute determinants of a students' future, so teachers need to provide English instruction to students to prepare the exams primarily focusing on linguistic skills of the target language rather than using CLT (Anderson, 1993).

Seventh, most EFL teachers are not comfortable in communicative skills, so they rather want to rely on the input from native speakers due to the perceived weakness of their language skills when they use CLT (Medyes, 1994). In particular, it is very difficult to use CLT for a non-native speaking teacher who is not very proficient in the target language. In fact, dialogues, drills, rehearsed exercises, and discussions of grammatical rules are much simpler and easier for average non-native speaking teachers for their classroom teaching (Anderson, 1993).

(2) Non-native Speakers and CLT

Most teachers in EFL classrooms are non-native speakers. In fact, SLA research has often fallen into the 'comparative fallacy' (Bley-Vroman, 1988) of L2 teaching based on the command of native speakers. The basis is that native speakers are the people who know their language perfectly so to be the models of L2 learners. Kramsch (1998) says that English teaching methodologies based on the native speaker usually define L2 learners in terms of what they are not or at least not yet (p.28). Apparently, the description of CLT approach is implicitly native-speakers based, and assumes that to gain native speaker proficiency is a final stage of achievement of L2 learning (Savignon, 1983). However, it will be more reasonable if the proficiency of L2 language learners to gain is
judged based on their own terms of L2 knowledge rather than referring to the native
speakers’ competence. Further, there is no reason that the competence of L2 language
learners should be identical to the monolingual’s L1 (Cook, 1999, p. 191). Then, the
fundamental question about CLT is to what extent the proficiency and competency of
target language are aimed at for L2 learners, and how those are measured based on what
criteria.

In fact, communicative competence, the ability to use a language in appropriate
ways is not a universal term. Instead, it should be defined contextually. To apply the
notion of communicative competence to EFL classrooms with the ways that native
speakers defined becomes problematic since the cultural contexts are different as
“appropriateness” is. Cook (1999) claimed “L2 users are not monolingual native speakers
and never will be” (p. 195). In other words, L2 users have to be understood as L2 users,
not as failed L2 learners due to different usage of grammar, pronunciation, and
vocabulary, which are different from those of native speakers.

2.2.4 Grammar Teaching (Form-focused instruction)

In general, the goal of form-focused instruction is to gain linguistic accuracy
while meaning-focused instruction is to gain communicative effectiveness. Indeed, the
role of form-focused instruction in L2 acquisition has been a matter of controversy. Many
developments in SLA syllabus design, materials writing, methodology and testing during
the past 30 years reflect a tension between the desirability of communicative use of the
target language in the classroom, on the one hand, and the need for a linguistic focus in
language learning, on the other hand. Newmark (1966) and Allwright (1977), among others who have strongly argued against grammar teaching, claimed that form-focused teaching interferes with language learning, and argued that the best way to learn a target language, inside or outside a classroom, is not by treating the target language structure as an object of study, but by experiencing it through the medium of communication.

(1) Notion of Grammar Teaching (form-focused instruction)

In the Western world, traditionally, foreign language learning in schools was synonymous with learning of Latin or Greek (Brown, 1994). Those languages were taught by means of the classical method, which focuses on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary, translation of texts, and written exercises. This method was adopted as a chief means for teaching foreign languages in the nineteenth centuries (Ceice-Murcia, 1991), but little thought was given at the time to teaching oral use of languages because languages were not being taught primarily to learn oral/aural communication but to learn for being scholarly or for gaining a reading proficiency in a foreign language. This classical method came to be known as the grammar translation method, and it remained as a standard methodology for language teaching in educational institutions at the turn of the twentieth century. Prator (1979) lists the major characteristics of grammar translation as following.

- Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
- Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
• Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
• Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
• Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.

Apparently, many foreign counties are still using grammar teaching method, although many researchers have questioned the values of the grammar teaching over decades. The key issue related to using form-focused approach in L2 classrooms might be “To what extent the nature and degree of form-focused teaching would be most beneficial to classrooms?” A similar question remains whether it likely to be equally unbeneicial in all settings as a number of researchers have strongly argued. However, another equally important issue related to the form-focused instruction is that the field of SLA has been dichotomized different language teaching approaches between meaning and form within a framework which values one extremely over the other although those are not mutually exclusive. Particularly, the dominant pedagogical discourse criticizes the grammar teaching by emphasizing meaning-focused approach and implicit teaching of structure.

There are certainly disagreements on the negative role of form-focused approach in L2 learning in the field. Particularly, a recent discussion on L2 pedagogies redefines the role of grammar teaching as facilitating not as hampering factors in L2 learning process. For instance, Ellis (1998) suggests that direct teach of language structures will form some foundations of students’ language development. A detailed discussion about the roles of grammar teaching in English language teaching is followed.
(2) Cons

Should L2 teachers teach grammar? The question arises because many researchers in the field have put negative values on grammar teaching based on the belief that teachers’ main task is to provide communicative language use in the classrooms. A weakness of the structural syllabus, which focuses on grammar teaching, is its tendency to highlight grammatical features to the exclusion of practical application in real situations. Thus, grammar translation method has been severely criticized with the reason that it does virtually nothing to enhance a student’s communicative ability in the target language. For instance, Brown (1994) criticizes the role of grammar teaching as followed.

“It is remarkable, in one sense, that this method has been so popular among many competing models. For many students, with this method, foreign language learning was meant a tedious experience of memorizing endless lists of unusable grammar rules and vocabulary and attempting produce perfect translations of literary prose.” (Brown, 1994).

In general, it has been claimed that form-focused approach is not effective in language teaching. The main reason is that it does not help learners improve L2 skills (Johnston, 1988). Particularly, it has been supported by the concept of a critical period, which argues that adult learners will never fully master the target language system either its phonological aspect or even some aspect of syntax (Long, 1993; Johnston & Newport, 1989).

Further, grammar teaching approach has been severely criticized by a group of people who favor CLT approach, thus CLT appeared to overcome the weakness of form-focused approach in their attention that the ultimate purpose of language learning is in the
pragmatic use of the language. For instance, a number of SLA researchers (Dulay & Burt 1973; Krashen, 1985; Prabhu, 1987) claimed that grammar instruction should be abandoned to create opportunities for natural language use, which is called “zero option”. It proposes that it is absolutely possible for classroom learners to acquire grammatical competence without any form-focused instruction. The zero option entails not only a rejection of planned intervention in L2 learning but also unplanned intervention like error correction. Particularly, Krashen (1981, p 74) refers to error correction as a serious mistake for L2 teaching. He argues that it puts students on the defensive position in their L2 learning, thus encourages them to avoid using difficult constructions of target language for fear of making mistakes.

However, in recent years, the zero option has been challenged. First, a number of researchers (Stevick, 1980; Sharwood Smith, 1981) have argued that the explicit knowledge, which typically results from formal grammar instruction, can convert into, through practice, the implicit knowledge that is required for use in communication (e.g., Interface Hypothesis, Krashen, 1985). Other researchers (Lightbown, 1985; Seliger, 1979) have argued that grammar instruction may not cause acquisition to take place, but may facilitate it by providing the learner with a conscious understanding of grammatical constructs that can be used later when the learner is ready to acquire those features (Delayed-Effect Hypothesis). Second, there have been a number of empirical studies (Long, 1991, Ellis, 1998), which demonstrate that learners who receive instructions entailed grammar teaching outperform those who do not, and suggest that teaching learners grammar contributes to their linguistic development.
As claimed by a number of researchers (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), there is rare literature that offers a rationale or justification for form-focused approach to language teaching or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, principles, or educational theory. Yet, in a certain point of view, it is understandable why grammar translation method has been so popular over the world. Most of all, it apparently, requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers (Brown, 1994). Also, tests of grammar rules and translations are easy to construct and be objectively scored. In fact, many standardized tests of foreign languages still do not attempt to tap into communicative abilities, so students have little motivation to go beyond grammar analogies, translations, and rote exercises.

(3) Pros

Current interest in focus on form is motivated partly by the findings of studies, which show that entirely meaning-focused instruction does not help learners gain some linguistic features of target languages (Harley, 1994; Pica, 1994). Those studies show that focus on form may be necessary to push learners beyond communicatively effective language toward target-like second language ability (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 2). A somewhat weaker claim is that, even if such a focus may not be absolutely necessary, form-focused approach may be a part of more efficient language learning experiences in which it can speed up L2 learning process.

Recently, researchers have argued that learners may need a basic knowledge of the lexical and grammatical forms of the language on the assumption that this knowledge will
provide an essential basis for communication when they are faced with a need to communicate. It has been argued that understanding the grammatical framework of a language is extremely important for some learners, often especially for speakers of very different languages (Ellis, 1998). A similar reason is that most EFL students speak and listen in their native tongues all day, so thinking it in English is impossible, which means that the direct method to teach target language structures is necessary although students should be exposed to English as much as possible.

On the contrary, in ESL contexts, many students are highly proficient in English because they have many opportunities to practice the target language by having sufficient meaning-focused input. In ESL contexts, therefore, L2 can be both the object and the medium of instruction, and the target language is generally available outside of classroom. In this context, it is easy to make students notice a form of target language in their everyday input, which are available to the learners. But, in EFL contexts, learners have years of instruction focusing on form, but have had limited meaning focused input and few opportunities to make an output. In sum, consideration of different classroom contexts suggests the needs to consider to what extent the form-focused instructions are effectively applicable to the classrooms. A study shows a need to consider different teaching approaches as below.

"The foreign experts cannot accept the obvious fact that Chinese students learn better if they can learn in their own way: start with rote memorization, grammar rules, sentence construction and then conversation. Chinese students learn to read, write, speak, and then comprehend aurally in exactly the reverse order stressed by Western pedagogy. The emphasis on grammar means students tend to neglect comprehension, but can easily
construct good sentences. It seems inexcusably formalistic to most foreign language teachers. But in our experiences, these students speak English more fluently after four years of study than their counterparts in the U.S. speak Chinese.” (Barlow and Low, 1985, p.115).

The above quote shows that in spite of the advocate of adopting CLT approach, there is an equally appealing evidence that grammar teaching enhances the learners’ language learning. Every country has traditional teaching methods, and those would be changed when the new method warranties better outcomes of learning. In fact, as suggested by a number of researchers, grammar provides a useful description of the target language for particularly beginning stage of L2 learning (Ellis, 1998: Fotos, 1994).

In sum, the discussion of form-focused versus meaning-focused instruction leads to a conclusion that neither form based instruction nor meaning based instruction alone can lead to a complete second language acquisition. It is, therefore, not effective to let people believe the form-meaning relationships in a mutually exclusive way. There are ample evidences that some degree of carefully timed and delivered focus on form is likely to be appropriate in most cases of L2 learning particularly for EFL classrooms. Further, it has been argued that L2 learners should master some linguistic features in the target language since second language learning is not identical to first language learning (Doughty & Williams, 1998). The pedagogical decision regarding grammar teaching in L2 classroom is not in the decision whether to teach or not, but how and what to teach to whom and when.
2.2.5 Polarized pedagogical assumption: CLT vs. Grammar Teaching

In communicative language teaching, students are given a rich variety of comprehensible input, so the teacher-fronted grammar instruction generally has been omitted. However, there are some empirical findings that indicate a necessity of some types of formal instruction, the grammar teaching of the target language (Ellis, 1997, 1998; Long, 1991), and those show that grammar teaching should be considered important since it gives learners the linguistic knowledge of the target language to facilitate the needs to express in L2. Further, a number of studies, which have recently emerged in SLA, are exploring the ways to integrate instruction on problematic grammar forms within a communicative framework (Fotos, 1994; Celce-Murcia, 1998). However, it is suggested that teachers should know to what extent L2 learners benefit from form-focused instruction and investigate these questions for themselves.

If the ultimate goal of language teaching is for communication, then, there are sufficient reasons that grammar teaching should be considered in the development of communicative competence of language learners. The problem in our understanding of grammar teaching has been its isolation from communication. Apparently, the field has been polarized different language teaching approaches in terms of new and old, modernized and backward. Rather than polarize teaching methods as black and white, which is indeed impossible to do so, a critical review of different teaching methods is necessary. It involves an effort that rather than accept the universal, unquestionable, dominant approach, we need to be cautious in dichotomizing teaching methods as either
one, since the dichotomy between progressive and old-fashioned pedagogy assumes that grammar teaching is inherently bad while CLT is beneficial and good.

In fact, our knowledge is often constructed by a dominant discourse or ideology, which privileges some and oppress others. Although some previous studies have reported difficulties in implementing CLT in EFL contexts, there has been little significant discussion about ideologies related to English language teaching approach. In particular, uncritical acceptance of a certain language teaching approach, assuming a universal application of “one-size-fits-all” (Kubota, 1998) approach to language teaching, should be substantially reconsidered. Therefore, we might need to question how, in which ways grammar teaching can facilitate communicative purpose of language learning rather than uncritically accept CLT. Nonetheless, there should be certain emerging pedagogical principles, which can inform decisions about how to teach language forms in classrooms. Then, our attention is in the need to find a pedagogically sound and empirically grounded position for L2 instructions.

2.3 Socio-Cultural Contexts and L2 Teaching

According to Halliday (1994), “the contexts in which meanings are exchanged are not devoid of social value, and contexts play a part in determining what we say; and it plays a part determining the context.” Learning a foreign language is not simply to master a subject of academic study but is more about learning a means of communication in the contexts (Hinkel, 1999, p.197). In other words, communication in real situation cannot be
out of contexts, and it has always been bounded in contexts that communication takes place.

2.3.1. Language Teaching as a Social Practice

Culture is, in a broader sense, how we make sense of our lives. Thus, culture determines how social reality is understood, and then it is important to know that language cannot be isolated from a particular context in which it is used. Particularly, English as EIL needs to be understood not only in terms of its global position but also in terms of the specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of use. Every language teaching approach reflects a particular view of people, society, and the goal of language learning, thus the study attempts to lay a foundation for debates about theoretical assumptions and social implications made by CLT in EFL contexts, and to counter its one-sided and relatively uncritical acceptance. Tollefson (1991) suggested, “ELT practices must be examined for their impact on the relationship between students and teachers, and students in society” (p.102). In other words, commonly accepted everyday classroom practices are never neutral and natural, rather those have ideological origins and consequences for relations of power inside and outside the classrooms.

Indeed, it is important to notice that language teaching and learning is a social practice, and both language and using language are always located in very particular social, cultural, and political contexts. Therefore, how language is used is different from one context to another, thus any approach to language teaching based on one particular view of language may be completely inapplicable in another context. If a particular
language teaching practice supports certain views of language, then such practices present a particular cultural politics and make the English language classroom a site of struggle over different ways of thinking and dealing with language (Pennycook, 1994).

Many assumptions that CLT approach made, as a global language teaching method, draw a significant question regarding its applicability to language classrooms. Considering EFL classroom contexts, in particular, the major question is “Is the CLT approach realistic?” Further, a critical analysis of the underlying socio-political assumptions regarding CLT approach brings following questions: Who learns to do what? Why? Who gets benefits? Indeed, there is a growing body of literature (Kubota, 1998; Holliday, 1994) that takes into account the socio-political context of language teaching and learning, which help us understand classroom contexts regarding the relationship of social and cultural factors to the classroom.

2.3.2 Socio-cultural Contexts in L2 Classrooms

To understand contexts of classrooms is to know culture surrounding the classrooms (Hinkel, 1999). The term of culture could be interpreted in different ways. Someone use it to refer to cultural products like art or music. Others might refer it to background information (e.g., history or geography of countries where the target language is spoken). In the present study, culture is understood as a framework of ideas, assumptions, and beliefs that are used to interpret other people’s actions, patterns of thoughts and behaviors. To describe the culture surrounding EFL classrooms, the study
mainly investigates perceptions and attitudes that teachers and students have regarding language teaching and learning in the classrooms.

From an early stage of their learning and teaching practices, students and teachers are socialized into expectations about what kinds of interactions are appropriate in classrooms, about how they should engage in teaching and learning processes. Consequently, the knowledge that they have learned from contexts of classrooms become powerful determinants of what happens in classroom interactions. Since the language learning itself is quite context based practice, L2 learning process is not only a matter that teachers apply what they get from theories and research findings but also a matter of what happens in the classroom between learners and teachers as a collaborative effort. It implies that English education needs to be sensitive to prevailing cultures, which are embedded in language classrooms, to determine appropriate language teaching methodologies. Most of all, it is necessary to understand the fact that appropriate teaching methodologies can be developed by noticing what happens among people in the classrooms, which consists of the features of classroom contexts.

It is, further, assumed that L2 teachers need to develop culturally proper language teaching methodologies, because they are in the position to take a more reflective or ethnographic stance toward cultural content considering behaviors, expectations, perspectives and values of people in the classrooms. For EFL teachers, therefore, to develop a reflective stance toward classroom experience should be regarded as a major step to professional development.
2.3.3 ESL vs. EFL contexts

Considering socio-cultural contexts in L2 language classrooms, the first factor that we might need to understand is the difference between EFL and ESL classrooms in a broad term. English is taught in either form of EFL or ESL for the learners who are non-native speakers. English is FL (Foreign language) in South Korea, but it is SL (Second language) in Hong Kong, and then a question arises that “To what extent this difference can be applied to seek appropriate English language teaching approaches?” Unfortunately, the contextual differences between ESL and EFL classrooms regarding purpose of English learning, English learning environments, teachers’ English proficiency, and availability of authentic English materials, have been rarely investigated among ELT researchers except a few recent studies (Li, 1998; Anderson, 1993; Burnaby & Sun, 1989).

Contrast to ESL situations where students have supportive environments to use English outside of classrooms, EFL classrooms are the primary place where students can hear and speak English (Ellis, 1994). In EFL classrooms, students do not need to use the language in their lives but only in pretended situations, since the language teaching takes place somewhere the language being taught is not a normal part of regular lives of the learners. In ESL teaching, by contrast, the teaching takes place in the target language community itself. For many teachers involved in ESL pedagogy, the ability to cope with target language community can be seen as an ultimate goal of English learning. The advantage of ESL situation is, then, that the target language community is immediately available for study, practice and test. However, those advantages that ESL contexts
provide are not available in EFL contexts. The recognition of EFL contexts different from ESL contexts, therefore, should draw a considerably different approach to English teaching and learning. Although different classroom situation should draw its own distinctive features concerning language teaching, it is apparently true that we have neglected developing English teaching methodologies for different contexts, in particular for EFL classrooms. Widdowson criticized (1998) the current English teaching approach emphasizing spoken language, and said that such an approach presupposes that the purpose of English learning is to prepare learners for engagement in social interaction with primary communities in native speaking countries. However, this approach may not be suited to many EFL countries where rare chances to communicate with target language are provided.

In sum, the distinction between ESL and EFL highlights a mismatch between proposed aims of the communicative approach and its own classroom contexts. That is the main reason that ELT practitioners need to be more cautious in implementing English teaching methodologies developed in other contexts. Related to the introduction of CLT in EFL contexts, particularly, several questions are proposed: “Is it possible to gain a native like communicative competence in EFL contexts?” “To what extent the communicative competence is aimed?” “Is it feasible to get the communicative competence in EFL contexts using CLT approach?” “If there is a mismatch between the aimed goal of language teaching and the reality of classrooms, how the gap can be filled in?” Those questions are all related to the issue of how to develop appropriate teaching methodologies for the contexts of classrooms. Then, the notion of contextual autonomy
should be a basis for the discussion to find and practice appropriate language teaching methodologies for local classroom contexts.

2.3.4 Socio-cultural Contexts and CLT

Language teaching methodologies cannot be culturally neutral since language teaching approaches are imbedded in cultural contexts surrounding classrooms, and the features of cultural contexts vary across cultures. The perspectives of EFL teachers regarding who they are, who their students are, and what appropriate teaching methodologies could be will show some aspects of contextual features of language classrooms. Therefore, it is important for EFL teachers to be aware of different contextual frameworks, both their own and those of others. Otherwise, they will use other frameworks to teach students living in a different socio-cultural framework.

Indeed, the culture of learning that students and teachers bring to the classroom is a taken-for-granted framework of expectations, attitudes, values, and beliefs about what constitute contexts of language classrooms (Coleman, 1996). One problem emerging in EFL classrooms is that when teachers and students share the same culture of learning but the teaching methodologies are based on a quite different culture of learning. For instance, when the interaction patterns and behaviors that teachers and students are congruent of cultures of learning, but the teaching methods do not match to the content of culture, there is a mismatch between cultures that teachers and students share and the teaching methods that the teachers use. The teachers will easily notice this gap because they are in a position that they observe students’ language learning process, by being
familiar with their culture of learning. It is also very difficult for them to change their teaching methodologies developed in other cultures because the teachers share the culture of learning with the students. Another clear mismatch between culture and teaching methodologies is shown when EFL teachers are native speakers of English, and using his or her own teaching methodologies to teach EFL. It will create barriers between teachers and learners because they do not teach in expected ways of the students. This situation may be improved when the teacher understands the contexts of classrooms and modifies their teaching methods to meet the students’ expectations. However, the paradox might be that the more the teacher moves toward the students’ expectations, the greater the distance he or she is from the target language culture (Hinkel, 1999).

(1) CLT and EFL Contexts

According to Kachru (1992), it is impossible to claim a pedagogical universality for the concept of communicative competence in EFL learning, given the way of functions of language, which vary from one country to another. In other words, the teaching methodologies, which might be acceptable, appropriate, and intelligible in the Center countries or ESL contexts, might not necessarily be so in EFL contexts. Ellis (1996) pointed out that different constructions of meaning or meaning system exist across cultures, and those inhibit the transferability of particular pedagogical practices between them. Consequently, teaching methodology from different cultures requires not only a change in behavior of students and teachers, but also a change in their value about language, people, and society (Holliday, 1994). Related to the implementation of CLT in
EFL classrooms, it is necessary to reframe the tasks, methodologies in keeping with EFL cultural contexts rather than trying to assimilate EFL teachers as well as EFL learners to Western values.

Furthermore, teaching practices take place between teachers and students, and then teachers need to be sensitive to existing beliefs and values. For instance, Little and Sanders (1990) examined the perceptions of a group of foreign language students toward various teaching methods, and found that unfamiliar activities like a communicative or process-oriented teaching were not highly valued by students from different contexts. They concluded that a big gap between the current level of performance and the intended learning experience results in a breakdown of language production, and frustration of the language learners.

(2) CLT in South Korea

In South Korea, the need for intercultural communication in English has become more prevalent than ever before. Thus, the need to have communication skills in English among Korean people has increased in recent years, and educational reforms focusing on increasing learners’ ability to use English have affected to the national curriculum for English education (Pae, 1995). As a result, the shortcomings of traditional approach in English education in South Korea, which has been mainly focused on grammar teaching and translation, have been criticized, and the criticism on the traditional English teaching methods has facilitated the recent changes in English education policies in South Korea.
In particular, early in 1990s, the Korean ministry of Education published a new curriculum to introduce CLT into all elementary and secondary schools with the hope that it will help to develop learners’ communicative competence in English (Kim, 1998; South Korean Ministry of Education, 1992a). The new curriculum clearly stated that CLT should replace the traditional audio-lingual method in middle schools and the grammar translation in high schools in South Korea (South Korean Ministry of Education, 1992a, 1992b). However, few studies have discussed the affects of those changes to language classrooms. Recently, Li (1998) reported difficulties in implementing CLT into English classrooms in South Korea from the interviews with English teachers of South Korea who visited to one institution in Canada to participate in an English language training program. He pointed out several reasons of why CLT has been difficult to practice in English classrooms in South Korea, and suggested the necessity to consider contextual differences of language classrooms. For instance, his study showed that teachers’ deficiency in spoken English, educational system such as large classes, grammar based examinations, and students’ resistance to class participation were major sources of difficulties in implementing CLT in English classrooms in South Korea. He claimed that the conflicts apparently exist between the goals of CLT and the EFL classroom situations, and the gaps must be resolved to get benefits from CLT. Choi’s study (1999) based on a descriptive survey study with Korean English teachers also showed a discrepancy between teachers’ beliefs of CLT and their actual teaching practice in the classrooms. According to the analysis of the survey data, the study showed that Korean English
teachers still use teacher-centered and drill-driven language teaching approaches although they support the notions of CLT and related activities to be used in their classrooms.

2.4 Critical Pedagogy in English Language Teaching

2.4.1 Critical pedagogy for EIL (English as an International Language)

In a broad area of educational theory and practice, critical pedagogy can be described as education grounded in a desire for social change (Shor, 1992, 1993; Simon 1992). According to Freire, critical pedagogy takes schools as cultural and political sites where different cultural, ideological, and social forms are in struggle. Broadly speaking, critical pedagogy aims to change both schooling and society, to the mutual benefit of both parties (Pennycook, 1994). The question related to critical pedagogy for language education appears, then, how teaching practices, which offer greater possibilities to all people in language classrooms, can be developed.

First, critical pedagogy of English language education needs to embrace an oppositional position to the central language norms. Thus, any concept that makes particular claims of language teaching approaches to be true as a universalized term needs to be reconsidered. In other words, we need to reject claims to objectivity in favor of more partial and particular versions of knowledge, truth and reason. Second, according to Freirean approach to pedagogy, critical pedagogy not only seeks to critique forms of knowledge but also to work towards the creation of new forms. Rather than ending with a criticism on certain practices in the field, it is suggested that we need to seek ways on
how to improve language education for all concerned body. Third, in order to develop critical consciousness, an approach to education should foster an authentic dialogue among people involved in education about reality. In the present study, particularly, voices from EFL teachers (Pennycook, 1994, 1997) are sought not in the sense of an individual teacher’s opinions, but refers to collective voices concerning English language teaching as a social practice. Critical practice in English language teaching must, then, start with ways of critically exploring cultures, knowledge, histories of teachers and learners in the ways that are both challenging and at the same time affirming and supportive. I believe that it is the voices need to be sought, and it will help EFL teachers speak in opposition to global discourses that limit possibilities framing their own teaching practices.

2.4.2 Language Teachers as Critical Encounters

Neither language nor pedagogy is ever neutral or apolitical. To teach critically is to acknowledge the political nature of all education, and it is not to take some political stance that stands in a neutral position. In order to pursue critical pedagogies in English language teaching, we need to reconsider the role of teachers as politically engaged critical educators. By doing so, the role of teachers, as intellectuals who find a hopeful vision of education so as of society rather than just technicians, transferring particular knowledge or skills, is found.

In the field of EIL, particularly, teachers need to see the worldliness of English that is necessarily local and specific to the context. It will enable them to see themselves
not as isolated individuals but as people engaged with a global community around English. By doing so, EFL teachers can see themselves who need to struggle around culture, language, knowledge that are being confronted by other people in different domains. This is why the critical educator needs to understand cultural politics of their educational contexts, trying to understand their contexts in which they work.

For a critical pedagogy for English education in the world to emerge, there must be much more listening between educators, much more profound sharing of pedagogical insights between teachers from different backgrounds. In fact, voices of English teachers, related to their teaching practices, in the periphery countries have been rarely spoken in the field. However, it is important to notice that they need to make their voices to question toward the mainstream teaching approaches that they have adopted. Particularly, the voices come from EFL teachers who are engaged in language teaching with EFL students and classroom contexts are necessary. By listening to their voices, we certainly can broaden our views for culturally responsive teaching methods. In other words, the voices from EFL teachers who have been marginalized in their field will help us broaden our views on pedagogical assumptions about English language education in the world.

2.4.3 Empowerment of EFL Teachers

It is impossible to separate English language education from its contexts, because language teaching is not just a matter about a language, rather it is necessarily related to how to teach. Teachers, then, should recognize that social, economic, and political forces influence their choices, and thus examine whether those forces are beneficial or harmful
to teachers and their students. By failing to acknowledge the politics involving teaching approaches, the teachers accept the role of gate keepers who believe that the pedagogical choices that they make are based on objective, scientific, rational grounds rather than on political or ideological ones. By doing so, they will inevitably promote their own disempowerment, allowing government or academic institutions to determine the pedagogies to use rather than they choose and develop. However, critical pedagogy implies that it brings to basic questions about education, social inequality and change, so teachers need to see themselves who can bring a change. It opposes to the ways that teachers are often positioned as classroom technicians employed to pass on a body of knowledge.

As language teaching is always involved in its social, cultural, and educational contexts, language teachers not only need to think about the ways of language teaching and learning, but also ways of thinking about education and inequality. As teachers they need to ask themselves of what sort of vision of society they are teaching for. Rather than teaching language following curricular, they need to have an ethical understanding of how education is related to broader social and cultural relations, thus there is a need to teach towards a different vision of curriculum and of society. By doing so, they could see English language teaching is connected to the construction of social difference and the struggle for voices.
2.4.4 Autonomy, Language teaching, and Empowerment

Indeed, the notion of autonomy is associated with a term of empowerment. The ultimate goal of empowerment for learners is “empower them to use their learning to improve the conditions under which they and those around them live and work.” (Pennycook, 1997, p.45). Similarly, language teachers need to empower themselves to practice teaching of their choice which can empower their students through language learning. Therefore, a version of autonomy in language teaching must seek a vision of possibility and alternatives, which can bring changes for language learners through language teaching. In order to acknowledge the cultural and ideological frames that limit education by positioning a deterministic pessimism, educators need to acknowledge the existing problems in practicing education, and a set of options for practical action to be used in the classrooms.

More specifically, English teachers need to critically be aware that pedagogical assumptions and methods developed by the Center countries have been influential in many periphery countries by endorsing particular types of knowledge. As a result, the unequal power relations between the Center and the periphery have promoted one-way knowledge transfer (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 1989, 1994; Tollefson, 1991). Therefore, L2 educators need to be aware of the criticism against implementation of popularized approaches and need to seek teaching methods that they perceive appropriate for their classroom contexts. Particularly, they need to realize that those who promote alternative methods along with dominant approaches are often criticized as traditionalists (Delpit, 1988) although they are in fact empowering themselves as well as students. An
exclusion of different discourse will discourage different but equally meaningful views for better teaching, and the lack of diverse dialogue could disempower teachers who will be more successful with alternative approaches.

The present study, thus, attempts to uncover how English teachers in South Korea have practiced their own teaching methodologies being different from the popularized approach, and how they have perceived their endeavors. The discussion will offer important insights in terms of applicability of methods to different contexts as well as into culturally responsive language education from the perspectives of EFL teachers. In sum, the study will provide a reason to have different ways of language teaching by suggesting that popularized approach to language teaching should not undermine voices from the margin. Eventually the uncritical adoption of dominant teaching method will be unintentionally harmful for some people involved in L2 teaching and learning because it interferes with developing language education for those who involved in language teaching in different language classrooms all over the world.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter describes the research methods used for the present study. More specifically, this chapter has descriptions about the research design combining a quantitative and a qualitative method, the subject selection from English teachers in middle schools in Seoul, Korea, the procedures for data collection using survey questionnaires and interviews, the instruments being used, and the data analysis showing how the data from the surveys and interviews is treated for this study.

3.1 Research Design

The present study employs a multidimensional approach for data collection combining a qualitative and a quantitative research design: interview and survey to investigate how English teachers in South Korea reflect on the English teaching methodologies that they are currently using. Rather than using one method, the present study attempts to show an optimal combination of two different research methods to address the research questions in a complementary way (Danzen & Lincoln, 1994).
### 3.1.1 Research Design

The present study uses two different research methods: survey (quantitative research) and interviews (qualitative research) to collect data. In general, quantitative research methods appeal to objectivity of findings using objective measurements and numerical data analysis to explain social phenomena investigated (Ary et al, 1979). Beginning with hypotheses that will be supported or not supported by the data, quantitative approach is principally concerned with the discovery of social facts devoid of subjective perceptions or intentions of the researcher, separated from particular social or historical contexts (Ary, et al 1979, p. 476).

Different from the quantitative research method, qualitative research concerns any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification, to search for a complete understanding of a social phenomenon through researcher's total immersion in the situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, qualitative research is intensely personal kind of research that admits “the subjective perception and biases of both participants and researchers into the research frame” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p.95).

The quantitative approach provides benefits for generalizability of findings, thus results of research are valid not just for the local situation but also for all similar situations. To do so, the quantitative approach applies well-established methods and statistical techniques to the data, and comes up with conclusions that are presumed to be valid beyond the immediate settings of the studies. Yet, in the qualitative approach, generalizability is not always a primary focus. In general, the qualitative research is non-
interventionist, thus it has naturally occurring groups rather than artificially designed or randomly selected groups representing some wider population. In particular, qualitative research is based on a concept that human behaviors are always bound to a particular historical, social, and cultural contexts, thus, generalization of human behaviors or phenomena are meaningless. The ultimate goal of this kind of inquiry is to portray the complex patterns of what is being studied in sufficient depth and detail. Therefore, qualitative data would typically be considered subjective focusing on a record of opinions and perceptions, rather than facts. To gather data, qualitative studies usually rely on fieldwork methods, such as interview, non-structural observation, and document analysis as a principle means of collecting data.

It has been suggested that at least more than one perspective for data collection are necessary if an accurate picture of a particular phenomenon on L2 classrooms is to be obtained (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). The value of multiple perspectives combining more than one research method in data collection and analysis for L2 classrooms is that it provides richer descriptions explaining and interpreting what happens in L2 learning by having advantages from two different research methods. In other words, it will be more appropriate to have a research design combining qualitative and quantitative approach in a complemented way by quantifying what can be usefully quantified, and utilizing qualitative data collection and analysis procedures wherever they are appropriate.

In fact, both quantitative and qualitative method have a role play in enhancing our understanding of L2 classrooms by utilizing strengths and limitations of both approaches in a complementary way. Based on the benefits that multiple data sources can bring, the
present study attempted to show an optimal combination of two research designs to address research questions, rather than simply choosing either qualitative or quantitative approach.

3.1.2 Survey

The present study used a questionnaire that was delivered by mail or in person to individual teachers in the sample, with a request that it should be completed and returned by a given date. Survey is a research method of collecting data directly from a group of individuals, called respondents, about their feelings, motivations, plans, beliefs, and personal, educational, financial backgrounds (Miller, 1998). The survey usually takes a form of questionnaire that someone fills out alone or with assistance, or it can be conducted using an interview or telephone. In general, survey has been used to make policy or plan, evaluate programs, and conduct research when the information should come directly from people (Fink, 1995), and it is typically involved in making generalizations about populations, except for a census, so sampling is involved.

A questionnaire has a series of questions or statements to which subjects individually respond. A questionnaire can gather many discrete pieces of information about individual attributes such as attitudes, values, habits, and background characteristics including age, education, and income (Henderson, 1998). One of many advantages which survey can provide is that it is possible to include a large number of subjects as well as subjects in more diverse locations. Particularly, a mailed survey has an advantage of confidentiality or anonymity, so it is possible to get more truthful responses.
Disadvantages in using a questionnaire are, sometimes, it demands time and money for data collection. Also, the researcher needs to deal with external validity threats, which interfere with generalization of findings to population due to errors like sampling error, non-response error, and selection error. Further, its approach is usually more extensive than intensive, thus it sometimes does not penetrate very deeply below the surface of research questions.

3.1.3 Interview

Followed by the survey, the current study used interviews with 17 English teachers among who completed the survey questionnaire to explore the research questions in a greater depth related to their views about English language teaching methodologies that they are using. The interviews were conducted based on a school unit. Approximately 3 or 4 English teachers in each school, who wanted to participate in interviews, became the interview participants.

The strength of using an interview is that it provides a great deal of information gathered directly from the respondents. Further, using an interview is much more flexible and open in form than survey, because the respondents are free to answer in their own words and can answer either briefly or at length during the interviews. For the present study, the researcher recorded interviews by taking notes and using audiotapes, and then transcribed the interview log verbatim for data analysis. Pseudonyms of those teachers were used for data presentation. Particularly, the researcher used focused group interviews by having 3 or 4 English teachers from each school for interviews. The intent
of having a focus group interview is to promote self-disclosure among participants about their perceptions, thoughts, and opinions about research questions being asked. Further, the group process encourages dialogues and exchange of ideas, which may not be available in one-on-one interviews.

In general, interview, as one of qualitative research methods, seeks to understand human and social behaviors from the insider’s perspectives (Seidman, 1991). In fact, qualitative inquiry is a generic term for a variety of approaches in educational research and evaluation, which is variously labeled as ethnography, interview, case studies, fieldwork, and participant observation (Ary, et al, 1979). Interviewing is typically non-interventionist and non-controlling since the goal of having interviews is to understand what happens in the individual situation, which is a potentially unique social context. Generalization of findings is, thus, not a primary concern for interview. According to van Lier (1988), generalizability is not a major goal in naturalistic inquiry, because ‘the first concern is to analyze the data as they are, rather than to compare them to other data to see how similar they are’. To understand what happened in L2 classrooms, the qualitative inquirer deals with data in the form of words, rather than numbers and statistics, so it avoids use of mechanical instrument and highly structured observational protocol. Instead, a naturalistic approach is assumed that understanding gained by an in-depth study of a real-life classroom may illustrate issues of people dealing with opinions and interpretations.
3.2 Subject Selection

The target population for the present study is middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. There are 355 middle schools in Seoul, South Korea (1996). Considering factors, such as convenience of data collection and inaccessibility to know the total number of English teachers in middle schools located in Seoul, the data collection was based on a school unit rather than individual teachers.

3.2.1 Survey Sample

The target population for the present study was middle school English teachers, including public and private schools, in Seoul, South Korea. Since the average of number of English teachers in each middle school was assumed to be around 6, the number of English teachers in the target population was approximately 2130 (355 x 6 = 2130).

To calculate an appropriate sample size from the population, several elements are considered, such as the degree of accuracy, the estimation of population values, the willingness to take a risk of making an error to generalize from the sample statistics to the population parameter, the margin of error (estimating how far sample results are likely to deviate from the population values for a given sample size). (Ary, et al, 1979).

To calculate an appropriate sample size, Cochran’s formula (1977, pp. 72-88) for estimating an appropriate sample size: \( n_0 = \frac{t^2pq}{d^2} \) is used.
\* \( t \) = willing to take a risk that actual margin of error can exceed the acceptable margin of error

\* \( p \) = estimated portion of elements in the population in the category of interest

\* \( q \) = \( 1 - p \)

\* \( d \) = degree of precision (acceptable margin of error for the proportion being estimated)

If \( \frac{n_0}{N} > .05 \), use finite population correction to adjust estimated sample size

\[ n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0}{N}} \]

The researcher set criteria for the formula as follows,

\* \( d \) = acceptable margin of error (degree of freedom) is \( \pm 10 \% \) for the population proportion (0.1)

\* \( t \) = chance of willing to take unlucky sample is 1 in 20 (alpha = .05). \( t \) = 1.96 (rounded =2)

\* \( p \) = estimated proportion of cases in the population in the category of interest is 50\% (.50)

\* \( q = 1 - p \) (.50)

When calculated,

\[ n_0 = \frac{t^2pq}{d^2} \]

\[ n_0 = \frac{2^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.1^2} = \frac{1}{.001} = 100 \]
Since \( \frac{100}{2130} (n_0/N) < .05 \), the researcher did not need to use the finite population correction to adjust estimated sample size. Based on the criteria set for the formula, the recommended sample size for the study was 100 at the 95% confidence level.

For the proposed study, the sampling unit was based on the school, not individual teachers since having information about an exact number of English teachers in each school is not attainable. The average number of English teachers in each school was about five to eight, and total 27 schools were randomly selected for the survey from the list of all public and private middle schools located in Seoul, South Korea. Thus, all English teachers in the 27 schools became representatives of middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea, and they were asked to respond to the survey questionnaires designed to gather perceptions regarding English teaching methods that they use. The total number of English teachers in the 27 middle schools in Seoul, South Korea was 161. Among 161 English teachers, 146 English teachers responded to the survey questionnaires (90.6% response).

To avoid errors during the sampling process, the researcher dealt with three possible sources of sampling errors. First, to avoid obtaining a non-probabilistic group of subjects from the population, an updated list of school names was used. Second, to deal with a section error, the list of schools was checked so that schools had no more than one chance to be selected. A selection error can occur when some members of a group have a greater chance of being selected than others. Third, frame errors can occur related to a discrepancy between the intended target population and the actual population from which
the sample is drawn. To control this error, an updated and accurate list of middle schools located in Seoul was obtained.

3.2.2 Interview Participants

Like a survey, the researcher needs to select purposive samples sufficient to provide maximum insights and understandings about research questions investigated based on the researcher’s decision. Therefore, the researcher determines what personnel to interview and in what settings, but the sampling is almost never random but purposive, intended to exploit competing views and fresh perspectives as fully as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 276).

For the present study, after the survey data were collected, in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 English teachers among the teachers who completed the survey questionnaires. Five middle schools were selected from the 27 schools for the focus-group interviews. The 17 interviewees in the five schools were volunteers who were willing to participate in the interviews. In general, three to four English teachers participated in each focus group interview.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Survey Instrument

The first step to develop the survey questionnaire was to compose a series of statements that cover domains of the teachers’ perceptions regarding English teaching
methods that they use. The statements covered main domains of CLT regarding learner-centered approach, group work, target language use for instruction, and authentic materials. The items were placed in a random order within classified variables. Below guidelines (Henderson, 1999) were followed in the process of developing the survey questionnaire.

* to make statements short, simple, and direct

* to elicit unambiguous answers, and avoid questions that might mislead by unstated assumptions.

* to avoid leading questions and phrase questions so that they can be understood by every respondents.

* to keep questions as brief as possible so that it requires a minimum of the respondents’ time.

The survey instrument\textsuperscript{1} consisted of two parts. The Part One consisted of eight sections covering subjects’ perceptions about English teaching methodologies, particularly, CLT and grammar teaching, and their perceived difficulties in implementing CLT and associated activities in their classrooms. To avoid neutral answers, the response of items consisted of six column from strongly agree to strongly disagree rather than five. Therefore, all eight sections in the part one used a six point Likert-type: 1 (strongly disagree); 2 (disagree); 3 (somewhat disagree); 4 (somewhat agree); 5 (agree); 6 (strongly agree).

\textsuperscript{1} The survey instrument was partly adopted from previous studies of Choi (1999) and Li (1998).
In the Part One of the survey questionnaire, section 1 consisted of 6 statements regarding the English teachers’ perceptions of CLT. Section 2 consisted of 11 statements dealing with the English teachers’ perceptions of difficulties in using CLT and the perceived reasons. Section 3 consisted of 5 statements related to the English teachers’ perceptions about group work activities. Section 4 consisted of 5 statements regarding the English teachers’ perceptions about target language (English) use in the classroom teaching. Section 5 consisted of 5 statements related to the English teachers’ perceptions about materials being used for CLT. Section 6 consisted of 5 statements asking the English teachers’ perceptions about interaction patterns between teachers and students. Section 7 consisted of 6 statements regarding the English teachers’ perceptions about grammar teaching. Section 8 consisted of 6 statements related to the English teachers’ perceptions about not focusing on grammar teaching.

Part Two contained 11 items using multiple choice or open-ended questions regarding background information (e.g., age, gender, the highest degree, years of English teaching, number of students in the classroom, etc.) of the subjects.

3.3.2 Interview Instrument

For interviews, the researcher used an open-ended format to explore opinions of the English teachers regarding the research questions in a greater depth. Particularly, interview questions aimed to solicit the research questions 3, 4, and 5. The interview questions consisted of three parts. Part one consisted of three questions asking English teachers’ experiences of using CLT and their understandings of CLT. Part two consisted
of two questions related to English teachers' opinions about grammar teaching and reasons for teaching grammar in their classrooms. Part three consisted of four questions regarding factors that facilitate or interfere English teachers in practicing English teaching methods of their choice.

Compared to the survey questionnaire, which was written in English, the interviews were conducted in Korean, the native language of the subjects, to provide environments that they could express themselves freely. The interview data were also translated into English later for the analysis.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

3.4.1 Mailing Procedures and Non-response Error for Survey

In order to increase the percentage of returns in mailed survey questionnaires, follow-up mailings were planned. As a first step, phone calls to inform forthcoming questionnaire were be given to English teachers of the 27 selected schools. Then, a questionnaire packet, including a cover letter signed, questionnaire, pre-addressed and stamped return envelope was mailed. An incentive was used to increase a response rate. The incentive creates a feeling of obligation on the part of the recipients and a need to reciprocate (Dillman, 1978). If the questionnaire had not been returned in a week or 10 days after the initial mailing, a postcard was sent to the respondents. The postcard served as a polite reminder that a questionnaire was sent earlier and that the response was very important for the study. The second questionnaire packet having a letter, another copy of
the questionnaire, and an addressed return envelope, was sent about two weeks after the original mailing. Then, the third follow up using phone calls was given in a couple of days later after the second mailing.

When using mailed questionnaires, the researcher needs to deal with missing returns, which is called non-response errors. It is easy for the individual, who receives a questionnaire, to forget to complete and return it, but for the researcher the non-response rate limits the generalizability of the results. The non-response errors can be dealt statistically. For the present study, comparing respondents' data to a randomly selected sample of non-respondents (perhaps 10 percent of the non-respondents), which is called a double-dipped sample (Miller, 1998; Ary et al. 1979), was used. After the third follow up phone calls, the researcher received the survey questionnaires completed by the 146 participants. The total number of non-respondents was, 15, so three subjects (20% of the non-respondents) were selected randomly from the fifteen non-respondents for the non-response error analysis. The researcher contacted with the three subjects individually, and received their completed survey responses. The statistical analysis for non-response error was presented in the following section of data analysis.

3.4.2 Measurement Errors in Survey

For the study, the researcher dealt with two kinds of error in the instrument design: validity and reliability of instruments.
(1) **Validity:** it concerns whether the instrument is really measuring what it is supposed to measure. The error occurs when the quality of an instrument is so poor that performance on the instrument does not represent what the instrument is intended to measure.

*Content validity* is the degree to which an instrument measures an intended content area. To check content validity of the instrument to be used for the present study, a panel of experts, who had knowledge of the study as well as instrument design, examined a draft of questionnaire and gave their opinions whether the instrument would obtain the desired data and whether they saw any problems that may have been overlooked. Based on the feedback from the panel of experts, the instrument was revised.

*Face validity* is concerned of the degree to which an instrument looks appropriate for an intended audience, and it is determined by a field test group (5-7) who represents as closely as possible the target population. For the present study, a field test was administered with 5 graduate students at the Ohio State University who had experiences of English teaching in South Korea. They were asked to comment on clarity, wording, thoughtfulness, ease of use, and appropriateness of the instrument. The main purpose of having a field test was to check the instrument in order to identify ambiguities, misunderstandings, or other inadequacies. Based on their feedback regarding any difficulties they had with the items, the researcher clarified the items or eliminated some.

(2) **Reliability:** After the validity check was completed, a pilot study was administered to a group similar to the target population before the actual data collection began to test reliability of the instrument. In general, reliability problems occur when the quality of an instrument is so poor (e.g., vague instructions, open to interpretations, interviewer errors,
etc.) that performance on the instrument can be affected by outside influences. Absence of this error is the extent to which an instrument is consistent in measuring whatever it measures.

For the present study, the pilot test was administered with 15 English teachers in middle schools in Seoul, South Korea before the actual data collection began. The sample teachers for the pilot study were randomly selected, but those were excluded from the actual sample selection for the study to avoid a duplication of sample teachers. The population for pilot test was a representative sample of the target population, and the pilot population was different from the field test population and neither group was used in the actual study. Although the subjects in the pilot test were not the actual sample for the present study, both samples in the pilot study and actual study had similar characteristics as English teachers in middle schools in Seoul, South Korea.

To assess the reliability of instrument statistically, Cronbach’s Alpha was used to test an internal consistency of the domain of the instrument, since items were summated and added together to represent each variable by using Likert scale. The Cronbach’s alpha of each section in Part One of the pilot study was:

* Section 1: Teachers’ perceptions about CLT = .63
* Section 2: Teachers’ perceptions about difficulty in using CLT = .64
* Section 3: Teachers’ perceptions about group work activities = .86
* Section 4: Teachers’ perceptions about target language use = .58
* Section 5: Teachers’ perceptions about materials = .69
* Section 6: Teachers’ perceptions about interaction pattern between teachers and students = .57

* Section 7: Teachers’ perceptions about grammar teaching = .67

* Section 8: Teachers’ perceptions about not focusing on grammar teaching = .64

If the Cronbach’s alpha is more than .5, the instrument is determined to be reliable (Nunnally, 1967). The items in Part Two, which consist of demographic questions, cannot be summated to constitute one variable, so assessing reliability for the Part Two was not possible. After the validity and reliability check were finished, the final version of survey instrument for the present study was determined.

3.4.3 Data Collection Procedure for Interviews

Respondents were interviewed regarding their perceptions of English teaching methodologies and ways to practice contextually appropriate English teaching. These semi-structured interviews employed a discourse-based conversation that covered philosophy of English teaching, teaching methods, and teaching practice of the interviewees. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts of the interviews were given later to the participants for verification and at that time, further questions were posed in order to clarify issues discussed in the interviews or to elaborate on main points.
3.4.4 Measurement Errors in Interviews

A qualitative design has different views toward questions of validity, reliability, and generalizability from a quantitative design. To discuss the true value of findings from the large volume of data sources generated from interviews, observations, or the collection of documents, a qualitative design employs concepts of trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, and conformability instead of validity, reliability, and generalizability in quantitative approaches (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

(1) Credibility: There are a variety of procedures to check the credibility of data being gathered and to confirm developing insights. For the present study, to establish the probability for credible findings and interpretations to be made, triangulation of data collection methods, peer debriefing, and member check were used. For a peer debriefing, a researcher’s colleague was asked to probe the researcher’s biases, explore meanings, and clarify interpretations without exposing to the intention of the study. For the member check, the researcher submitted her interpretations to original participants for their validations to avoid researcher’s bias in the process of data interpretations and conclusions made.

(2) Transferability is linked to generalizing results, but not intended to represent all members of a certain population like a quantitative research design aims at, but the data is wide enough in scope and detailed enough in depth to be considered valuable information to other researchers by having rich descriptions of data collection process and salient features of the contexts. To establish transferability of findings, the researcher provided a
detailed data base (thick description) of data collection process so transfer could possible by any readers.

(3) Dependability: the concept is roughly equivalent to the reliability in the conventional research design. In general, it is believed that there can be no validity without reliability, so a demonstration of credibility is sufficient to establish dependability. In particular, the concept focuses on assuring the data interpretations and conclusions made, which are grounded in context and participants apart from the researcher by attempting to increase objectivity. More specifically, the dependability can be established by “overlapping” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 317) of data sources, like having multiple data sources combining quantitative and qualitative measures (triangulation), which is also used for credibility concern. For this study, triangulation of data sources was used to establish dependability.

(4) Confirmability: if dependability examines the process of inquiry, confirmability attests the product- the data, findings, interpretations, and examines that it is supported by data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For the present study, audit trail was used, which can be used to determine dependability and confirmability simultaneously. The Audit trail involves in documentation and review of how the study was conducted, including what was done, when, and why to establish those criteria. It constrains the raw data gathered in interviews, records of the inquirer’s decisions about whom to interview or what to observe and why. Using the audit trail as a guide, the third party auditor examines the
inquirer’s study in order to attest the dependability of procedures employed and to examine whether findings are confirmable (whether logically derived from and grounded in the data that were collected) for raw data reconstruction and analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data from the surveys and interviews were analyzed together using a constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), thus findings were discussed within the recurrent themes and salient comments from the completed survey and the interview transcripts. Therefore, themes were emerged from multiple data sources, surveys and interviews, and those were identified, compared, and developed into the analysis. For the discussions for the themes (categories) to be made, direct quotes were given from the interview transcripts. The translation of interview data was literal rather than subject to the researcher’s interpretations, and the goal of translation was to faithfully produce the voices of Korean English teachers.

3.5.1 Survey

Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation and range) were used for data analysis using SPSS 10.0 Version for Windows. Those responses were numerically coded and interpreted based on the mean scores of each items, and it was compared with interview data for further discussions.
3.5.1.1 Part One

The Likert type responses in the Part One were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, range and rank order. In the Part One, the total eight sections represented eight domains regarding Korean English teachers’ perceptions in using CLT and related activities, and all statements under each domain were summated. Negative statements in each section were reversed for summation when entering data. The central tendency (mean), variability (SD and range), and rank order of mean scores were presented for data analysis. The higher summated scores indicated more positive perceptions of English teachers about each domain being asked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One of the Survey (Eight Domains)</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1: perceptions of CLT</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2: perceptions of difficulty in using CLT</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3: perceptions about group work</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4: perceptions about target language use</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5: perceptions about materials</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6: perceptions about interaction pattern</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7: perceptions about grammar teaching</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8: perceptions about not focusing grammar teaching</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, range, rank order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Descriptive statistics used for data analysis for the part one of the survey
3.5.1.2 Part Two

In the Part two, the demographic data were not summated, but discussed in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and range based on the scale of measurement of each domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part Two of the Survey (Backgrounds of the Participants)</th>
<th>Scale of the measurement</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The highest degree earned</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>frequency, percentage, median, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of English teaching</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School type</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ grade level</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student numbers in a classroom</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching hours per week</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of speaking to native speakers of English</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage, median, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of travel experiences to English speaking countries</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>mean, standard deviation, range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching methods being used</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and scales of measurement for demographic data in the survey

3.5.1.3 Non-response Error Control

The researcher compared statistically the mean responses of the non-respondents to those of the respondents to see whether the two groups differ significantly. T-test
statistics were used to see differences between the two groups (respondent group and non-respondent group) regarding English teachers' perceptions of CLT and associated activities. For the test, .05 significance level was established. If no significant differences are found between the responses of the two groups, the researcher can assume that the respondent group represents an unbiased estimate of the sample (Miller, 1998; Ary et al, 1979).

For the present study, T-test about difference between population means of the two samples (respondent and non-respondent group) was used. The decision rule was if the probability associated with the calculated value of the test statistic (p-value) is greater than alpha (.05), H0: mean 1 (respondent group) = mean 2 (non-respondent group) is accepted. Then, the generalizations are made to the total sample and to the population.

Further, assumptions were made for the t-test for two independent groups. If the independent groups are random samples, normally distributed in the populations, and two sample sizes are equal (n1=n2), the researcher needs to use pooled variance estimate (equal variance). If the sample sizes are not equal and larger variance is paired with the larger sample, the researcher also uses pooled variance. However, if the sample sizes are not equal, larger variance is paired with the smaller sample, the researcher needs to use separate variance estimate (unequal variance, Hopkins & Glass, p. 159-207). In the present study, unequal variance estimate was used for 3 domains regarding perceptions about difficulty (Table 3), interaction patterns (Table 8), and not using grammar (Table 10).
The p-values of t-test for eight domains showed no statistical significance of two means between respondent group and non-respondent group under each domain at the alpha level of .05. Since no difference between the two groups was found, no adjustment was made, and the data of non-response group was collapsed as a representative of the sample for the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>22.86</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pooled variance estimate</th>
<th>Separate variance estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.456</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about CLT.
### Table 4.
T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers' perceptions about difficulty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>19.71</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19.33</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.
T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about group work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>19.95</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.33</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>-.846</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>.399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. T-test of mean score of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about L2 use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>17.23</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.67</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td>-.725</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>-.973</td>
<td>2.154</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>21.18</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about interaction patterns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>22.29</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23.67</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about grammar teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Group</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>19.52</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondent group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>2.712</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>2.158</td>
<td>2.052</td>
<td>.160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10. T-test of the mean scores of respondent group and non-respondent control group regarding English teachers’ perceptions about not grammar teaching.

3.5.2 Interview

To broaden the base of information on Korean English teachers’ perceptions of English teaching methods that they use, open-ended interviews were conducted to gather their perceptions of language teaching, teaching methods, and ways to improve their English teaching methods. Through the interviews, the researcher reflected on the meaning of what she heard from the participants, and reconstructed the data through the processes of coding and categorization. The translation of interview data was based on words for words rather than interpretation to get their own voices directly (refer to the Interview Transcripts in the Appendices).
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings from statistical analyses of the data collected from the survey questionnaires, and reflections of interviews through the process of coding and categorization. For the survey data analysis, descriptive statistics were used. For interview data analysis, salient issues and recurrent themes were discussed based on the interview transcripts.

4.1 Demographic Information of Participants

This section describes the demographic characteristics of the sample of 146 English teachers in Seoul, South Korea who responded to the survey questionnaires, and 19 teachers who participated in the interviews.

4.1.1 Survey Participants

Among the 146 middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea, who participated in the survey questionnaires of the study, the majority was female teachers.
(85%) compared to male teachers (15%). The average age was 37 years with a range from 23 to 60 years old. Their range in English teaching experience varied from 1 to 36 years with an average of 12 years. Eighty percent (80%) of the teachers had a Bachelor’s degree while 17% had a Master’s degree. Only 2 teachers had Ph.D degree (1.5%). Among the teachers, the majority was public school teachers (84%) compared to private school English teachers (15%). The grade levels of students that the English teachers were teaching were shown even distributions among 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year (27%, 27%, and 28%). Only 17% of the teachers were teaching two grade levels together: 1st and 2nd (10%), 1st and 3rd (4%), 2nd and 3rd (3%).

The average number of students per class that the teachers were teaching was around 40 with a range of 30 to 52. The average hours of English teaching was 19 per week with a range from 4 to 26 hours. Regarding the frequency of speaking to native speakers of English, the majority of the teachers (36%) had chances to speak to native speakers a few times per year. Twenty two percent (22%) of the English teachers responded that they had rare chance to speak to native speakers, compared to 14% of the teachers who answered that they had no chance to speak to native speakers of English.

The average months of travel to English speaking countries among the participants was 4 months. Only 4 English teachers (2%) had lived in English speaking counties more than 30 months. Eighty eight percent (88%) of the teachers had less than 4 months of travel experiences to English speaking countries, and 50% of the teachers said that they did not have any travel experience to English speaking countries. Forty four percent of the English teachers responded that they were using all three teaching methods in their

90
classrooms. Thirty five percent (35%) of the teachers responded that they were using grammar teaching in the classrooms while only 5% of the teachers answered that they were using mainly CLT in the classrooms.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>37.28</td>
<td>8.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of English Teaching</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>7.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students Per Classroom</td>
<td>40.27</td>
<td>6.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of English Teaching Per Week</td>
<td>19.37</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months of Travel to English Speaking Countries</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>15.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA (1)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>80.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA (2)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph. D (3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Levels of Teaching</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; and 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; and 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; and 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Year</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Speaking to Native Speakers of English</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 Per Week</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 Per Month</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Few Per Year</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Methods Being Used</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar Translation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-Lingual</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Audio-Lingual</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and CLT</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-Lingual and CLT</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Backgrounds of the survey participants
4.1.2 Interview Participants

Among the 17 middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea, who participated in the interviews, the majority was female teachers (14 female and 3 male teachers), and they ranged from 32 to 47 in age. Most were public school teachers (14 public school teachers and 3 private school teachers). They showed a broad range in years of English teaching experiences (2 to 26 years) and grade levels of students that they were teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Teacher (Pseudonym, code)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years of Teaching</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Grade Levels of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kye-young (A)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyung-mi (B)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin-hwa (C)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jung-ku (D)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hwa-won (E)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yung-woo (F)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yon-mi (G)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyong-ja (H)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyung-bok (I)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hye-jin (J)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yung-a (K)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eun-jin (L)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jung-hwa (M)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wan-su (N)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyong-ek (O)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An-sook (P)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tae-jo (Q)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Backgrounds of the interview participants
4.2 Research Question 1:

“What are Korean English teachers’ perceptions about CLT?”

4.2.1 CLT related matters from the survey

Teachers were asked to rate their levels of agreement to each statement under eight domains using 6-point Likert type from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (somewhat agree), 5 (agree) to 6 (strongly agree). Each table shows the levels of agreement of Korean English teachers regarding each statement, using mean score, standard deviation, and rank. The higher mean scores indicate more positive opinions on the statement asked.

4.2.1.1 General perceptions about CLT

Overall, Korean English teachers had positive opinions about using CLT. They agreed with the use of CLT in their classroom teaching (mean score of 4.73 with SD of 1.09). Teachers also agreed with the statement that “it is important to teach four language skills equally” with a mean score of 4.70 and SD of 1.35. But, they slightly disagreed with the statements regarding their actual practice using CLT in the classrooms. For instance, teachers disagreed with the statement “I am competent in using CLT in my classrooms” with a mean score of 3.49 and SD of .96. For the statement “I am teaching four language skills equally in my classrooms” they disagreed with a mean score of 3.25 and SD of 1.13. They showed more disagreement about the statement “I have had enough chances to learn how to learn CLT” with a mean score of 2.82 and SD 1.13.
Based on what Korean English teachers responded to the section, it is concluded that although they were positive about using CLT in their classrooms, their actual use of CLT in the classrooms was less positive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English teachers’ perceptions about CLT</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I want to use CLT as much as possible in my classroom teaching</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Using CLT benefits most students in my classrooms.</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It is important to teach four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing equally.</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am teaching four language skills equally in my classrooms.</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am competent in using CLT in my classrooms.</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have had enough chances to learn how to use CLT.</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3338</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about CLT

4.2.1.2 Perceptions about difficulties in using CLT

Teachers agreed with the statement “It is difficult to implement CLT in my classroom teaching” with a mean score of 4.18 and SD of 1.13. Regarding the reasons for difficulties, they agreed with all statements with slightly different levels. The most significant problem in using CLT that they rated was “large class size” (mean score of 5.40 and SD of .98). The least significant reason of the difficulties was “teachers’ lack of cultural knowledge of English speaking countries” (mean core of 3.66 and SD of 1.23). Other factors such as “lack of time to learn and develop teaching methods” (mean of
"few chances to be trained to develop teaching skills" (mean of 4.60) were also regarded as significant reasons for difficulties in using CLT (see the Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons of Difficulty in Using CLT</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is difficult to implement CLT in my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Teachers’ deficiency in spoken English</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Teachers’ lack of cultural knowledge of English speaking countries</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Students’ passive styles of learning</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Students’ lack of motivation to develop communicative competence</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 lack of suitable materials</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 large class size</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 grammar-based evaluation</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 few chances to be trained to develop teaching skills</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Lack of time to learn and develop teaching methods</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6404</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.39</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about difficulty in using CLT in their classrooms.

### 4.2.1.2 Perceptions about group work activities

In general, the teachers agreed with using group work: Teachers need to use a lot of communicative activities for classroom teaching (mean of 4.78); it is important to use group work activities to improve students’ communicative skills (mean of 4.57). However, they slightly disagreed with the statement “I use a lot of group work to provide effective language learning opportunities to students” (mean of 3.45). In addition, they slightly agreed with a statement related to difficulties in their actual use of group work: “Group work is not easy to use since it is difficult to monitor students’ performance
(mean of 3.37 reversed). In general, the English teachers agreed with the use of group work activities in the classrooms, but they slightly disagreed with statements related to their actual use of group work in the classrooms (see the Table 15).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions about Group work Activities</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important to use group work activities to improve students’ communicative skills.</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teachers’ need to use a lot of communicative activities, such as information gap, problem solving tasks, for classroom teaching.</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I use a lot of group work activities to provide effective language learning opportunities to students.</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Group work activities take too language to organize and waste a lot of valuable teaching time.</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Group work is not easy to use since it is very difficult for teachers to monitor students’ performance.</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2878</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* negative item 4 and 5 were reversed for summation

Table 15: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perception about group work.

4.2.1.3 Perceptions about target language (English) use

Teachers agreed with using English for their classroom teaching: it is important for English teachers to speak English for English teaching (mean of 4.95). With a similar degree, they also agreed with students’ use of English in the classrooms: students need to speak English in classrooms (means of 4.80). They showed a lesser agreement in their actual use of English for classroom teaching: I speak English a lot in my classroom teaching (mean of 3.60). However, they slightly agreed with the use of Korean language
for both teachers and students in the English classrooms: To use Korean in English classrooms provides effective instructions to students (mean of 3.08 reversed); it is not effective to prevent students’ use of their first language in English classrooms (mean of 3.51 reversed). In sum, the English teachers somewhat agreed with the use of target language (English) in the classrooms. But, at the same time they do not disagree with the use of first language for classroom teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions about Target Language (English) Use</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important for English teachers to speak English for English teaching.</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I speak English a lot in my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To use Korean (first language) in English classrooms provide effective instructions to students.</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students need to speak English in classrooms.</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is not effective to prevent students’ use of their first language (Korean) in English classrooms.</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2912</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* negative items 3 and 5 were reversed for summation.

Table 16: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about English use for English teaching.

4.2.1.4 Perceptions about materials for CLT

English teachers somewhat agreed with the use of authentic materials for English teaching: it is important to use authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, movies, and books for English teaching (mean of 4.69). But for their actual use of materials for classroom teaching, they showed a slight disagreement: I use a lot of audio, visual aids to teach English in my classrooms (mean score of 3.47). They strongly agreed
with the statements related to difficulty in using appropriate materials: it is not easy to use authentic materials in classrooms due to lack of time to prepare (mean of 2.82 reversed); it is difficult to find appropriate teaching materials for CLT (mean of 2.85 reversed). However, they showed lesser agreement to the statement: it is difficult to use authentic materials due to lack of knowledge about the target language culture (mean score of 3.39 reversed). In sum, the teachers agreed with the use of authentic materials for English teaching, but they had difficulties in finding and using those materials for actual classroom teaching (see the Table 16).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English teachers' Perceptions About Materials</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important to use authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, movies, books for English teaching.</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is not easy to use authentic materials in classrooms due to lack of time to prepare.</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I use a lot of audio, visual aids to teach English in my classrooms.</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It is difficult to find appropriate teaching materials to teach CLT.</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is difficult to use authentic materials due to lack of knowledge about the target language culture.</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2512</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.44</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* negative items 2, 4, 5 were revered for summation.

Table 17: Sum, mean, SD, and rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about materials for CLT.

4.2.1.5 Perceptions about interaction patterns between teachers and students

Teachers thought that they needed to be flexible in teaching styles: teachers need to be flexible in using different teaching styles (mean of 5.09). However, at the same
time, they agreed to the statements related to learner-centered approach: learner-centered approach is more beneficial than teacher-centered approach in my classroom teaching (mean of 4.47); the teacher as an authority is no longer adequate to describe teachers' role in language classrooms (mean of 3.74); using learner-centered approach in the classroom is not meaningful since students are not used to such an approach (mean of 4.06 reversed); teacher-centered approach can provide benefits to students' language learning (mean of 3.82 reversed). In sum, teachers were in favor of learner-centered approach than teacher-centered approach, but they showed a stronger agreement with flexible teaching styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions about Interaction Patterns Between Teacher and Students</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Learner-centered approach is more beneficial than teacher-centered approach in my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The teacher as an authority is no longer adequate to describe teachers' role in language classrooms.</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Using learner-centered approach in the classroom is not meaningful since students are not used to such an approach.</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teacher-centered approach can provide benefits to students' language learning.</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teachers need to be flexible in using different teaching styles based on classroom activities, tasks, goals, and learners.</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3092</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* negative items 3, 4 were reversed for summation.

Table 18: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about interaction patterns between teachers and students.
4.2.2 CLT related matters from interviews

In this section, data from interviews are discussed. The salient issues conveyed from interviews regarding their understanding and using of CLT are outlined as below.

1) Lack of clear understanding of CLT

First of all, teachers gave few complete descriptions of CLT.

“I do not know about a lot about CLT. I think that many English teachers have little knowledge about what CLT means. Well… I guess that CLT is to teach practical English and to learn English in reality. Therefore, the focus is in building an ability to communicate with foreigners.” (Kyung-mi, June 21)

The interviews showed that the teachers understood CLT broadly as well as various terms related to their teaching practice, but never solidly established. The most common term that teachers defined of CLT was that it is a communication focused language teaching, which is different from their previous language teaching practice emphasizing grammar or reading skills.

“I think that CLT is a situation based English teaching, so it focuses on expressions of how to communicate or convey meanings using English. Students need to be creative for their own ideas, thus it asks students to be different from previous English learning experiences like repetitions, pattern drills or content focused learning.” (Hye-jin, June 14)

Most English teachers had positive opinions about using CLT in their classrooms in spite of their unclear understanding of CLT. The main reason that they had positive
opinions of CLT were from the reflection of previous English language teaching, which did not help students gain communication skills as well as the need to use English in practice to prepare students in the global world.

“I think that to have an ability to speak English fits to the current changes for using English as an international language in the world. It is an international movement as well as a call for the 21st century. However, the current educational situation in South Korea does not support us to practice CLT.” (Yung-a, June 13)

Although the teachers showed positive opinions about CLT and its introduction to the classrooms, they, at the same time, expressed difficulties in using CLT, thus doubted its feasibility of successful implementation of CLT into the classrooms.

“I am very positive about what CLT says and its application. However, in practice, to apply the original ideas of CLT, although those sound good, is really hard in my classrooms. I do not think that I use CLT a lot in my classrooms although I am very positive about CLT.” (Yung-a, June 13)

2) Difficulties in using CLT

Most English teachers explained a lot of difficulties in implementing CLT into their classrooms. Among many, four main reasons of difficulties in using CLT were identified from the interviews: (1) educational environments, (2) teaching materials, (3) teachers, and (4) students.

First, the teachers faced with many difficulties in using CLT in the educational environments of South Korea, such as large class size, evaluation system, teaching hours,
and lack of support for teacher trainings. The teachers using CLT in the classrooms mentioned that to use CLT with a large group of students was difficult because it was hard to control students and took more class time to finish the lesson planned. Another important issue was how to test the outcomes of CLT learning. The ultimate responsibility of Korean English teachers is to prepare students for examinations, but the current discrete-point exams are reading-based, which are not effective to test the communicative skills of students. Further, for the learners who do not have much access to authentic communicative situations, to apply CLT focused tests is hard.

“Although CLT sounds good, it does not mean that it is working well in my classrooms thinking of class size and evaluation system. I think that the class size is a big problem. It is very hard to control students for group activities. We also need to teach students to prepare examinations, but the examinations are not communication focused. It still mainly focuses on reading. Currently, most English tests have 80% of reading and 20% of listening with no speaking and writing tests… We cannot teach CLT as much as the curriculum directs due to the expectations of parents and students about text results.” (Hwa-won, June 20)

“We always need to teach students to prepare exams. But, the current exams do not meet to what CLT intends. Most exams focus on reading not speaking.” (Kyung-mi, June 21)

Further, teachers expressed a great deal of difficulty in preparing new teaching materials for CLT, mainly due to the lack of administrative support. Frequently mentioned reasons among interviewees were heavy teaching hours and lack of in-service teacher training. The lack of time to develop communicative materials has been constraints for them to apply CLT. They needed enough time to design and prepare
materials for the new teaching approach, but they were overloaded on their work. They also mentioned that they needed professional help from experts in the area of language teaching methods.

“We lack of time to develop and study teaching methods due to heavy teaching hours. Most of us teach English classes 20 hours per week, and we do not have time to prepare new teaching methods.” (Kye-young, June 21)

Teachers pointed out a significance of frequent in-service teacher training to understand new curriculum introducing CLT. Due to a lack of opportunities to retrain themselves even after the new curriculum was announced, their understanding of CLT was limited, thus hardly motivated them to apply it to the classrooms.

“In the current educational settings, we lack supports from schools and government. For instance, we have not had enough in-service teacher trainings for new English curriculum. At current, to have an in-service teacher training in English speaking countries, teachers should have more than 15 years of teaching experiences. But, even if we are chosen, we should provide a portion of financial supports for the training, therefore only a small number of teachers can go outside. Also, there is one 5week teacher-training program inside. We need more systematic and frequent in-service English teacher trainings.” (Kyong-ok, June 7)

Second, teachers indicated that some difficulties they encountered were from teaching materials, particularly from textbooks. They mentioned that the current textbooks were not adequate to prepare authentic as well as dynamic teaching required for communicative approaches.
"To use CLT, the amount of content that the current textbooks covers should be reduced, and we need more supporting materials." (Kyong-ja, June 14)

First of all, the teachers mentioned that the current textbooks had a lot of contents to teach, so it burdened the teachers in using various CLT activities. In practice, to use CLT activities they need sufficient supporting materials due to the lack of time to develop teaching materials.

"We have many teaching hours as well as miscellaneous jobs to do. We do not have enough time for material developments for teaching. Therefore, we are in need of good and various supporting materials that teachers can find and use easily for English teaching." (Hye-jin, June 14)

Third, teachers mentioned that some difficulties in using CLT were from teachers themselves. They said that most Korean English teachers were not ready to use CLT in practice.

"I think that the teachers are not ready for implementing CLT. For instance, due to lack of proficiency in English, we use only typical classroom English, so there are limitations in using English for classroom teaching. Although we use English in the classrooms, we do not think that we communicate well with students in many cases." (Yung-woo, June 20).

Most teachers said that although they wanted to use L2 (English) as much as possible, they felt insecure about their English proficiency. In addition, they pointed out that their difficulty in using CLT not only came from the lack of teachers’ proficiency in
English but also it was related to other factors, such as a lack of understanding of CLT and contents of textbook to teach, and those discouraged their application of CLT to their teaching.

"I think that teachers do not have clear ideas of how to apply CLT to their classroom teaching. To me, it is difficult to set appropriate situations for teaching conversations in English. Also, there are many things to teach in the textbooks... Regarding CLT, I use textbooks by reading contents and answering to questions rather than applying those to practical situations." (Yung-a, June 13)

Fourth, teachers mentioned some difficulties in implementing CLT came from students. One of the difficulties was students’ low English proficiency. Most Korean students begin English learning after they enter middle schools. Due to their limited knowledge of vocabulary and structure of English that they learn in the middle schools, most of them do not involve in effective communicative activities with teachers and other students.

"I guess that many students like group activities, but due to their different levels of English proficiency they do not feel interested in communicating in English... In many times, I need to explain same things twice using both Korean and English, so it is easy to get behind the teaching schedule... Further, many students still want to learn grammar, and they think that to learn grammar is a serious learning." (Yung-a, June 13)

The students’ passive learning style was also mentioned as another reason for the difficulties in implementing CLT.
“Passive attitude of students is a problem in using CLT. They have been used to follow directions from teachers and textbooks. They, thus, lack ideas of how to express themselves. They still want to memorize patterns from textbooks.” (Hwa-won, June 20)

Most Korean students understand teachers as authorities and providers of knowledge. They have been used to accept knowledge from teachers uncritically, and hesitate to express their own thinking if different, because their culture of learning includes the notion that one cannot really create something new until she or he masters the field. Many Korean students believe that asking questions carry a high risk of wasting time and being understood as not knowing. If students have questions that they really want to ask, they might prefer to ask those individually after the class to avoid disturbing the class. The teachers mentioned that most Korean students do not want to be known as foolish by asking questions, so to save their faces in the classroom. In contrast, CLT is based on western teaching philosophy in which teachers ask questions to students and encourage them to do so in the belief that it will help them get involved in active learning. Thus, they encourage students to volunteer comments in the class and it is understood that they are interested in the class. However, for most Korean students, it seems to be “showing off”, because they value social relationships in their classrooms and concerns for the issue of “face” for group harmony.

3) Actual classroom practice using CLT

In the interviews, the English teachers mentioned that to use CLT in the classrooms became a burden on most Korean English teachers. Although they wanted to
use CLT in the classrooms, they mentioned that to use CLT and associated activities had been difficult, so their actual use of CLT became limited to the use of audio and visual aids like cassette tapes and videotapes, in general.

"I have tried to use CLT approach through speaking English for classroom teaching and using group activities, but those are not easy. Students think that to use games is not learning. The results of exams, when I use many group work activities, were low, and students told me that they did not learn a lot from the classes... Currently, I do not use CLT a lot although I feel that I need to use it more." (Kyung-bok, June 14)

Most teachers responded that they were using more traditional teaching methods like grammar teaching and audio-lingual approaches than CLT. They thought that CLT might not be an appropriate method to use in their classroom contexts despite of the importance of using English for communication, which CLT emphasized. The teachers understood the contextual features of English classrooms in South Korea, as one of EFL classrooms, were different from ESL, thus questioned the necessity of using CLT in their classrooms.

"In my classrooms, I use audio-lingual, grammar, and group activities together. I do not focus on CLT only. It is impossible to use only CLT. I think that there is little understanding of CLT among teachers. They just teach content of the textbooks introducing CLT. There is little application beyond textbook levels." (Kyong-ok, June 7)

4.3 Research Question 2:

“What are Korean English teachers’ perceptions about grammar teaching?”

4.3.1 Grammar related matters from surveys
4.3.1.1 Perceptions about grammar teaching in English classrooms

Regarding the reasons for teaching English grammar, the teachers agreed with the statements: I need to help students prepare examinations (mean score of 4.36); correct grammar use is an essential skill in language use (mean score of 3.91); I am competent in teaching grammar (mean score of 3.82). However, they slightly disagreed with the below reasons: students want to learn grammar (mean score of 3.40); it is an effective way to teach a language in a large class size (mean score of 3.34). A slight disagreement was also found on the statement "I teach grammar a lot." with a means score of 3.46. In sum, teachers taught grammar in the classrooms, and the main reason was that they believed that it was necessary for students to learn English and prepare exams, rather than to seek a convenience for their teaching practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons that English Teachers Teach Grammar in Classrooms.</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I teach English grammar a lot in my classroom.</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Correct grammar use is an essential skill in language use.</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Students want to learn grammar.</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 I need to help students prepare examinations.</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 It is an effective way to teach a language in a large class size.</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 I am competent in teaching grammar.</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3254</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions about reasons for teaching English grammar.

4.3.1.2 Perceptions about not focusing on teaching grammar in English classrooms.

For the reasons that grammar teaching was not a primary focus of the English teaching, the teachers somewhat agreed with the statements: grammar needs to be taught
in communicative ways; not just an explanation of separate grammatical rules (mean score of 4.40); teaching grammar is asking students to memorize rules (mean score of 3.92); grammar is boring to teach (mean score of 3.74). However, teachers somewhat disagreed with the statements: to teach grammar is not necessary in helping learners’ appropriate language use (mean score of 2.72); students do not need to learn grammar to gain communicative competence (mean score of 2.51); I do not have enough knowledge of English grammar to teach (mean score of 2.23).

In sum, the teachers perceived that grammar should be taught in communicative ways rather than the traditional ways in which students were asked to memorize rules. Although the teachers taught grammar as a portion of their English teaching since grammar teaching was not a part of what CLT aimed at, they still believed that grammar teaching was necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons that Grammar Teaching is NOT a Primary Focus in My Teaching.</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Grammar needs to be taught in communicative ways; not just an explanation of separate grammatical rules.</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 To teach grammar is not necessary in helping learners’ appropriate language use.</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Students do not need to learn grammar to gain communicative competence.</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Grammar is boring to teach.</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Teaching grammar is asking students to memorize rules.</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 I do not have enough knowledge of English grammar to teach.</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2820</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.25</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: Sum, mean, SD, rank of the English teachers’ perceptions of reasons for not focusing on English grammar.
4.3.2 Grammar related matters from interviews

First, although teachers understood that one of features of CLT approach is in its emphasis on fluency rather than on accuracy, teachers believed that to teach grammar is an essential part of their English teaching practice. They said that whether or not they were teaching English using CLT approach, grammar instruction was still a central focus in their classroom teaching.

“I think that grammar is necessary to teach but in different ways. To teach grammar is important for language learning. I try not focus on grammar in my classrooms, but it does not mean that I do not teach it.” (Yon-mi, June 14)

In practice, the teachers teach grammar since it benefits students by providing a structure of English language. Their understanding of EFL classrooms assures the need to teach grammar rather than rely on the natural learning process, in which students gain structure of the target language through the medium of communication. In particular, teachers thought that to teach grammar became more important as students’ grade levels got higher.

“I think that grammar teaching is necessary as students’ grade levels get higher. To teach English without grammar might be possible for a beginning level. However, it becomes very difficult to teach English without grammar explanations for students in advanced levels of English. Without an appropriate explanation of grammar, how can students understand the structure of English in EFL classrooms, where little chance to practice English in their lives provided? I do not think that Korean students can learn English naturally without learning grammar.” (Kyong-ok, June 7)
Second, teachers were challenged over what to do for grammar teaching in the classrooms although they perceived the importance of teaching grammar. They were aware of the role of grammar in teaching English, but got confused about how to cooperate grammar instructions with the current CLT focused curriculum and textbooks.

“...I need to explain why students need to follow certain English patterns even for CLT activities… In the CLT, the problem is that it is not organized with systemic grammar explanations. As English teachers, we need to know when, how, and what to teach regarding grammar instruction, but I do not have any clear idea of how much grammar should be taught.” (Yung-a, June 13)

“I teach grammar at the end or beginning of the class. However, the textbooks do not have a grammar section, so it makes teachers get confused in terms of how to teach and what to teach. I think that students also get confused.” (An-sook, June 7)

4.4 Research Question 3:

“What are factors interfering with Korean English teachers in practicing English teaching methods of their choice?”

Apparently, there is no specific teaching method that the Korean English teachers perceived that they needed to use for classroom teaching. Yet, in practice, they did not have many options in English teaching methods for several reasons. The reasons that teachers consistently pointed out during the interviews were discussed as: (a) pressure on English education, (b) national curriculum and textbooks, (c) educational environments (evaluation system and lack of administrative support), (d) lack of ideas about teaching methods.
First, the teachers perceived that they got a lot of pressures on English education. Since English has become the most important language as a tool for international communication, English education has received considerable attention among other subjects in South Korea. For instance, English teachers have been obliged to report their output regarding English instructions to the Ministry of Education on a regular basis. Most of all, the pressure on English education had discouraged teachers’ endeavors to find and develop various teaching approaches, which might be appropriate for the classrooms. Rather than challenging themselves to find and practice their own choice of teaching approaches, they had just followed the curriculum reforms to meet outcomes set by the Ministry of Education.

“There have been tremendous pressures on English education. The pressures make English teachers feel hard to teach English in their own ways. Definitely, it is a social issue. I believe that English education should be similar to other subjects, so teachers and students feel less burden on their English teaching and learning.” (Tae-joo, June 7)

Second, Korean English teachers were required to follow the national curriculum developed by the government. Although the teachers perceived little restriction in choosing teaching methods, they, in fact, needed to teach the textbooks, according to national curriculum, within a certain period. Further, the Ministry of Education selects a list of textbooks for middle and high schools based on their guidelines for textbook publications. Teachers only have freedom to select one of the textbooks recommended by the government. Currently, English teachers in each middle school can use one out of eight textbooks chosen by the Ministry of Education, but the formats and contents of
textbook are similar, following the textbook guidelines given by the government. The fact that English teachers have to teach textbooks in a given period of time based on the national curriculum had restricted teachers’ efforts in developing and using various teaching methods of their choice.

“I think that although we are free to use any teaching methods, there is little freedom for English teachers since we are supposed to teach English with textbooks. Currently, it emphasizes CLT... We understand that there is a felt necessary in introducing CLT, but it is not easy to practice. To teach CLT might be possible in theory, but not in practice in South Korea.” (Jung-ku, June 21)

“There should be more freedom for English teachers in textbook selections. Sometimes, I think that having no textbook to follow might provide teachers chances for a better English teaching. We always need to teach contents of textbooks strictly to prepare exams, and there has been little room for us to try different teaching approaches.” (Yonmi, June 14)

Third, teachers generally perceived that educational environment in South Korea was not encouraging them to practice the teaching methods of their choice. Among many, frequently mentioned environmental factors were an evaluation system and a lack of administrative support to develop various teaching methods.

“I need to teach English for students to prepare exams. The results of exams are so important. The success of English teaching is determined by performance of students on exams. Apparently, I have little space to try other teaching approaches, which are not related to the exams. Currently, the exams are mainly focused on reading with a small portion of listening.” (Jin-hwa, June 21)
By the nature of examinations, which focuses on more easily judged aspects of language like proficiency in reading, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary knowledge in order to discriminate among students who will advance and those who will not, the teachers had a lot of pressures to produce good results on exams. In South Korea, the scores on mandatory foreign language study (particularly English) from early secondary schools continue to be critical factors for entrance exam into post-secondary education. Having good scores in English promises a great prestige for learners, and guarantees chances for better jobs and professional mobility. Thus, the primary job for English teachers is to prepare students for examinations. Although there are some local variations in the content and form of exams, they are very similar to that of national exams due to the national curriculum. Accordingly, students need to study and get high scores on the discrete-points, reading based examinations. Teachers, thus, do not have many options to practice and develop different teaching methods.

Teachers also perceived that lack of professional and administrative support were discouraging them from practicing their own teaching methods. The teachers mentioned that due to heavy teaching hours and overloaded work, they did not have enough time to develop and examine teaching methods.

“... I guess that it is not an issue of what teaching methods we choose rather it is about educational environment in South Korea like evaluation systems and heavy teaching hours. For instance, I am teaching English 24 hours a week. I am tired when finished teaching for the day, thus neither time nor energy to prepare a new class teaching left.” (Hwa-won, June 20)
"We need enough time for developing teaching methods and materials to use in English classrooms. Obviously, we do not have enough support from outside. If we need to develop new teaching methods, we need enough time to do so." (Kye-young, June 21)

Fourth, teachers frequently mentioned that their lack of idea about teaching methods discouraged them to practice English teaching of their choice. Among several reasons, the top down order from the Ministry of Education and a lack of in-service training were pointed out.

"Teachers have little understanding of teaching methods. We have been passive about English education by following top-down orders from the Ministry of Education. As a result, we have rarely asked ourselves ‘why’ and ‘how’ to teach English. I realized that I even did not know much about CLT, but never questioned seriously about it." (Kyung-bok, June 14)

The teachers have rarely been challenged to develop and improve their teaching methods due to a lack of motivation. The fact that they have the curriculum for English education determined by the Ministry of Education has rarely motivated the teachers to develop and practice different English teaching approaches other than directed, so they have not perceived a necessity to challenge themselves for different teaching practices. Teachers also pointed out that the lack of in-service teacher training did not encourage them to practice different teaching methods and materials.

"I think that educational environments in South Korea have not been changed in terms of top down orders and a lack of support for teachers. Everything is up to individual teacher’s efforts. We should provide ourselves time and financial support for self-training... We lack support from schools and government. For instance, we have not had enough in-service trainings for the new English curriculum." (Kyung-mi, June 21)
Teachers needed support to develop their English teaching practice. Unfortunately, they perceived that they could not get any administrative help in developing and applying better teaching methods. They wanted to have frequent and systematic in-service teacher trainings to challenge themselves with various teaching approaches, but the chance to get in-service training had been very limited.

"The in service-teacher training is a big problem. Teacher education should help teachers practice new curriculum. Definitely, more in-service training programs are necessary. Currently, there is one in-service teacher-training program in Seoul (60 hour conversation program). Every year one teacher from one school participates in the in-service teacher training as a school representative, and they get encouraged to stimulate other teachers in their schools through what they learned from the training. In fact, it is not only difficult for the teacher to apply what he or she learned from such a short training to classrooms, but also to share with other teachers is practically very hard in the current educational situation." (Wan-su, June 23)

4.5 Research Question 4:

"What factors can help Korean English teachers practice English teaching methods of their choice?"

In general, the teachers were in need of administrative support from the government and schools that encourages them to practice English teaching practice of their own choice. The teachers suggested several factors which can facilitate their teaching practice: (a) freedom from the national curriculum and textbooks, (b) improvement of in-service and pre-service teacher training programs, (c) opportunities to share with other English teachers, (d) clear understanding of EFL classrooms, (e) changes
of educational environments (e.g., class size, teaching hours, sufficient funding for English education).

First of all, the teachers wanted to be free from the national curriculum and textbook selection. They thought that the national curriculum and English textbooks guided by the Ministry of Education had restricted English teachers in developing and practicing various English teaching methods, which are relevant to their classroom contexts.

“... The national curriculum should be changed. There is no need to control teachers by the government. Teachers have capabilities to determine textbooks and curriculum for their teaching practice.” (Yung-woo, June 20)

“We are supposed to teach all content of a textbook in a given period. I often think that it might be better if we do not have textbooks that we should follow strictly. In fact, there are many resourceful materials available outside for English teaching. Obviously, we can not say that the current textbook is the best material that we need to use for English teaching.” (Yon-mi, June 14)

To improve English teaching practice, the teachers wanted to be in a position that they decide on what they need to teach based on their understandings of English classrooms rather than being guided and directed by someone else. In fact, they felt that the national curriculum directed by the Ministry of Education have introduced irrelevant practices distant from needs of students and an actual situation of English classrooms in South Korea.
Second, teachers wanted to have systematic opportunities to train themselves for English teaching. In addition to in-service teacher training, they also pointed out the need to improve the pre-service teacher education program in South Korea.

“I think that pre-service teacher training program should be changed. They should provide students chances to experience teaching methodologies in theory and practice together.” (Jung-ku, June 21)

The teachers, in particular, suggested that English teaching methodology courses in the pre-service teacher education program should be changed. They mentioned that teaching methods should be practiced rather than lectured, and the primary reason that neither did they have a clear idea of teaching methods nor felt confident in developing teaching methods of their choice was that they did not have appropriate teacher training in pre-service program regarding teaching methodologies before they began actual teaching in English classrooms. They assured that novice teachers should have opportunities to experience different teaching methods and gain confidence in developing and refining their teaching approaches in the pre-service teacher education programs.

“… Teachers need to feel confident in using different teaching methods. But, I do not think that I know teaching methods well. I did not have chances to learn and practice English teaching methodologies in a pre-service teacher-training program. I think that the pre-service teacher education should be changed. For instance, I did not learn how to use CLT there. As a result, it is difficult for me to follow the teaching methods and curriculum that I do not know well.” (Yung-a, June 13)
In particular, the teachers agreed with that they had not have enough chances to practice different teaching methods, thus they encountered a lot of discrepancies between what they learn and what they actually do regarding English teaching practice. They suggested that the pre-service teacher education program should provide teachers sufficient chances to apply and develop teaching methods relevant to local English classrooms, and challenge them to develop different teaching approaches. Obviously, the English teachers perceived difficulties in trying new teaching approaches in the classrooms due to the lack of teacher trainings.

“The teacher education programs for English teachers should be changed. I think that the current problem in English teaching approaches is not in English teachers. We did not have appropriate trainings about English teaching methods. We learned a little bit about teaching methods in theory, but it was different in practice. We need chances to experience different teaching methods before we graduate. I believe that the quality of education can not go over the quality of teachers.” (Eun-jin, June 13)

Third, the teachers wanted to have chances to share their teaching practice with other English teachers. Teachers perceived a necessity to collaborate each other for better English teaching, and emphasized consistent opportunities to share teaching resources among English teachers. They suggested that all English teachers needed to be resources to other teachers. They believed that to have enough chances to communicate with other English teachers would promote collaborative endeavors for better English education.

“I want more chances that English teachers can share their teaching experiences or ideas. I think that having this kind of interviews is very helpful for us since we can share what
we are thinking about our English teaching. Indeed, we need chances to share and communicate with other English teachers.” (Yong-woo, June 20)

Fourth, they assured that the goal of English teaching in South Korea should be clarified based on the contexts of the classrooms for a better English teaching practice. The primary purpose of English learning for most students in South Korea has been to build an ability to read rather than to speak. From the interviews, the teachers emphasized on the importance of developing students’ reading abilities rather than speaking, so suggested a separation of English conversation class from reading or grammar instruction. The English teachers mentioned that the goal of English learning for most Korean students is different from that of students whose primary purpose of English learning is in verbal communication. They thought that to teach English conversation to all Korean students is irrelevant to the need of most students who are not going to have many chances to speak to native speakers. Rather, they emphasized the importance to teach reading skills, as a tool for international communication, particularly considering the increased use of Internet and world- wide web resources.

“...It would be better if we separate English classrooms from conversation classes, so only the students who want to learn conversation have chances to learn it, not for all students. Teachers also take different classes based on their proficiency.” (Yung-woo, June 20)

“I think that Korean students do not have much need to learn English using CLT. The main goal of CLT is to use English in reality. However, little Korean students are exposed to English language in their life, so there is little need for them to learn productive English skills like speaking and writing. I think that reading is more important
due to Internet use. The actual need to use English for most students is reading skill rather than speaking skill.” (Yung-a, June 13)

Few would deny that one of ultimate goals of language teaching is to help students gain communicative competence. However, the Korean English teachers perceived that the primary goal of CLT was not easy to attain in their classrooms since to gain communicative competence might not a main goal for most Korean students. They clearly understood the features of EFL classrooms, and wanted to establish more relevant goals for English teaching based on the contexts of language classrooms. In EFL contexts, English is not an instrument to do something with, but one subject in the whole curriculum, thus the needs for L2 learners to learn the language are different. Further, the English teachers suggested that language teaching and learning carried out in the classrooms does not necessarily need to rely on a certain method. Instead, they mentioned that other approaches, which seem suitable for their classrooms contexts, should be encouraged to use.

Fifth, the teachers pointed out a supportive educational environment for English teaching related to multimedia facility, class size, teaching hours as factors that help the teachers practice teaching methods of their choice.

“ We need to have a supporting environment like a small class size, less teaching hours, etc. It is out of question.” (Wan-su, June 23)

“I hope that we need to have a smaller class size (about 20) based on students’ proficiency levels. Further, we need multi-media rooms providing various visual and audio resources for language teaching.” (Hwa-won, June 20)
It is important to notice that an appropriate educational environment will provide English teachers better chances to practice English teaching of their choice. In other words, the teachers’ endeavors to develop and improve their teaching practices will be successful when educational environment, in particular, administrative support, is provided appropriately. In sum, to make locally appropriate versions of teaching methods, the teachers need a supporting environment encouraging them to find and apply workable teaching approaches of their choice in their language classrooms.

4.6 Research Question 5:

“How are the voices of Korean English teachers reflected in the existing English curriculum and policy?”

During the interviews, the above research question was discussed within the following categories: (a) How have the voices of English teachers been influenced in the existing English curriculum and policy? (b) To what extent the voices of English teachers need to be reflected for English education in South Korea?

1) How have the voices of English teachers been influenced in the existing English curriculum and policy?

Teachers’ opinions of English teaching practices regarding the English curriculum or policy reforms remained unexplored. The teachers reflected that the voices of English teachers have rarely influenced on English curriculum and policy reforms. They said that
policy changes or curriculum reforms for English education have been directed by a
group of people who might be professionals in theories but not in actual English teaching.
They said that their role as English teachers, thus, has been limited to as recipients of
decisions made by someone else regarding their teaching practice, although they
acknowledge that they can bring significant insights for English education reforms from
their experiences of teaching. The teachers mentioned that they were in a central position
to bring successful changes for English education compared to the group of people who
lacked actual classroom teaching experiences.

“Obviously, English teachers have been passive. We have not had chances to participate
in English education policy or curriculum changes. I do not know who have decided
those reforms. They might be very good at theories but not in practice. I doubt whether
they have actual English teaching experiences.” (Kyong-ja, June 14)

Although the teachers perceived gaps between teaching methods that they were
using and the classroom contexts, their roles as passive recipients did not encourage them
to resolve the gaps, but limited their capability in developing their own teaching practice.

“I think that CLT is a foreign model, and it has been implemented without an analysis of
English classrooms in South Korea although the theory itself might be good. We have
been used to accept any foreign models that seem good.” (Hye-jin, June 14)

“We are not used to ask why... There has been little question of ‘why’ regarding the
introduction of CLT. We just have thought that it is a good teaching method although we
have found many difficulties in using it. We just followed the policy changes or
curriculum reforms.” (Jin-hwa, June 21)
Based on the interviews, the reasons that English teachers have been passive toward English educational policy and curriculum reforms can be summarized as: (a) frequent changes, (b) no incentives to become active teachers, (c) lack of existing channels to listen to teachers’ voices. The teachers reflected that they have never had chances to participate in curriculum reforms or policy changes for English education. It is true that opinions of Korean English teachers have been ignored in the quest for improvement of English language education directed by the Korean government. Regarding CLT and its implementation into the classrooms, the teachers acknowledged the significance of listening to teachers’ perceptions related to the new curriculum, because it holds promises for successful educational changes based on their perceptions of discrepancies between implementing the foreign method and the contexts of language classrooms. Further, the teachers perceived that the frequent curriculum changes for English education, without teachers’ involvements, have discouraged them to practice and develop alternative teaching approaches of their choices.

“Due to frequent changes in educational policy and curriculum, teachers have not been motivated to develop teaching methods. They have already been very busy in following educational changes directed by the Ministry of Education, and it has discouraged their efforts to find their own ways to teach.” (Wan-su, June 23)

“There has been no incentive for teachers to make their own voices because nobody was listening to us. I guess that English teachers have been tired of following the top-down orders from the Ministry of Education. The government policy for English education focuses on output without considering the actual situation that teachers and students have.” (Hwa-won, June 20)
“I hope that there are many opportunities that we can participate in the decision making process, thus make them listen to teachers. However, it sounds very unfamiliar, and I do not know why. We are not used to such a thing, I guess.” (Yon-mi, June 14)

2) To what extent voices of English teachers need to be reflected for English education in South Korea?

Among many, the below was suggested as most effective ways to improve English teachers’ participation in English curriculum and policy changes: (a) raise voices, (b) self-training and research, (c) cooperation with other English teachers.

First, the teachers mentioned the need to raise teachers’ voices reflecting their experiences of difficulties in following curriculum changes directed by someone else. They believed that teachers are in a position that makes sense of teaching practice based on their actual classrooms teaching experiences.

“There has been little channel to listen to teachers’ voices. Teachers have not participated in decision-making process for English education. Also, the decision makers do not have necessary teaching experiences. I think that the actual English teaching experiences are necessary for all people involved in English education.” (Yung-a, June 13)

“They should listen to the voices of teachers from various English teaching backgrounds. Further, they should reflect the failure and success of English education reforms from asking to teachers.” (Kyong-ja, June 14)

Second, they mentioned the need to change their attitudes, from passive recipients to active participants, to improve their teaching practice. In particular, they pointed out the importance of conducting research by English teachers. The teachers said that despite
the importance to listen to teachers’ perceptions in determining the successful implementation of teaching methods, their opinions from classroom teaching experiences have been neglected in research in South Korea. Particularly, they claimed a need to have their own research about their classrooms since it would promote them to find appropriate teaching methods. Given the enormous complexity of both teaching and learning situations for L2 learning, they acknowledged that it is simply not possible to advocate a certain teaching approach on the basis of studies from other contexts.

“Teachers’ self-motivated research is necessary. In fact, the Ministry of Education needs to support teachers who are interested in research, because it is hard for them to do teaching and research together.” (Eun-jin, June 13)

“There has been little classroom research by English teachers. Policy makers do not have actual teaching experience while teachers lack solid theoretical backgrounds. We need research to raise our voices regarding English education. However, currently, we have little time for doing research.” (Yung-a, June 13)

Third, they pointed out the need for English teachers to communicate and cooperate together.

“We need more cooperation among English teachers. I heard that groups of English teachers began getting involved in textbook writing for next curriculum reform (7th curriculum reform) for English education. I think that it is a good news for us since we know the English classrooms better than others.” (Yung-woo, June 20)

“We need a room for English teachers to communicate with and share our teaching experiences and materials. For instance, we could do some workshop together. It will
provide an environment that encourages English teachers to collect and share information, and to do research together." (Yung-a, June 13)

By having more chances to communicate each other, the teachers believed that they could make collective voices for English education and bring constructive endeavors that contribute English teaching practice to be successful. They believed that English teachers, as a group, should be a part of discourses for English education because they provide significant insider’s views regarding language teaching and learning from their experience of teaching.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of findings, discussions of the results, and pedagogical implications of the study. The limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are briefly described at the end of the chapter.

5.1 Summary

The findings from the surveys and interviews showed that the English teachers in South Korea had difficulties in implementing CLT into their classrooms. Despite their incomplete understandings of CLT and difficulties in using it, they believed that CLT, in general, was a good teaching approach. Although they encountered many difficulties in practicing CLT, most of the teachers had not seriously questioned about their teaching practice with regard to CLT, mainly due to their positive perceptions of CLT. Hence, most teachers were challenged by contextual factors constraining their efforts to find English teaching approaches of their choices. They perceived that the current English curriculum reform focusing on CLT did not fit to the actual classroom situations in South
Korea, but they have had rare chance to input their voices from their teaching experiences to existing English education curriculum and policy changes. In this section, salient issues from the findings are summarized based on the research questions.

5.1.1 Perceptions about CLT

Since Korean government realized that the ability to use English was a key factor to catch up modernization, English has become a required subject for all middle and high schools, even for elementary schools in South Korea. Upon the reflection of English education, which has been unsuccessful in developing learners’ ability to speak and write in English, South Korean government changed the English education policy to introduce CLT approach to all English classrooms in South Korea from 6th curriculum reform for English education in 1996. Apparently, English teachers have had a lot of pressures and challenges to meet to the direction of the new curriculum introducing CLT (L1, 1998). Further, a question appears whether English teachers had enough chances to practice new curriculum, and gained appropriate teaching skills to meet the goal of the curriculum reform.

1) Lack of clear idea of CLT and its implementation

First of all, the teachers had few complete ideas about what CLT was. The discrepancy between their belief and their actual classroom practice with regard to CLT approach was found from the surveys, and their lack of understandings of CLT was verified in the interviews. In the interviews, it was found that most teachers did not
understand practical implications of some of principles of CLT. In other words, the teachers had a glimpse of CLT approach, but they had confusion on how to practice it into the classrooms.

The findings from the survey and interviews showed that the teachers were very positive about CLT itself, but uncertain of its feasibility when it was introduced into their classrooms. Almost all teachers broadly defined CLT as learning to communicate with other people using L2. Although they agreed that the ultimate purpose of L2 learning is to use the language, in practice, the teachers were unsure about to what extent they needed to apply CLT to their classroom teaching, and whether or not all students were capable of learning it. In particular, the teachers perceived that the difficulties in using CLT were increased due to lack of institutional support and their lack of proficiency in L2. Since the teachers were unsure of CLT, they relied on the textbooks regarding CLT implementations rather than they developed various activities.

Rather than using CLT only, the English teachers employed CLT related activities as a portion of their teaching practice with a combination of traditional teaching approaches like audio-lingual and grammar teaching. They perceived that to use only CLT approach was not feasible in their classrooms. They, thus, adjusted their teaching practice of CLT by combining with other traditional approaches, but apparently it was distant from what the new English education curriculum directed.

“It is difficult for English teachers to implement CLT in the classrooms. I think that no teacher applies CLT in theory to the classroom teaching. Further, most Korean students do not have many chances to speak English outside classrooms... I think that positive
aspects in CLT were not implemented in the classrooms because it is difficult to use.”
(Wan-su, June 23)

2) Contextual factors constraining CLT implementation

Despite the theoretical developments and policy acceptance of CLT for numerous L2 learning environments, many questions appear concerning how the teachers think about CLT and its implementation in their classrooms. Due to an increased need to communicate in English as a result of globalization, the teachers understood an importance of gaining listening and speaking skills as a significant output of English learning. Yet, they, at the same time, perceived the educational contexts in South Korea constrained them using CLT. For instance, the teachers pointed out an importance of supporting educational environment, such as smaller class, reduced teaching hours, and sufficient supporting materials, to get benefits from the introduction of CLT.

First, the teachers perceived differences between ESL and EFL contexts, and mentioned that most Western language teaching approaches had been based on ESL not on EFL. To the English teachers, CLT does not account contexts of English classrooms in South Korea. They particularly argued that the goals of English education in South Korea are different from the ones in ESL. They thought that the challenges in using CLT seemed to outweigh the benefits that most Korean students get in reality. In particular, the teachers thought that to learn English through CLT was irrelevant to the needs of most Korean students. They, rather, perceived that reading skill is more significant to gain for most Korean students than speaking skill that CLT emphasizes.
Second, complications were found between the CLT approach and contexts of English classrooms in South Korea. For instance, the teachers thought that student-centered approach was good and effective strategy in L2 classrooms, but to use it in their classrooms was not easy. In fact, in many EFL countries, learners-centered approach is not a natural teaching method. Thus, the notion of learner-centered approach is very difficult to implement in English classrooms in South Korea where the traditional teacher-centered teaching methods have been dominated. In fact, most Korean students have studied in a traditional setting of teacher-centered, and they have heavily relied on teachers as a sole resource of the subject areas to learn. Furthermore, it does not balance with other subjects, which are still taught with teacher-oriented approach. The teachers reflected that some of the current reforms in English education in South Korea have been movements toward a Western-oriented style of teaching and learning, in which teachers expect that students involve actively in learning, and doing an independent thinking. The survey data showed that although teachers were positive about the learner-centered approach (mean of 4.47), they more agreed on “flexible teaching styles based on classroom activities, tasks, goals, and learners.” (mean of 5.09). In the interviews, the teachers further mentioned that there was no right way regarding interaction patterns between teacher and learners, and the classroom practices should be flexible in using different methods to meet classroom contexts considering tasks, students, and teachers.

Third, the teachers did not have enough time to develop communicative classrooms, so they were reluctant in promoting CLT activities, and avoided the challenges for implementing CLT in their instruction. For instance, in the interviews, they
said that they did not use many communicative activities due to a lack of time to prepare as well as a heavy teaching schedule. The average teaching hours of the English teachers were 19 per week (table 8), and they mentioned that due to the lack of time to develop CLT related instruction, their conceptions of CLT appeared to have little chance for an extensive development. For instance, although most teachers understood that group work was useful for language teaching (mean of 4.57) they admitted that preparing group works was time intensive. In sum, due to a lack of time to prepare and implement CLT, to use CLT and associated activities was not a priority in their English teaching.

Fourth, students did not feel comfortable in learning English through CLT. One of the main themes of the CLT is that learners need to have some degree of control over their learning. Therefore, teachers need to use role-play or pair work to provide chances for students to gain confidence in communication with other people in L2. However, one of the difficulties perceived by most Korean students was to involve in group or pair work as a natural learning process in the language classrooms. Simply, the idea for group work activities is originated from a different educational practice having a certain expected relationship between students and teachers based on a cultural assumption embedded in the classroom contexts. Thus, most Korean students felt that the group work activities were games, not a serious learning experience. Thus, for the teachers, it was hard to control students in the classrooms when they use the learner-centered approach.
3) Teachers’ classroom practice using CLT

It is important to notice how the English teachers actually implemented CLT in their classrooms. In general, most teachers did not conceptualize their teaching practice according to a particular model of CLT. Instead, they combined traditional teachings like grammar teaching at the expense of communicative activities. Even the teachers, who were very positive about CLT and its implementation, expressed that their teaching seemed very superficial adherence to CLT principles. Although the teachers had goals for communicative classrooms in mind, they offered students few opportunities for genuine communicative language use in the classes. Even though the actual classroom teaching plans have followed CLT principles advocated in the CLT literature, the actual classroom teaching practice resembled traditional ones rather than the CLT approach. The teachers said that the CLT approach that they were using in their classrooms deviated considerably from the principles of CLT. Yet, they perceived that to have combined teaching approaches rather than to use CLT only was appropriate due to classroom contexts of South Korea.

In summary, the findings from two data show that conflicts exist between CLT in theory and its practice in English classrooms in South Korea. The teachers were unsure about the extent to which they use CLT in the classrooms, and whether or not all students were capable of learning it. It indicates that the conflicts must be resolved to get benefits from the new approach. Based on numerous challenges found in implementing CLT into classrooms in South Korea, a conclusion is made that changes in English education cannot be successful by only curriculum reforms, rather it should be conveyed with
changes in educational environment supporting the new concepts. There is a reason to adapt rather than simply adopt teaching methods from other contexts, considering its own contexts of language classrooms regarding how the teaching method best serves the needs and interests of students.

5.1.2 Perceptions about Grammar teaching

1) Teachers’ perceived reasons for grammar teaching:

In the interviews, the major challenge mentioned by most teachers was about grammar instruction. The teachers not only had difficulties ignoring grammar in the current CLT focused English teaching, but also they had problems in teaching grammar. They understood that CLT highlighted that the primary goal of language instruction needed to go beyond the teaching of the discrete elements, rules, and patterns of the target language. Consequently, the teachers were challenged over what to do with grammar in the classrooms.

Most teachers, yet, mentioned that Korean students needed to learn grammar to understand the structure of English language. Although they thought that CLT emphasized no explicit grammar teaching, they pointed out that to understand grammar would help learners develop their language skills. Further, they perceived that it was not feasible for most Korean students to acquire some sense of “know” naturally taking place inside them, within the contexts surrounding EFL classrooms. They understood that EFL context in South Korea was a place where rare target language input to practice and learn was provided to students outside classrooms, thus teachers needed to teach grammar to
help students obtain the target language structures. From both surveys and interviews, the teachers claimed that Korean students need to learn grammar to build knowledge of English structure, and it became more important as students’ grade levels get higher.

“I think that grammar teaching is necessary. Grammar and conversation is not separated. Also, there are more needs for us to teach grammar as students’ grades get higher. I think that students will obtain many benefits from learning grammar... Is it possible to learn English without understanding its structure? I teach students rules, but ask them to practice and apply. I think that to build both fluency and accuracy in English is important.” (Jung-hwa, June 13)

The grammar’s place was highlighted, particularly, from the survey results. The teachers were sure about the importance of learning grammar (mean of 3.91). Further, the teachers felt confident in teaching grammar (mean of 3.82), and grammar teaching was still central in their instructions. Clearly, tensions were found over grammar instruction and CLT, and the English teachers encountered challenges between needs of students and classroom contexts under the directions of the new English curriculum.

2) Classroom practice related to grammar teaching

Whether or not the English teachers were teaching English communicatively, grammar was still a central focus in their teaching practice. They tried to present grammar within contextual clues, and in most cases, grammar instructions were followed by communicative exercises. However, most teachers still practiced grammar teaching at the expense of communicative activities. In most EFL classrooms, where language input to learn and practice the target language features is rarely provided, most L2 learners never
have enough chances to improve their linguistic accuracy without a formal instruction. The teachers noticed that the problem in the commutative language approaches in EFL contexts was that it did not help students gain appropriate degree of grammatical knowledge of target language as an outcome of their English learning.

Many teachers were seeking acceptable ways to bring formal grammar instruction back into the communicative activities. They said that their students also wanted to learn grammar rather than having instructions focusing on CLT only. In other words, both teachers and students perceived the necessary to develop grammatical knowledge while they were communicating in English. Although the teachers agreed with the need to teach grammar in their classrooms, they were unsure to what extend they needed to teach grammar within the current national curriculum emphasizing CLT. Thus, their grammar teaching practice varied depending on teachers and their teaching schedules.

5.1.3 Factors interfering English teaching practice of their choice

Many contextual factors constraining English teachers’ endeavors to practice appropriate teaching methods were discussed. First of all, the teachers perceived the educational system in South Korea was the major factor, which has interfered their teaching practices. For instance, their conceptions of CLT had little chances for development, and the main reason was a lack of supportive educational environment, such as national curriculum, class size, teaching hours, insufficient trainings, and evaluation system, which were all surrounding their teaching practice. From the surveys, the educational environment discouraging the teachers’ efforts to practice English teaching methods of their choice was found. For instance, the average number of students
that the teachers have in a classroom was 40, and the average teaching hours per week were 19. Most teachers (72%) had rare chance to speak to native speakers, and 50% of the teachers had no chance to travel to English speaking countries (Table 1).

“... Educational environment, such as number of students in a class, hours of teaching, and other duties, does not encourage English teachers to practice and develop their own ways of language teaching...” (Wan-su, June 23)

In general, teachers wanted to develop teaching methodologies that they feel confident in using in their classrooms. Even though the teachers perceived that to use teaching methods depends on the teachers, in reality they do not have much chance to practice and develop different teaching methods. Instead, they needed to follow the national curriculum determined by the Ministry of Education. Thus, they were not challenged to develop their instructional beliefs, knowledge, and practices throughout their teaching practice.

“To choose teaching methods opens to teachers, but factors, like heavy teaching schedules to follow, exams to prepare, and results of exams, always have interfered English teaching methods of our choices. We can choose various teaching methods, but we have the curriculum and textbooks, which direct our teaching. In other words, syllabus is not restricted but we have a strict curriculum to follow... (Eun-jin, June 13)”

The teachers mentioned a social pressure on English education has interfered their teaching practice. Even though they acknowledged the importance to obtain an ability to use English as an international language, thus the reason for the educational reform for English education, they thought that the heavy pressure on English education has actually
restricted them engaging in genuine teaching practice of their choice. Instead, they suggested “English needs to become one of subjects that students can choose” (Jung-hwa, June 13), thus teachers get a lesser pressure on English education, and get some freedom in finding their own ways of teaching that they feel confident as well as necessary.

5.1.4 Factors helping English teaching practices of their choice

If we believe that language is a means for social interaction, the language that being taught and used should be based on the local contexts. To provide a framework to develop and implement teaching methods responsive to various contexts of language classrooms, the first step for teachers is to understand the social and cultural features of contexts where the language is taught. It further involves a consideration of learners, goals of language learning, and the culture surrounding classrooms. Particularly, to understand contexts of language classrooms is important for Korean English teachers, because to understand the contexts of language classrooms will help them identify reasons for conflicts in teaching practice, thus guide them to find ways to resolve. Among several factors, the importance of changing pre-service and in-service teacher trainings, and of providing opportunities for English teachers to share their teaching resources were pointed out.

“I have had a lot of trials and errors since I started English teaching. I realized that the actual classrooms were much different from what I though in the pre-service teacher educational program. There were many gaps between what I have learned and what I do now. In addition, I had only one teacher training beforehand, and I feel that I needed to have more.” (Jung-hwa, June 13)
To try out new ideas and materials, the teachers needed assistance and encouragement. The teachers emphasized the importance of continuing support for teachers to develop and refresh teaching methods. According to them, the teacher education should focus on teachers’ autonomy and the decision making process as well as their ability to reflect their teaching practice. They perceived that it would help the teachers change their practice in significant and meaningful directions.

The teachers said that they have rarely had chances to discuss ideas, notions, and perceptions about language teaching and teaching approaches with their colleagues. They said that they learned many lessons through trials and errors from their experience of teaching, but those were formed as personal experiences rather than as a group to share with. It is assumed that changes in their teaching in meaningful directions will be encouraged when they are invited to the discourses, regarding their English teaching practice, with their colleagues. Other contextual factors, such as class size, hours of teaching, national curriculum, and multimedia equipments, were also mentioned as factors, which help teachers find and practice appropriate as well as responsive teaching approaches in their classrooms.

5.1.5 Voices of Korean English teachers

Understanding of the difficulties that EFL teachers have in practicing western based teaching methods suggests that the best way to resolve the problems is to develop workable teaching methods for their own contexts. Apparently, there has been little discussion of how teachers have perceived the curriculum innovation and its
implementation to classrooms in South Korea. Further, little literature has discussed how teachers developed their belief, knowledge, and practice with regard to CLT implementation into English classrooms in South Korea.

“As I have known of, there had been no need analysis conducted before they developed the new English curriculum introducing CLT…” (Wan-su, June 23).

However, the teachers acknowledged the importance of being active participants in curriculum reforms for English education. Among several ways to become active participants, they suggested the need to establish research agenda to encourage language teachers and researchers to develop teaching methods accounting contexts of the local English classrooms. A crucial reason is that it opens ways for teachers to become active participants for English education to be made rather than directed by someone outside the classrooms in terms of what changes are necessary for English classrooms. An important fact for the current English education to be successful, it should be beyond merely saying that CLT implementation has been hard, rather it suggests the need to investigate particular promising approaches, and pursue analyses for the reasons in the hope of improvement.

“We need to change our attitudes. We have been too much passive. We need to do classroom research to be active teachers. Otherwise, they understand our voices just as complaints.” (Kyong-ok, June 7)
Teachers are in the position that mediates ideas, constructs meaning, and acts upon those constructions (Richardson, 1996). If teachers perceive contradictions between their existing practice and the new curriculum, those should be resolved. Without listening to teachers’ opinions regarding educational changes for English education, the curriculum and policy changes will bring a burden on teachers and students. Yet, the Korean English teachers reflected that they seldom had chances to participate in the decision processes for English education although they had significant insiders’ views to bring for English education. As a result, the teachers have ignored the importance of asking “why?” toward their teaching practice and existing problems. Thus, they perceived that they have been powerless in their teaching practice, which limits their roles to recipients of teaching methodologies directed by someone else outside classrooms.

“Due to frequent educational policy and curriculum changes without listening to teachers’ voices, teachers become recipients who lack ideas of how to teach. What are advantages and rewards for the teachers who want to practice their own teaching methods? There has been little incentive for us to make such efforts.” (Wan-su, June 23)

Due to their powerlessness, they have neglected finding ways to deal with the problems in implementing imported foreign methods into the English classrooms, and to develop alternative teaching methods of their choice. Through the interviews, they felt a need to build a new relationship with their teaching practice based on contexts, and recognized the significance to raise their voices coming from their actual classroom teaching experiences.
"There has been little channel for teachers' voices. Teachers have not participated in decision process for English education. Also, most decision makers did not have actual teaching experiences. I think that actual teaching experiences are necessary for all people involved in English education." (Yung-a, June 13)

5.2 Discussions and Implications

The present study investigated reasons to practice appropriate language teaching methods, through discussions regarding CLT implementation into English classrooms, in South Korea as one of EFL contexts. Language learning cannot be isolated from particular contexts in which it is used, but there have been little studies to uncover how language teaching methods have been applied with a consideration of educational environment of a particular context. The primary focus of the study is not to discuss difficulties in practicing CLT but to investigate reasons for the difficulties to suggest contextually based teaching approaches, from the experiences of English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. Further, the study extends its discussions to find factors, which interfere or help Korean English teachers practice teaching approaches of their choice, emphasizing the significance of language teachers' voices. Thus, the study proposes the importance of empowering language teachers who can bring insights for responsive language teaching practice to be made. Finally, the study suggests that the field of EIL needs to conduct studies not only in terms of its global position but also in terms of the specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts of the language use (Pennycook, 1997; Kachru, 1992; Phillipson, 1994; Sridhar, 1994). In a certain aspect, the study claims that to know various teaching methods or approaches is not important, but what is
more important is to understand whether the pedagogic approach is suited to classroom contexts to be applied. Based on the findings discussed in the previous section, our attention should be given to following issues.

5.2.1 Contextual autonomy in English language education

The rise of communicative language teaching in the 1980s and the current globalization of English as EIL (English as an International Language) have placed a great attention on successful intercultural communication using English as a medium. As one of English teaching approaches, CLT has become a prominent teaching method in EFL countries, but there has been rare investigation and discussion regarding issues of how CLT, originated from the Center countries, has been taught to other contexts.

Language has no function independently from the social contexts surrounding language classrooms in which it is used. Since English has become a lingua franca, the contexts in which English has been used are as varied as they are numerous over the world. Similarly, the ways to use, learn, and teach English in different contexts are diverse. In other words, we might need to be very cautious about the notion of authentic and real English, or other dominant terms. Hence, appropriate language teaching is different from authentic language learning, and authentic language learning is not the language spoken by a certain group of people. The appropriate language teaching is certainly related to the methods used and determined within the community of teachers, authenticated by them in their teaching process. In other words, the present study claims that the imported teaching methods, which are unfamiliar to the teachers and students are
unappreciated if those are implemented without an appropriate filtering process (e.g., Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Pennycook, 1994).

The present study uncovers tensions in implementing CLT with numerous difficulties reported by the English teachers in South Korea. The two data also show the complexity that the teachers faced regarding the foreign teaching method implemented in their teaching practice without an appropriate filtering process. The survey data particularly highlighted the gap between what the teachers believed regarding CLT and their actual practice in classrooms, while the interview data showed the teachers’ reluctance in implementing CLT and the perceived reasons. In sum, the present study shows what happens when language classrooms are exposed to a particular version of teaching methodology based on other contexts that the teachers in the classrooms do not endorse. The study, finally, suggests that language teaching is a cultural practice, thus responsive teaching approaches should be based on local contexts to be successful.

1) CLT and contexts of English classrooms in South Korea

The present study shows that the Korean English teachers had positive opinions about CLT, but they found that to apply the CLT into their classrooms had been difficult for various reasons such as class size, evaluation system, lack of teacher trainings, and hours of teaching. They perceived distance between the contexts surrounding classrooms of South Korea and the CLT applications. The teachers understood that CLT might have a lot of positive aspects in theory, but it did not mean that it worked well in English classrooms in South Korea. Instead, they felt a necessity to practice and develop workable
teaching methods in their classrooms rather than relying on certain imported foreign methods.

“I am very positive about what CLT says and its application. However, in practice, to apply the original ideas, although those sound good, is really hard in my classrooms… I do not think that I use CLT a lot in my classrooms. We need teaching methods which are working in our classroom contexts.” (Yung-a, June 13)

The teachers were aware of the gap between the current educational environment and the CLT application, and they perceived that the difficulties in implementing CLT were originated by accepting philosophy and ideas of English teaching from Western countries without considering the educational contexts to be applied. It also indicates that implementation of CLT has been originated from an assumption that Western society has developed language teaching methodologies with a universal application regardless of contextual differences of language classrooms. Such an assumption often leads an inaccurate pedagogy for language teaching ignoring classroom contexts. The English teachers further mentioned that the main reason that they blindly accepted and applied certain foreign language teaching methods to English classrooms in South Korea was the dependent attitudes toward the Center countries regarding theory and practice for English education. As a result, teachers have had rare chance to input their voices concerning the classroom contexts and language teaching practice in the decision process for English education policy and leadership.
2) Goals of English language teaching in South Korea

The teachers raised a question whether Korean students need to learn English through CLT. Students and teachers are all situated in a cultural context, and they can engage in language teaching and learning process successfully when they find appropriate teaching methodologies based on their contexts of living and goals for the language learning. Therefore, it is important to build solid instructional goals of language teaching, which compose of the contexts of language classrooms as well as incorporate with teachers’ view on appropriate language teaching.

Most teachers believed that CLT is best applicable to the students who are going to use English in future, but not for other types of language learners. In other words, CLT approach is based on the learners’ communication needs (Canale & Swain, 1980), but to apply CLT to all students who have different purpose of language learning and needs is inappropriate. For instance, in ESL classrooms, the immediate needs to communicate in L2 exist, but not in EFL classrooms. According to Canale and Swain (1980), CLT approach must provide learners with the opportunity to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic second language classrooms (p.27). But, in EFL context, it is difficult to create authentic second language classroom situations for the learners who do not have the necessity to communicate in the target language in their lives.

As the teachers mentioned, the learners in English classrooms in South Korea are different from those in ESL classrooms, where learners have an obvious reason to use the target language thus may integrate well with their goals as well. Yet, not all Korean
students need to learn English through CLT. The teachers strongly pointed out that CLT is good only for the students who are going to use English in their future lives, not for all Korean students. Even they suggested a separation of general English classrooms from conversation classrooms, so only the students who want to learn English conversation can have it for their own interests.

“I think that most Korean students do not have much need to learn English using CLT. The main goal of CLT is to use English in reality. However, few Korean students are exposed to the use of English language in their lives, so there has been little need for them to learn productive English skills like speaking and writing.” (Yung-a, June 13)

“… It will be good if we have English classrooms separated from conversation class, so only the students, who want to learn conversation, can have a chance to learn it. Teachers might need to take in charge of either reading or speaking based on their preference.”(Yung-woo, June 20)

Cook (1998) divided goals of language learning into two categories, ‘internal classroom goals’ which relate to students’ life’ within the classroom, and ‘external goals’ that relate to the actual use of language outside the classroom. Most EFL learners, being different from those in ESL, are not explicitly related to the actual use of English. What they want to learn from their learning should relate to their interests and goals, not to certain types of performance set based on other contexts. In other words, we need various language teaching approaches for language classrooms serving different goals of language learning, which benefit the students having various reasons of language learning, not for only the ones who use the language outside classrooms.
In sum, the goals of language teaching should be based on the needs of students and teachers who compose of classroom contexts. The Korean English teachers strongly believed that the purposes of English learning as well as the classroom contexts of South Korea were very different from the ones where students learn English in English speaking contexts. It is, then, necessary to investigate to what extent the communication based teaching approach benefits students in EFL classrooms.

5.2.2 Ideology in language teaching methods

1) CLT vs. Grammar teaching

The study challenges accepting popular terms without questioning. Widdowson (1998) mentioned that what communicative language stands for has been understood that it focuses on meaning rather than on form, but it should be reconsidered in terms of context and authentic language use in a critical manner. TESOL professionals repeatedly claimed that what distinguishes the communicative approach from the outmoded structuralist one is its focus on meaning for communication (Swain, 1995; Pica, 1985), and it seems to be taken as self-evident truth. However, the form and meaning in language learning is interrelated. In EFL classrooms, contexts available for students to connect form and meaning of target language are their language classrooms, but they do not have enough chances to get input of target language from outside classrooms, thus the chances that learners naturally build the target language features, without learning forms of the language, are rarely provided.

In the interviews, the Korean English teachers, particularly, emphasized the fact that they were teaching grammar although the current English curriculum does not
encourage grammar instruction. They understood clearly the necessity of teaching grammar and benefits that students will have by learning English grammar in EFL classrooms.

“I think that grammar teaching is necessary. Grammar and conversation cannot be separated. Also, there are more needs to teach grammar as the students’ grade levels get higher. I think that students will get many benefits by knowing grammar. Is it possible to learn English without understanding structure? I teach students rules, but ask them to practice and apply.” (Jung-hwa, June 13)

In EFL classrooms where natural language input is rarely provided outside of classrooms, maintaining meaning-focused CLT approach by providing authentic situations is unrealistic. Further, as Widdowson (1990) mentioned, it is not the general purpose of language learning, which intentionally brings efficient and systematic language acquisition process to contexts of classrooms.

2) Ideology in CLT and related activities

(1) Communicative activities

CLT was based on the belief that as long as some sorts of messages are passed among people, learning could take place. Thus, a range of CLT activists have been devised through, in most cases, various games. In fact, most textbooks dealing with CLT approach suggest various types of communicative games as ideal language learning activities. However, using games as learning tools has been raised significant questions regarding whether those are appropriate to use in language classrooms in the world.
Although most of the Korean English teachers were very positive in using games or other communicative activities in their classrooms, they pointed out that to use games required a lot of time for preparation, so they became easily get behind in their teaching schedules. Further, they said that to use games was not easy in the classrooms because it was hard to control students in the large classroom where the students were not used to act within groups.

The teachers mentioned that many Korean students have not been satisfied with using games for their English learning since they did not think that games were serious learning activities. Although they felt fun with games, they thought they did not learn a lot. Some students even believed that they were learning nothing, and being treated as children. Further, the teachers mentioned that students were more unsatisfied with using games as their grade levels became higher thinking that the teacher was making no effort to teach.

(2) Student-centered approach

Student-centered approach has become a central dogma in language education. However, to apply the approach is not only inappropriate to many contexts in which the roles of students and teachers are defined differently, but it also supports a very particular view of educational philosophy related to individualism, development, and authority. For many EFL learners, to learn English in the student-centered approach is very uncomfortable to practice from how they have learned, since language learning is a type of social practice in the contexts that they live. If language learning should take account
students’ lives, desires, cultures, experiences, and backgrounds as an important part of pedagogy, the student-centered approach is simply a limited version to apply to the EFL classrooms surrounded by a different tenet of philosophy and history of teaching.

The findings from the surveys showed that although most teachers were in favor of the student-centered approach, they assured teachers should be flexible in the interactions with students (Table 7). Interviews also revealed that the teachers had positive opinions about the student-centered approach in theory, but they were challenged with the concept in the practice.

(3) Authenticity

Many researchers have proposed the importance of using CLT approach to prepare students to communicate in real situations such as interpreting, negotiating, and dealing with native English speakers (Li, 1984; Savignon, 1983; Berns, 1990). They claimed the use of authentic languages emphasizing a necessity of sufficient input of a target language. However, understanding of EFL classroom contexts proposes a substantial need to reconsider the goal that CLT aims at, which is to gain proficiency through authentic language uses.

CLT, which focuses on pragmatic meaning, is indeed a context dependent approach (Cook, 1999) because the pragmatic meaning in the normal communication to engage in social action is context based. In a certain aspect, the language used in EFL classrooms hardly becomes authentic because the classrooms cannot provide the contextual conditions for authentic language use to learners. In general, EFL learners are
outsiders of the target language use. They are not members of the communities using the language. Therefore, the language that is authentic for native speakers cannot possibly be authentic for EFL learners. The Korean English teachers clearly mentioned that to provide authentic communication for the students was hard, thus they rather depended on artificial situations provided by textbooks.

“I think that teachers lack ideas of how to apply CLT in their classroom teaching. To me, it is difficult to set appropriate situations to teach conversations in English. I rely on textbooks by reading the contents and answering to questions rather than providing practical situations for the CLT.” (Yung-a, June 13)

(4) **Use of target language for English instruction**

According to CLT, learners need to use the target languages in their classrooms to gain communicative competence. Thus, most EFL books do not recommend using L1 for English (L2) learning. However, a number of studies showed that using L1 in the classrooms helped students understand meaning (Ellis, 1994). For example, when students need to know the meaning of a new word or a grammatical structure, they can access it through a translation into their L1 provided by their teachers or dictionary. However, in reality, given most EFL textbooks, teachers are not encouraged to use students’ L1 to convey meaning. The two data showed limitations in using the target language although the teachers ideally agreed with the use of target language for their instruction. In surveys, the teachers believed that to use L1 helped them clarify the meaning of their English instruction (Table 5). In interviews, the teachers further assured that they needed to use both L1 and L2 for classroom teaching. In particular, for the
students who did not understand English well, to explain in L1 was necessary. According to the teachers, to use L2 only in the classrooms was simply a wistful dream that did not consider the actual abilities of students and teachers in L2.

“I think that teachers are not ready for implementing CLT. For instance, due to a lack of proficiency in English, we use only typical classroom English, so there are limitations in using it. Although we attempt to use English in classrooms, we do not think that we communicate well with students in many cases.” (Yung-woo, June 20).

(5) Non-native English teachers

CLT emphasizes an ability to speak, thus the goal of EFL learning is frequently taken into oral communication with native speakers of English (Nayar, 1989). The problem is that it is a monolingual belief situated within the notion of native speaker (NS), which idealizes NS with a complete or possibly innate competence in the language. Rampton suggests (1990) that the concept of native speaker and mother tongue supports a very particular ideology of language teachers who are born into a particular language, and the biological birth certification becomes a symbol, which identifies a qualified language teacher. The concept simply implies that a language is inherited, and there is a close correspondence that being native speaker of one language automatically confers a high level of proficiency in all domains of the language. It poses a clear distinction between being native speaker and non-native speakers. In the interviews, most teachers believed that they were qualified EFL teachers although English is not their L1. However, many of them questioned their capability as language teachers compared to native speakers. In particular, CLT approach emphasizing speaking ability in L2 brought the question
regarding their capabilities as qualified language teachers. In indicates that to accept ideology of native speakers is closely interrelated with what CLT aims, which proposes the primary goal of language learning is to attain native speakers’ proficiency. Thus, EFL teachers encountered with gaps between their actual abilities in using L2 and the assumed goal of language teaching, thus became uncertain of their capability as equally qualified teachers as native speakers.

Unfortunately, SLA researchers have not recognized substantial reasons that L2 teaching needs to be different from L1 teaching, so they have not investigated how to teach L2 learners in their own right, not as deficient native speakers (Cook, 1999). Medgyes said (1994), “it is a wishful dream to have a native like command of English for EFL learners”. If his claim is true, a question remains as “how TESOL professionals define the goals and methods of language teaching for L2 learners” Further, the question raises a significant issue for EFL teacher education program in developing new conceptual tools for teaching methods and theories for EFL classrooms. In sum, to understand EFL contexts and goals of English leaning bring a critical attention about the role of EFL teachers in the field as well as reasons for their empowerment (Samimi & Brutt-Griffler, 1999).

5.2.3 Empowering language teachers

1) Voices from English teachers

To make an appropriate teaching practice for each classroom, teachers, first, need to be aware of what actually takes place in the classroom, then teachers’ perceptions or
belief play a crucial role in determining their teaching approaches. In particular, when introducing a new approach in the classroom, it may be necessary to be based on teachers’ knowledge and practice filtering through their experiences of classroom teaching. In fact, for teachers, the teaching methodology they are using, in most cases, were acquired in their early socialization process and through the internalization of roles and expectations that they learn at schools (Lantolf, 1999). It is also gained through the years of being students and observing others’ teaching. Therefore, their knowledge to approach to classroom teaching becomes a framework of contextual interpretation (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). It is their own views as insiders, which are invisible, but clear and solid for their judgments about how to teach and what to teach, and what are necessary for their teaching.

Throughout the interviews, the teachers perceived that they were challenged by an implementation of the foreign teaching method. In practice, they have adjusted their English teaching approaches by combining traditional approaches with CLT believing that it was appropriate to meet the needs of students and educational contexts of South Korea. Ellis (1998) talked about the universal relevance of communicative approach to language teaching in a view of cultural conflicts arising from the introduction of a predominantly Western context based language teaching approach to Far Eastern cultures. The central argument was that for the communicative approach to be made suitable for Asian conditions, it needed to be culturally tuned and accepted. The teachers already found a large gap between the current teaching practice and the intended learning experience, thus warned that it might result in a breakdown of language learning and
frustration of language learners. Indeed, it is important to encourage the teachers to filter the foreign methods to make it appropriate to the local cultural contexts, and to assure their significant roles in finding the teaching approaches serving needs of students in language classrooms.

The interviews showed that although the teachers faced with difficulties in implementing the teaching method originated from foreign contexts, their voices regarding the teaching practices have not been raised. Among many reasons, the teachers mentioned that there was no existing channel to convey their opinions to the existing policy and curriculum for English education. As they agreed, they have been passive recipients of whatever decided by the Ministry of Education, thus powerless in their profession. By having little chance to question the status quo and the power relationship surrounding their teaching practice, they have been powerless in controlling over the curriculum reforms for English education and negotiating what they want to teach.

2) Contextual autonomy and empowerment in L2 teaching

The notion of contextual autonomy for language education considers language users not merely within a psychological and individualistic frame, but as ones expressing cultural alternatives in their language learning to be the authors of their own world. In particular, the notion of contextual autonomy is based on the understanding that language is no longer a code that students need to learn, but rather as a major aspect of cultural domain in which their lives are constructed and reconstructed (Fairclough, 1990; Shor, 1993). Then, the goals of language educators are to teach language in the way that opens
up cultural alternatives for the learners’ lives to allow them to become authors of their world (Pennycook, 1997).

If CLT approach is concerned with pragmatic meaning and its use, it has to come with the learners’ reality within contextual conditions that are appropriate for them, so it will enable them to authenticate it as their own discourse (Pennycook, 1996). If the purpose of L2 teaching for learners is to invest in their ability to use the target language for further learning, it should not be the way that they may never use. In other words, the language that EFL students learn has to be localized so that the learners can engage with it as meaningful discourses, which means that EFL learners have to learn English language within appropriate patterns of contextual response for themselves. Thus, the goal of language teaching is not to replicate experiences of other people living other contexts called authentic contexts, but just to prepare them to learn it in their own ways.

The Korean English teachers expressed that they have been situated within various difficulties due to the implementation of foreign teaching methods, and rare chances have been provided for them to encourage teaching methods of their choice. They recognized that the foreign teaching approach was fundamentally irrelevant to needs of the classrooms, and the primary reason for the difficulties was contextual differences. Although the teacher perceived the existing problems in introducing foreign teaching approaches originated from western contexts, few opportunities to raise their opinions have been provided. The teachers, thus, experience their powerlessness and its consequence in their teaching practice.
In particular, the English teachers pointed out the factors that have interfered or helped them find and practice teaching methods that benefit both students and teachers. Most of all, they emphasized the importance of having supporting educational environment encouraging them to find and practice relevant teaching approaches to their classroom contexts. Among several factors, particularly, to improve in-service and pre-service teacher programs and to collaborate with other English teachers were strongly pointed out.

First, the teachers perceived that the current in-service and pre-service teacher education programs should be changed. They understood the importance of teaching students with relevant pedagogical methods, which may help them achieve cultural pluralism as a frame of mind, along with demonstrable competence in a given language. Under the supportive educational conditions, which encourage the teachers to be authors of teaching practice, EFL teachers can build their profession rather than being suppressed by unfamiliar teaching approaches. To be a capable language teacher, one of many qualifications necessary for them is to be familiar with teaching methods, and be comfortable in applying those to his or her classroom teaching. Both data showed that the teachers not only had difficulties in following the current curriculum for English education, but also had rare support to practice and develop various teaching methods throughout pre-school and in-service teacher trainings. There is no doubt that the administrative support, through teacher training programs, becomes a crucial factor in South Korea for English teachers to be active decision makers who put their efforts to find appropriate teaching methods.
Second, the teachers wanted to have systematic and constant chances to share and collaborate with other English teachers. The teachers felt that English teachers should be resources to resolve problems that they face with in their teaching practice. To have the teaching practice, which makes sense of within the contexts, they need to collaborate each other, and help them gain a sense of empowerment in their profession. They believed that teachers needed to be a central position in resolving problems as a collaborative endeavor rather than as an individual effort being isolated from other teachers. Further, through the collaborative efforts, the teachers have a reexamination of their professional experiences exploring ways of how their teaching methods and materials meet the needs of language learners and classrooms contexts. The teachers also agreed that they needed to work harder both individually and collectively to improve their teaching practice. In sum, to regain a sense of their own power as EFL professionals, collaborative dialogues with other colleagues, which provide conditions sharing their professional concerns and encouraging their efforts to situate their teaching practice in the contexts, are necessary.

3) Suggestions to empower EFL teachers in South Korea

If we say that empowerment requires recognition of what’s happened in reality, teachers’ reflections on their own experience of teaching should be a starting point to empower them in their profession. Simon (1987) calls empowerment as pedagogy of possibility. Simon commented that a curriculum and its supporting pedagogy are a vision of our own dreams for us, our children, and our communities (p.370). From the interviews, the teachers found that the key to empower themselves was in their reflection on their teaching practice. A teacher mentioned, “I feel that teachers have been silent in
their professions” (Kyung-ja, June 14). The important thing that we need to be aware is that education needs to guide a vision of future and promote alternative versions to resolve conflicts oppressing their lives. Overall, the teachers recognized the socio-cultural contexts surrounding their teaching practice, so they were challenged to develop appropriate teaching approaches rather than to rely on imported ones from other countries, or appropriate them according to their classrooms and needs of students. Based on the findings from the interviews, ways to empower English teachers in their professions are discussed as below.

(1) **Question of why: to challenge ideologies in EFL teaching**

The present study found that CLT and related activities did not serve well English teachers and students in South Korea. It also uncovered that global spread of English and related discourses have not provided relevant theories and approaches for EFL classrooms by ignoring different contexts of classrooms. In fact, the dominant English language teaching methodology has constantly stressed the neutrality and beneficiary of the spread of English, while ignoring a range of social, cultural, and political issues. Yet, beliefs, practices and materials for language teaching are never neutral, but represent very particular understandings of language, communication, learning, and education as cultural practices.

The study found that most Korean English teachers had very positive perceptions about CLT itself although they were challenged over conflicts between the implementation of the foreign method and their classroom contexts. The reasons for the
difficulties were, partly, due to their assumptions that the Center countries have found advanced theories and teaching approaches for English education. The important issue that the present study suggest is not only of the inappropriateness of the foreign method being used in EFL contexts, but also of finding workable teaching approaches responsive to local classroom contexts. Indeed, teaching practices, approaches, and methods are cultural practices that occur within a specific discourse and imply particular understandings of roles of students and teachers, interactions between teachers and students, and so on. If there are conflicts between particular contexts and imported teaching methods, the questions of “why” should be raised.

In particular, teachers need to become critical investigators of theories and methodologies as who examine the feasibility of those when applied, so they are in the position to determine its practical significance (Ellis, 1997). To become the teachers who are capable in questioning “why” related to their teaching practice, it is important for them to become familiar with the knowledge obtained from research as well as making it meaningful to them. By doing so, all conclusions based on research are to be viewed only as a provisional specification, which the teachers can choose to examine in the context of their own classrooms.

In essence, the present study showed the need to promote teaching methods in which teachers and students feel confident, and meet their goals and needs of language teaching and learning. If the language teaching approach does not serve well for teachers and learners, the questions to seek reasons of “why” as well as solutions for the conflicts should be raised. It is, particularly, important to notice that the teachers’ efforts to take
responsive teaching are made possible through reflections on their teaching practices and factors oppressing their professions. The teachers, then, need to raise open dialogues among all parties involved in education to answer to the questions of why, since being silence limits the development of their knowledge for responsive education. In order to encourage responsive language teaching and to engage teachers in a genuine dialogue, we need to understand the importance of inquiry, as a starting point to build the notion of contextual autonomy, which promotes the efforts to find and practice appropriate teaching methods in the contexts.

(2) Research by EFL teachers

The assumption that research in the Center countries provides knowledge base for making pedagogical decision regardless of contextual differences is dangerous because it not only implies a particular power relationship between the Center countries and periphery countries, but also discourages EFL teachers to build their own teaching profession responsive to their contexts different from the Center countries. In fact, the communication becomes dysfunctional when EFL teachers are placed in a position of receiving “decision or findings” from the researchers in the Center countries. Indeed, they need to be encouraged to participate in research for their classrooms rather than relying on findings by someone else from outside.

Related to language teaching approach and its improvement, more research should be conducted on different language classrooms, particularly of EFL contexts, so the findings should help teachers guide and practice their L2 teaching. One of dangers in SLA
is a theory-based application without sufficient review for the local classrooms. In the interviews, the teachers mentioned a significance of conducting classroom research by Korean English teachers. They understood that classroom research by Korean English teachers would be one of important ways to empower them and to open dialogues and opportunities to participate in the process of policy and curriculum change for English education.

"We need to change our attitudes. We have been passive. We need to do classroom research to be active teachers. Otherwise, they might understand our voices just as complaints." (Kyong-ok, June 7)

The assumption that research provides knowledge base for making pedagogical decisions is also dangerous because it commonly implies a particular power relationship between researcher and teacher (Ellis, 1997). The assumption, in general, places researchers at the top of a social hierarchy, giving them the responsibility of making decisions, and teachers at the bottom. Ellis (1997, 1998) challenges the role of teachers as well as researchers to bring out a perspective in terms of pedagogical implications from research that has been conducted to guide its future directions. He said the reason of encouraging teachers to become researchers is to fill the gap between technical knowledge and practical knowledge². To resolve the problems for the gap between research findings and application of those to actual classrooms, it is important that L2

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² According to Ellis' definition of knowledge in SLA, there are two types of knowledge: technical knowledge and practical knowledge (1997, 1998). In particular, practical knowledge is acquired through actual experience in the context of language teaching. SLA as an academic discipline is concerned with the production of technical knowledge, whereas language pedagogy as a profession is primarily directed at practical knowledge.
teachers should keep their own research regarding what works, what does not work, and what is necessary to change in their classrooms.

By posing questions about research findings in terms of whether it is feasible to be applied successfully in classrooms, the problematic gaps related to language teaching approaches and its application in language classroom can be solved. Further, through conducting research, the teachers gain a sense of ownership over their teaching practice.

Therefore, it is crucial to encourage EFL teachers to conduct research, or collaborate with other researchers to establish EFL knowledge base, which is called action research. Particularly, a form of action research, the collaborative endeavor between teachers and researchers, will accelerate an integration of findings of research into practice of language teaching.

(3) **EFL teacher education**

The guiding question in EFL teacher development must start from an acknowledgment of the real status of EFL teachers regarding their teaching practice and classrooms contexts. In other words, the question must be practical regarding “how can EFL teaches in South Korea get help find and practice appropriate teaching methods?” From the surveys and interviews, the teachers emphasized the importance of providing sufficient opportunities to train them through in-service and pre-service teacher programs, which provide them chances to develop and refine their teaching practice, which are working in their own settings, rather than uncritically following theories and methodologies from the Center countries.
As an attention drawn to different goals of language learning for EFL classrooms, teacher education programs also should provide chances to develop appropriate teaching methods corresponding particular goals of language teaching. It will certainly demonstrate how all of the variety of language teaching approaches can actually cooperate with different classrooms. Further, the teacher education programs need to encourage teachers to be very sensitive to different teaching methods, particularly to the popular and dominant teaching methods, based on their decisions whether those are appropriate to be used in their classrooms, rather than just accepting those. With all these in mind, EFL teachers can improve their L2 teaching methodologies, which L2 learners also get benefits from their language learning experiences rather than being discouraged and failed through the language learning accompanying irrelevant goals and methods to their needs.

5.3 Conclusion

The present study claims that the significant problem in the field of ELT is its failure to see different contexts of language classrooms regarding language teaching approaches. The dominant acquisition theories and teaching methodologies have been largely based on SLA models founded in the Center countries, and most of the data used in developing those models were from immigrants and international students studying in the Center countries. Thus, few attempts have been made to gather evidence from EFL contexts. (Kachru, 1994; Sridhar, 1994). As a result, the dominant L2 acquisition theories
leave out vast millions of EFL learners who use and learn L2 in EFL contexts different from the Center contexts. (Sridhar, 1994, p.801). In fact, many of L2 acquisition theories and approaches that make sense in the Center countries may not work in EFL countries.

Related to CLT, which has been a dominant language teaching methodology in ELT, recently researchers began to claim that it is an impractical and ineffective approach to non-Western countries based on significant socieconomic and cultural differences of language classrooms (Burnaby &Sun, 1989; Holliday, 1994; Sano, 1984). The present study, thus, attempted to uncover perceptions that Korean English teachers have in using CLT in their classrooms, and to suggest ways to improve their English teaching practice by proposing the notion of contextual autonomy along with the importance of empowering language teachers. The present study claimed that although teachers were central to educational changes to be successful as who can see the feasibility of curriculum reforms, thus can bring the ultimate success or failure, little consideration about teachers and the actual classroom contexts were given in the process of curriculum and policy change for English education in South Korea.

In sum, the study proposed an urgent task to find and develop theories and methodologies that are “functionally oriented and culturally authentic” (Sridhar, 1994, p.803) for EFL classrooms. Hence, many factors which interfering or encouraging teachers’ efforts to practice the teaching approaches of their choices were identified and discussed to emphasize the importance of providing supportive environment for English teachers to practice contextual autonomy for their language teaching.
First of all, the study suggests that ELT practitioners in EFL countries should abandon ideological and methodological dogmatism related English education. Rather they need to work for adapting, not adopting, and developing methods and techniques that will work for their own classrooms. It is important to be aware that every aspect of classroom practice has meaning and value in its own context. In other words, we must question whether there are universally appropriate ways of teaching and evaluating the success of language teaching. In particular, related to implementing foreign approaches in EFL classrooms, the present study shows that teachers need to test them out in actual teaching to determine whether it is practical approach or how it should be adapted. Further, English teachers need to understand that it is not true that valid theory has always a pedagogical utility, but any theories or approaches should be tested out for local classrooms considering language learners, their interests and needs for language learning. What is universal truth in language classrooms is that there are a lot of factors differentiating the degree of success obtained, then teaching methods should be flexible based on teachers’ competency, classroom situations, and needs of learners.

Second, the study suggests that EFL teachers need to be positioned at the center of endeavors to develop contextually responsive language teaching approaches acknowledging their significant roles, which provide insights from experiences of teaching, thus bring necessary changes into English classrooms. Language teacher is a means to the end of language learning taking place (Medgyes, 1994 p.21). If teachers are discouraged in their professions, the reasons that make them powerlessness should be identified and resolved.
Among many, the importance of having classroom research by EFL teachers and administrative support was pointed out. In particular, the Korean English teachers wanted the teaching theories and methodologies responsive to their contexts, which provide a basis for determining educational policy and curricula, preparing teaching materials, and planning language lessons. They thought that the main reason that they had difficulties in implementing CLT was that it represented the values of a westernized style of education, which was not appropriate to be applied to their classroom contexts. From insider views of language teachers in South Korea, the present study found that effective teaching could not be equated with dependence and implementation of any particular approach or methods from outside the contexts. Rather than imposing teaching methodologies from other cultural contexts, the teachers should increase their cultural sensitivity and devoted efforts to meet needs of their students and classroom contexts. In sum, through appropriate teaching approaches in English classrooms, ELT professions will get more insights to serve different people living in different places.

Third, the present study claims that to improve teacher education program becomes a significant issue to provide chances for teachers to practice contextually appropriate teaching methodologies for English education in South Korea. Among several, the Korean English teachers suggested the importance to provide frequent opportunities to train them. Many Korean English teachers were aware of the challenges when teaching methods were implemented without a proper cultural filtering process. Therefore, the teacher education programs, which guide appropriate teaching methodologies, will eventually encourage the teachers to become owners of their
professions, thus contribute to fill the gap between technical knowledge developed in Western counties and practical knowledge for their EFL classrooms. Through the enhanced teacher education programs, the teachers have chances to review critically what constitutes language learning, and how it is viewed and interpreted for individual learners and their lives, and in which ways the teaching practice should be balanced and incorporated well with the classroom contexts.

In addition, the Korean English teachers wanted to distinguish ESL classrooms from EFL related to their teaching practice. In fact, it is importance to notice that most EFL teacher preparation programs in the Center or periphery countries have not provided appropriate education for EFL teachers preparing them become professionals in their own countries (Liu, 1999; Kamhi-Stein, 1999). The failure in training EFL teachers who acknowledge differences between teaching practice in the Center countries and other countries indicates that the field has ignored differences in socio-cultural conditions surrounding different language classrooms, thus has imposed educational ideologies that interfere defining appropriate teaching conventions. Largely, it is due to ELT practitioners’ dependence on theories and teaching methodologies from the Center countries, but it is also undeniable that researchers in the Center countries have given little attention to the millions of different learners in different classroom contexts in terms of how to serve their needs and interests.

Finally, the study suggests the significance of providing supportive educational environment, which encourages teachers to find and practice teaching approaches of their own choice. The teachers have had various difficulties in adjusting their teaching practice
to the new curriculum emphasizing the foreign approach, which apparently does not fit to their local contexts. Rather than spending time and resources of English teachers by adopting methods from the Center countries, the substantial as well as constructive suggestions, which guide the teachers to solve and build their professions based on their contexts of classrooms, should be raised.

Teachers make decisions on the basis of their personal experiences of what works and what does not. Their perceptions, a sense of working or not working, will further provide what are necessary to improve English education. Through the interviews, discussions were made for identifying both factors which help as well as interfere teaching practice of their choice. Among several factors, the teachers pointed out the importance of administrative support providing them the environment to overcome disempowering practice that exists in their teaching. The study, thus, emphasizes the significance of encouraging conditions positioning English teachers in South Korea on the construction to build their own capacities for contextually responsive teaching in their professions, thus promise possibilities for significant and gradual improvement that is needed for English education in South Korea. It also helps English teachers construct new identity as EFL practitioners, taking away from the limited roles as recipients of teaching practice and theories from other countries to autonomous decision makers regarding what is necessary and what they want to teach in the classrooms.
5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study attempted to have multiple data sources using survey and interviews. Although using multi-data sources would build findings becoming rich, the study did not use classroom observations, in particular, due to time constraints. To observe what teachers do in the classrooms might provide a clearer feature of classroom teaching practice of Korean English teachers regarding their teaching approaches.

The study limited a target population to middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. Due to time constraints and limited accessibility to the population, the study did not cover all middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. Therefore, to apply the findings of the present study to all middle school teachers in South Korea might not appropriate.

While surveys were conducted based on a random selection of middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea, the interviewees were not randomly selected. Interviews were conducted with the teachers among who wanted to participate in the interviews. Among the volunteers, the researcher selected participants based on the completed surveys to explore the research questions in greater depth. In this way, the researcher tried to vary interviewee’s age, years of English teaching, and grade of students as much as possible, which is called a maximum variation sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There could be differences between teachers who wanted to participate in interviews and ones who did not want to, but it was not investigated since the purpose of
interviews was to listen their opinions in depth, not to draw a generalization based on random selections.

The participants of the study were middle school English teachers in Seoul, South Korea. The researcher could not have chances to talk to the people who actually have involved in the curriculum and policy reforms for English education due to inaccessibility. The discussions regarding policy and curriculum changes for English education were, therefore, based on only English teachers and their perceptions related to their teaching practices.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study attempted to investigate Korean English teachers’ perceptions of English teaching methods to suggest reasons for contextually appropriate language teaching. There are some further questions that need to be investigated with regard to the development of the notion of contextual autonomy and empowerment of language teachers.

First, the studies, which extend its discussions beyond the problems in using CLT, might be necessary. CLT was selected due to its popularity and its introduction to the recent curriculum reform for English education in South Korea. Certainly, further studies dealing with other teaching approaches, which suggest reasons for context-based teaching, are necessary.
Second, the present study showed difficulties in implementing CLT, and aspects regarding how English teachers have accommodated their teaching practice to meet the contexts of English classrooms in South Korea. Further research about other English classroom contexts in various countries will help us understand complications and challenges by introducing theories and practice originated from other contexts.

Third, the study only focused on perceptions of English teachers in South Korea. For any attempt for improving English education, it is believed that teachers are central to guide successful changes. However, to listen to students and their perceptions of language learning will help us understand EFL classrooms and necessary changes to be made regarding English education to be successful.

Fourth, the study basically focused on teaching methods. We need to further investigate teaching practice related to philosophy, theories, and teaching materials for EFL classrooms, and it will help us address an issue of ideology and empowerment of language teachers as a whole.

Finally, teaching of EIL not only challenges the profession but also promotes new agenda for cross-cultural research. There is a need to bring a paradigm shift in research and teaching practice from the Western point of view to the global aspects for contextual understanding of language learning as a broad term, and this perspective should lead an endeavor to understand socio-cultural realities of various English language classrooms. An ethnographic action research, which can provide contextual information, explaining teachers, students, classrooms, and their language learning and teaching practices as a whole, is recommended for the new arena. It is true that EFL practitioners have, more or
less, failed to accommodate the need to teach English with appropriate L2 theories and methodologies based on contextual understanding of their classrooms. It is, therefore, important to bring an increase cultural sensitivity and devoted efforts to meet the needs of students with the studies grounded on the local classroom contexts.
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APPENDICES

A. Survey Questionnaire

Dear English teacher,

You have been selected as a participant of the study who represents the body of middle school English teachers in Seoul, Korea. The primary goal of the current study is to propose the need to seek appropriate English teaching methods, which consider classroom contexts based on the opinions of middle school English teachers in Seoul, Korea. To suggest the significant issue to find appropriate English teaching methods, the researcher wants to have data regarding English teachers’ perceptions about their teaching methods used in the classrooms.

The survey questionnaire consists of two parts. Part One contains questions about your beliefs or attitudes regarding teaching methods that you use, primarily of CLT (communicative language teaching) and grammar teaching, in your classrooms. Part Two contains questions about your personal backgrounds.

Your response is the most important part of the study. Please help me by answering all the questions. Your response will be kept confidential and used only for the research purpose.

I greatly appreciate your help for this study, and would like to offer my sincere thanks to you.

Sincerely,

Seon-hwa Eun

Doctoral candidate
Graduate Research Associate
Foreign and Second Language Education
School of Teaching and Learning
The Ohio State University
U.S.A.
Survey Questionnaire

Part One: Teachers’ Perceptions about English teaching methods

Please indicate by circling the corresponding number, the degree to which you think the statement describes your beliefs or attitudes about English teaching methods that you use in your classroom instruction.

Key
6= Strongly Agree
5= Agree
4= Somewhat Agree
3= Somewhat Disagree
2= Disagree
1= Strongly Disagree

Section 1: Perceptions about CLT (Communicative Language Teaching)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think that…</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I want to use CLT as much as possible in my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Using CLT benefits most students in my classrooms.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It is important to teach four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing equally.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am teaching four language skills equally in my classroom.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am competent in using CLT in my classrooms.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have had enough chances to learn how to use CLT for my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 2: Reasons of Difficulty in Using CLT

1. It is difficult to implement CLT in my classroom teaching.  
2. If you think that it is difficult to use CLT in your classroom, what are the reasons?  
   - 2-1 teachers’ deficiency in spoken English.  
   - 2-2 teachers’ lack of cultural knowledge of English speaking countries.  
   - 2-3 students’ passive style of learning.  
   - 2-4 students’ lack of motivation to develop communicative competence.  
   - 2-5 lack of suitable materials.  
   - 2-6 large class size.  
   - 2-7 grammar-based evaluation.  
   - 2-8 few chances to be trained to develop teaching skills.  
   - 2-9 lack of time to learn and to develop teaching methods.  
   - 2-10 Others:

### Section 3: Perceptions about Group Work Activities

I think that…

1. It is important to use group work activities to improve students’ communicative skills.  
2. Teachers need to use a lot of communicative activities, such as information gap, problem solving tasks, for classroom teaching.  
3. I use a lot of group work activities to provide effective language learning opportunities to students.  
4. Group work activities take too long to organize and waste a lot of valuable teaching time.  
5. Group work is not easy to use since it is very difficult for teachers to monitor students’ performance.
### Section 4: Perceptions about Target language (English) Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think that…</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important for English teachers to speak English (target language) in English teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I speak English a lot in my classroom teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To use Korean (first language) in English classrooms provides effective instructions to students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students need to speak English in classrooms.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is not effective to prevent students’ use of their first language (Korean) in English classrooms.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section 5: Perceptions about Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think that…</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important to use authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, movies, books, for English teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is not easy to use authentic materials in classrooms due to lack of time to prepare.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I use a lot of audio, visual aids to teach English in my classrooms.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It is difficult to find appropriate teaching materials to teach CLT.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is difficult to use authentic materials due to lack of knowledge about the target language culture.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 6: Perceptions about Interaction Pattern between Teacher and Students

I think that…

1. Learner-centered approach is more beneficial than teacher-centered approach in my English teaching.  
2. The teacher as an authority is no longer adequate to describe the teachers’ role in language classrooms.  
3. Using learner-centered approach in the classroom is not meaningful since students are not used to such an approach.  
4. Teacher-centered approach can provide benefits to students’ language learning.  
5. Teachers need to be flexible in using different teaching styles based on classroom activities, tasks, goals, and learners.

Section 7: Perceptions About Grammar Teaching

1. I teach English grammar a lot in my classrooms.  
2. I think that grammar teaching is necessary in my classrooms because…  
2-1 Correct grammar use is an essential skill in language use.  
2-2 Students want to learn grammar.  
2-3 I need to help students prepare examinations.  
2-4 It is an effective way to teach a language in a large class size.  
2-5 I am competent in teaching grammar.
Section 8: Perceptions About Not Focusing On Grammar Teaching.

1. I believe that grammar teaching is not a primary focus in my teaching because....
2-1 Grammar needs to be taught in communicative ways; not just an explanation of separate grammatical rules.
2-2 To teach grammar is not necessary in helping learners’ appropriate language use.
2-3 Students don’t need to learn grammar to gain communicative competence.
2-4 Grammar is boring to teach.
2-5 Teaching grammar is asking students to memorize rules.
2-6 I don’t have enough knowledge of English grammar to teach.

Part Two: Demographic Information

*Direction: Please check the most appropriate response or fill in the blanks.*

1. Age: _________ years old.

2. Gender:
   1. male
   2. female

3. Highest degree earned:
   1. BA
   2. MA
   3. Ph. D
   4. Other: _______________
4. How long have you been an English teacher? ________ years.

5. Are you teaching in a private school or public school?
   1. private school
   2. public school

6. What grade level of students are you teaching?
   1. 1st year
   2. 2nd year
   3. 3rd year

7. On the average, how many students are in your classroom? ________________

8. On the average, how many hours a week do you teach English? ________________

9. How often do you speak with native speakers of English?
   1. once or twice a week
   2. once or twice a month
   3. a few times a year
   4. rarely
   5. never

10. How long have you traveled to English speaking countries? ___________ months

11. What kind of English teaching method(s) are you using now? (mark that all apply).
    1. Grammar translation method
    2. Audio-lingual method
    3. Communicative Language Teaching
    4. Others __________________________

   Thank you very much.
B. Interview Questionnaire

Part One: Perceptions about CLT

1. How do you use CLT in your classrooms?
2. What is your understanding of CLT, and why do you think so?
3. Do you feel comfortable in using CLT? If not, what are difficulties in implementing CLT in your classrooms?

Part Two: Perceptions about grammar Teaching

1. Do you use grammar teaching in your classroom? What are difficulties in grammar teaching?
2. To what extent you think that grammar teaching is necessary in your classroom teaching?

Part Three: Your beliefs about language teaching

1. Do you feel comfortable in using current English teaching methods in your classrooms? If not, why?
2. Do you think that voices of English teachers have been influenced in curriculum and policy for English education in Korea? If not, why?
3. To what extent voices of English teachers need to be reflected to find English teaching methods of your choice in Korea?
C. Interview Transcript

(Categorization Code)

0. Backgrounds

1. Perceptions about CLT
   1.1 What is your understanding of CLT?
   1.2 How do you use CLT in your classrooms?
   1.3 What are difficulties in implementing CLT in your classrooms?

2. Perceptions about Grammar teaching
   2.1 What is your understanding of grammar teaching?
   2.2 To what extent do you think that grammar teaching is necessary in your classrooms?

3. What factors can interfere with English teachers in practicing teaching methods of their choice?

4. What factors can facilitate English teachers in practicing teaching methods of their choice?

5. Voices of English teachers in the existing curriculum and policy for English education
   5.1 How have voices of English teachers been influenced in curriculum and policy for English education in South Korea?
   5.2 To what extent do voices of English teachers need to be reflected for English education in South Korea?
School 1
Time: June 21, 2000
Place: School 1 in Seoul, South Korea
Four teachers: Kye-young (A), Kyung-mi (B), Jin-hwa (C), Jung-ku (D)

Q. What is your understanding of CLT?

B: 1.1 Understanding of CLT? Well... I do not think that I know well about it. I think that many English teachers have little knowledge about what CLT means. I guess that it is about to teach practical English and to learn English in reality. Therefore, the focus is in building an ability to communicate with foreigners. It is fluency emphasized, and situational English teaching.
C: I think that it does not focus on teaching grammar.

Q. How do you think about CLT?

A: It is related to the worldwide movement to use English for intercultural communication. But CLT is very difficult to use in my classrooms, mainly due to a lack of enough preparation to be implemented... Simply, it does not fit to educational settings in South Korea. We do not have good textbooks supporting the CLT.
D: 1.3 I have tried to use it, but it was not easy.
B: 1.3 The CLT asks us to use English for classroom instruction. However, when I use English in classrooms, I do not think that I communicate well with my students.
A: To use CLT is hard for teachers not for students. I think that most students like CLT... They feel fun.

Q. You said that to use CLT is not easy. Then, what are the difficulties?

B: 1.3 There are many difficulties. First, we need to teach students to prepare examinations, but the exams are not communication focused. It is still mainly focused on reading. Second, we have too many students in a class to apply CLT.
D: 1.3 I think that the class size is a big problem. Also, students have different English proficiency levels, so it becomes hard to teach them together in one class.
C: 1.3 It is very hard to control students when doing group activities. Most of them believe that it is not a serious learning. For instance, some students asked me after a group activity that I spent almost whole hour, "When are we going to learn a lesson for today?"
A: 1.3 Another problem is in teaching hours. We lack of time to develop and study for better teaching due to the heavy teaching hours... Most of us teach English class 20 hours a week, and we do not have enough time for preparing new teaching methods.
B: 3. I think that educational environment in South Korea has not been changed. Everything is up to individual teachers’ capabilities and efforts... We should provide ourselves time and financial supports for self-development... The current educational reform encourages teachers’ individual efforts but in reality we do not have sufficient
support from the schools or government. For instance, we have not had enough in-service teacher training for the new English curriculum.

D: * It is difficult to teach English language culture. In some cases, textbooks do not fit to Korean contexts (e.g., “why should we teach about garage sale? It is a very unfamiliar situation in South Korea”). Sometimes, I feel that certain dialogues in the CLT focused textbook are too childish.

**Q. How do you use CLT in your classrooms?**

A: 1.2 I do not use CLT a lot. For the CLT related lessons, I use videos, songs, or some games. Yet, due to the evaluation, it is impossible to use CLT all the time.

B: 1.2 I also try not to focus on CLT only but focus more on reading.

D: I have widely different levels of students in the classrooms. I use a medium level of difficulty for CLT focused instruction, but it is not that easy due to the large class size.

C: 1.3 There are many problems in using CLT in my classrooms. First, teachers have limitations in their expressions using English. They follow guidance of textbooks and help students prepare exams. Further, I think that teachers do not understand clearly what CLT is. Most of us are not sure whether what we understand CLT comprehensively. Nobody has provided clear understanding about CLT. We just teach textbooks. For NNS teachers, it is very difficult to use or teach CLT.

A: 1.3 We lack of confidence of using CLT. For instance, to use English in classrooms is impossible for both teachers and students. Teachers are not sure whether it is right expressions or not. Also, we do not have enough teacher training for CLT.

D: 1.3 Students have different learning styles. I guess that most passive style of learners do not like the CLT related activities.

**Q. How do you think of grammar teaching? Do you still use grammar teaching in your classrooms? If so, why?**

B: 2.2 Most teachers have used to teach grammar. We are not familiar with not teaching grammar.

**Q. What are factors that interfere your English language teaching to be your choice?**

A: 3. Well… There is no certain teaching method that we need to use. We can use as many as we want. The problem is that we do not have many options for English teaching. There are many reasons… We have heavy teaching hours as well as miscellaneous jobs. We need enough time for material development. If we need to challenge ourselves for new teaching methods, we need enough time for self-development...

B: * Evaluation system is also a problem. We always need to teach students for exams. But, the current exams do not meet what CLT asks, I think.
D: * I think that although we are free to use any teaching method, there is not much freedom since we are supposed to teach followed textbooks. Currently, it emphasizes on CLT. We understand that there is a felt necessity for CLT use, but it is not easy to practice. It might be possible in theory but not in practice. There has been a social pressure about English education, but little consideration and preparation about teaching context and teachers have been given.
C: * Passive attitude of teachers is another problem. We are not used to ask why? There has been little question about CLT so far. We have just thought that it is a good method although many difficulties that we have faced in implementing...?

Q. How the current English teaching method in South Korea can be improved? What are factors that you consider for a better English teaching?
C: 4. First, we need less number of students in a classroom. Also, we need special English classrooms having audio, visual equipment, and sufficient materials for teaching.
B: 4. I hope that they cut out the hours of teaching.
C: 4. I do not like the top-down order from the government to English teachers. I want the environment that considers teachers first. I feel that English teachers have spent a lot of time to follow what the government decided for English education. At least, they should provide appropriate environment first, and then bring practical changes.
D: 4. I think that pre-service teacher-training program should be changed. They should teach methodologies to students in theory and practice together. Further, we need classes being taught in English.
B: 4. It is important to provide incentives to teachers to encourage their efforts for better teaching. In general, we need financial supports.

Q. Do you think that English teachers voices have been reflected in English education policy and curriculum in South Korea?
C: 5.1 Have they listened to English teachers for curriculum reforms? Most cases, they put more burdens on teachers without listening to us.
B: 5.1 Did they show any effort to listen to teachers’ voices?
C: 5.1 We have not had any question regarding why we need to teach CLT. We just followed the policy change or curriculum reform. I guess that even we are not used to ask why...
School 2
Time: June 20, 2000
Place: School 2 in Seoul, South Korea
Two teachers: hwa-won (E), yung-woo (F)

Q. Please tell me your understandings of CLT?

E: 1.1 I think that the method itself is OK, but problems are in the application to classrooms. It was not balanced well in theory and practice to be used to my classrooms.
F: 1.1 It is good in theory, but not ready for applying to the classrooms here. I am questioning that "Why Korean students need to learn CLT if most of them do not have chances to speak to native speakers in the future? Does it necessary for all Korean students?
E: 1.1 In the current situation in Korea, reading is the most important skill to teach. For instance, we have a lot of contacts with people in other countries through Internet. However, CLT does not focus on reading that much.
E: 1.1 Although CLT sounds good, it does not mean it is working well in the classrooms considering the current class size and evaluation system. I think that the class size is a big problem. It is very hard to control students when doing group activities... We also need to teach students to prepare examinations, but the examinations are not communication focused. It still mainly focuses on reading. Currently, most tests have 80% of reading and 20% of listening portion with no speaking and writing test. We can not teach CLT as much as the curriculum directs due to the expectations of parents and students about test results.
F: 1.1 I understand the necessity of changing English education, but the more important thing is in how to change...

Q. What are problems in using CLT in your classroom?

F: 1.3 Regarding speaking, it is impossible to teach them to speak in English although to teach speaking for communication is important. Also, writing is the most difficult area. Teachers themselves are not sure about their ability to teach English writing, so I use rephrasing a lot....

E: 1.3 I think that to use English in classroom teaching is difficult. I have heard that from next year (7th curriculum), classroom English is required for the first grade middle school classrooms. It is impossible to use only English in the classrooms... There are certain limitations in using English because it does not convey ideas or thoughts that students and teachers have in mind very well. If it is for only typical communication used for classroom teaching, it makes sense... Otherwise, it does not.

1.3 Difficulty as well as # 4.
E: * Students show different English proficiency levels. There is also a gender difference (in general, girls are better in speaking). Some students have been taking English classes from private institutions outside classrooms, and it affects their proficiency levels.
Passive attitude of students is also an issue. They are used to follow directions from teachers or textbooks. They lack of ideas to express themselves. Many times when I use English in the classrooms, I feel that I do not have many common interests to talk to students.

F: * Most of them do not have an actual need to communicate with native speakers of English. At present, they learn English for tests not for communication.

F: * Teachers are not ready for implementing CLT. For instance, they use only typical classroom English, so there is a limitation in using English. Although we use English in the classrooms, many cases, we do not communicate well with students, so we need to explain it in Korean language again. Most of us ask students to memorize some English patterns, then practice it due to lack of appropriate situation to explain and practice. Sometimes, I feel that memorization is an appropriate method for English teaching and learning.

E: * We lack of confidence in using CLT. We need to have more intensive and frequent English in-service teacher trainings.

F: * Stress as an English teacher is huge. As an English teacher, making mistakes when using English in the classrooms give more stress and burden.

Q. How do you think of grammar teaching? Do you think that it is necessary to teach, and why?

F: 2.1 Grammar is necessary to teach, because it is a tool for understanding a language. I think that it provides a foundation for language learning.

E: 2.2 In reality, it is necessary to teach to help students prepare exams.

Q. What are the things that interfere English teachers in South Korea in practicing teaching methods that they want?

E: 3. To select teaching methods is up to us, but to use CLT is required by the Ministry of Education... I guess an issue is not in teaching method, but it is in educational environment, such as large class size, heavy teaching hours (for your reference, I am teaching 24 hours a week), examination focusing on reading (no speaking test)... We lack visual and audio aids to use in classrooms.

F: * I think that textbook is a big problem. We have a lot of contents to cover within the time limit, so there is no freedom to determine what to teach and how to teach... .The levels of textbooks are higher than the actual level of students, in general. In the textbook that I currently use, there are many Korean English having Korean concepts and understandings, and I doubt whether those are appropriate ones to teach. I feel that what they learn would be very different from authentic English, and wonder of who wrote the textbook for what purpose...

F: * We had native speakers in English classrooms. Most of them had little knowledge or understanding about English teaching and English classrooms in South Korea. I often doubted their quality as language teachers in foreign countries. Many of them actually did not make good jobs. Well, I heard that they also complained about heavy teaching hours.
E: This is a little bit different point. I think that most Korean students feel bored of English study. They are not motivated to learn English. My guess is that they already have had too much pressure on English study from society, parents, and schools. Most of them hold the traditional concept for English learning aiming at getting better grade.

Q. How can Korean English teachers have better conditions for teaching English?

E: I hope that we have a smaller size of class (about 20) with proficiency levels of students considered. We also need enough teaching materials, less teaching hours, enough time for self-training.
F: I agree. We have too many miscellaneous works. We need sufficient teaching resources to share or provide among teachers.
E: I hope that we have language labs or rooms having computers (to use Internet) that English teachers can use for English teaching. We need multi-media rooms using computers, which provide various resources or cultural backgrounds for language teaching.
F: In textbooks, they need to separate the reading part from the conversation part, and teachers also need to take in charge of either reading or speaking part. In the speaking part, I think that there should be more practical content similar to English as an international language.
E: Most of all, teachers need to get provided systematic opportunities to train themselves for better English teaching. We learned English education in theory in colleges, but little chance to practice in actual situation was provided.
F: Evaluation system should be changed.

Q. If there is a need to have teachers’ opinions for English education policy and curriculum changes, how it could be possible?

E: 5.1 There has been little incentive for teachers to make their own voices because nobody was listening to us… I guess that all teachers just have been tired in teaching English itself. We have been busy in following whatever the Ministry of Education asks us to do… In a certain point, the government policy for English education focuses on output without considering the actual situations where teachers and students have.
F: 5.1 That is true that we have always had a top-down order direction from the Ministry of Education. There was no existing channel for making our voices. We are not sure the existence of representatives for English teachers to convey our voices. I am sure that it is not English teachers who made textbooks and decided guideline for the curriculum reform.
E: 5.1 Educational policy becomes too much burden on teachers, because it only focuses on output of what students are going to achieve, not of how and why…
F: 5.2 We need more cooperation among English teachers. I hope that we have freedom from textbooks. I heard that from the next curriculum reform, English teachers are getting more involved in textbook writing process. I think that it is good news for English education since we know the classroom situation better than others.
School 3  
Time: June 14, 2000  
Place: school 3 in Seoul, South Korea  
Four teachers: Yon-mi (G), Kyong-ja (H), Kyung-bok (I), Hye-jin (J)

Q. How do you understand CLT? Could I ask you to explain it?

I: 1.1 I do not know about it clearly, but I think that CLT neither focuses on repetition nor pattern drills. It provides background information, and makes students express themselves what they know in English.

J: 1.1 I think that is a situational English teaching, so it focuses on expression as how to communicate or convey meaning. Through the CLT, students are asked to build up an ability to express themselves… They need to be creative for their own ideas so it asks students to become different from the previous English learning like repetitions, pattern drills, or content focused learning…. In general, when using the CLT, most students feel interested, but I cannot maintain the teaching plans. Also, it is difficult to teach four language skills altogether.

G: * I think that CLT is a challenging teaching method. It is OK in theory, but doubtful in practice.

Q. How do you use CLT in your classrooms?

G: 1.2 I use English for instruction. Students think the use of English as fun not a significant learning. I think that to use English is helping teachers rather than students.

I: 1.2 I use games. I want to stimulate students, but many of them are not serious. They think that to use game is not learning. The results of exams when I used many group work activities were low, and students told me that they did not learn a lot.

J: 1.2 I gave them some situations focusing on creativeness, and then do a comprehension check up..

Q. You already explained some difficulties when using CLT. Can you tell me more about the difficulties and the reasons?

H: 1.3 I think that teachers are not ready for CLT application in the classrooms. To use CLT, the amount of content that the current textbook covers should be less, and we need more supporting materials.

I: 1.3 I try to use group activity to encourage students’ participations. I guess that about 10% of students actively participate, but I cannot teach as much as I planned. Most students are passive in general. So I try to use assignments regarding CLT related activities, but I cannot check all whether they can do actually.

G: 1.3 For higher grade levels of students, to use CLT is not meaningful because it is too easy for them. It is difficult to control groups in the large classrooms. I put 10 or 15 students in a group. If I have a small number of students, and they follow directions well, to use group activities would be fun for teachers too.
J: 1.3 When focusing on CLT, we expect less output on exams. Students want to study English focusing on exams. They are still used to memorization of textbooks with reading focused. It is still not focused on communication.

J: 1.3 Teachers have a lot of pressure from textbooks to teach as well as from parents and students regarding test results. I guess that foreign textbooks have more communicative activities. The current textbooks that we are using cover too much contents.

J: 1.3 Also, we do not know much about English cultures. To prepare teaching those, we need time and information. I am not satisfied with what I am teaching English now, but there is little room for change to me.

H: * Students are not used to the CLT. They still memorize patterns. To provide situational English learning is difficult. They heavily depend on textbooks. As their grades get higher, they become more reluctant on participating in CLT related activities, and more focused on reading. Grammar appears from the second grade textbooks, and it becomes much more difficult to focus on communication only.

I: * Well, I feel sorry, sometimes, of my ability in teaching as an English teacher. If I were a better teacher, I would handle the problems well. I sometimes question my qualification as a good English teacher. It is my fault....

Q. How do you think about grammar teaching?

G: 2.2 I think that grammar is necessary to teach, but in different ways. It is true that we taught mainly grammar in previous English education, and it was the main reason that CLT appeared. However, to learn grammar is an important tool for language learning. I try not to focus on grammar in my classrooms, but it does not mean that I do not teach it.

H: 2.1 Students need to learn grammar. They need it to use English better. For teachers, knowledge of grammar will provide a solid foundation for English teaching.

J: 2.2 I do not teach grammar itself, but try to combine it with the content of textbooks. If students do not know grammar, they have even more difficulties in reading textbooks, I guess.

Q. What are factors that interfere better English teaching in your classrooms, and why?

H: 3. Basically, I am positive about CLT. It challenges teachers. If we have appropriate situations, it can be better applied. The educational environment in South Korea is the biggest problem to practice better teaching methods, I think.

G: 3. There should be more freedom for English teachers from textbook selection. Sometimes, I think that not having textbooks to follow might provide teachers an opportunity for better English teaching. We need to follow the textbook strictly to prepare exams.

J: 3. Teachers have too many miscellaneous works to do. I am tired when finished teaching for the day, and no energy or time left to prepare next class.

I: 3. We need to admit that English teachers also have problem inside. We have been lazy by having passive attitudes like just following the top-down orders. We have little asked
about what to teach and how to teach seriously. We even do not know much about CLT, but never asked seriously about it.

Q. What factors can help Korean English teachers have teaching methods of their choice?

H: I want more chances that English teachers can share their teaching experiences or ideas. I think that having this kind of interview is very helpful for us since we can share what we are thinking of our teaching. We need more freedom for our decisions as well as chances to share or communicate with other teachers. We need rooms for English teachers to talk about our English teaching practice.

J: I think that English teachers need to have sufficient as well as various supporting materials that they can find and use easily... In sum, it is a matter of supporting environment for English teachers. For instance, if we have assistants in the classrooms when applying CLT, we can try more CLT.

Q. How do you think that English teachers’ opinions have been reflected in English education in South Korea?

H: 5.1 Obviously, we have been passive. We have not participated in any English education policy or curriculum changes... I do not know who decided those. There are always certain groups of people who make decisions. They might be very good at in theory, but not in practice. I wonder who has an actual teaching experience among them?

I: 5.1 I do not care what they decide because it will be changed again soon. I just need to follow what they direct. They copy and apply theories sound good to our education, so we face with a lot of troubles in following their decisions.

J: 5.1 I think that CLT introduction is a typical example of following a foreign teaching model without an analysis of classroom contexts in South Korea although the theory itself is good. We are used to follow many foreign models.

H: 5.2 They should listen to voices from different teachers having various teaching experiences. Further, they should reflect its failure and success by asking to the teachers.

G: 5.2 I hope there are many opportunities that we can participate in decision making process to make them listen to our opinions for policy changes... Yet, it sounds very unfamiliar. I do not know why... I guess that it is because we are not used to such a thing.
Q: What is your understanding of CLT?

K: 1.1 It is not clear, but I think that it would be a communication focused language teaching by not teaching grammar....
L: 1.1 It is a fluency focused language teaching, not accuracy focused. It asks students to use English and to have an ability to use English in actual situations.
M: 1.1 I think that CLT theory itself is OK, but we are not ready for using it in the classrooms.
K: 1.1 I am very positive about what CLT says and its application in theory. However, in practice, to apply original ideas, although those sound good, is really hard in my classrooms. I do not think that I use the CLT a lot in my classrooms.
M: 1.1 I think that students need to have an ability to communicate in English as a result of English language learning. Therefore, I am positive about what CLT aims, but the current educational environment does not support the changes to be successful...
K: 1.1 I think that to have an ability to speak English fits to the current demands of the world. It is an international movement as well as a call for the 21st century. However, the current educational situation does not allow us to practice CLT.
L: 1.1 I think that we need to have different teaching methods fit to the classrooms because only a certain number of students are going to speak English in future. I think that CLT is one of many teaching methods that we can use.

Q: How do you use CLT in your classrooms?

L: 1.2 I am using English for classroom teaching.
K: 1.2 I try to have conversation focused English teaching. I ask students to express their ideas in English.
L: 1.2 I use some visual materials like pictures, maps, and videotapes, and ask students to explain it in English.

Q: What are difficulties in implementing CLT in your classrooms?

M: 1.3 Teachers lack ideas of how to apply it to their classroom teaching. I am sure that teachers are not ready for using CLT due to the low proficiency in English. Most of them still teach grammar, and use same evaluation methods.
K: 1.3 To me, it is difficult to set appropriate situations for teaching conversation. Also, there are too many things to teach in the textbooks... I asked students to read textbooks and answer questions rather than having practice in real situation.
**Q. Do you still teach grammar in your classrooms? How do you think about grammar teaching?**

**K:** 2.1 I need to explain why certain structures that they need to follow even for CLT focused lessons... Also, students need to understand why... They still learn English grammar in private institutions. In CLT, it is not organized with systemic grammar explanation.

**L:** 2.1 We do not teach grammar as much as we did before because it is not practical. In my classrooms, first I explain grammar (give rules first), then use CLT for practice. In fact, I do not have much time for practice, so grammar teaching goes first to give them chances to figure some rules of English.

**M:** 2.2 I think that grammar teaching is necessary. Grammar and conversation is not separated. Also, there are more needs to explain grammar as their grades are getting higher. I think that students will get many benefits by knowing grammar. Is it possible to learn foreign language without teaching its structure? I teach them rules but ask them to practice and apply.... I think that both fluency and accuracy are important. In CLT, it is not clear how to explain grammar, how much, and when... It becomes burden on both students and teachers.

**K:** 2.2 I agree with that. For basic communication, to learn grammar is not necessary. But for higher levels, it becomes important. I try not to focus on teaching grammar too much, but it is not excluded. For higher level of English, accuracy is important. As English teachers, I think that it is important to know when, how, what to teach for grammar, but I do not have a clear idea of how much I should teach grammar.

**Q. What are factors that interfere your English teaching methods to be successful?**

**K:** 3. We do not have appropriate environment to teach English better. Particularly for CLT, it is difficult to use. First, teachers get a lot of pressure from outside about English education, and we are obliged to regularly report output of our teaching to the Ministry of Education. We should be idea banks to teach English because everything is dependent on us.

**L:** 3. The most problem is in textbooks because we make teaching plans according to that. We do not have much time to try different things that we may want to...
M: 3. The evaluation systems also have a problem. Since it focuses on reading not on speaking and writing, there is no way to know whether students can apply it or not in practical situation.

M: 3. The heavy teaching hours is a problem. In fact, we need time for developing materials and studying for better teaching.

K: 3. I get stress from the top-down order for English education. It bothers me, and gives me a big burden. I should report what I am doing to the Ministry of Education. I feel that I am being watched and controlled by the Ministry of Education.

L: 3. To choose teaching methods opens to teachers, but the factors like teaching plans to follow, preparation for exams, results of evaluation (if it is not good) interfere with us in making a better English teaching. We can choose various teaching methods, but the goals for English teaching are same. In other words, syllabus is not restricted but we have a curriculum to follow.

M: 3. We should have own applications fitting to our classroom situation. In fact, there might be rare chance that students use what they learn from the CLT approaches in their lives. We have the same method of evaluation focusing on reading, so there is little chance to test what they learn through CLT. I do not know what we are going to do with this?

Q. To what extent the current English teaching or teaching methods can be better?

K: 4. Better teaching method? There is no perfect teaching method. We need to open to different ones in different situations. Therefore, many different methods should be available to teachers. But, I do not think that I know teaching methods well. I did not have chances to learn English teaching methodologies in pre-service teacher education program… I think that the pre-service teacher education should be changed. I did not learn how to use CLT, and it is difficult to follow teaching methods and curriculum that frequently change. It will be good if we received English education in English…

L: 4. The class size should be small (about 20). We need multi-media rooms providing various resources and materials to share. We need enough time for preparation as well as financial support… We need rooms for English teachers to share their experiences.

M: 4. The content of textbook should be cut down. It is too much to teach all within class hours. Teachers need freedom in using and selecting textbooks, so we can use other materials. We need freedom for textbook publication without being tied up the textbook guidance.

K: 4. If we separate conversation class from grammar, it might be better for us. Evaluation method is a still paper-pencil format focused on reading, so fundamental changes in teaching were not brought in. If the main goal of language learning for students is to help them get good grades in tests, to learn English using CLT will not be successful because there is no chance to test CLT.

L: 4. In-service teacher education is necessary. We need enough opportunities to practice new teaching methods. It will also challenge teachers to practice for better teaching. We have very rare chances for trainings in foreign (English speaking) countries. Currently, we have 60 hours teacher training about every 3 years, but we still should continue other duties when we get the training.
M: 4. We need practical as well as professional help. To know how to implement new curriculum, we need to get help from professional organizations or institutions regarding supporting materials or methodologies.
K: 4. Teachers themselves should work for better teaching and material development: self-efforts are also necessary.

Q. To what extent do you think that English teachers’ opinions have been reflected in English education policy and curriculum in South Korea?

K: 5.1 There has been little channel for teachers’ voices. Teachers have not participated in decision making process. Also, the decision makers do not have teaching experiences. I think that actual English teaching experiences are necessary for all people involved in English education.
K: 5.2 There has been little classroom research of teachers. Policy makers do not have actual experiences while teachers do not have much knowledge. We need research to make our voices to raise our concerns of English education. If we have a lot of research and reports, it will be applied to policy making process. However, currently, we have little time for research. It is not a supportive environment for conducting research.
L: 5.2 Teacher education programs for English teachers should be changed. I think that the current problem in English teaching is not in English teachers. We did not have appropriate trainings to apply different teaching methods in practice. They should change the curriculum in teacher training programs. It is said that the quality of education does not go over the quality of teachers. We learned a little bit of teaching methods in theory, but it was different in practice. We need chances to experience actual teaching before we graduate colleges.
M: 5.2 I have had a lot of trials and errors after I began English teaching. I realized that the actual English classrooms are much different than I learned in pre-service teacher training program. There are many gaps between what I have learned and what I do. I had only one teacher training for one term before I graduate, and I feel that I needed it more.
L: 5.2 Teachers’ self-motivated research is necessary. In fact, the Ministry of Education needs to provide sufficient supports to teachers who are interested in research because it is hard to do teaching and research together.
K: 5.2 The rooms for English teachers to communicate with and share experiences and materials are necessary. We could do some workshops together. It will provide an environment that encourages English teachers to collect and share information, and to do research.
Q. How do you think about CLT application to your English classrooms?

N: 0. There have been frequent curriculum changes for English education in South Korea. Particularly, the 6th curriculum renovation (from 1995 for middle school, 1996 for high school) was originated from a need to use English as an international language as well as a reflection of previous English language education, which did not help learners use L2. Foci in the new curriculum were changed to listening and speaking. The 7th curriculum applying from 2001 will include grammar teaching acknowledging problems in previous curriculum, which excluded grammar teaching.
N: 1.1. As you know, CLT adoption was a response to the traditional grammar teaching and tedious memorization of English. In fact, from 6th curriculum, there has no exam about pronunciation. Do you remember how you learned pronunciation? Students just memorized all sounds to prepare exams.
N: 1.1. I think that the positive aspect of CLT implementation is that English classrooms become interesting. It has caused interests among students by using classroom activities, and encouraged their participations. I think that to use CLT makes English classrooms better than before. In contrast, the negative aspect of CLT is that there is little interest in teachers about CLT mainly due to lack of teacher training for using CLT. It, thus, has been implemented poorly. I think that no school applies CLT in theory.

Q. What are reasons that CLT has been implemented poorly?

N: 1.3. It is difficult in implementing speaking and writing in classroom teaching. Further, there is little need for using CLT outside classrooms. Positive aspects in CLT were not implemented in classrooms because it is difficult to use.

Q. What are reasons for the difficulties?

N: 3. First of all, textbook has a problem. Textbook problem is a social issue because the government has controlled textbooks. The government guided textbook selections, and directed guidelines for textbook publications.
N: 3. I think that English teachers have little solid educational philosophy in terms of how to teach and what to teach. They have become passive recipients from the government regarding English education. Further, the educational environment does not allow teachers to practice and develop their own philosophy. The number of students in classrooms, hours of teaching, and other duties are really matters.
Q. What are the factors that interfere English teachers feel comfortable in teaching?

N: 3. They have little understanding of teaching methods. For instance, one English teacher said that “Yes, she is” is a wrong answer because it is not a full answer like “Yes, she is pretty.” for the question of “Is she pretty?” What to teach and how to response are not clear to them.

N: 3. Most of all, in-service teacher education is a problem. Teacher education should help teachers practice new curriculum. More in-service teacher training programs are necessary. There is one in-service teacher training program (60 hour conversation program) in Seoul. Currently, each year one teacher from one school goes to the in-service teacher training as a representative of the school. In fact, neither is it easy to apply what they learn from the training into their classrooms nor to corporate with other teachers.

N: 3 or 4 Pre-service teacher education has provided little chance to learn and practice teaching methods. Therefore, most teachers did not build clear philosophy or ideas for their teaching.

Q. How can English teachers be helped?

N: 4. Well, we need freedom in textbook development, publication, and selection (outside factors), and self-training (inside factor). First, national curriculum should be changed. There is no need to have English education controlled by the government. Teachers can decide textbooks and curriculum. We need freedom to decide what we want.

N: 4. I think that English should become a selective subject. What is the responsibility of public education for teaching English? Public schools only need to serve needs and interests of all students. Students will have chances to learn higher levels of English from other sources later on.

N: 5.1 There has been frequent educational policy and curriculum changes—no more incentives for teachers. We become recipients, and it causes a lack of idea of how to teach. What are advantages when teachers develop teaching methods and materials? What are rewards? Obviously, there had been no incentive for better teaching.

Q. Do you think that opinions of English teachers have been reflected well to English education policy and curriculum?

N: 5.1 The policy and curriculum changes for English education has been made by a small number of people, and their opinions always brought curriculum changes, but no one has majored teaching methodologies among them. In fact, most English teachers do not know how the CLT was selected and who made the decision. They have been passive to educational policy and curriculum.

N: 5.2 Currently, a group of English teachers have set up a symposium for current English education. I think that it is an action to raise voices of teachers and construct our professionalism. One of topics that we discussed was “How much English education is
necessary in South Korea?” Also, there should be research from Macro perspectives asking “why?”

N: 5.2 As I have known of, there has been no need analysis conducted before they changed curriculum for English education. I think that Korean students do not have much need to learn English through CLT. The main goal of CLT was to use English in reality. However, little students are exposed to English language in their life, so there is little need for learning productive English skills like speaking and writing. I think that reading is important for Internet use. The actual need for using English is in reading rather than speaking.

N: * Importance in reading: In CLT, speaking is more important. But, there is no need that all Korean students need to speak English.

N: 4. Most students go to private institutions while they attend schools. Therefore, public education is not only the place that takes a responsibility for English education. Small number of students actually use English in their future.

N: 5. Well, we need to have supportive environment like a small class size, less teaching hours to help English teachers... It is out of question.
School 6
Time: June 7, 2000
Place: School 6 in Seoul, South Korea
Three Teachers (Kyong-ok (O), An-sook (P), Tae-joo (Q))

Q. What is your understanding of CLT?

P: 1.1 It is not clear, but I think that it emphasizes communication and functional approach. But to me, it is more comfortable to teach sentences with some grammar instructions.

O: 1.2 In practice, I use audio-lingual, grammar, and CLT activities together. I am not focusing on CLT only for classroom teaching. It is impossible to use only CLT. I think that there is not enough understanding of CLT among teachers. Like what I do, they just apply the content of textbooks introducing CLT to classroom teaching. In most cases, there seems no CLT application beyond the textbook level in the actual teaching. We just follow textbook guidance without having clear ideas about what to do and how to do regarding CLT.

Q: 1.3 It is difficult to use CLT in the classrooms. I do not have clear ideas about teaching methodology. Many factors, such as a large class size, lengths of textbook, lack of appropriate environment (multimedia rooms, equipments to practice different approaches), various levels of students, competitive educational system, content to cover to prepare exams, difficulty to control students in group works, lack of time to practice conversation with students, are all matters for the reasons.

P: 1.3 Regarding the classroom environment, I think that English classrooms need audiovisual equipment. We need language labs, which do not bother other classes when we practice CLT activities.

Q. Could you tell me a little bit more about the difficulties that you have in using CLT?

O: 1.3 Students feel interested in group activities, but their different levels of language proficiency make teachers feel so hard in using CLT related activities. Sometimes, I need to write directions in Korean on the blackboard for some students who do not understand what I am saying in English. I guess that there should be different approaches for different levels of students. Some students have advanced knowledge in English from private institutions. For them, what they learn in the classrooms is not new, thus very boring.

Q: 1.3 I think that my students like the fact that I can speak in and listen to English. However, most students have low desires for English learning in general. As they have more English classes, they feel more tired about instruction in English. I guess that they are already tired of studying English and examinations.

P: 1.3 I think that the test is a big problem. There is little chance to test CLT. How can we test students’ free talking on test? Tests still focus on reading. Teachers are not ready for new test types. Actually, we do not have a clear idea how to test students’
communicative ability. Are there any guidelines? How do we evaluate those abilities? It may bring us a lot of extra works, but there is little time or desire to try new test types.

O: 1.3 Well. We are not native speakers of English. To use English only in the classrooms might be feasible in theory, but not in practice. We have a lot of limitations in our abilities in using English. To use English only benefits excellent students, not many students who do not understand English well. I think that we should use both English and Korean. If we can use English well, we need to use English for English teaching, but if we do not, why should we use only English for our teaching? I do not like making mistakes in front of my students. I know that some teachers try to use English in the classrooms. But, they use only typical classroom English (simple classroom English like “open your books”...). Some mistakes should be allowed because it is not our mother tongue.

P: 1.3 Textbooks are neither interesting nor informative. Both students and teachers feel that the textbooks are very boring. One reason is that the government regulates its content through government guidelines.

Q: 1.3 Native English teachers applied different teaching methods, but they failed to control classrooms. They applied teaching methods, which were not used to students. There were also cultural misunderstandings, so many of them left classroom being disappointed about results of their teaching. I guess that to use native speakers of English, in fact, was helpful for teachers rather than students (we could have chances to communicate with native speakers, and asks questions related to English teaching).

O: 4 In the current educational settings, we lack support from schools and governments. For instance, we have not had enough in-service teacher trainings for new English curriculum. So far, to have an in-service teacher training in foreign countries, teachers should have more than 15 years of teaching experiences. But even if they are chosen, they should provide financial supports for self-education, therefore, only a small number of teachers can go outside. Also, there is one 5week teacher-training program inside. We need more supportive and frequent in-service English teacher trainings.

Q. Well, let’s change our topics to grammar teaching. Do you still want to teach grammar in your classrooms? If yes, why?

O: 2.1 I think that grammar teaching is necessary, as levels of student get higher. It is very difficult to teach English without grammar explanations.

P: 2.1 I do not teach grammar just for grammar. I teach grammar at the end or in the beginning of the class. Currently, textbooks do not have a grammar section, so it makes teachers get confused in terms of what to teach and how to teach grammar. I think that students get confused also. I heard that they include grammar teaching from 7th curriculum reform.

O: 2.2 I am positive about grammar teaching because it provides structures of language. I think that it is necessary to teach grammar. To teach English without grammar explanation might be possible for a beginning level, but as levels go up, it becomes important to provide fundamental knowledge of English language to students. Without explanation of grammar, how students can understand the structure of language in EFL situation where target language input is not much provided for learners inside or outside
classrooms. I do not think that Korean students can learn English naturally without learning grammar.

Q. It seems that there are many problems in English language teaching. What are factors interfering your English language teaching to be better? What factors can help those problems?

Q: 4. First, there is too much pressure on English education. The pressure makes English teachers get harder to teach English for their own ways. Definitely, it is a social issue. I believe that English education should be similar to other subjects, so students also feel less burdens on their English learning.

O: 4. We need enough time to practice English teaching. The contents of textbooks should be reduced (e.g., new vocabulary or usage to teach in one chapter are about 30). We need enough time for preparation before the class, but it is difficult to do it everyday basis... I am curious what are useful methods for English teaching? We need to use other textbooks. What we teach does not correspond to international English. We need other textbooks developed in English speaking countries because those will be more practical to use than the current ones.

P: 3. There are too many lessons to cover in the textbooks. I wanted to use activities, but it made the class go slow, and I needed to catch up lesson plans get behind. Whenever I use activities, I am always behind from teaching plans. For instance, the textbook for 1st grade has 18 chapters, 2nd grade has 16 chapters. In general, we should cover or complete one chapter in two weeks. I guess that to cover one chapter, at least 7 or 8 hours are necessary, which means we need more than two weeks to teach one chapter.

O: 4. We need rooms for English teachers to share and collaborate together. Having systematic meetings for English teachers will be good.

Q: 4. We need financial supports for English teachers to collaborate.

Q. You have many opinions about English teaching and methods. What are your thoughts about the current English education policy and curriculum? Do you think that teachers' opinions have been reflected well?

O: 5.1 Who decided the curriculum change? Whose voices are reflected on the reform? Were there any English teachers? Well, I guess, that it is a rather social problem. There have been too many changes.

P: 5.1 Decision makers need to have teaching experiences in classrooms. Then, they can come up with what problems they face with and how to improve their teaching. In theory, many things seem possible, but in practice, it turns out different because there are numerous factors involved in classroom teaching.

Q: 5.1 We have been too much dependent toward language teaching methods from outside. If it seemed good, we applied it to the classrooms. I think that theory is just a theory. It can work out, but not all the time.
O: 5.1 English education policies had been made mainly by the group of people who did not have actual teaching experiences. In general, teachers are weak in theoretical backgrounds, but they are experts in actual teaching.

P: 5.2 We need to raise our voices. We need to work and study harder to build professionalism of English teachers. Currently, teachers begin to participate in textbook development (a little bit). But, not yet for educational policy...

O: 5.2 We need to do research of English classrooms to be more active teachers. Without building on our own profession, they will understand our voices just as complaints. We need to change our attitudes. We have been too much passive.

O: 5.2 Also, we have gained little knowledge of teaching methodologies to implement in the classrooms from teacher education programs. So, there was little interest in teaching methods among English teachers. Further, there has been no change in class size, amount of content in textbooks to teach, so it was not feasible to develop new teaching methods in such an environment.

Q: 4. I think that we need to change goals of middle school English education to get rid of fear about English learning. Students will feel free about English learning by having English as a selective subject… We need to reduce social expectation or pressure on English learning or use. Social change is necessary. It is a big social problem. Students easily give up English learning due to the pressure on English, and most of them are already tired of English class. I think that the existence of social expectation to English and entrance exams add more pressure on students as well as teachers. We want students to feel interest in English learning. We want to give them incentives and desires for English learning. Is it impossible to provide such an environment that students can keep up their interests in language learning?

P: 5.1 Well, it is out of control of teachers. We cannot do anything about this social phenomenon.

O: 5.2 I do not think so. For instance, teachers need to take participate in textbook developments. We need to learn from other textbooks. It needs to be fun and interesting. We need people who know both Korean and English culture and language well to make textbooks better. Currently, teachers only have a right to select textbooks out of 8 different textbooks.