

2015

Overcoming the challenges: How native English-speaking teachers develop the English speaking skills of university students in South Korea

Dawon Seo
Edith Cowan University

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**Overcoming the challenges: How native English-speaking teachers develop
the English speaking skills of university students in South Korea**

A thesis submitted to the Edith Cowan University as the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy,

DAWON SEO

Edith Cowan University

Faculty of Education and Arts

School of Education

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

Abstract

English is considered the most important language after Korean in South Korea; thus, it is a compulsory subject in schools. English lessons begin in year three of the primary school and continue until the end of schooling, including at the university level. This was not always the case, as English was not considered to be significant until the Korean government needed people who could speak it in order to communicate with the US military during the Korean War. After a period where English was backgrounded by more pressing issues, it re-emerged as necessary to promote globalisation which was seen as a challenge for the Korean people. More recently, additional pressure to improve Korean students' English language competence has come from an increasing economic dependence on international trade.

The Department of Education has responded differently to these three main points of pressure to improve English language competency. Initially, they adopted a grammar-translation method to respond to the demand provided by the Korean War, and following the failure of this method to produce competent speakers of English, the audio lingual method was introduced to address the communication issues associated with globalisation. However, this method was also seen to fail, primarily as teachers at that time had learnt through a grammar translation method which did not develop the spoken English skills they needed for this way of teaching. More recently, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has been implemented in an attempt to improve Korean students' use of English for spoken communication.

The CLT approach promotes a focus on meaning more than form, content and function more than grammar and fluency more than accuracy. The approach also emphasises student-centred learning, communicative competence, authentic speech, and the teaching of cultural knowledge. To address the issue of teacher competence, many universities employ native speakers of English to teach the conversation units in English related courses. Despite this and other support, students continue to struggle to achieve communicative competence in English. This perpetuates a cycle of failure in English learning when some of these students graduate as a new generation of English teachers unable to speak English with fluency or confidence. Only a small number of studies have investigated this issue and they identified the linguistic differences between English and Korean, cultural differences, Korean learners'

characteristics and students' low levels of motivation as the four main challenges. In order to extend this work, this study investigated what was happening in English conversation classrooms so as to identify those aspects of pedagogy that supported student learning and the challenges which may have impeded it. Further, the previous studies were conducted in middle schools so this one selected the university level of schooling as a context not yet investigated.

The study employed a qualitative research design in the form of a case study. The case included three sub cases, each focusing on a native English-speaking conversation teacher in a national university. The data were collected through classroom observations followed by informal discussions, interviews, reflective journals, document analysis, and research field notes. First, the study investigated the teaching practices the three informants used in their university level English conversation classrooms and compared these to those expected in a CLT-based classroom. Second, the challenges the teachers experienced in the implementation of a communicative approach were explored. Lastly, the study investigated how the challenges identified might be addressed in a South Korean university context.

The study found that the three teachers, although all claiming to use very similar communicative teaching methods, did not do so. One used a highly structured approach that relied heavily on a high level of teacher control, with careful direction of learning and controlled repetition of specific language forms. Another took a student-centred approach with careful structuring of authentic activities to encourage students to interact using English fluently. The third teacher used a communicative approach but with very limited support provided to his students. The teachers' practices were influenced by their educational backgrounds, teaching experiences and beliefs. This study identified three different types of challenges faced by the teachers of English conversation in a South Korean university. The first was the marginalised position of English conversation classes in the university; the second was the teachers' limited knowledge of the CLT approach and their students' cultural and educational backgrounds; and, the third was the students' limited access to English outside of their English conversation classes. These findings have a number of implications for Korean universities, including those related to the recruitment of English speaking teachers and the support offered to them after their appointments, the integration of English conversation units into the major areas of study and the provision of conditions suited to the demands of learning English as a foreign language.

The declaration page
is not included in this version of the thesis

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CLT – Communicative Language Teaching

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

ESL – English as a Second Language

EPIK – English Program in Korea

FL – Foreign Language

FLA – First Language Acquisition

LAD – Language Acquisition Device

NCLRC – National Capital Language Resource Center

NES - Native English-Speaking

NIIED – National Institute for International Education

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language

TOEIC – Test of English for International Communication

UG – Universal Grammar

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the status of English in South Korea, English education in South Korea, the purpose, and the significance of this study. An overview of the structure of the thesis is also provided.

1.1 The status of English in South Korea

South Korea is a strongly monolingual country, but despite this, English language has played a very important role in its recent history (Shim & Park, 2008). The conservation of the Korean language and its continued use during the Japanese colonial period was a source of great pride for the Korean people and an important expression of their self-identity (Poonoosamy, 2009; Shim & Park, 2008). Furthermore, the Korean people's great affection for their mother language enabled them to unite throughout the period of Japanese colonisation and modernisation, which was influenced by western countries. Therefore, the use of Korean as a national language is highly valued and this sense of pride has reinforced the monolingual views of Koreans (Poonoosamy, 2009; Shim & Park, 2008).

However, during the Korean War, in the period of 1950 - 1953, the government needed Korean people who were skilled in English in order to communicate with the U.S. military personnel who were stationed in the southern part of Korea. Following that war, English continued to be an important language due to its political value (Collins, 2005; Shim & Park, 2008). The value of English grew during the 1980s largely due to the Korean government's hosting of the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympic Games (Shim & Park, 2008). Since that time, the Korean government has considered the mastery of English, which is a challenge for Korean people, as one of the essential skills to align with globalisation and has, therefore, pushed its citizens to learn English communication skills (Collins, 2005; Shim & Park, 2008).

In the mid-1990s, the Korean government adopted 'globalisation' as their national slogan and under its influence made two prominent changes to its education policy. The first change was to shift English language teaching methodology to focus on communicative fluency rather than on grammatical knowledge (Shim & Park, 2008). The second change was to introduce English earlier in the school curriculum, moving the introduction from the seventh to the third grade (Lee, 2010; Shim & Park, 2008). These reforms were supported by the

introduction of the ‘English Program in Korea (EPIK)’ in 1994. This program was regarded as the Ministry of Education’s prime project (EPIK, 2013a), reflecting the importance placed on promoting English language learning. The purpose of EPIK was to help students to improve their spoken English by employing native speaking teachers in public schools (EPIK, 2013a, 2013b). The Korean people saw this government focus and investment as indicating the importance of mastering English speaking skills and, consequently, there was increased motivation to develop these skills (Shim & Park, 2008).

The influence of these policy changes has continued into the current time. In 2007, then President Roh Moo-hyun announced that English is an indispensable skill for Korean people to achieve in order to participate in globally competitive industries. He pointed out that many highly developed countries have citizens who can speak English (Shim & Park, 2008). Furthermore, the President extended the scope of the EPIK reforms when he stated that in order to respond to the demand for fluent English speakers to engage in the global community, English will have to be the medium of instruction at least in all English classrooms (Shim & Park, 2008). The response to this directive has been an even greater focus on developing English speaking skills (Lee, 2010; Shim & Park, 2008).

1.2 English education in South Korea

In South Korea, English is the most important language after Korean. Therefore, it is a compulsory subject in schools with lessons beginning in year three of primary school and continuing until the end of schooling. Students’ scores in English examinations taken during their senior high school education are very important to their university entrance. It follows then that English teaching is focused on those aspects tested in the examinations and these include listening, reading, and grammar-based tasks. So, even though the current policies would seem to be designed to promote spoken English competence, the testing regime would seem to be promoting the other modes of language together with accuracy more than fluency. As a result, South Korean students have limited opportunities to develop their spoken competence despite eight or more years of English education (Lee, 2010; Poonosamy, 2009).

There have been changes in English teaching methods over time as the Ministry of Education have had to respond to shifts in national demand for English use (Collins, 2005; Flattery, 2007; Shim & Park, 2008). For instance, the grammar-translation method was used in English

classrooms after the Japanese colonial period until the Korean War and the continued collaboration with the US government that followed demanded spoken competence (Shim & Park, 2008) and challenged its dominance. The audio-lingual method was then introduced to address the need for spoken competence as it focused on this rather than grammatical accuracy (Collins, 2005). However, Collins (2005) pointed out that the method was not successful because the Korean teachers of English at that time, having learnt the language through the grammar-translation method, had such poorly developed spoken skills that they were unable to teach them.

In the 1990s, additional pressure to improve Korean students' English skills came from the government wanting its people to be part of a global generation so as to promote the development of increasingly important international trade (Flattery, 2007). The Ministry of Education responded to this pressure by replacing the audio-lingual method with a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach to teaching English. Since then, this approach has been the main means of teaching English at every level of education in South Korea (Flattery, 2007).

The CLT approach in a Korean context focuses on meaning more than form, content and function more than grammar, fluency more than accuracy, student-centred learning, communicative competence, authentic speech, and the teaching of cultural knowledge (Kim, 2001). While this conforms to the principles of the CLT approach, it would seem that South Korean students are not achieving the level of speaking skills this conformity promised (Jambor, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). At the same time, good results from the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), together with excellent speaking skills, have remained the keys to better job opportunities for students (Jambor, 2010; Shim & Park, 2008). As a result of this, university students have started investing large amounts of money and time into achieving good speaking skills and subsequently, higher scores on the TOEIC. Some students consider this goal so important that they even go to English speaking countries to learn communicative skills at an early age (Jambor, 2010; Lee, 2010; Park & Abelmann, 2004). This begs the question of why, given the implementation of communicative teaching approaches, in many cases taught by native speakers of the language, students are still failing to learn English speaking skills; a question that the current study seeks to address in the context of a national university.

There is also an increasing trend in many universities for the medium of instruction to be English in other subject areas in addition to English conversation units (Byun et al., 2011; Jambor, 2010; Shim & Park, 2008). Furthermore, the lecturers in English conversation classes at universities have to be native speakers of English in order to provide an authentic language learning environment. However, students still struggle to achieve communicative competence in English even though there are many supports from their university to assist them to improve their speaking skills (Jambor, 2010; Shim & Park, 2008). Hence, it is valuable to investigate what is happening in English conversation classrooms in order to identify those aspects of methodology that support student learning and those which impede it. The challenges that impede the work of the teachers and/or the learning of the students need to be identified so that they can be systematically addressed. Earlier studies identified Korean linguistic features, Korean learners' characteristics, cultural differences and learners' low motivation as barrier to learning English (Flattery, 2007; Lee, 2001; Li, 1998), however, these were undertaken in the context of middle schools rather than universities. Additionally, research needs to examine what teaching practices are currently used in university-based English conversation classes, how they are implemented, and the influence of teachers' backgrounds, experiences and beliefs in relation to their teaching.

1.3 The purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to examine teaching practices that were used in English conversation classrooms in South Korean universities to enhance students' English speaking skills and to investigate the challenges faced by native English-speaking teachers in this context. In order to meet this purpose, the teaching practices of three native English speakers employed as English conversation teachers in a national university in South Korea were investigated. Then, the challenges experienced by the teachers and their suggestions as to how these might be addressed were examined. Lastly, the study explored ways for the issues raised by this study to be addressed, drawing on its findings and those of other relevant research.

1.4 Significance of this study

As was described in the previous sections, the achievement levels of South Korean students in the area of English speaking skills are poor despite decades of targeted intervention programs. Kim (2001) suggested that the CLT approach is well implemented in terms of compliance with the principles of the approach. If that is the case, then further investigation is

required to identify what factors are preventing the development of students' English speaking skills. Given the high level of government and individual investment in English language education and the severe consequences for students' future employment choices if they fail to achieve a sufficiently high level of spoken English competence, it is an important issue to investigate further. Despite this importance, there is currently very little research addressing the issue. This study aims to contribute to the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in South Korea by investigating the persistent problem of why Korean students fail to achieve spoken English competence.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is structured in the following way. Chapter 1 provides an overview of English education in South Korea, focusing on the historical background and the current policy. Additionally, the purpose and the significance of the study are described.

Chapter 2, Literature Review, provides a brief account of the key second language acquisition (SLA) theories with emphasis on the development of speaking skills and the characteristics of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. Next, it explores how this study relates to research in the field, focusing on the implementation of CLT in South Korean and other countries where English is learned as a foreign language (EFL). Finally, it reiterates the conceptual framework and research questions for this study.

Chapter 3, Methodology, describes the research design chosen for this study and the context, participants, the research process, the procedures of data collection, the initial data analysis processes, and the limitations of this study.

Chapter 4, Case Studies, provides the three sub-cases forming the case study that is the basis of this research. Each sub-case describes the participant's demographic background, prior teaching experience, teaching philosophy and teaching approach.

Chapter 5, Cross-case Analysis, presents the patterns that emerged when the three sub-cases were compared and contrasted.

Chapter 6, Discussion, elaborates on the patterns found in the cross-case analysis and relates these findings to the relevant literature.

Chapter 7, Conclusion, summarises the key findings to answer the research questions. The contribution the study makes to the field and the implications of its findings are noted. Finally, the contribution of this study and recommendations for future research are made.

An overview of the structure of the study is presented in Figure 1.1.

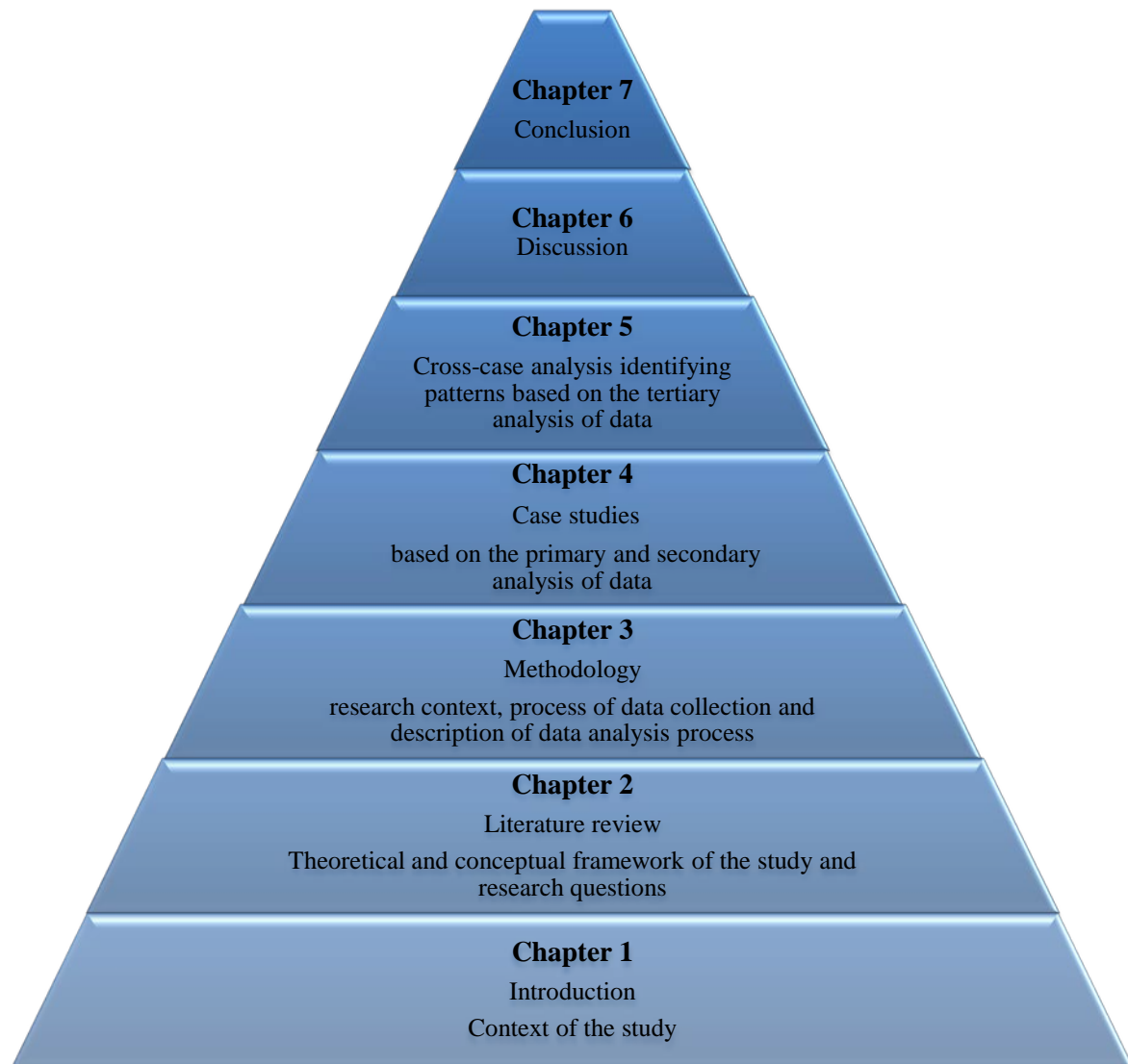


Figure 1.1 The Overview of the Thesis Structure

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter described the role of English in South Korea and noted how its growing importance as a lingua franca in the ‘global’ community is motivating the Korean government to see fluency in it as an important outcome of education. The way in which the Ministry of Education responded to the pressure to increase student achievement in English

language by introducing different methodological approaches was described. The chapter noted that this study is motivated by the issue of poor achievement levels in English speaking skills persisting despite the high level of support being provided.

The next chapter will describe how this study relates to the research in the field. To that end, it will examine the current theories of second language acquisition (SLA), the relative focus on accuracy and fluency in teaching speaking skills, and the characteristics of the CLT approach. Additionally, it will investigate the implementation of the CLT approach in South Korea and other countries where English is learned as a Foreign Language (EFL) as this is a key part of the context of this study. Then, it will explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices, as this aspect of teachers' work is important to this study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the research relevant to this study. First, it reviews the current theories of second language acquisition (SLA) as these underpin the teaching approaches teachers adopt. Second, it discusses views on the relative importance of accuracy and fluency when teaching speaking skills. Third, the key characteristics of communicative language teaching (CLT) are described as this approach is mandated for national universities in South Korea, including the university where this study was located. Given the importance of context in this study, the implementation of CLT in South Korea, and other countries where English is learned as a foreign language, will be examined. Finally, the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices will be explored. This review will provide a conceptual framework for the study and identify the questions it will explore.

2.1. Background

Teaching speaking skills in a second language is a key goal for language teachers and learning these speaking skills is a major aim for second language learners (Burns, 2006). Indeed, for many language learners, speaking skill is regarded as the measurement of knowing a language (NCLRC, 2004). Further, many students see speaking skills as a priority in their language learning because they have to use them to communicate with other people in real life situations (Hedge, 2000). Therefore, teaching speaking skills is an important goal for second language classes.

However, teaching speaking skills in a second language is not a simple task. This is seen as due to their intricacy which discourages learners (Dalton-Puffer, 2006). It is not surprising then that some learners have found learning speaking skills in a second language to be the most challenging of the four macro skills (Martínez-Flor, Usó- Juan, & Soler, 2006). Martínez-Flor, et al. (2006) found this to be the case because of the complexity of creating meaning through speech as this requires speakers to understand the social and cultural context in which the communication happens, and to use the target language in pragmatically appropriate and linguistically accurate ways. This implies that the speakers must have well-developed listening skills as they will rely on these in conversations where meaning is built collaboratively (Burns, 2006). A further complexity arises from the more fluid and less predictable meaning-making process that operates in spoken communication compared to written (Dalton-Puffer, 2006; Martínez-Flor et al., 2006).

As speaking skills are very challenging for language learners and they are the focus of this study, the following review of the literature will focus particularly on the teaching of this aspect of English in a foreign language learning context. As noted earlier, it will explore the teaching of these skills in relation to current second language acquisition theory and views of the relative importance of accuracy as opposed to fluency. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) will then be examined as it is currently the most popular method used in language teaching and the main methodology of English education in South Korea, the context of this study. In this section, there will be a particular emphasis on the implementation of this largely western approach in Korea and similar countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Finally, the review will discuss the research related to the influence of teachers' beliefs on their teaching practices.

2.2. Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

There are three main classes of theory related to SLA: behaviourism, rationalism, and constructivism (Brown, 2000). First, behaviourism was introduced in the 1940s and 1950s and is considered to have been the main theory of environmentalists (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991). The main tenet of behaviourism was that habit formation is the key constituent in language learning (Skinner, 1957). These habits develop as learners respond to stimuli and are reinforced until a stimuli-response connection is made (Ellis, 2008). Further, these theories regarded input as important in that it can be manipulated and together with feedback, has a direct link to output. This theoretical approach constructed the learner as passive and subject to external factors, or the environment (Ellis, 2008; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Lightbown & Spada, 1993, 2013).

Second, rationalism was introduced in the 1960s and 1970s, and was strongly influenced by Chomsky (1995, 1975, 2010) who stated that human language cannot be explained simply by a stimuli-response connection. Indeed, he argued that human beings are equipped with a faculty for learning language which he called the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) (Chomsky, 1965, 1975, 2010). According to Chomsky, this faculty is the major determinant of language acquisition, and only a small amount of exposure to input is needed to activate it (Chomsky, 1965, 1975, 2010; Ellis, 2008).

According to rationalism, also referred to as the nativist theory, the complexity of language acquisition is explained as an innate language specific capacity that makes learning possible

(Chomsky, 1965, 1975). In their comprehensive review of the major theories of SLA, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) stated that the two important nativist theories are Universal Grammar and the Monitor Theory. Universal Grammar (UG) was a concept developed by Chomsky (1965) who asserted that human beings are born with innate 'language-specific knowledge' that allows language learning to happen. He argued that this endowment, in the form of UG, was necessary as inductive learning processes are not sufficient to support language learning.

According to the Monitor Theory, developed by Krashen (1976), there are two separate knowledge systems in SLA and are the 'acquired system' and the 'learned system'. Krashen claims that learners already have the language-learning abilities acquired through learning their first language and are, therefore, able to apply this system to their second language learning subconsciously. He asserts that the 'learned system' is normally obtained through formal instruction, such as classroom language teaching, and it helps the learners with the conscious understanding of the grammatical rules of the second language it builds (Krashen, 1976, 1981).

However, Krashen (1985) posits that adult learners have an *affective filter* which may prevent them learning. That is, when the *affective filter* is *up* learners fail to acquire the target language, whereas language acquisition can occur when the affective filter is *down*. The filter will be *down* when learners are not stressed by concern about failure in their learning (Krashen, 1985). According to this theory, learners with a high level of motivation and self-confidence together with a low level of anxiety are more successful in their language learning than those who are concerned about failure (Krashen, 1981, 1985). It follows then that language learners should be provided with a supportive environment that promotes a low *affective filter*. Gass and Selinker (2001) challenged Krashen's theory arguing that affective variables, such as motivation, self-confidence and anxiety, are not explicitly defined or explained in terms of their scope or the process by which they were accounted for in the theory. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) argued that the types of affective variables which increase or decrease language learners' affective filter need to be specified, including with attention to whether all of the variables are needed or only one is sufficient.

Lastly, constructivism was introduced in the 1980s and early 2000s. The main themes of this theory are interactive discourse, sociocultural variables, cooperative group learning and interactionist hypotheses (Brown, 2000; Long, 1981, 1983b, 1985a, 1996). According to the

interactionist theory, a complex interaction between the linguistic environment and the learner's internal cognitive skills promotes language learning (Brown, 2000; Ellis, 2008; Long, 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a, 1996). Long (1981, 1996) argued that comprehensible input is essential in SLA, but it is not sufficient and, therefore, language learners need to be exposed to an interactive environment where they can negotiate meaning and through this process receive negative feedback.

This suggests that the three important factors that facilitate second language learning are comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), modified input and interaction (Long, 1981), and comprehensible output (Swain, 1995). These factors would seem to provide a theoretical framework for second language acquisition and, if so, that language learning programs should provide students with access to them as shown in Figure 2.1.

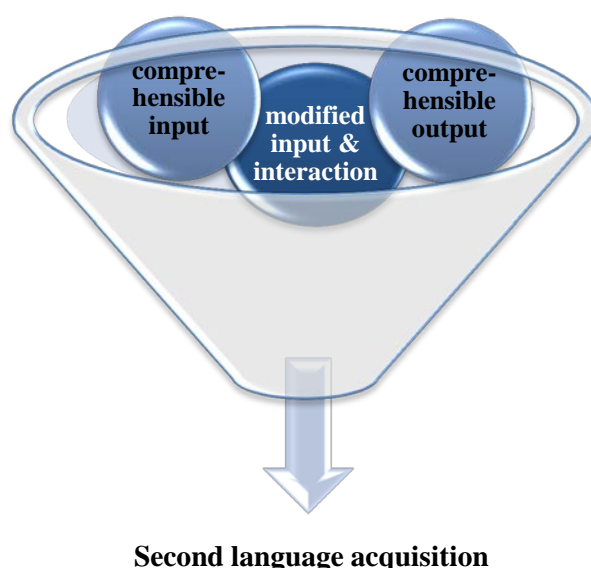


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework for Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

2.2.1. Comprehensible Input

The Input Hypothesis was introduced by Krashen (1985) who argued that human beings learn language through receiving comprehensible input. According to this theoretical perspective, language teachers do not have to teach grammatical rules because these will be acquired automatically if learners are given access to target language they can understand.

The Interactionists agree that comprehensible input is necessary, but argue that it is not sufficient for language acquisition to occur (Long, 1981, 1996). They do not agree that the grammatical rules of the second language will be unconsciously acquired on the basis of the first with only the stimulus of comprehensible input. Rather, they posit that learners require

negative evidence to prompt them to notice (Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 2001) that their output includes non-native features (Long, 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a, 1996; Oliver, 1995, 1998; Oliver & Grote, 2010; Philp & Iwashita, 2013; Pica, 1987, 1988, 1994).

2.2.2. Modified Input and Interaction

Long (1981) claimed that comprehensible input is necessary for second language acquisition (SLA), but it is not sufficient as interaction is also needed. That is, he argued that SLA is most efficient when comprehensible input is modified through the negotiation of meaning. In the main, this negotiation of meaning is achieved by learners' active interaction while doing purposeful language tasks (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Long, 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a, 1996). Thus, it is argued that interaction between learners' general cognitive abilities and their linguistic learning environment is the key to their SLA (Brown, 2000; Ellis, 2008; Long, 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a, 1996). In this approach, learners apply their internal cognitive skills to their social interactions through active negotiation of meaning, and this involves a recursive process of input – production – feedback (Long, 1990). That is, language learners should be exposed to comprehensible input through interaction with interlocutors, and once they receive that input, they intake and process the information to produce output. Then, they receive negative feedback on their production through the negotiation of meaning, and this feedback, in turn, provides a form of modified input to the learners. This recursive process is best achieved through interactions within meaningful communicative activities. Figure 2.2 illustrates this process.

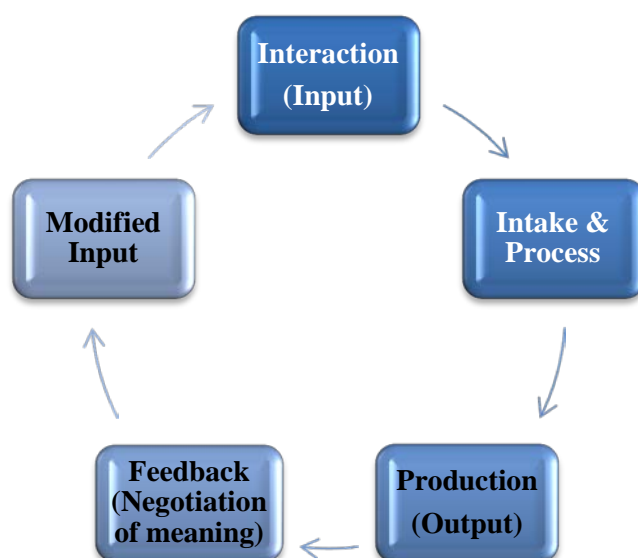


Figure 2.2 The Recursive Process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Long (1981) argued that input modified through interaction rather than provided in a simplified form as part of learning materials, or comprehensible input, is more powerful in promoting SLA.

2.2.3. Comprehensible Output

Swain (1995) claimed that comprehensible input is necessary for SLA, but comprehensible output also plays a significant role. This claim was generated from studies conducted in immersion programs in Canada (Swain, 1984, 1985). In these programs, English-speaking Canadian students learning French as a second language were provided with comprehensible input throughout their schooling, but they displayed much lower levels of spoken proficiency compared to the same-aged native speakers of French (Swain, 1984, 1985). With these results, Swain postulated that comprehensible input is not sufficient for language acquisition and, thus, learners need to be forced to produce comprehensible output (Swain, 1995, 1998, 2005). Swain claimed that language learners can learn from this output which has the three important functions of noticing/triggering, hypothesis-testing, and a metalinguistic function. First, output serves a consciousness-raising function by helping learners to notice gaps in their linguistic knowledge, and, in turn, this noticing triggers cognitive processes which involve formulating and testing assumptions about linguistic forms and functions. Second, the hypothesis-testing function helps learners to modify their output by trying out rules they formulate as part of the language learning process. Third, the metalinguistic function encourages learners to examine their output so that they identify problems and negotiate how to solve them (Swain, 1995, 1998, 2005).

Further, it is argued that these three functions of comprehensible output are important to SLA since they are achieved through negotiated interactions. That is, learners notice their linguistic gaps (Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 2001) during interactive meaning-focused communication with interlocutors and they negotiate the meaning to explain and clarify their purposes, thoughts or opinions to achieve mutual understanding (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Long, 1985a; Pica, 1988, 1994; Pica, Holliday, Lewis, & Morgenthaler, 1989). Then, through this negotiated interaction, they receive corrective feedback from more proficient speakers of the target language which ‘pushes’ them to produce modified output (Mackey, 1999, 2006; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey & Philp, 1998).

It would seem then, that learners can benefit from attention to comprehensible input, modified input and interaction, and the three functions of comprehensible output in their second language learning. This includes learners' modified output which is achieved through corrective feedback and negotiated interactions. This view of SLA was heavily influenced by the Interactionist school of theory which sees interactions between learners as a vital factor in SLA. Figure 2.3 illustrates how second language acquisition is promoted through the role of interaction in SLA, taking into account the elements described in this section. The elements represented in this figure are interrelated, influencing one another in dynamic ways within the process of interaction.

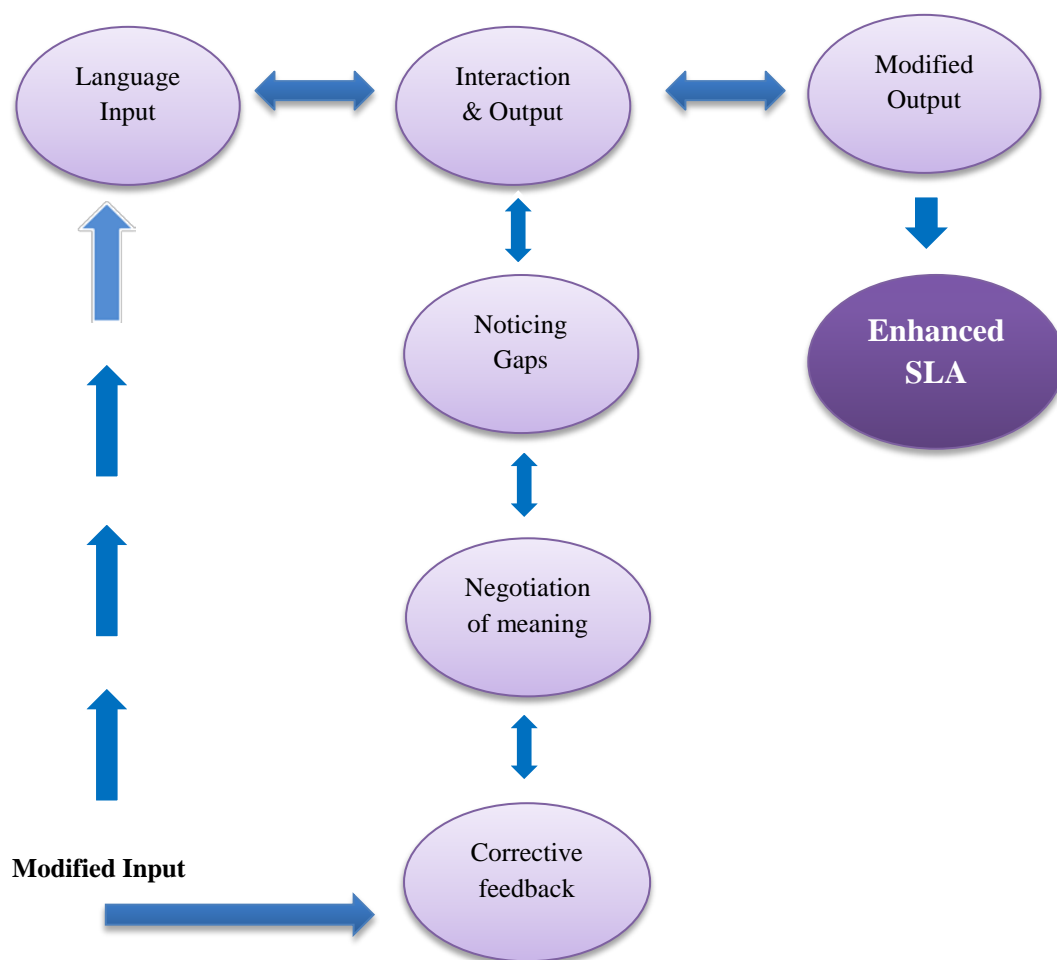


Figure 2.3 The Role of Interaction in SLA

The Interaction Hypothesis suggested that comprehensible input, which occurs when less fluent speakers get provided with feedback on their lack of comprehension from more fluent speakers, promotes language acquisition (Long, 1983b). However, this hypothesis is limited

in that it only refers to the situation where less fluent speakers construct the target language responding to more fluent speakers, and it only focuses on comprehensible input as a contributing factor to the promotion of SLA (Ellis, 2003). Thus, the hypothesis has subsequently extended its principle focus to the role of interactive negotiation of meaning between learners, which is considered significant to discourse exchanges (Pica, 1992, 1994).

The view of SLA promoted by this school of theory emphasises information exchanges, including negotiation of meaning such as occurs in information gap activities. However, studies of classroom practice have found that the manner of applying the theory and the context in which it is applied can impact its effectiveness in promoting SLA, particularly in foreign language environments. For instance, it has been noted that students engage in more negotiation of meaning in a small group activity, compared to teacher-fronted lessons (Pica & Doughty, 1985). Additionally, this study found that negotiation of meaning was influenced by the level of student motivation. This may be an important influence on the efficacy of these approaches to learning where a foreign rather than second language is being learnt. In these contexts, the new language being learnt is not necessarily needed to meet immediate and everyday needs and access to speakers of the language generally is restricted. The teachers may not be native or fluent speakers of the language or in the case where they are native speakers, they are likely to have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to those of their students and may find it difficult to provide the appropriate socio-cultural support needed to render the language input comprehensible or to foster interaction.

2.3 Accuracy or Fluency

The goal of teaching speaking skills in a second language can be focused on either or both accuracy and fluency (DeKeyser, 1998; Doughty & Williams, 1998; Ellis, 2008; Hammerly, 1991; Hedge, 2000; Kormos, 2006; Lennon, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Accuracy is concerned with the language learners' use of correct, native like linguistic features, such as phonemes, intonation, stress patterns, words, collocations, spoken grammar rules, structures, and functions (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Fluency, on the other hand, is defined as oral proficiency and the skill to create speech efficiently in a timely manner matching that of native speaker social communication (Kormos, 2006). Lennon (2000) defined fluency as "rapid, smooth, accurate, lucid, and efficient translation of thought or communicative intention under the temporal constraints of on-line processing (p.26)." Hedge (2000) defined

fluency as the ability to reply consistently within the turns of a conversation, to link words and phrases, and to use intelligible pronunciation and appropriate intonation without hesitation. And she argued that in order to achieve the dual goals of accuracy and fluency, language teachers need to provide opportunities for their students to practice using the linguistic features accurately in controlled contexts as well as to use them spontaneously when the focus is on purposeful fluent communication (Hedge, 2000).

Richards (1990) suggested that the two basic approaches to teaching speaking skills were the indirect approach and the direct approach. The indirect approach basically engages students in conversation through role-play and problem-solving tasks, and provides them with opportunities to use the target language in classroom activities. The success of the indirect approach depends on such factors as whether the input provided includes attention to the conversational strategies learners will need to complete the tasks, whether the speaking activities assigned require the learners to practice the linguistic features and skills they need to acquire, and the degree to which individual students have an opportunity to practise the target language in the activities (Richards, 1990). The direct approach is based on a systematic analysis of the components of speaking competence and requires students to complete a programme of awareness-raising and practice to learn these. Unlike, the indirect approach which relies on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the activities the students complete, the success of this approach depends on learning transfer; that is, the degree to which the students are able to apply strategies they have practiced in controlled, largely artificial contexts to communication in uncontrolled situations where fluency is important (Richards, 1990).

Hedge (2000) describes the indirect approach as promoting fluency-based activities that can contribute to the development of speaking skills. She notes that the three main fluency-based activities are free discussion, role-play and 'gap' activities. Free discussion involves learners in talking about various topics which engage their interests, opinions, histories, and experiences. This type of discussion encourages learners to use the language needed to maintain conversations and provides an opportunity for learners to practise the strategies required in interpersonal communication. Despite these benefits, language teachers have reported being worried about the less structured nature of free discussion and about being able to ensure that all the members of the discussion groups participate. In addressing this concern, Hedge (2000) suggested that teachers need to consider five organisational aspects.

First, she recommends they consider how they might support their students to understand the content relevant to the discussion and how this support will be provided. Second, they need to determine the degree to which they will structure the activity such as by dividing it into clearly articulated phases or assigning group roles to the participants. Third, she recommends that teachers think about whether to establish a goal or objective for the discussion and, if so, the nature of that aim. Finally, the teachers need to consider how they might foster the participation of the students in the discussion and how to structure the activity so that negotiation of meaning is required in order to complete it (Hedge, 2000). The teachers can adjust these types of support to meet the needs of their students and to maximise the effectiveness of the activity for them.

In contrast, Hedge (2000) refers to the direct approach as accuracy-based practice as it focusses students' attention on particular linguistic features in the input, and requires these in their output within controlled activities. Hedge (2000) notes that these types of controlled activities must meet four requirements if learners are to learn the knowledge and skills needed for communication. These are that the controlled activities provide the students with contextualised practice and personalised language and that they build their awareness of the social use of language and their confidence. As the first requirement, contextualised practice should make the link between linguistic form and communicative function clear to students. The second requirement, personalised language, should make the focus of the language in the activities more memorable and motivating for learners by allowing them to express their own ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions and giving them control over what they say so that they can personalise the language they use. The third requirement is that the activities should build students' awareness of the social expectations inherent in the use of the target language in order to protect them from inappropriate language choices. Lastly, the fourth requirement is to build learners' confidence through the controlled activities so that their ease helps them to produce language more quickly and automatically (Hedge, 2000).

Role-play is believed to be more effective than free discussion in involving learners in practicing speaking and, additionally, it allows them to practice language as they perceive it is used in natural settings. Role-play, here, means that the students spontaneously generate their own scripts according to the roles or the situations set by teachers. It has been found to be particularly effective when it is performed by the class concurrently in pairs or groups rather than as a group performance which others watch. According to Hedge (2000), while

there are many advantages to using role-play as a conversational activity, there are also limitations. The main limitation occurs when students are required to take roles they may not understand. Therefore, it is important for language teachers to consider whether learners understand their roles and if they are willing to take particular roles when they implement role-play activities.

Lastly, 'gap' activities, sometimes called 'information gap' activities (Long, 1983a, 1983b; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Richards, 1990; Richards & Rodgers, 2001) involve each learner in a pair holding information which the other learner does not have. The two main types of information gap tasks are one-way and two-way. In a one-way task, the information is held by one learner and must be shared with others while in a two-way task, the information is held by both learners and must be shared to complete the task (Doughty & Pica, 1986). A number of studies have found that if students work in pairs in 'gap' activities, they engage in more negotiation of meaning than they do in activities where such modification is optional, such as in free discussion or role play (Long, 1981, 1983b; Mackey, 2006; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Pica, 1988, 1994, 2005; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Pica et al., 1989). However, Hedge (2000) argues that while 'gap' activities can enhance learners' language acquisition, but they do not engage them in conversational strategies in the same way as free discussion or role-play. That may be the case, but it should be noted that information gap tasks promote acquisition of conversational repair strategies such as the use of confirmation and clarification questions and requests (Mackey, 2006; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Pica, 2005; Pica & Doughty, 1985) which are useful in everyday communication. Another criticism is that tasks that encourage negotiation of meaning, such as 'gap' activities, are hard to design and can be frustrating to perform if learners keep failing to understand the meaning (Foster, 1998). This suggests it is important for language teachers to prepare students well before doing these types of activities and to consider their learners' proficiency levels and background knowledge of the topic before they assign them 'gap' activities.

Fluency and accuracy are stressed to varying degrees in approaches to teaching spoken language. This is seen in the contrast between the pre-communicative approach (McDonough & Shaw, 1993) which focuses on accuracy rather than fluency and the communicative language approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990) which places emphasis on fluency more than accuracy.

In the pre-communicative approach there is an emphasis on linguistic features more than on language functions to allow learners to respond rapidly to their teachers with predictable responses. For this to happen, attention is given to the patterns, conversational routines and rules that govern spoken language. There is an added focus on the 'frames' of oral exchanges, such as conversational gambits, so that students can learn to initiate, sustain and end conversations. It is argued that, if learners are exposed to natural speech to develop their knowledge of conversational characteristics and strategies from the early stage of language learning, and if they are encouraged to practise the 'frames' of these oral exchanges, they would be more comfortable to take turns using them in real conversations (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

In contrast, 'communicative' language teaching focuses on learners' interactive conversation in a meaningful context where the learning is designed to achieve a specific outcome. As this approach is mainly concerned with function, even though it does attend to form, it could be considered to focus on fluency to a greater extent than accuracy (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). As this is the main approach used in South Korea, it will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this review.

The relative emphasis placed on accuracy compared to fluency in approaches to teaching languages has changed over time (Eskey, 1983; Krashen, 1981; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Long, 1985a; Swain, 1995). Prior to the emergence of Chomsky and Krashen's work that challenged the behaviourist approaches dominating the field, there was an emphasis on linguistic forms motivated by the belief that if language learners mastered these forms, communication would develop spontaneously. A more Chomskian view promoted the idea that when language learners were engaged in communication, mastery of linguistic forms would occur spontaneously, due to their endowment with universal grammar. However, this view that communicative competence automatically leads to the equal achievement of grammatical competence was challenged by Eskey (1983), Morris and Ortega (2000), and VanPatten and Cadierno (1993). They argued that rewarding learners' fluency may actually delay their achievement of accuracy. That is, the errors in linguistic forms may persist when native speaking interlocutors ignore them and provide positive feedback on the sense of the message (Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Eskey, 1983; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Sheen, 2002; Spada & Lightbown, 2008; Swain, 1985, 1993; Swain & Lapkin, 1995; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993).

Eskey (1983) argued that language teachers need better techniques and materials for relating communicative function to form, and suggested three basic principles to be observed in order to achieve better balance between these two aspects of language. These three principles were that the forms that express key ideas, or basic notions, in language should be systematically introduced to language learners, that the forms should be introduced in communicative contexts and that the expectations must be for students to produce both appropriate and correctly structured discourse (Eskey, 1983). He then claimed that language teachers should not accept inaccurate language simply because it leads to successful communication. Instead, they should teach what learners need and promote the ability to construct correct forms as well as that to communicate meaning.

This suggests that language teachers should balance direct and indirect approaches (Richards, 1990); accuracy-based and fluency-based activities (Hedge, 2000); pre-communicative and more communicative frameworks (McDonough & Shaw, 1993); and, linguistic forms and communicative function (Eskey, 1983). This is because the learning of one aspect does not always involve the learning of the other in second language contexts (Case, Ndura, & Righettini, 2005; Eskey, 1983). Indeed, this is the approach advocated by the National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC) who claim that the major goal of teaching speaking skills is to help language learners to acquire communicative efficiency (NCLRC, 2004). That is, language learners should be able to communicate successfully in a range of communicative situations by using their social, cultural and linguistic knowledge of the target language. To achieve this type of communicative efficiency, NCLRC (2004) recommended that language teachers employ a *balanced activities approach*. By this, they mean that the focus should not be exclusively on one form of competence, one skill, or one language component (Hammerly, 1991). Rather, language teachers should encourage students' development of accurate linguistic knowledge and their fluent communicative skills through various language activities that provide comprehensible input and prompt forced output (NCLRC, 2004).

It has been argued that communicative language teaching (CLT) involves a systematic approach to functional as well as structural aspects of language (Littlewood, 1981). By doing so, it would seem to conform to the requirement suggested by the NCLRC that there be a balance in the focus on accuracy and fluency, or form and function, in language learning programs. This approach to teaching language will be explored in the next section, as it is the

most widely used methodology and is the mandated approach in the education system in South Korea, the context of this study.

2.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Chomsky claimed that the standard structural theories of language, the aim of which was to master linguistic accuracy, were not able to demonstrate the essential characteristic of language, which is the ‘creativity’ and ‘uniqueness’ of individual sentences (Chomsky, 1957). Some British applied linguists claimed that the essential characteristic of function or communication was also neglected in this approach. Indeed, they argued that language teaching should focus more on communicative proficiency than on the accuracy of linguistic features in order to meet learners’ genuine need, which is control over meaningful communication skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For more than three decades, functional and communicative aspects of language have been regarded as fundamental elements in language teaching and it has long been argued that developing communicative syllabuses for effective language teaching is essential (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Ellis, 1984; Johnson, 1982; Krashen, 1985; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Munby, 1978; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Shaw, 1977; White, 1988; Wilkins, 1976). Attention to these aspects was seen in approaches from the 1970s, such as the ‘Notional Syllabuses’ (Wilkins, 1976), with their focus on the meanings and functions of communicative procedures of language in actual speech, rather than on linguistic structures.

This attention to function, rather than linguistic forms, led to the development of communicative approaches to language learning. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is seen as an approach rather than a method. As the name suggests, the approach focusses on communicative competence as the goal of language teaching. The notion of communicative competence was first introduced by Hymes (1972) who foregrounded contextual relevance, including a speaker’s knowledge of what was expected in particular speech communities, in this concept. At the time the concept was introduced, it contrasted sharply with Chomsky’s notion of idealised linguistic competence by including attention to the “rules” of language use, or its function in particular contexts, not just its forms. Although, it could be argued that Chomsky’s original notion was included in the grammatical component of the model of competence which was developed by Canale and Swain (1980) as part of a framework for the context of second language learning. This framework included three different types of communicative competence with these being

grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic. Later, Canale (1983) further divided sociolinguistic competence to separate the discourse aspect, thereby making a fourth type.

The first type, grammatical competence, focuses on linguistic knowledge, such as vocabulary, rules of word formation, pronunciation, spelling and sentence formation. The second, sociolinguistic competence, focuses on knowledge of speech acts, such as rate of speech, pause length, turn-taking, awareness of the norms of stylistic appropriateness and other social aspects of language use. The third type, discourse competence, focuses on the cohesion and coherence of different types of discourse. Finally, the fourth type, strategic competence, focuses on communication strategies used when there are deficiencies in grammatical and sociolinguistic knowledge or to enhance communication.

While the concept of linguistic competence, or knowledge and correct use of linguistic forms, is included in Canale and Swain's 1980 framework, some have seen the competence goal as neglecting form in favour of function and, therefore, have advocated more attention to grammar (Savignon, 2000).

However, Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) argue that CLT has a particular focus on meaning and so demands that the goal of communicative competence be achieved through an emphasis on fluency with attention to accuracy or form being contextualised in ways that are meaningful to the learners. That is, the approach requires teachers to place emphasis on motivating their learners and on encouraging them to interact with others using the target language for communicative purposes (Brown, 2000; Brumfit, 1984; Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983; Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1989).

For the successful implementation of CLT, classroom practice should reflect four key characteristics of CLT. First, it has been found that providing a student-centred learning environment is one of the key components of CLT as it can give students ownership of their learning so they can focus on their prime needs (Hu, 2010; Jones, 2007; Lochland, 2013; Wu, 2010). Additionally, it encourages students to be more independent and responsible for their learning, and further, promotes their learning skills, such as collaborative and critical thinking skills (Wu, 2010).

Second, providing a safe and non-threatening learning environment is considered critical in terms of encouraging students to feel relaxed and comfortable when they communicate in their target language. When they have a high level of anxiety or fear of making mistakes, they

are less likely to be actively engaged in communicative activities (Ewald, 2007; Gregersen, 2003; Kim, 2009; Tallon, 2009). It is also argued that students achieve better learning outcomes when there is no explicit error correction from their teachers during communication activities (Ewald 2007; Gregersen, 2003). Thus, it is suggested that language teachers create a safe and stress-free learning environment for the successful implementation of a CLT approach.

Third, in order to implement a CLT approach more effectively, language teachers should provide their students with authentic and contextualised teaching materials (Bax, 2003; Collins, 2005; Harmer, 2003; Hiep, 2007; Sowden, 2007; Su, 2011). It has been found that students show greater engagement when learning materials are related to their real life situations and contextualised to take account of their cultural background. Further, student motivation is greater when there is a connection between what they learn in their language classrooms and what they need in their daily lives (Hiep, 2007; Kim, 2002; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Su, 2011).

Finally, language teachers should focus on developing students' fluency and accuracy in their additional language when implementing a CLT approach (Eskey, 1983; Hammerly, 1991; Hedge, 2000; NCLRC, 2004). As discussed in the previous section, CLT-focussed activities should reflect a balance between promoting fluency and accuracy, depending on students' proficiency levels. As these four characteristics have been found to be critical to the successful implementation of the CLT approach, they will be used as a framework to examine the practices of the teachers involved in this study.

Although the CLT approach is compatible with communicative language syllabuses which share its goals and principles, it can be difficult to implement (Hiep, 2007). Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood, and Son (2007) claimed that CLT has not been effectively used in English classrooms due to its ambiguity and because many teachers are not fully aware of what it is or how to apply it in their classrooms. As Harmer (2003) pointed out, this difficulty may be due to the approach meaning different things to different people and because it needs to be contextualised to be effective, thereby complicating the development of a common understanding of it. The role of context in the approach also implies that teachers have to understand the different culture and context of their students as well as that of the target language when they design CLT-based programmes (Harmer, 2003) and, it could be argued,

this increases the complexity of its implementation. The current study will investigate if these factors are impacting the implementation of CLT in a South Korean national university.

Bax (2003) expresses a different view when he argues that CLT does not attend to the context in which learning takes place and this causes problems, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers who complain about the lack of connection between what students learn in their CLT classrooms and their real-life situations. According to Bax (2003), this leads to low student motivation to achieve communicative competence and, consequently, it has a negative impact on the learning process. He advocates that a 'context approach' be adopted in EFL contexts in place of CLT. As the name suggests, this approach would give due attention to the context where the learning was occurring, not just that of the target language. This would include attention to aspects such as students' attitudes and cultural expectations (Bax, 2003). That is, students would not be engaged in the CLT-based classroom activities if the materials are not contextualised to their learning environment nor related to their needs. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the context where learning is occurring and the students' needs when designing lessons in CLT classrooms (Harmer, 2003; Kim, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Porto, 2010; Sowden, 2007).

This point about the vital role of culture is also taken up by Sowden (2007) who foregrounds the importance of students in his arguments. He asserts the growing interest in individual learners' needs and priorities such as their personal differences, motivation, characteristics and aptitude, is rendering particular methodologies less relevant, noting that CLT has not proved itself as any more effective than the traditional methodologies, such as the grammar-translation method or the audio-lingual method. Therefore, he advocates a student-centred approach where students determine how they best learn and their learning priorities. He draws on Kramsch's (1993) work to argue that culture would be a vital part of this type of approach to language learning and teaching because it is essentially a social practice. This suggests that teachers need to understand their students' culture in addition to that of the target language, as Bax (2003) and Harmer (2003) also advocated.

In his arguments about the need for a change in methodology in EFL classrooms, Sowden (2007) not only focusses on students, but also on teachers whom he considers to be an important factor in the language teaching process. Teachers are particularly important because of what he sees as the deficiency of explicit instructions for implementing methods. Additionally, he claims that confident, well-formed and experienced teachers are able to

appeal to their students and to create a positive relationship with them. This, in turn, would encourage them to be engaged in their learning. In his view, positive relationships between teachers and their students are more important to language learning than the implementation of particular methodologies.

Additional concerns about the effectiveness of CLT were raised by Littlewood (2007) who reviewed studies that examined the implementation of CLT and task-based language teaching (TBLT) in primary and secondary schools in East Asia. His review identified five main concerns: classroom management, avoidance of English, minimal demands on language competence, incompatibility with public assessment demands, and conflict with educational values and traditions. It is claimed that these five factors hinder the effectiveness of a CLT approach in the East Asian context (Littlewood, 2007). The first concern, classroom management, refers to the high number of students in language classrooms in East Asian countries; class sizes which make the use of communicative activities particularly challenging for teachers. The second concern, avoidance of English, refers to the lack of spoken English proficiency of East Asian primary and secondary school students. That is, as these students are not confident in speaking English, they are reluctant to actively participate in the CLT or TBLT activities which demand high levels of interactive communication. The third concern, minimal demands on language competence, indicates that these students do not use all of the language processes and resources available, but instead, they choose to make minimal effort by using their prior English knowledge to complete the given tasks. The fourth concern, incompatibility with public assessment demands, highlights how the classroom activities designed to be aligned with the CLT or TBLT approach are not compatible with the public examination system in East Asian countries. This is especially the case as the examinations in these countries emphasise grammar knowledge and reading comprehension skills rather than the students' general English language proficiency. This incompatibility is exacerbated by the emphasis placed on spoken competency in the CLT and TBLT approaches while the examination system tends to measure selective written language skills and metalinguistic knowledge. The final concern identified by Littlewood's (2007) review, conflict with educational values and traditions, notes the contrast between the culture of learning in East Asian countries and that which underpins the CLT and TBLT approaches. That is, East Asian countries have teacher-centred teaching and learning practices, while CLT and TBLT approaches promote learner-centred methodologies. Thus, Littlewood (2007) claimed that even though the underpinning theoretical framework of the CLT approach,

including TBLT, seems to contribute to improvement in language learners' English speaking skills, there are limitations to consider when these approaches are implemented, especially in the EFL contexts.

Despite the criticisms of CLT, it has been the main pedagogy of English education in many EFL countries, including Japan, China, Vietnam, Bangladesh and South Korea, the context for this study. In light of the criticisms levelled at CLT in EFL contexts, and its use in South Korea, the following section will examine the research related to its use in these contexts.

2.5 CLT in EFL Countries

There is evidence that a CLT approach has not been successful in many countries where people learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL) even though it has been widely used in those where English as a Second Language (ESL) is learnt (Bax, 2003; Chowdhury, 2003; Gao, 2008; Harmer, 2003; Hu, 2010; Lamb, 2007; Li, 1998; Liu, 2005; Lochland, 2013; Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood, & Son, 2007; McGrath, 2001; Nishino, 2007; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Rao, 2002; Sakui, 2004; Taguchi, 2005; Wu, 2001; Yu, 2001).

In Japan, CLT has been deemed an inappropriate teaching method due to its lack of 'effectiveness' (Nishino, 2007; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Sakui, 2004; Taguchi, 2005). Nishino and Watanabe (2008) analysed surveys, conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Technology, which aimed to investigate the gaps between CLT principles and their implementation in practice. The surveys were conducted in secondary schools and the participants were Japanese teachers of English. The findings suggest that there are many obstacles to the implementation of CLT in Japan. These difficulties included insufficient opportunities for students to practise English speaking outside their classrooms; low student motivation to achieve speaking skills; the predominance of teacher-centred instruction; the focus on reading comprehension in the exam-based curriculum; high student numbers in language classrooms; the lack of CLT training for teachers; and, the teachers' poor English speaking proficiency. It is, further, argued that EFL countries should create English teaching theory and practice that suits the local context (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). Taguchi (2005), also researching CLT in Japanese secondary schools, found similar challenges and the additional difficulty of a lack of connection between the classroom teaching materials and the students' everyday lives. Further, he argued that one of the most challenging factors that hindered the successful implementation of CLT in Japan was its

‘education system’ which employs traditional grammar-translation methods to measure students’ communicative competence. He, therefore, recommends that attention be paid to the development of CLT-focused assessment (Taguchi, 2005).

Similarly, Hiep (2007) conducted research on the implementation of CLT in the context of Vietnamese universities. The three participants in this research were Vietnamese first language speakers teaching English conversation skills at the university where the research was conducted. They had all completed postgraduate courses in Australia. This study found that CLT has not been successfully implemented in Vietnam because access to an authentic learning environment in which students can use English is very limited and the focus is on passing examinations which are grammar-based. Further, teachers are not certain about how to generate independent CLT practices and when they do try, they have difficulty managing communicative activities due to the high student numbers in their classes. Finally, the lack of student motivation is considered to be an obstacle to the success of CLT. To attend to some of these challenges, Hiep (2007) suggested that there be a focus on local contextual factors, including the provision of authentic materials, as access to these and their use can be problematic in EFL countries, such as Vietnam and China.

In China, while CLT is the main English teaching method, it has not been found to be effectively implemented (Rao, 2002; Wu, 2001; Yu, 2001). For instance, Rao (2002) investigated students’ perspectives of communicative activities and non-communicative activities in EFL classrooms through a case study, using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The participants were 30 Chinese university students who were majoring in English. The study noted several reasons why a CLT approach had not been implemented even though most of the students acknowledged its significance. First, the purpose of learning English is not clear to students because it is not necessary for their day to day living and so the learning environment is not authentic, as is usually the case in ESL learning. The impact of this is exacerbated by a lack of access to authentic teaching materials and the low levels of teacher competence in speaking English, both of which further limit the students’ access to meaningful use of the language. Second, these circumstances lead to a lack of motivation to achieve communicative competence in English. Third, students tend to keep their traditional learning styles and habits, which are passive and teacher-centred rather than adopt those that better match a CLT approach. Last, funding for implementing CLT practices is not sufficient to support any change. Rao (2002) argued that EFL countries should update English teaching

methods by modifying the communicative approach, paying particular attention to contextual factors.

Similarly, Chowdhury (2003) found that the conflict between the teacher-centred nature of traditional approaches and the learner-centred nature of the CLT approach had contributed to the failure of CLT in his study involving EFL teachers in a Bangladesh university. Traditionally in Bangladesh, a classroom teacher is regarded as a powerful authority and so the dominant practice is for them to give a lecture and for their students to listen and take notes. This strong hierarchical relationship between teachers and students makes CLT difficult to implement. Therefore, Chowdhury (2003) recommended that CLT be redesigned for the Bangladesh context.

2.6 CLT in South Korea

As in other EFL countries, research conducted in South Korea suggests there have been many challenges to address in implementing CLT (Li, 1998). This research has been conducted in the context of middle schools which provide education for thirteen to eighteen year old students and have mainly viewed the issues from the perspective of the teachers implementing the approach.

Li (1998) examined the perceptions of CLT held by Korean teachers of English in these schools. His study identified the difficulties experienced when introducing CLT in this context and divided them into four categories according to whether they were caused by teachers, students, the education system or the CLT approach.

2.6.1 Difficulties caused by teachers

First, Li (1998) found that the teachers' English proficiency was so low that they lacked confidence speaking the language and, therefore, could not teach their students speaking skills. Second, the teachers avoided using the strategies recommended by the CLT approach as they were afraid of losing their authority by not being able to answer any unexpected questions their students might ask. Third, the teachers claimed that their lack of training had left them with misconceptions and uncertainty about what CLT is and how to implement it effectively. Finally, the teachers argued that it took too long to create their own CLT-based lessons because they did not have access to authentic materials (Li, 1998).

2.6.2 Difficulties caused by students

According to the teachers, Korean students had very limited English proficiency, and, therefore, they often felt frustrated when they tried to construct and use communicative activities with them (Li, 1998). Also, their students showed low levels of motivation to learn speaking skills because they were more concerned with being successful in examinations which focussed on grammar and reading comprehension. Moreover, they did not participate in the classroom activities and displayed a passive attitude towards learning speaking skills. Therefore, the teachers claimed that it was not easy to implement CLT even though they were motivated to do so (Li, 1998).

2.6.3 Difficulties caused by education system

The structure and function of the education system in South Korea caused the third category of difficulties found by Li (1998). First, the high student numbers in the middle school English classes meant CLT activities such as pair and small group work which demand manageable numbers and space were difficult to implement. Second, as previously mentioned, English speaking skills were not examined in the middle school and as students were highly motivated to be successful in these tests, they focussed on grammar and reading comprehension which were measured. The failure of the system to reward achievement in speaking skills decreased both the students' and the teachers' motivation to pay due attention to their development. The final issue Li (1998) identified in this category was the lack of funding and support provided for developing CLT practices and creating authentic teaching materials which meant teachers struggled to design CLT-based lessons (Li, 1998).

2.6.4 Difficulties caused by CLT approach

The final category identified by Li (1998) related to the nature of the CLT approach. The two aspects he identified as particularly problematic were the failure of the approach to account for the context of English as a foreign language and the inadequacy of its assessment instruments which lacked effectiveness and efficiency. As discussed above, a CLT approach needs to be modified and contextualised before it is used in EFL classrooms because it was originally designed in the context of western culture where it was used in ESL contexts. Further, Li (1998) argued that despite the research related to the theories and practices of CLT, accessible assessment tools and criteria have not been developed yet and, as a

consequence, the Korean teachers became confused when they needed to assess their students' oral proficiency because there were no standard criteria to guide them.

Similar issues were identified by other studies on the use of CLT in South Korean middle schools. These studies found that the teachers reported difficulties in implementing CLT methods in their English language classrooms (Choi, 1999; Eun, 2001; Flattery, 2007). First, many of the teachers did not understand the nature of CLT and did not think it was appropriate for their classroom settings (Flattery, 2007), which are examination-based (Eun, 2001). Other teachers noted that these examinations focus on reading, listening, and grammar more than speaking, socio-cultural knowledge and writing (Choi, 1999). This suggests backwash from the university entrance examinations which focus on reading and grammar translation. Second, teachers did not provide student-oriented activities or encourage their students to interact because they preferred to use teacher-centred and directive methods, including drill activities, which lacked opportunities for interaction (Choi, 1999; Eun, 2001). The teachers' low levels of spoken English competency and their lack of CLT training added to their difficulties (Eun, 2001). These factors, together with high student numbers in English language classes and the students' lack of willingness to actively participate in activities seemed to be obstacles to implementing CLT in South Korean middle schools (Eun, 2001).

2.7 Perceived Challenges

Other researchers have argued that there are four additional challenges that impact on Korean students learning English speaking skills, including the contrast between Korean and English linguistic features, cultural differences related to the first and target language, Korean learners' characteristics, and their low levels of motivation to learn spoken English.

2.7.1 Korean linguistic features

Korean and English differ at all levels of language. These differences challenge students who find them difficult to understand, master and then apply in spoken language (Borden, Gerber, & Milsark, 1983; Lee, 2001).

The differences in the two languages' phoneme systems cause a number of difficulties for Korean learners of spoken English. The Korean phonemic system consists of 14 consonants and 10 vowels, unlike English which has 20 vowels and 24 consonants. Borden, Gerber, and Milsark (1983) conducted research into the production and perception of the /r/ and /l/

phonemes as these were seen as particularly problematic for Korean speakers learning English. As there is no /r/ sound in Korean, they found that Korean learners find it very difficult to distinguish between these two sounds in English. Besides these sounds, Korean students find it difficult to pronounce English consonants which involve voiced and voiceless contrasts, such as the /f/-/v/ and /p/-/b/, as they hear these pairs as the same sound (Lee, 2001). This has considerable implications as the voiced and voiceless contrast is pervasive in English, involving eight pairs of consonants (Yule, 1985, 2010) which are widely distributed in the lexis.

Further, Li (2001) found that there were difficulties related to the differences in the use of stress between the two languages. Unlike in English, there is no syllable or word stress in Korean so that when this type of ‘flat and regular’ prosody is applied to English, it may lead to miscommunication.

Further difficulties are experienced at the morpho-syntax level of language. Lee (2001) has found that the differences in the main sentence structures of Korean and English cause problems for students. This is because the grammatical structure of a Korean sentence is typically subject-object-verb which is opposite to the usual subject-verb-object structure used in English. Further difficulties are caused by the English perfect tense which is not used in Korean and so makes it very difficult for Korean students to understand the difference between simple past tense and present perfect tense in English.

In addition to the structural differences, the pragmatic level of language is problematic for Korean learners as the behaviours that accompany speech in Korean and English contrast sharply. Lee (2001) claimed that the facial expressions and gestures which accompany English use are very rich compared to those required when using Korean. According to Lee (2001), the influence of the Korean culture means that students of English tend to speak in an unhurried way with no facial expression or gestures and that this type of mismatch of culturally influenced behaviours can lead to misunderstanding. These findings suggest that the influence of language differences as obstacles for Korean students trying to achieve competence in English speaking skills is worthy of further investigation.

2.7.2 Cultural differences

Much research has demonstrated the connection between language and culture and established that a good understanding of the cultural aspects of language learning helps

teachers use teaching methods more effectively (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Harmer, 2003; Kim, 2002; Kramsch, 1993; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Mitchell & Lee, 2003; Sowden, 2007; Windle, 2000).

Windle (2000) argued that native English-speaking teachers need to know about the differences between their own culture and Korean culture and went on to identify the key differences. First of all, Windle (2000) claimed it is very important for the teachers to know that the principles of Confucianism continue to be the most influential educational philosophy in South Korea. In Confucian influenced culture, the teachers have absolute authority in the classroom and the students are expected to show respect which promotes a hierarchical relationship between teachers and students. As a consequence, making direct eye contact with teachers is often considered to be rebellious behaviour. In contrast, in western culture, teachers could judge students as not being interested if they do not maintain eye contact (Windle, 2000).

The role of questions in the learning process is a further source of cultural misunderstanding between English speaking teachers and their Korean students. Question and answer routines are frequently used in western classrooms and communicative approaches encourage students to generate questions as a way to moving them to independence. In contrast, Korean students have been discouraged from asking questions for fear of embarrassing their teachers because direct questions are considered rude in a Confucian influenced culture (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Windle, 2000). In addition, Korean students tend to keep silent when they do not understand a question that has been asked of them; a response which is considered to be appropriate in Confucian influenced culture. Native English-speaking teachers, however, often do not understand that this use of silence signals a lack of comprehension, so they keep asking the same questions adding more information. In an attempt to avoid the difficult situation, the students provide a very ambiguous answer which can lead the teachers to believe that they are 'playing with them' (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Windle, 2000).

2.7.3 Korean learners' characteristics

Research has noted that other characteristics of Korean learners, identified by both English background teachers and Korean college students, would appear to cause difficulty in the context of learning English through a CLT approach (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006). These characteristics include that Korean students have low levels of participation during classes

and this is thought to be due to them seeing the teacher as an authoritarian figure. Further, they report that they are more comfortable in whole class rather than group based learning activities. Teachers report that their students prefer lectures to discussions because they have difficulty in thinking critically and expressing their thoughts. Additionally, the teachers believe that the students do not have a clear concept of 'ownership of knowledge', seeing it as an abstraction existing outside themselves. As discussed earlier, they try not to have direct eye contact with their teachers, and they do not seem to be comfortable generating questions during the class (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Windle, 2000). These characteristics do not match those expected of students within a communicative approach and would seem to pose particular problems for teachers of spoken language, especially in a foreign language learning environment. This study will investigate if these factors impact on the implementation of CLT in a university environment, as the studies surveyed here were contextualised at the college level of education in Korea.

2.7.4 Low motivation

Even though Korean students recognise the importance of English speaking skills, they demonstrate a low level of motivation to achieve communicative competence. This is seen as largely due to the examination system, which focuses on grammar and reading comprehension, and to their limited use of English outside the classroom (Flattery, 2007; Li, 1998; McGrath, 2001; Roberts, 2002).

Korea has an examination-oriented education system so this increases the negative impact of the focus on grammar and reading comprehension in English tests, particularly as these aspects of language are not foregrounded in a CLT approach. Li (1998), in a study based in the middle school, reported that the students in his study focussed on their success in examinations as their scores determined which courses they could study at university. This focus led to them having low motivation to learn spoken English, an aspect of language not tested in Education Department or university entrance examinations. This finding is consistent with research by McGrath (2001) who claims that students will remain unmotivated to learn speaking skills unless the examinations required include spoken competence.

The second major cause of low student motivation to learn spoken English was their limited opportunities to use it in their everyday lives (Flattery, 2007; Li, 1998). This leads the students to see speaking skills as less useful than those related to grammar and reading

comprehension, particularly given the latter will assist them to perform better in examinations (Flattery, 2007; Roberts, 2002).

To date, research into the development of spoken English in a Korean context has identified the challenges related to the contrast in linguistic features between Korean and English, cultural differences associated with the two languages, factors attributed to Korean learner characteristics and the learners' low levels of motivation to learn spoken English. Although spoken English competence is important to Korean students, there are a limited number of studies identifying the issues limiting their success in acquiring it. Therefore, the current research seeks to extend this investigation of challenges to the context of the university level of education.

2.8 Teachers' Beliefs

Beliefs influence people's understanding and perceptions of new information and whether to accept or reject it. Therefore, beliefs can influence teachers' implementation of new teaching strategies or methodologies (Borg, 2001). Further, teachers' beliefs about their teaching, their students and their professional content knowledge can influence their practice either positively or negatively (Buehl & Fives, 2009; Haney, Lumpe, & Czerniak, 2002; Kuzborska, 2011; Pajares, 1992). This relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practice is important since it can impact on the quality of their teaching and their professional growth (Buehl & Fives, 2009; Kuzborska, 2011). Teachers' beliefs are influenced by their knowledge and previous teaching experiences and contribute to their decisions about classroom construction and so impact on the design of their teaching goals, teaching materials, teaching instructions and teaching strategies and (Kuzborska, 2011). The influence of ESL and EFL teacher beliefs has been investigated in a number of contexts. For instance, Borg (2003) reviewed 62 studies, published between 1976 and 2002 and undertaken in 11 different countries, related to the influence of teachers' thinking, knowledge, and beliefs on their practice in ESL and EFL language classrooms. He referred to these three aspects as teacher cognition, and discussed this in relation to three main themes: cognition and prior language learning experience, cognition and teacher education, and cognition and classroom practice (Borg, 2003). His analysis showed that teachers' prior language learning experiences encourage them to formulate the foundation of their preliminary conceptualisation of second and foreign language teaching. Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers (1997) also found that teachers' experiences as language learners were a significant influence on their teaching

practice. So, too, were their initial teacher education courses which can impact their practices throughout their professional life (Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997). Finally, Borg's (2003) analysis showed that even though teachers' practices are shaped by many interrelated and contradictory factors, their cognition remains a powerful influence.

Peacock (2001) also found that language teachers are influenced by their prior knowledge and their theoretical beliefs about language learning and teaching. Teachers' knowledge and beliefs can have a positive impact on their classroom practice as they develop their professional knowledge of language teaching approaches (Peacock, 2001). However, other researchers warn that if the teachers' knowledge and beliefs are not consistent with the approach being implemented, it is problematic as they will tend to apply them despite the incompatibility. In these situations, they recommend that the teachers are encouraged to modify their existing views to better fit the new teaching environment, noting that this would help them to adopt appropriate instructional practices (Davis & Wilson, 1999; Gebel & Schirier, 2002; Kuzborska, 2011).

While there is a considerable body of research investigating the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in the area of first language acquisition, the research into teachers' beliefs in foreign language (FL) contexts is limited (Borg, 2003, 2006). Further, there is even less research exploring the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in a university setting in FL contexts (Borg, 2009). This relationship will be explored in this study of conversation teachers teaching English as a foreign language in a South Korean university.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study includes attention to the current theories of SLA that influence approaches to teaching language teaching, particularly those that are communicative. The characteristics of the CLT approach are important to the framework as this is the mandated approach to English language teaching in South Korea, the context of this study. Finally, the challenges which have been found in previous studies are examined so that they can be compared to those that emerge from the current study. These key components of the study are summarised in the following figure.

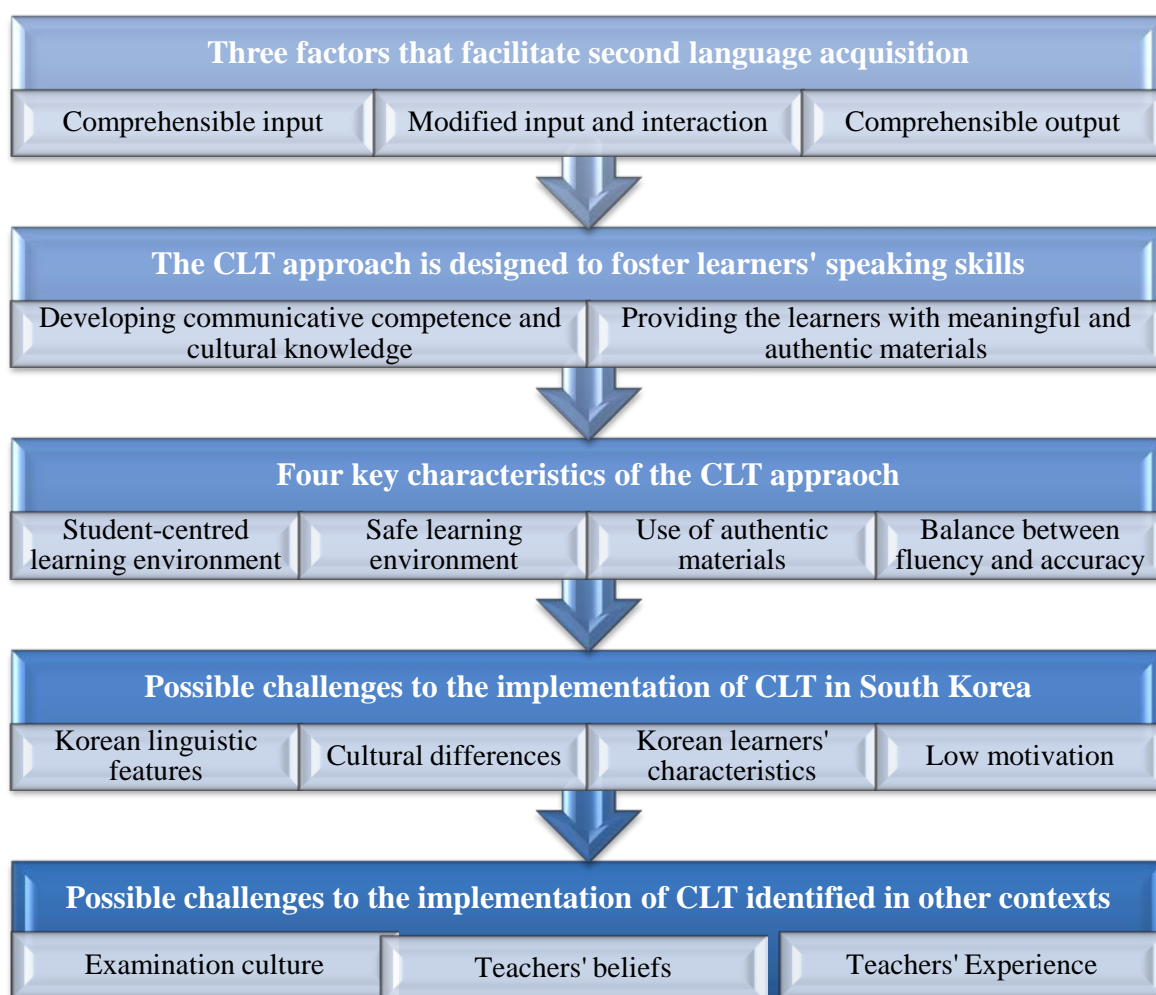


Figure 2.4 Conceptual Framework

Comprehensible input, modified input and interaction, and comprehensible output trigger second language acquisition making these three factors very important aspects of language learning and teaching (Long, 1981, 1983b, 1985a; Mackey, 1999, 2006; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Pica, 1988; Pica et al., 1989; Pica, Young, & Doughty, 1987; Schmidt, 1983; Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005). These aspects of language learning can be attended to within a CLT approach which is the main method used in language classes in South Korea. Despite this theoretical consistency and the high level of support provided for learning spoken English in South Korea, learners are still failing to learn to speak English (Jambor, 2009a, 2009b, 2010).

A small number of studies have explored this issue in middle schools and identified those factors that have impeded success in this context. These are the contrast between the linguistic features of Korean and English (Borden et al., 1983; Lee, 2001; Li, 1998), cultural differences between the first and target language communities (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Harmer, 2003; Kim, 2002; Kramsch, 1993; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Mitchell & Lee, 2003;

Sowden, 2007; Windle, 2000), Korean learners' characteristics (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006) and learners' low levels of motivation (Flattery, 2007; Li, 1998; McGrath, 2001; Roberts, 2002).

In addition to these four challenges identified by studies done in South Korea, there are three other issues raised by studies in other ESL and EFL contexts. These are the examination culture, teachers' beliefs, and teachers' experience. First, it has been found that CLT-focused classroom activities are not compatible with some examination systems, especially those in EFL countries. That is because English examinations in those countries are generally more focused on assessing students' English grammar knowledge and reading comprehension skills than on evaluating students' English spoken proficiency (Borg, 2003). For example, in Japan, the university entrance examinations, which emphasise grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension, influence English classrooms in secondary schools and lead to a limited focus on English speaking skills (Butler & Iino, 2005; Gorsuch, 2000). The second and third type of challenge identified concerned teachers' beliefs and their previous language learning experiences (Borg, 2003). As discussed in the previous section, teachers' personal beliefs and their language learning experiences can have either a positive or negative impact on their language classroom practices (Borg, 2003; Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997). Thus, even though these factors were not evident in the studies done in the context of school level education in South Korea, they could be influential in the university context of the current study.

In order to further investigate the important issue of English speaking skill development in EFL contexts, this study focused on examining how native English-speaking conversation teachers develop the speaking skills of university students in South Korea. Specifically, the study investigated the teachers' practices and noted whether these were consistent with the principles of the CLT approach. It identified the challenges the teachers faced in implementing the strategies they chose and explored possible solutions to the difficulties they faced.

2.10 Research Questions

How do native speaking English teachers develop the English speaking skills of university students in South Korea?

This question was answered through the following five sub questions:

1. What strategies are implemented in English conversation classrooms in South Korea?
2. Are these strategies consistent with a CLT approach?
3. What are the challenges involved in implementing these strategies?
4. How do English conversation teachers overcome these challenges?
5. What are English conversation teachers' suggestions for improving students' English speaking skills?

2.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter briefly reviewed the key theoretical concepts of comprehensible input, comprehensible output, and modified input and interaction which underpin a communicative approach to second language acquisition (SLA). These concepts are particularly relevant to the teaching of speaking skills.

Further, these concepts influenced the constitution of the CLT approach, which has been chosen as the main methodology for English education in South Korea. This chapter also examined the key characteristics of a CLT approach and its implementation in South Korea and other countries where English is learned as foreign language. Four possible challenges to the implementation of the CLT approach in a South Korean context were identified in other studies undertaken in middle schools. These were the contrast between Korean and English linguistic features, cultural differences, Korean learners' characteristics, and learners' low levels of motivation.

Finally, the chapter described how research had found that teachers' knowledge and beliefs influenced their instructional practices. This research suggested that while this influence can have a positive impact when the teachers' experiences and beliefs are compatible with the new approaches being implemented, where this is not the case, the teachers may need to be encouraged to modify their views to ensure the appropriate practices are implemented.

The following chapter will describe the research methodology and the instruments which were used in this study. It will provide information about the research contexts and participants, the procedures and methods of data collection, and the data analysis method employed in the study.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology that guided this study. First, the research design is presented; second, the context of the study is described; third, the participants in the study are introduced; fourth, the data collection methods and procedures are explained; fifth, the way the data were analysed is presented; and, sixth, the limitations of the study are noted. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided.

3.1 Research Design

This study investigated the teaching approaches used by English conversation teachers in a South Korean university, the challenges the teachers faced when implementing these approaches, and their efforts to overcome them. It was recognised that these phenomena would be strongly influenced by the context within which the study was situated. Therefore, a qualitative research design was selected as it is a particularly useful approach for investigating those phenomena that are ‘context specific’ and for identifying the contextual features that influence them (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Smith, 1987; Yin, 2009). Further, the need to be responsive to changes in the context of the research meant that the more flexible and less controlled approaches, which are more common to qualitative methods than to quantitative study designs, were suitable for this research (Wiersma, 1995). In this type of investigation, data needed to be collected over time in the natural environment (Wiersma, 1995). The interpretation of that data involved an inductive process, which meant that a general conclusion could be formed from a specific context, highlighting the significant role of the context and the need to take a holistic approach to data analysis.

Another reason for using this approach was that it had been used in other studies to gain insight into teachers’ perceptions (Bell, 2005; Bouma & Ling, 2004; Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Rushton, 2001) which were an important data source in this study.

There are many different types of research methods used in qualitative research. Of these, a case study was considered to be the most appropriate as its philosophical underpinnings matched the intentions of this study. That is, a case study approach is based on a constructivist paradigm which reflects the view that truth is relative and influenced by perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Taking this approach allows participants to describe their views of the phenomena being studied which, in turn, promotes a deeper understanding of

their actions (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993). According to Yin (2009), a case study approach is suited to research where the focus is on how and why questions; where the behaviour of those involved cannot be manipulated; where the context is important to the phenomenon being investigated; and, where the boundaries between the context and phenomenon are not clear. These criteria are met in the current study which investigates how English conversation class teachers working in a South Korean university teach and why they choose the approaches they use. This type of investigation is of necessity naturalistic and so does not allow for any manipulation of the participants. In regard to the third and fourth criteria listed above, the context is very important and highly influential in the teachers' decision making and teaching.

As a case study allows investigation of one aspect of a problem in depth (Bell, 2005), it was important to determine the unit of analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008) or what constituted the case in this study and to bound it (Yin, 2009). Therefore, it was determined that this case would be bound by time and place (Creswell, 2007). That is, the case would be bound to one semester and to three different departments where English-speaking teachers were employed to teach English conversation skills to first year students at one South Korean university. More specifically, it was bound to the three teachers and their roles and how they enacted them (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). As such, it employed purposive sampling (Yin, 2011) in that this university was representative of the national universities in South Korea which all followed the same National Curriculum and employed English-speaking teachers to teach compulsory first year classes in English conversation.

This descriptive case study (Yin, 2009), then, took the form of a holistic case as it was based at only one university. However, it was decided to include sub-units, involving the three teachers working in different departments, so that the data could be analysed and presented separately as case studies and compared and contrasted by means of cross-case analysis (Yin, 2009). It could be argued that this type of case study allowed for richer analysis (Yin, 2009) to better investigate the issue (Stake, 1995). Stake claims that issues are not straightforward but rather involve political, social, historical and personal contexts, as they did in this study.

In order to enhance credibility, multiple data sources were determined and these were at the broader and narrower levels (Yin, 2009). At the broader level, document analysis provided data about the context as it related to the university and the classroom. At the narrower level, observation, post-observation discussions, interviews and reflective journals provided data

related to the teachers' work and the challenges they faced. Observation was selected as one of the most important sources in this study as it provides rich data in natural settings (Cohen, Manion, & Morisson, 2007). Besides observation, document analysis, reflective journals and interviews were used as these are very effective and appropriate research tools in a qualitative case study (Cohen et al., 2007). These different methods allowed for triangulation of the data and so enhanced the reliability of the findings from the study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Triangulation of several data sources in qualitative research promotes the modification of the findings and as such it is an effective strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research (Barbour, 1998; Johnson, 1997; Patton, 2002).

Having established the overall research design of the case study, the remainder of this chapter describes the context in which this study was conducted and provides details about the participants and how they were selected and recruited. Finally, the procedures followed to conduct the research and the process of data analysis are explained.

3.2 Context

As was noted earlier, the context was a key element in this study and so is further described in this section. The site of the study was Kyoyuk National University (KNU) [a pseudonym] in South Korea. KNU was chosen as the context for this study because it is one of thirty-one standard, four-year-course universities that follow the National Curriculum for tertiary levels of education. The students who come to KNU are mainly aiming to qualify as secondary school teachers. KNU was founded as a government supported 'Teachers' College' in 1948, and then it was promoted to become a national university in 1990, expanding to include other colleges. Despite these changes, the source of its reputation is its secondary teacher preparation courses (KNU Homepage). The students who attend the national four-year-course universities have to achieve scores of 700 in the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) before they are able to graduate.

The English conversation classes are compulsory units for the courses offered by the Department of English Education, the Department of English Language and Literature, and the Department of Tourism and English Interpretation. Students in these departments are required to pass three of these units at different levels of complexity during their four year degrees. These conversation classes are all taught by teachers who speak English as their first language.

The students who were in the three English conversation classrooms involved in this study were in the first year of their courses, were approximately 21 years old and of either gender. Although they were from different senior high schools in different regions of South Korea, all had learned English under the same curriculum before they entered the university. They also had very similar social and cultural backgrounds.

3.2.1 The Department of English Education

The students in the Department of English Education are expected to become English teachers at junior and senior high schools after they graduate. As the importance of English education grows, there is greater demand for English teachers, and, in turn, more students wish to qualify for that profession. As a first step in achieving that goal, students have to be academically excellent in their junior and senior high schools and gain high scores in the university entrance examinations. Therefore, in general, the students in this department have high levels of English grammar knowledge. They are expected to develop good English speaking skills since, as English teachers, they will be required to conduct their lessons in English in addition to teaching it.

In recognition of the importance of developing English language skills, the Ministry of English Education provides additional financial support for the Departments of English Education at all national universities in South Korea. This allows these departments to employ more English conversation teachers than others in the same university. Before this additional funding was made available, the Department of English Education at KNU had only one English conversation teacher while at the time of this study, and as a result of the additional funding, there were four such teachers employed. The additional native English-speaking teachers were intended to reduce student numbers from between 20 and 25 per classroom to 7 or 8 to allow for more individual attention. Further, the four teachers were encouraged to collaborate to create appropriate teaching materials to achieve their teaching goal, which was to develop their students' English discussion and presentation skills.

3.2.2 The Department of English Language and Literature

The graduates from the Department of English Language and Literature are expected to become English teachers, but they do have other career options such as public officers or employment in large multinational companies. However, even with greater choice, they tend to get a job which uses their English language skills which means that these skills are seen to

enhance their job opportunities. This department is less competitive than the Department of English Education in the university entrance examination. This is because the graduates from the Department of English Education are more likely to become English teachers in junior and senior high schools than those from this department. As a result, the students in this department tend to enter university with lower level academic achievements in their junior and senior high schools and lower scores in their university entrance examination than those who gain entry to the Department of English Education.

Unlike the Department of English Education, at the time of this study, this department had one English conversation skills teacher as it did not receive additional financial support from the Ministry of English Education. As a result, the teacher had 20 to 25 students in his English conversation classroom, allowing for less individual attention to be given to students during lessons. Additionally, he had to prepare teaching materials without collegial support since there were no other native English-speaking teachers in the department. The teacher also worked in isolation from other departmental staff and was not provided with a copy of the main curriculum of the department.

3.2.3 The Department of Tourism and English Interpretation

Graduates from the Department of Tourism and English Interpretation are expected to become tour guides for foreigners, English-Korean and Korean-English interpreters, or English teachers in private English colleges. These jobs require high level English speaking skills, potentially motivating the compulsory English conversation classes. Compared to the other two departments described above, this one is the least competitive in the university entrance examination. Consequently, the students in this department come with generally lower level English language knowledge than do those in the other two departments.

As with the Department of English Language and Literature, this department did not receive additional financial support from the Ministry of English Education so did not employ more than one teacher for the English conversation classes. As happened in the Department of English Language and Literature, this English teacher worked in isolation, prepared his own materials and was not provided with a copy of the main curriculum.

3.3 Participants

As explained in the previous section, this study was conducted at KNU which employed native speakers of English as English conversation teachers in three of its departments in

order to provide a more authentic learning environment and to enhance students' English speaking skills. The departments where these teachers worked were provided with information about the proposed study and permission to conduct the research and to invite the teachers to participate was obtained in writing. The teachers were provided with written information about the study and invited to participate and those who agreed gave written consent. The three teachers recruited, one from each of the university departments with native English-speaking teachers, showed great interest in the outcomes of this study.

The teachers recruited were native English speaking (NES) because, as discussed in the Chapter 1, the university where this study was conducted, was following a relatively new government policy of employing NES teachers in primary and secondary schools and universities as a strategy to try to improve the English spoken language skills of Korean students (EPIK, 2013a, 2013b). The decision was made to have three participants as this would allow for all three departments with English conversation classes, within the university selected to be the site for the research, to be represented and to provide richer data than that available from one participant. Three participants, allowed for the identification of common issues and differences across three case studies. The participants and the university involved in this study have been given pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality. The teachers' pseudonyms were Andy, Steve and David while the university was referred to as Kyoyuk National University (KNU).

3.3.1 Andy

Andy, who was in his early forties at the time of the study, had lived in South Korea for ten years, and had been employed as an English conversation teacher in a number of different education institutions, including KNU. He was employed by the Department of English Language and Literature to teach the English conversation units when the study was conducted.

Prior to teaching English, Andy completed his Bachelor Degree in Law and his Master's Degree in Human Rights, and after graduating he had worked in Italy and France where he learnt Italian and French and taught English conversation skills at the same time. On his return to Ireland, he worked as a police officer. Despite his experience teaching English as a foreign language in Europe, he had no education or language teaching qualifications or training when he started teaching English conversation skills in South Korea.

3.3.2 Steve

Steve, who was in his early thirties, came from New Zealand and had lived in South Korea for four years when this study commenced. He had worked as an English conversation teacher in several private after-school English academies for two years. He had just been employed by the Department of English Education at KNU as one of the English conversation teachers at the time this study commenced.

In New Zealand, he completed a Bachelor degree in Political Science and History. He did not have any education or language related qualification or training, and neither did he have any teaching experience before coming to South Korea. At the time of the study, he was enrolled in the Master of Pedagogy course at KNU.

3.3.3 David

David, who was in his late thirties, was a church minister leading a youth ministry in Canada before he came to South Korea. Having been a youth pastor, he had experience in counselling and caring, but he did not have training related to language teaching. He did not hold a degree in Education or a certificate in language teaching when he commenced teaching English conversation skills in South Korea.

At the time of this study, David had been in South Korea for 13 years, and had been working as an English conversation teacher during this time. Before he was employed by the Department of Tourism and English Interpretation at KNU, he had taught in a number of English institutions including local junior and senior high schools, colleges, and universities. He was enrolled in an on-line Master of Applied Linguistics course, specialising in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia at the time of the study.

3.4 The Procedures of Data Collection

A case study was selected as the most suitable research method for this qualitative study. The four different research tools used to collect genuine and authentic data were classroom observation followed by informal discussion, document analysis, reflective journals and semi-structured interviews. The study proposal included the collection of additional data sources, such as audio-taped classroom observations and students' work products, with informed, written consent from the students. However, the participants did not provide

permission to audio-record in their classrooms or to collect their students' written work, citing confidentiality issues as the reason for this decision. An overview of the study design is provided below (see Figure 3.1).

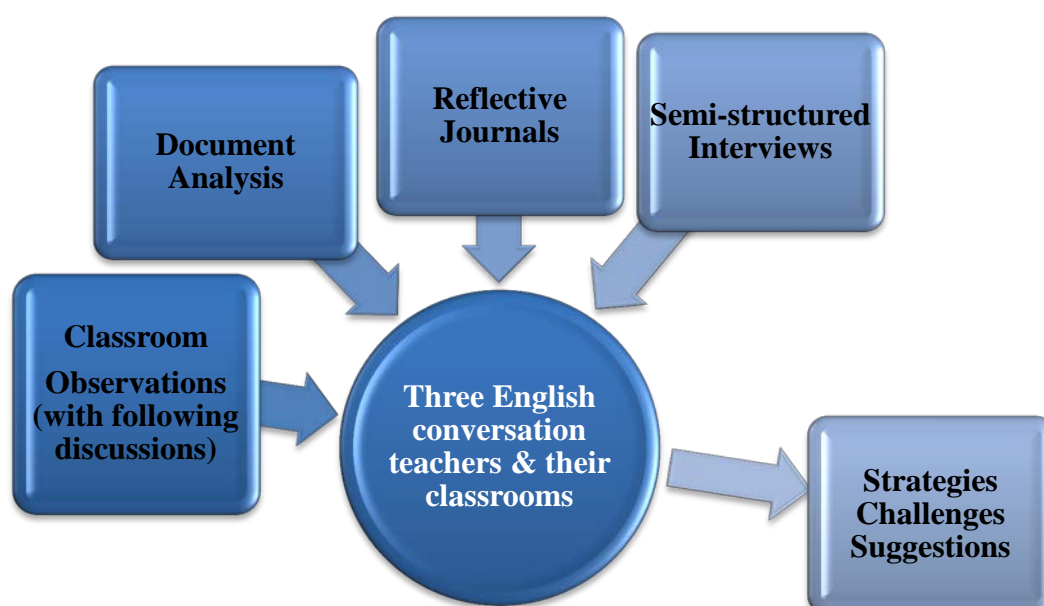


Figure 3.1 Research Process and its Expected Outcomes

In the initial individual meetings with the participants, they were each given a Research Information Sheet and Participant's Consent Form, the process of data collection was explained, and the times for the classroom observations and interviews were negotiated. They agreed to write a minimum of two reflective journals throughout the semester and to be interviewed at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the semester. At that meeting, the participants provided their demographic information. Additionally, information about the textbooks they each used was provided, allowing background knowledge of the teaching focus to be gained prior to observing the classes. The detailed process of data collection in relation to each research tool is described in the following section.

3.4.1 Classroom observation

Classroom observation was a valuable research tool for this study since it enabled the researcher to gain insight into a participant's actual teaching practice in natural settings (Bell, 2005; Cohen & Manion, 1994). In this study, an observation guide was designed to assist in collecting data about the nature of the classroom, the teaching practices and strategies used and the challenges they posed. It also focused on the interaction between teachers and students in terms of paralinguistic, discourse and linguistic features to see whether the

strategies used by the teachers were consistent with a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. A copy of the observation guide is provided in the Appendix A.

At the request of the participants, the classroom observations were conducted on the same day of the week for two of the three hours of English conversation provision, with the remaining hour being scheduled on a different day. These observations were conducted for the 15 weeks of the first semester of the university year, making a total of 30 hours for each teacher. Protocols of non-participant observation were used to avoid any possible distraction or interruption in the classes. There was a short discussion session with the participant after each observation. This allowed any aspects of the teacher's practice that had been observed to be further explored by asking questions or encouraging the teacher to reflect on them. The teachers could also nominate events or strategies they wanted to explain further. These sessions helped to capture the participants' opinions about the lessons they had just conducted, with particular focus on the strategies they had used and the challenges they faced using them. It was planned that these conversations would be audio-recorded, but the participants did not provide permission for this since they thought it would prevent them speaking naturally. Therefore, notes were taken and this information was linked to the semi-structured interview prompts.

3.4.2 Document analysis

Much research involves document analysis since written documents are considered to be reliable and valuable evidence for qualitative research (Bell, 2005; Cohen & Manion, 1994; Wiersma, 1995). This study analysed both system level and teacher participant documents.

The system level documents included the National Curriculum related to university level education and the curriculum and policy documents of the three departments where this study was conducted. These documents were expected to provide detailed information about the expected learning outcomes, content, readings, semester plans and assessments of the units related to the English conversation classes.

The teacher participant documents included the unit outlines, lesson plans, textbooks, written teaching materials and examination papers prepared and/or used by the teachers. These were expected to provide information related to how the participants interpreted the system requirements for their units and how they met these demands in their classrooms.

3.4.3 Reflective journal

In this study, reflective journals were used because they allowed the participants to have an active voice in an uninterrupted environment (Borg, 2001; Janesick, 1999; Jasper, 2005; Uline, Wilson, & Cordry, 2004). Additionally, they provide rich descriptive information about participants' perceptions of the phenomenon being studied (Wiersma, 1995). The participants agreed to provide the researcher with a minimum of two in-depth reflective journal entries to be done at any time of their choosing during the semester in which they participated in the study. Although general guidelines were provided, the participants were free to select their own topic or issue to be the subject of their reflection (see Appendix B).

The Researcher also kept a reflective journal in the form of field notes which recorded her thinking and plans (Richards, 2003; Swanborn, 2010). This was done in order to increase her understanding of all aspects of the research process (Borg, 2001).

3.4.4 Semi-structured interview

The participants were interviewed to capture their perceptions and insights (Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Stouthamer-Loeber & Kammen, 1995). The interviews focused particularly on their teaching practices, how they applied their professional knowledge, especially their understandings of CLT, the challenges they faced, how they managed these and the solutions they suggested to address the issues they identified.

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted, at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the semester and were between forty minutes and one hour in duration. Each interview was audio-taped and transcribed, and the transcriptions were sent to the participants for member checking. A protocol was developed to guide the interview with the prompts focussing on capturing the teachers' perceptions, attitudes and teaching philosophy (see Appendix C). These prompts were used flexibly and other questions were added so as to be responsive to the participants.

The following table (Table 3.1) summarises the procedures and timelines for the data collection.

Table 3.1 *Data sources and Timeline*

Data source	Research Questions	Focus of source	Timeline
Observation	Q.1. Q. 3. Q. 4.	Observe the teachers' practice and build an overall understanding of English conversation classrooms in South Korea. Post-observation discussions to allow the teachers to describe their perceptions and views of the lessons observed. The observation focuses on what strategies are being used and how the teachers manage the challenges they face.	Semester 1; March – July, 2010
Document analysis	Q. 1. Q.2.	Curriculum of English conversation class to provide information about the strategies to be implemented to achieve the goals noted. Unit outline and lesson plans to provide a general understanding of how teachers' planning aligned with the university curriculum, including the CLT approach, and how they designed their lessons.	Semester 1; March-July, 2010
Reflective journal	Q. 3. Q. 4.	Two reflective journal entries, in the form of a narrative recount to provide deeper insights into the teacher participants' perceptions.	Semester 1; March - July, 2010
Semi-structured interview	Q.1. Q. 2. Q. 3. Q. 4. Q. 5	Three semi-structured interviews to provide information about the teacher participants' professional knowledge, including of CLT and other English conversation teaching strategies.	Semester 1 : March – July, 2010

3.5 The Process of Data Analysis

The three main processes typical of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007), preparing and organising the data, coding and recoding the data into themes and categories, and representing the data, were followed in this study. Specifically, the following eleven steps recommended by Creswell (2007, p. 149) were followed:

1. Sketching ideas;
2. Taking notes;
3. Summarising field notes;
4. Working with words (making metaphors);
5. Identifying codes;
6. Reducing codes to themes;
7. Counting frequency of codes;

8. Relating categories;
9. Relating categories to analytic framework in literature;
10. Creating a point of view; and,
11. Displaying the data.

First, this allowed the data to be summarised, coded, and sorted into themes and categories. Second, it assisted in the organisation and conceptualisation of the data so a point of view could be drawn. Lastly, it helped with interpreting and contextualising the data in order to give it meaning (See Figure 3.2).

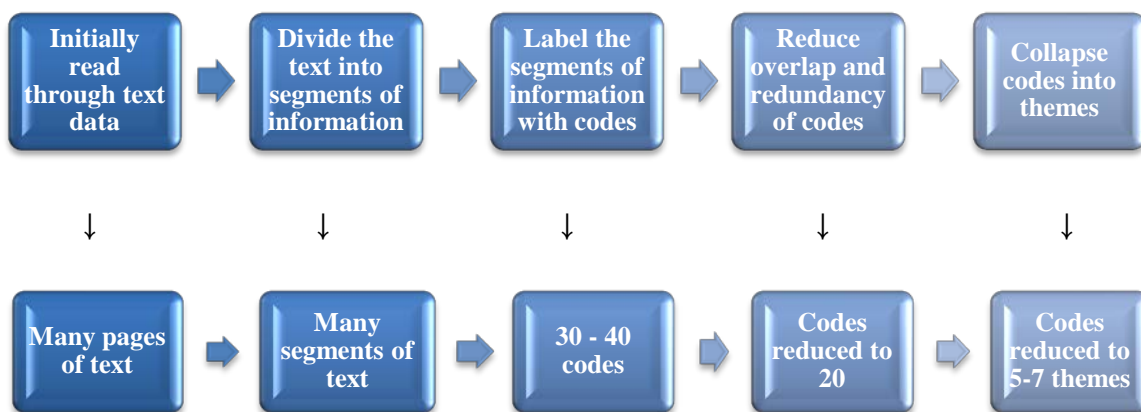


Figure 3.2 Qualitative Data Coding Process

Source: A Visual Model of the Coding Process in Qualitative Research (Creswell, 2007, p. 238)

In the first instance, the data were prepared for coding. This was done by first transcribing the nine interviews and organising the MS word records of these together with the classroom observation notes, the participants' reflective journals, the participants' teaching materials, and the Researcher's field notes, including recorded thinking and actions taken during the data collection process (reflective journal).

The initial coding was developed by repeated reading of the raw data and then dividing it into segments which contained similar information. These segments were further categorised according to the three main research questions, 'what is really happening?', 'any challenges?', and 'possible solutions or suggestions?' so they could be labelled (example in Appendix D). Following this process, the Researcher developed the segments of information into 16 codes through the process of the reduction of overlapping codes (Appendix E). These codes were then entered into the QSR NVivo 9 software which assisted in the processes of further categorising them into 8 main themes (see Appendix F).

3.6 Limitations of the study

This study was set up in one of the standard national universities in South Korea to increase its validity and authenticity but there are still limitations. The limitations arise mainly from the narrow scope of the study. That is, this study was conducted in only one university and only for one semester which consisted of fifteen weeks of classes. Further, there were only three cases examined, which, although enabling the data to be triangulated and providing depth, does not allow generalisations to be made. There was an additional challenge in the processes used to collect data. While the intent was to audio record the classroom discourse in the observed classes to better capture the interactions occurring, the participants would not provide written consent for data to be collected in this way. Although field notes guided by observation schedules captured rich data, the recordings would have enhanced this information and provided further validation of it.

3.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the research methodology used in this study was described. The research context and the participants were introduced, with justification for their selection. The procedures of data collection were explained, together with those followed in the initial analysis of the data. Finally, the limitations of the study were noted.

The next chapter presents a detailed description of each of the sub-cases in the case study that formed the basis of this study.

Chapter 4 Case Studies

This chapter presents the analysed data in the form of three cases, one each for the three teachers involved. There were three main themes that emerged from the data analysis. The first of these was the influence of the three teachers' background, including their demographic and educational details, their prior teaching experience, and their professional knowledge related to their teaching practice. The second concerned the teachers' teaching philosophy and its influence on their practices. This includes their views on the role of English in South Korea, their students' attitudes towards English learning, their teaching focus, their students, their relationship with students and their students' engagement. Others have also found that these two factors are an important influence on teachers' practice (Buehl & Fives, 2009; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Haney et al., 2002; Keys, 2005; Kuzborska, 2011; Lee, 2009; Pachler, Makoe, Burns, & Blommaert, 2008; Pajares, 1992). The final theme in the case studies focuses on the teachers' approaches to teaching and describes what and how the teachers taught, how they assessed their students' learning outcomes and how they managed their students in the learning process.

4.1 Introduction

The three case studies presented in this chapter are based on the analysis of five data sources, the demographic background collected in the first meeting with the teachers, the classroom observations and the conversations following them, the teachers' reflective journals, the research field notes, and the three semi-structured interviews conducted with the teachers throughout the semester. Through the analysis of the data the emergent codes could be clustered into three main themes. These key themes were the teachers' backgrounds, including their current work contexts, their teaching philosophies and their teaching approaches.

First, demographic data about the teachers were considered, including their past teaching experiences and their educational backgrounds. Then, the data were analysed to identify the main themes related to the teaching philosophy of each participant. Lastly, the analysis identified the teaching approach of each teacher participant, noting the teaching strategies they both reported and used and their views on the impact of these on their students' learning.

Initially, the emergent themes related to the teachers' philosophies and practices were categorised into sixteen codes (see Appendix E). These being explicit teaching instruction,

goal-oriented lesson planning, teachers' influence (teachers' motivation), learning strategies, learners' motivation and interest level, memorisation learning system, examination-driven education system, cultural differences, students' different proficiency levels, actual coordination, effective teaching methodologies, time limits, learners' characteristics, teachers' professional knowledge, student-teacher ratio, and teachers' beliefs.

The codes related to teaching philosophy were further categorised into six themes. These concerned the teachers' views about: the role of English for South Korean students; the South Korean students' attitude toward English learning; English teaching approaches used by the teachers, particularly the relative focus on accuracy and fluency; South Korean students; the relationship between teachers and students; and, the students' engagement in learning. The relationship between these six themes and the original 16 codes is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 *The relationship between the codes and categories for teaching philosophy*

Teachers' Views	Codes
Views about the role of English for South Korean students	6, 7, 5
Views about South Korean students' attitude towards English learning	5, 4
Views about English teaching approach – focus on accuracy or fluency	11, 6
Views about South Korean students	13, 8
Views about teachers' relationship with students	3, 16
Views about students engagement	5, 10, 12, 15

Those codes related to teaching approach were further categorised into three emergent themes, what and how teachers teach, assess and manage students. The relationship between these themes and the original 16 codes is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 *The relationship between the codes and categories related to teaching approach*

Teaching Approach	Codes
What and how the teachers teach	1, 2, 11
What and how the teachers assess	7, 6
How the teachers manage students	3, 8, 14

The results of this analysis are reported in the form of three case studies, one for each of the participants, Andy, Steve and David. In each of these case studies, the teacher's background

and education are described and this section is followed by a description of his teaching philosophy and teaching approach.

4.2 Case Study One – Andy

4.2.1 Background

Andy came from Ireland and he was in his early forties when this study was conducted. He had majored in Law at Bachelor degree level and Human Rights at Masters level with both of these degrees being completed in Ireland. Following his graduation from university, he taught English in Europe and while doing so, learnt French and Italian. On returning to Ireland, he joined the police force and worked as a policeman for a number of years.

He made his first visit to South Korea to watch the seventeenth FIFA World Cup after which he travelled. In the southern part of South Korea, he was offered a job as an English conversation teacher in a private institution which he accepted. He held this and other similar positions in private institutions for five years. Even though he had considerable experience teaching English in Europe, he did not have teaching qualifications or an education degree when he first started teaching in South Korea. Based on his experience teaching English and learning the local language in France and Italy, he claimed to be aware of what should be focused on in language teaching.

After five years teaching English conversation skills in private institutions, he applied for a position as a Foreign Professor teaching English conversation skills at KNU and was appointed. He was employed by the Department of English Language and Literature as its only native English-speaking teacher and, as such, reported he had limited access to collegial support. Andy claimed that he could get support from departmental staff when required, but this was mainly administrative in nature. While he acknowledged that he could request further support, he did not do so since he thought there were no challenges or difficulties he could not manage himself.

Andy described how he struggled to create his own teaching materials and, consistent with his claim of self-sufficiency, he attempted to meet this challenge by searching the internet for assistance. For information related to the unit he was teaching, he searched the official website of the Department of English Language and Literature. However, all the information available on the website was written in Korean, with no English version provided. For information he needed for lesson planning, he searched ESL websites, despite the information

on these not taking account of the context of EFL. He reported recognising that the difference between the contexts of second and foreign language learning was influential and, consequently, he saw reading texts related to language teaching as the only way available to him to broaden his professional knowledge, as he stated in his interview:

I kind of try to update myself. I do my own development, for example, I'm not trained as a TESOL teacher, but I've read and studied books, and I actually taught some TESOL strategies here at university. I actually do my own professional development. I gave professional development to myself. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 5)

However, he was aware that he could get support from his department if he wanted to take the Master course in TESOL as professional development, as was evident in his interview:

I haven't actually asked for professional development from my department. I know the Master Degree here at university in TESOL will be starting in September, and I might be interested in doing that, then maybe I'll talk to my department about that. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 5)

4.2.2. Teaching philosophy

This section reports Andy's views on his teaching and his students and explores the relationship between these and his teaching practices. It is presented according to the six major themes that emerged from the data analysis which concern Andy's views about the role of English for South Korean students, South Korean students' attitudes toward English learning, his English teaching approach, particularly the relative focus on accuracy and fluency, South Korean students, teachers' relationships with students and about Korean students' engagement.

Views about the role of English for South Korean students

Andy argued that English is becoming a more important language in South Korean society as it is recognised as necessary in order to survive in the global community, and, therefore, there should be more emphasis on improving it, especially English speaking skills. He noted that Korean students had studied textbook English, rather than English for real life communication. In his view, they studied English to pass or to get higher scores in their examinations. In the quotation below, Andy claims that Korean students were misdirected when studying English.

That's really the grammar of English. They could be filling their time a lot more productively as regards getting more confident, achieving more spoken competency than reading and listening exams. That's the system. They have to go through it, so I think a lot of time is taken out. A lot of time could be used more productively. They are led in the wrong direction, wrong area of the language. ... Koreans for so many years, I think they put in a lot of money and time too, but it was put into the wrong direction; they have to focus on spoken language. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 9)

Andy often made the point that Korean students were guided to focus too much on grammar because of the examination system in Korea stressing this area of competence in the reading and listening modes. He claimed that Korean students should put more focus on practising spoken English than on textbook English, or structural aspects. He argued that it was important for his students to expose themselves to a more authentic English environment to enhance their English speaking skills; otherwise, they would not achieve the goals they set for their English learning.

However, Andy acknowledged that it would be difficult for students to devote more time to developing their spoken English skills as long as the system of English examinations remained the same. This was because the examinations only focused on testing written English skills, which included reading comprehension skills, grammar skills and vocabulary knowledge. A further pressure came from tests being used as screening tools in school, university and employment contexts. In particular, the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) was considered to be the only measuring tool needed to establish applicants' English proficiency levels when they applied for a job. This is despite the test only including reading comprehension skills, vocabulary skills and listening skills. Andy claimed that as a consequence, Korean students were not motivated to learn spoken English, but rather wanted to devote their time to improving their written English skills. For this reason, he suggested that the English test should include speaking skills in order to direct Korean students to learn English appropriately.

To conclude, Andy viewed English as a significant skill that Korean students should have so that they can be more competitive in the job market. Therefore, he saw that Korean students had a specific reason to study English, but he thought that it would be more motivating for them if English speaking skills were included in tests.

Views about South Korean students' attitudes toward English learning

Despite his reservations regarding the negative influence of the examination system on his students' motivation to learn English, Andy claimed that most of the Korean students he had taught had a positive attitude toward English learning, showing they were aware of its importance. This meant they were willing to be in his English conversation classrooms and were eager to learn. Andy reported that most of his students had a high level of motivation to achieve their goal, which was to improve their English speaking skills to be able to communicate with native English speakers. Andy thought that his students had additional motivation because they wanted to be successful in gaining employment after graduation. Andy expressed these views in his interviews, as evident in the quotations below:

I mean there are many motivating factors, exams, travel, jobs. Most of my students try to improve their English ability; they need English for their jobs (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 9).

They have enthusiasm and they also have positive attitudes toward English, so they want to have more activities...And my students, a lot of my students in that class are very motivated. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 2)

He also claimed that most Korean students he had taught had either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to achieve high levels of English speaking skills. Some students were motivated to learn English to achieve higher scores in their English examinations or to get a good job, and some wanted to learn English for their enjoyment. Andy noted that while most of his students were extrinsically motivated by their desire for success in examinations, others were intrinsically motivated as they liked English or found learning it fun. Some of these had travelled abroad and wished to do so again.

Probably some students are motivated because of the exam, and maybe everyone is motivated because of the exam-based system. And some of them are more motivated because they really like English. Some of these students have been abroad and some of them like to go abroad again. English could be fun for some students. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 1-2)

To conclude, Andy claimed that Korean students were generally highly motivated, and this, in turn, led to a positive attitude towards English language learning.

Views about English teaching approach – focus on accuracy or fluency

Andy described the approaches he took to teaching English conversation and provided a rationale for his choices. He claimed that he used communicative classroom activities so his students could improve their English speaking skills, stating his view that the main purpose

of language learning is to acquire speaking skills to be able to communicate in the target language in a real life situation. He said that if the students put too much focus on the structure of the language, it would be challenging for them to achieve fluent communication skills due to a fear of making mistakes.

However, he also claimed that knowing the linguistic features of English would promote the learners' speaking skills because once they master the rules, they would not be afraid of making mistakes and, consequently, they would be able to construct sentences quickly and accurately. This process would increase their confidence and, in turn, lead to greater fluency.

I found that having grammatical competence makes language learning more successful from my theory of the language learning world, and phrasal verbs rather than single words are important. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 2)

Andy's point was that the students should focus on both grammatical and communicative competence equally, which means that there has to be a balance between accuracy and fluency. He noted that in order to be a fluent speaker, the students should practise phrasal verbs and conversational dialogues so that they can use these structures more accurately in a real conversation.

I get them to kind of understand idioms, new expressions, phrasal verbs. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 5)

He also pointed out that the more they practise these phrasal verbs and conversational dialogues, the more fluent they would become in their real communication, and that grammar would be learnt unconsciously as a by-product of the process.

They're learning in context in a phrase, they're using it correctly and they are learning grammar through it. If they learn phrases, they often learn correct English. They often automatically learn grammar. That's why I say learn phrases, spoken phrases; focus on spoken phrases. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 10)

In summary, Andy claimed to take a communicative approach to teaching English conversation, placing an equal emphasis on fluency and accuracy in his teaching. However, the methods he advocated emphasised the practice of grammatical forms and pre-prepared dialogues which would suggest that he placed more emphasis on accuracy than on fluency.

Views about South Korean students

Andy regarded Korean students as being quiet, passive, compliant and reluctant to participate, especially in Korean traditional classrooms.

Their confidence is ok, but they're quiet students, quiet young girls, for me to have... got them to produce the language...for example, in Korean history class, the students would be very quiet and passive. They are quiet in class; it's not because of English. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 8)

However, he argued that most of his students were responsive and engaged well in the classroom activities he provided. He thought this responsiveness was due to them feeling more comfortable and willing to express their ideas and thoughts in his classrooms compared to traditional classrooms where the teacher is the centre of the class and dictates the rules.

Andy explained that the students in his classes participated and interacted because they were encouraged to generate questions and use their ideas to complete classroom activities. In this way, he claimed that his classes were different from others in that his students had more opportunities to talk and express their opinions, rather than to listen and take notes from the lecturer as happened in traditional classes. He thought that providing his students with a friendlier learning environment would have a positive impact on their motivation and interest in learning English.

I think about 95% of the students are relaxed and they know each other. They feel comfortable with each other, and most of them actually know what they are going to learn because they all come to the class with preparation done. So, most of them are ready to interact, and most of time. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 1-2)

I think Koreans are very well behaved. I think every task I give them, they do; they do it. So, they are very responsive, yes, responsive to their homework, the preparation, and any kind of activities. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 4)

In Andy's view, these motivated students had the capacity to improve their English speaking skills. He saw this strong motivation to learn English speaking skills as coming from the students' desire to succeed in examinations, to travel, and to get a better job (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 9). Andy thought that these three reasons motivated his students to be more interactive, participatory, and engaged in the classroom activities, resulting in improvements in their spoken English.

There is improvement, but it's difficult to say whether they improved or not at this point of time because it's mid-term now... But I can see the improvement in their interaction and participation. They want to be engaged. I had previously had some groups of students who were really engaged in the classroom activities and gradually they really improved their speaking skills. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 3)

To conclude, Andy claimed that the students he had been teaching in South Korean universities showed good levels of participation in the classroom activities, and that they

were highly motivated to improve their English speaking skills to achieve higher scores in their English examinations, to get a good job, or to acquire self-satisfaction. Andy also claimed that the students were responsive and well prepared for his lessons.

Views about teachers' relationship with students

Andy expressed the view that it was necessary for a language teacher to develop a good relationship with students to ensure the classroom activities were successfully completed and to encourage the development of their English speaking skills. He claimed that if the students did not feel safe and comfortable with their teacher, they would not be able to achieve the best outcomes from the learning process. Andy noted that Korean students tended to see him as a powerful authority figure due to their educational background where they were considered to be confronting the teacher if they asked questions. Andy aimed to change what he saw as his students' stereotyped view of teachers. He noted that he often asked his students questions and encouraged them to create their own questions, valuing the interaction that resulted.

I find that getting the students to do 'ask questions'; I think the questions have to have an answer, and the information for the answer is complex, and another student might have it or might not have it. So, they really try to ask questions and answer the questions; lots of interaction is happening. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 6)

Andy reported that as the students became comfortable with him, so they became more interactive in the classroom and started asking questions. Andy pointed out that even though the students wanted to be engaged in the classroom activities to improve their English speaking skills, they were afraid of making mistakes in front of the class. He saw it as the teacher's responsibility to lead their students "in the right direction" by advising them "to stop worrying about grammar".

I often say to students to stop studying grammar. I also tell them, like, if they study too much of it, I mean, too much grammar, then, it will negatively influence the students. I know it by experience, my own language learning experience... It can actually discourage the students from trying out the language. If you focus on using perfect grammar, they will be hesitant because they have fear of making mistakes, because they are afraid of using incorrect grammar. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 2)

Andy's main views related to the nature of the relationship between a teacher and the students were that the teacher should provide a safe and student-friendly learning environment where the threat of embarrassment from making mistakes was reduced while the

students should be well prepared for the classroom activities in order to facilitate their participation.

Views about students' engagement

Andy claimed that the students were highly engaged and interactive in his English conversation classes and that as a teacher it was his role to encourage this. He further claimed that the success of classroom activities depended on the students' participation level and, in turn, that this participation depended on the students doing the preparation necessary before they came to class.

It really depends on the students whether they get the preparation done at home. If we didn't do the preparation work in the class, I could actually have more time for observing and the students would understand the preparation work better.
(Andy's Interview 2, Q. 2-2)

Andy noted that he gave homework to students because there was a time limit of 45 minutes for each lesson meaning that time was too short to cover all aspects of the English language. By doing the homework, the students had an understanding of the kind of classroom activities that would be completed and the vocabulary they would need. Andy claimed that this allowed him to begin the activities immediately without spending time on preparatory work and to observe his students completing the tasks.

To conclude, Andy claimed that most of his students were well prepared for their lessons, and consequently, they all participated most of the time. He saw the role of the teacher in promoting student learning as critical, particularly regarding managing time appropriately according to the students' needs and the teaching environment.

4.2.3 Teaching approach

In this section, Andy's approach to teaching, including those strategies he implemented to improve his students' English conversation skills, will be described. This will include his reporting of these practices and what was observed and evident in the document analysis of his planning documentation. Further, the influence of his teaching philosophy, as described in the previous section, on his actual teaching practices will be explored. There were three main themes that emerged from the data relating to teaching approaches. These were what and how of teaching, of assessing and of student management.

What and how the teachers teach

Andy claimed that he used a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach with his students. He noted that he based the classroom activities he developed on this approach because it was designed for and focused on improving language learners' speaking skills. He said that as his students had a good understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, they only needed to be “gently pushed” to produce spoken English.

Andy claimed that his main aim as an English conversation teacher was to get his students to be more actively involved in communicative classroom activities. He noted that he focused more on teaching English communication skills than on teaching grammar. These views are evident in the following quotations from Andy's interviews:

I think basically I try to get my students to perform to the optimum of their ability to maximise their ability. I try to get them to speak everyday English, practical English and spoken English. (Andy's Interview 1, Q.5)

I mean, a lot of activities I do in the class are kind of gap filling, like information gap filling, and they are very interactive and communicative. (Andy's Interview 3, Q.2)

I'll actually say it's action, you know, getting the students to be involved in doing action, getting the students to be involved in speaking and listening. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 6)

With these views, Andy thought the CLT was the most suitable approach as it focused on learners' communicative interaction, which meant they could repair each other's mistakes and learn through their own. However, according to the classroom observations and the document analysis, his teaching strategies did not seem to be aligned with a CLT approach. Further, the actual classroom activities he described using did not comply with either his stated views or with the principles of a CLT approach. That is, the activities he used with his students were more traditional, involving repetitive classroom tasks such as copying simple phrases and answering simple closed questions. This is evident in the following quotations from his first interview when he described the types of strategies he used in his classroom.

I do a lot of guided conversation, heavily guided conversation, in a sense that I let them speak. I get them to answer 'yes', or 'no', for example asking simple questions, 'what did I buy', 'what's my hobby'. I sometimes put the questions on the screen so that they can read the questions and select the questions and all they have to say is 'yes' or 'no'...I deliberately have heavily guided conversation depending on the students' level. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 7)

It's kind of listen and repeat, listen and repeat. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 10)

Andy's more traditional approach was reflected in the very structured way he organised his lesson with careful attention to timing for each component. For example, the introduction was assigned five minutes, the presentation of the task ten minutes, the students' practice time fifteen minutes, the students' production time ten minutes, and the closing five minutes. He always checked his time to assure he could cover all these components in one class (Observation Notes 1-14, Andy).

Further, his lessons followed the same routine. That is, he handed out the tasks, he explained the purpose of the activity, he read it out to the class, and then asked them to repeat it after him. This type of language teaching was more similar to the Audio-Lingual Method than to CLT. He claimed that he would not use this strategy if the students' speaking proficiency level was high enough to communicate with each other with no pauses or hesitation. However, with the lower level proficiency level of his students, he did not believe he had any other choice but to ask them to 'listen-and-repeat' the basic classroom language he introduced. He described these views in the following quotation from an interview:

I wouldn't use it for good students. If I knew the students were good, with stronger students I could do similar activities in a different context...I have to be flexible in a sense that the activity I can do in one classroom, I wouldn't be able to do in another classroom, depending on the level of students, and the age of students as well. (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 7)

Andy did not prepare a lesson plan for each class since he was following the textbook; the outline of which he also used as the unit outline and a semester plan. At the end of each lesson, he asked his students to copy the outline for the following week and read it before they came to the next class so that they would know what they were going to learn. He made efforts to cover all the areas of the textbook, but did not have sufficient time to do so. Despite his intentions, some lessons did not go as planned and where there was incomplete work or work that was not completed to the required standard, it was assigned as homework. When students did not participate or get engaged in the classroom activities, he approached them and invited them to do so. If they did not, he gave them a warning that they would need to be more interactive and involved in order to get a grade at the end of the semester (Observation Notes 2, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, Andy).

In addition, the main textbook Andy used was created for the learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) in western countries and, therefore, its content would not be considered

authentic and contextualised for a Korean classroom environment, a requirement of a CLT approach. Despite this failure to conform to the principles of CLT, Andy claimed that most of his classroom activities were designed to promote his students' English speaking skills so were communicative activities. Further, he saw them as suitable for his beginner level students who, in his view, required direct teaching of simple phrases and the use the 'asking questions' strategy.

To conclude, Andy claimed that he used interactive and communicative teaching strategies to encourage his students to be more engaged and to participate in the classroom activities and consequently to improve their English speaking skills. However, these types of strategies were not evident in the observed classes; indeed, the methods he used and his teaching materials did not conform to the characteristics of a communicative language classroom but, rather, reflected an audio-lingual approach.

What and how the teachers assess

Andy emphasised tests in his approach to assessment. The main assessment, as consistent with KNU policy, was two examinations, one held mid-term and the other at the end of the semester. In addition to these assessments, Andy gave his students quizzes and even though this type of testing was not included in university policy, the quiz scores were part of the final grade at the end of the semester.

Andy's examination papers were based on the textbook and aimed to determine the degree to which the students could apply the knowledge gained during the class to their spontaneous speech. He randomly chose a topic for each student and expected them to be able to voice their opinions, using specific vocabulary related to the topic and taught in class. In addition, they were expected to use speaking strategies, such as a 'question strategy' or the 'confirmation strategy', they had learnt during the semester. The students were given information about the nature of their exam, but they did not get their topic until they entered the examination venue (Observation Notes³, 6, 12, Andy& Document Analysis - handout).

Andy deliberately provided his students with information about the nature of the examination as he thought that this would motivate his students to prepare well and through that process they would promote their English language learning. In this way, he saw the examinations as educative, even though he recognised that the students' success in examinations was more the

result of memorisation than of understanding or real life use of language. These views are reflected in the following quotation from Andy's first interview.

I think Korean students are very good at passing exams; they're really good. They amaze me with their power of memorisation; they remember them for the exams.
(Andy's Interview 1, Q. 9)

Andy claimed that there were no assessment criteria or tools for him to use in preparing his examinations. This meant he had to develop his own and that he was the only assessor for all of the more than a 100 students in the department. This assessment involved individual face-to-face discussion over the two week examination period; a task he reported being "tired of" by the second week of testing (Observation Notes 6, 12, Andy).

To conclude, Andy claimed that he had to assess his students' English speaking proficiency level without appropriate guidance from the department. He reported that he gave enough time and information to his students before the examinations to encourage their thorough preparation which he saw as promoting their English language development. While his examinations were individual and focussed on discussion of a set topic, they also expected structured responses from the students, including the use of specific strategies and vocabulary.

How the teachers manage students

Andy claimed that Korean students in general were quiet and passive learners, but despite this, most of his students were motivated and engaged in the classroom activities. He also claimed that he always searched for more effective teaching materials to engage his students more actively in interactive and communicative classroom activities. After a time, he realised that Korean students seemed to keep silent when they were asked to answer difficult questions or to articulate their opinions on a topic about which they had little knowledge. In this case, he claimed that a lack of English language proficiency was not the issue; rather, the students' low interest level and their lack of general knowledge were responsible. Andy described this challenge in his second and third interviews.

I know the students, if I ask them some questions, difficult questions in front of the class, and if they are not able to answer, then it will discourage them. I know them; they don't want to lose face in front of other students. (Andy's Interview 2, Q. 4)

Also, there is students' lack of general information. Students would have language, but they lack background knowledge of topics or issues. That'll limit

their speaking... For example, if we talk about Bill Gates, they've never heard about Bill Gates. They didn't know who Bill Gates was. I had to teach them who Bill Gates was to continue the lesson. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 3)

As stated above, Andy sometimes found it difficult to conduct interactive activities such as 'gap filling tasks' or 'discussion tasks' with his students due to their lack of general knowledge of the given topics. In order to manage this issue, Andy introduced a quiz activity to the class. The students, working in teams, were asked to create five to ten quizzes about the background knowledge required by the textbook. Andy checked the quizzes he got from the students and then a representative from each team had to run the quiz. He thought that this activity might be challenging for his students, but he still conducted it in an effort to improve their general knowledge. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 4 & Observation Notes 2-13, Andy)

Andy sometimes found it difficult to get his students' to participate in classroom activities which he thought was due to either poor time management or the students having not done their homework and so being unprepared for the class. Andy's students were expected to prepare for class by doing homework so that he could save some of the class time. He devoted this time to building this background knowledge, giving instructions and providing more activities, as he described in his third interview.

Students are actually required to do quite an amount of reading as preparation work, outside of the class; therefore, they actually come to class with some kind of understanding of what is going to happen in the class, and it really makes it possible to use class time for more speaking activities. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 4)

He also said that his students needed very explicit instructions before the activities started, but he did not always have enough time to provide the detail they required.

4.3 Case Study Two – Steve

4.3.1 Background

Steve came from New Zealand, and was in his early thirties when the research was conducted. He had lived in South Korea for four years and had been teaching English conversation skills since he arrived. He had completed his Bachelor degree in Political Science and History in New Zealand.

As with Andy, Steve held no education qualifications before he became an English conversation teacher in South Korea. Not only had he not received training, but neither had he any experience teaching English conversation skills. He started his teaching career in

several private English colleges teaching primary school aged students. After two years, he applied for a Foreign Professor position in the Department of English Education at KNU. With his Bachelor Degree from an English speaking country and two years of teaching experience in South Korea, he was successful in gaining the position. He had held that position for two years at the time of this study.

The KNU Department of English Education is well known for the success of its students in the National Teachers' Test, so entry is very competitive with the successful students having high academic scores from their high schools and the university entrance examination. This means the students come with high levels of understanding of the English language system. The main goal of the Department is to develop the students to be junior and senior high school English teachers who are competent in conducting lessons in English (KNU website). To achieve this goal, the Department gained funding from the Ministry of Education of South Korea so they could employ three additional native English speaking teachers. These teachers had formed a professional community and welcomed Steve as a new member. Thus, Steve had access to some information about the students in the department and the teaching materials he would need for his classes. He could also draw on other collegiate support.

However, Steve mentioned that there was no induction training for him to obtain an understanding of the broader university or its policies. He noted that there were no opportunities or support for professional development from the department and this resulted in him struggling when he first began teaching at KNU.

For the first two weeks, I just started teaching without any information about my department or my students. I met one of the professors, but again, it was about the course and how it relates to the evaluation, not about the students or other information. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 5)

Later, one of the senior professors from the department suggested that he take the Master in Pedagogy course at KNU.

[Senior Professor], who is hierarchical...He has often said, "Hey, guys! that will be good if you do a Master course." And I said, "Yeah! I would." And he said, "Oh, I'll help you, help you", like that. It's not anything like a formal thing, not formal support from the department. (Steve's Interview 1, Q 5-1)

According to Steve, even though he was encouraged to take the Masters course, there was no official support in terms of the time and cost from the department. However, as he thought it would be a great opportunity for him to learn and to understand how to design a lesson within

the South Korean education system, he was willing to take the course and he was enrolled at the time of this study.

4.3.2 Teaching philosophy

In this section, Steve's reflective views on his teaching and his students are investigated to see how these influence his actual teaching practices. As with Andy, the data relating to Steve's views were analysed to reveal six categories which related to his views about: the role of English for South Korean students; South Korean students' attitudes toward English learning; English teaching approaches, with particular emphasis on the attention given to accuracy and fluency; South Korean students; teachers' relationships with students; and, student engagement.

Views about the role of English for South Korean students

Steve claimed that acquiring good English speaking skills was necessary for his students particularly since they were being trained as junior and senior high school English teachers. To become an English teacher, students have to pass the 'National Teacher Qualification Test' which requires them to speak fluent English. As the following quotation from Steve's interviews notes indicates, he saw his students as highly motivated to achieve their goal of being more competitive in the qualification test.

They are highly motivated, you know, they pay attention, they are always on board. I think they would respond to any teaching style. They want to be an English teacher after university, so they've got purpose and strong motivation. They think the most important thing is English. They need English. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 6-3)

Steve claimed that being able to speak good English in South Korea, in general, increased job opportunities for university students and helped to make them more competitive in gaining employment. He also claimed that English was becoming a more important language in South Korean society and that this motivated his students to spend much more time in acquiring high level English speaking skills.

Views about South Korean students' attitudes toward English learning

Steve described the students in his English conversation class as highly motivated and as proactive learners. They were always prepared for the lessons and came to their class knowing what they were expected to do. Steve noted that his students had high level

knowledge of English grammar and, consequently, they were quite confident. He expressed the view that this encouraged them to participate in classroom activities.

All students can communicate at some level and most students can communicate very fluently in terms of expressing their ideas. They barely make mistakes. They don't have serious problems with grammatical structure, word forms and tense, things like that... They know what they have to do. They understand what to do in the class. They're participating in communicative, functional activities. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 1)

Steve saw this high level of student motivation and commitment as due to a number of factors. First, his students were given very specific and comprehensive goals for their English conversation classes; thus, they were very clear about the purpose of the activities in each class. Second, Steve claimed that his students' motivation to achieve high level English speaking skills was greater than for many other students because of the standards of English the students had to demonstrate to become English teachers in the government junior and senior high schools.

Steve noted that, in turn, this motivation and commitment led to a positive attitude towards learning English as the students saw it as helping them meet their goal of gaining a position as an English teacher. Steve posited that the students' motivation, commitment and positive attitude towards learning English meant it was easy for him to gain their willing interaction in the communicative classroom activities he provided.

Views about English teaching approach - focus on accuracy or fluency

Steve said that he had little professional knowledge of English teaching theories, approaches or strategies since he did not have language teaching qualifications or degrees in education.

I don't know any educational terms or theories... I mean I know the words, you know, it's my language. I'm sure I've read a paragraph, something about them. I remember, I recognise the words, but I don't know what they are, frankly speaking. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 1-2)

Despite this, he was employed to teach at university with two years of teaching experience and a Bachelor Degree from an English speaking country. As a result, Steve reported that he was not certain what or how to teach and what direction he should take with his students. Consequently, he said he was confused at the beginning but learnt as he taught his students. He noted that he came to recognise what interested his students and what English speaking skills were important to them and that this helped him to plan his lessons.

In Steve's view, his students needed more time to practise spoken English rather than written English. The reason he gave for this position was that his students had studied English grammar and vocabulary since they were in junior high school, but they had never had a chance to use this knowledge by actually using the spoken language to communicate. Therefore, Steve argued that his students did not need him to give them English grammar lectures. As he said in his first interview, Steve thought that his students would want to focus more on spoken English in order to relate the English grammar they had learned to real communication. Steve expressed these views on how he could improve his students' English speaking skills in the following quotation from his first interview.

They always know what they're doing. They need more practice. They need to, kind of, link the confidence to the performance, I think, the grammatical confidence, grammatical performance. They know it. Sometimes, it needs to be pointed out to them, but they don't need to be focused on it. ... I would say they don't like it, they don't enjoy it. They had an old fat guy standing up in front of them talking about English, giving them grammatical instructions and vocabulary to memorise. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 4)

Therefore, Steve said that he encouraged his students to be more confident and to use more spoken English. He continued by saying that his students should learn skills related to how to maintain a conversation, such as turn-taking, and therefore, he started putting a focus on maintaining conversations in his classes. Steve expressed these views in the following quotation from his first interview.

So, I tend to be conducting conversational-based lessons hoping to have some kind of participation ... I'd rather keep them talking about that, like asking why you think like that, and next people will interact with her about that, and another student will interact as well. I'm trying to get some kind of actual happening, you know, the production of English ... I'd rather let them be involved in a communication activity, let them be in more free environment where they can practise their English. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 6-1)

Given that his students needed practice in using their speaking skills, Steve saw that providing a non-threatening and comfortable learning environment was a key factor in encouraging his students to speak more freely without the fear of making mistakes. Steve also expressed the view that his students were hesitant to begin a conversation in English due to the fear of "losing face" by making grammatical mistakes, so his aim as an English conversation teacher was to help his students not to focus on producing grammatically perfect sentences but instead to concentrate more on maintaining conversations. While he was aware of the importance of constructing grammatical sentences, he thought the focus for his

students should be on growing their confidence to maintain the conversation fluently despite some grammatical mistakes. This was because he realised that speaking fluently without pausing or hesitation is more important than “perfect” grammatical accuracy in a real conversation.

To summarise, Steve recognised that accuracy in spoken English was important but that fluency and the capacity to maintain conversations was more important for his students. This was due to the need to increase their confidence in speaking English and in recognition of their already well developed knowledge of English language structure.

Views about Korean students

Steve perceived Korean students as being passive, quiet and compliant, especially in traditional Korean learning environments. However, even though his students were quiet and not interactive in his first few lessons, he reported that as the semester continued, they became more involved and active in the classroom activities. He felt this change was due to them getting to know him better and becoming familiar with the classes themselves and their roles in them.

Steve claimed that at first his students were confused by his teaching style since they were used to sitting in a classroom being 'spoon-fed' by a teacher who gives a lecture while they take notes without asking questions. Also, the teachers and the students in traditional Korean classrooms do not communicate or interact with one other. Steve noted that initially his students expected him to give them a lecture and so they were ready to listen and take notes. They were surprised and uncertain when Steve wanted them to talk, generate conversations and make presentations in his class.

I'd like to have more opportunities to get them to generate questions, making their own conversation you know, their own personal idea, for example, using the language to talk about cultural differences, you know what I mean. I feel like I'm more facilitating their kind of learning stuff. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 1-3)

As a result of Steve's approach, even though the students were initially confused by the different learning environment and the different expectations of their teacher, they became actively engaged and interacted with each other and they developed the confidence to create their own dialogues and maintain conversations.

I think they are pretty comfortable with me now and they don't feel like, kind of, nervous. I try to get them to talk, like keep talking. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 1-3)

Steve also claimed that, in general, female students were more proactive and interactive than male students. He thought that this was due to the different gender ratio in the classes. That is, there were more female than male students and as a result, the females tended to be more active and confident when talking and they showed less fear of making mistakes. Steve also thought that female students were more proactive in preparing for the lesson and so were clearer about what was expected in class.

Steve emphasised that in his view the most important factor in language learning was student motivation. He went on to say that students would not be able to improve their speaking skills if they were not motivated enough to have strong will power to continue and complete the tasks they were assigned.

I think the biggest thing is the students' motivation. You know, even if I try to make them do it, saying, 'create a dialogue, and just try to do it.', if they are not trying to do it, you know, if they are not motivated to do it, it is going to be terrible. So, I guess the most important thing is motivation. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 1-3)

Steve claimed that all of the students in his department showed a high level of interest, enthusiasm, and motivation to improve their English speaking skills. In order to have a high level of motivation, Steve thought that the students needed a specific goal for their learning. As his students had the goal of qualifying as an English teacher, they were highly motivated to engage in learning to achieve it.

Views about teachers' relationship with students

Steve posited the view that teachers have to build a positive relationship with their students in order to encourage them to be interactive in class, especially in language classrooms. Also, he argued that students need to be in a safe learning environment where they can express their thoughts and opinions freely and, consequently, gradually build their confidence. These views were evident in one of his interviews and confirmed in the observations of his class.

And I think they are enjoying my class, like I said, they are comfortable with me ... I guess it's very informal, but there is still little bit of tension ... I think the students are very comfortable in my classroom... You know, they don't need to be taught in a conventional way ... I want them to feel kind of safe in my class. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 1-3)

Steve claimed that it is important to know students' likes and dislikes and the motivational factors that encourage them to be more engaged and to participate in classroom activities.

However, he said that he was struggling to get his students involved in free discussion activities since he did not have information about what they were interested in. He found that his students talked continuously on topics they were interested in whereas they did not want to be engaged in topics that they were not interested in such as politics or controversial social issues. He thought this was due to the cultural differences. He said that the students in western cultures where he had grown up had a high level of interest in politics or current social issues so he had assumed that his students would like to talk about these types of issues as well. However, when he introduced these issues as the topic of the day in the class, his students kept silent and did not want to be the first one to speak in the discussion so the free discussion activity failed. Steve noted this challenge in his second interview.

It's lack of my knowledge about my students...The biggest challenge for me is, like, to know what my students are going to be interested in. Korean students are not interested in the same kind of thing that western students are interested in... So, you know, I have to be really careful with choosing a topic, like, what kind of thing, I think, is generally interesting to my students...You know, what I mean is that I really need to know what they are interested in, their interests. I have to think about whether they are going to be interested in a topic or not. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 2-2)

To conclude, Steve claimed that success in a language classroom depended on teachers being able to build a positive relationship with their students and on them knowing their students' interests.

Views about students' engagement

Steve claimed that his students' participation level was high and he thought that it was because they had a clear goal for developing their English speaking skills. Steve reported that his students always came to the class with the knowledge of what they were expected to do in the lesson and that their positive attitudes toward the class promoted their learning.

I can conduct 45 minutes of functional lesson in English and students understand; they're never confused. They know what they have to do. They understand what to do in the class. They're participating in communicative, functional activities. (Steve's Interview 1, Q.1)

In summary, Steve claimed that getting the students motivated to be more engaged in the classroom activities was one of the keys to improving their spoken English.

4.3.3 Teaching approach

In this section, the teaching strategies Steve used to improve his students' English speaking skills and how these were influenced by his teaching philosophy will be examined. This will include describing what Steve was doing to achieve his teaching goals and how he managed the challenges that he was faced with in his English conversation classrooms. These aspects will be examined in terms of what and how the Steve taught, what and how he assessed and how he managed his students as these were the categories that emerged from the data analysis.

What and how the teachers teach

In Steve's department, there were four native English-speaking teachers working together and they had created their own teaching materials, including textbooks, classroom activity texts and vocabulary books. Steve had contributed some of the content and activities to those teaching materials. He mentioned that they were based on ESL websites and published ESL textbooks, but had been contextualised to reflect Korean culture in order to make them more authentic and relevant to their students.

The contents and activities in the main textbook that was used in Steve's class were related to the students' real life situations (Document Analysis - textbook). For example, in one of the tasks, the students were asked to describe their roommate and tell their speaking partner what they liked and disliked about that person. In a related task, they had to explain the rules in their dormitory to a new international student (Observation Notes 8, Steve). Steve said that the students seemed to enjoy the tasks and that they interacted well with one another.

Steve valued that his students were well prepared for class and were able to complete the tasks he assigned. He noted that they coped well with the lessons even though they were all delivered in English.

Steve discussed how he did not have any professional knowledge of English teaching and was not familiar with the professional terms associated with teaching approaches, methodologies or strategies. Although he had heard of CLT, he had not read anything about its principles since he did not think the approach would be useful for his students. He said that he understood the meaning of the words, Communicative Language Teaching, but he did not have any idea of what these terms really meant. Interestingly, even though he did not have a theoretical understanding of CLT teaching, he focused on communicative classroom

activities such as topic-based activities. These topics changed in each lesson so that the students could experience many different situations where they had to use spoken English to communicate with each other to complete the tasks, which in turn, promoted their English speaking skills.

Steve claimed that rather than design his lesson to achieve a specific goal, he followed the textbook instructions which focused on communication skills. Although Steve made this claim, there was evidence from the observations and document analysis that he did have clear goals for his lessons and was not reliant on the textbook for direction in his teaching. For instance, one of the topics in the textbook during the time this study was being conducted was 'Understanding of Western Culture', and as part of this topic, Steve was supposed to lecture on cultural differences between Korean and western countries. However, as his main goal was to help the students to develop their English speaking skills and to increase their participation and interaction levels, he focused on this rather than lecturing. This suggests that even when the textbook and teaching materials suggested otherwise, Steve's teaching remained focused on encouraging the students to be actively engaged and to participate in communicative classroom activities. This was also evident in his second and third interviews.

So, I tend to be conducting conversational-based lessons hoping to have some kind of participation that has some culture block. (Steve's Interview 2 Q. 6-1)

My goal for my students is participation and discussion; ask them more questions sometimes...So, I keep on kind of trying to point them the directions. I'm always looking for connection, you know ... what I'm trying to do is making them have certain phrases or structure, kind of, to form a discussion, things like that, you know. It's more like one-to-one speaking without putting a lot of time in the activity doing nothing...So, I try to generate conversation. My role is just to control time-work and push the contents toward the right direction. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 6)

This suggests that Steve considered himself as a facilitator who assists and encourages the students to achieve their learning goals. His view of his role was confirmed by the data collected from the observations and document analysis. As a facilitator, he provided guidance and support to his students while encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning. This was seen in the way he started classroom activities by introducing the task and giving the students explicit instructions on what they must do to complete it. If the students seemed to be unsure, then he demonstrated the expected outcomes of the task. Steve ensured that the students understood their tasks and what they were meant to do before they started

working on them. Once the students began working together on the tasks, he did not intervene unless they required assistance (Observation Notes1-13, Steve).

Initially Steve did not plan his lessons and this sometimes resulted in him not completing the textbook requirements. When this happened, he tried to hurry the students by moving them immediately into creating dialogues and making presentations without the usual preparation work. Understandably, many students found this difficult and Steve had to intervene with more direct teaching strategies to assist them. He reported that this type of teaching conflicted with his belief that he needed to take a facilitating rather than a “telling” role. Through this experience, Steve realised the importance of time management and lesson preparation to successful student learning. Steve described his views on the importance of planning on a number of occasions, including in his first interview.

You have to do planning, you take a role first, give them examples of dialogue, different types of dialogue, then I make another example of dialogue on the board, then students would understand what it's like. Then I can send them away to do it. It's really kind of 20 minutes set-up. And one time, I didn't have time, and I really wanted to do that activity kind of quick through it. They just didn't get it, so I kind of interrupted them, going around each group and telling them what to do and half wrote their dialogue for them. That was a definite failure. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 7)

Steve also claimed that he always put a focus on improving his students' English speaking skills rather than on those areas that the students were already good at, such as grammar. Indeed, he considered his students to be more expert than he was in regards to English grammar. He expressed these views in his interviews.

I don't give them a whole lecture about grammar. I don't really. I maybe need to know more about that, but I don't really teach grammar, and I don't think it's necessary in my class. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 1)

Last semester, there was a grammar book. We taught alongside it; it was 'English Grammar in Use'. Interestingly, what happened was the students did the workbook and I checked it. It was not working because they already have the Korean aspect of grammar; they have a lot of it. And generally speaking, any Korean students can master that very quickly. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 6-1)

It was apparent in his interviews and the classroom observations that Steve enjoyed his English conversation teaching job and that his students seemed to be positively influenced by his enthusiasm.

In summary, while Steve used the texts that had been developed by the teaching team in which he worked, he adapted these and planned his lessons so that there was a consistent emphasis on using spoken English in his classroom. Steve saw himself as a learning facilitator rather than as a lecturer but this role included providing careful scaffolding to his students so they could successfully complete the tasks he assigned them. The nature of the tasks and the materials developed to support them were contextualised for his Korean students.

What and how the teachers assess

As with the other departments at KNU, the one where Steve taught had two examinations, one at mid-term and the other at the end of semester. In the mid-term examination, the teachers of the conversation classes assessed their students' unplanned spoken language responses to see whether they had gained the skills they needed to communicate with native English speakers in a real life situation. In the final exam, the students were expected to deliver a fluent 3-minute presentation in front of two assessors. One of the assessors was Steve himself, with the second being one of the other three native English-speaking teachers from his department (Document Analysis– handout provided by Steve).

Steve managed the examinations in a way that reflected his role as a facilitator. First, he put the examination schedule up and allowed the students to nominate times to suit their own commitments. Second, Steve provided enough information and time for his students to be well prepared for their examinations and he encouraged them to practise doing the required tasks during his classes. Further, he provided help for those students who were experiencing difficulty with strategies, such as developing a rationale, to assist them to meet the demands of the examination (Observation Notes 6, 12, 13, Steve). Steve noted that he approached examinations in this way as he believed that his students' spoken English skills would improve as a result of their intense preparation. He also thought that his students would work better under the pressure of preparing for the examinations; he saw examinations as creating positive stress that promoted their commitment to learning English speaking skills.

I really want them to be prepared for their exam, which is coming up in two weeks. I really want them to sit down and read and answer the questions, and to give me a really solid kind of minute and half, or two minutes kind of solid completed answer. You know, some of the students there, will not be able to do that, you know, so I've been trying to get them to kind of study to help them, you know, things like, techniques to answer the questions quickly and techniques to think of reasons and examples really really quickly. You know I, kind of, for

example, I ask them to think of at least three reasons why they believe that's true and I'm trying to help the students to build up three reasons when they have difficulty. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 2)

However, Steve expressed concern about the lack of attention to overall proficiency in the examination system of his department. The focus of the two examinations was to firstly assess the students' English speaking skills taught as part of the course to see whether they had met the objectives set for the semester (Observation Notes 6, 12, 13, Steve). However, Steve said that he was not provided with specialised assessment criteria or assessment tools. Although there was a checklist for him to follow during the exams, it was from an ESL website on the internet rather than created by the teachers from the department (Field Notes - Steve). Further, Steve reported that there was no attempt to assess the students' English speaking proficiency level; this claim was confirmed by the observations of both the conversation classes and the examination process and by the analysis of the teacher and university level policies and assessment and planning documents.

To summarise, although Steve approached the examination system imposed by the university in a positive manner and used the motivation of the students to do well as a means to promote intensive learning of spoken English, he had concerns about the construction of the examinations, a lack of support to make fair judgements on student performance and the failure to assess the students' overall spoken English proficiency.

How the teachers manage students

Steve claimed that the South Korean university students he had been teaching were generally active in classroom activities and that they displayed a high level of motivation to achieve fluent English speaking skills. He also claimed that his students were proactive in learning English conversation skills; especially the female students were more proactive than the male students. Steve expressed these views often during the data collection period and they were confirmed in the observation of his classes. The following quotations represent the many ways he described his students' willing participation in class and aptitude for English during this study.

All students can communicate at some level and most students can communicate very fluently in terms of how they can express their ideas. They barely make mistakes. They don't have serious problems with grammatical structure, word forms and tense, things like that... They understand what to do in the class. They're participating in communicative, functional activities. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 1)

Generally girls are more proactive in terms of presenting, role-play, giving their ideas and sort of, something like that. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 2)

Steve claimed that his students were, in general, actively engaged in the communicative classroom activities and their active involvement had a positive influence on their learning of English speaking skills. However, Steve said that his students were sometimes hesitant to start a conversation since they were afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates; especially those male students who had completed their two-year-and-two-month compulsory military service and so were older than their classmates. He thought that it was a lack of practice in speaking English which led to their lack of confidence.

They need more practice. They need to, kind of, link the confidence to the performance, I think, the grammatical confidence, grammatical performance. They know it. Sometimes, it needs to be pointed out to them, but they don't need to be focused on it. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 4)

Steve viewed the students' involvement in the classroom activities as one of the keys to the success of lessons and also determined whether the activities were effective or not in terms of improving the students' English speaking skills. However, it was observed that the students in Steve's classes were sometimes not actively engaged and participating, but were keeping silent, waiting for their teacher to give them more guidance or direction. He thought that this was not a case of them not having enough English language skills or of not wanting to participate in the activities but, rather, that other aspects of the learning were barriers to their participation.

Steve lamented his lack of knowledge of his students but speculated that they may not be participating in free discussion activities because they lacked background knowledge of the topics which meant they were not able to discuss them, even though they had well-developed English speaking skills. Another reason Steve provided was that his students had not been trained or encouraged to have critical views on issues. He said that it would have been helpful for his students to generate their own opinion on the discussion topics if they were equipped to apply critical thinking. Steve discussed these concerns in his second interview.

It's lack of my knowledge about my students. The biggest challenge for me is, like, to know what my students are going to be interested in ...Maybe, they don't have background knowledge or whatever, but it's kind of discussion... It's so natural to think critically and to have my own opinion or idea...So, you know I expected that my students also think critically and have their own opinion, but now I know that my students are not critical. It's maybe because of the different

thought ... different view or maybe the education system is broken. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 2-2)

As stated above, Steve found it difficult to conduct free discussion activities with his students to know what topic would invite his students' participation. As he mentioned above, he thought that building up the students' general knowledge and improving their ability to think critically could address this issue and promote their engagement in discussion or debating activities. However, Steve found the time provided for his English conversation classes was limited, meaning there was not enough time for him to teach his students the background knowledge needed for each discussion topic or the skills of critical thinking, despite recognising their importance.

To me, personally, I mean, at my personal level, I think critical thinking is very very important... So, it has come into education system, but in Korea, probably they don't see its value, you know, we have different values ... You know, critical thinking will help their speaking skills... It has to be sort of bottom line for communication, like, to be better in their discussion or debates. If they have this critical thinking skill, then students will be better in English speaking activities, but it will take too long. It's going to be difficult to teach it over the semester, and I'm not sure if I could. (Steve's Interview 2, Q. 2-2)

Besides his students' lack of background knowledge and critical thinking skills, Steve claimed that they sometimes did not find his English conversation classes interesting due to the lack of connection between what they learned in his classes and other classes conducted by Korean professors. He thought that this disconnects between his classes and their main university programs, which were related to major subjects in the Department of English Education, was one of the most challenging factors that could discourage his students from engagement in the classroom activities. Steve claimed that a stronger connection between these aspects of the students' program would help his students to see the relevance and practical application of what they learnt in his class.

Korean professors will be there with deeper pedagogical knowledge and deeper knowledge of lesson planning, curriculum planning and they can correct that stuff, and they come to us, and we deal with nuts and bolts; pronunciation, grammar... They are taught certain things in Korean, and then they come to my class and I set them with discussion, then that'll be better. And I'll get them moving in the right direction specifically for our students, but also I think, in general, it will improve in terms of what foreign professors are doing, you know. And also I think it would make students more motivated. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 8)

Another concern that Steve expressed was that one of the common misconceptions which his students had was that there was one particular solution to resolve the difficulties that they were experiencing in learning to speak English fluently. However, Steve claimed that it was not possible to provide one solution as his students needed to focus on every aspect of the English language, not just on one area.

Korean students in general, university students, it would seem that Korean students always look for some kind of solution to their language learning difficulties, but there is not a solution... But what they don't know or what they should know is that there is no specific answer like that; they need to improve all the skills, everything they do they need to do correctly and accurately, and they need to do everything. They need to read, they need to write, they need to speak, and they need to listen to, you know, everything. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 9)

In summary, even though Steve expressed some concerns regarding his students' knowledge about some of the topics they needed to discuss in his class, about their lack of critical thinking skills and about the disconnect between the English conversation classes and the remainder of the students' university course, he was generally positive about his students' levels of engagement and commitment to learning. He reported having few difficulties in his lessons and as enjoying working with his students.

4.4 Case Study Three – David

4.4.1 Background

David is from Canada and he was in his late thirties when the research was conducted. At that time, he had lived in South Korea for 13 years. He had completed his Bachelor degree in Theology in Canada, and previously led the Youth Ministry in a church there. Prior to coming to South Korea, he had no language training or experience in teaching. Despite not having these qualifications or experience, David gained employment teaching English conversation skills at junior high schools, private English academies and later, at a local college in Chungnam Province, South Korea. Then, he gained a position as a Foreign Professor in a national college where he was in charge of the English conversation unit in the Department of Tourism English Interpretation. Some years after he began this role, the college was amalgamated with KNU, and he and his colleagues became part of the Division of Tourism, Major in Tourism English Interpretation, within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. At the time of the study, he had been teaching English conversation skills there for nine years.

The department where David works aims to equip the students with excellent English communication skills and a global mind-set and trains them to become professional and global travel agents, English Interpreters, and English Translators. Accordingly, it emphasises the importance of English speaking skills to fulfil these aims (KNU's Homepage). One of the strategies the department has adopted to improve its students' English speaking skills has been to employ native speakers of English as English conversation teachers. Despite the importance attributed to spoken English, these teachers are not required to have either general education qualifications or specialist training in language teaching and neither are they provided with a curriculum or guidelines for the units they are employed to teach.

In addition to having no training in general or language teaching, David did not have access to any professional development in KNU or to knowledge about South Korean university students, their characteristics or their culture. Further, he was not provided with any course materials or textbooks but rather, told to choose his own.

I just bought more textbooks. I studied and I searched. Accordingly, I attended a seminar that related to teaching English conversation, and I paid myself to attend the seminar. There was no support from my department. (David's Interview 1, Q. 5)

As a result, David reported that when he first started teaching in the university he struggled to teach Korean university students because they were very passive and were not responsive in the classroom activities he provided. He mentioned that he panicked and did not know what to do to make them interactive and engaged. He talked about this fear in his second interview and referred to it as 'potato syndrome'; in that he saw his students as "potatoes with eyes but no mouth".

I went into the class and I was immediately affected by my potatoes. They didn't respond to me. I talked to them, but it was again, potato disease, I mean potatoes may have eyes, but no mouth, so the students become potatoes; they were just looking at me. (David's Interview 2, Q. 1-1)

He wanted to overcome this fear so that he could be more successful and confident in his teaching. Since he was not given any support and teaching resources from the department, he bought English conversation textbooks to get an idea of teaching guidelines and asked other English conversation teachers what should and should not be done in the classroom. After some eight years, he decided to enrol in a Master's degree offered by the University of Southern Queensland, Australia as an on-line course. He completed this Master of Applied

Linguistics degree with specialisation in TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) the following year.

David claimed that he had learned how to analyse his students' behaviour during classroom activities and how to determine their learning preferences and that this had helped him to understand his students better while he was taking the Masters course. (David's Reflective Journal 2)

4.4.2 Teaching philosophy

In this section, David's reflective views on his teaching and his students are described as is the influence of these on his actual teaching practices. These views are presented in the categories that emerged in the data analysis. These were David's views on the role of English for South Korean students; South Korean students' attitude toward English learning; English teaching approach, particularly the relative focus on accuracy or fluency; South Korean students; the teachers' relationship with students; and, students' engagement.

Views about the role of English for South Korean students

David claimed that many Korean university students, including those in his classes, spent a great amount of time and money studying English to improve their speaking skills because most Korean companies required these skills as one of the main criteria for employees. However, David claimed that Korean people did not need English in their life since it was not being used anywhere in Korea, not even in work places. He said that he could only see Korean written in newspapers and magazines, Korean spoken on TV programs around him, and all the official documents were mainly written in Korean. Therefore, Korean people did not need to use English in their daily lives. David expressed these views in his second interview:

Koreans have, have it to learn, English for TOEIC in particular. In fact, they don't need it, except for they need it to get high scores to get a job or to get into a university, but they do not see the value. They know there is no value in it for them. They know what kind of job does need good English, but there is no real purpose to study English. (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-1)

David also claimed that even though they did not need English, Korean people, especially university students, "were pushed to sit down in front of the desk and spend huge amounts of time in memorising English vocabulary just for examinations". David expressed the view that

his students were not actually studying to improve their English speaking skills, but instead were studying to pass their examinations.

TOEIC has been used as a filter or a screener for university or a company. If it is creating a real negative attitude toward English, TOEIC has to be left without any thought to any education system. They might have messed it up because the students tell me that when they study TOEIC, they don't study English. They're studying the strategies they need to pass. (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-1)

David held a negative view of the way that his students studied English. He argued that the students spent too much time in memorising complicated English grammar rules and vocabulary rather than learning how to speak in a real life situation. He noted that language is a living thing, and, therefore, language learning cannot happen simply by memorising sentence structure and vocabulary.

Views about South Korean students' attitude toward English learning

David claimed that most of his students had strong motivation to learn English to achieve good scores in TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). He opined that even though they knew that they would not often use English in their daily life or in their work, they were aware that they needed to master English skills in order to survive. Therefore, Steve argued that since the students felt forced to study English by memorising rules and vocabulary in order to pass the examinations, they did not seem to enjoy studying English and, consequently, they developed a negative attitude toward English learning. In turn, this resulted in a loss of interest in and motivation to learn English.

TOEIC is still one of the driving forces. When they think about English, automatically they think about grammar and TOEIC. TOEIC is kind of a grammar-driven test. They're not actually learning. They're only learning things to be passed without learning the language. Language is a living thing. I don't think the way Korean people learn and the attitude they have for English is a happy way. (David's Interview 1, Q. 12)

David expressed strong views about the role and impact of different methodologies on Korean students' learning. He claimed that if students lacked motivation and explicit goals for their learning, no methodologies, no matter how widely used or sensitised to their needs they were, would be effective in promoting learning. Furthermore, he expressed the view that Korean learners would become more passive if the cycle of inappropriate learning to meet the demands of the examination system continued. Therefore, he argued that Korean university

students should find real reasons why they need to learn English and that this, in turn, would improve their attitudes towards learning to speak the language.

Views about English teaching approach - focus on accuracy or fluency

David claimed that he did not usually design lesson plans before the class for a number of reasons. First, he thought planning was not needed as Korean students were easy to teach with any materials. Second, he noted that his students saw him as a strong authority figure in the class, and, therefore, they tended to be compliant, meaning they would participate in the classroom activities when directed to do so. Third, he said that he could not predict how many students would come to his class and what their English speaking proficiency levels would be in the next semester, so he could not plan the lessons beforehand. Finally, he said that he could intuitively grasp what his students' wanted when he walked into the class and allowed him to spontaneously plan what he needed to teach at that time.

I know it sounds strange, but I sometimes do my lesson plan in class. When I'm in the class, I can see what's happening... So I can decide what I'm going to do straight away. I'm very far ahead. For example, I can't design my lesson plans during the vacation for the next semester because I don't know how many students will be in my class and who will be in my class. I don't know... I can't plan in advance. I'm a week-to-week guy. (David's Interview 1, Q. 9)

Most of activities I am doing in my class are spontaneous, you know, no certain plan, but spontaneous activities. (David's Interview 1, Q. 1-3)

As for his teaching methodologies or strategies, David claimed that he did not have a particular method for his teaching since he thought that there was no such thing as the most effective teaching strategy for Korean students. However, he argued that he tried to focus more on teaching communicative skills than teaching English grammar or reading comprehension skills since he noticed that his students needed more guidance and direction in this area of learning. David expressed these views a number of times, including in his first and third interviews.

I haven't focused a lot on sentence structure or pronunciation. Instead, I did a lot of things, such as communicating, interacting, creating questions, confirmation questions, not just, not in your brain. I spent a lot of time, a lot of time doing them. (David's Interview 1, Q. 2)

I mainly focus on communication, especially at the discourse level, including some strategic competence, maybe? I sometimes teach them, like clarification? Or confirmation questions? You know things like that. But I haven't taught them that much. I think I focus on discourse competence a lot, like constructing meaningful sentences, you know, make them talk, like keeping a conversation,

and lots of confirmation questions, but there are not so much of them in the class where you're observing. (David's Interview 3, Q. 2)

David also claimed that some of his students were highly motivated to improve their English speaking skills and so they were studying English intensively. However, he noticed that these students were going in what he deemed to be the "wrong direction". That is, they focused on areas like reading comprehension skills, listening skills, grammar and vocabulary skills. He understood that this was due to the English examination focusing on these skills but he did not believe that this focus would help them improve their speaking skills. He argued that Korean students need to change their studying habits from sitting in front of desk all day memorising to starting to apply the rules and to use the vocabulary that they have been studying in practice; otherwise, they would never be successful in speaking English.

David claimed that grammar was important for his students, but he argued that they already had strong skills in this area of language so he did not need to focus on it. He said that as long as his students were capable of maintaining a conversation, able to understand other people speaking English and could communicate their ideas, linguistic accuracy was not important. He reported that he wanted his students to talk fluently instead of them hesitating as a result of a heightened concern with grammatical accuracy. For this reason, he did not correct his students' grammatical mistakes when they were talking. It followed that he thought that he would provide them with a non-threatening learning environment by not correcting their errors. Given this emphasis, David set his students speaking tasks and then withdrew, expecting them to complete these independently of him. David expressed these views in his first interview.

When it comes to the linguistic level, such as sentence structure or pronunciation, generally I'm awful at teaching them. But I believe that teaching grammar is also important in the language teaching area and it is important to be understood, but I have a different focus. (David's Interview 1, Q. 1)

Actually, grammar is not my main focus, I know it's also important, but I usually take what I'm familiar with and what I think important. (David's Interview 1, Q. 13)

To conclude, David claimed that teaching linguistic features to improve his students' English linguistic accuracy was important but not as valuable as fluency. Therefore, he did not teach English linguistic features and only focused on improving his students' speaking fluency. To do this, he directed his students to talk during the whole three-hour lessons and did not interrupt them even when they made grammatical mistakes.

Views about Korean students

David claimed that Korean students are quiet, passive, compliant, not interactive, not engaged and not motivated to participate in classroom activities. He also claimed that they were not used to expressing their opinion in front of the class, and, consequently, they tended to be quiet and unresponsive. He said that at the beginning of his teaching career, he was embarrassed when his students did not respond to his questions and he panicked since he did not know how to handle their silence. As previously reported, he referred to his students as potatoes as they all looked the same and had eyes but no mouth to talk. Since that time, he had struggled to overcome this discomfort, which he called 'potato syndrome'.

David also claimed that Korean students tended to be passive learners who sat in the classroom and expected their teachers to do everything for them. They would listen to their teachers and take notes but not respond with comments or questions. David claimed that if they were asked to do any activities, they would remain in their chairs waiting for the teacher to allocate them into a group and tell them what to do. David's expressed these views in his second interview.

Koreans are so passive. They're seeing their teacher as the giver passing on their knowledge. I think they are not asked to be active, powerful and participant. They have no power in the classes. So, they're just there to sit and listen to their teacher. It's not, they are not often expected to participate as the equal partner, and I think most of them are passive; Koreans are passive. (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-1)

Moreover, he said that no one voluntarily participated in the classroom activities unless they were nominated by name. He also said that due to these characteristics, he would not have any behaviour issues from his students, but it was very hard for him to make his students engage and interact in the classroom activities, and that participation was critical to improve their speaking abilities.

They are passive. They need to be more active in the class. I don't teach the technical learning strategies, but always encourage them to be more involved in their own learning. (David's Interview 1, Q. 11)

Another student characteristic that David claimed was a key to success for his students was their personality. He argued that the students who were more outgoing and social tended to be more actively engaged and to participate in the classroom activities, leading them to grow in confidence and, consequently, to improve their English speaking skills. He thought that there

was a connection between the students' self-confidence and their learning; the more confident they are, the more they learn.

I think, from observing my students, people who are confident, outgoing and social improve their English more. Normally, more outgoing people have no problem with self-confidence and it helps them. (David's Interview 1, Q. 1)

To conclude, David claimed that, in general, his students were passive and not responsive in the classroom activities; thus, they were not successful in achieving a high level of English speaking skills. However, there were students who were motivated, more talkative and social and these students achieved better results than did those not sharing these personal traits. Therefore, David thought that students' personality and level of confidence play an important role in language learning.

Views about teachers' relationship with students

David claimed that building a positive relationship with his students, not only inside of the class but also outside, was very important in terms of generating more successful English conversation classrooms. He believed that students accepted any type of classroom activities once they established a good relationship with their teacher.

I've noticed that if I can develop a positive or good relationship with my students inside and outside of the classroom, they'll do almost anything, almost anything that I would like to give them. And they are performing well if they're comfortable between me and them, and between themselves (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-2)

And I think the stronger the relationship I have with my students, the more they seem to want to communicate in the class. I try to make things relevant and meaningful in my classes and lessons. (David's Interview 3, Q. 6)

He said that once his students trusted him as a friend, not just as a teacher, they were loyal to him in the classroom. To David, this meant the students would do any activity he brought to the classroom, and they would give him a good evaluation report at the end of the semester.

Overall, then, David believed that it was important to have a positive relationship with his students because then they would accept the activities he gave them to do and participate more in class which would, in turn, enhance their learning. He also valued the positive impact that a friendly relationship had on the students' evaluation of his teaching. David emphasised the importance of having a relationship with his students based on friendship rather than on his role as their teacher and that this friendship went beyond the classroom.

Views about students' engagement

David claimed that Korean students, in general, did not actively engage in classroom activities because they were passive learners. He claimed that, initially, he did not understand why his students wanted to learn English speaking skills if they were not going to participate and engage in the classroom activities he organised. He noted that the students, rather than interacting, sat and tried to memorise what was being said in the classroom. Although they had very good memorisation skills, he did not think that these would help them to improve their English speaking skills.

When I taught English in a South Korean school, my first impression of the students was that they looked the same and they never spoke in the class. They were always quiet, and I didn't understand why they wanted to learn English speaking skills because they seemed that they didn't need English. Also, I felt pity for them because they sat there for hours and hours doing a lot of memorization work. They were very good at memorizing stuff, but it's not working for conversation. (David's Interview 1, Q. 11)

On a more positive note, David observed that his students tended to be more engaged and to participate more readily when they were grouped with their close friends. He thought this was because they felt more comfortable and secure when they were with their friends than when they were grouped with classmates who they were not familiar to them. Another observation was that his students were more interactively engaged in the classroom activities when they were given specific and explicit teaching instructions or more structured guidelines. Here is an extract from David's reflective journal indicating the importance of providing more guidance.

I have enjoyed some success this semester as I have striven to provide for sophomore students a more structured, nurturing environment in which to learn. (David's Reflective Journal 2)

To summarise, David claimed that his students' engagement level was generally low, but he reported encouraging them to be more interactive by grouping them with their close friends and providing them with more explicit and structured instructions when necessary.

4.4.3 Teaching approach

This section describes David's teaching strategies and how his teaching philosophy influenced his actual teaching practices. This section is divided into three categories to reflect those that emerged in the data analysis. These were what and how the teachers teach, what and how the teachers assess, and how the teachers manage students.

What and how the teachers teach

David did not have experience in learning languages other than his mother tongue, English. In his first interview, David described how when the Canadian Ministry of Education encouraged students to learn French, he refused as he could not see its value. He said that French was not used in his province and, therefore, he did not have to learn it to survive. This experience seemed to lead him to develop a negative view of Korean students' lack of protest about having to learn English. In his view, they did not see the value of English and had a negative attitude toward learning it, so should have complained or refused to do so.

Despite his negative opinion of Korean students' attitude toward learning English, David still taught them English communication skills since it was his job. As he thought English was not needed in South Korea and students were not motivated to learn it, he did not see the point of teaching it. As a result of these beliefs, David appeared to lose interest in and passion for teaching English speaking skills; consequently, he did not want to spend too much time on lesson planning, creating authentic teaching materials for his students, or delivering more interactive and communicative classroom activities. He argued that this lack of commitment to his teaching work was because he thought all of his efforts would be meaningless if his students did not have high levels of motivation to acquire English speaking skills from his classes.

It's kind of meaningfully relevant, and it's like comprehensive input and output? Well, I don't think it's necessary here in Korea, why would you teach them? There is no need. There is no point to the strategy. What's the point actually? Why would you do that if you are just going to give them a paper test, you know? We've actually talked about this a number of time, you know, wonderful theories, strategies, and methodologies, you know, but they are not actually happening here, you know, it's like, it's so exam-based society, and the strategies or whatever you call them, you know, they are maybe great to use, but no, not in Korea, I think. (David's Interview 3, Q. 1)

However, even though David thought that teaching English speaking skills was not necessary in South Korea, he still claimed that he used the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to improve the students' English speaking skills, mentioning that 80% of his teaching activities were task-based learning activities or information gap activities. He also claimed that the teaching focus in the classroom was to promote his students' English communication skills and, therefore, he always aimed to provide them with a safe and relaxed learning environment so that they could talk freely. He said that his students did not really

have to learn English grammar or reading comprehension skills from him since they had already studied them in other classes.

I guess I use CLT and little bit of task-based syllabus. I'm actually getting more into that now. Trying to find out what that is. In fact, CLT I guess. I use techniques, strategies, specifically information gap activities, anything that would foster them, the students' speaking, communication skills. I guess it's communicative. The other thing like grammar, reading ... I think in Korea, the students learn those macro skills a lot, so I just focus on communicating in real life. I try to give them activities that foster that. I've never done those consciously with any particular methods in mind. (David's Interview 1, Q. 3)

Even though David expressed a view that English was not needed to survive in South Korea in general, as mentioned previously, he claimed that there was a strong reason for him to focus on improving his students' English communication skills due to their importance in some work contexts. For example, he said that he was still in contact with some of his students who had graduated about ten years ago, and one of them told him that he had been told to leave the company for whom he was working. He explained that the former student was working for an international trading company. One day, he received a phone call from one of their customers in America, and the customer claimed that there were some problems with the trading process, but his former student could not really understand what the customer was saying. So, he just said 'yes', and ended the phone conversation without taking messages and did not inform his manager. After a while, his manager got a cancellation notice from the customer due to the unsatisfactory process of trading. This failure led to a highly significant financial loss to the company, and so he lost his position with the company.

After David heard the former student's story, he once again realised how important the communication skills were, and since then, he had decided to put more focus on improving his students' English speaking skills. He thought that providing the students with a non-threatening learning environment was imperative to make the students feel comfortable and encourage them to participate in communicative activities since they tended to perform better when there was no stress or pressure related to making mistakes. Therefore, he let the students keep talking without any kind of interruption, such as corrective feedback. It was observed that David did not make any corrective comments on the students' mistakes even after they finished talking, and he claimed that he was expecting his students to correct their own mistakes through interactive communication (Observation Notes 2-15, David).

David claimed that his aim for his students was to move them away from being passive to being active in the class, so he tried to encourage them to be more engaged by teaching them basic classroom English such as simple communication gambits. In all of the observed classes, however, he started lessons without providing outlines or any instructions, but simply told his students to talk. Neither did David provide his students with materials to suit their level of proficiency in English, choosing to give them all the same materials throughout the semester and to not attend to the linguistic demands inherent in these (Observation Notes 2-15, David).

The textbook David used was new to him and he said that he was confused as to how to use it properly. Although he had been told to use a textbook by the department, there were no guidelines for him to consider when he decided what to choose. He was just told to teach the department's principal content knowledge, which is Tourism, using English.

Therefore, he chose a textbook called, '*Oxford English for careers: Tourism 1 - Student's book*' (Walker & Harding, 2006), and decided to use a project-based approach to combine the content knowledge with English speaking skills. The basic principles of project-based approaches were aligned with those of task-based approaches, which are to encourage language learners to learn the target language by completing the given tasks or projects. While the students were completing the tasks or projects, they were supposed to use the target language. David said that he chose to adopt a project-based approach since its aims were for the language learners to learn the target language in a natural way; thus, he was expecting his students to make progress in improving their English speaking skills while they were completing their project work.

According to the theory of the project-approach, the students in his class should have gained good content knowledge through the projects that they were given, and at the same time, improved their English speaking skills (Document Analysis - handout). However, in practice, the approach did not seem to produce these outcomes for David's students. There appeared to be a range of reasons for this lack of success. One was that the depth of content knowledge contained in the project was too shallow, particularly considering that the students in the class were seniors. Since David had little background knowledge related to tourism, he had difficulty designing this aspect of the project.

A further reason for the apparent failure of the project work was that David did not give the students any guidance. He gave them the project task without explaining what they needed to do or how they might do it. David allowed the students to form their own groups because, as was described earlier, he believed that they worked more effectively in friendship groups. However, a consequence of this was that each group had students with a range of proficiency levels which, in practice, meant that the confident more competent students dominated and those with less proficiency did not get the practice speaking that they needed. This was particularly the case given that David did not intervene in any aspect of the group processes. The observations suggest that the students were often confused and frustrated, spoke mainly in Korean and made little progress in developing their English speaking skills over the semester (Observation Notes 2-15, David).

This suggests that David's personal experiences, knowledge and philosophy influenced his teaching practice. Through David's personal experience of his refusal to learn French, he developed a negative opinion about South Korean students' attitude toward English learning. This, together with his view that English was not relevant to Korean students, seemed to result in him losing motivation and enthusiasm for teaching in this context. As a result, when he designed the project-based approach, he did not contribute the time and effort needed to make it more applicable to his class. He could not use the approach to broaden his students' content knowledge because he lacked content knowledge related to tourism. Also, he thought that Korean students tended to be more interactive and engaged in the classroom activities when they were grouped with friends; thus, he did not consider the students' proficiency level when he designed the learning program. As a result, he did not address the learning needs of his less fluent students.

What and how the teachers assess

As with other staff members at KNU, David said that he usually gave his students two examinations every semester. However, in the semester when this study was conducted, he decided to only have a summative evaluation for the senior class since the focus of his teaching for the semester was solely on the completion of the tourism project. In addition to this evaluation, David took into account the students' class attendance, their participation in the project preparation, and noted their results from the pop-quizzes given to assess their understanding of the content knowledge of tourism which they had learned from the textbook (Document Analysis - handout).

For the summative evaluation, each group of students was expected to submit their project portfolio at the end of the semester in the form of a presentation. In the portfolio package, there were four items: Recruitment Promotion, Past/Current Trends in Tourism and Tourist Motivation, Promotional Campaign, and Textbook and other outside sources. The details of these requirements were given to the students in week 11, including the criterion which had five categories: Vocabulary, Language Structures, Relevance of Materials, Overall Appeal, and Instructor Questions. The presentations were performed in weeks 14 and 15 of semester (Document Analysis – handout).

The projects were completed in six groups of four or five students. Each group made a presentation, with every member expected to be involved. Additionally, members were required to prove their contribution to the portfolio and the presentation. In week 11, the students were given the assessment criterion for the portfolio presentation (Document Analysis – handout).

David checked the students' participation as he believed that the process was as important as the product. David gave the students the pop-quizzes to see whether they had studied the content and vocabulary of the textbook as these were important components of the portfolio presentation. David reported his approach to assessment in his first interview.

I was aiming for them to communicate, to fully understand each other, to negotiate the meaning. I wanted to see what they really understood through the communication. And I assessed them based on how they talked in the presentation and also the product that they made together. I also looked at how effective their communication was. I assess my students, their speaking skills, never done reading, never done writing, and speaking and listening go kind of together, but when I assess their speaking, I check their vocabulary. I mainly focus on their speaking skills. (David's Interview 1, Q. 8)

In the portfolio presentation, David claimed that the focus of the assessment was on both accuracy and fluency, and he also assessed the students' general presentation skills and their level of knowledge about their project topic. He also claimed that he aimed to assess the students' improvement in English speaking skills and their content knowledge of tourism.

How the teachers manage students

David thought that Korean students were reluctant to learn English and were usually quiet and passive in class and, thus, it was hard to make them actively engage in the communicative activities. David said that when he saw some students who were not

participating but keeping silent in the class, he usually made sure they understood the activities that the class was doing and he encouraged them to be interact more with other students.

If there is a group that isn't working well, then I go there and ask them what's going on and I model for them. And if the students are passive, I don't force them too much. And sometimes they may naturally have questions to continuously communicate. In that case, I just go there and listen to them and talk to them, you know, I try to make them understand what's happening in the class, otherwise, they don't get it, they're just there, like looking at me. (David's Interview 3, Q. 4)

However, when there was disengagement in the classes being observed, although David was moving around the class, he did not go to those students to help them to understand the classroom activities or to encourage them to be more interactive. Instead, he told the whole class to ask him if they were not sure what to do, but those students still remained quiet (Observation Notes 2-15, David).

David claimed that he did not normally have any issues with his students in the class since they were quiet and compliant, but that sometimes Korean students' passiveness caused problems. He said that when the students were not responding to his questions or actions, he struggled to find a way to get their responses. As already described, his early experiences teaching Korean students had led him to fear silence in his classrooms and to refer to these students as "potatoes" who had eyes but not mouths. On one occasion, he had to cancel a class because he could not tolerate his students' silence and he noted that this made him disappointed in himself.

With many similar experiences, he started realising that he had to overcome his 'potato syndrome' and, finally, he overcame the fear of students' silence when he was taking the MA (Master of Arts in TESOL) course. Among the units he was taking, there was one that required him to observe his teaching by video-recording and analysing his own practice and his students' characteristics. When he was doing the assignment, he realised that beginner level students needed more attention from the teacher and they tended to perform better when they were given more explicit instructions and guidance. He found that this worked in practice when he tried it. He also claimed that he changed the activity when he noticed that students were not interacting. However, this was not observed in any of his classes. Rather, when his students were disengaged or frustrated, David just kept walking around the class watching the groups without intervening or assisting. (Observation Notes 2-15, David)

David claimed that he sometimes found it challenging to implement interactive and communicative classroom activities since the classroom where he was teaching was too small and he had too many students in one class. He also claimed that the small classroom size could confine the students' physical movement and make them feel too uncomfortable to communicate with their classmates interactively.

The physical environment in my class can limit natural communicative study, you know what I mean. They are all in a small room, and making a group task? You know they can't comfortably communicate or interact with other groups, you know small class, but too many students? They can't comfortably do a communicative group task. Also, sometimes, they have to be there, you know any kind of anxiety can limit their communication skill. (David's Interview 3, Q. 3)

He recounted how he had requested that his department assign fewer students to his English conversation class and provide him with a bigger classroom so that he could run his classes more effectively. However, the department did not respond to his requests, despite announcing a new policy which required all the students applying for a scholarship to take the English conversation units he taught.

David argued that his students tended to avoid discussion activities since they were not used to expressing their opinions on certain topics or agreeing or disagreeing with other people. He found it challenging to encourage his students to be more actively engaged in discussion due to their unwillingness to participate. He saw these problems as related to the students' Korean cultural background.

The student had some difficulties with expressing her opinion or disagreeing with another person's opinion because the people were older than her, you know, the Korean culture can hinder, and it can make obstacles. (David's Interview 3, Q. 3)

The classroom observation indicated that the students in David's classroom were not participating in the discussion activities largely because they were not familiar with the topic given or what they were required to do in the task. Further, David did not provide any instructions or guidance in response to the difficulties they were experiencing.

David also argued that he did not get enough support from his department in terms of what he was expected to teach in his English conversation classrooms. That is, he was not aware of what his students had been learning in other units; therefore, he claimed that it was challenging for him to make a connection between what he was teaching and what his

students were learning in other classes. He also claimed that it was hard for him to relate his classes to his students' needs.

A lot of students even in my class, I don't see, like, how this is going to be relevant to what they need, I mean, you know the things they learn here? Often they are not relevant. I don't think, unless they are purely interested in English? (David's Interview 3, Q. 3)

I try to make things relevant and meaningful to my classes and lessons. (David's Interview 3, Q. 6)

David claimed that he tried to engage his students in classroom activities by making his lessons relevant to their lives, but he argued that it was not easy since he did not get any support from the department and there was no professional development for him to attend. Therefore, he could not learn more about his students' characteristics or their cultural and educational backgrounds; knowledge that he said would help him to generate more relevant and practical teaching materials.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the work of the teachers involved in this study as three case studies. These case students were based on a thematic analysis of the data from the teachers' interviews and reflective journals, the classroom observations and the following discussions with the teachers, the document analysis and the field notes.

The chapter described the teacher's backgrounds, focussing particularly on their educational backgrounds and teaching experience. It then described their teaching philosophies as revealed in the interviews and journals and seen in their practice. These related to their views about: the role of English in South Korea, their students' attitudes towards English learning, their teaching focus, their students, their relationship with students, and their students' engagement. Finally, their teaching approach was described in relation to what and how they taught, assessed and managed their students.

The case studies showed that the three teachers had different cultural and educational backgrounds, different teaching philosophies and they used different teaching approaches in terms of what and how they taught, assessed, and managed their students. There were, however, similarities noticed as well. Therefore, the next chapter investigates these similarities and differences to identify cross-case patterns.

Chapter 5 Cross-case Analysis

This chapter elaborates on the findings presented in the previous chapter as three case studies. Eight themes that emerged from the 16 initial codes were compared and contrasted to search for cross-case patterns. These eight themes were teaching experience, teachers' motivation, teaching preparation, teaching instruction, teaching strategies, professional knowledge of CLT, teachers' understanding of South Korean education system and their students, and teaching environment.

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the three cases presented in the previous chapter are compared and contrasted and the cross-case patterns that emerge are discussed. The aim of searching for cross-case patterns was to re-examine the previous coding process to avoid precipitate or false conclusions (Bryman, 2012; Eisenhardt, 1989). This process helps to analyse large amounts of data in a more accurate and reliable way and to increase the chances of capturing new findings which may not have emerged in the initial coding process (Eisenhardt, 1989). It also helps to triangulate data to strengthen the findings (Dooley, 2002) and, finally, this process stimulates theoretical reflection on the findings (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The search for cross-case patterns involved identifying the similarities and differences among the three case studies (Burns, 2010; Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994). First, the 16 initial codes were considered. These were: 1) Explicit teaching instruction; 2) Goal-oriented lesson plan; 3) Teachers' influence (teachers' motivation); 4) Learners' learning strategies; 5) Learners' motivation and interest level; 6) Memorisation learning system; 7) Exam-driven education system; 8) Cultural differences; 9) Students' different proficiency level; 10) Actual coordination; 11) Effective teaching methodologies; 12) Time Limit; 13) Learners' characteristics; 14) Teachers' professional knowledge; 15) Student-teacher ratio; 16) Teachers' beliefs. Second, these codes were further categorised into key themes. These eight emergent themes were teaching experience, teachers' motivation, teaching preparation, teaching instruction, teaching strategies, professional knowledge of CLT, teachers' understanding of South Korean education system and their students, and teaching environment. The relationship between these eight emergent themes and the initial codes is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 *Relationship between the initial codes and the categories*

Main themes	Sixteen initial codes	Source - Case study	Eight themes
How could teachers' personal thoughts and past experience influence their teaching?	3 3, 16	Demographic facts – teachers' personal background Teaching Philosophy – teachers' views	Teaching experience Teachers' motivation
What were teachers actually doing to improve their students' English speaking skills?	1, 2	Teaching Approach – how and what do teachers teach	Teaching preparation Teaching instruction Teaching strategies
What challenges did teachers face and how did they manage them?	11, 14 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13 10, 12, 15	Demographic facts – teachers' personal background Teaching Philosophy – teachers' views Demographic facts – teachers' views	Professional knowledge of CLT teachers' understanding of South Korean education system and their students Teaching environment

5.2 Teaching Experience

It was evident in the data analysis that the teachers' personal experiences and their background knowledge of teaching influenced their teaching philosophy, and consequently, had an impact on their teaching practice. These aspects are, therefore, compared and contrasted in this section.

As described in the previous chapter, the three teachers in this study had started their English teaching career in South Korea without any general teaching qualifications or specialist training specific to teaching languages. This was consistent with the background of most English conversation teachers working in universities as according to the Ministry of English Education in South Korea, any native English speaking adults from an English speaking country who hold a Bachelor Degree in any field of study can apply for English teaching jobs in South Korea (NIIED, 2012). The teachers' views regarding their lack of training varied. On one hand, Andy viewed his experience teaching English and learning French and Italian in Europeans providing him with the skills and understandings he need to be an English teacher.

On the other hand, David and Steve began teaching for the first time in South Korea and expressed a lack of confidence in their teaching skills.

David conceded that he had developed the skills he had as he was teaching and, therefore, he expressed confusion and inner conflict as to whether he was “doing the right thing” in his classes at the beginning of his teaching career. As a result, he felt fear and nervousness before he entered his classroom, and this resulted in him not enjoying teaching. Further, the data suggest that because of these experiences he developed negative attitudes towards the learning behaviours of his Korean students. Over time, he became more familiar with Korean culture and how this impacted on his workplace, and he reported that through this he had gained a deeper understanding of Korean students and the classroom culture with which they were familiar. As a result, he became more relaxed in his teaching. However, he retained the view that his students were compliant and unable to think critically. He maintained that no matter what activities or materials he provided, they would not engage in group learning so he could not see the value of preparing for his lessons. Rather, he relied on his intuitive understanding and claimed the lesson emerged as part of classroom processes. His experiences led him to believe that Korean people did not need to learn English conversation skills and, as a result, he expressed a sceptical view of the value of teaching these skills in Korea.

Steve, like David, experienced panic and confusion when he commenced teaching. However, unlike David, Steve did not fear his students but instead tried to engage them with an innovative teaching program. His more positive experience and reaction to his insecurity may have been due to his being in a primary school rather than in a secondary school as was the case with David. The working environment and atmosphere in these two levels of schooling were quite different as their curricular focus differed. The private English academy where Steve worked offered extracurricular courses so the students selected those they wanted to complete. Furthermore, this type of school does not have to follow the curriculum designed by the Ministry of English Education and its focus is not on examinations, but on improving students’ speaking confidence. Therefore, a range of engaging speaking activities, including games, is used. In contrast, in a public junior high school, English language is a mandatory course for all the students and these courses are governed by the nationwide curriculum, with its focus on higher academic achievement.

David believed his students were not interested in his class as speaking was not assessed in English examinations and this impacted negatively on his teaching. Steve expressed different views as he had enjoyed his first teaching experience. He saw this as due to his students not being pressured by examinations and so being able to focus on learning through interactive speaking activities which they enjoyed. From their different teaching experiences and perceptions of these, David and Steve had established contrasting views of teaching English speaking skills in South Korea. As mentioned earlier, David did not see the value of teaching English communication skills and had a largely negative view of his students' interest in and capacity for learning spoken English. In contrast, Steve saw English proficiency as important for his students and felt rewarded when he saw the progress they made as a result of their commitment to learning. These two contrasting views were reflected in their teaching practice. For instance, David did not interact with his students very often in his classes and had low expectations for their engagement levels, while Steve was actively engaged with his students and designed activities with the expectation that they would interact with each other and with him.

Andy's background differed from both David's and Steve's in that he had a number of years English teaching experience in France and Italy before he came to South Korea and, additionally, he had experience in learning both French and Italian, albeit in second rather than foreign language contexts. He believed that this experience facilitated his English teaching skills. He introduced his own language learning methods to his students and encouraged them to apply them to their English learning. Unlike David and Steve, he was confident from the beginning of his work in South Korea because of his previous teaching experience. While David and Steve gradually developed their English teaching skills as they were teaching, Andy employed his existing skills. As a consequence, it seemed that David's and, particularly, Steve's teaching skills were developed with attention to them fitting into a Korean-based classroom culture whereas Andy's were generalised from his previous teaching experiences in European countries.

To summarise, it would seem that Andy's teaching practices were influenced by his prior teaching experiences in European countries in that most of his teaching materials were more ESL-based and oriented to western cultures than those used in Steve's or David's classrooms. Andy's use of materials contrasted most with Steve's which were modified, with assistance

from his colleagues, to better match the social, cultural and educational backgrounds and needs of his students so as to promote motivation and engagement.

5.3 Teachers' Motivation

The second category of themes that emerged from this level of analysis was the teachers' motivation. Therefore, the nature of the three teachers' motivation, together with its impact on their teaching practices, are compared and contrasted in this section.

As was evident in his case study, Andy showed a high level of motivation to teach English communication skills. He claimed that he was enthusiastic and willing to help his students to improve their speaking skills, as he wrote in his reflective journal (Andy's Reflective Journal 4), "I'm enthused and energetic about what I do." There was additional evidence of this commitment in the classroom observations and document analysis. The evidence suggested that he had high expectations for his students, expecting them prepare for each of his classes by completing assigned tasks in their own time. This confidence in his students and thorough organisation reflected Andy's high level of motivation to improve his students' English speaking skills. However, the classroom observations provided extensive evidence that his lessons focused on structural elements and employed strategies that encouraged repetition of set dialogues and other copying techniques rather than promoting interaction. Andy's commitment to his plans seemed to prevent him from adjusting his program to the needs of his students and this was reflected in their lack of engagement with the classroom activities, as observed in the study (Observation Notes 1-14, Andy).

In sharp contrast to Andy, David reported that he did not see the value of teaching English speaking skills in South Korea since Korean people did not need to learn the language for their daily lives and, therefore, were not motivated to do so. Consequently, he seemed to lack motivation to teach these skills to his students. This attitude was a recurring theme in the data, as reported in the Case Study. Further evidence of this negative attitude was seen in the way that David did not plan his lessons, relying instead on "knowing what to do in the on-going process of teaching". This approach and his total reliance on a textbook without scaffolding or support being offered to his students would seem to be a reflection of his lack of motivation. Further, his attitude towards Korean students appeared to reflect this negativity, particularly the way he often referred to them as "potatoes with eyes but no mouth".

In contrast to David, but like Andy, Steve was highly motivated to teach English conversation and had positive attitudes towards his Korean students, even while he did not feel capable of meeting their needs initially. Like David, his previous teaching experiences had been only in South Korea. Although, while David's experiences had been largely negative, his were positive and, consequently, he began work with positive expectations for the high level motivation and capacity of his students. However, unlike both Andy and David, Steve had support in converting this commitment and these positive attitudes into teaching approaches that were sensitised to Korean students. This support came through a professional learning community formed with the three other native English-speaking teachers employed by his department. This collegiate group helped Steve to set teaching goals for his students and to develop a program and the materials to support its implementation. As he reported in his interviews, his commitment was rewarded and his positive attitude reinforced when he saw that his students were progressing in their development of spoken English. In turn, this success had a positive influence on his teaching practices, including his commitment to planning and continually striving to meet his students' particular needs.

In summary, while Andy and Steve showed high levels of motivation in relation to their teaching, David did not. There would appear to be a number of influences on this difference including David's negative teaching experiences in Korean secondary schools before he commenced work in the university and his view that Korean students did not need to learn English. A lack of motivation and negative attitude towards English learning seemed to result in David not devoting time to planning his lessons. In contrast, Andy and Steve's high levels of motivation led to their commitment to thorough planning and high expectations for their students' achievement. However, the nature of their planning and its influence on their teaching practices varied in that Andy adhered to his plan even in the face of time constraints and a lack of student engagement, while Steve remained responsive to his students and willing to adjust his plans according to what he perceived were his students' needs and interests.

5.4 Teaching Preparation

The third emergent theme related to the influence of the role of preparation on the teachers' practice and the outcomes achieved by their students, as reflected in the teachers' views and the class observations. Preparation for teaching was briefly mentioned in respect of its

relationship to motivation in the previous section, but its prominence in the data suggests it deserves the more thorough examination offered in this section.

Andy developed a semester plan and he used this to prepare all the materials needed before each class. This plan was based on the textbook which took a mainly structural/functional approach and was designed for ESL, rather than EFL learners. In addition to the textbook materials, he included strategies he had found helpful in his own learning, including using set dialogues and vocabulary learning. He claimed that he relied on a specific plan in order to fulfil his students' needs. He reported that he designed his lessons according to the students' English speaking proficiency level and the factors he thought motivated their interest in classroom activities. From the classroom observations, it was evident that he tried to follow the plans to achieve his teaching goals within the time assigned for the class, but it seemed that his effort to do this sometimes made it difficult to achieve the goals he had set. This may have been due to his focus being on completing the tasks he had prepared more than on ensuring his students understood sufficiently well to achieve the learning outcomes set for the class. Andy was often heard saying to his students, "Hurry up as there are only five minutes left for you to finish the tasks." during the observations. (Observation Notes², 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, Andy)

In contrast, David did not have a semester or any lesson plans. He referred to himself as "a week-to-week guy", and rationalised this approach by saying that he did not design lesson plans in advance since he did not have any information about his students or what they would want to do in the class before the actual lessons. He claimed that he could analyse his students' needs when he entered the classroom because he knew Korean students well enough from teaching them over a number of years to detect what they were thinking from their facial expressions. Having analysed their needs in this way, he would then select the most suitable classroom activities for them.

Unlike Andy and David who worked alone in their departments, Steve collaborated with other native English-speaking teachers when he designed a semester plan and lesson plans for his classes. He claimed that he and his colleagues worked together to find CLT-based teaching materials from ESL websites, and to contextualise them to suit their students' learning environment and their needs. He asserted that it was easier for him and the lesson was more effective when he was well prepared. However, even though Steve had goals for each lesson and wrote lesson plans, unlike Andy, he readily adjusted his lessons in response

to his students' needs as the lesson progressed. In the observed classes, he was seen to abandon the tasks he had prepared when the students did not show interest in them or when they were too difficult for them. When this happened, Steve adapted the tasks, provided more scaffolding or suggested alternative tasks better matched to the students' interests and needs. In his view, this helped to keep his students engaged and committed to their learning which was more important than finishing the task as planned.

To summarise, it was observed that the three teachers in this study had different perspectives on the effectiveness of teaching preparation and what impact it had on their teaching practices in terms of achieving their goals. Andy and Steve had a similar view that teaching preparation was important in their role in helping their students to achieve the expected learning outcomes. However, Andy put a stronger focus on adhering to the plans than did Steve. While Andy saw the completion of the tasks he had set as the key way his students would achieve the learning goals, Steve believed that he needed to adjust his plans in response to how his students viewed and managed the selected activities. In contrast, David did not see the value of spending his time doing preparation before the class, and he did not set any particular teaching goals since he taught his students by adjusting the content of the textbook according to his judgement of what his students needed at the beginning of each lesson.

5.5 Teaching Instruction

The fourth category to emerge, particularly in the analysis of the data collected in the interviews and classroom observations, concerned the way the three English conversation teachers instructed their students before and during the lessons. The teachers' use of instruction are compared and contrasted in this section.

Andy claimed that his students needed to be guided in conversational activities; otherwise, they would not participate and so not improve their English speaking skills. He also argued that he needed to direct his students explicitly in order to get them to communicate, as he said in one of his interviews (Andy's Interview 1, Q. 7), "I do a lot of guided conversation, heavily guided conversation, in a sense that I let them speak". Andy argued that he needed to take this approach as his students were passive and not interactive in classroom activities. It was observed that the students in his class did not participate voluntarily, and further, they seemed to respond reluctantly when Andy nominated them by name to answer or comment. He also said that even though his students were equipped with strong English grammar skills

from their previous study, their speaking skills were weaker than other areas, such as reading comprehension or writing skills, since they had little or no chance to practise their spoken English.

While Andy always gave very detailed instructions to help his students to understand what they were expected to do, David argued that providing explicit, detailed instructions might hinder the students' willingness to speak English. He claimed that his students had sufficiently strong English grammar skills to construct English sentences correctly, and that this would happen when the students were in a relaxed environment where there was no pressure or possibility of losing face by making mistakes or of being corrected publically. Therefore, he did not provide step-by-step instructions or explain topic-related vocabulary. Rather, he introduced the topic for each lesson and then expected his students to be actively engaged in the classroom activities provided. However, it was observed that his students did not engage with or complete the activities as, from their comments in Korean, it was apparent that they did not know what they were expected to do.

Steve, like Andy, gave instructions at the beginning of each class but, unlike Andy, he also explained the learning outcomes the students were expected to achieve as a result of participating in the lesson. Further, he demonstrated how to do the tasks if his students did not understand them, and then, he encouraged them to create their own dialogues or role-plays according to the given topic. This contrasted to Andy's approach of providing set dialogues that the students had to learn. Steve argued that any classroom activities would fail if the students did not understand what was expected of them or were not sure what they were supposed to do to complete the tasks. Thus, he claimed that the students should be given sufficient instructions and guidance before they start performing the tasks; otherwise, they would not learn from them.

Further, like, David, Steve argued that the students should not be interrupted or corrected while they were talking since this type of interference could reduce their level of confidence, resulting in them being less interactive. He argued for this type of approach to correction in one of his interviews.

... but I try not to correct them... I tend to not correct them... If I kind of cut them down, then they are going to stop talking. I'd rather keep them talking about that, like asking why you think like that, and next people will interact with her about that, and another student will interact as well. I'm trying to get some kind

of actual happening, you know, the production of English. (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 6-1)

The way Steve described his approach to instruction was evident in the classroom observations where he was seen to give instructions and examples at the beginning of every class and to provide on-going support. However, unlike Andy, he did not interrupt his students to correct their mistakes once they started working on the tasks. And, unlike David, he observed his students' communicative interaction and took notes about any incorrect forms they used persistently. He then used these notes to provide targeted feedback that did not identify individual students after the tasks were finished. This way, he argued, he could avoid confronting or embarrassing his students, resulting in a safe learning environment which encouraged interaction, while also providing corrective feedback.

To summarise, there were similarities and differences in the approach to instruction taken by the three teachers in this study. While Andy provided explicit teaching instructions and very detailed guides, including dialogues to learn, David did not provide any guidance or support in order to provide a relaxed learning environment. Further, while Andy provided explicit correction of grammatical errors, David did not correct his students' speech at all. Unlike either David or Andy, Steve seemed to take the middle ground in his approach to instruction. He provided sufficient instruction to ensure his student could understand what was expected from the tasks they were given to complete and did not interrupt his students unless they required assistance once they began to interact. He carefully observed his students and noted any persistent grammatical errors in their speech. At the end of each lesson, he explained the problematic features he had noted to the students and asked them to work on them as part of their assigned work. The classroom observations indicated that these different approaches to teaching instruction seemed to influence the level of engagement demonstrated by the students. In Andy's classes, the students appeared disengaged and reluctant to participate in the set dialogues even when called on to do so by the teacher. Similarly, the students in David's classes were reluctant to participate, but this time it seemed to be due to a lack of understanding of what was required by the tasks. In contrast, the students in Steve's classes were mostly engaged and actively interacting in the tasks assigned to them. Evidence from the observational data suggests that the students attended to the feedback provided and that many of the problematic features in their speech were no longer evident by the end of semester (see Appendix A-1 for the examples of relevant observation notes). Of course, there were other factors influencing student engagement in addition to the teachers' different

instructional approaches and these will be explored in other sections of this and the following chapter.

5.6 Teaching Strategies

The three teachers in this study all tried to motivate their students to interact with each other in their classrooms. Their main goal in doing this was to improve their students' English speaking skills. Even though the teachers shared this common goal, their views on what teaching strategies should be used to reach it differed. As with the other categories being discussed in this chapter, the sharpest contrast in strategy choice was between Andy and David. On one hand, Andy mostly used pre-communicative and semi-structured activities such as 'listen-and-repeat', 'echoic speech', 'set-dialogues exercises', and the like (Appendix G). On the other hand, David mostly used unstructured communicative activities such as 'free topic discussion' without any forms of guidance or direction being provided. Despite these differences, both teachers relied heavily on commercially available textbooks that had been designed for ESL rather than EFL learners for selecting the tasks and they obtained supplementary materials from ESL specific internet sites.

As with other aspects of practice, Steve's use of strategies both resembled and differed from Andy and David's practices. Steve spent more time searching for communicative activities which he thought would engage his students' interest. Since his teaching goal was to develop his students' presentation and discussion skills, he employed topic-based free discussion and role-play activities. He claimed that his focus was on encouraging his students to continue talking for a minimum of two minutes about the set topics. He also reported that he provided support when it was needed, and he ensured that his students achieved their expected learning outcomes. Steve's choice of strategies and the way he sensitised them to his students' needs not only reflected his teaching philosophy but was also due to the support he received from colleagues who all worked together to design teaching plans and materials adapted for Korean students.

Even though the teachers shared a common goal, their views on what teaching strategies should be used to reach it differed. The data analysis revealed that their teaching strategies were influenced by their past teaching experience, their motivation level, their attitudes towards teaching preparation and how they used instructional language. This was seen in many instances, so the following are presented as examples. On one hand, David's negative

experience of teaching English conversation skills to South Korean high school aged students was closely related in his conversations to his view of English language skills as being of little value to his students or Korean people generally. These factors, in turn, would appear to have led to a lack of motivation and subsequently to a lack of preparation for his lessons, including of teaching materials and his choice not to provide his students with support or guidance evident in the classroom observations. On the other hand, unlike David, Steve had teaching experience with primary aged students and expressed positive attitudes towards the teaching of English conversation skills in South Korea, drawing on these positive experiences. He drew on this positive view when describing his motivation to teach and commitment to focus on his students' English speaking skills. Unlike David and Steve, Andy had language teaching and language learning experience in France and Italy before teaching in South Korea and he attributed his confidence in himself and motivation for teaching to this experience. As with Steve, these positive attitudes encouraged him to value the importance of English speaking skills for his students which, in turn, led him to pay careful attention to designing his lessons. However, unlike Steve whose positive experiences and confidence in his students led him to design interactive student-centred learning activities, Andy relied on teacher-controlled structured activities as he believed his students needed detailed guidance to produce accurate English sentences which would promote their confidence. He claimed his own experiences of both learning and teaching languages in Europe had shown him that language learning is promoted by structured, repetitive activities with careful teacher guidance.

To summarise, the three teachers in this study described and demonstrated the use of different types of strategies in their teaching, and these were influenced by their previous teaching experience, their motivation, their views on what type of preparation they needed to do before their lessons and their beliefs about the types of instruction they needed to provide to scaffold their students' learning.

5.7 Professional Knowledge of CLT

By their own admission, the teachers did not have extensive professional knowledge related to teaching English as a second or foreign language. This was understandable as they did not have general or specialist teaching qualifications or degrees related to language or linguistics when they began work in South Korea. At the time of this study, the three teachers had varying experience teaching English conversation skills in a range of contexts which they

claimed had provided them with knowledge of language learning. This was particularly the case for Andy who had teaching experience in France and Italy in addition to his work in South Korea. Andy also argued that his experience as a learner of French and Italian was a source of knowledge about language learning as was his internet searches and journal reading. In addition to these general understandings of language learning, the participants were expected to have knowledge of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach as this was the methodology the university expected them to implement (Collins, 2005; EPIK, 2013b; Flattery, 2007; NIIED, 2012). Despite that expectation, the teachers demonstrated a lack of professional knowledge of the principles and key practices of a CLT approach in the interviews and classroom observations. Indeed, they noted that they were not even aware that the use of a CLT approach was required by KNU.

Andy reported that he had been using various communicative speaking activities to promote his students' speaking skills and all the activities that he used related to the CLT principles. He also claimed that he had studied ESL teaching methodologies through English communication textbooks and journal articles. Thus, he thought that his teaching practice was consistent with communicative teaching theories. This claim was evident in one of his interviews.

I think Bachman's theory is very similar to CLT theory and it has lots of problem solving activities. And I do lots of those activities in the class. I mean, a lot of activities I do in the class are kind of gap filling, like information gap filling and they are very interactive and communicative. (Andy's Interview 3, Q. 2)

However, the activities he claimed to use were not evident in the classroom observations; rather, those he used better matched an audio-lingual approach. Therefore, he could be said to have understood the characteristics of a communicative approach but not how it is implemented in the classroom. Further, Bachman's theory, which he claimed to be similar to CLT theory, is more focused on communicative assessment with little attention to implications for teaching practice (Bachman, 1989, 1991).

Similarly, David claimed that he had used a communicative approach to meet his teaching goal which was to improve his students' English speaking skills. He argued that he used a lot of communicative activities such as information gap tasks since these would enhance his students' spoken English. This suggests that his classroom could be considered to have been communicative in that he provided interactive tasks for his students within what he referred

to as a safe and relaxed learning environment where they were not interrupted or corrected. However, he did not attend to the important role of providing support even when his students clearly indicated they were not able to do the tasks he set and so became disengaged from the learning process. The data from this study suggest that David lacked knowledge of the important facilitating role required of teachers in the CLT approach.

Unlike Andy and David, Steve reported that he did not have much knowledge of the CLT approach and, therefore, he was not sure whether he used this approach in his classrooms. Even though he did not understand the theory of CLT, like David, he claimed that he used topic-based and task-based activities since he knew that they would assist his students to improve their discussion and presentation skills. He also claimed that it was not hard for him to design his lessons although he did not have much understanding of CLT since he had collegiate support. As he expressed it: "... there are four, including myself, English conversation teachers in my department, so we all work together and we share some information or resources" (Steve's Interview 1, Q. 5). However, it seemed to be Steve himself who created the supportive culture in his classroom. He ensured that his students were aware of the goals of each lesson and were sufficiently clear about what they needed to do to complete the tasks assigned. And, unlike David, when they experienced difficulty, he provided assistance and when they made consistent errors, he noted this and provided corrective feedback at the end of each lesson. He said he provided correction in this way to prevent embarrassment to individual students and to protect them from loss of confidence or increased reluctance to participate. This differed from Andy's approach of providing immediate corrective feedback to individual students.

Finally, Steve's access to collegiate support contrasted with Andy and David's professional isolation as they worked as the only native English-speaking teachers in their departments. This professional collaboration would seem to have assisted Steve to both develop an understanding of language learning and how to apply this knowledge in a classroom, although, unlike Andy and David, he still expressed a lack of confidence in his teaching.

To summarise, the three teachers' limited knowledge of CLT had an impact on their teaching practices. Andy and David claimed that they used CLT-based activities to improve their students' English speaking skills while Steve reported that he was uncertain if he used CLT-based activities due to his lack of knowledge of the approach. In Andy's case, the classroom observations revealed that the activities he used were pre-communicative and better matched

an audio lingual approach rather than conforming to CLT principles as he suggested they did. Although David's could be considered communicative, the lack of facilitation of learning rendered them largely ineffective in terms of engaging his students. Interestingly, although Steve was the least confident that the activities he used would meet the requirements of a CLT approach, they resulted in the most student engagement and interaction. Further, Steve scaffolded his students by providing clear goals and instruction, on-going support and corrective feedback. He noted that his colleagues had assisted him in planning for and preparing to implement this approach.

5.8 Teachers' Understanding of the South Korean Education System and their Students

The initial data analysis showed that the teachers' understanding of the South Korean education system impacted on their teaching. In general, Andy and David understood that South Korean university students tend to favour memorisation as a learning strategy as they have been trained to take this approach to learning through their schooling. This approach to learning is encouraged by an examination system which rewards the demonstration of having learnt factual information provided by teachers. This pattern of learning continues into the university system, except in the English conversation classes where the expectations differ and so may become unpredictable.

Andy seemed to understand how his Korean students were educated in their junior and senior high schools. He reported that they had considerable knowledge of English vocabulary from their rote-memorisation learning style and that they even tried to memorise every sentence from their text book. He argued that the value of memorisation is limited in language learning saying:

...they memorise language sometimes they don't realise what they are memorising. They want to get good grades in their exam, so they study; they actually memorise some English for the exam, but it's very limiting; they cannot use it in a real situation because there's no connection between what they memorised and real life English. (Andy's Interview 1, Q.9)

Therefore, he had been trying to teach his students not to depend solely on the textbook sentences, but rather, to study spoken phrases. As a result, his teaching aim was to get the students to learn spoken phrases and use them in the classroom and, therefore, he gave his students homework which was generally short spoken phrases they were expected to learn. This suggests that he was responding to his students' preference for memorisation but

changing what was memorised from sentences to phrases, which he deemed was a more suitable linguistic element for speech.

Similarly, David showed an understanding of the South Korean education system and his students' learning styles. He claimed South Korea was an examination-driven country so students studied for tests rather than focussing on learning. In David's view, this meant that they studied grammar to the exclusion of more important aspects of language, including the spoken forms. However, unlike Andy, he wanted to change his students' attitudes towards learning spoken English as he thought the examination-focused system "killed" their creativity. He expressed these views often, including in his first interview:

...They learn too much; they learn too much grammar. Their English teacher gives them too much information, and they try to memorise them all, and when they fail, they can't move on to the next level. It makes them so nervous all the time and they don't enjoy the learning process. It's confusing them... They're only learning things to be passed without learning the language. Language is a living thing. I don't think the way Korean people learn and the attitude they have for English is a happy way. (David's Interview 1, Q. 12)

Thus, he argued that the system itself had a negative influence on students, and it could hinder their motivation to learn English. He further argued that his students were used to studying to pass or gain higher scores in an examination and consequently, they were not motivated to participate in classroom activities. He blamed the Korean education system for his students' lack of motivation saying, "...Well, it's the Korean education system. Or it's culture. I think everyone is categorised or judged by a test in Korea, like from elementary school, maybe." (David's Interview 3, Q. 8)

On the other hand, Steve did not refer to the South Korean education system, but he stated that his students had good grammar skills and, therefore, it was not necessary for him to consider how they had acquired the skills before they came to his class. He preferred to focus on how he could engage his students and encourage them to speak. He did not appear to understand the students' educational background when he expressed frustration at their expectation that there was one guaranteed way to improve their spoken English. He noted that they expected him to give them a simple solution, expressing it like this in his third interview:

...'Okay, what you should do is you should go home and you should listen to the BBC or CNN whatever, then your English would be good', or they want me to

say, 'Oh, you should, you know, you should practise more free talking.' or 'You need to buy a grammar book.' you know. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 9)

He also reported that the students did not seem to understand how language works and, therefore, he was frustrated with their questions as shown in his third interview.

You know, their problem is they think there is a book which is right, that is great, you know, they think, 'When I get the right book, the right CD, then everything is going to be fine', but the thing is, that's not true. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 9)

Not having understood why his students kept asking such questions, he simply told them to "study every aspect of English harder". This showed Steve's lack of understanding of the South Korean education system or how his students had developed the view of learning reflected in their questions. It also illustrated how a lack of understanding of students' educational backgrounds could influence teachers' views of them and impact on the way they managed the implementation of essentially western views of education in an eastern context.

Even though the three teachers differed in their understanding of the South Korean education system, there was one aspect they all knew well. This was the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). The teachers argued that their students studied English in order to gain high scores in the TOEIC and, therefore, they focussed on this rather than on other more important aspects of learning, including of spoken English skills. This motivation was not surprising given the influence of TOEIC scores in gaining university entry and employment. As David noted in his second interview, "...TOEIC has been used as a filter or a screener for university or a company" (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-1).

While the TOEIC was another external measure of competence consistent with the many other examinations dominating the South Korean education system, according to the teachers in this study, it had an added negative impact on their students' view of learning and the approach to learning they favoured. This was due to its focus on English vocabulary and grammar rather than speaking skills, which were ignored. David described how, in his experience, the TOEIC score did not predict a student's spoken proficiency as the test encourages students to study strategies rather than the language itself.

And I've met, my 13 years being here, I've met tons of people who have perfect TOEIC scores, but cannot communicate with me. And I've met an equally great number of people who have terrible TOEIC scores, but can communicate fine with me. They might have messed it up because the students tell me that when

they study TOEIC, they don't study English. They're studying the strategies they need to be passed. (David's Interview 2, Q. 4-1)

Andy expressed a similar view of TOEIC, claiming its importance was leading his students to focus on inappropriate areas of the language, particularly as it did not have a spoken component. Similarly, Steve claimed that his students spent too much time studying for English examinations, such as TOEIC, which was not necessarily helping them to improve their English speaking skills. He also argued that his students were memorising a great deal of English vocabulary for the examination. He further argued that the way his students studied English was misguided and it led them to focus on the wrong area of the language and to use unproductive learning strategies.

...it's not, you're not learning. They've been badly taught. No one ever told them to make sentences using the vocabulary that they've learned. It's not educationally good, you know. (Steve's Interview 3, Q. 9)

All three teachers saw the focus on the TOEIC as having a negative influence on their students' development of spoken language. This was due to its focus on vocabulary and listening and reading comprehension without any attention to spoken English. Further, they argued that the nature of the test encouraged unproductive learning approaches which reinforced the Korean students' reliance on memorisation rather than an understanding of the English language and its use in communication.

In summary, Andy and David expressed an understanding of the Korean education system with its emphasis on examinations which encouraged memorisation as the dominant learning strategy. While Andy used this preference but encouraged his students to learn phrases rather than sentences, David claimed that he tried to change his students' approach by emphasising free discussion to encourage their creativity. Steve, in contrast, did not refer to the influence of the education system on his students' learning when he complained that they sought simple solutions to the complex issues they faced when learning an additional language. All three teachers saw the TOEIC as a negative influence on their students' learning, particularly given its importance to university entry and employment and its emphasis on vocabulary knowledge and listening and reading comprehension at the expense of speaking.

5.9 Teaching Environment

The final theme to emerge from the data analysis was the teaching environment which includes aspects such as access to professional development, the relationship between colleagues and the physical environment, particularly the size of the classrooms and student numbers. This section then compares and contrasts the teaching environments of the three teachers, and discusses how it influenced their views and practices.

A lack of access to university sponsored professional development was common to all three teachers. Further, in all three cases, there were no curriculum or guidelines provided to assist the teachers in preparing their courses. The departments did, however, provide teaching materials that were requested. It is not surprising, then, that the teachers reported that they had experienced great difficulty in adjusting to the new teaching environment in their respective departments.

Despite these general similarities, there were differences among the three cases in relation to the teaching environment. First, Steve had access to support from senior colleagues while Andy and David were both the sole English conversation teachers in their departments. Steve's three colleagues had already established English conversation programmes in the department before he arrived and they welcomed him as part of a teaching team and provided support, as detailed in the Case Study. David, on the other hand, not only did not have support but reported that colleagues did not want to communicate with him. He said that this made him feel 'like an alien' in his department (David's Interview 3, Q.5). As with David, Andy did not have the professional support of other language teachers although he did report he had a good working relationship with colleagues in his department.

A further difference between the three cases was the physical teaching environment. Steve had a bigger classroom and a smaller number of students than did Andy and David. Steve appreciated his teaching conditions, saying that he would not have been able to conduct interactive communicative activities or to manage student groups if he was teaching in a small classroom with a large number of students, as were David and Andy. David mentioned that he experienced difficulties in terms of implementing interactive speaking activities since the classroom was too small for his students to move around to complete their communicative tasks. Furthermore, he said that he had asked his department to reduce the number of students enrolled in his English conversation class, but that they had not responded. Indeed, just after

his request was ignored, the department identified the conversational English class as one of the compulsory units for students applying for a scholarship thereby increasing the pressure of student numbers and, in David's view, making it even more difficult for him to conduct communicative activities.

Andy's classroom was similar to David's in terms of its size and the number of students it had to accommodate. Like David, he noted that the crowded conditions made it difficult for him to manage interactive speaking activities. A further difficulty was the need to move desks and chairs to allow for interaction before the class began and to move them back after the class, often while there was another class waiting to use the same classroom. This, and the pressure of time, discouraged Andy from implementing interactive activities.

To summarise, while Steve had the support of colleagues, a spacious classroom and relatively low student numbers, Andy and David did not share these favourable teaching conditions. Although, Andy had cordial relations with his department colleagues, he received no practical support from them. David received neither regard nor support from colleagues and felt "alien" in his department. Further, both Andy and David had small classrooms and high numbers of students which they found challenging, particularly in terms of implementing interactive strategies.

5.10 Chapter Summary

Based on the analysis of the data collected through class observation notes, interviews, documentation analysis, and reflective journals, it was evident that each case represented an example of the different approaches to English conversation classes taken in South Korean universities. That is, Andy could be described as taking a formal and structured approach, Steve could be described as taking a flexible and semi-structured approach, and David could be described as taking an informal and unstructured approach. Figure 5.1 illustrates the suggested continuum.

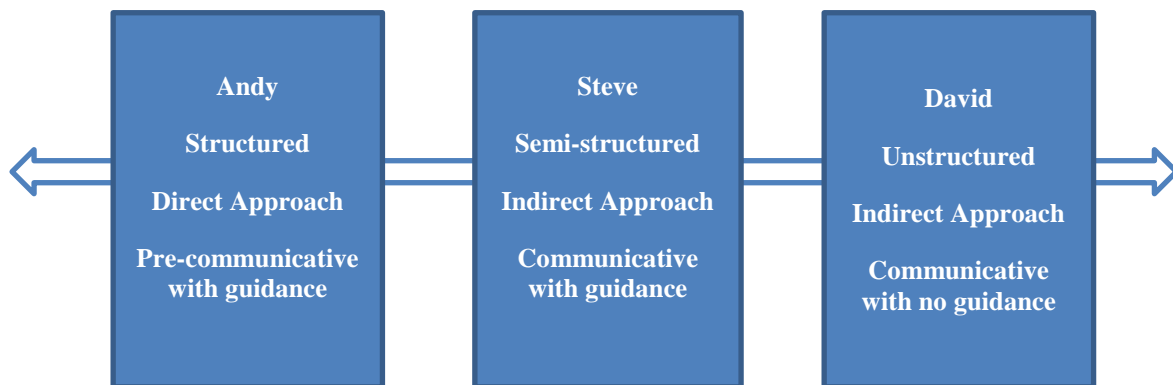


Figure 5.1 Suggested Continuum of practice

This chapter compared and contrasted the three teachers' views, experiences, teaching practices and the challenges they faced in order to explore the cross-case patterns. These patterns related to the teachers' practices, including the influence of their previous teaching experience, their motivation, how they prepared for their lessons, how they instructed their students, and the strategies they used to promote the development of their students' spoken English. These patterns are summarised on Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 *Patterns identified through the cross-case analysis*

Eight categories	Cross-case patterns identified	
1. Teaching experience 2. Teacher's motivation 3. Teaching preparation 4. Teaching instruction 5. Teaching strategies	Section 1: Teaching practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching practices used by the three teachers • Factors that influenced the teachers' practices • The relationship between the teachers' practices and a CLT approach.
6. Professional knowledge of CLT 7. Teachers' understanding of South Korean education system and their students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' professional knowledge of CLT • Teachers' understanding of their students' cultural and educational background • How these understandings affected their teaching practices • How they managed the challenges associated with their knowledge and understandings • Possible solutions to challenges as suggested by the three teachers
8. Teaching environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position of English conversation classrooms in the university • How the university environment influenced the teachers' practices • How the teachers managed the challenges which arose from the university environment • Possible solutions to challenges as suggested by the three teachers

The data analysis revealed a range of similarities and differences in the views, backgrounds and practices of the three teachers and complex relationships among all these categories. These will be further examined and related to other research in the following chapter.

Chapter 6 Discussion

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first of these will discuss how the teachers developed their students' English speaking skills and will focus on their teaching practices. The use of these practices will be examined within the framework of the four key characteristics of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The second section will examine the challenges faced by teachers and how these were recognised and managed by them. Finally, possible solutions and suggestions to resolve these challenges as suggested by one or more of the teachers or the findings from others' research will be explored.

6.1 Introduction

The discussion chapter addresses the question of how native English-speaking teachers of English develop the English skills of university students in South Korea. It examines the challenges the teachers experienced in implementing a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in English conversation classrooms and the way they manage these challenges.

As was described in the case studies and cross-case analysis, the three teachers who participated in this study generally used different teaching styles in their English conversation classes; one teacher's approach was unstructured, another's was semi-structured, and the remaining teacher's approach was structured. In spite of these differences, they all reported using communicative and interactive teaching strategies to encourage their students to be more engaged in classroom activities. The three teachers nominated the same purpose for their teaching, which was to promote their students' English speaking skills by motivating them to achieve the required level of spoken English.

In seeking to achieve this goal, the teachers faced three major categories of challenges, as revealed by the iterative analysis of data. These were the challenges that related to the position of English conversation classes in the university, those that related to the teachers' knowledge of CLT and their students, and those that related to their students' limited access to English outside the conversation classes. While the teachers recognised many of these challenges, there were some evident in the data that were not noted by them.

The first category of challenges, the position of English conversation classes in the university were evident in the data but not many of the issues were recognised by the teachers as being a barrier to the success of their programs. In contrast, the second and third categories of challenges were mainly recognised by the teachers, who reported that they struggled to manage them due to their lack of understanding of CLT and their students' educational and cultural backgrounds.

The discussion chapter is divided into two sections. The first of these will discuss how the teachers developed their students' English speaking skills and will focus on their teaching practices. The use of these practices will be examined within the framework of the four key characteristics of the CLT approach: a student-centred learning environment; a safe and non-threatening learning environment; the use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials; and, a balance between achieving fluency and accuracy in English (Bax, 2003; Brown, 2000; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Eskey, 1983; Flattery, 2007; Hammerly, 1991; Harmer, 2003; Hedge, 2000; Hiep, 2007; Hu, 2010; Jones, 2007; Krashen, 1985; Lamb, 2007; Li, 1998; Liu, 2005; Lochland, 2013; Mangubhai et al., 2007; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Nonkukhetkhong, Baldauf Jr, & Moni, 2006; Nunan, 1988; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). The second section will examine the challenges faced by teachers and how these were recognised and managed. Finally, possible solutions and suggestions to resolve these challenges as suggested by one or more of the teachers or the findings from others' research will be explored.

6.2 The Teachers' Teaching Practices

The three teachers in this study claimed that they were using interactive and communicative classroom activities to improve their students' English speaking skills and that these were based on a CLT approach. They reported that even though they might not fully understand the meaning of the approach and its teaching principles, they recognised that the central goal of their classes was to develop their students' English speaking skills. Therefore, the teachers claimed that they tried to focus on fluency over accuracy, and to encourage their students to be more confident and view the grammatical errors they made when speaking English as part of their learning. They also reported that encouraging their students to talk in English without stopping or hesitating was one of the key factors to increase their confidence level and ultimately improve their speaking fluency.

This section discusses the teachers' practice, particularly examining its consistency with the CLT approach as it is the main teaching methodology used in English education in South Korea (Collins, 2005; Flattery, 2007) and the teachers were expected to apply it in their English conversation classes. Further, this section examines how the teachers assessed their students' English speaking skills and explores the relationships between these practices, their teaching approach and the key characteristics of CLT.

6.2.1 Student-centred learning environment

The three teachers in this study claimed that providing their students with a student-centred learning environment was essential to constructing a successful English conversation classroom. Thus, they argued that they tried to encourage their students to be more motivated to learn because they thought that this was one of the most important factors in improving the students' English speaking skills. The teachers viewed motivated students as making more rapid progress, of having a higher level of participation in classroom activities due to being better prepared for the lesson and of having greater confidence than students who were not self-motivated. The teachers' concern with the motivation of their students to take part in meaningful communicative activities and their level of engagement in them is consistent with what the literature suggests is an essential role of teachers in a student-centred learning environment (Chen, 2007; Hu, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Weimer, 2002; Wu, 2010).

While the teachers were concerned with the level of motivation to engage in interactive learning tasks their students demonstrated, the practices that supported this involvement were not evident in all of the classrooms observed in this study. Indeed, Andy, one of the teachers observed, was not seen to take the role of a facilitator, an adviser, an encourager, or a motivator to encourage his students to be more motivated and engaged. Rather, he seemed to take an authoritative role. That is, he structured the lessons according to the textbook using the goals set, instructing the students to do the activities it suggested and following the time frame it gave. This teacher-centred approach is in contrast to the student-centred approach that Wu (2000) indicates should characterise a CLT classroom. While in Andy's classroom it was the teacher who controlled the learning, according to Jones (2007) and Weimer (2002), it should have been the students who took this role. This is not surprising given that teachers in other EFL contexts have found the construction of a student-centred learning environment challenging, particularly where traditional teaching approaches are still dominant (Chen, 2007; Wu, 2010; Zhou, 2010).

In contrast, Steve used practices that reflected a CLT approach. He motivated the students to be more proactive in their English learning by encouraging them to form their own learning groups; decide their own topics for the tasks; and, generate their own dialogues through negotiation of meaning. He only provided guidance when the students were struggling to continue talking and did not interrupt them to correct their grammatical mistakes. This type of approach has been shown to help students to be independent learners and to foster the development of effective learning skills, including collaborative and critical thinking skills (Hu, 2010; Jones, 2007; Lochland, 2013; Wu, 2010).

The practices used by David were similar to those of Steve, but there were some differences found in the classroom observations. David claimed that he encouraged his students to be more motivated and, consequently, more engaged in communicative tasks by allowing them to build their own learning groups for completing the project which was going to be their final assessment at the end of the semester. The students in David's class were expected to run a project throughout the semester, so each lesson was a part of their preparation for the project. For this reason, David claimed that the best way to run each project-based lesson was to encourage the students to organise and design their own learning and take responsibility for it. However, unlike Steve, he was not seen to provide any form of support even when his students seemed to struggle to continue the given task. This appeared to result in a lack of student engagement. This outcome is consistent with research that suggests teachers in a student-centred learning environment need to provide guidance and support when necessary (Chen, 2007; Hu, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Weimer, 2002; Wu, 2010).

To summarise, in this study it was found that the practices observed in the teachers' classrooms were not always consistent with those they claimed to use. Further, while some of their practices were aligned with a student-centred learning environment, as expected in a CLT approach, others were not. The following section will discuss whether the learning environment created by the teachers in this study was consistent with the second key characteristic of the CLT approach: a safe and non-threatening learning environment.

6.2.2 Safe and non-threatening learning environment

The three teachers in this study claimed that the main goal of their English conversation classes was to help their students become fluent speakers of English. In order to do this, they reported trying to create a stress-free learning environment where their students would feel

comfortable during lessons and so learn more successfully. This view of the negative impact of anxiety on achievement is supported by research which has found that students with a higher level of anxiety or fear of making mistakes showed lower levels of achievement compared those who were less anxious or concerned (Ewald, 2007; Gregersen, 2003; Kim, 2009; Tallon, 2009; Wu, 2010). In addition, the teachers reported that they did not correct their students' errors so that they could encourage them to participate in speaking and listening activities. They argued that students feel more secure if there is no teacher intervention to correct their mistakes; a view that is consistent with research (Ewald, 2007; Gregersen, 2003).

However, as with the student-centred learning environment, there was inconsistency between the teaching practices that the teachers claimed they used in their English conversation classrooms and those they were observed using. For example, David claimed that he always provided a safe and non-threatening learning environment to invite his students to be more interactive and engaged in classroom activities. He viewed his students as capable of learning English speaking skills through self-correction and the process of negotiating meaning while they were interacting in the classroom. For this reason, he did not stop the students' conversation to correct their English but, rather, he trusted that they would notice their own errors and correct these while interacting with peers. This type of self-correction has been noted by Swain (1995) who found that learners notice their own mistakes while talking, correct these through interactive engagement and learn from this process.

The classroom observations showed that David did allow his students to interact without correction. Indeed, he did not intervene in any aspect of the learning process, not even to provide guidance or support. There was, however, very little interaction among students evident in the observed classes and the students often seemed to be confused about the purpose of the activities and how to do them. In discussion about this, he claimed it was due to the students' cultural and educational backgrounds making them passive learners. While these background factors may have contributed, student participation in other language classes suggests that there were other factors involved as well. One of these could have been the lack of guidance and support provided by David; an approach which is not consistent with the view that teachers in communicative language classrooms need to provide their students with guidance through their role as a facilitator, an adviser or an encourager (Chen, 2007; Hu, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Weimer, 2002; Wu, 2010).

Similarly, Steve claimed that he always provided a safe and non-threatening learning environment so that his students could produce spoken English without fear of making mistakes. He saw his students as responsible learners, having the ability to notice their errors, modify them and learn from this learning process. Thus, he did not see the value of interrupting their talking to correct their errors, but, unlike David, he provided support when his students' apparent confusion seemed to warrant it. This provision of reactive support is consistent with what others have found to be effective in creating a safe and non-threatening learning environment (Chen, 2007; Hu, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Weimer, 2002; Wu, 2010).

Although, like David and Steve, Andy claimed that he provided a safe and non-threatening environment for his students, the data from the observations and document analysis did not support this claim. For instance, he called on individual students by name to respond to questions when there was silence. Another practice not associated with a supportive environment was the way he interrupted his students' conversation to correct any grammatical errors in their speech (Ewald, 2007; Gregersen, 2003).

To conclude, the three teachers in this study had an awareness of the importance of providing a safe and non-threatening learning environment to promote their students' English speaking skills, but it seemed to be challenging for some of them to apply this in their classrooms for a range of reasons. The challenges they faced will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. The following section will discuss the third key characteristic of a CLT approach which is teachers' use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials.

6.2.3 The use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials

The teachers in this study were aware of the importance of using authentic and contextualised teaching materials, but reported that they did not have enough time to create them for their English conversation classes. They also claimed that they were given little guidance or direction as to what type of teaching materials should be used in their lessons.

The classroom observations revealed that the three teachers used authentic and contextualised learning materials to varying degrees. Steve used contextualised teaching materials more than the other two teachers. It was interesting to note that the English conversation teachers collaborated to prepare the course in Steve's department, but that this collaboration did not happen in either David's or Andy's departments. In Steve's department, the senior teacher

prepared an overview of the curriculum which noted the learning outcomes expected and the weekly topics through which they would be achieved. He then allocated these topics to the other English teachers and asked them to create draft communicative tasks to facilitate the students' learning. Steve drew on resources from the internet when preparing his allocated communicative tasks. Once all the draft tasks were prepared, the English conversation teachers worked together to modify them so that they reflected their students' daily lives. Steve reported that when the topics he had selected did not relate to his students' interests or current knowledge, he would change them, often through negotiation with his students. This approach was observed as was his students' high level of engagement in these tasks. Steve's concern with the effective use of authentic teaching materials could have had a positive impact on improving his students' English speaking skills as has been found in other contexts, especially where English is being learnt as a foreign language (Bax, 2003; Chowdhury, 2003; Collins, 2005; Ellis, 1996; Harmer, 2003; Hiep, 2007; Kim, 2002; Lochland, 2013; Mangubhai et al., 2007; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Su, 2011).

In contrast, the other two teachers were working in isolation within their departments and were not given a curriculum or any form of planning support. They were provided with a textbook that had been used previously but were told they could select an alternative if they wished. The textbooks they selected were designed in the USA for both ESL and EFL contexts. As was noted in the case study chapter, David selected a textbook based on tasks which were designed to support the students to do tourism-based projects. As most of the students in David's class were enrolled in tourism courses, with some from other departments such as English Language and Literature, and Economics, these materials could be considered authentic and as related to the majority of the students' current learning goals. However, because the tasks in the text were contextualised in European countries and no additional support was provided to assist the students to understand these contexts, they did not appear to have a positive effect on their engagement and learning as the literature suggests they should have had (Bax, 2003; Chowdhury, 2003; Collins, 2005; Ellis, 1996; Harmer, 2003; Hiep, 2007; Kim, 2002; Lochland, 2013; Mangubhai et al., 2007; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Su, 2011).

Andy's selected text took a situational approach with an emphasis on linguistic aspects such as phonology, lexis, morpho-syntax and discourse. This text included reading comprehension

and writing tasks and these were used despite it being an English conversation class. The scenarios used to contextualise the learning of forms were based in the USA and Europe and in the observed classes Andy did not provide any support to assist his students to understand these contexts. Further, the way he used the tasks did not involve the students in authentic language use, but rather focused on the form and involved a great deal of teacher talk. As in David's classroom, the observations showed that the students demonstrated a lack of engagement with the tasks given from the text.

These findings suggest that it is not sufficient to provide authentic contextualised learning tasks. It could be argued that all the teachers in this study did so yet this contextualisation only appeared to have a positive impact on student engagement in Steve's classroom. This could be because the structure of the tasks and the materials that Steve used gave the students access to information about the cultural context of English and encouraged them to relate this to their understanding of Korean culture. Further, the topics nominated were within the students' experience, as was discussed in the case study.

To sum up, the three teachers recognised the importance of using authentic and contextualised teaching materials to motivate and engage their students in their learning. However, in practice, only one of the teachers created his own teaching materials or modified the existing materials to make them suitable for his students in a South Korean context. This seemed, at least in part, to be due to the challenges the teachers faced in this context and these will be discussed in a later section of this chapter. The following section will discuss the teachers' practice in relation to the fourth characteristic of a CLT approach: the balance between the focus on fluency and that on accuracy.

6.2.4 A balance between achieving fluency and accuracy

The three teachers in this study reported that they encouraged their students to focus on acquiring communicative rather than linguistic competence in order to improve their English speaking skills. They noted that they were aware that English grammar should be included in their programs, but did not see the value of teaching this aspect since their students already had a high level of English grammar knowledge before they came to their classes. They claimed their students needed to practise speaking so that they could apply their knowledge of English grammar.

However, this view of the relative importance of fluency and accuracy was not necessarily observed in all of the classrooms. Indeed, Andy paid more attention to language forms than he did to communicative functions in his classes. He stopped his students talking to correct their grammatical errors every time he noticed them; consequently, his students seemed to be easily disengaged and to be reluctant to interact during the activities. As was described in the Case Study chapter, he claimed that he used heavily guided classroom English for the students as they were at the beginner level in terms of English speaking proficiency. He also claimed that using the sets of dialogues provided in the textbook could help the students develop their fluency. When he introduced the dialogues, he encouraged the students to repeat them after him until they were familiar with them.

Further, he gave grammar lectures on the errors with verb tenses and the subject-verb agreement that the students continued to make. In the observed classes, Andy spent more time on teaching English language forms than on communicative activities. This emphasis on language forms was not consistent with a CLT approach which expects a balance between activities that promote fluency and those which promote accuracy (Case et al., 2005; Eskey, 1983; Hammerly, 1991; Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990; Hedge, 2000; Kormos, 2006; Martínez-Flor et al., 2006; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Pica, 2005; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). The practices used by Andy reflected a ‘focus on forms’ view of promoting accuracy in language learning. In this view, the linguistic features are seen as skills to be taught explicitly and through grammar-focused sessions that are separated from other learning activities (DeKeyser, 1998).

It was observed that Andy taught linguistic forms separately and in most cases, this teaching was not contextualised. Long (2000) argues that there are six main issues with a ‘focus on forms’ approach and some of these were evident during observations of Andy’s classroom. The first was that there was a strong focus on linguistic forms rather than communication and that the students’ needs were not taken into account in determining what features were taught. Long (2000) suggests that this leads to a one-size-fits-all approach where language skills and genres that students do not need are taught while some of those they do require are not. Consequently, the students can be discouraged. Second, this type of approach leads to the use of artificial and stilted materials that do not relate to real life language use. This was the case in Andy’s class where only the textbook, based on Caucasian contexts, was used. Further, the speaking was based on written texts rather than related to communication in everyday life.

For instance, the text used reading passages with the speaking tasks being focused on responding to these. The third issue raised by Long (2000) relates to the language learning process and the assumptions made by the 'focus on forms' approach: that students will learn forms in a sequence that reflects the synthetic syllabus that guides the program, in this case the class textbook. This ignores the fact that language acquisition is not a process of learning sequences of linguistic forms (Rutherford, 1988). The fourth concern is related to this in that the teachability of forms relies on their learnability (Mackey, 1995). That is, students do not necessarily learn what is taught. Further, the fifth issue suggests that this approach tends to produce boring lessons, which are demotivating. Andy's students showed no evidence of being motivated to participate in the learning, as evidenced by their lack of interaction. Long's final issue is that those who support a 'focus on forms' approach claim that students all over the world have learnt language in this way, but this ignores the possibility that they have learnt despite this approach. Andy made the claim that his approach promoted his students' learning although there was no evidence in the classroom observations that their English speaking skills had improved. Indeed, there was very little English spoken by the students during the observation of his classes as it was the teacher who spoke the most.

In contrast, Steve claimed that his students were more expert than himself in regards to English grammar, and they were able to notice their own errors and fix them quickly without him correcting them. Hence, he did not see the necessity of giving his students grammar lectures. However, despite the claim that his students noticed their own errors, in the observed lessons he did provide general feedback on any commonly made errors that his students did not notice. However, rather than correct these explicitly, he drew the students' attention to the errors after the activity had finished and encouraged them to correct these themselves. In some cases, he assigned additional activities related to the errors for homework. He said that his students needed to know what errors they made, but that they had the ability to correct these independently. The analysis of the observation data showed that the students were using these forms correctly by the end of semester. Steve's practices were consistent with some of aspects of a 'focus on form' (Long, 1991, 2000; Long & Robinson, 1998) view. According to this view, comprehensible input, which was introduced by Krashen (1985), is necessary in second language acquisition, but not sufficient to enable the learners to improve their communication skills (Long, 1985b). Rather, the learners' attention needs to be drawn to linguistic elements (Schmidt, 1983, 1993) as they arise naturally in tasks where the focus is on meaning or communication (Long, 2000). This matches well with Steve's

approach to building his students' linguistic skills. However, while Long (1991, 2000) suggests that this feedback to students should be implicit and occur in the process of negotiating meaning in communicative tasks, Steve provided explicit feedback about linguistic features that the students had not self-corrected during the tasks rather than relying on implicit negative evidence (Long, 1996). This may have been related to the nature of the tasks the students completed. That is, the students did topic-based discussion rather than information gap or other sorts of tasks that required more negotiation of meaning.

David's focus on accuracy in relation to fluency was very similar to Steve's in that he viewed his students as having high levels of English grammar knowledge and as only needing more uninterrupted communicative tasks to apply this to their speech. However, unlike Steve, he did not provide any feedback about the students' consistent errors and neither did he provide tasks that focused the students' attention on the form of their speech. David's practices would seem to align with a 'focus on meaning' view where language learning does not occur intentionally. That is, linguistic features are acquired incidentally and implicitly through the learners' natural interaction during meaningful communicative activities (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Newmark, 1971). The lesson observations showed that the students' consistent errors persisted throughout the semester. This may have been influenced by the nature of the communicative activities which did not seem to be readily understood by the students or to direct their attention to the form of the language. This type of lack of attention to form can result in the persistence of incorrect language features (Pavesi, 1986; Schmidt, 1983; Swain, 1991).

This section discussed the teachers' practices and their consistency with the four key characteristics of the CLT approach: a student-centred learning environment; a safe and non-threatening learning environment; the use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials; and a balance between achieving fluency and accuracy. While the teachers held views that generally reflected these key features, their practices evident in the classroom observations were not always consistent. In general, Steve's practices most closely matched all four key characteristics while Andy's showed the least similarity. David's approach seemed to be consistent with some of each characteristic but lacked the degree of student support advocated by the CLT approach.

6.2.5 Assessment

The teachers in this study reported that their faculties did not provide them with any assessment instruments or marking criteria with which to evaluate their students' English speaking proficiency. Neither were they informed of what aspects of speaking should be focussed on in assessment processes. As was described in the Case Study chapter, there were two formal assessments per semester at KNU and these were typically the mid-term and the final examination. However, lecturers could use different types of assessment provided the academic results of their students were validated. Andy and Steve implemented two formal assessments while David chose to have one final assessment at the end of the semester.

Andy reported that he put a strong focus on assessing his students' speaking fluency rather than checking their linguistic features during examinations. He handed out an information sheet about the exam to his students before the examination period so that they could study and practise the relevant content and skills. As was described in the Case Study chapter, Andy claimed that this was because he felt his students were motivated to study for examinations. He also noted that his students produced better outcomes when they studied intensively for a short period of time. However, document analysis and observations showed a mismatch between what he claimed to focus on in the assessment and the actual focus reflected in the student notes and examination paper. That is, the assessments focused on form rather than fluency, and while this was consistent with his teaching practices, it did not reflect CLT principles.

A closer analysis of Andy's assessment strategy showed why he may have perceived it as stressing fluency. The assessment task required small groups of students to discuss topics taken from the textbook. However, rather than assessing aspects of fluency such as the communication of ideas, use of negotiation strategies and the like, the emphasis was placed on the use of the particular vocabulary and linguistic structures that had been taught as part of the topic.

David constructed one summative assessment at the end of the semester. The assessment took the form of a group presentation related to tourism for which his students had to take full responsibility in terms of forming groups, choosing the topic and designing the project to be presented. David saw the assessment as authentic and relevant to his students' future careers because it required each group to design a tour package as if they worked for the company.

The project was the focus of all the conversation classes so the students had the semester to prepare for the task and were expected to learn specialist vocabulary and to learn relevant content knowledge. This type of assessment was quite consistent with David's teaching practices, as it was in Andy's case. Unlike with Andy's assessment, David's assessment followed aspects that were consistent with CLT principles. The task was authentic and mostly focussed on fluency, with appropriate attention to linguistic features required for the students' major and future careers. As was described earlier, however, there was insufficient support provided for the students to successfully complete the task because of the lack of teacher scaffolding available in the conversation classes.

Steve's assessment was more similar to David's than Andy's in terms of its relevance to the students' needs. Steve's assessment required each of his students to demonstrate presentation skills required by the National Teachers Qualifications Examination, which his students would need to pass in order to qualify as English teachers. To demonstrate these skills, the students gave 3 to 5 minutes individual presentations on a teacher assigned topic and were assessed in terms of their fluency. The assessment matched his teaching focus which was to develop the students' presentation and discussion skills. Like David's, it was consistent with some CLT principles, particularly in that it was authentic. In contrast to David's students, Steve's were supported through the semester to develop the skills and knowledge to be assessed.

Although their strategies differed, all three teachers constructed a performance-based assessment, a type of assessment that is not well matched with the CLT principle requiring that students' ongoing progress in their English speaking skills be monitored rather than determined by a single summative assessment (Canale & Swain, 1980; Llosa, 2012; Sato, 2012; Stoyanoff, 2012). This approach was further compromised in Andy's and David's situations as they assessed their students' English speaking proficiency level using their judgement without moderation whereas Steve's judgements were moderated with other teachers from his department. The teachers in Steve's department used a marking rubric that was downloaded from an ESL website and contextualised it to their students' needs and to match the expected learning outcomes of their course.

The following section will discuss the challenges that the teachers faced in implementing practices that were consistent with a CLT approach, how the teachers managed these, and possible solutions to them.

6.3 Challenges Faced by the Teachers in the Implementation of CLT Approach

The teachers in this study faced a range of challenges in implementing teaching practices consistent with a CLT approach in a Korean university. These challenges related to three different aspects of the implementation: the position of English conversation classes in the university; the teachers' knowledge of CLT and their students; and, the students' access to English outside of the conversation classes.

These three types of challenges emerged from the tertiary level of cross-case analysis which examined patterns among the eight categories identified, and these patterns clustered into three types of challenges. The first type of challenge was identified from the first five and the last of the eight themes discussed in the previous chapter, which were teaching experience, teachers' motivation, teaching preparation, teaching instruction, teaching strategies, and teaching environment. The second type of challenge was identified from the sixth theme, which is professional knowledge of CLT, and the third type of challenge emerged from the seventh theme, which was teachers' understanding of the South Korean education system and their students. These three types of challenges are to be discussed in this section.

Some of these challenges were recognised by the teachers and some were not but, rather, were evident in the analysis of data collected through the interviews, reflective journals, observation, and document analysis. The teachers managed the challenges in different ways and suggested a range of solutions to address those they recognised.

6.3.1 The position of English classes in the university

The first challenge faced by the teachers related to the position of English classes in the university. The two factors that appeared to influence this position were the relationship the teachers had with the broader university community and the context of the English conversation classes. These two factors, together with how the teachers identified and managed the challenges associated with them, and what they suggested to improve the situation will be discussed in the following section.

Relationship with the broader university community

The three native English-speaking teachers of English in this study noted that they did not receive either induction training or professional orientation when they were appointed to KNU. This was at odds with the stated importance of the units they taught, given that undergraduates were required to take three English conversation units across the four years of

their course. While the teachers identified this as an issue, they did not seek to address it nor did they report that it impacted on their teaching.

Even though the teachers did not recognise the disadvantages associated with the lack of induction, these were apparent in the findings from this study. A failure to formally orientate new staff meant that David and Andy were not introduced to other English conversation teachers and so were not given the opportunity to join a professional learning community within their faculties. While they did eventually socialise with English teachers from other universities, these colleagues taught students who differed in age and proficiency levels and that, together with their different teaching contexts, limited the usefulness of information they shared. Steve, however, was invited by the other conversation teachers who were already working in his department to be part of their collegial group. Belonging to this professional learning community offered Steve the opportunity to improve his professional knowledge and to be part of a co-operative working environment. He also reported that this collegiate support had a positive impact on his teaching. This supports other research which has found that this type of networking not only supports newly appointed teachers but, additionally, contributes to improvements in teaching (Forrester & Lok, 2008; Vo & Nguyen, 2009; Wichadee, 2011). As noted earlier, Steve's department received additional funding from the government so were able to employ more native English-speaking teachers of English conversation. These teachers were encouraged to collaborate but there were no formal structures in place to facilitate this process.

Another consequence of the lack of induction was that the English conversation teachers were not familiarised with their new working environment, university policies and procedures, the course management handbook, or the main curriculum. This is despite the evidence that suggests that newly appointed teachers, particularly those new to the teaching profession, can benefit from induction sessions or orientation workshops (Doerger, 2003; Howe, 2006; Keay, 2009; Koetsier & Wubbels, 1995; Smith, 2011). Doerger (2003) highlighted that such sessions give new teachers opportunities to meet others so that collaborative learning groups can be formed. He claims that successful induction training results in improved student achievement as well as providing more collegial support for the teaching staff (Doerger, 2003). Further, the professional networking that can result has been shown to improve teaching practice (Bruce, Esmonde, Ross, Dookie, & Beatty, 2010; Smith, 2011; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008; Vo & Nguyen, 2009; Wichadee, 2011).

In addition, it was challenging for the three teachers to gain knowledge of the course they were expected to teach before they commenced teaching. This limited the opportunity to prepare the units ahead of the semester and to integrate their teaching program with that of the major areas their students were studying. This lack of integration led to a number of problems one of which was related to the expectation that the English conversation classes would include content from the students' major areas of study. This was evident when some of David's students complained to a senior professor about the lack of integration between the English conversation classes and other units in their course. As a result of this complaint, the senior professor told David to integrate content about tourism into his lessons. In responding to this directive, David selected a textbook based on the theme of tourism. However, the text related to European contexts which were unfamiliar to his students as their courses focussed on tourism in Korea. This incident illustrated how vital it is for English language teachers to understand the main curriculum so that their teaching complies with its demands. However, before teachers can align their teaching program with the wider university curriculum, they need on-going professional development (Brand & Triplett, 2012; Ignatz, 2005; Mee, 2010; Shower, 2010; Shriner, Schlee, & Libler, 2010).

Another aspect of the relationship between the English conversation classes and the wider university that seemed to contribute to the teachers' difficulties was that they did not have to hold a general teaching or language teaching qualification in order to gain employment as an English conversation teacher. In South Korea, teachers of English conversation classes at university level do not generally have to hold either of these qualifications. As was the case in this study, they are able to gain teaching positions as long as they are from English speaking countries and have a Bachelor level degree (NIIED, 2012). This contrasted with other lecturers who were required to hold a minimum of a Master's Degree in the area within which they taught (Kim, 2000). The lack of a teaching qualification seemed to contribute to the teachers' difficulty with understanding the nature of teaching in terms of designing lesson plans and aligning their lessons with the main curriculum of the university. This type of challenge is understandable given that teaching is a complex process involving cognitive, affective and developmental procedures and requiring specific training (Beattie, 2000; Bramald, Hardman, & Leat, 1995; Bryan & Abell, 1999; Cochran-Smith, 2012; McNally & Martin, 1998; Rahman, Scaife, & Yahya, 2010; Reynolds, 1992; Wood, 2000; Yourn, 2000). While the teachers did not appear to recognise the relationship between some of the issues they faced in their teaching and their lack of teaching or language related qualifications,

Steve and David were both involved in Master's level studies at the time of this research. However, in noting why they were undertaking this study, Steve reported that the Master of Pedagogy, which is not related to English language teaching, he had recently enrolled in had been recommended by a senior Korean professor in his department while David had decided to do a Master's level on-line applied linguistics degree so that he could apply for a permanent position at a Korean university.

The requirement that English conversation teachers in the National universities be native speakers of English raises another important issue related to fair access to employment for local teachers. This requirement means that local teachers who may be fluent in spoken English, have appropriate qualifications and have an insider's knowledge of social and cultural factors which impact on language learning, are unable to compete for these teaching positions. This study has found that the lack of teaching qualifications and professional knowledge related to additional language learning had a negative impact on teacher effectiveness. Similarly, this study and others have found that knowledge of the students' social and cultural backgrounds is particularly important when applying CLT approach in EFL contexts (Bax, 2003; Flattery, 2007; Hiep, 2007; Mangubhai et al., 2007; Sowden, 2007). Thus, it could be argued that Korean teachers with this knowledge and skill should not be denied access to teaching English conversation classes in National universities in South Korea.

Teaching context of English conversation classes

In addition, the teachers faced challenges related to the unfamiliar teaching environment of a Korean university. The teachers in this study reported that they had been educated in a western educational system which tends to be more student-centred and to encourage more creative thinking and classroom interaction. Steve, in the Case Study Two, claimed that western educational systems purport to value critical thinking and the expression and justification of personal opinions.

The teachers reported struggling with the large number of students and a lack of space in their classrooms. These conditions, however, were typical of Korean universities where between 30 and 40 undergraduate students are assigned to spaces large enough for rows of desks to accommodate them. While Andy and David claimed that it was challenging for them to pay attention to each student in order to give them individual feedback because of the high numbers in their classes, Steve reported that since he had a manageable number of students in

a large classroom, it was possible for him to respond to their individual needs. He claimed the communicative activities he used required these smaller numbers and additional space. Andy and David did raise this issue with their department leadership team but when they did not receive a response, they took no further action to address the issue.

Another difficulty that the teachers noted was that there were no formal procedures to allocate students to classes based on their current speaking proficiency or their personal needs. As a result of this, the teachers reported struggling to accommodate their students' mixed proficiency levels although they did report applying strategies to address the issue. For instance, Andy intentionally grouped the students who had strong English speaking skills with those whose skills were weaker in order to facilitate the completion of the tasks he assigned. Steve adapted the tasks to better match his students' needs and provided additional support when they experienced difficulty.

A related challenge, particularly for Andy and David, was the lack of access to specialised English language teaching resources at the department or university level. They were given a textbook and some supplementary teaching books that had been used by previous teachers. However, most of these commercial English conversation textbooks were not sensitive to the Korean context or culture and, therefore, much of their content did not appear to be relevant to the students. When the teachers required additional materials, they searched for them on ESL websites and asked for advice from other native English-speaking teachers. However, the materials available on such websites were developed in western countries and so were not contextually appropriate for Korean students. Although neither Andy nor David recognised this as an issue, the contextualisation of teaching materials is seen as one of the most effective ways to promote students' learning especially in language teaching classrooms (Porto, 2010; Sowden, 2007; Su, 2011). This is because students need to be able to relate the content of the lesson to their real life situation in order to maintain interest and motivation to learn the target language (Bax, 2003; Cathcart, 1989; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Ellis, 1996; Hiep, 2007; Jenkins, 2012; McDonough & Shaw, 1993). The use of inappropriate materials seemed to discourage students' interaction in class as reported by the teachers and observed in the study. Interestingly, however, Andy and David did not seem to recognise the influence of the inappropriate materials on this disengagement.

This was in contrast to Steve's situation where, as part of a teaching team, he had access to materials designed to reflect his students' lives and which were adapted to their needs. As

mentioned in the previous section, Steve's access to these resources was a direct result of his being involved in a collegial group that worked together to not only develop relevant materials, but also to support each other professionally. As has been discussed, there would appear to be a role for the university to promote these sorts of professional collaborations rather than them being left to chance.

A related challenge noted by the teachers was that when staff left the university, there was no formal handover process, which resulted in a lack of continuity and consistency in the teaching program. It is claimed that the consistency between the past teachers and the current teachers should be constantly maintained to avoid the confusion that results from different teaching styles and foci whenever students have new teachers (Huard, 2001). Additionally, the teachers noted that this lack of handover made it more difficult for them to become familiar with their new teaching environment and the students and, consequently, to design suitable teaching materials.

These findings suggest that the English conversation classes were marginalised in KNU. As was described in the Case Studies, other lecturers at the university had access to induction training, professional networks and on-going professional learning opportunities offered by both the university and the departments. Their work was guided by professors and curriculum documents, including Unit Outlines. Their teaching spaces were subject-specific and well equipped, including language laboratories, audio visual equipment, special seating and the like. Although these were available for all staff in the department, the conversation teachers were not informed of this, or indeed of other supports from which they could have benefited.

To summarise, the study findings suggest that the marginalised position of the English conversation classes presented challenges for the teachers, some of which they recognised and some which they did not. Some of these challenges related to a lack of induction training, professional orientation and networking opportunities for the new English conversation teachers. Others resulted from a lack of integration between the students' major areas of study and the compulsory English conversation classes. Additional challenges were associated with the teachers' limited access to authentic materials and adequate space for teaching. Being outside the university structures meant that there was no official handover process when new teachers were appointed and as they were not required to have general or language specific teaching qualifications they faced additional challenges in designing and delivering their teaching programs.

6.3.2 The teachers' knowledge of CLT and their students

This section will further examine the second category of difficulties the teachers experienced in the implementation of CLT, particularly focusing on the challenges they faced in relation to their knowledge of CLT and of their students, especially their cultural and educational backgrounds. It will explore how these challenges impacted on the teachers' practices and discuss how they responded to these difficulties. Finally, the solutions suggested by the teachers will be noted.

CLT in South Korea

As has been noted earlier, the CLT approach is the main methodology of English education in South Korea (Collins, 2005; Flattery, 2007); thus, this approach was expected to be implemented in English conversation classrooms at KNU. Despite this expectation, the three teachers reported that they had not been informed that implementing a CLT approach was a requirement. However, they noted that while they had limited knowledge of the approach, they used communicative activities in their classes. Analysis of the data suggests that this led them to assume they were implementing a CLT approach and so meeting the university requirement. As was discussed earlier, many of their practices did not conform to the approach and they reported experiencing difficulties with designing their lesson plans and in deciding what teaching strategies they should apply in their classes. Thus, it was challenging for them to create a CLT-based classroom.

One challenge related to the teachers' limited knowledge of the CLT approach involved their misinterpretation of the principles of this approach. This misinterpretation was evident in the way some of the teachers did not include all aspects of teaching and learning considered important in a CLT approach or put undue emphasis on one or more aspects and neglected others. Further, this misinterpretation led to inconsistencies between what the teachers said they did in their classrooms and the practices evident in their planning documents and during the observations. That is, their practices did not always match their claims related to the principles of CLT, as was discussed earlier in this chapter.

Andy claimed he used CLT-based activities to meet his goals because his teaching strategies were developed to enhance his students' English speaking skills. Further, he claimed that he viewed his classes as interaction-focused classrooms in that he facilitated his students to be actively engaged in communicative activities. He described how he supported this approach

by providing extra teaching materials that contained the elements of a communicative approach, including 'information gap' and 'problem solving' activities. However, the classroom observations revealed practices that were not consistent with this description. That is, even though Andy may have prepared his lessons in a way he thought reflected a communicative approach, his students were not observed as being actively engaged or as interacting, but rather, they displayed disengagement.

Moreover, the document analysis of his non-textbook teaching materials revealed that he used 'Classroom English' extensively. This involved the repetition of set forms related to agreeing and disagreeing, clarifying, discussion moves, rejoinders and follow-up questions. These strategies seemed to be more consistent with some of the aspects of the 'pre-communicative framework' or 'direct approach' rather than with a communicative approach. That is, they focussed on linguistic forms rather than functions, with the students' responses being foreseeable, such as they are within pre-communicative tasks (McDonough & Shaw, 1993).

Further, Andy's teaching had characteristics of the direct approach in that he expected the students to produce correct output in controlled activities (Hedge, 2000). This suggests that Andy's lack of understanding of the CLT principles led him to assume that because his students were talking, they were engaging in communicative activities. However, the data analysis suggests that they were not engaged in genuine communication as they were merely repeating set dialogues that emphasised form while it was function that should have been the focus. This, then, shows that the teaching strategies employed by Andy were closer to a structural approach than to a communicative one, particularly in their emphasis on form rather than function. This suggests there was a lack of connection between teaching theory and the practices associated with it, which could be due to a lack of professional knowledge as was found in similar studies (Burke, 2006; Dooly & Masats, 2011; Nazari, 2007). The impact of a lack of professional knowledge on the transfer of theory to practice has also been found in other teaching contexts (Buehl & Fives, 2009; Haney et al., 2002; Kuzborska, 2011).

David, like Andy, claimed that because his teaching practices were focused on improving his students' English speaking skills, he used a communicative approach. However, unlike Andy, David paid more attention to encouraging his students to sustain their conversations without emphasising particular language forms. Hedge (2000) suggests that this type of teaching can be referred to as an 'indirect approach' as it promotes fluency-based activities that encourage

the students to develop their speaking skills. The expectation is that students will learn linguistic forms while completing these contextualised tasks. In this way, there is a focus on fluency over accuracy. However, classroom observations revealed that David did not draw his students' attention to language forms through the tasks he set although this aspect is a requirement of a CLT classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, observations indicated that his students were making the same linguistic errors in their spoken English at the end of the unit as they had at the beginning. This suggests that his lack of understanding led him to omit critical aspects of a communicative approach in his practice.

Steve's teaching practices were observed to be different overall from those of Andy and David. However, they were more similar to some aspects of David's in that he, too, put more focus on developing his students' English speaking fluency rather than accuracy. Unlike David, however, Steve attended to his students' persistent linguistic errors. Steve reported that he engaged his students in interactive conversational activities that were designed to develop their fluency, and these activities included free discussion, role play and information gap tasks which are considered to be the most commonly used in a communicative language classroom (Hedge, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As was discussed in section 6.2, Steve's practices were the most compatible with the principles of CLT, but interestingly, he reported that he was not sure whether he was using a CLT approach. This uncertainty might have resulted from his limited knowledge of the approach. Unlike Andy and David, Steve had collegial support to assist him in developing his program and this seemed to mitigate the impact of his lack of knowledge on his teaching practices.

Another challenge associated with this limited knowledge of the CLT approach was the teachers' selection of materials that did not reflect the lives of their students. The research findings in this study revealed that the teachers had difficulty organising socially and culturally appropriate teaching materials for their students. They claimed that they were not informed that the use of authentic and contextualised materials is considered to be critical to construct a successful CLT-based classroom. This is the case, since what is deemed to be authentic will vary from culture to culture making the localisation of teaching materials essential (Bax, 2003; Harmer, 2003; Hedge, 2000; Hiep, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Sowden, 2007).

However, despite claiming he was not aware he needed to use authentic materials, Andy reported that those he used in his classes were culturally contextualised for his students so

that they could relate their English learning to their lives outside of the classroom. He reported doing this because he thought that it would stimulate their interest and increase their motivation. However, his materials were structural in nature and contextualised in European and American cultures that were largely unfamiliar to his Korean students. The materials David used were also based on an unfamiliar context although his were more communicative in nature. In summary, neither Andy nor David recognised that the materials they used with their students lacked authenticity or the impact this had on their students' learning despite this being clear in the observations and document analysis.

In contrast, Steve's teaching materials were adapted to meet his students' needs and were developed in collaboration with other English teaching colleagues in his department. This adaptation attended to the context and to the level of the materials so they better matched his students' backgrounds and levels of English language proficiency. This suggests that even though Steve lacked knowledge of the importance of authentic materials, it did not impact his practices because of the support he received from his colleagues.

The challenges related to the teachers' limited knowledge of CLT were understandable given the context and circumstances within which they were teaching and the consequences of that lack of knowledge underline the significant role played by professional knowledge in the effective implementation of teaching approaches (Brown & King, 2000; Cochran-Smith, 2012; Koehler & Mishra, 2005; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Meurant, 2008; Richardson, 2003; Schrum et al., 2007; So & Kim, 2009; Tirri, 2011; Wood, 2000; Yourn, 2000). The differences in the outcomes of this lack of knowledge in Steve's case point to the importance of structural supports such as collegiate collaboration with strong leadership that can perform a supportive and educative role for a novice teacher or one unfamiliar with a new teaching context.

Cultural understanding

The second challenge related to a lack of knowledge concerned the teachers' perception that they did not have sufficient understanding of their students or their cultural and educational backgrounds. They also reported that they were expected to obtain knowledge of their students' learning characteristics, such as their learning styles, learning aptitudes, and what motivated them to learn English during the first few lessons of the semester. Even though the teachers were aware of this expectation, they did not report that they had sought this

information and neither was there evidence they had done so in the observations or any of the documentation related to their planning.

This lack of understanding of their students' learning preferences, aptitudes and motivations was a concern since these characteristics are based on the culture in which learners have grown up, so they may have varied from those of students the teachers were familiar with (Sowden, 2007; Su, 2011). The teachers reported that they had difficulty planning lessons because of this lack of knowledge about their students' backgrounds and that they had experienced discomfort when teaching approaches that had been successful with other groups of students failed to engage their Korean classes.

In David's case, this lack of knowledge seemed to lead him to see his students' as passive, compliant and dependent learners whom he referred to as "potatoes", having eyes and no mouth. He noted he had a fear of his students' disengagement but saw this as a problem of their learning style rather than being due to his lack of understanding of their backgrounds or arising from learning activities that were not designed to meet their particular needs. David reported that once when he recognised that his lesson "was not going to work", he cancelled the class and that he later regretted this action. This may have influenced him to develop the view that planning was not useful and that he could decide what to teach by "reading his students' expressions" at the beginning of the lesson. Despite the students' lack of engagement persisting, as evidenced in the observations, he did not consider adapting the tasks he assigned or providing more support. Neither did he attempt to find out more about why his students were not engaging in the learning tasks.

Andy's case was complex as there would seem to have been a good match between his teaching approach which stressed form and provided individual mastery oriented activities and his perception of his students' preferred learning styles. However, his program may not have matched the students' expectation that they would have speaking, rather than writing activities, in an English conversation class. While Andy saw the majority of his students as responsive and engaged in the learning activities provided, this was not evident in the observed lessons where even though they completed the tasks they were assigned, they were disengaged and quietly complained to each other in Korean about being bored. This suggests that Andy was not aware of his students' learning expectations and neither was he able to interpret their level of interest in the learning tasks he provided.

While Steve perceived that his students preferred memorising or rote learning, he saw this approach as unsuitable for teaching conversational English. When his students asked if they should learn dialogues for their mid-term examinations, he told them that they could not learn to speak English by memorising. Steve recognised that his students would find communicative approaches very difficult so he carefully supported them. He did this by ensuring that the topic was familiar and of interest to them and changed it if it was not. He carefully scaffolded the tasks his students had difficulty with, particularly group discussions. This suggests that although Steve did not know about his students' backgrounds when he started teaching them, he was sensitive to their learning needs and so learnt about their preferences over time. The observations indicated that his students readily participated in communicative activities, requested help when they needed it and were active and engaged learners.

To summarise, the research findings suggest that the teachers' limited knowledge of the CLT approach and their students' cultural backgrounds resulted in challenges which impacted on their teaching practices. Some of the challenges were recognised by the teachers while others were not. Some related to the misinterpretation of the CLT principles that led to a mismatch between the teachers' practices and those they claimed to use. Other challenges were associated with the limited use of authentic and contextualised materials due to the teachers' lack of knowledge of CLT, their students and of their cultural and educational backgrounds. It would seem that some of these challenges could have been prevented by the university providing on-going professional development. The provision of this type of university-based support is, in turn, related to the marginalised position of the English conversation classes in the departments and wider university.

6.3.3 The students' access to English

It was evident from the data that most of the students in this study had limited access to English both inside and outside of their English conversation classes. The three teachers saw this as a challenge that impacted on their students' motivation and opportunities to learn spoken English since language learners need consistent exposure to the target language for a considerable amount of time in order to learn (Cummins, 1984, 2000). Further, learners benefit from an environment in which they must use the target language for survival, as happens when they are learning English as a second or additional language in an English speaking country (Bax, 2003; Cathcart, 1989; Flattery, 2007; NCLRC, 2004).

However, in South Korea, English is a foreign language so learners do not need it for everyday purposes but, rather, to meet delayed goals such as university graduation or future career opportunities which are considered to be optional (Collins, 2005; Flattery, 2007). Additionally, access to English is restricted mainly to the conversation classroom. This has led to a high level of demand for English conversational classes in the three departments that were the context of this study. At the same time, the lack of access to English outside these classes increased the pressure on the conversation teachers to assist their students to meet the required standards of spoken English needed to graduate and gain employment. According to the teachers, this was a difficult expectation to meet owing to the relatively short time allocated to English conversation units which, according to the data analysed in this study, was three classes running for a total of 150 minutes a week. For David, these classes were consecutive on one day a week, while for Andy and Steve they were over two days, with one 100 minute lesson early and another of 50 minutes duration later in the week. For Andy and David, a further issue was the relatively large number of students assigned to their classes and the inadequate teaching spaces they were allocated.

Andy perceived this lack of time as impacting on his students' learning and motivation as it prevented them completing activities during their classes. Observations confirmed that the activities were often not completed, in which case they would be assigned as homework. However, as these activities focussed on the written structure of English or rehearsing set dialogues, rather than providing opportunities for his students to use conversational English.

David, on the other hand, had a weekly session of the full 150 minutes and his students worked on the same large task over the semester. He, however, did note the impact of a lack of exposure to English outside of the classroom and perceived this as the cause of his students' lack of interest in learning the language in his classes. Further, as stated in his interviews, he did not see learning English as of value for his students.

Steve recognised that his students lacked access to English outside of his classroom but encouraged them to create opportunities for themselves and not to rely on books or written resources. He suggested that they try to befriend English speaking people and to use English whenever they had the chance. Unlike David and Andy, Steve did not report any problems in his classes associated with this lack of access to English.

The only university-based response to the challenge of insufficient access to English was from the leadership in Andy and David's two departments who established an English Only Zone (EOZ) which was an informal meeting place where students could gather at any time of the day to converse in English. A native English speaker from a university sponsored international language school was rostered to be available in the EOZ from 9:00am to 6:00pm each week day. A regular classroom was made available for this purpose but there was no provision of financial or administrative support for the program. David, and particularly Andy, encouraged their students to use this space for English practice and Steve also did so, after his department had been invited to participate.

The finding that the teachers were concerned that their students' insufficient access to the target language would impact their learning reflects other research which has found that the degree of a learners' exposure to the target language is crucial in their language learning, especially in ESL or EFL learning environments (Flattery, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). It is claimed that the more learners are exposed to English language, the more chances they get to use spoken English, and thus improve their English speaking skills (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Martínez-Flor et al., 2006; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990).

To conclude, this section examined the challenges associated with the students' limited access to English inside and outside of their English conversation classes. These challenges could have hindered the students' learning due to the lack of exposure to the language. In order to maximise their exposure to English outside of their classes, the teachers encouraged their students to attend the EOZ classes, and suggested they use spoken English as much as they could in their everyday life by making friends with native English-speakers and watching English movies and TV programs.

6.4 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify which teaching strategies were used to improve Korean university students' English speaking skills, the degree to which these reflected a CLT approach and the challenges faced in implementing this approach. To do this, the teaching practices used by the three teachers were identified and examined in relation to their consistency with four key characteristics of a CLT approach. These key characteristics include a student-centred learning environment, a safe and non-threatening learning

environment, the use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials, and a balance between achieving fluency and accuracy in English. Generally, the study found that the teachers' practices were not always consistent with how they described them or with a CLT approach, as they had claimed. The teacher with the most consistent practices had smaller classes, a more suitable teaching environment and collegiate support from more experienced English language teachers.

In this study, the three key categories of challenges the teachers faced when implementing a CLT approach were: the marginalised position of English conversation classes in the university; the teachers' lack of knowledge of CLT and of their students; and, the students' limited access to English. These key findings contrasted with those of other researchers. That is, other studies had found that those linguistic features that differed markedly between English and Korean were one of the greatest challenges facing English conversation learners (Borden et al., 1983; Lee, 2001; Li, 1998).

However, the issue of language differences was not raised by any of the teachers or evident from other data sources in this study. Rather, the teachers saw their students as having strong English grammar knowledge and, therefore, they were not confused with the differences between English and Korean linguistic features. Other key categories evident in the literature were cultural differences (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006; Harmer, 2003; Kim, 2002; Kramsch, 1993; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Mitchell & Lee, 2003; Sowden, 2007; Windle, 2000), Korean learner characteristics (Carrasquillo & Lee, 2006) and low motivation (Flattery, 2007; Li, 1998; McGrath, 2001; Roberts, 2002). While there was evidence that aspects of these categories were challenging in this study, they were not as influential as other factors. The contrast between the findings of this study and those of other similar studies is shown in Figure 6.1.

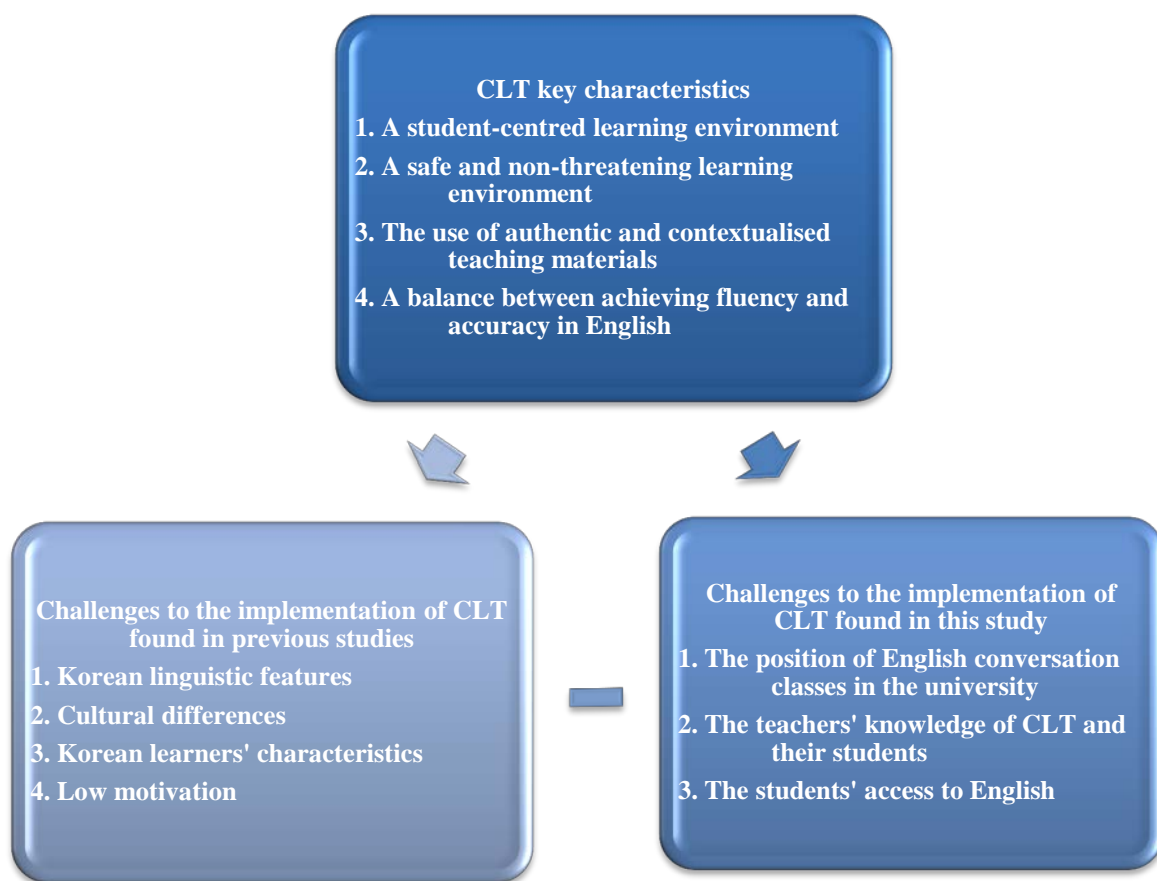


Figure 6.1 Research Findings - Challenges to the Implementation of CLT

The ways in which these challenges might be overcome and the implications that the findings of this study have for future practice will be discussed in the next chapter. The limitations of this study and suggestions for further research will also be presented.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Overview of this Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teaching practices used by native English-speaking teachers to develop their students' English speaking skills in a South Korean university context. The research was designed to respond to concerns that South Korean students' spoken English skills were poor as indicated in results from international English examinations such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). These results showed that scores in the speaking component were lower than the average while those in reading, listening, grammar, vocabulary and writing were higher (Jambor, 2009a, 2009b). This poor performance has been despite the Korean government's considerable investment in addressing the issue since 1996 (NIIED, 2012). A university site was chosen for the study as this allowed for an extension of existing research into the issue which had been undertaken in middle school contexts and because future teachers of English are trained in departments like those represented in the study. Further, most of the funding provided to improve the Korean students' English speaking skills was invested at university level, particularly in pre-service teacher programs.

A case study methodology was used to explore the various contextual features that influenced the teachers' choice and use of strategies and the associated issues in natural settings (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2007; Maxwell, 2005; Smith, 1987; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). The study was undertaken in three English conversation classrooms at KNU, one of number of national universities in South Korea, to ensure its authenticity (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011). The case study included three sub-cases, one for each of the three native English-speaking teachers who taught conversation classes in three different departments. The data were collected through classroom observations followed by informal discussions, semi-structured interviews, reflective journals, document analysis, and field notes.

The teaching practices of the three native English-speaking teachers were investigated. These practices were then related to the principles of the CLT approach as this was the method the university required the teachers to use. The challenges the teachers experienced in the implementation of the approach and their responses to these were explored. Lastly, the study

investigated the solutions the three teachers suggested to address the challenges as they perceived them.

This chapter summarises the key findings from this study in the form of answering the research questions. It then discusses the implications of these findings and suggests how the challenges found might be addressed.

7.2 Research Findings

This study had one main research question: How do native speaking English teachers develop the English speaking skills of university students in South Korea?

This question was answered through the following five sub questions:

1. What practices are implemented in English conversation classrooms in South Korea?
2. Are these practices consistent with a CLT approach?
3. What are the challenges involved in the implementation of a CLT approach?
4. How do English conversation teachers overcome these challenges?
5. What are English conversation teachers' suggestions for improving students' English speaking skills?

Sub-questions 1 & 2

What practices are implemented in English conversation classrooms in South Korea? Are these practices consistent with a CLT approach?

This study revealed that the three native English-speaking teachers involved used a range of strategies in their university-based English conversation classes. While there was considerable variation across the three classes, each teacher used largely consistent practices within their observed lessons. The teachers claimed that these strategies conformed to the key principles of the CLT approach which included: the provision of a learning environment that was student-centred, safe and non-threatening; the use of authentic and contextualised teaching materials; and, a balance between a focus on fluency and accuracy in their teaching and assessment. However, the classroom observations and the discussions that followed these together with the document analysis showed that some of the teachers' practices were not consistent with the CLT approach. The teachers' choice of strategies was influenced by their

backgrounds, previous teaching experiences and their beliefs about teaching and their Korean students.

The strategies used by the teachers in this study to promote their students' spoken English skills could be represented as a continuum ranging from the predominant use of unstructured to structured activities. At the unstructured end of the continuum, the teacher assigned open-ended tasks but provided his students with very limited support to complete them even when they demonstrated they were experiencing difficulty. This approach focussed on fluency with the students' consistent structural errors being ignored by the teacher who did not provide immediate reactive explicit correction or access to negative evidence through the learning tasks.

This teacher's strategies would seem to have conformed to most of the key principles of the CLT approach in that they were communicative in nature and were intended to encourage independent peer-based learning. The learning environment provided could be considered non-threatening given the open-ended nature of the tasks and the absence of student correction. In addition, the tasks were based on the students' major area of study so could be considered to be authentic and meaningful. However, it could be argued that practices were not consistent with all the aspects of a student-centred approach. First, the learning activities were not modified to match the students' backgrounds or their current level of English language competence. Second, the teacher had limited knowledge of tourism which was the students' major area of study so the contextualised aspects of the tasks lacked depth or relevance to the course. Third, the safety of the learning environment and the effectiveness of the student-centred approach would seem to have been compromised by the teacher's failure to provide any scaffolding or adaptation when the students experienced difficulty. This lack of support also compromised the integrity of the assessment strategy employed by the teacher. This assessment was authentic as it was based on the task the students had done over the semester and took the form of a presentation which was consistent with what would be expected of them as graduates entering the tourist industry. However, as the students had not received any support to meet the requirements of the task through the semester, they were not able to demonstrate the level of spoken English demanded by the assessment. A further problem was the summative 'once off performance' nature of the assessment as on-going formative monitoring is favoured in a CLT approach. While this issue was largely due to the assessment policy of the university, the teacher had the option of two assessment points but opted for one. Neither had he supplemented the end of semester assessment with any

formative monitoring to provide his students with feedback to guide or motivate their learning.

The study showed that this teacher's practices were influenced by his background and teaching experiences and that these, in turn, had shaped his beliefs about his Korean students. The findings suggest that the strongest influence on this teacher was his negative teaching experiences in a South Korea high school. The distress he reported feeling in this context would seem to be partly due to his lack of preparation as he had no training in teaching, little technical knowledge about language or language learning and a restricted understanding of Korean culture and the education system, including the pedagogy with which his students would be familiar. As a result, he developed a negative view of his Korean students' motivation, learning preferences and capacity. In addition, he developed a strong belief that Korean students did not need English in their everyday lives and so should rebel against having to learn the language, just as he had done when he was in university. These factors also seemed to influence his decision not to plan his lessons or intervene in the learning processes within his classroom.

In the middle of the continuum, the teacher provided open-ended tasks that were carefully structured and introduced to the students. In contrast to the unstructured approach, additional teacher assistance was provided if the students experienced difficulty in completing the tasks. The teacher constantly monitored the students and at the end of each session, drew their attention to any persistent errors he had noted and asked them to work on these independently. In this way, he kept the focus on fluency but did give attention to accuracy. It was interesting that even though his approach to teaching was consistent with a task-based communicative approach, there was no indication that he knew about negative evidence (Long, 1996, 2000; Mackey, 1999, 2006; Pica, 1988, 2005; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 2001; Swain, 1993, 1998) or how to exploit it in his teaching, although the opportunities to do so were evident in the observation data. He noted that his students had a better understanding of grammar than he did and so they just needed to be reminded of when to apply the rules. His way of managing this at the end of the lesson encouraged his students to independently address their English grammar needs, avoided the need for lecturing and allowed more class time to be devoted to spoken interaction.

This teacher's practices were mostly consistent with the CLT approach. He provided a student-centred program using authentic materials adapted to the social, cultural and language

backgrounds of his students. Additionally, he scaffolded the learning very carefully, providing clear instructions before his students started tasks and he carefully monitored their progress so that he could assist if they encountered difficulties and to provide feedback at the end of the lesson. He protected the safety of the learning environment with the nature of the tasks he provided, the group-based approach he took and the way he provided depersonalised summative feedback on persistent errors in student speech. This feedback could have been considered compromised in that it was not contingent or differentiated. That is, the feedback was not provided in context at the time the error was made, it was not part of the interaction process and it was not tailored to individual students in the way that corrective feedback is in a task-based approach. There was a stress on fluency in the learning activities and in the assessment tasks used in mid-semester and at the end of the unit. These assessment tasks were authentic as they were based on class work and on the skills the students would be expected to demonstrate as graduating teachers. Further, the assessment was designed and administered by the collegiate teaching team with moderation at all stages of the process, thereby increasing its effectiveness.

The study provided evidence that this teacher's practices were influenced by his background, his previous positive teaching experiences in South Korean primary schools and his belief in his students' high levels of motivation and capacity. However, the strongest influence would seem to have been from other conversation teachers in his department with whom he worked to plan learning programs and prepare teaching materials. Despite his positive experiences and attitudes, his enjoyment of teaching and the support and guidance of his colleagues, he expressed more doubts about his program and its effectiveness than did the other teachers. This may be because he showed a lack of confidence in his professional knowledge of the nature of teaching, and he did not have education specific qualifications. Further, he had the least working experience as an English conversation teacher in South Korea in his department and lacked previous teaching experience, including of learning another language. At the structured end of the continuum, the teacher provided formal lessons generally with a lecture followed by student practice of spoken phrases and dialogues. The students were expected to do homework to prepare for each lesson and the teacher expressed disappointment when many did not do this, claiming it was due to a lack of motivation. In the lessons, the emphasis was on the students' accurate use of the language rather than their spoken fluency with the teacher interrupting tasks to explicitly correct errors.

These practices did not match those expected in a communicative approach despite the teacher claiming that they did so. They reflected a teacher-centred approach largely based on the textbook which had been designed for ESL contexts. The lessons involved didactic teaching followed by repetitive practice of phrases and dialogues and involved explicit reactive correction of form. There was little or no attention to fluency or to providing the students with opportunities to use the language forms they were learning in meaningful communication. The learning environment could be deemed to be unsupportive as the students were observed to be very confused by what was expected and reluctant to engage in interaction. The assessment strategies used could be viewed as communicative because they required the students to engage in discussion of topics taken from the textbook. However, the overall approach to assessment did not conform to what is expected in a CLT approach. This was due to the emphasis in the criteria and feedback being on grammatical correctness and the use of specific vocabulary from the text with little attention to fluency. Further, the assessment task did not match the approach taken in class, compromising its authenticity.

As with the other cases, these practices seemed to be influenced by the teacher's background, previous teaching experiences and beliefs (Borg, 2003; Kuzborska, 2011; Nishino, 2008). Although this teacher had not had any education or language specific training, he noted often that his experience teaching in France and Italy and in private educational institutions in South Korea had prepared him well for his teaching role. Additionally, the teacher drew on his experiences learning French and Italian as second languages when selecting strategies and guiding his students' learning. His teaching experiences and his own experience learning languages influenced his beliefs about what strategies were effective for Korean students and his views on their attitudes and aptitude. He was very positive about the role of English in South Korea and about his students' current skills and capacity to learn. Despite this confidence in his students, he did not share responsibility for learning with them but, rather, maintained a very teacher-centred approach. Further, he blamed his students' lack of motivation for their reluctance to prepare for his class or participate in the learning activities, never questioning the suitability of his approach.

The lack of consistency between the teachers' practices, what they said they did and what was expected in a CLT approach was not surprising in light of the challenges they faced in teaching in the context of a South Korean university. These challenges will be described in the following section.

Sub-questions 3, 4 & 5

What are the challenges involved in the implementation of a CLT approach? How do English conversation teachers overcome these challenges? What are English conversation teachers' suggestions for improving students' English speaking skills?

The teachers in this study faced a range of challenges in implementing teaching practices that were consistent with a CLT approach. These challenges related to the position of English conversation classes in the university, the teachers' knowledge of CLT and their students, and the students' access to English. The teachers managed the challenges in different ways and suggested a range of solutions to address those they recognised.

The research findings suggest that the English conversation classes were marginalised in the departments where they were located and, more generally, in the university. This marginalisation presented challenges, some of which the teachers recognised and some which they did not. This set of challenges could be further categorised into recruitment and orientation issues, integration issues and issues related to teaching conditions. The recruitment issue mainly related to the failure of the university to recognise the need for teaching and specialist language qualifications for conversation teachers. The orientation issues included that the teachers were not provided with any formal introductions to university personnel, structures, policies or facilities. They were further denied access by the language barrier because all the relevant information was provided in Korean with no English translation available. There was no induction or on-going training provided and no hand over processes so they could benefit from their predecessors or to provide continuity for their students. A further consequence of the inadequate orientation to the new working environment was that the teachers' access to professional networks within their departments was restricted.

The poor orientation processes exacerbated the lack of integration between the department courses and the English conversation classes. Further, because the teachers' lacked an understanding of the way the university was structured and operated, they did not seem to recognise some issues or address those they did notice. The language barrier between the personnel involved further impeded integration. There were no formal policies or processes to encourage this integration and the lack of awareness or networking meant that it was unlikely to arise unprompted.

The other type of challenge related to the marginalised position of the conversation classes concerned the teaching conditions, particularly for the two teachers who worked in isolation. These included that the student numbers in their classes would be considered too high to allow for easily organised and managed interactive activities. The impact of this was exacerbated by the teaching spaces being small and crowded, making the furniture arrangements needed for group work difficult. In one teacher's case, there were further difficulties when other lecturers using the same space required that the student desks be returned to rows, meaning furniture had to be moved at the beginning and end of every lesson. These conditions were made more difficult by limited access to authentic materials or funding and time to develop them. Although, the findings from this study indicate that even should time and resources have been available, the teachers may have lacked the expertise to develop suitable materials without the assistance of more experienced colleagues or professional development.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the study found that the teachers did not view all of these challenges as issues that could be resolved and generally did not raise them with department personnel. Further, they believed that Korean colleagues would think they were confrontational if they raised any issues with them. This and other interpretations of the Korean university context had seemed to develop as a result of the teachers seeking procedural advice related to the structure and management of the university from their students rather than using official information sources. This student advice was not always professional or accurate and, hence, the teachers were often misinformed and misled.

The second major set of challenges identified in the study concerned the teachers' understanding of the CLT principles and of their students. The teachers reported that while they lacked knowledge of the CLT approach, they still used communicative tasks in their classes so that their students could practise their spoken English. However, the research findings suggest that the teachers had limited knowledge of the CLT approach and their students' cultural backgrounds and that this lack of understanding led to a mismatch between the teachers' practices and those they claimed to use. A further impact was their limited use of authentic and contextualised materials. This indicates the need for on-going professional development (Brand & Triplett, 2012; Ignatz, 2005; Mee, 2010; Shawer, 2010; Shriner et al., 2010) both to help them recognise the need to use these types of materials and how to prepare them. The lack of provision of this type of university-based support is, in turn, related to the

marginalised position of the English conversation classes in the faculties and wider university as was discussed previously.

The final set of challenges identified through this study involved the students' limited access to English inside and outside of their English conversation classes. These challenges could have hindered the students' learning due to the lack of exposure to the language (Flattery, 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Martínez-Flor et al., 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). In response to the students' limited access to English, the Faculty of Humanity and Social Science established the English Only Zone (EOZ) where the students in the three departments involved in this study could use spoken English outside of their English conversation classes. The teachers encouraged their students to attend the EOZ classes, and suggested they use spoken English as much as they could in their everyday life by making friends with English speakers and watching English movies and TV programs. However, these strategies did little to redress the disadvantages of learning in an EFL environment.

To summarise, one of the key findings of this study was that the teachers' choice of strategies was influenced by their backgrounds, previous teaching experiences and their beliefs about teaching and their Korean students. This study also identified three challenges that English conversation teachers faced when implementing CLT-related teaching practices. First, the English conversation classes were marginalised in the university. As a result, there was little or no attention to recruiting professionally qualified teachers, there were no induction training and professional networks within their workplace, and there was no integration between the department courses and the English conversation teachers. Second, the three English conversation teachers had limited knowledge of the CLT principles and their students' cultural and educational backgrounds, and this lack of knowledge led them to the misuse of the CLT approach and limited their use of authentic and contextualised materials. Finally, the students had limited access to English inside and outside of their English conversation classes, and this could have delayed the students' learning due to the lack of exposure to the language.

7.3 Implications

This study aimed to explore what native English-speaking conversation teachers do to develop South Korean university students' English speaking skills, and it found a range of challenges associated with the implementation of the CLT approach which is the main teaching methodology in English education in South Korea. By investigating these challenges and ways to address them, this study is able to contribute to improving students' speaking skills in contexts where English is learned as a Foreign Language (EFL).

The three teachers in this study faced a range of challenges, some of which they recognised and some they did not. The first set of challenges related to the marginalised position of English conversation classes in the university. This marginalisation led to little or no attention being paid to the teachers' needs, such as in the provision of induction training, professional orientation, transition processes, networking opportunities or access to appropriate teaching conditions, including reasonable student numbers, authentic materials and adequate teaching space.

This suggests that universities in South Korea need to provide systematic and effective induction training for new native English-speaking teachers in order to provide them with opportunities to become familiar with the education system and the culture of the university. Further, these teachers should be introduced to other English conversation teachers working in the university to give them the opportunity to create professional learning communities. Within these communities, they could share their previous English language teaching experiences and their prior teaching knowledge, together with information about South Korean university students. These types of groups would provide them with on-going collegiate support and informal opportunities for professional development. It was apparent in this study that the teacher who had access to the support of colleagues was able to meet the requirements of his teaching position more readily than were the other teachers in the study.

The findings from this study suggest that universities need to consider the importance of recruiting English conversation teachers with appropriate professional qualifications and training, as is the case with other teaching staff. This is particularly important given that a lack of professional knowledge had a negative impact on teachers' practice in this study. Further, other research suggests that ineffective teaching impacts on students' learning and the development of positive learning habits (Doerger, 2003; Hemsley-Brown & Sharp, 2003). The findings from this study support Briggs (2003) assertion that employment processes

should be more attentive to selecting teachers who are equipped with professional knowledge and skills sets related to teaching, to understanding their students' learning processes and to encouraging meaningful learning. Further, this study found there was a disjunction between the participants' understanding of the prescribed approach to teaching English and their practices. The provision of training courses is recommended to assist teachers to combine existing knowledge, skills and prior experiences with applied teaching practices that are compatible with the new approach (Boyle, While, & Boyle, 2004; Rahman et al., 2010).

This study found that one of the challenges impacting the conversation teachers' practice was the high number of students and the inadequate teaching space they were assigned. Two of the teachers in this study reported that the size of their classes and the restricted space made the use of communicative teaching strategies difficult. In contrast, the third teacher's classes were smaller and the space adequate, allowing him to use communicative activities. This suggests that the implementation of a CLT approach in university-based English conversation classes depends, at least in part, on reasonable class sizes that allow for attention to individual needs and appropriate classroom spaces that allow for student movement and the use of grouped furniture. A related issue was that the students were assigned to classes without consideration for the level of their spoken English language proficiency. Taking account of this student characteristic in student allocation would allow teachers to better cater for their individual needs in designing learning programs.

Findings from this study suggest that Korean students' limited exposure to English is impacting on their learning of spoken English. First, the English conversation classes had less time allocation on the timetable than other classes despite research suggesting they needed more (Flattery, 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Martínez-Flor et al., 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). The teachers in this study noted that this impacted on their students' learning as has been confirmed in other studies (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1981; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Krashen, 1990). This is particularly the case in Korea where exposure to English in the community is limited. This suggests that the time allocation for the conversation classes should be increased and that a more coordinated effort needs to be made to increase the students' exposure to English speakers by better use of the skills of the English speaking teachers and other initiatives, including the use of electronic communication devices.

To summarise, research findings from this study suggest that university-based initiatives could increase the effectiveness of the teaching of native English-speaking teachers and so improve Korean students' acquisition of spoken English. These include the provision of:

- an employment policy that requires native English-speaking teachers to have appropriate specialist qualifications;
- systematic induction training for newly appointed native English-speaking teachers, including with attention to South Korean students' cultural and educational backgrounds;
- professional orientation to prepare teachers for their new positions, including assistance to understand the requirements of their positions (job descriptions) and information about the classes (units) they will teach and the courses of which these are part;
- formal handover processes to promote consistency between new and previous native English-speaking teachers' programs and so ensure continuity for students;
- a communication channel between the university leadership and the native English-speaking teachers so that prompt action can be taken when there are problems;
- networking opportunities for new teachers to assist them to form a professional learning community;
- access to authentic materials and adequate teaching space to enable teachers to design effective CLT-based classroom activities;
- systematic and on-going professional development addressing the CLT approach and the socio-cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds of Korean students;
- policies and practices to foster the integration of English conversation classes with the students' major areas of study so that there is linked learning and a fairer allocation of time;
- policies and practices that allow for the allocation of reasonable student loads to conversation classes and the consideration of their proficiency levels when making these allocations.

The findings from this study suggest that attention to these recommendations will improve the positive impact of English conversation classes in national universities in South Korea. However, a further issue to consider is the assumption that native English speaking teachers will be more effective than suitably qualified Korean teachers in addressing the issue of poor

outcomes in spoken English at the university level. Given the advantages Korean teachers would have in relation to familiarity with the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students and the South Korean education system, the policy of requiring conversation teachers to be native speakers of English should be re-examined.

7.4 Recommendations for Future Research

As the narrow scope of this study restricts the application of its findings, future research could extend it through increasing the sample and its representation, including students and other personnel involved, using a wider range of study sites or by increasing the time allocated to the collection of data. The use of different methodological approaches could be considered, particularly those that allow for both quantitative and qualitative data to be collected. Particular consideration should be given to further investigating the achievement of students and the factors, including the impact of different instructional methods, on the development of their spoken language. Additionally, measuring the learning outcomes of students should be considered in future research as it will help indicate the most suitable and appropriate teaching approach for particular groups of students in South Korean universities. This is particularly the case given the prevalent use of methods developed for ESL contexts in western countries in EFL contexts like South Korea and the issue of lack of access to English in EFL learners' everyday lives as found in this study.

7.5 Contribution of the Study

The findings from this study will contribute to addressing the problem of how to improve Korean students' English speaking skills. In particular, the findings will be relevant to those universities which are striving to improve the skills of students preparing for careers that require fluency in spoken English. This will be especially important for those students preparing to be English teachers as their skill levels will potentially impact on another generation of English learners. Additionally, those students preparing for careers as translators, interpreters and tour guides and those who wish to seek work in globally-focussed industries will benefit.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Observation Guide

Teacher:

Date:

This observation guide aims to examine:

- the strategies used in English conversation classrooms in South Korea to enhance students' English speaking skills;
- the challenges involved in implementing the strategies;
- how English conversation teachers overcome the challenges.

Observation guide

Observation focus	Comments
<p><i>-What paralinguistic features (pragmatics) characterise the interaction between:</i></p> <p>* teacher and individual student;</p> <p>*teacher and group of students;</p> <p>*teacher and whole class;</p> <p>*student to student (pairs or groups)?</p> <p>- e.g. eye contact, use of gesture, body position, proximity.</p>	

Observation focus	Comments
<p><i>-What discourse features characterise the interaction between:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * teacher and individual student; *teacher and group of students; *teacher and whole class; *student to student (pairs or groups)? <p>- e.g. turn-taking, question/answer patterns, distribution of talk time.</p>	
<p><i>-What linguistic features do the students experience difficulty in using correctly?</i></p> <p>-e.g. word order, verb tense, pronunciation.</p>	

Appendix A-1 Some specific examples of Observation Note summaries on Steve's Class

Observation Focus	
<p>– What linguistic features do the students experience difficulty in using them correctly? E.g. word order, verb tenses, pronunciation</p>	
<p>Week 3 17/03/10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In general, the students are able to construct English sentences well. - Some students have difficulty using verb tenses. : example – they often get confused with the difference between present perfect tense and past simple tense <i>I have watched that movie last night.</i> <i>She lived in Seoul for three years (when she still lives in Seoul).</i> - Some students mispronounced some words, and then the teacher corrected it after the students finished their speech. - Students are having difficulties in using articles and subject-verb agreement, and distinguishing countable and uncountable nouns : example – they often forget to add –s at the end of verb when the subject is the third person singular <i>Tom miss the bus.</i> <i>I and Jane is going to the town tomorrow.</i>
<p>Week 6 07/04/10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In general, students' English speaking skills are excellent. - The students can express their own opinion freely. - Even though there are students who are making grammatical mistakes, such as verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and singular & plural nouns, there was no misunderstanding when they communicate.
<p>Week 9 28/04/10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are generally good at constructing English sentences even though they still make mistakes in verb tenses and subject-verb agreement, but the frequencies have decreased. - Also, the mistakes in singular/plural nouns were reduced. - Most of them have intelligible pronunciation, no strong Korean accents
<p>Week 12 19/05/10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally, students have good understanding of constructing English sentences. They are well aware of word order. - The frequencies in making error in verb tenses and singular & plural nouns are less frequent compared to those observed at the beginning of the semester. : e.g. <i>My parents got married 30 years ago.</i> - However, they still sometimes struggle with subject-verb agreement and articles. : e.g. <i>Terry don't like to eat apple.</i>

Appendix B – Reflective Journal Guideline

This reflective journal aims to provide a platform for the teachers to evaluate their teaching practices. This involves a minimum of two in-depth reflective journal entries.

The areas for reflection involve:

- teaching strategies that result in successful outcomes;
- teaching strategies that result in unsuccessful outcomes.

The teacher participants may use the following questions as a guide in their reflection.

**Guideline for reflective journal*

<i>Reflection questions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the situation?• Why did you choose that particular strategy?• How did you go about using it?• Why did you go about it that way?• What happened when you used it?• What was the outcome?• What do you think went well?• Is there any way the outcomes might have been improved?• Would you do anything differently next time?• Is there anything you will change as a result of this experience?

Appendix C - Prompts for interview

There will be three semi-structured interviews in this study and the prompts used in the interviews will be based on the five sub-questions which guide this research. The prompts used in the interviews aim to observe possible changes in the participants' teaching perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs. More prompts will be added during the research.

Example of the prompts

Research questions	The prompts used in the interviews	Comments
Q.1. What strategies are implemented in English conversation classrooms in South Korea?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Please tell me about your students (e.g. level of engagement, involvement, attendance, participation and behaviour).- What are your main aims as a teacher?- Think of activities you have conducted with your classes over last semester. What are the best examples to illustrate how you are achieving your aims?- What strategies did you use last semester to engage student interest and activity?- Which strategies did you find the most effective? Why?- How do you decide on the strategy you use?- Ideally how would you like to implement the strategy?	

<p>Q. 2. Are these strategies consistent with a CLT?</p> <p>Q. 3. What are the challenges involved in implementing these strategies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Last time we met, we talked about the strategies that you used last semester. Are you still using those strategies? - I noticed that some strategies you have talked about involve your students in using English for communication purpose. Can you tell me more about them? - Are they consistent with a CLT? - To what extent do you apply CLT theories into your teaching practices? - Are there any factors that impact on how effective these strategies are in your classroom? - Are there any limiting factors in implementing the strategy that you use now? 	
<p>Q. 4. How do English conversation teachers overcome these challenges?</p> <p>Q. 5. What are English conversation teachers' suggestions for improving the students' English speaking skills?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you manage these factors that limit achieving your goal? - Have you been able to find assistance to help you overcome these challenges? 	

<p>Q. 4. How do English conversation teachers overcome these challenges?</p> <p>Q. 5. What are English conversation teachers' suggestions for improving the students' English speaking skills?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the university aware of this issue? - Have you had the opportunity to do professional development related to this challenge? - Are there resources available to assist you? - What challenge is the most difficult to overcome? Why? - What strategies have you found to be the most effective for enhancing your students' English speaking skills at this point in time? Why? - Do you have any suggestions for promoting Korean students' English speaking skills? 	
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Appendix D – Example of Analysis

	David	Andy	Steve
What is really happening? (observation & document analysis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No particular lesson plan -No explicit teaching instruction -Too much freedom -No feedback or correction -No grammar lesson -No teaching of cultural differences and pragmatics -Focus on learners' strategies, but no explicit suggestions (no example was given) -Not following the textbook -Positive relationship btw teacher and the students was observed (teacher has no power→ learning atmosphere is too much relaxed) <p>Communicative with no structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Very clear lesson plan -Explicit instruction -Too much explanation -Lots of correction -Covering all aspects: reading, grammar, listening, writing, speaking.→ lack of time for communication activities -Following textbook -Focus on learners' strategies with useful information -Use lots of gambits, spoken phrases -Good relationship btw teacher and the students was observed, but teacher tends to be dominant (lots of corrections and instructions)→ not a safe learning environment <p>Communicative with too much structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Very specific goal, but no particular lesson plan -Very task-based lesson -Lots of discussion & presentation -Feedback and correction were given if necessary -Clear teaching of cultural differences & pragmatics -Very positive relationship btw teacher and the students was observed -Providing secure learning environment -Teacher is not controlling the class, but he sometimes does when necessary <p>Communicative with certain structure</p>
Any other challenges? (interview & reflective journal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exam-driven system -Students' low participation, -Lack of interaction -Low engagement -No response -No connection to the students' real need (in a real life) -Memorisation learning system -Lack of preparation time (My own laziness) -No support from department -Large number of students in one class -Limited knowledge of CLT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Time limitation -Too many students -Students' age difference -Students' different speaking proficiency -Memorisation learning system -Students' lack of preparation for the lesson -Not participating students -Exam-driven system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -My own laziness -No actual coordination -Students' different speaking proficiency level -Lack of knowledge of my students & Korean culture -Lack of knowledge of what my students are interested in -Lack of knowledge of language teaching theories
Possible solutions? Or suggestions? (interview & reflective journal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Speaking test should be included -Put less focus on TOEIC -More guidance is needed -No particular strategy for S.Korean students -More exposure to authentic learning environment→ improve their confidence level→ better understanding of English speaking culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No particular strategy for S. Korean students -Study phrases, spoken phrases -Study regularly -Put less focus on TOEIC -More guidance is needed -Stay close to English -Expose yourself to English environment as often as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Actual connection to what other professors are doing is really needed -Students have to be guided in right direction (No TOEIC) -Study smart (don't look for a right book, one single solution, and study hard)

Appendix E – List of Codes

List of Sixteen Codes

1. Explicit teaching instruction
2. Goal-oriented lesson plan
3. Teachers' influence (teachers' motivation)
4. Learning strategies
5. Learners' motivation and interest level
6. Memorisation learning system
7. Exam-driven education system (too much focus on TOEIC)
8. Cultural differences (different likes & dislikes)
9. Students' different proficiency level
10. Actual coordination
11. Effective teaching methodologies
12. Time limits
13. Learners' characteristics
14. Teachers' professional knowledge
15. Student-Teacher ratio
16. Teachers' beliefs

Appendix F – Eight Main Themes

Sixteen initial codes	Eight themes
3. Teaching influence	Teaching experience
3. Teaching influence 16. Teachers' beliefs	Teachers' motivation
1.Explicit teaching instruction 2.Goal-oriented lesson plan	Teaching preparation Teaching instruction Teaching strategies
11.Effective teaching methodologies 14. Teachers' professional knowledge	Professional knowledge of CLT
4.Learning strategies 5.Learners' motivation and interest level 6.Memorisation learning system 7.Exam-driven education system 8.Cultural differences 9.Students' different proficiency level 13.Learners' characteristics	Teachers' understanding of South Korean education system and their students
10.Actual coordination 12.Time limits 15.Student-Teacher ratio	Teaching environment

Appendix G – Examples of Andy’s teaching materials

Example 1: Clarification Strategies

Clarifications with Question Words

	You did <i>what</i> ?
	I didn’t understand what you said.
Excuse me.	He went <i>where</i> ?
Sorry.	She’s coming <i>when</i> ?
Pardon (me)	He’s how <i>old</i> ?
	We’ll meet <i>who</i> ?
	What did you say?

Introductory Exercise

Fill in the blanks with these words or phrases.

I see Sorry before what Excuse me carries a what

1. A: My father carries a *blah blah* when he visits a foreign country.
2. B: _____ me. He _____?
3. A: A dictionary.
4. B: Oh, a dictionary. _____.
5. A: Before *blah blah*, I always take a bath.
6. B: _____. You take a bath _____?
7. A: Before dinner I see.
8. B: I see.

Who will take didn’t understand What did you do
speak what OK

9. A: If you see *blah blah*, tell him *blah blah*.
10. B: Excuse me. _____ say?
11. A: If you see Bill, tell him I need his help.
12. B: _____.
13. A: I know how to speak *blah blah* very well.
14. B: Sorry. You _____ very well?
15. A: Italian.
16. B: I see.
17. A: When you arrive at the university, a student advisor will take you to your dorm.
18. B: Pardon? _____us?
19. A: A student advisor. Then you’ll meet with the dorm supervisor.
20. B: Excuse me. I _____.
21. A: The dorm supervisor. He’s in charge of the dorm.

Student A

Step 1. Say these sentences to Student B. Clarify your sentences when Student B asks you to. Remember to put the emphasis on the word in *italics* when you speak.

1. I'm planning to go to *blah blah* on my next vacation.
2. I need to buy a *blah blah*.
3. Blah blah is very *blah blah*.
4. It costs *blah blah* to buy new shoes.
5. *Blah blah* told us to stay here.
6. After I finish my homework, I will watch *blah blah*.

Step 2. Listen to Student B. Choose one of the clarifying sentences and ask Student B to clarify his or her sentence.

7. Sorry. His *what* is old?
Sorry. *When* did he go?
8. Excuse me. *Who* must arrive?
Excuse me. Before *when*?
9. Sorry. *Who* do you want?
Sorry. I didn't understand what you said.
10. Pardon? She's *how many* years old?
Pardon? *Why* did she do that?
11. Sorry. You have to do *what*?
Sorry. *Who* did you talk to?

Step 3. Say these sentences to Student B. Then clarify them. Also ask Student B to clarify his or her sentences.

1. After you *blah blah*, I want you to help me.
3. *Blah blah* is my favorite sport.
5. It usually costs about *blah blah* to buy a movie ticket in my country.
7. If you *blah blah*, don't forget to *blah blah*.
9. When I arrived at the meeting, there were only about *blah blah* people there.

Student B

Step 2. Listen to Student A. Choose one of the clarifying sentences and ask Student A to clarify his or her sentence. Remember to put the emphasis on the word in *italics* when you speak.

12. Excuse me. You're eating *what*?
Excuse me. You're going *where*?
13. Pardon? You need to see *what*?
Pardon? You need to buy a *what*?
14. Sorry. What did you say?
Sorry. You did *what*?
15. Sorry. You will go *where*?
Sorry. It costs *how much*?
16. Excuse me. *Who* told us?
Excuse me. She told us to stay *where*?
17. Pardon? You watch *what*?
Pardon? You went *where*?

Step 2. Say these sentences to Student A. Clarify your sentences when Student A asks you to.

18. His *blah blah* is very old.
19. We must arrive before *blah blah*.
20. I want you to *blah blah* and *blah blah*.
21. My sister had a birthday yesterday. She's *blah blah* years old.
22. If you see the teacher, tell her that I have to *blah blah*, so I can't come to school.

Step 3. Say these sentences to Student A. Then clarify them. Also ask Student A to clarify his or her sentences.

4. I always eat *blah blah* for lunch.
6. I think you look like *blah blah*.
8. My best friend told me to *blah blah*.
8. *Blah blah* gave me some medicine because I was starting to feel sick.
10. Do you know what car I like best? I love *blah blah*.

Example 2: Rejoinders and Follow-up questions

<u>Rejoinders</u>	<u>Follow-up questions</u>
I see	Note: Follow-up questions frequently use WH-questions
Oh, yeah?	Example:
Really?	A: What did you do last night?
That's great	B: I watched a movie on TV.
That's wonderful	A: (<i>Rejoinder and follow-up</i>). I see.
That's too bad	What movie was it?
I'm sorry to hear that	<u>Other follow-up questions</u>
	-Where did you see it?
	-Who was in it?
	-Do you like him/her as an actor?
	-What did you think of the movie?
	-How long was it?
	-How often do you watch movies?

Format: Triads - Student A

Before the discussion

- (1) Complete the questions below at home
- (2) Write two more questions about any topic

Discussion Directions

- (1) Ask **both** of your partners your discussion questions.
- (2) After they answer, ask follow-up questions and use rejoinders.
- (3) Take turns. You begin with discussion question # 1. Student B asks # 2, then student C asks # 3, and you continue then with # 4.
- (4) Answer your partners' questions **with details**.

Student A Discussion Questions

- (1) Did you _____ yesterday?
- (5) When you were in high school, did you ever _____?
- (6) Have you ever _____?
- (10) What are some good points about _____?
- (13) Was anyone in your family a victim of a crime (e.g., robbed by a thief)?
- (16) Which would you prefer to visit, a museum, a park or a zoo?
- (19) _____?
- (22) _____?

Format: Triads – Student B

Before the discussion

- (3) Complete the questions below at home
- (4) Write two more questions about any topic

Discussion Directions

- (7) Ask **both** of your partners your discussion questions.
- (8) After they answer, ask follow-up questions and use rejoinders.
- (9) Take turns. Student A begins with discussion question # 1. You ask # 2, then student C asks # 3, and you continue.
- (10) Answer your partners' questions **with details**.

Student B Discussion Questions

- (2) What time do you prefer to _____?
- (11) Do you have any _____?
- (8) Where have you _____ recently?
- (11) Were you a good student when you were in elementary school?
- (14) Which member of your family _____?
- (17) Are you _____?
- (20) _____?
- (23) _____?

Format: Triads – Student C

Before the discussion

- (5) Read the questions below at home. **Do not write** the answers to them.
- (6) Write two more questions about any topic

Discussion Directions

- (12) Ask **both** of your partners your discussion questions.
- (13) After they answer, ask follow-up questions and use rejoinders.
- (14) Take turns. Student A begins with discussion question # 1. Student B asks # 2, then student you ask # 3, and you continue.
- (15) Answer your partners' questions **with details**.

Student C Discussion Questions

- (3) Are you happy now?
- (7) After getting married what would cause you to get divorced?
- (9) Do you enjoy visiting museums?
- (12) What's your opinion on this group's members?
- (15) Do your parents treat you and your siblings equally?
- (18) Do you trust most people?
- (21) _____?
- (24) _____?

Example 3: Agreeing and Disagreeing

When you disagree with someone else's views, you can use the expressions below. Which is the most polite and which the least polite? What could you do to make them more polite?

Do you really think that...?
Are you really sure that ...?
Don't you think that ...?
What about ...?
Hang on a moment! Surely ...!
Aren't you forgetting that ...?
Have you considered...?
What a load of old rubbish...
I can't believe that somebody would even say such a thing

To make expressions such as those in task 2 more polite, you can use 'softeners', i.e. expressions which make your disagreement less direct. There are some examples below. Add them to the expressions in task 2. Which expression cannot be 'softened'?

Sorry, but ...
Maybe, but ...
Perhaps, but ...
I see what you're saying, but ...
I see where you're coming from, but ...
I take your point, but ...
I agree with you up to a point but...
That's easy to say but...

Now write one thing that you feel strongly about and write 3 reasons to support your opinion. Also think of reasons that oppose your idea.

-For e.g., I think all Private Education Academies (학원) should be prohibited from opening after 8pm at night. (3 reasons why)

Write your idea and reasons here:

Appendix H – The sample of Annotated Interview Transcript

Interview Transcript	Annotation
# 17. David's second interview (26/ 04/ 2010) – 49mins and 36secs	
<p>Q. 1. In the last interview, we talked about the teaching strategies that you used in the past. Today, I would like to talk about the teaching strategies that you are using this semester. First, could you please tell me the most successful or the best lesson you have had this semester?</p> <p>: I don't remember, actually, Oh, maybe, I have one, but I don't recall the details, you know, I don't remember the details. I do know that I have been, kind of, taken different approaches with my students, kind of to find which is more appropriate for them, for the particular group, as you know, I'm new to the curriculum, new focus, and I am using the textbook, which I haven't been using for a long time, you know, everything is new this semester. So, I, every week, at least once a week, I have been painting things up, you know, like looking at what I did in the class or following up the classroom activities. I remember one has gone particularly well, I do. I never doubt whether it went well or not, but I don't just remember what we did.</p> <p>Q. 1-1. Then, could you please tell me how you prepared the lesson that went particularly well?</p> <p>: Well, it seems to me that I don't really remember. I will get my notes, am I allowed? That can give me hints or better idea of what happened. Yeah, OK, there are plenty of things talking about good, focusing again on communication skills, clarification questions, confirmation questions, like 'Pardon me?', 'What do you say this in English?', 'What does that mean?', 'How do you feel?', you know, things like that. It's a type of interactive communication skills in class. We did, I remember, I went into the class and I was immediately affected by my potatoes. They didn't respond to me. I talked to them, but it was again, potato disease, I mean, potatoes may have eyes, but no mouth, so the students become potatoes, they were just looking at me, I asked them questions, and I repeated, but they just didn't answer, they just looked at me blank, so, well, if that happened in the past, I just used to say, 'well, if you are not going to communicate with me in class time, that's fine with me, but you are not going to learn anything here because this is a talking class, so you have to decide, right?', you know, then the students won't be here next time, but this particular class, I said, 'No, I'm going to give you more work to do.' And we did an activity, which was able to make the students actively engaged, and it's called 'Baker Street', it's a kind of jigsaw puzzle, it's a jigsaw activity. It worked out really well. I had pieces of information, and the number of pieces of information was almost exactly the same as the number of the students from the class, so I handed them to everyone. Then, I took notes, and I also observed the class. The students couldn't see that they were doing really well. Everyone else could speak well and more specifically to the topic. And I told them what we had to do and gave them a task. And it took a few minutes. I kept telling them to react to what was happening, and I think it's communicative. They had to kind of communicate to complete the task. It went really really well, and I was very happy with it. Regarding to the preparation, well, they would have no time to prepare, and I had already prepared all the materials. It took me only about one hour, I had to laminate everything so that I can use them again and again. I have never had the lesson plans ready, in fact, I had them in my hand, never had a troublesome class, you know. It happened to be that the 'Baker Street' activity was from the previous class, so they were already ready to go, anyway, and when I had my potatoes, I realised that I just wanted to leave the class without explaining things, you know, but I didn't leave the class of course. I am not going to bullshit you, it's not a difficult Korean class, and anyway, that's what has happened with me. I haven't designed the class, I normally give it spontaneously. They were using everything, I had them, I gave them a piece of paper about the classroom English in a TESOL- based English classroom to communicate, obviously, their English level was not great, their confidence was weak, and they were not comfortable with using English in the class, and I thought I had them have a piece of paper about classroom English, and use them to express themselves, and it went really well, and it went slowly, but they again managed them. Afterwards, I collected all the paper, and 90% of the class had sorted</p>	<p>New curriculum, new textbook – vague about what is specifically done</p> <p>Negative impact on his practices from past teaching experience</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>No lesson plans</p> <p>No preparation</p> <p>No particular strategy</p> <p>Proof of the importance of preparation</p>

<p>things out. They gathered or got the information accurately from other people. That was successful, and it was more successful in terms of that they actually started communicating. There was no task or test involved, and they just became more active while doing the activity. A large group of students started asking questions in a communicating, interacting, and natural way without having a test before that.</p>	<p>Students showing greater interest when there is no stress</p>
<p>Q. 1-2. Great, then, could you please tell me what the underpinning theory behind the lesson was? : Oh, I love your question, yep, I don't know who said this, or I don't even know the exact theory, and I don't want to pretend to know that, but it's probably the negotiation of meaningful things? You know, meaningful interaction things, maybe? Obviously, there were input and output? Meaningful relevance based on comprehensive input things, and based on the negotiation of meaning to complete the task. If I classify my class according to what you introduced, maybe I would say CLT and TBI, Task Based Instructions, which focuses on the task including the language in it, and, you know, the focus is on the task using the target language.</p>	<p>Lack of understanding of CLT or language teaching theories – uncertainty Lack of knowledge but some control of specialist language</p>
<p>Q. 1-3. When you designed the lesson that you've just talked about, did you think about what theory would be more effective for your students before you decided the activity? : No, I didn't. I didn't obviously, no. No, I will tell you, whenever I think about using jigsaw activity, it's always I don't go any underpinning theory. It's always, 'what can I do to make it work?', or 'how can I give them more opportunities to communicate?' I guess, it's definitely my desire to have them engaged in meaningful communication with each other, and I try to provide them with communicative ESL, kind of learning environment, and most of activities I am doing in my class are spontaneous, you know, no certain plan, but spontaneous activities. Normally, I think about what I want to have in a class to engage the students or what I do in a class to change from sophomore level to senior level. For senior level, I'm expecting them to be much more independent themselves so that I don't have to lead them there so much, and they have, generally, they're so motivated. They almost take care themselves, but I still use activities that, you know, would be very straightforward, like I'm still giving them instructions, bits and bits, you know. The class is spontaneous, this one class was spontaneous, and I want them to communicate in more free way, you know, that's why, if I have to label or classify my teaching style or my aim, or my goal, it's at least 80% communicative and interactive, you know, Koreans are quite passive learners.</p>	<p>Lack of professional knowledge No planning No structure for his class His perception on Korean students</p>
<p>Q. 1-4. What was your aim in the class? What did you want your students to achieve from the lesson? : I want to, number one, see them speaking in the classes. If they don't speak, I'll be just panic. I want them to speak using something that they are not comfortable with, and number two, gradually, they would become more comfortable with using it. If I can see that, that will be great.</p>	<p>Negative influence from his past teaching experience</p>
<p>Q. 1-5. What factors do you think made the lesson successful? : That lesson? What made it successful? Students. It's the students in the class, you know, they want, they want to do well in English. They want to improve, and they are motivated. That's why I could do that activity with that particular class. If they didn't care, it would affect them during the whole lesson, for two hours, but they were actually engaged, so it went pretty well. And, also, the motivation affected them, and that's probably going to be the biggest one, I think, generally they want to be there, and they want to improve their English. So, and I think that's the difference in the first semester for sophomore class, I don't see that in my sophomore students. When I get to their class, they're still very much looking at me, like a teacher putting them into direction and do everything. I try to be encouraging them when they started, and you know, you're really asking me the same questions in different ways, you know, my main goal for that particular activity is pretty much the same as my normal teaching goals, if I have to say. I want to see how communication happens through the activities. I just want them to do well, you know. Yeah, students' high motivation and teachers' encouragement are important and also, the relationship between me and my students, and between the students themselves. And also, like fun time, generally, they do better when they have fun, you know, fun time in the</p>	<p>Another perception on his students His thoughts on the factors to have successful lessons</p>

<p>class, and if they are tensed during the lesson, they wouldn't understand what's happening, but if they are more comfortable, the questions will be flowing out and they'll laugh. So, yeah, I guess, comfortable environment, that is important as well, so I try to provide them with kind of comfortable environment. Most of the students in the class you're observing have very strong motivation and they are all, not all, but most of them are active learners.</p>	<p>Again, students performing better when there is no stress</p>
<p>Q. 2. While observing, I noticed that you don't often teach grammar. Sometimes, you pointed out their mistakes, but you didn't give them a grammar lecture. Are there any particular reasons?</p> <p>: you know, well, teaching grammar? Most of them have that kind of knowledge and most of them will respond to the correction. They've studied it, especially students in the senior class, they studied grammar a lot, and I don't need to teach it, because I just know it wouldn't be necessary for them, and actually they are almost self-corrected, you know. Sometimes, they do self-correction, and I also think that, for this level, I'm not trying to, they're understandable. Their message are getting crossed, and I think in ESL context, for these students who are going on to teach English or going on to become a translator or interpreter, teaching grammar doesn't seem to be important. In fact, they can communicate, I mean, they can get the idea crossed more than enough. Unless their grammar, unless they are really infuriating them to get the message out, I won't, I mean, I won't worry about teaching it too much.</p>	<p>No accurate analysis on students' needs</p> <p>No need for teaching grammar</p>
<p>Q. 2-1. Do you think grammar teaching is necessary in CLT classroom?</p> <p>: I would say yes, it's probably necessary, but you know, my personal teaching experience is very limited. I've taught only in Korea, and most of the students, or almost everyone, in the class? They've already been taught a lot of grammar. They've come to me with the use of grammar instruction built already. So, I've never been asked to teach grammar. Well, I've pointed out some common mistakes that many Korean students make in sentence structures or word usage, but the details of grammar? No, I've never taught them. Generally, I've pointed out that just as a, kind of, reminder of what grammatical structure looks like. They are either they've forgotten the structure or they are just lazy in their language learning. They've been working with this language for years, and they come to me with this knowledge, so they will recall them quickly when I point them out, you know.</p>	<p>His limited teaching experience</p> <p>His understanding of Korean students</p>
<p>Q. 2-2. Do you think your students' linguistic knowledge is enough to communicate?</p> <p>: you mean communicate? Oh, yeah, absolutely, they are engaged in the classroom activities, and they can communicate.</p>	
<p>Q. 2-3. When your students are given the difficult topic, are they still able to communicate?</p> <p>: I'm thinking of one student in particular, the student has the lowest linguistic confidence, but he is still able to get the message out and give the message for me to get with even more difficult topic, like through the negotiation of meaning.</p>	
<p>Q. 2-4. When the students speak, do you notice their grammatical mistakes, like the use of wrong word order or wrong verb tenses?</p> <p>: Sure, they do, they do make that kind of mistakes, very often. Are you asking me about accuracy? Right, some are great, and some are lousy, but fluency? Most of them have high fluency, I think.</p>	<p>Students' errors evident but no guidance – focus on fluency</p>
<p>Q. 2-5. Could you please tell me what fluency is from your perspective?</p> <p>: Fluency, I would define it as feeling comfortable in the language, having competency, I mean, communicative competency, and being able to get message crossed and to overflow, to turn-take, to get to a discourse in proper talking in progress, I think, without necessarily having the mastery of linguistic knowledge. I don't find it (grammar) necessary. I don't focus on that in any of my classes, oh, well, I do sometimes certain level of it, especially the tenses, basic tenses, not the aspects or proper usages of it. It actually depends on what they're studying, and depends on the focus in the class. Unless they are really lacking and messing up the message crossed, I don't normally teach grammar. Maybe it is important or necessary in appropriate and communicative discourse, but it's</p>	<p>Showing his knowledge of language teaching, but lacking</p>

<p>not my main thing, not the main focus, you know, it's not the most important thing for me to think about. I think about where my students are and where I'm going.</p> <p>Q.3. Could you please tell me the lesson which was the least successful?</p> <p>: Oh, great, I have lots of those. I'm never satisfied with my lessons. I realised there is always something I could've done better, something that I haven't thought about well enough. If I have to think of one example, I have one in my mind, and it was sophomore class. I had two activities. One was something like a guessing activity. It was a regular Romeo and Juliet role play. I had set the background, like, I said to them, 'ok, there are Romeo and Juliet lying down on the floor in the bedroom and the window was open. Okay, what would happen next?' you know, things like that. They were asked to reconstruct the story using the information that they got from me or by asking me, and they were only allowed to ask 'yes' or 'no' questions. And they were expected to use the past tense. You know, the aim of the lesson was to see if they could naturally use the past tense when forming sentences. Senior students, they would get the point, I mean they would do self-correction, you know, first few questions, they can recall from the past how to use the past tenses. I think it went well. The other was a 'detective role-play'. I said to them, 'somebody stole my netbook last night between what time and what time; and I think it was you.' It's a role play, I called it Korean CSI. I made two suspects and told them to make an alibi. They had to find different correct alibi. It didn't go well, the students didn't do well. I don't know why. They probably didn't understand what was exactly happening in the class. They were not involved in the activity. First, I made a large group and probably I should have changed the group into a smaller group. It was dragging time, and some students were text messaging. Only few students were actively involved. I lost them, I lost the audience, and then it turned out very bad. They started speaking in Korean, and I just lost my control. That was the worst class that I had this semester.</p> <p>Q. 3-1. Could you please tell me what the underpinning theory behind the lesson was?</p> <p>: I never even thought about that. I was kind of trying to activate their cognitive thinking process and speaking abilities, maybe? I wanted them to respond and to pick up the points so that they could start talking. You know, it's just like that, it's simple, it's an English conversation class and I am trying to teach them or you know, kind of encourage them to keep talking. Oh, I hate that kind of complicated thing, you know? Well, it's still communicative because they'll be communicating again, a lot of it, there will be a lot of communication. You know, maybe, force them to use the communication skills which I've been focusing on. I think I've already been asked, and I will not repeat.</p> <p>Q. 3-2. What factors do you think made the lesson less successful?</p> <p>: I think it's too much of the same thing, too much of the same type of activity. Definitely, there were in a group and they were supposed to communicate within their group, but they never interacted. I spoke the class up, and I formed the group, so people there probably they either didn't really know the other people or other members or they didn't like them. Maybe, it could've been that, they were not comfortable; maybe they were intimate with using English in front of someone they didn't know. The factors could be dynamic. It could be the students' interest level, or maybe it could be the students' lack of understanding of what was happening in the class. They maybe didn't understand what was really happening. Maybe I didn't communicate with them clearly. Ah, and I got a message after that lesson. One of the students' from that class texted me, "David, was your netbook really stolen? I'm really worried." He didn't really understand what was really happening in the classroom. They really misunderstood what happened. They really thought that my netbook was really stolen. Or, probably there was kind of lack of instruction. There was only verbal instruction. I haven't given them any written instruction. So, probably it could've been that. Maybe it confused them, I mean, confused them to think my netbook was really stolen. It was something that I didn't intend. Of course, I tried to make my students improve or make them engaged in that activity, but, however, when I had that lesson, I had a bad day. I was suffering from a cold and I was tired.</p>	<p>CLT</p> <p>His lack of understanding of Korean culture – Koreans don't want to be accused of anything nor accuse their friends even during activities</p> <p>Lack of professional knowledge and no planning</p> <p>His perception on his students' learning characteristics</p> <p>His students' lack of understanding</p> <p>No explicit teaching instructions</p> <p>His lack of understanding of his students</p>
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<p>Q. 3-3. What about the students' motivation? Were they motivated? : well, as I said, they already did something similar, so they were kind of exhausted on that activity. They were not interacting at all. So, I guess they were not highly motivated.</p> <p>Q. 4. What Korean students' characteristics do you think can hinder and help them to improve English speaking skills?</p> <p>Q. 4-1. First, could you please tell me about their characteristics that might hinder? : I think I've answered completely, you know, Koreans are being so passive. They're seeing their teacher as the giver, passing on their knowledge. I think they are not asked to be active, powerful, and participant. They have no power in the classes. So, they're just there to sit and listen to their teacher. It's not, they are not often expected to participate as the equal partner, and I think most of them are passive, Koreans are passive. They want to know how to solve the problems of English, not communicative English. I think Koreans, not necessarily in my department, they don't teach it as a compulsory course, I think it's the level of assessment, Koreans have, have it to learn, English for TOEIC in particular. In fact, they don't need it, except for they need it to get high score to get a job or to get into a university, but they don't see the value. They know there is no value in it for them. They know what kind of job does need good English, but there is no real purpose to study English. I mean if I were in that situation, I would've been fighting with that system all the way. I wouldn't want to have that system. When I was growing up in Canada, I had to take French in Canada, but I didn't see the value in it. At that time in history, my province, particularly, western Canada was opposing the bilingualism. It didn't affect our daily lives, but it was big imposed upon it, bilingual education. Because I didn't see the value of it, I didn't sign up for French. I didn't study it. In fact, I developed very negative attitude. So, having something imposed on you, like Koreans do with English education, might have a negative impact on you. TOEIC has been used as a filter or a screener for university or a company. If it is creating a real negative attitude toward English, TOEIC has to be left without any thought to any education system. They might have messed it up because the students tell me that when they study TOEIC they don't study English. They're studying the strategies to be passed. And I've met, my 13 years being here, I've met tons of people who have perfect TOEIC score, but cannot communicate with me. And I've met equally great number of people who have terrible TOEIC score, but can communicate fine with me, like my Korean brothers; most of them, they have five or few hundred points on TOEIC that isn't that high. They couldn't even graduate from my department with that, but their fluency is high, accuracy is not fantastic.</p> <p>Q. 4-2. Then, could you please tell me about their characteristics that might help? : I don't know, I've never thought about that. I've always thought about negative. Definitely, there are some positive points as well. Well, extensive memorisation training, you know, rote-memory skills, and it will lead to a large amount of vocabulary. And definitely a great amount of vocabulary helps them learning. Maybe, positive relationship? When Korean people are in good relationship, everything is fine with them. There are no problems. I've noticed that if I can develop a positive or good relationship with my students inside and outside of the classroom, they'll do almost anything, almost anything that I would like to give. And they are performing well if they're comfortable between me and them, and between themselves.</p>	<p>Factors to less successful lesson – students' lack of engagement</p> <p>His perception on Korean students' characteristics</p> <p>Korean students' learning styles</p> <p>Exam-driven system</p> <p>His lack of understanding of Korean culture – Korean students cannot raise their voices against the system, and even they did, it would not make any difference</p> <p>Fault of exam system</p> <p>Memorisation learning system</p> <p>Positive relationship with his students</p>
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