A Study of Culture Teaching in English Classes in Korea and

Rural Elementary Schools in the Republic of Korea

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ABSTRACT

This study explores culture teaching in English classes in urban and rural elementary schools in Korea from the perspectives of both teachers and students. Language and culture theories provide a framework for the data interpretation. As well, qualitative research methodology depicts a picture of much deeper understanding for teachers' and students' perceptions. Interviews were audiotape recorded as a primary tool to gather information for the inquiry for three months (May-July, 2004). Data also included document analysis and participant observations in schools. From the research findings, I conclude that not only can teachers not fully engage in culture teaching in elementary English education, but also students are not exposed to sufficient cultural education. Sociocultural contexts significantly affect teachers' and students' perceptions of English-speaking cultures and their English education. Elementary English textbooks also play an essential role in culture teaching in Korea.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude explore les perceptions des professeurs et des étudiants sur l'enseignement de la culture dans les classes anglaises des écoles primaires urbaines et ruraux en Corée du Sud. La langue et la culture fournissent un cadre théorique pour les interprétations des données. De plus, la méthodologie de la recherche qualitative donne une compréhension plus profonde concernant les perceptions des enseignants et des étudiants. Les entrevues étaient une cassette étaient enregistrée comme outil primaire afin de recueillir l'information pour l'enquête pendant trois mois (Mai-Juillet, 2004). Les données ont également inclus l'analyse de document et les observations de participant aux écoles. À partir des résultats de la recherche, je conclus que les professeurs ne sont pas entièrement enthousiastes ni participant à l'enseignement de la culture dans l'éducation anglaise aux écoles primaires, mais également les étudiants ne sont pas suffisamment exposés à l'éducation culturelle. Les contextes socioculturels affectent considérablement la perception des professeurs et des étudiants autant que culture anglais et l'apprentissage de l'anglais. Les textes anglais élémentaires jouent également un rôle essentiel dans l'enseignement de culture en Corée du Sud.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I provide relevant background knowledge to help better locate and understand the inquiry into how elementary English education is associated with culture teaching in two different contexts, rural and urban areas, in Korea. First, I introduce general challenges and difficulties of teaching another language in foreign countries where the target language is hardly used in the daily life and the whole nation significantly emphasizes the necessity of its linguistic competency in the era of globalization. Then, I explore social trends and sociocultural influences on elementary English education in Korea. Lastly, I present a rationale for the inquiry.

Challenges and Difficulties with Teaching Communicative Competence

After a long domination of the grammar-translation approach, the communicative approach has recently had a powerful influence on language teaching in many foreign countries and in particular Korea (McGarry, 1995; Higgs & Clifford, 1982; Freeman & Freeman, 2001). However, it still faces a number of limitations and challenges to the extent that it is difficult to create a classroom situation close to the target language and culture (Saville-Troike, 2003). For example, in their research with respect to sociocultural background and language, Burnaby and Sun (1989) depicted the difficulty of implementing the communicative approach in China, and its benefits to only certain students who plan to study abroad or live in foreign countries, instead of all Chinese students. The failure of the communicative approach in China was mainly rooted from the

inappropriate knowledge of the target culture and the strict national examination that focused only on the "content and form" (p. 228).

There are more scholars to deal with the predicament of the communicative approach to English classes. Jung and Norton (2002) explored English classes in elementary schools by interviewing teachers and administrators. According to them, elementary English education in Korea was not ready for fully implementing the communicative approach. Jarvis and Atsilarat (2004) also presented the communicative language teaching practice in Thailand. They revealed some difficulties through the questionnaire distributed to teachers and students. In addition, Kim (2004) pointed out the barriers against the communicative approach within the Korean contexts. Zhenhui (1999) mentioned the need for considering the unique social and cultural contexts in China so as to make the communicative approach more effective. Likewise, a number of researchers continuously study the communicative language teaching and find out the difficult circumstances to implement it in EFL situations.

These findings seem to be neither extraordinary nor unpredictable among Asian countries where the educational circumstance was similar to Chinese under the influence of Confucianism. At that time, it was a common phenomenon that students listened to the lecture in silence and rarely asked questions to teachers during the class while a teacher instructed in a unilateral way. The students were expected to respect their teachers without any challenge to teachers' authority. In a classroom, they had to be calm, which is quite different from the air of classrooms in western countries that appeared more lively and active. As a result, it is hard to encourage the communicative approach in classrooms,

particularly in language classrooms. In fact, even language teachers who advocated the adoption of a communicative approach could not but admit a failure of a communicative approach in the Korean educational system at the very beginning. However, curriculum developers and teachers have tried to solve its emerging problems and adapt the communicative approach to Korean contexts step-by-step.

Still, secondary English education in Korea tends to emphasize only traditional skills approach in literacy that is the most crucial criterion to achieve a high mark in the national exam called "수학능력평가 [College Scholastic Ability Test]". Since the English test consists of two sections, listening and reading tests, most English teachers push their students to memorize as much vocabulary and grammar as possible. As a result, their teaching method still follows traditional ways of teaching, that is, reading the text in textbooks and then interpreting it. However, many middle and high school boards assign students extracurricular English activities in order to develop their oral communicative competence. Some innovative teachers or schools even motivate their students to improve their communicative competence by organizing the Speaking Competition in English, which starts with interclass competition, and continues local competition and national competition at large. Nevertheless, as long as the educational policy remains unchanged, it is hard and unrealistic to expect far-reaching development of the communicative approach in English classes at the level of secondary education in Korea.

Since 1997, English has been taught from the third grade in elementary schools to catch up with the contemporary trend of English education across the country. The seventh curriculum held from 1997 to 2004 for elementary English education does not

urge children to study English with heavy workload and stress because it aims at making children aware that English language is favorable and enjoyable to learn. As a result, elementary English classes primarily consisted of games at first. Students were seemingly fond of English learning as the developers of the seventh curriculum expected. However they tended to recognize an English class as a playing time without any learning. They also actively engaged in classroom activities, but did not know anything about English as a language and culture. Recently, with revised teaching materials, teachers have reduced the time assigned to games and employ different teaching methods such as role-plays and group activities.

In spite of these attempts to activate communicative English classes, teachers still struggle with authenticity in their elementary English classes. Most of them do not have firsthand experiences of other cultures, nor do they have varied resources in knowing and establishing authenticity in their classrooms. The content of textbooks used in elementary schools did not seem to consist of much information about the target language cultures. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) support teaching materials that present linguistic features or various activities such as communication skills and games. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has replaced the former Ministry of Education since January 29, 2001. Hence, elementary English education in Korea needs to be scrutinized for its future effectiveness and success.

Predicament of Activating Authenticity in Language Teaching Context of Elementary English Education

The seventh curriculum

In Korea, English has been taught as a major subject of foreign languages in secondary schools (from Grade 7 to 12) since 1945 (Jung & Norton, 2002). In Korea, secondary schools are divided into two different levels of schooling; Grades 7 to 9 for middle school, and Grades 10 to 12 for high school. For quite a long time, the Korean curriculum and policy on English education have focused on what students should know about English as a system rather than how to communicate with others in their authentic use of English. As a result, many Korean learners of English could not express themselves when they met foreigners in spite of their high level of written English ability after graduation from universities in areas such as grammar and vocabulary.

Such an educational failure of English education has been issued across the nation and as a result facilitated several innovations in English education. The seventh government attempted to revise the existing educational policy and system. At the same time, early education of English was a controversial issue among parents, educational specialists, and program developers. According to advocates for early education of English, if children start to learn English at an early age, they achieve English ability with less effort, time, and money, which I agree with. To the contrary, opponents argue that if children learn both Korean and English simultaneously, they may achieve neither of these two languages well and then lose their national identity. Under enormous pressure from the whole Korean society, the Ministry of Education started to bring about changes to the English curriculum. It first tried to adopt the communicative approach in secondary education. Then, it created a

new educational curriculum, that is, English education from Grade 3 to 6 in primary schools after 1997. New English education had been gradually implemented in primary schools during a period of four years as follows:

March 1, 1997: Grade 3-listening and speaking (100 words; 7 words in a sentence).

March 1, 1998: Grades 3 and 4-listening, speaking, and reading (add 100 words;

7 words in a sentence).

March 1, 1999: Grades 3, 4 and 5-listening, speaking, and reading (add 150 words;

9 words in a sentence).

March 1, 2000: Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6- listening, speaking, reading, and writing (add 150 words;

9 words in a sentence). (Jung & Norton, 2002, p. 247)

The Ministry of Education aims at implementing new elementary English education gradually. This shift of policy in English education is designed to allow for learners and teachers to adjust to communicative English learning.

In 1998, The MEHRD promulgated the Seventh curriculum. The Seventh curriculum continues to include English education in Korean elementary schools. The MEHRD (1999) presented the revised aims for elementary English education:

초등학교 영어 교육의 성격은, 영어에 관심을 가지게 할 뿐만 아니라 영어를 좋아하게 되고 영어 교육을 통해서 아름다운 정서를 함양할 수 있도록 하는 것이 바람직할 것이다. ... 대부분의 수업 시간을 게임, 노래, 챈트, 역할놀이 등과 같은 놀이나 유희를 통해 영어의 감각도 익히면서 정서도 함양할 수 있도록 해야 할 것이다. (p. 132)

It is desirable that the characteristic of the elementary English education is located in making students interested in and favorable on English, and further in equipping students to possess the beautiful sentiment through English education. ... During most of the class hour, teachers have to design the class with such plays and entertainment as games, songs, chants, and role-plays for the purpose of making students acquire the sense of English as well as possess the sentiment.

Like the secondary curriculum, the primary purpose of elementary English education is to

motivate children to form a positive impression of English learning during their present and

future schooling.

The seventh curriculum presents other goals for learners and teachers to achieve. To

develop students' communicative competence, teachers have to incorporate culture teaching

in elementary English education. The seventh curriculum is intended to educate children to

become a person that can function appropriately in the era of globalization. The MEHRD

(1998) presents aims and the aspired characteristics of elementary English education.

또, 외국 문화를 바르게 이해하고 수용하는 태도를 길러 주고, 나아가 국제적 안목과 세계인으로서의 협동심과 소양을 기르도록 한다. ... 라. 외국 문화를 이해함으로써 우리 문화를 새롭게 인식하고, 올바른 가치관을 기른다. (p. 286)

And, students ought to understand foreign cultures appropriately and further promote cooperation and attainment as an international insight. ... Fourth[1], students construct a moral value system and obtain a new insight about Korean culture by understanding foreign cultures.

The MEHRD (1999) document further explains the characteristics of elementary English

education.

영어 교과는 영어 의사 소통 능력을 길러 주는 것도 중요한 목표지만, 영어 교과를 통해서 인성 교육에도 힘쓰고, 더 나아가서 세계 문화를 바르게 이해하고 수용하는 태도를 길러 국제적 안목을 가진 세계인을 기르는 것이 중요하다. 초등 학교 영어 교육을 반대하는 학자들의 주된 주장 중의 하나는, 외국 문화의 유입으로 인한 주체성 상실의 가능성을 들고 있다. 이러한 우려를 해결하기 위해서는, 외국

It is an important goal to develop students' communicative competence in English education. However, it is also important to raise a world man with an international insight by adopting attitudes that understand world culture appropriately and accept it. Proponents for English education in elementary schools are worried about a possibility of losing cultural autonomy from an influx of foreign cultures as one of the main reasons. To solve such a concern, English teachers should always take a critical stance when they introduce foreign cultures and then should educate students to adopt attitudes that accept it selectively. And to understand foreign cultures not only aims at

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[1] Just as the English alphabet replaces numerical order, the Korean alphabet is sometimes used for sequential order.

문화를 소개할 때 항상 비판적 자세를 견지하여 이를 선별적으로 수용하는 태도를 길러 주어야 한다. 또, 외국 문화를 이해하는 것은, 이를 통해서 지식과 정보를 입수한다는 목표도 있지만 외국 문화를 이해하지 않고서는 외국인과의 의사 소통이 불가능하다는 것을 알려 주고, 수업 중에 외국 문화를 소개하는 것을 의사 소통 활동과 같은 차원에서 중시해야 할 것이다. (pp. 136-137)

obtaining its knowledge and information, but also informing children that it is impossible to communicate with foreigners unless understanding foreign cultures. Teachers ought to place the same importance on communicative activities as the introduction of foreign cultures during the class.

Based on these aspirations for and characteristics of elementary English education, English has been considered as a regular subject even in primary schools in Korea and taught one to two hours a week. At the onset of implementing elementary English education, teachers resisted teaching English because they regarded themselves as unready for teaching "the" English language and culture. I recognize that there are many varieties of English. In fact, when teachers attended National University of Education, one located in each province and three metropolitan cities such as Seoul, Incheon, and Pusan respectively, they did not study English as a regular subject because they usually learned what primary schools were supposed to teach. Thus, the Ministry of Education in Korea provided current elementary teachers with some teacher education during summer and winter vacations. In the Korean educational system, each summer and winter vacation lasts at least six weeks. The Ministry of Education usually opens some additional teacher education in order to give teachers new educational knowledge and skills. Although a great number of elementary teachers were not satisfied with a short period of teacher education, the government continued to implement a new English curriculum in elementary schools in Korea.

From a macro level, government perspective, English education in elementary schools in Korea now seems to be "settled". The National Universities of Education teach future elementary teachers English as a regular subject in their program. Among elementary teachers, there are some teachers who major in English education during the university years. In addition, in large elementary schools, a school board assigns a number of English specialist teachers to only English education, not dealing with all other subjects that homeroom teachers normally should do. The number of English specialist teachers depends on the size of school. 초•중등교육법시행령 [The Enforcement Ordinance of The Elementary and Secondary Education Law] (2003) document (2003) presents:

초등학교에는 각 학급담당교사외에 체육 · 음악 · 미술 · 영어 기타 교과의 전담을 위하여 교과전담교사를 둘 수 있으며, 그 산정기준은 학교별로 3학년이상 3학급마다 0.75 인으로 하되, 학교별 배치기준은 관할청이 정한다.	Elementary schools can have subject specialist teachers for Physical Education, Music, Art, and English in addition to classroom teachers. Subject specialist teachers are assigned at the rate of 0.75 every three classes of more than third grades, and the relevant department of provincial office of Education determines the criteria of their arrangement for the individual elementary schools.

The government invited native foreign teachers from English-speaking countries such as the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and Ireland to help improve teachers' English ability in both teaching and the language in itself (MEHRD, 2002). These systematic professional development supports seem to reduce the heavy duty of teachers to teach English.

There are still unresolved challenges and difficulties to implement English education in authentic and meaningful ways. First, because of their small size, elementary schools in remote areas cannot afford to hire an English specialist teacher. In other words, teachers in elementary schools in rural areas have few possibilities to receive other practical assistance

in their English teaching. They must teach English by themselves although they feel that they are not ready to teach English. The quality of elementary English education in rural areas is significantly different from one in urban areas. In fact, the MEHRD allows teachers to employ exchanging classes and team-teaching methods, but these methods cannot help playing a secondary role for teachers with respect to their confidence and authority as a teacher if they do not escape from an image of teachers with deficient ability to teach English. Secondly, English as a subject in elementary schools does not belong to four primary subjects that include both midterm and final exams such as Korean language, math, science, and social science. It is because English education in elementary schools is considered as an introductory and rudimentary course that is expected to be fully developed during the period of secondary education. Teachers seem to set aside an English subject when they are busy in doing other school activities on the school curriculum given the limited time and actual resources. This indicates that teachers sometimes cannot but skip the English class because of some special school events and there are no supplementary English classes. On the contrary, they try to catch up with all the content in other four primary subjects.

Social trends and their impact on English classes in urban and rural elementary schools

When children learn English in Korea, they are surrounded by different sociocultural backgrounds. For example, their parents' financial support plays an important role in the type and quality of English education they will receive. Where they live is also an important factor in their English learning. Since I conducted my research in Korea, I discuss how

social trends and sociocultural factors in urban and rural areas impact on students' English

education.

First, the class size would be beyond 35 students in both rural areas and urban areas.

Since the seventh curriculum revision, the MEHRD planned to reduce the number of

students below 35 in one classroom, based on their aims to implement a communicative

approach. The MEHRD (2002) states:

> As a result, the number of pupils per class dropped from 65 in 1965 to 34.8 in 1998. Overcrowded
>
> schools have been divided into smaller ones and the double shift system of classes has disappeared. (p.
>
> 42)

In the 1960s-70s, there was a stream of baby boom in the aftermath of the Korean national

war in 1950-52 and as a result students were overcrowded in schools and classes across the

country. Recently, the MEHRD tried to adopt a communicative approach to education, but it

revealed that a large class was one of the main obstacles to activate communicative teaching.

When it tried to know what number of students per class is effective in communicative

teaching, it found out that the fewer the students there are, the more effective

communicative teaching is. However, to open more classes needs more education budget.

Within budget, the MEHRD could not help compromising on the number of 35. As a result,

the number of children per class in most elementary schools is below 35.

However, it is expected to be far less than 35 in each class in rural areas due to a

social movement. The MEHRD (2002) presents the following information:

> The sudden increase of the school population and the drift of the rural population into cities,
>
> attendant to the rapid process of industrialization in the 1970s and 1980s, left rural schools
>
> underpopulated and urban schools overcrowded. The overcrowded classrooms in urban areas were

the major obstacle in the development of education. Accordingly, the government created an

education tax in 1982 to finance the expansion and modernization of physical facilities and to

improve the teachers' socio-economic status. (p. 42)

Many Korean parents have tended to move to the city for better education for their children

and better life themselves since 1970. The notable movement from the rural society to the

metropolitan area almost has ceased. Still, a temporal movement from a town to a middle-

sized city often occurs because of educational purposes. This social tendency facilitates the

construction of new schools in a metropolitan area whereas schools in rural society struggle

with their local school administrators who have minimal resources. As a result, the ratio of

students in one classroom seems to be higher in urban areas than in rural ones.

Secondly, since children have different sociocultural and economic backgrounds,

their English learning brings varied outcomes. If children live in urban areas where foreign

travelers and residents are often seen, they are exposed to more chances to be interested and

motivated to learn English. Since they can frequently hear English conversations around

them, they felt less shy and more familiar with foreigners and their cultures. Also, they are

encouraged to learn English because many of their friends usually attend private institutes or

receive private tutoring. On the contrary, children in rural areas do not seem to see others

from different countries in and near their neighborhood. They are naturally deprived of

acquiring English because they do not have many opportunities to meet others and their

cultures around them. Most of their friends do not show much concern to learn English as

well. Thus, circumstances and contexts greatly affect their English learning.

Thirdly, most people in Korea have exerted tremendous effort and time in learning

English as well as produced extremely strong reactions to the national policy for English

education. Most parents enthusiastically push their children to learn English in either at least

private institutions or language programs abroad at their own expense.   Generally, Korean

parents, particularly mothers, express excessively high concerns about their children's

education. For their children, to study takes priority over all other things such as to develop

their own talent or to socialize. Many parents make life sacrifices for the sake of their

children's education. For example, they work hard and support their children by investing

much money for sustaining their children's private tutoring. The expanse of tutoring is

remarkable varied from 10$ per hour to more than 100$ per hour depending on the

qualification of tutors. It is normally said that each family in Korea spends approximately

half of the cost of living on average in educating their children.

Since Korea experienced an economic crisis in 1997, the need for abilities in English

has been accelerated across the country. The society wants a new generation to overcome

language barriers and lead the 21st century with confidence and the power of language. The

seventh educational reform has been aimed at *knowledge-based society* in which Koreans

perceive that children receive more practical rather than superficial knowledge and

information. To have excellent English abilities becomes the most fundamental and powerful

tool for getting a good job. The entire society desires and aims to provide people with more

opportunities to acquire advanced English abilities. As a result, many Korean parents

recognized this social trend in education and they are enthusiastic about pushing or even

worse forcing their children to learn English in both schools and private institutes.

Still, there are different levels of enthusiasm about English education between rural

and urban areas. Most parents in urban areas express high interest in their children's English

education whereas few parents in rural areas do so. The difference is more severely affected by environmental contexts rather than parenting types. Depending on parents' financial support, the quality of children's English education seems to be varied. Since 1997, children have received formal English education starting at the third grade. At first, English education in elementary schools was assigned two class hours every week from the third to sixth grade. In the seventh educational reform, the number of English class hours for the third and fourth graders has been reduced into one hour per week that is contrary to the social trend that puts a great emphasis on English education. Ideally, the seventh curriculum purports to release children's load for studying English at an early age. For instance, students do not need to memorize a lot of grammar and vocabulary and they are not supposed to do a heavy amount of assignments. More important, they have no mid-term and final exams. In reality, it turns out to boosts private English education for parents who are not satisfied with current English education in schools. As a result, children who come from a wealthy family learn English while attending private English institutes in which expatriate teachers instruct in Korea or taking language courses abroad by themselves during summer and winter vacations. However, children who come from a poor family just receive only English education in their local school context. Many of them lose their interest in English learning and think that English learning is difficult because teachers do not cover the content in the English curriculum without follow-up studying at home. Therefore, elementary English education in Korea is influenced by social trends and sociocultural and economic factors that may and may not offer Korean students opportunities to learn English.

Research Questions for the Inquiry

1. Teachers' perceptions of English-speaking cultures and others

    a. Do teachers' backgrounds influence their perceptions of teaching English?

    b. What do they think of English-speaking cultures?

    c. How do they deal with culture teaching in their English classes?

    d. How does teacher education train teachers and does it provide any information

        related to culture teaching?

2. Students' attitudes and values towards other cultures

    a. What does elementary English education consist of?

    b. What are children's perceptions towards English-speaking cultures and English

        learning through their life and formal education?

3. Sociocultural influence on elementary English education

    a. What learning environments are children surrounded by when they learn English?

    b. What is the most significant factor to influence children's English education?

4. Content of English textbooks

    a. How are English textbooks published?

    b. What kinds of cultural content do current elementary English textbooks provide?

    c. How do teachers manage ideological concerns when they use English textbooks?

5. Intercultural competence

    Is it possible to employ intercultural education in current English classes in

elementary schools in Korea, which is to help students understand different cultures and

build up unbiased attitudes and appropriate knowledge towards a particular culture in the era

of globalization?

Rationale for Qualitative Research

The Ministry of Education in Korea has recently emphasized an understanding of

others and other cultures in English education. As shown in the Seventh curriculum, the

purpose of the elementary English education in Korea aims at "초등 학생들에게 외국

문화의 올바른 이해를 통해서 세계적 안목을 가진 자기 문화, 자기 가치관을

가지도록 해야 한다" [Make elementary students foster their own culture and value with a

worldwide insight by means of a proper understanding of foreign cultures] (MEHRD, 1999).

This purpose made me become curious about current practices of culture teaching in English

education in elementary schools in Korea.

First of all, I am looking at teachers' perceptions of culture teaching. Ryan (1998)

examined language teachers' perceptions about cultural knowledge towards foreign

language teaching. As a result of the study, Ryan found that the teacher's role was as a

facilitator and a transmitter of cultural information and claimed the intercultural competence

as a necessary qualification for foreign language teachers. Duff and Uchida (1997) also

examine how EFL teachers in Japan regard culture teaching and how they employ culture

teaching in their English classes. They present struggles and difficulties of EFL teachers

when they deal with culture teaching. Since language has an inseparable relationship with

culture, language teachers should think of culture teaching in their language classes. Thus, it

is important to know teachers' perceptions of culture teaching in current English classes in elementary schools in Korea where elementary English education has just been implemented. In other words, teachers' attitudes and views towards English-speaking cultures and others would make a significant difference in cultural teaching in English classes.

Elementary English education in Korea has depended heavily upon teacher education because a number of elementary school teachers are not qualified to teach English. Most existent teachers in elementary schools did not receive additional English education in their university years. Their knowledge about English education was all what they learned in their middle and high school years, which was dated. Nonetheless, the government continued to implement elementary English education in 1997. It provided current teachers with teacher education during summer and winter vacations. Now, national universities of education created an English major and its graduates are assigned to elementary schools. However, teacher education in Korea still does not seem to satisfy teachers. I examine how teacher education provides culture teaching and teachers' perceptions of culture teaching as well.

In addition to an examination of teachers' perceptions of culture teaching, I also examine language learners' attitudes and values towards English-speaking cultures and others. Through conversations with children, I aim to discover what language learners achieve through their teachers' language instruction and how they have been influenced by current English education. This information may be helpful in presenting the factors that actually affect outcomes of children's English learning in Korea.

Secondly, local culture, defined by Flowerdew and Miller (1995), may have greater influence on English education. Flowerdew and Miller (1995) explored four different dimensions of culture. For my research purpose, I focus on how *local culture* affects the practice of teaching and learning. Here, I define local culture as learning environments to influence English education in primary schools in Korea including a direct contact with foreign cultures. In Korea, there is a big gap between urban and rural schools with respect to English education in many ways. The students in city elementary schools tend to have more opportunities to experience foreign cultures. For instance, in large elementary schools, English specialist teachers are responsible for English while in most rural elementary schools homeroom teachers are. Since English specialist teachers do not need to teach other subjects except for English, they can concentrate on developing teaching materials and studying English. Nonetheless, the curriculum in urban schools is the same as that in rural ones. Thus, I argue that English education, in particular concerning cultural competence, needs to be different depending on the learning context.

In addition, Rampton's concept of *language affiliation* (1990) provides another framework for my research. Rampton differentiated affiliation referring to "a connection between people and groups that are considered to be separate or different" (p. 99) from inheritance which is "the continuity between people and groups who are felt to be closely linked (p. 99). I wonder about the relationship between language learners' affiliation to the target culture and their language learning. I think that since the Korean society emphasizes the era of globalization, a notion of affiliation is an important factor in culture teaching in English classes.

Apple (1991)'s work on textbook analysis is relevant to my study. His ideological and critical concerns on textbook publication processes are closely related to my concerns that teachers in Korea usually transmit the content of English textbooks. Most teachers do not have enough time to reflect on and have a critical stance on texts due to their heavy administrative work. Nevertheless, since they use English textbooks as a primary resource of their English teaching, studying English textbooks draws critical attention to researchers like me. I aim to look at how teachers think of English textbooks and provide English instruction for the children they teach.

Finally, I am concerned about whether there are any hierarchical or procedural steps and/or constraints when someone tries to implement culture teaching in language classrooms. Many language teachers are likely to propose the advanced level of language learners as an appropriate starting point for teaching culture (Byram M., 1989, 1994; Kramsch, 1993). However, not much research has likely been done about culture teaching at the beginning level of language learning. In theory or practice, it is commonly accepted that language and culture are interrelated and inseparable (Duff & Uchida, 1997). In this regard, some language teachers consider the feasibility of culture teaching even at the beginning level of language learners, assuming that culture teaching likely happens at any level of learning in language classes.

In support of this perspective, Bennett, Bennett and Allen (2003) proposed the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). They adopted a procedural notion to culture teaching from the practice of language teaching. In practice, many ESL teachers have suggested a number of effective teaching methods and various materials

according to the level of learners (i.e., Freeman & Freeman, 2001). The DMIS consists of two dimensions: "Ethnocentric Stage" and "Ethnorelative Stage". These stages have three subcategories respectively, which are chronologically progressed into "Denial", "Defense", and "Minimization" for the former stage whereas for the latter stage there are "Acceptance", "Adaptation", and "Integration". (pp. 248-252) They divided these six sub-stages of culture teaching into three groups of two in accordance with the level of language proficiency such as novice, intermediate, and advanced level. In public English classes in Korea, I connect these three levels of language proficiency with grade levels equally setting aside individual difference among students within the same grade. According to their model, the beginning level learners, elementary school children who I am interested in may be situated in the Denial and Defense stages, followed by intermediate level for Minimization and Acceptance, and by the advanced for Adaptation and Integration.

From this model, I wonder whether intercultural education is available in English classes in elementary schools in Korea and whether Bennett et al.'s DMIS can be utilized in Korean contexts. As mentioned previously, English teachers should consider an implementation of this DMIS model according to the Korean context where English learning is regarded as a foreign language.

Role of Researcher

My research topic reflects who I am as *insider/outsider* to the Korean context. I was born and raised in a rural community. However, I continued to further my education and I had to move to several larger cities. This situation resulted in my feeling separated from my original community at that time. Now, my perceptions of sensitivity towards my cultural

roots have provided me a greater awareness of English education in rural areas. In particular, the works of Villenas (1996) and Enos (2001) have raised attention to my identity in a sense that as a novice researcher, I need to give priority to my reflections on my own background. As a result, I have decided to investigate the difference of cultural teaching between the urban and rural societies, where I experienced both school systems in spite of different levels.

Before entering the research settings, I need to reflect on myself as an insider of my community to the extent that there are more or less social changes in my community during the last decade. This allows me to be familiar with the context where the research was conducted. As a prior community member, I assume that there would not be much struggle between the community and myself. Rather, by establishing rapport with community members, I present a picture of a school situation and community.

As an outsider, I came back to my community located in a rural area with a dual role of both a researcher and an educated graduate student. This positioning of myself showed two different streams of understanding: one for a community that I belonged to, and the other for elementary English education.

The first insight into my community shows studying abroad evokes respect from community members. Most of the community members are seniors who live alone because all their children have grown up and settled for a better life in a much bigger city. They believe that education is the only breakthrough to escape poverty and a hard work that are common in rural areas. Even though they could not but live in a rural community, they did not want their children to do their work. The income from the harvest was usually going into

education for their children. The lives of people in rural communities abound with physically arduous work, but they accepted such a painful life with a hope that support for children's education would be useful. Thus, the career of receiving education abroad permitted me to have a certain privilege in my community. This perception was affirmed for me when I walked into Gana elementary school. For example, when I walk into a corridor, some students rushed to see me. They asked me if I had been to Canada. When I said "Yes", they stared at me with curiosity and admiration. They respected me and were enthusiastic about participating in my research. Even though I was not their teacher, I was given a warm welcome from them. Their friendly attitudes made me feel comfortable about conducting my research

Exposure to Elementary English education is another understanding that pushes me to reflect. I did not receive any English education, in either private or public, during my elementary school years. As well, I have been away from elementary schools for more than ten years. The social and educational changes might prevent me from being fully involved in primary education. Merriam (1990) notes: "As an outsider an observer will notice things that have become routine to the participants themselves, things which may lead to understanding the context" (p. 88).

In addition, as a current student and future educator, I understand better both elementary teachers and students who are participants in my research project. For teachers, I can provide them with my cultural experiences and current knowledge about English education in Canada. With students, I can share my learning experiences and know-how with them since I have been highly interested in English learning and am still studying how

to master English. During the research period, I tried to communicate with my participants in an equal position, rather than by staying distant from them. Furthermore, the period of stepping inside the research site makes me behave carefully (Merriam, 1990).

In conclusion, I am very excited about what I have been doing as I am situated in my hometown as a researcher. As an insider, I absorb myself in finding out about unequal learning conditions in rural areas and hope to benefit rural communities from the research by paying attention to the Ministry of Education or curriculum designers. My researcher role as an outsider is important in forming a favorable atmosphere among participants as well as giving me easy access to a research site and offering critical insights into elementary English education. Therefore, I commit myself to doing research as an individual who is strongly involved in Korean culture, and as a novice researcher with outsider stance, who currently studies out of Korea.

CHAPTER 2: EXPLORING CULTURE THEORIES & PRACTICES

This chapter provides a theoretical exploration of culture teaching in order to know current culture teaching in English classes in Korea situated in the EFL contexts and to find out learning environments' influence on language learning. For this inquiry, I examine the following concepts: First, I present the background knowledge on English teaching and learning in Asian contexts and then I discuss the definitions of culture from several fields such as language teaching and anthropology. Second, I explore empirical research on the teaching approaches and methods of teaching culture in language classrooms. Third, I reveal the process of textbook publication and find out problems and dangers hidden in the textbooks. Fourth, I investigate the meaning and necessity of the concept of intercultural competence in the teaching of culture. Last, as a result of the different outcomes of language learning depending on contexts and learning environments, I look at the sociocultural influence of a learning environment on culture teaching as well as its affiliation of language teaching with native culture.

English Teaching and Learning in Asian contexts

As the world is getting globalized, a great number of people are anxious to learn English. Many various teaching and learning methods are developed and decline every minute. Among them, the communicative approach has been issued for a long time. Unlike the grammar-focused approach, it seemed to lead language learners to communicate with each other more easily. However, when it was adopted in EFL contexts, in particular Asian countries language teachers and researchers found out the difficulties of its implementation.

Introducing the historical development of English education in Korea, Jung and Norton (2002) examined how existing teachers and administrators were dealing with the 7th curriculum that focused on the communicative approach. They would like to know whether the 7th curriculum was successfully implemented. Through the interviews, they found that the communicative approach to elementary English classes seemed to be rather premature. In other words, there were many other systematic problems to reconsider for the successful settlement of new elementary English classes. However, they failed to suggest other complementary methods.

In contrast, Jarvis and Atsilarat (2004) tried to look for additional methods presenting the practice of the communicative language teaching from both teachers and students' perspectives. They discovered that the success of the communicative approach depended on the authenticity, which made learners experience the target language and culture at the same time under the EFL contexts. For the successful communicative approach, they mentioned the importance of the context. In the similar way, Zhenhui (1999) insisted that language teachers could not ignore the EFL contexts when they implement the communicative approach. Because English education in China was severely grammar-centered, language teachers needed to adapt the communicative approach to the traditional approach step by step considering the particular Chinese context.

Kim (2004) also explored the difficult implementation of the communicative approach to English classes in Korea. He examined the Korean cultures such as collectivism, which was regarded as obstacles to the communicative language teaching. Through his critical studies on Korean cultures, he recommended several alternative teaching methods

such as group work. Like Jarvis and Atsilarat (2004) and Zhenhui (1999), he thought that the best way to implement the communicative approach was to contextualize English classes considering the particular cultural characteristics.

So far, I explained why the communicative approach was not effective in EFL countries. In most cases, it was said that social and cultural factors played an important role in English classes. As a result, here, I will show culture teaching in language classes from the theoretical and practical perspective.

Defining Culture in Language Teaching

Throughout the history of humankind people have been interested in culture and explored the meaning of culture. However, it has not been long since culture became an issue in the field of language teaching and learning, although other disciplines such as anthropology and sociology have studied culture for more than a century (Hall, 1980). As culture became significantly recognized in academe, a number of scholars worked hard to define and categorize culture from various perspectives and disciplines. The discipline of anthropology seems to have done pioneering work in defining culture. For example, Tylor (1871)'s definition, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (p. 1)" has been well known among anthropologists (Geertz, 1973; Hall, 1973). In the similar way, Hall (1973) refers to culture as "the way of life of a people, … the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things" (p. 20). This definition in a broad sense has been taken to mean that culture is everything deeply associated with the lives of either an individual or a group of people. However, Hall (1980) introduces Thompson's articulation

of *cultures* versus *Culture* and "ways of life" versus "a way of life" examining a history of

cultural studies (p. 20). Hence, the definition of culture is ostensibly connected to a

concept of "ways of life", a plural rather than a singular, "a way of life".

From a slightly different perspective, Geertz (1973) insists "… culture is not a power,

something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally

attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly-that is, thickly-

described" (p. 14) delving into a notion of *thick description*. He also disputes that culture is

pertinent to a complicated network and mentions:

> The concept of culture I espouse, and whose utility the essays below attempt to
>
> demonstrate, is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal
>
> suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the
>
> analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in
>
> search of meaning. (p. 5)

Geertz explains that culture is a context-embedded phenomenon with interwoven relations.

In this regard, Hall (1980) corroborates lived cultures and states, "The 'lived accounts'

which social actors gave of their experience themselves had to be situated. They had their

own determinate conditions" (p. 24). He also presents the association of concepts such as

ideology and hegemony with a definition of culture. According to him, the work of defining

culture is ceaselessly and gradually elaborated and sophisticated in the field of anthropology

for a long period of time.

Such a piecemeal work of the definition of culture elaborated and solidified in the

discipline of anthropology has greatly influenced cultural studies in the field of language

teaching and learning. Kramsch (1995) presents two disciplinary viewpoints in defining

culture. In the discipline of humanities, she defines culture as "the way a social group represents itself and others through its material productions, be they works of art, literature, social institutions, or artifacts of everyday life, and the mechanisms for their reproduction and preservation through history" (p. 84). From the discipline of social sciences, she agrees with some educators such as Nostrand (1989) who refers to subjective culture as the product of a mental process such as beliefs and ways of thinking. However, her latter definition of culture seems to be narrower than ones discussed in the field of social sciences.

Kramsch (1998) adds the notion of instability into definitions of culture referring to cultures as "heterogeneous and constantly changing" (p. 10). Ryan's (1996) study findings support this idea. During a two-year case study, Ryan investigates the thoughts and beliefs of EFL teachers towards culture in language teaching. The participants in the study defined culture in the light of their own experiences (Geertz, 1983), that is, Geertz (1973) called "emic analysis" (p. 14). According to their opinions, culture is largely divided into three categories; (1) "Education, both in an academic sense as well as acquired manners"; (2) "knowledge of the arts, literature, and music" and "meaning well-educated or the equivalent of being a cultured person"; and (3) "traditions of a group of people" (p. 575). These categories represent culture in a dynamic state, not an innate and static state because all the products of human civilization such as education are made and changed depending on the members of each society. Language teachers need to keep in mind the fact that culture is not fixed but a fluid notion.

Thorough examination of the relationships between language and culture can also refine the work of defining culture in order to understand culture better. Kramsch (1995)

proposes the teaching of *language as culture*, not of *language and culture* or *culture in language*. The first relation, *language as culture*, represents the equivalent position between language and culture. She explains, "One of the major ways in which culture manifests itself is through language" (p. 85). The second view, *language and culture*, reveals, "culture as composed of attitudes and ideas existing somewhere out there independent of language" (p. 85). The last concept mentioned by Kramsch refers to how language teachers, in practice, treat culture. By defining culture teaching as "teaching not only how things are and have been, but how they could have been or how else they could be" (p. 85), she points out the role of language in a sense that learning a language facilitates changes of views towards a particular culture. The third concept seems to emphasize language rather than culture, but it is noteworthy that language can be meaningful when associating with culture in language instruction, and vice versa. Similarly, Allen (1985) maintains that culture is an important component of language instruction.

To the extent that language is considered as a culture-embedded phenomenon, not simply as a collection of linguistic features, Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991) state:

> ... language is inseparable from other phenomena both inside and outside the classroom. Language is the main medium for expressing and embodying other phenomena. It expresses and embodies the values, beliefs and meanings which members of a given society, or part of it, share by virtue of their socialization into it and their acceptance of and identification with it. (p. 5)

These definitions of language and culture help explain the issues Koreans may have with English language learning. In Korea, a certain group of people has in common the use of certain English vocabulary like an emblem of belonging to a particular social group. For instance, when people live in urban areas where the native culture is exposed to foreign

cultures to a great degree, they realize that communication is often mixed with foreign languages, in particular English. Consequently, they in the urban society consciously make a tremendous effort in learning English in order to keep up with urban life. On the contrary, foreign languages rarely threaten a person living in rural areas. Because the lives of members in a rural community do not require as much use of foreign languages as in an urban community, competence in English or other foreign languages do not challenge people in a rural society. In other words, people can survive living in a rural community without the knowledge of foreign languages and cultures. As well, people easily identify others' identity and values when they communicate with each other. When she studies the phenomena of language teaching and learning, Norton (1997) highlights the importance of social identity that refers to learners' identity influenced by other external factors such as social or cultural resources. She cannot think of language learning separated from the learning environment. Thus, the discussion of these definitions suggests a close association between language and culture.

Now, let's look at the definition of culture from a practical perspective, Bennett, Bennett, and Allen (2003) present definitions of culture differentiating *subjective* from *objective* culture in accordance with the distinction between *Culture* and *culture*. *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (as cited in Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003) defines the capital "C" Culture as "the formal institutions (social, political, and economic), the great figures of history, and those products of literature, fine arts, and the sciences that were traditionally assigned to the category of elite culture" (p. 243). The small "c" culture refers to "those aspects of daily living studies by the sociologist and the anthropologist: housing,

clothing, food, tools, transportation, and all the patterns of behavior that members of the

culture regard as necessary and appropriate" (p. 243). After synthesizing the notion of

Culture and *culture*, Bennett et al. constitute their own terminology in defining culture,

which is *objective culture* and *subjective culture*. In their explanation, *objective culture*

incorporates both *Culture* and *culture*; that is, it refers to physical and visible conventions

and monuments as well as behavior patterns in the daily life such as shopping. On the other

hand, *subjective culture* is defined as a way of thinking such as language patterns and values.

Here Bennett et al.'s definitions have some problems; that is, "fine arts" in the capital

Culture is overlapped with "housing" in the small culture. I also wonder whether culture can

ever be objective.

This speculative dichotomy of defining culture sometimes attracts sharp criticism

with regard to the category divided into objective culture and subjective culture. The

criticism starts with such a question, "Is it possible to decide which culture implies either

objectiveness or subjectivity?" Nevertheless, the definition of culture by Bennett et al. is

twofold; it develops previous definitions of culture from an intercultural perspective on the

one hand, but it provides language teachers with some criteria for consisting of the cultural

content in language instruction on the other.

To overcome the limitation of these two contrasting categories and to extend the

meaning of culture to language teaching, Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990) suggest culture

with respect to four different kinds of sense; (1) *The aesthetic sense* which is related to

Culture; (2) *The sociological sense* associated with *culture*; (3) *The semantic sense* to

indicate a particular way of life such as food and clothes; (4) *The pragmatic*

(sociolinguistic) sense to identify what is appropriate in a particular situation (pp. 3-4). This categorization of defining culture still has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, these definitions not only add new concepts such as the semantic sense and pragmatic sense into the discussion by Bennett et al. (2003), but also help language teachers grasp the characteristics of culture according to the categories. On the other hand, they do not carry a full meaning of culture by means of four simplified categories.

From an empirical perspective, Flowerdew and Miller (1995) introduce culture in four dimensions to build a theoretical background for their research in Hong Kong. As a first dimension, they present *ethnic culture*, which refers to "culturally based, social-psychological features that affect the behaviour of lecturers and students" (p. 346). The second dimension, *local culture*, indicates environmental considerations, which refer to the familiarity or distance that language learners may feel towards the target language and culture. The third *academic culture* means "features of the lecture situation which require an understanding of the particular academic values, assumptions, roles, and so one f a given society" (p. 346). The last dimension is *disciplinary culture*, which covers theoretical and conceptual domains (e.g., norms and terms). In fact, these four dimensions of looking at culture contribute to an investigation of the behaviors of expatriate lecturers in other countries where English is not regarded as a mother tongue or first language among the entire nation. Accordingly, these categories of culture help understand the context of English education in Korea in that there is a substantial gap between native culture and target culture in language learning

In summary, even though a number of scholars across disciplines have put a great deal of time and exerted much effort in identifying what culture is, the difficulty and subtleness of deciphering the meaning of culture has appeared to exist for some time. However, I believe that unveiling the nature of culture can be meaningful and worthwhile when it is related to the lives of people and the phenomenon of language teaching. So far, the definition of culture seems to be diverse, complicated, and simplistic depending on the perspectives and disciplines.

For my study, here, I will provide my own definition through the previous discussions so far. From the definition raised by Hall, I have in mind a general property of constituting culture. Then, I examine Bennett et al.'s study. As I mentioned before, their definition entails problematic categories, but the whole content of culture, regardless of categories, is quite comprehensive. As well, I add the sociocultural and pragmatic concepts discussed by Adaskou et al. into my definition related to Flowerdew and Miller's work because I study a phenomenon of language learning situated in Korea where English is quite different from the native language, Korean. Furthermore, I cannot think of the definition of culture without an inseparable relationship between language and culture, which offers the core to my own terminology of culture.

Combining all of these considerations, I define culture that consists completely of three key ideas. Since I have seen limitations to the categories, I do not divide the definition into certain categories. More important, the definition is a whole concept with each unique meaning. The first component of defining culture is aimed at how people perceive, think of, and produce both verbal and written communication. This focuses on a mental process of

humankind with language. Next, ways of life and its byproducts in a contemporary society is another important component of culture in the same way as Hall (1980) argues. Some readers may confuse the first with the second element in a sense that the way of life is beyond a mental process somehow. However, I differentiate the first and the second to the extent that the second element deals with occasions in our daily life whereas the first one concentrates on the language use through the entire life. Finally, I consider situational meanings as a third component. Even though the second element limits the boundary of culture, "in a contemporary society", there are still a variety of changes of meaning by virtue of space and time. Thus, the third element provides the concept of culture with flexibility. Therefore, I decide to define culture as a distinct entity to convey the thoughts and views of people closely attached to the use of language, to connote the pragmatic and contextual meanings including the ways of the lives and all the products in either an abstract or physical form, as mankind has produced.

Realities of Culture Teaching in the Literature

It is not easy to teach culture in language classes for a variety of reasons. In a previous section, I examined the meaning and properties of culture to limit its boundary before I examine culture teaching within the domain of language teaching and learning. The complex meaning of culture in itself presents a difficulty in the teaching of culture that is different from the teaching of linguistic features. Whereas linguistic features are limited to teach despite their huge range of amounts and potential, cultural content is boundless in light of its invisible properties that are closely related to cognitive and epistemological processes such as views and values. This characteristic of culture teaching in foreign

language education constantly keeps some educators aware of whether students look down on their own culture compared with other cultures of the target language or vice versa (Kramsch, 1993). As a result, Adaskou et al. (1990) intentionally exclude the teaching of culture in language instruction or textbooks, instead of taking risks— inserting cultural content into language instruction on behalf of stimulating students' interest in the target language.

In addition, although language teachers have tried to grasp a clear concept of culture as previously mentioned, in reality, many of them rarely recognize that their language instruction is deeply associated with culture either in an implicit or explicit manner. Some of them even deny that they themselves incorporate culture into their language instruction. For example, Duff and Uchida (1997) examine the thinking of four teachers about teaching culture in Japan. Three of the teachers, regardless of whether they are native or non-native English teachers, resisted accepting the significance of explicit culture teaching as well as implicit culture-embedded language instruction at the onset of a research period. They said "culture played a minimal role in communication" (as cited in an interview with Denny, p. 461) and viewed "language learning as a legitimate end in itself, not necessarily as a tool for the transmission of culture, values, and philosophy" (as cited about Miki, p. 465). In a similar way, another interviewee from their study, Carol stated:

> I think [teaching culture is] a BS issue. When people are teaching culture or things like body language, who cares? ... [It] comes down to a very personal interpretation. That's what I don't like about it. ... It's basically teaching what's inside you. (p. 462)

However, at the end of a longitudinal research period, teachers in their study gradually accepted the integration of cultural aspects in the target language with linguistic features. As

a result, they, either reluctantly or willingly, recognized that culture teaching facilitated language learning by broadening the understanding of others and their lives where a target language was spoken and establishing authenticity in foreign language classrooms. One of the participants, Carol, changed her attitudes towards culture teaching as illustrated in the following statement:

> Carol's struggle to find the ideal teaching method resulted in continuous frustration and fluctuation on her part. Ultimately, she accepted the teaching of culture (albeit Japanese culture) in order to better bridge the gap between her self and her students. She began to incorporate more discussion topics, role-plays, storytelling, brainstorming, and other interactive activities, a compromise that seemed to work. (p. 464)

Likewise, I believe that culture teaching opens its door to effective language teaching and learning by attracting the learners' attention and enthusiasm to successful communication with others in target-language communities.

However, as a practical necessity for culture teaching, creating authenticity is one of the key issues in language classrooms (Kramsch, 1993). Some teachers use newspapers or magazines. Others search the Internet for current information on or knowledge of target cultures/countries. At their own or government's expense, more adventurous teachers travel to other countries where the target language is used. In this way, language teachers can activate their language classes to the extent that learners reach and experience the lives of target-language users despite not taking a trip abroad for themselves.

Nevertheless, the establishment of authenticity in language classes is still subject to certain restrictions. On the one hand, it causes some ideological concerns such as what the stereotype of a particular culture or country would be (Kramsch, 1998). The discussion of

these concerns has become highly controversial in the domain of language teaching and

learning because there are no clear and rational criteria for authentic content in language

classes. On the other hand, access to the target language is limited since a society of the

target language in itself is so complicated that it is tremendously hard to describe it in a

simple way (Alptekin & Alptekin, 1984). For example, people who have ever experienced

the winter sports only in Montreal may exaggerate his experience as if they experienced all

the winter sports all over Canada. However, nobody knows that all the Canadians enjoy the

same winter sports as Montrealers do. Geertz (1973) proposes the diversity of different

approaches to the deciphering of culture. Still, language teachers have a difficulty in

including authentic teaching about culture since there is a variety of cultural information

even in the same country.

In the same way, Kramsch (1998) doubts the contentious and diversified

characteristic of authenticity stating that "the diversity of authenticities within one national

society, depending on such contextual variables as age, social status, gender, ethnicity, race;

what is authentic in one context might be inauthentic in another" (p. 81). According to her,

the issue of authenticity can be more complicated to deal with. Rampton (1990) supports

Kramsch by regarding "language education as a social activity in which efforts are made to

manage continuity, change, and the relationship between social groups" (p. 100). He

advocates that authenticity in the field of language teaching and learning be varied

according to people, society, and their connections. However, since I focus on the Korean

context that is a monolingual and homogeneous society, I will set aside more complicated

issues about authenticity that have been often discussed in multilingual or heterogeneous societies that Kramsch and Rampton raise as concerns in their studies.

So far, I focus on the current predicament of culture teaching through theoretical discussions. Now, I examine some empirical studies in order to understand the existent practices and thoughts towards language instruction in regard to culture teaching. Ryan (1998)'s study shows how language teachers handled culture teaching and what kinds of materials they used in practical teaching through a case study of cultural perceptions and practices of two English teachers in Mexico. Different from those teachers in Duff and Uchida's research, both teachers were willing to use their cultural knowledge in language classrooms except for the limitation of their own cultural subjectivity.

In this study, Veronica, who was Mexican with native-like English proficiency, attempted to motivate learners with topics related to the "C2 (English-speaking cultures)" (p. 136). In the beginning, she seemed to succeed in a sense that she compared the C1 (learners' native culture) with the C2, but during a period of a whole class, she tended to focus more on topics about Mexico rather than about the target culture (e.g., in this particular research, introducing American culture). Generally, nonnative English teachers tend to convey their own cultural knowledge accumulated through their lifetime, but they themselves feel deficient in the target cultural knowledge. Another example of culture teaching is Cathy. As a native speaker of English, she increased the interest of students in language learning with the use of authentic materials such as postcards of famous locations and buildings in her hometown, and regarded herself as "a cultural informant" (p. 140). Moreover, because she noticed the inevitable intervention of culture teaching in language instruction from the

beginning of her language teaching, she could avoid difficulties that other teachers in other studies as previously mentioned faced in their language classrooms. Thus, language teachers need to develop an awareness of culture teaching for the effectiveness of language learning.

Problematic Representations of Culture in Textbooks

In spite of a strong belief that culture teaching contributes to more successful communication, the choice and sequence of cultural contents do not appear relatively straightforward in the practical application of language teaching. In reality, many language teachers in foreign countries, most of who are detached from other cultures, tend to regard textbooks as a primary source of teaching the target language and cultures (Olson, 1989). In Korea, since language teachers do not have enough time in preparing for their classes due to heavy administrative work, they are crucially dependent on textbooks as teaching materials. As for this phenomenon, Apple (1991) presents the imminent necessity of critical thinking and states:

> Yet, even given the ubiquitous character of the textbook, it is one of the things we know least about. While the text dominates curricula at the elementary, secondary, and even college levels, very little critical attention has been paid to the ideological, political, economic sources of its production, distribution, and reception. (p. 24)

There exists a hidden mechanism whereby textbooks need to be critically examined (Apple, 1990; Luke, 1988).

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) take a careful look at a whole process of textbooks from their publication to invisible power imposed on people and societies at large. They mention that textbook not only includes a collection of simple facts, but also implies complicated ideological issues. They note:

> This is a distinct problem since texts are not simply "delivery systems" of "facts." They are at
>
> once the results of political, economic, and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are
>
> conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the
>
> political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power. And what texts mean and how
>
> they are used are fought over by communities with distinctly different commitments and by teachers
>
> and students as well. (pp. 1-2)

Apple (1991) raises a question "whose knowledge is taught and produced in our schools" (p.

23), which implies controversial issues such as class and censorship. Tracing the historical

background of the textbook industry, he argues that the mainstream or dominant class keeps

their social stratum by controlling the selection of content of textbooks. To support this idea,

Apple (1990) points out:

> Here, education in general, and the everyday meanings of the curriculum in schools in particular,
>
> were seen as essential elements in the preservation of existing social privilege, interests, and
>
> knowledge, which were the prerogatives of one element of the population, maintained at the expense
>
> of less powerful groups. (p. 48)

In a broad sense, school knowledge cannot be neutral, but is always ideological. It is a

sociocultural byproduct that conspires and consolidates the current societies.

Apple (1991) continues to draw a meticulous attention to censorship while

examining the mechanism, production, and circulation of textbooks.

> As many know from personal experience, in quite a few states – most often in the southern tier
>
> around to the western sun-belt – textbooks for use in the major subject areas must be approved by
>
> state agencies or communities, or they are reviewed and a limited number are selected as
>
> recommended for use in schools. If local school districts select material from such an approved list,
>
> they are often reimbursed for a significant portion of the purchases cost. Because of this, even where
>
> texts are mandated, there is a good deal to be gained by local schools in a time of economic crisis if

they do in fact ultimately choose an approved volume. The cost savings here, obviously, are not

inconsequential. (p. 32)

In Korea, the Ministry of Education publishes English textbooks used in elementary schools.

Some elementary teachers are involved in the process of textbook publication, but most of

the editorial members consisted of professors, middle and high school teachers, and

educational experts, as Luke (1988) called "particular historical interpretive communities"

(p. 28). In other words, although elementary teachers play an important role in practice,

their voices seem to be very weak in the process of publication. As a result, the censorship

needs to be issued among both teachers and students (Apple, 1991; Luke, Castell, & Luke,

1989; Luke, 1988).

In addition to these ideological concerns for textbooks as earlier noted, language

teachers need to take a critical stance on international publications which they often regard

as a crucial breakthrough to culture teaching twofold (Pennycook, 1994; Tollefson, 2002;

Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). First, imported textbooks convey their own cultural values

and views as well as linguistic content. As Alptekin (1993) points out, "most textbook

writers are native speakers who consciously or unconsciously transmit the views, values,

attitudes, and feelings of their own English-speaking society" (p. 138). Apple and Christian-

Smith (1991) depict a danger of the process of international textbooks markets.

> Economic and political realities structure text publishing not only internally, however. On an
>
> international level, the major text-publishing conglomerates control the market of much of the
>
> material not only in the capitalist centers, but in many other nations as well. Cultural domination is a
>
> fact of life for millions of students throughout the world, in part because of the economic control of
>
> communication and publishing by multinational firms, in part because of the ideologies and systems

of political and cultural control of new elites within former colonial countries. All of this, too, has led

to complicated relations and struggles over official knowledge and the text between "center" and

"periphery" and within these areas as well. (p. 6)

In this regard, Pennycook (1994, 1998) warns against an emergent crisis of neocolonization

through English. In particular, he warns about the predominance of a great amount of the

teaching materials that originally come from English-spoken countries all over the world

because he sees an invisible power of English to control people's minds. Thus, language

teachers have to be cautious about selecting textbooks taking a careful look at whether there

are hidden cultural values or views to influence learners.

Secondly, some of the topics and materials in EFL textbooks do not seem to be well

applied to each EFL context. The publishers or editors of those textbooks sometimes do not

seem to consider the uniqueness of particular EFL contexts different from ESL contexts. In

their research, Flowerdew and Miller (1995) reveal that language teachers hardly stimulate

their students by the use of imported textbooks that are behind the times. They state:

"textbooks are not available as a teaching and learning resource because the publishers

cannot keep up to date with the field" (p. 368). Accordingly, when teachers use the imported

textbooks, the content of the textbooks does not include the same real-life contexts as target

language users currently do, but consists of already outdated information on target language

societies. Arva and Medgyes (2000) also support this idea, stating that "the non-native

classes were poor in cultural content: four lessons conveyed hardly any cultural information

on English-speaking countries, whereas the concrete facts supplied in the fifth lesson about

the British school-system were some 30 years out of date" (p. 367).

As discussed so far, the cultural content of textbooks is often problematic, but textbooks play an important role in culture teaching. In reality, some language teachers are aware of the potential dangers of using imported textbooks while most of them still disregard such problems. To cope with this challenging situation, language teachers need to take a critical stance against a thoughtless use of textbooks.

Intercultural Competence in English Classes

In a previous section, I presented what language teachers perceive to be the dangerous effects of textbooks. Now, I extend their paramount concern for the possible dangers of language learning to their concept of teaching practices involved in culture teaching. In a broad sense, Byram (1988) agrees with the responsibility of language teachers, which is to keep learners alert to overall implicit culture learning. As a result, teachers sometimes take chauvinistic attitudes about culture teaching in ESL/EFL classes and then strictly teach only their own culture in order to prevent possibly overwhelming negative influences on learners from other cultures (Adaskou et al., 1990). However, such extremely conservative attitudes may prevent students from developing flexible attitudes and balanced views appropriate to the era of globalization. Language teachers look forward to possessing knowledge of intercultural or multicultural competence as a key constituent of culture teaching and which seems to provide both teachers and learners with global perspectives (Schumann, 1986; Bennett et al, 2003).

Generally, intercultural or multicultural competence comes from a basic notion of cultural competence. As people and their lives are frequently exposed to other cultures, language teachers consider cultural competence as another important competence, which

language learners have to accomplish for their competency in language. In other words, they add cultural competence into Canale and Swain (1979)'s four competences in language, that is, grammatical competence, communicative competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. To support this idea, Kramsch (1993) presents a new term, *cultural competence,* as one of the constituents of language competence.

> Despite recent voices in favour of a relational pedagogy that takes into account various perspectives on self and other (e.g. Byrnes 1991, Swaffar 1992), most teachers see culture as a fifth skill on the ACTFL proficiency scale (American Council 1986). They view cultural competence as knowledge of foreign facts and a general acceptance of the foreign culture. Cultural acceptance is a matter of ethics and democratic attitude; cultural knowledge can be administered in appropriately paced building blocks. (p. 187)

Likewise, as language teachers are interested in cultural competence in the domain of language teaching, they discover the importance of intercultural competence in times of globalization.

Along with this need for intercultural competence, Kramsch (1998) defines intercultural as "the meeting between people from different cultures and languages across the political boundaries of nation-states" and multicultural as "communication between people from different ethnic, social, gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same nation" (p. 128). While tracing the history of culture teaching, Kramsch incorporated these two notions into one inclusive meaning of intercultural competence, that is, "to understand and overcome particularity, by building bridges between one culture and another" (p, 87). As shown in her definition of intercultural competence, Kramsch (1993) strongly emphasizes the necessity of intercultural competence in this way:

Foreign language learners around the world have to grapple with the paradox of discovering their

own national, ethnic, and personal identity through a language that is not the one they grew up with.

Their teachers have to deal with the dilemma of both representing an institution that imposes its own

educational values and initiating learners to the values of a foreign culture, while at the same time

helping them not to be bound by either one. (p. 256)

In particular, intercultural competence is increasingly urgent to Korean learners because the

whole society pushes young people to become competent in English as well as their

speciality for the purpose of international exchange in varied fields. In fact, every year

thousands of Korean people have chances to go abroad and to meet foreigners. Accordingly,

as they frequently meet others from different cultures, Korean people see the necessity to

develop intercultural competence in order to better understand others.

Just as language teachers in Korea have a national emergency in terms of the

teaching of intercultural competence in foreign language classes, more language teachers

increasingly become aware of the importance of culture teaching. They also continue to

exploit teaching materials in order to help learners better communicate and understand

others to a great degree without any awkwardness (i.e., a person with only linguistic

proficiency and a lack of understanding about others may have a hard time to adapt

himself/herself to every new situation because s/he does not have cultural knowledge on

how to behave appropriately to specific context). For instance, Kramsch (2003) depicts the

case of Judy who is "a young American student returning from a stay with a German

family" (p. 22) and whose experiences Kramsch uses in her article.

Judy was perplexed not because she didn't have the appropriate vocabulary, but because she was

interpreting the situation according to her own social values. Not understanding the context, she

couldn't know when to use or not to use the vocabulary she knew. Thus the third stage entails

understanding how we impose our schemata on the members of other cultures, and how they impose

their on ours. (p. 31)

In this excerpt, even if Judy had relevant knowledge of what she had to answer, she

hesitated to say something out of her mouth. She was frightened of being seen as an outsider

among friends. Because she was not accustomed to new circumstances, she could not

express herself freely. As shown in the case of Judy, language teachers do not want their

students to become a "second or third Judy". They hope that their students will behave in an

appropriate way when students face other cultures or others with different cultural

backgrounds.

Along with this growing trend in teaching culture, choosing cultural elements

becomes a debatable issue among language teachers. Defining intercultural education as "a

highly specialized form of instruction designed to prepare persons to live and work

effectively in cultures other than their own" (p. 1), Paige (1993) contended that language

teachers have more difficulty in establishing a sequence of the intercultural content because

the acquisition of intercultural competence is intrinsically an on-going process in which all

aspects are intertwined with one another. Nonetheless, Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991)

attempt to find specific procedures of intercultural language classes by dividing cultural

content into main and sub-categories according to the result of interviews in their research.

For the main category, they introduce such topics as "'family and daily life', 'food' and

'people'. The minor category belongs to "'the education system', 'growing up', 'leisure and

the media'" (p. 32). In fact, these topics, either main or minor, have been likely familiar to

current language learners and teachers in Korea by virtue of relatively easy access to information. As a result, Byram and Esarte-Sarries' study seems to help reduce a heavy load from teachers in selecting intercultural topics, but it still has limitations because those topics Byram and Esarte-Sarries present in their study are stereotypes.

Furthermore, Bennett, Bennett and Allen (2003) design a practical model for English classes from the intercultural perspective called the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The DMIS consists of six chronological steps: "Denial", "Defense", "Minimization", "Acceptance", "Adaptation", and "Integration" (pp. 248-252). They divided these six sub-stages of culture teaching into three groups of two in accordance with the level of language proficiency such as novice, intermediate, and advanced level. According to their model, the beginning level learners are located in the Denial and Defense stages, followed by intermediate level for Minimization and Acceptance, and by the advanced for Adaptation and Integration. This model offers specific procedures well, but I wonder whether the chosen topics and materials in the DMIS will be useful in a particular EFL context such as the Korean context.

In conclusion, language learners need to acquire intercultural competence to cope with the international communication and better cultural understandings. Since language teachers are aware of the importance of intercultural education, their students may learn and achieve intercultural competence. Current language teachers still have many difficult things to deal with in the teaching of intercultural competence. However, I am sure that intercultural education greatly contributes to the views and attitudes of language learners

towards others little by little, because to gain intercultural competence is essentially an on-going and slow process.

Sociocultural Consideration and Language Learners' Affiliation to the Target-Language Society

For a quite long time, a great number of researchers on language teaching practices have focused on either linguistic features produced by language learners or the process of language learning and teaching. Recently, some researchers started to look at the source of external influences on language teaching and learning such as the issue of identity and sociocultural contexts (Norton, 1997; Peirce, 1995; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Starfield, 2002; Maguire & Graves, 2001; Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995). This new trend extends the wide-ranging understanding of language teaching and learning from English-speaking countries to other countries.

After an era of colonialism, a number of people have migrated from their own countries to other countries, especially English-speaking countries, because they seek better lives and education (Pennycook, 1994). With this movement, several social issues such as ethnicity or minority rights have emerged inside those countries that received immigration populations. One of the most prominent problems is how to effectively teach students who are immigrant children with multicultural backgrounds in the same classroom. The existing methods designed for the white monolingual students may not work any more because they may be inappropriate learning approaches for children who come from different learning traditions. As a result, this current educational need has drawn much attention from language researchers in multicultural societies such as Canada and the U. S. However, since

Korea is a monolingual and homogeneous society, this issue does not seem to be connected to a language-learning situation in Korea.

As a result of a growing interest in the study of language-learning phenomena in other countries such as Japan or China, some language researchers have started to examine different ways of learning language situated in various sociocultural contexts (Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997; Rampton, 1990, 2001). Bourne (1988) shows how the surrounding environment of learners may affect language learning while exploring the meaning of the natural acquisition of language through the history of language practices and traditions. Bourne also mentioned the sociocultural aspects of language, stating that "In general, working class children have not gained proportional access to higher education" (p. 94). Here, working class children cannot reach higher education because they do not acquire the linguistic conventions and behaviors appropriate to higher education, which the mainstream children normally can achieve. Thus, the success of overall education relies upon language learning and then language learning depends on sociocultural contexts of language learners. That is, this indicates that the learning of language cannot stand on its own, but must be considered in the surrounding contexts.

Rampton (1990) presents a notion of *affiliation* from a new perspective. He differentiated *affiliation* referring to "a connection between people and groups that are considered to be separate or different" (p. 99) from *inheritance* which is defined as "the continuity between people and groups who are felt to be closely linked" (p. 99). For the emphasis on intercultural competence in culture teaching, the notion of Rampton's affiliation provides a theoretical ground for key considerations in my research. In other

words, I want to see whether language learners in Korea have affiliation towards other cultures and if so, how much they are affiliated depending on the sociocultural contexts. Specifically speaking, English learners in Korea do not have any geographical or cultural connections with English-speaking countries or cultures, but I think that they can become more enthusiastic about learning English when they commit themselves to affiliating with English-speaking cultures. Also, I argue that the degree of affiliation may be different between rural and urban communities and it will result in different levels of language learning. Accordingly, language teachers who highlight intercultural education will push their students to have affiliations towards other cultures because affiliation connects different cultures or people into a full union.

Nonetheless, there is still little research on this impact of sociocultural contexts on language learning in EFL situations (Leung et al., 1997). I believe that my study provides scholars and practitioners with an understanding of language learning as well as attraction for further studies on this topic. Therefore, language teachers can teach language more effectively by considering the environmental influences on cultural learning in language classes.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY & METHODS

Based on the theoretical positions on culture teaching discussed in Chapter 2, I use interviewing as a key method and consider other complementary methods for my qualitative study. To understand the research context, I describe research sites belonging to my community where I was born and raised. Then, I depict a general picture of how the educational system in Korea is shaped, especially focusing on the educational background of elementary teachers. I provide details of my research process from the first visit to the establishment of my relationships with a participant.

Interviewing as a Primary Tool & Participants

Rationale for qualitative interviewing

In this study, I collected data primarily using interviewing as a qualitative research methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The questions I am interested in are better treated by a qualitative methodology. It would be appropriate to acknowledge that quantitative researchers in this field have in fact made many useful contributions. Qualitative methods such as interviewing may be well matched with the Korean educational conventions as well. Within the authority and power relationship between administrators and teachers, the Korean teachers usually appear uncomfortable no matter who sits and observes them in their classrooms. Instead of placing teachers in this awkward, non-productive situation, I interviewed them. The interviewing method significantly contributes to my study in which I delve into teachers' and students' perceptions and views.

Interviewing entails several advantages over other methods in research. Tierney and Dilley (2002) differentiate qualitative interviewing from two other methods, survey and observation. They describe:

> Qualitative interviewing can be used to gather information that cannot be obtained using other methods. Surveys might offer mass data about a particular issue, but they lack the depth of understanding that a qualitative interview provides. Observation can certainly lead to insights about, say, interactional styles of teachers with students or patterns of behavior in a classroom, but without interview data gathered directly from the participants/actors, observation is akin to watching silent movies. For these reasons alone, the interview has become the most common qualitative tool that researchers employ in education. (p. 454)

In addition, interviewing highlights participants' views on a particular phenomenon through their interpretation, not just to gather factual or statistical information (Warren, 2000). It does not necessarily control other socio-cultural factors within a research context. Rather, it seeks to look at how socio-cultural context influences different outcomes of interviewing. This is deeply associated with my research concern because I would like to see how language learners deal with different learning environments surrounding them and develop different knowledge of a target language. As a result, my research absolutely needs to use socio-cultural context embedded in interviewing.

The interviewing method also initiates face-to-face interaction between interviewer and interviewee and then builds a better relationship among them (Johnson, 2002). Warren (2002) corroborates this idea and states:

> Although the frame of talking and listening may be apt for conceiving telephone interviews, the frame of social interaction accords better with the face-to-face qualitative interview. In the social interaction of the qualitative interview, the perspectives of the interviewer and the respondent dance

together for the moment but also extend outward in social space and backward and forward in time.

(p. 98)

In this respect, Ellis and Berger (2002) present the efficacy of using personal experiences of an interviewer interviewing in order to gain rapport with participants.

In short, by interviewing teachers and students in elementary schools in Korea, I can demystify their perceptions and thoughts of current culture teaching in elementary English classes in depth. As for interviews with children, I would like to identify students' perspectives of their teachers' culture teaching. Eder and Fingerson (2002) mention, "One clear reason for interviewing youthful respondents is to allow them to give voice to their own interpretations and thoughts rather than rely solely on our adult interpretations of their lives" (p. 181). Therefore, interviewing plays an important role in my research by establishing a research context and respecting participants' interpretation of a learning phenomenon.

Specific aspects of interviewing

For interviews, I constructed a semi-structured interviewing method in order to reduce intense pressure on participants and to create a friendly, informal atmosphere. In thinking of questions in the semi-structured interviews, I carefully put a higher value on the powerful voices of key participants than on a researcher's own because Golombek (1994) emphasizes the importance of teachers' knowledge in the research process. In the area of research on EFL/ESL teachers, many theory-based researchers have made serious errors in reporting the results of research from their own perspectives rather than from teachers'. However, since teachers know very well what's going on in a school setting, researchers on

teaching practices should give priority to teachers' knowledge. Accordingly, based on Golombek's work, I asked teachers for their knowledge about definitions of culture and teacher in-service programs at the beginning of interviews.

As one source of data collection, I interviewed elementary school teachers three times just as Steinbach (1998) did in her research. In the first session, I focused on information about their background (e.g., what kinds of educational backgrounds they have and cultural knowledge they have through the lifetime would influence their perceptions of English). I assumed that teachers' backgrounds might affect the construction of their values and views towards English. Also, I was curious about how teachers' perceptions of the English language and cultures significantly affect the attitudes and perspectives of their students. Thus, I constructed interviewing questions such as "Do teachers have positive or negative attitudes of English-speaking cultures?" or "How much knowledge do teachers have towards English-speaking cultures?"

Then, I looked at what kinds of beliefs and thoughts primary school teachers had about elementary English education in Korea. In particular, I wanted to see whether or not they recognized the importance of culture teaching in English education. Also, I examined how aware they were of English-speaking countries or cultures (e.g., do they have a good impression of English-speaking foreigners?). In this second session, I could investigate teachers' perceptions and attitudes of culture teaching in English classes in elementary schools.

For the last interview with teachers, I made practical inquiries as to their opinions and recommendations with respect to the content of English textbooks and teaching

materials in English classes including educational policy on elementary English education (e.g., how English teachers incorporate cultural aspects with linguistic features). This session helped me identify a current predicament embedded in culture teaching in English classes in elementary schools. Through these three phases of the interviewing process, I collected English teachers' perceptions of culture teaching in English classes in elementary schools in both rural and urban areas.

I also interviewed elementary students whose teachers participated in my research. This interview was aimed at finding out how frequently elementary students were exposed to foreign cultures, in particular, English-speaking cultures and what they perceived and learned through English classes. While interviewing students, I also explored how sociocultural contexts influenced students' attitudes towards other cultures (e.g., is there any difference between rural and urban areas when students look at foreigners and foreign cultures?).

I present how I set out details of the interviews for the study. During the research process, I used Korean as a medium of communication and translated the informed consent form for parents and children into Korean for participants' convenience and familiarity. As to the informed consent form for the teachers, I used an initial English version because I thought it was a way to respect their expertise in English as an English teacher. With permission from participants, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in English. All the names used here are pseudonyms.

Additional Research Methods

To understand fully current elementary English education in Korea, I added two more complementary research tools into my qualitative methodology for research: observation and the other document analysis. Eder and Fingerson (2002) advocate a need of observation for bringing an effective result of interviewing and note:

> Through observation, the researcher can identify naturally occurring events during which interviews could take place as well as typical language routines in the setting. … Whether or not interviewing is the main methodology in a study, a period of field observation can enable the researcher to gain rapport with the children prior to interviewing them. (p. 188)

I use observation only to gain an understanding of how English is taught in elementary school while observing English classes. I also examined documents published by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development in Korea and other teaching materials on English education to see the policies and assumptions about English teaching in these documents.

I have two purposes in using observation as a method. My first purpose aims at understanding the current situation of elementary English classes in a broad sense. As I have been an outsider for teaching and learning practices about elementary school since graduation, I need to resituate myself in a current elementary school site in Korea. My second purpose is to identify a possible discrepancy between teacher's beliefs and actions. I asked teachers about how they perceive and teach culture in their English classes. Hodder (1994) supports this action by delineating the difference between "what people say" and "what people do" (p. 395). My position during observation is "observer as participant". My participants all were well informed of what I was doing and why I was also staying inside

the research site where my participants engaged in activities. Though I did not participate in those activities directly and actively, I took part in them by sitting and observing a classroom situation. Qualitative researchers now acknowledge that even when researchers "are only observing a classroom or site" they are in a sense participant. There has been much discussion in the major qualitative research handbooks about the participant observation. Any observation does involve some participation on the part of the research. Thus, I became a participant-observer. In fact, while observing the classroom situation, I kept field notes in five English classes. My reasons for doing this are: I intentionally avoided using any type of recording that might bother teachers because teachers showed tremendous discomfort with respect to the presence of someone during their teaching. In Korea, this results from an educational convention that school inspectors or a principal sometimes evaluate the teaching of teachers and then the result significantly affects the future promotion of teachers. As a result, teachers regard research in the same way as inspection or supervision.

Document analysis was helpful for my study in order to understand the context of the Korean English education. Among the kinds of documents I collected, English textbooks are the most important resource to identify the influence of written texts on both teachers and students. Duff & Uchida (1992) support this idea with their research findings about the importance of textbook analysis in order to look at "both explicit and implicit cultural and linguistic messages" (p. 470). Since the Korean Educational Ministry regulates the number and content of textbooks, I hope to present a general picture of the major content of textbooks used in elementary schools in Korea. If textbooks include any kinds of cultural

topics, teachers may teach particular cultural aspects explicitly during their instruction in

that English teachers in Korea usually follow directions shown in textbooks. Accordingly,

my analysis of English textbooks may help teachers identify what kinds of cultural content

English textbooks have and be aware of hidden values in culture teaching. I gathered other

written teaching materials and publications of the Ministry of Education as well.

Context of Research Site

Jung S. K. and Norton B. (2002) showed teaching practices and perceptions of key

practitioners after the inauguration of the new elementary English curriculum in Korea. At

that time, it struck me that elementary English education might need some research by the

end of the Seventh Educational Curriculum because national curriculum designers wanted to

hear the voices from the practical perspective. Unlike Jung S. K. and Norton B., I was

involved in the school context located in provincial areas in Korea.

The city of Iksan

Figure 1 illustrates the location of my research site, the Republic of Korea and the

city of Iksan. Table 1 provides demographic information about the areas, population,

population density, etc.

Figure 1. 2004 Map of the Republic of Korea
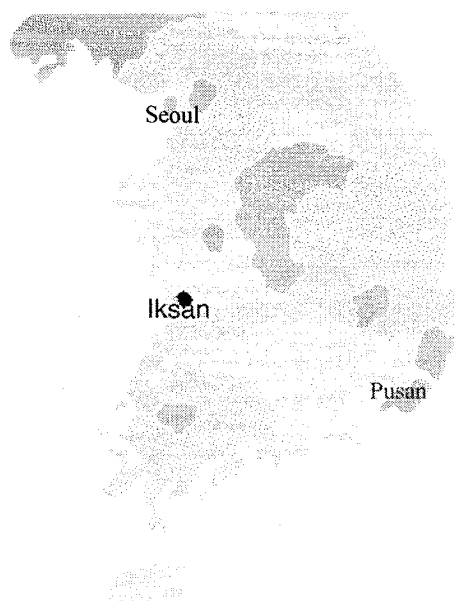
Table 1. Demography of the City of Iksan.

면적 (Area)	507.07 ㎢
인구 (Population)	337, 240 명 (person) (2002)
인구밀도 (Population density)	665 명 (person) /㎢ (2002)
가구수 (Family)	107, 180 (household) (2002))
행정구분 (Administrative district)	1 읍 14 면 12 동 (1 Eub 14 Myun 12 Dong)
시의 꽃 (City flower)	국화 (Chrysanthemum)
시의 나무 (City tree)	소나무(pine tree)
시의 새 (City bird)	비둘기 (dove)

Iksan city has enormous significance in my life. I was born and raised in Iksan.

Even though I have to be away from it for educational reasons, I always return to Iksan

where I feel mentally relaxed and my parents still live. Even my memories from childhood

to youth are deeply related to Iksan because I not only lived there, but also attended

elementary, middle, and high school. Thus, I have decided to do qualitative research related

to Iksan as a novice researcher.

Iksan city is a united city. In 1995, Iri city and Iksan-gun merged into Iksan city by

Law No. 4948 whose document title was *Five Urbans and Agricultural Integrated Type*

Facilities Law, including Pyungtaek City in Kyunggi Province.

Figure 2. Map of Iksan-gun and Iri-si before 1995
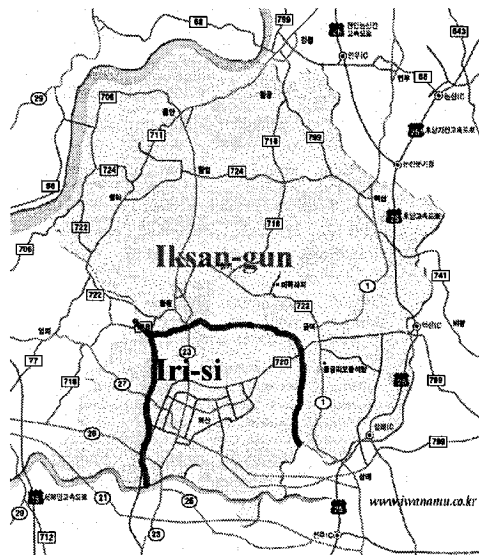
In Korea, the system of administrative districts is relatively complicated. The "시 (si)"

referring to *city* belongs to the general administrative district while the "군 (gun)" refers to

the provincial administrative district. The *si* is built around the urban area whereas the *gun*

is located in a rural area. The population and dimension depend on the growth of the

economy, but the *si* normally has a larger population and more developed economy than the

gun. In the same way, the old Iri-si was changed into Iksan-si with more expanded area and

population.

My hometown originally belonged to the Iksan-gun where dozens of small

agricultural villages gathered. Figure 3 provides photos of my hometown.

Figure 3. My Hometown
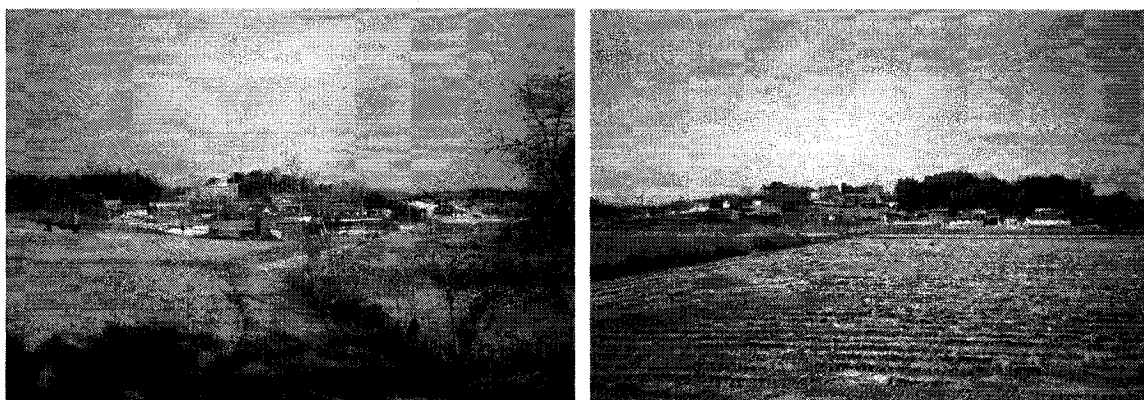
After the unification of Iksan-si, there was not seemingly a big change; only the residents in

the old Iksan-gun had to visit the city hall in Iksan-si, which was far from their village,

instead of going to the office near their community even for dealing with a small concern.

As a high school student, I did not experience any inconvenience from this. Rather, I

benefited by feeling that I belonged to the *si* instead of the *gun*. Because most of my high

school friends came from the city, I seemed to have the same sense of belonging as my

friends did. Thus, the unification kept me aware of my background as a Korean and opened

my eyes towards the life in the city.

It did not take long until I realized that there was much difference between *dong*s,

small administrative districts within the city. In my high school years, Baeyoung-dong was

the downtown where people usually went shopping and met friends. However, Sinai-dong

has recently grown and become a new downtown. New businesses such as branches of well-

known private institutions and hospitals opened in Sinai-dong. This change greatly affected

the lives of people in Iksan city. As Sinai-dong has been prosperous, the quality of

education has improved faster than other districts. In particular, English education shows a

marked discrepancy between Sinai-dong and other districts because children in Sinai-dong

attend the private institute in which native English teachers instruct. Also, on an average, at

least one of the classmates in each class leaves a class for a language program abroad.

This phenomenon often appears distant for children in other remote areas of the city or in

the old Iksan-gun. Therefore, I compare the largest and most prosperous districts, Sinai-

dong and Royael-dong, with one of the small villages, Whangsan-myun, which is my

hometown, in order to examine elementary English education and the different learning

environments.

Table 2. Population and Household inside the City of Iksan according to Eub, Myun, and Dong, which are Administrative Districts in the City

	Population	**Number of Households**
Sungdang-eup	9,646	2,965
Dalyoung-myun	6,533	2,123
Gammi-myun	11,892	3,854
Keunshin-myun	3,387	1,208
Puyeu-myun	2,570	934
Changpo-myun	3,342	1,166
Pojin-myun	4,788	1,590
Haegeum-myun	5,279	1,757
Whangsan-myun	**5,396**	**1,871**
Myunghwa-myun	5,395	1,786
Kimsung-myun	7,059	2,184
Woojang-myun	8,219	2,924
Donggae-myun	7,452	2,555
Gunguk-myun	3,929	1,286
Sinai-dong	**69,363**	**20,496**
Baeyoung-dong	7,051	2,501
Garak-dong	5,099	1,680
Insa-dong	10,896	3,461
Donggo-dong	27,371	8,178
Pyungga-dong	14,419	4,543
Kangsan-dong	20,247	6,366
Royael-dong	**33,519**	**9,976**
Nongae-dong	7,134	2,171

Jinjae-dong	20,878	6,762
Yesung-myun	2,705	940
Ogeum-dong	6,056	1,584
Paldal-dong	26,954	8,151

As can be seen from the table 5, numbers represent each district's population as well as a size of economy. The smaller the number, the more remote a district is. Most *myun* districts are located in rural areas whereas *dong* districts are in downtown. This geographical situation makes a big difference between them. This explanation may benefit those who are not familiar with and are curious about my choice of my research setting.

Table 3. Demography of Three Participant Schools

Item \ Elementary school	Gana	Royal	Sinai
Starting Year	1960	1995	1995
Class	6	47	46
Students (+kindergarten)	62 (+5)	1793	1713
Teachers	15	60	71

Gana elementary school

Figure 4. A Picture of Gana Elementary School

As a graduate, I visited the Gana elementary school in May 11, 2004. After

graduation, it was my first time to go inside because classrooms had usually been locked for

security. There were many changes both inside and outside the school. Due to the

geographical reason that the school was located in a rural area, the number of students

decreased every year. In my elementary school years, each grade had two classes except for

the fifth grade that consisted of only one class, whereas in 2004 each grade had only one

class with far fewer students. For example, when I attended Gana elementary school from

1986 to 1992 the total of students was more than 200. On the contrary, now in 2004 the

number of students is only 62.

Table 4. The Number of Students in Gana elementary school

구분	학년 (Grade)	1	2	3	4	5	6	계 (Total)	유 (Kindergarten)
	학습수 (Classroom)	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
학생수	남 (Male)	4	6	6	7	4	8	35	3
	여 (Female)	3	3	3	8	4	6	27	2
	계 (Total)	7	9	9	15	8	14	62	5

However, the fact that classes are smaller in size may bring a better learning environment

to students with respect to more spacious classrooms, various facilities, and a relatively

small number of students per teacher.

All the classrooms were well equipped with useful furniture for schooling. Each

student had his/her own locker at the rear of the classroom. At least three computers were

distributed among students per class; the teacher has one on the desk. A blackboard and a

movable board were in the front of the class. For multimedia education, a set of television

and video, an overhead projector and a visual presenter were set at the corner of the front. In

addition, there was a classroom library filled with a variety of books per classroom in

addition to a school library. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development gave priority to elementary schools in rural areas for the distribution of all this equipment to ensure equality.

As for the SES of the students in Gana elementary school, students do not seem to have a wealthy background. As you see in Table 4, most parents of students do not have a degree. This indicates that their jobs are low-paid because the educational career plays an important role in choosing a job in Korea. Thus, this economic status in Gana elementary school will affect students' private English education.

Table 5. Educational Background of Parents in Gana Elementary School

Grade	Elementary School Graduate	Middle School Graduate	High School Graduate	College/University Graduate	Graduate	Total
1		1	2			3
2			3			3
3	1	1	2	3		7
4	4	1	5	2		12
5		1	5			6
6	1	2	9	2		14
Total	6	6	26	7		45

When I made contact with the principal at Gana elementary school, he kindly listened to me and introduced me to teachers, who were to become my key participants. Soon after I explained the purpose and method of my research, the teachers arranged my schedule right away. Every step of my research was quickly made in cooperation with teachers.

For the second visit, I was supposed to observe the English classes of both fifth and sixth grade in order to expand my understanding of elementary English classes as well as

interview teachers. I arrived at school around 9:30. Because I had to wait for the observation of the sixth grade's English class that started in the third class (10:50 – 11:30), I had a chance to communicate with a vice-principal whom I met for the first time because of his absence at the time of my first visit to the school. He made some comments that contributed to my understanding of current English education in Gana elementary school.

In the morning, I observed two English classes of grade 5 and 6 and then had school lunch together with the teachers and students in a school cafeteria. In Korea, most of elementary schools are equipped with a school cafeteria at students' expense in addition to government subsidy. The government provides free lunch for a certain portion of students who cannot afford to pay for the fee. The number of students who have free lunch increases according to the policy of the MEHRD. In the afternoon, I interviewed a fifth grade teacher and second grade teacher who substituted for a sixth grade teacher only in English classes because of the regular teacher's lack of competency to teach English. All teachers and staff treated me well with full cooperation.

The third visit was made one week after. To obtain an informed consent from parents of students, I made a short visit two days before. On May 27, 2004, it was extremely busy and tight enough to have something to do every minute. First of all, observing two classes, I had to interview two teachers for the rest of questions and two more teachers as well as their students. At that time, teachers looked too busy in dealing with official letters and catching up with the school curriculum delayed due to a variety of events such as an athletic meeting and a picnic in May every year. Much worse, it was the very day that

teachers had a social gathering. As a result, I had to make another appointment with the

third grade teacher who I could not interview at that time.

On Saturday, two days later, I made a last visit to Gana elementary school. I

interviewed the third grade teacher as well as her students. With her permission, I took some

photos of the third grade classroom because she utilized one part of a board at the rear as a

device to acknowledge students in English. For instance, she let students post some English

cards about the day (e.g., Saturday) and weather (e.g., cloudy) (See Appendix Ⅱ). Students

could play with those cards at will.

Royal elementary school

Figure 5. A Picture of Royal Elementary School

In Korea, it happens frequently that public institutions or organizations are named

after a name of a district in which they are built. However, the orthography for foreign

language was not unified, so a slight difference may exist. For example, the name of the

district is 왕실 (Ro*yael*) while an elementary school within the district is 왕실초등학교

(Ro*yal* elementary school). As we can see, the Korean letters look like the same shapes at

both the district and the elementary school, but can be varied when they are translated into English.

As a community member, I was not totally strange to the name of the Royal elementary school when I heard of it. In my high school years, some of my friends lived in the district of Royael-dong that was well known as a village of apartments instead of a collection of houses. Since in Royael-dong most of the residents are public officers or teachers, the prime population of the Royal elementary school is also composed of their offspring. It is not difficult to guess the socioeconomic status of the Royal elementary school, which is a middle class.

During a conversation with my cousin, I started to become interested in the Royal elementary school. He told me that he enjoyed his English class very much and his English teacher was not a homeroom teacher. At that time, I realized that the Royal elementary school had adopted an English specialist teacher. Actually, a large school can have special teachers in the subject of art or physical education in proportion to the number of students. In the city of Iksan, there are a few schools that adopt English specialist teacher programs. The Royal elementary school is one of them.

In May 10, 2004, I visited Royal elementary school and had a contact with Monica, who was an English specialist teacher. She was in her own room that is given to an English specialist teacher. I introduced my research proposal and myself. As soon as I identified myself as a cousin of one of her students, she started to connect me with my cousin. Generally, it is not unusual in Korea that Koreans emphasize any kind of relationship when getting acquainted. Nevertheless, she agreed to let me conduct interviews for my research,

but did not agree with observation of her class. After Monica checked her schedule, we scheduled the next meeting. For her convenience, we decided to cover three interviews in two sessions.

In May 17, 2004, I audiotaped an interview with Monica. For the first interview session, I asked questions about her background and any relationships between her life and English. She seemed to be more comfortable talking with me when the tape recorder was turned off. The second visit was made on Friday in May 21, 2004. This time we used questions from both the second and third sessions of interviews I had proposed.

As for the interviews of students, I could contact only one who is my cousin. I tried to contact other students, but since they usually went to various kinds of private institutions right after school, I could not contact them in a private way. Fortunately, the lack of students here was compensated by other students who I could contact at Sinai elementary school through the support of their teacher.

Sinai elementary school

Figure 6. A Picture of Sinai Elementary School

Maria is a senior colleague as well as a member of the same church as a friend of mine. Also, she enthusiastically expressed her interest in participating in my research in that

she was studying English education at a graduate level at that time. Maria truly understood

the difficulty in doing research and wanted to share our experiences of studying English

education in elementary schools. Such empathy made it much easier for me to conduct my

research. Likewise, this case showed that if one knows a person before knowing an

institution, it could bring a deeper and mutual relationship between a researcher and a

participant instead of a superficial and temporary one.

To get more familiar with Maria, we had a dinner together with my friend on June

20, 2004. We spent several hours talking with each other. During the conversation, I

explained my research and she let me visit her English class. In June 25, I came to Sinai

elementary school. Yet, I had difficulties identifying Maria's classroom. The structure

looked simple, but I could not figure out a way of locating the classrooms. When I found her

classroom, I realized why I had such a hard time: Maria's classroom was separated from the

other classrooms of fifth grade. It was far from the front entrance and very close to the back

entrance. When I got there, it was in the middle of class so that I had to wait in the corridor.

On the wall, there were works by students and small flowerpots besides windows. It made

me comfortable and relaxed even as I stood outside the classroom.

When recess started, I met Maria who looked really busy and rather angry. She told

me that the day before because some of her students did something wrong, she expressed

regret in order to make them realize their fault. She expressed her dismay and apologized to

me in that it was not a peaceful and enjoyable situation. Regardless of her worry, children

looked active and pleasantly played with each other. The third class started at 11:40. I was

sitting at the rear of the classroom. The English class was lively and interactive. Children

were willing to participate in classroom activities. After this class, I gave the informed consent form to Maria and she distributed it to students. Because she invited me to have a school lunch with her, I unexpectedly had a chance to observe another class, a science class that was held in the fourth session. While I was having lunch, I experienced another aspect of elementary school life at Sinai elementary school. These additional activities provided me with greater opportunity to know the children better.

Since there were a few class hours on Saturday, I came to school early in the morning. In Korea, most people worked half of a day on Saturday according to the "working hour by law". The school curriculum was also designed in the same way so that students received education only in the morning on Saturday. The Korean government has been implementing a five-day workweek system that gradually extended to all the workplaces. Now, many of elementary school boards begin to adopt the system and allow their students to have no class on Saturday once a month. Maria was standing in front of the school in order to guide the children safely across the street. I greeted her and then went to the classroom. Before the first class started, children were reading books. Because their homeroom teacher was not in the classroom, the class monitor kept the children quiet. I came to the classroom without causing any disturbance and asked some students whether they had brought the informed consent form from their parents. With help from some students, I collected the forms and started interviewing students whose parents agreed. During three recesses I interviewed them.

During the interviewing session, I found that some of the students were excited in interviews while others expressed indifferent attitudes. I felt that I was not a special person

to the students in Sinai elementary school unlike the students in Gana elementary school. There were many opportunities to be exposed to foreigners around them than around Gana elementary school. Sinai elementary school was located in the center of a city where one could often see foreign travelers and residents who work in EFL institutes or other corporations while fields and hills rather than urban landscapes surrounded Gana elementary school. From these students' attitudes, I could see how familiar students in the Sinai elementary school were with foreign cultures.

After the interviews with Sinai elementary students, I conducted interview sessions with Maria on a private occasion in restaurants. We kept in touch with each other not only during the proposed interview sessions but also on personal matters. This relationship has lasted since I left the research site. This sort of relationship enlarges my insight into creating desirable relationships between a researcher and a participant.

Key Participants

I interviewed my participants in Korean for their convenience. As shown in Appendix Ⅲ, I constructed several interview questions. However, I used these questions flexibly depending on contexts, which is based on the semi-structured interviewing method.

Elementary school teachers

Monica

For Monica, Royal elementary school located in Iksan city was the second place after she used to teach in rural areas. She was in the second year as an English specialist teacher who was responsible for only English as a subject, instead of becoming a homeroom teacher. Because she had a health problem, she wanted to avoid a heavy teaching load as a

homeroom teacher. The vice-principal recommended her to become an English specialist

teacher who was in charge of only English with fewer teaching hours. According to the

Reinforcement Ordinance of the Elementary and Secondary Education Law, an elementary

school can have subject teachers in the English, Music, Art, or Physical subject to the extent

of 0.75 per three classes that are higher than a third grade (Reinforcement Ordinance of the

Elementary and Secondary Education Law, 2003). Based on this Law, Monica decided to

teach English because she was more interested in English than in other subjects. As a result,

in this spring semester, she was teaching the fifth grade students English and was also

supposed to teach the sixth graders in the following fall semester. That's because she was

the only English specialist teacher in Royal elementary school.

Monica used to like studying English in the years of schooling because she was fond

of memorizing English vocabulary and understanding sentences by means of newly

acquired vocabulary. During her childhood, however, she had never been to other countries.

According to her, her parents thought that westerners employ wit and inner resources even

in a difficult situation watching foreign movies. In particular, her mom, comparing the life

of Western countries with that of Korea, said that they looked resourceful and happy.

However, Monica herself did not like foreign movies, nor eating western food such as pizza

or hamburger. Her style of life is closer to Korean traditional patterns of life. She said that

since she had a shy and passive personality, she did not attempt to initiate a conversation

with foreigners.

Nevertheless, she was enthusiastic about teaching English. She continuously

practiced her pronunciation in order to be more similar to a native English speaker, listening

to the CD, and often watched EBS (Educational Broadcasting System) English programs, that is, educational TV programs that provide varied kinds of educational information at government expense in Korea. Sometimes she obtained information about English-speaking cultures and then used it in her English classes. While we were having a conversation together, she showed a strong commitment to acquire better knowledge about English, expecting to share my experiences and studies. As well, she expressed thorough and critical views about elementary English education. With her cooperation, I gained a deep insight into English classes in elementary schools in Korea.

Maria

Maria was a homeroom teacher in Sinai elementary school. After majoring in English education during the university years, she was studying elementary English education for her M. A. program. Since she was highly motivated to teach English in elementary schools, she was enthusiastic about participating in my research. She wanted to develop a reciprocal relationship with me. I shared my knowledge about Canadian cultures and English education with her, which she looked for. In return, she was involved in the entire research process by becoming an interviewee and connecting me to her students to interview.

Maria had been teaching for seven years and was in her second year in Sinai elementary school. She said that she was lucky to transfer to Sinai elementary school at a relatively young age because Sinai elementary school belonged to one of the first school groups in Iksan. Most teachers in Sinai elementary school were old enough to have a long period of teaching experiences.

Monica looked forward to doing things related to English. She wanted to take responsibility for an English club as an extracurricular activity. Instead, to her disappointment, she was in charge of the choir because she used to have the same responsibility in a previous school. However, she still longed to take charge of the English club since she wanted to try to use innovative and creative teaching methods and ideas she obtained or discovered in her study. She would like to lead her students to learn English in a more effective and efficient way.

For her, this interest in English education started from her childhood. At that time when she attended an elementary school, English was not a regular subject. Nonetheless, since she really liked English, she had received private English tutoring in the sixth grade. Her parents also emphasized Math and English due to the overall GPA at first. As the globalization of education became a concern among people, her parents encouraged her to study English, describing how fabulous she look when she speak another language and acknowledging her with a need of English in the case of going abroad. Her parents themselves had favorable attitudes towards foreign countries. For example, they frequently mentioned that Japanese electronics such as an electronic razor were the best and that Swiss watches were also the best.

Maria's initial interest grew more intensive when she met a great English teacher in her seventh grade. Thanks to the English teacher, she was more interested in English and studied English hard. Because the trend of English curriculum and national exam focused on the grammatical approach, she primarily studied grammar. Nonetheless, she wanted to be a

simultaneous interpreter at the very outset, but she finally decided to go to a national

educational university.

Fortunately, she heard that an English major was newly created in the network of

national universities of education in Korea, and she decided to major in English. When she

was in the university, she had some opportunities to meet native English-speaking

instructors who came from Britain. Though current English education in Korea promoted

American English styles, she utilized some teaching methods in her English classes, which

the British instructor had employed. Until now, she had not had any opportunities to go

abroad yet, but she wanted to go to visit Britain in order to study the origin of English and

British English.

Related to the English teaching, Maria had a team-teaching experience in English in

a previous elementary school that was located in a poor district in Iksan city. When doing

team-teaching, she came to understand English teachers who worked in middle schools. In

her first class, she did not teach English well due to a lack of preparation for the English

class. However, as she was teaching the same content in different classes, she realized that

she was getting more skillful and confident in teaching the particular lesson. She could

utilize various teaching methods and try to speak English because she had more time by

reducing the frequency of trial and error that occurred frequently in normal English classes.

Finally, as for her taste in foreign cultures, she liked to see western movies because

she favored action movies. However, as she turned to a different genre, a romantic comedy,

she began to watch Korean movies. Because a large portion of themes in foreign movies

still focused primarily on action, she preferred Korean movies that deal with a romantic

theme. As well, she liked to eat western foods such as hamburger and pizza. She still liked them, but had become cautious of having hamburger or pizza frequently because of potential health problems.

While interviewing Maria, I could establish a rapport with her because both of us were in a graduate program and had a strong commitment to English education in Korea. Maria was supposed to finish her M. A. program in 2005. She was interested in cooperative learning in English classes for her thesis. As well, she planned to apply for the teacher-training program abroad. Our relationships made me think of a possibility of developing a long-term friendship.

Hanna

Hanna was in her second year of teaching in Gana elementary school after majoring in Pedagogy during the university year. When receiving her secondary education, she did not like English. She just studied English as much as she could to obtain a good mark in the national exam. Neither her parents emphasized English at all, nor did she visit other countries with her family. However, her parents had different perceptions of products from other countries. For instance, they recognized that Japanese products were strong and "cute" whereas American ones were practical.

Hanna used to watch foreign movies, but it was not because she was particularly interested in the foreign lives, but because she thought that foreign movies were filled with fun. These days she usually went to see Korean movies that were rapidly developed in light of story and humor. Hanna had been exposed to foreign cultures when she had been to China for a graduation trip during the university year. However, she did not need to speak

other languages such as Chinese or English because a Korean tour guide led her group of people. If she said that if she had a chance to go abroad again, she would like to go to China again because she did not have enough time to know China in depth in her first visit. In addition, she would like to go to Europe because she had a desire to experience their actual life that she had usually faced in the movies.

As for teacher education, she had not achieved an opportunity to participate in teacher education yet since it was no more than the second year of her teaching career. She added that she currently did not have time to prepare for English classes since she had much administrative work to do at school, but she tried to encourage her students to be familiar with their daily life by making a chart in English in which students practice the date and weather.

Jasmine

Jasmine was placed in Gana elementary school right after her graduation with Pedagogy major like Hanna. Since I contacted her in May, she said that she was too busy in learning the administrative work to prepare for her classes as a homeroom teacher.

During her schooling, she liked studying English because she was attached to humanities such as Korean language and English language. Among teachers interviewed, she was the only one who had traveled to other countries during her childhood. When she visited Thailand, she felt that other cultures were more open and liberal than Korean ones that put a high value on deference. At that time, she could practice English during her travels, different from Hanna. If she had a chance to travel again, she wanted to go to

Europe. She thought that any kind of experiences in other countries would motivate her students' learning.

Her parents emphasized English, but did not force her to study English hard. According to her, they motivated her and told her that English provided a cornerstone for everything. Just like her contemporaries who experienced the same era, her parents used to consider Korean movies inferior to foreign movies. At that time, the quality of Korean movies was much poorer than that of foreign movies. As a result, this sort of perceptions of foreign movies was prevalent in the past. However, she said that her parents did not say any other cultures were better than Korean.

Jasmine liked seeing Korean movies because she was more attached to the sentiment embedded in Korean movies. The foreign movies appeared full of action. She used to watch foreign movies when she was young, but she was not as impressed with foreign movies as Korean movies.

John

John was the fourth year of teaching, but the second year of English teaching. During his university years, he majored in Physical education and was currently doing his doctoral degree. He had been to Greece to obtain some background knowledge of his study that examined a comparative study on Physical education. This trip to Greece brought him not only broad perspectives to look at other cultures, but also an understanding of Greek culture. He said he could use his travel experience in teaching social science as well as English.

John used to like studying English very much during his schooling. About thirteen or fourteen years ago, his English teacher encouraged his classmates and him to participate in class activities actively and voluntarily, as was unusual in regular English classes. For example, they presented some stories in front of the whole class. He highlighted reading as well. At that time, his innovative teaching methods such as daily communication or active participation in classroom activities motivated John and other students to a great degree because the contemporary trend of English education was grammar-focused instruction. In addition to his English teacher, his parents also emphasized the importance of English. These two significant influences on his English education helped him to develop favorable relationships with English.

Like other teachers, he used to like watching foreign movies due to their large scale. More important, he used to look forward to seeing foreign life through movies since he wanted to go abroad. He said that he liked having both Korean traditional food and bread, but he normally preferred Korean food to western food because he was not accustomed to the latter.

Even though John was more interested in Physical education, he tried to activate his English classes based on his experience in Greece and acquired knowledge in teacher education. He led his students to engage in activities actively with their bodies adopting the TPR (Total Physical Response) method. He also expressed a desire to learn about my knowledge and experience in order to have better information about English education.

Esther

After her major in Fine Art, Esther was in the fourth year of her teaching career. Since she did not transfer from/to other elementary schools, she was considered a veteran teacher among her colleagues in Gana elementary school. She was familiar with administrative work and the school context. In fact, she was not supposed to teach English in 2004 since she was a homeroom teacher for the second graders who did not learn English. However, because the sixth graders' teacher was reluctant to teach English and asked for her, she substituted for him. The Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development (2002) allowed teachers to exchange classes, in particular an English class: "In elementary schools, home room teachers are in principle made responsible for teaching English, but new methods such as exchanging classes and team-teaching are also available to suit the individual schools" (p. 43).

This exchange sometimes occurred in elementary schools after teachers had to teach English. Older teachers did not try to teach English because English education they received during the schooling was remarkably different from the current one. For instance, their accent and grammar-oriented knowledge about English was dated, and detached from the current trend of English education. The predicament of teaching English was not only extremely stressful to elder teachers, but also pushed them to give up and to ask for younger teachers. As a result, Esther took charge of the sixth graders' English education.

Esther was fond of studying English during her secondary education. She had never been to other countries during childhood, nor did she grow up there. She preferred watching Korean movies to foreign movies due to the cultural difference. She was planning to visit Australia to experience other cultures. She thought that her experiences would benefit

students. She was interested in English education although she majored in Fine Art. She pushed her students to participate in classroom activities actively employing both English and Korean interchangeably.

Elementary school students

In conducting this research, I met a total of twenty elementary school students in both urban and rural areas, respectively 12 in a rural area and 8 in urban areas. To help readers understand, I add students' grade level to their name. For example, Philip4 indicates that Philip is a fourth grader.

Students in a rural area

When I visited Gana elementary school, interviews with students in rural areas were conducted simultaneously. On the second visit, I interviewed 7 fourth graders thanks to their homeroom teacher during the fourth class hour. During the period of extracurricular activity located in the middle of lunchtime, I interviewed 3 sixth graders. On the last visit, I added 2 interviews with third graders. I collected more consent forms from other students' parents. However, I could not interview more students due to the lack of time.

At first, students were curious about the interviewing process. The term "interview" is likely to be used in the field of broadcasting in Korea. Most students wondered whether they could be seen or heard in the TV or radio even though I explained that the purpose of this interview is to collect data for my thesis. Also, they repeatedly asked me if I had been to Canada. For them, it did not frequently happen to meet someone who had experienced foreign cultures. Some students were eager to participate in interviewing, while others felt so shy and embarrassed that they could not express their opinions clearly and speak out.

Since homeroom teachers in Gana elementary school supported my research to a great degree, I could interview students effectively even during a short period of time.

Students in urban areas

When I contacted students as participants in urban areas, I had to undergo more difficult processes of obtaining access. Since I had to meet a teacher and students as participants respectively in Royal elementary schools, I asked for my cousin who attended Royal elementary schools. However, because most of his friends attended private institutes right after school, it was not easy to contact them. After several trials failed, I just interviewed my cousin and turned to Sinai elementary schools.

I not only visited Sinai elementary schools three times, but also built a close relationship with Maria. Since Maria was a graduate student who studied elementary English education, she could understand my difficulties and help me a lot. This collaborative relationship made my research process much easier. I could use the morning time and recesses to interview students in her class. I collected approximately one third of the consent forms I distributed. Those students who were allowed to participate in my research enthusiastically respond to my inquiries. There is a significant difference between students in Sinai elementary schools and those in Gana elementary schools; in Sinai elementary schools many students did not express as much curiosity as those in Gana elementary schools did. Some students in Sinai elementary schools were interested in the fact that I had been to Canada, but the degree could not be comparable with that of rural school children. This may be because students in urban areas are more exposed to other cultures than those in rural areas.

Educational System beyond Research in Korea

The Korean educational system is quite different from the one here in Canada. The school year begins with the spring semester from March to July and continues with the fall semester in September whereas in Canada the school year starts in September and ends in June. Because the semester is operated differently, the school life is very different. When I started research in Korea, it was in the middle of the spring semester. Although the new school year started in March, everything seemed to settle down and to be in order. Usually May appeared loose because there were so many events such as Parents' Day and Teachers' Day including the athletic meeting planned twice a year. However, when I interviewed teachers and students, my research did not seem to disturb the school curriculum.

In addition, most elementary teachers think they need more pre-service preparation for teaching English. Teachers in public elementary schools graduate from the National Educational Universities and then are placed in elementary schools. They major in one of the subjects currently taught in elementary schools during their university years. However, when they enter elementary schools, most teachers have to teach all the subjects regardless of their major. The teaching of English as a subject is in a similar situation. The homeroom teachers also teach English combined with the other subjects. Currently, English as a subject in elementary school does not belong to one of the major subjects that have two official evaluations: mid-term and final examination. Nonetheless, teachers struggle to teach English because teaching another language is quite different from teaching other subjects such as social science and mathematics. The Ministry of Education supports the teaching

materials such as the CD-ROMs, but such support is minimal. Teachers need more authentic materials or other sources of help.

With these systemic limitations to teaching English in elementary schools, the age factor also plays an important role in English education. In practice, since novice teachers tend to be placed in elementary schools in rural areas, English teachers tend to be younger in rural elementary schools than in urban ones. In reality, teachers in the Yongsung elementary school are younger than in other elementary schools in urban areas. Generally, I found that the younger a teacher is, the more enthusiastic s/he is in teaching. Thus, the public English education in itself would be better in rural schools because the novice teachers seem to be more equipped with recent theories and methodologies of English education along with zeal and enthusiasm to teach. The age of the teachers who were the main participants in this study varied from the mid-twenties to mid-thirties.

The age of the students was from approximately nine to twelve because the Korean educational system allows elementary English as a subject from the third grade in elementary schools. In my research, I do not focus on any age factors because I concentrated on how teachers and students perceive English-spoken cultures through English education and how sociocultural factors may make a difference in learning English.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the process of my research. At first, I presented interviewing as a methodological rationale and explore its specific procedures. Examining documents such as English textbooks and observing English classes were also beneficial to my research since they enabled me to understand current elementary English education. As

a research site, the city of Iksan needed introducing to readers who do not have background information about it. Teaching its history, I show how the city of Iksan has been composed of two contrastive areas, urban and rural, within the same territory. Then, I introduce three elementary schools as specific research sites. Gana elementary school belongs to a rural area while Royal and Sinai elementary schools are located in urban areas. All the participants, 6 teachers and 20 students in elementary schools, came from these elementary schools. I described the processes of recruiting participants to obtaining access and establishing a relationship with them. Finally, I provided more additional and indispensable background information about Korean educational system.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

I 선생님, 그러면 영어 교육에 있어서 이제 여러 가지 요즘은 이제. 예전에는 문법이나 단어 중심이었지만, 지금은 이제 의사 소통을 주로 많이 하잖아요? 그 중에서 이제 그런 말들이 있거든요. 의사 소통을 제대로 하려면 그 나라 문화를 제대로 알아야 된다. 왜냐하면 우리 나라에서 밥 먹을 때 이렇게 먹는 것 하고 그러니까 다른 나라에서 밥 먹을 때 먹는 것 같은 그런 습관들이 다 틀리잖아요? 그런 문화를 알아야 의사 소통이 제대로 된다고 하는데, 선생님이 영어 교육, 외국어잖아요? 다루시면서 문화에 대한 면은 어떻게 생각하시는지요?

Teacher[2], you know that English education used to focus on grammar and vocabulary. However, it has currently moved to communication. It is said that people should know about the target language culture to communicate with each other appropriately. For example, the eating custom in Korea is different from in other countries. It is said that knowing different customs helps an appropriate way of communication. Teacher, how do you deal with culture teaching in English education in EFL contexts?

Hanna 문화에 대한 면들을? 제가 다룰 필요는 있다고 생각을 해요. 분명히 저도 영어 공부를 하면서 그러니까 그 사람들 문화에... 고등 학교 때 이럴 때 영어 수업을 받을 때, 그냥 표현들만 외워서 하느니, 영어 선생님 중에 외우라 외워서 시험 보라고 이렇게 시험 보고 하는 선생님이 있는가 하면, 영어 수업을 하다가 중간 중간에 외국 사람들의 문화에 대해서 설명을 해 준다거나 뭐 이러면 더 이렇게 잘 들어오더라구요. 그런게. 그래서, 물론 이 초등학생들이지만, 그런 것을 얘기해 주면, 그 사람들은 이렇게 한다더라 더 얘기를 해 주면 더 잘 받아들이지 않을까

About culture teaching? I think that I need to engage in culture teaching. When I used to attend a high school, there were different types of English teachers; some who focused on rote-memorization of English expressions and the others who introduced foreign cultures during classes. For sure, I listened to them more carefully and understood English better when the latter taught me. In the same manner, despite elementary students, they may understand English better if I connect it with culture teaching. From this idea, I made that at the rear of classroom (pointing a certain frame) that I intended for supervision of school board (See Appendix II). When I announce that I will ask some questions such as date or weather, I let children know how to prepare for appropriate answers. Also, I have taught them intonation. For

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[2] Koreans prefer someone's designations such as title or affiliation to their name when they indicate others. In particular, when they refer to someone related to the teaching profession they usually add an honorific form, 님, into 선생 (literally the same as *teacher*) and use 선생님 without mentioning teachers' name. While conducting interviewing I follow this Korean custom.

해서 생각을 해서 제가 저기 뒤에 있는 거. 저거, 지금 장학 지도용으로 보여 주기식으로 대충 만든건데, 저거를 할 때도 아침마다 선생님이 물어보겠다. 뭐, 요일이라든지 날씨 같은 것 물어보겠다라고 해서 "선생님이 뭐라고 질문을 하면 너가 뭐라고 대답을 해야 된다."라고 얘기를 하면서 이렇게 억양 같은 거에 대해서 설명을 해 줬어요. 우리 나라는 뭐 이렇게 "야, 너 밥 먹었나?" 끝에만 올리면 되지만, 그 나라 사람들은 그게 아니다. 뭐 너네가 뭐 중요하다고 생각하는 부분을 올렸다가 내렸다가 뭐 이런 것을 설명을 해 줬어요. 그 사람들은 이렇게 이렇게 얘기를 한다.라고 해 줬더니 더 흥미 있어 하고 잘 받아들이는 것 같더라구요. 그래서 문화에 대해서 설명을 해 주는 것, 이해를 더 빨리 이해를 시키는 방법일수도 있고, 더 잘 받아들이는 것 같아요.

example, Koreans raise the end of sentence with a question while English speakers use intonation depending on important words or phrases in sentences. When I provided children with the information about different uses of register, they seemed to be more interested and understand better. As a result, culture teaching may be a medium of facilitating an understanding of children and children seem to comprehend English better.

(Interview with Hanna in 29 May 2004)

These excerpts emerge from my interview with Hanna, one of the teacher participants. For the data analysis, I collected the total of 8 audiotapes: one for each teacher, one for Gana elementary school students, and one for elementary school students in Iksan. The interviews for teachers were tape-recorded for 15 minutes to more than 1 hour. The students' interviews took 5-10 minutes on average. I did not transcribe all the interview data. While listening to the tapes, I wrote down what I needed in Korean first and then translated it in English. Since there were so many chopped sentences during the interview, I had more hard time translating the interview so as to maintain the interviewee's intention. During the transcribing process, I could reexamine the interviews and synthesize what I had to write.

For the inquiry, I chose the urban-rural divide among many other divides such as family background. Since I had been educated in both urban and rural areas, I knew the significant differences between them from various perspectives. Generally, residents in rural areas are economically poor whereas people in urban areas are not. Under this assumption, I would like to know whether the urban-rural divide really affects English learning and if more determining factor exists.

At the beginning of this chapter, I present the research results on how elementary teachers implement culture teaching in their English instruction depending on their perceptions and cultural backgrounds and how their teaching influences students' attitudes towards English. Then, I look at different perceptions of teachers and students towards English-speaking cultures and learning behaviors affected by socio-cultural contexts that are situated in rural or urban areas. In order to see whether those teaching materials include cultural content in a text and to what extent cultural content influences culture teaching on elementary teachers in English classes, I investigate English textbooks as well as relevant documents. Finally, I show how much teachers and learners recognize the importance of intercultural competence and consider whether the theoretical model of Bennett et al (2003), DMIS, helps teachers to provide students with intercultural education in English classes.

Teachers' Perceptions

Teachers' ways of seeing the world significantly affect their students' attitudes and values towards the world. Under this fundamental assumption, I did research on elementary school teachers' perceptions towards both the English language and English-speaking cultures. Through an interview about their background, I investigated how frequently

teachers have experienced English-speaking cultures and how they think about others and different cultures. Teachers' firsthand experiences of other cultures can show how many opportunities teachers had and what kinds of perceptions they gained. The information from the teachers' background makes me delve into relationships between elementary English teachers and their perceptions of English.

Then, I show their opinions about culture teaching in English classes and provide a general overview on culture teaching in English classes in elementary school settings. I explore their own definitions of culture and present their preferences and views of foreigners and other cultures. More important, I want to know about how they formulate culture teaching in practice. Here, I present some restrictions and predicaments of culture teaching in current elementary English education in Korea.

Along with the difficulties of culture teaching, I concentrate on teachers' experiences of and insights into teacher education, and on their innovative and constructive ideas for improving teacher education. I present how much they are satisfied with current teacher education and what types of education they have received. In particular, I present how teacher education for English provides elementary teachers with practical knowledge immediately applicable to their English teaching. In this subsection, I adopt an emic perspective (Geertz, 1983) from which teachers have experienced and given their critical voices of overall teacher education.

Exposure to English-speaking cultures

Elementary English teachers in Korea have few opportunities to experience English-speaking cultures through their lifetime. During childhood most of their parents could not

afford to give them opportunities to travel to other countries, especially English-speaking countries. For example, none of the six teachers who participated in my research went abroad at an early age except for Jasmine. However, even Jasmine did not travel to English-speaking countries. This indicates while the teachers were learning English they might build up misinformed images towards English-speaking cultures that were detached from the real life of English-speaking people.

In addition, elementary school teachers become more liable to go abroad when they are economically independent of their parents. However, English-speaking countries do not take priority over other countries for a trip because they think that any experience of other cultures will be beneficial to their students. For instance, Jasmine wanted to visit Europe because she believed that her firsthand experiences in Europe might motivate her students to be more interested in a social science class about the lives of European countries. This results from a status of English as a subject in elementary schools, which does not belong to primary subjects such as Korean language, math, social science, and science. A number of elementary teachers agree with Jasmine as well. Thus, a trip to English-speaking countries is not an urgent need for current elementary teachers who are responsible for English education.

Nonetheless, globalization trends affect Korean society so that people can often see foreigners around them despite not trying to go abroad. The research site, Iksan, was not an exception. Walking across streets, I could often see some foreigners, even though Iksan is neither located around Seoul, the capital of Korea, where an enormous variety of foreigners stay, nor regarded as a large city. Generally, the foreigners are divided into two groups, that

is, "white Europeans" and other Asians. In fact, some Asian women from the Philippines and others from South Asia marry farmers, and live in rural areas. Thus, even in rural areas, it is not hard to meet foreigners.

English teachers have more opportunities to meet English people because of an increasing need of English education in Korea. In reality, many foreigners come to Korea for EFL teaching jobs every year. Some of them work in public institutions and others in private institutions. For example, Monica has met foreigners twice: once in a teacher-training program and the other time in a church. However, because Monica tends to be timid and passive, it is almost impossible for her to engage in conversations with foreigners as illustrated in these excerpts from interviews with her.

어, 개인적으로는 만나본 적은 없고 연수 받을 때, 원어민 강사 선생님 계셨고, 아! 우리 교회에, 교회에 호주 사람이 있었는데, 제가 접근을 피했죠. 한 마디라도 걸어와서 옆에 사람들이 못한다고 망신당할까봐 (laughing)

M: Um, I have not met foreigners personally, but met a foreign instructor in a teacher-training program. Ah! In my church, I saw an Australian, but I avoid meeting him because of a fear of being laughed because of my English ability

남자여가지고, 여자 같으면 접근하기가 좀 편했을 텐데... 남자라서... 좀 외모에 대해서 그런 게 있는 것 같아요. 외국 사람 외모에 대해서 막 코 크고 그런 외모에 대해서
어. 그래서 내가 피하는 것 같아요. 주된 원인은 의사소통이 문제가 있을 까봐(laugh)

M: As well, he is a man. If a foreigner were a woman, it might be much easier for me to get closer to the foreigner. As a man... I seem to feel uncomfortable with an appearance of foreigners who have a big nose. As a result, I avoid them. However, a main reason is that I am worried about miscommunication.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

She was not accustomed to his appearance such as having a big nose. She also hesitated talking with foreigners because she fears that others will make fun of her because of her insufficient English ability as an English teacher.

On the other hand, Maria is enthusiastic about teaching English. She attended a private institute after work where native English teachers teach. She said that hanging around with her teacher and classmates was more helpful in improving English than English classes with him. Outside classes, she could learn everyday English that usually she could not encounter through books and lectures. In addition, she sought other effective methods for better English education by studying English education at a graduate level and applying for teacher education abroad at the government's expense because she was highly motivated to teach English.

Likewise, although there are increasing opportunities to meet foreign cultures and others in Korea, English teachers do not seem to utilize them fully due to their "passive" personalities and attitudes. Monica said,

저는 좀더. 다른 사람에 비해서 피하는 것 같아요. 소극적으로.
자신이 없으니까. 가르치는 것은 괜찮은데, 애들 가르치는 것은 주어진 범위 내에서 내가 공부해 가지고 가르치고 하니까 괜찮은데, 그 사람들과 만나면 무슨 말이 나, 나올지 모르잖아요? 그런 변수가 있으니까 그런 위험에서 벗어나가지고 (laughing)

M: I think I avoid meeting foreigners more than others. Passively.

I am not confident enough to speak out. Teaching English is different from speaking English with foreigners. I can teach English because its range of content is limited. I can prepare for it, but I cannot talk with foreigners due to unexpected variables when I talk with a foreigner.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

Therefore, English teachers in elementary schools need to have more enthusiastic and active attitudes towards others to enlarge their knowledge of foreign cultures. In other words, the challenge facing elementary teachers lies in how to conquer and overcome their struggles to "speak out" regardless of how frequently they are exposed to English-speaking cultures or others.

Reality of teaching culture in English classes

In a previous section, I presented how elementary teachers are exposed to English-speaking cultures. Since I assumed that teachers' lives might influence their teaching, it was important to examine their lives prior to looking at culture teaching in elementary English classes. Now, I describe how teachers define culture, how they develop attitudes and values toward foreign cultures, and how they deliver culture teaching in English classes in elementary schools.

First of all, many elementary teachers generally seem to embrace Hall (1973)'s definition of culture, that is, "the way of life of a people, … the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things" (p. 20). All the teachers interviewed defined culture in a similar way. For instance, Monica defined culture as

혼히 배워온 (laughing) 그런 내용인 것 같아요. 오랜 세월 동안에… 행해져온 그런 생활 습관, 생활 습관이라고 생각해요. 반복되어진 생활 습관 같은 거.

It is a familiar content learned, that is, a way of life held for a long time. A way of life. A repeated way of life.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

Also, Hanna regarded culture as

일반적인 정의? 문… 화라는 것은 그 사람들의… 생활 모습이죠? 에. 그 사람들의 생활하는 모습

A general definition? Culture is a picture of people's life in a particular country. Yeah, a picture of the people's life.

(Interview with Hanna, 29 May 2004)

Based on these definitions, all six teachers took a critical stance on foreign cultures. They did not presume automatically that culture in developed countries is always higher than culture in developing countries. Pennycook (1994, 1998) is concerned about the possibility of neo-colonization due to the prevalence of English all over the world. All six

teachers thought that when individuals are exposed to other cultures they have to accept or discard them depending on their appropriateness and usefulness to their lives. During an interview with her, Monica highlighted the practical ways of life of American culture, but she expressed her dismay at its too liberal life styles. In other words, she underscores a value system when she determines which culture is acceptable or not. In light of her value system, she likes to accept exclusively certain cultures that are ethically or morally desirable. She abhors depraved and blatant behaviors that are generally regarded as negative aspects in western cultures. In this way, Maria rebukes children who like hip-hop culture or rap music because such children are apt to behave in a rebellious way without critical thinking of its good or bad effects. John also agreed with ideas of openness and respect for others, and he disliked accepting a political culture such as war in the U.S. Likewise teachers are highly critical of other cultures instead of accepting everything without questioning it when encountering other cultures.

In addition, teachers do not express any exclusionary attitudes towards foreigners who live in Korea. All of them accept living together in the era of globalization. In the case of John, he has empathy for foreigners because he had the same experience as a sojourner in Greece. In other words, from this experience, John has an open mind to understand others' situations. Such favorable attitudes ensure that teachers will not force their students to form a negative attitude towards others, and lead them to have balanced views about other cultures.

Through contact with other cultures, teachers are aware of the importance of culture teaching in communicative English classes in elementary schools in Korea. They regard

culture teaching as an effective medium for creating a communicative English class.

However, they feel that they themselves are deficient in culture teaching in English classes

because they do not have much knowledge of English-speaking cultures. Even English

textbooks do not provide much cultural content in the texts. Only Teacher's Guidebooks

provide teachers with some tips on cultural content for every lesson. Thus, while teachers

know the usefulness of culture teaching, they do not successfully adopt culture teaching to

English classes because of their lack of knowledge and relevant teaching materials.

Nonetheless, teachers try to connect culture teaching with English classes for

stimulating students in improving communicative competence. Hanna introduced students

to different uses of intonation. For example, when Koreans ask a question like "너 밥

먹었냐? [Did you have a meal?]", they usually use rising intonation at the end of the

sentence. In contrast, English-speaking people may use different intonations in a sentence

according to the speaker's intention. If a speaker wonders WHO had a meal, s/he may put

the main stress on "you". Through such explanations, students might start being more

interested in English by looking at differences between the Korean language and English

language. For another example, Esther told students that each country uses different units of

currency. In other words, she let them know that Americans use the dollar whereas English

the pound. However, after the explanation, she did not deal with their specific uses in depth

because even she did not know more about the currency used in other countries. As a result,

this is an example of how teachers cannot but have a limited approach to culture teaching in

spite of their zeal to incorporate culture teaching into their English classes.

Teacher education

It has not been long since English is being taught in elementary schools as a regular subject from the third grade. In the early period of implementation, most existent elementary teachers resisted teaching English because they were not capable of communicating in English, nor did they have an appropriate knowledge of English. However, as the Ministry of Education emphasized the need for English in the era of globalization, it assured teachers that teacher education would provide them with pertinent knowledge of teaching English in their teacher education. Thus, I examine the management of current teacher education as well as teachers' opinions of it with regard to culture teaching.

English teacher education takes place every summer (August) and winter vacation (January) for 20 6-hour days, for a total of 120 hours. At first, homeroom teachers who were in charge of an English subject could voluntarily register for the program. However, these days teachers who take responsibility for the third grade and have not joined teacher education should take teacher education at least once. The number of teachers who can participate in English teacher education depends on the size of each school.

English teacher education needs reinforcing to satisfy teachers for various reasons. Current elementary school teachers expected native English instructors in English teacher education, but the Ministry of Education could not afford to deliver them. John and Maria received lectures from Korean teachers who had lived in an English-speaking country. They wanted to improve their communicative competence and experience other cultures during the program, because the primary goal of elementary English education is communication. However, since the Korean lecturers in teacher education often used Korean more

frequently than English, they did not practice English, nor did they experience any different

cultural behaviors that foreign lecturers might display.

Moreover, English teacher education coincides with an axiom that "the rich get

richer and the poor get poorer". There is English teacher education to go abroad at

government's expense. After the IMF in 1997, the program temporarily ceased, but these

days it has been revived so that many teachers are eager to apply for teacher education (for

example, Monica in the first interview). English teacher education abroad operates for

approximately a month, thus teachers may avail themselves of school vacations. The

Ministry of Education aims at equality of opportunity to provide teachers with a high quality

teacher education for English teachers who have not had any experiences to go abroad or

work in rural schools (선진교육현장 체험 연수계획 [A plan to experience and take

teacher education in Advanced Education of other countries], 2003). It documents

"연수대상자 선정시에는 해외연수.유학 미경험자 우선 선발 [priority for those who

have neither studied nor trained abroad when giving opportunities for teacher education

abroad]" and "농어촌지역 교사를 위하여 도 단위 교육청 (경기도 제외)의

연수인원 배정에 별도배려[Benefits for teachers in rural areas by placing a certain ratio

of applicants in each provincial office of education]".   However, this policy still has some

problems in terms of the evaluation process such as oral proficiency test and oral interviews

(영어교육활성화대책 [A Plan to Activate English Education in the Kangwondo Office of

Education], 2003). 교육부 주관 교원특별해외연수(초•중등학교 영어지도교사)계획

[A Plan of the Special Teacher Education Abroad by the Ministry of Education (Elementary and Secondary English teachers)], 2003) documents the criteria for teacher education abroad as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Criteria of Teachers Receiving Teacher Education Abroad

시교육청의 최종 선발 기준		The final criteria of each city office of Education for teacher training abroad
1) 2002 년 근무성적(20%반영)과 면접 및 영어회화 능력 검정 (80%반영) 결과로 선발		selection criteria: the total of 20% of applicant's service record in 2002 and 80% of interviewing and communication ability
2) 평가 내용 및 방법[evaluation process]	a) 면접: 주제 발표(정해진 주제를 영어로 발표)	Interviewing: Topic presentation (give a speech about a given topic in English)-40%
	b) 영어회화 능력: Free talking-40%	Communication ability: Free talking-40%
3) 면접 및 영어회화 능력 검정: 중등교육과 주관		Evaluating interviewing and communication ability supervised by the department of secondary education

In reality, most teachers who have not been to foreign countries or taught in rural schools tend to possess lower levels of English ability than those who have worked in urban schools. Thus, they actually do not dare to apply for teacher education abroad, and this newly adopted teacher education creates more marked discrepancies between teachers who have already achieved advanced levels of English ability and those who have little knowledge about English education.

Teachers have opinions as to the duration and content of teacher education. During teacher education, they are motivated to learn and speak English, but as soon as teacher education is over, they start to lose their enthusiasm and zeal for English education. There is

no follow-up teacher education after this initial teacher education. Also, since there is no

level tested among teachers, teacher education consists of quite easy content. The content is

mainly about communication skills. Maria reported that

교재하구요, 교재 연구하고, 지도, 지도 방법이죠. 그건데, 아 그리고 의사 소통. 세 가지가 있는 데요. 지금은 좀 약간 회화 쪽으로 많이 기운 것 같아요.

There are three major ways: textbook development, teaching methods, and communication. Current teacher education tends to concentrate on communication more.

(Interview with Maria, 24 June 2004)

There is no systematic training of cultural content in teacher education because teachers

usually do not regard cultural education as necessary content. Maria described,

좀 그런 건 많이 꺼려하시던데... 선생님들이 '그냥 다 아는 내용아냐?' 그러면서 그냥 어렴풋이 알고 계시는 걸로만 지나가고, 어떤 연수 프로그램에 있어서는 가치를 못 느끼시는 것 같아요. 그냥 차라리 그러한 것을 원하면 차라리 native speaker 가 와서 이야기를 해 준다면 들을려나 모르는데, 누가 와서 얘기하면 '나도 저 정도는 알고 있어.' 이런 식으로. 예. 흘러 들으시는 식으로.

English education. They are satisfied with their superficial knowledge of culture. As a result, they do not think that culture is worthwhile content in teacher education. If they want to know about culture, they may listen to a native speaker. However, if Korean experts in culture teaching try to instruct them, the teachers may not listen to them. They think as if they have as much knowledge of culture as the experts have.

(Interview with Maria, 26 June 2004)

For elementary teachers in Korea, to understand another culture often means stepping

outside one's own culture which is not what many Korean teachers are apt to do. In other

words, when teachers long for teacher education on English-speaking cultures, they want to

learn and experience different cultures that native English speakers bring with themselves.

However, current teacher education is not likely to provide teachers with a satisfactory

quality of English education.

English learners' Attitudes towards English

Korean elementary students have begun to learn English as a regular subject since 1997. Originally, elementary students from the third grade had to take two hours of English classes every week. In 2004, the English class hour of the third and fourth grade was reduced from two to one hour a week. The decreased English class hour appears contradictory to the government policy of enthusiastic English learning in Korea. Based on this situation, I examine students' English learning in elementary schools and their attitudes towards English-speaking cultures based on culture learning through their lifetime.

A general landscape of elementary English learning in Korea

Generally, students in Korea start leaning English from the third grade in public elementary schools. Some students have already become accustomed to English prior to the third grade by attending private English institutes while others are just beginning to know the English alphabet. The knowledge gap among students makes it difficult for their teachers to include English content in their classes. It also influences students' English learning in regard to their interest and motivation. Thus, I want to describe a general landscape of students' English learning at the beginning level which is typical of what I saw, through observing in either public schools or private institutes.

Students in the third and fourth grades are supposed to acquire oral language such as speaking and listening without knowing even the English alphabet. The primary goal of the first two-year English classes is to attract students' interest in English learning. Teachers are not supposed to force their students to memorize vocabulary or to study English hard. They offer a pleasant and comfortable learning environment so that students do not express any

initial reluctance to learn English from the very beginning. Most of time students play games and do role-plays. Because English classes need active and voluntary participation in classroom activities, they look more relaxing and lively than other classes.

When students become fifth and sixth graders, they start to learn written language skills such as writing and reading in both urban and rural areas. After practicing listening and speaking skills, they start with the alphabet and spelling. Even though the curriculum entails systematic and gradual separation of the four language skills, many students have actually started to learn written language at the same time. Students even in lower grades have learned vocabulary and the alphabet in private English institutes or through private tutoring. Students in elementary schools are busy acquiring Basic English skills, instead of enjoying English as the curriculum documents. Since students have already advanced through the school curriculum, it is neither practical nor realistic for teachers to present English gradually according to the curriculum.

Moreover, as Rigg (1991) insists, I assert that language learning is a whole and unitary process, not a collection of single elements. Even though the purpose of separated acquisition is to reduce students' study load and to impose less stress on them, separated language learning neither has positive effects on culture teaching, nor seems to produce amicable learning of English education in elementary schools. For instance, John resists teaching English in elementary schools because he believes that a big gap of English ability among students will let some students give up English at an early age. He describes,

지금 아직 초등이... 저는 시골 학교에 있기 때문에, 근무를 하기 때문에 아이들의 사정을 다 알거든요. 문화적인 차이도 도시아이들보다

Currently, since I teach students in a rural school, I know my children's situations well. Children in rura areas feel even more alienated from other cultures than in urban areas. Because children in rural areas

많아요. 많이 접해 보지 못했기 때문에 그런 것을 가르치기에는 아직 이르다. 중학교 정도 가야 문화적인 그런 것을 배우는 것이, 초등학교에서는 영어적인 기초, 아! 이런 것이 있구나. dialog 이런 게 있구나! 그냥 재미있게 그런 식으로 진행을 해야지, 아이들한테 스트레스를 주면 안 되겠더라구요. 스트레스의 예를 들면 단어를 외워야 된다거나 temporary 에 단어를 외워야 된다는 그런 거. 그런 것을 많이 강조를 하거든요. 그런데 실제적으로 3 학년 때부터 영어가 시작이 되는데, 1 부터 100 까지를 몰라요. 애들이. 모르니까. 그런 기본적인 거는 그냥 넘어가요. 선생님들도 다. 알겠지 하고 넘어가는데, 실질적으로 애들한테 얘기를 해 보면 안 돼요. 5 학년 때 딱 보니까, 3 학년 4 학년 때 계속 영어를 지금 배워오는데, 6 학년 때에도 제가 한번 애들을, 영어 선생님이 연세가 많으셔서 제가 수업을 대신했었거든요. 6 학년 정도면 어느 정도 수준이 올라와 있어야 하는데, 그런 애들 중에서는 수준차이가 많이 나버리지요. 개인차가 너무 심하게 나버려요. 애들이 1 을 못 쓰는 애도 있어요. 영어로 first 라는, 단어조차도 못써요. 애들이. 그러니까 발음자체도 안 돼요. 완전히 떨어져버렸어요. 그러니까 초등학교에 갑자기 영어가 들어온 후부터 애들이 수준차이가 너무 나 버리는 거예요.

are rarely exposed to other cultures, it is considered that it is early to teach cultural content in elementary schools. When children enter middle schools, it is an appropriate timing for them to learn cultural content. In elementary schools, it is enough for them to be interested in dialog. Teachers in elementary schools lead English classes with more fun and less stress. For example, they must not force their children to memorize the vocabulary as many as possible temporarily. However, in practice, teachers put more emphasis on such rote-memorization. In contrast, some children in higher grades do not know the numbers from 1 to 100 even if they start to learn English in the third grade. Teachers assume that children know such basic level of English and they teach next chapters. In fact, children cannot count numbers in English. Children continue to learn English from the third grade to the sixth. Nevertheless the fifth graders and even sixth graders- who I taught because I temporarily substituted for their homeroom teachers due to his old age- do not acquire all the levels of English given during classes. There is a big individual gap in the English ability among students. Some sixth graders cannot write FIRST. Even worse, those children cannot pronounce it. The English in elementary schools completely falls down. Thus, after children learn English in elementary schools, their individual levels of English become far apart.

(Interview with John in 27 May, 2004)

To him, it is not too much to say that cultural teaching is less important even though he assumes that culture teaching may be helpful for English learning.

Students receive a different quality of English education according to the institutions, such as public schools or private institutes, they attend. On the one hand, students mainly

learn how to ask others questions and directions, learning about road, weather, and time in

public schools. The topics all tend to be related to Korean situations. The following excerpt

presents a student participant's perception of her English classes.

I: 수업 시간에 주로 영어에 대해서 뭘 배워요?

Sophi5: 수업 시간에. 영어 수업 시간에요?

I: 으흠.

Sophi5: 영어 수업 시간에는요, 어. 5 학년

되서요?

I: 으흠.

Sophi5: 길에 대해서도 배웠구요, 시간에

대해서도 배우고, 날씨에 대해서도 배우구요.

I: 주로 우리 나라 날씨, 뭐 시간 이런거에

대해서 배워요?

Sophi5: 네

I: What have you mostly learned about English during classes?
Sophi5: During classes, English classes?
I: Yes
Sophi5: In English classes, ... Um. As a fifth grader?
I: Yes
Sophi5: I learned about the road, time, and weather.
I: Have you learned mainly about Korean weather, time, etc.?
Sophi5: Yes.

However, Sophi5' opinion seems to be contradictory to Yu (2003)' analysis of the fifth and

sixth graders' English textbooks. Yu states:

... 교과서의 문화내용을 보편적, 한국적, 영미적, 한국적 & 영미적으로 분류된 것이다.

그 결과, 솔직하게 감정을 표현하는 생활, 감탄하는 일 등 영미적인 문화적 배경이 많이

반영되었다. 반면 한국적 배경의 문화내용이 적었으며, 한국적 & 영미적 내용으로 양

문화를 비교하는 것도 2~3 개 정도에 불과했다. [... cultural content in textbooks is

categorized into ubiquitous, Korean, English-speaking, and a combined Korean and English-speaking

cultures. As a result, it reflects English-speaking cultures such as behaviors to express one's emotions

and admiration overtly. In contrast, cultural content based on Korean culture seldom appears and comparing Korean cultures with English-speaking ones is only 2~3.]. (pp. 23-24)

This serious conflict of opinions represents a big gap between the national curriculum and its implementation; that is, the government engages in the process of textbook publishing in light of their policy, but in practice both teachers and learners do not seem to catch up with the direction of curriculum. On the other hand, students learn vocabulary and grammar in private institutes. To learn cultural content related to English-speaking cultures rarely occurs. Only Rebekah5, one student, said that her Canadian English teacher in a private institute sometimes introduced lakes and provinces in Canada.

Likewise, current elementary English education in theory does not seem to accord with practice. It seemingly encourages students to be interested in English learning and to enjoy English, but it actually turned out a little different for secondary English education that focuses mainly on written language learning. Elementary school students have already started to arduously memorize vocabulary and grammar. Also, while the curriculum presents the importance of cultural teaching and learning in English classes in elementary schools, students do not seem to receive as much cultural content as the curriculum presents.

Culture learning through the life of students and learners' attitudes towards English-speaking cultures

There are two ways of experiencing other cultures for English learners in Korea: one can go abroad and have direct experiences, or one can stay in Korea and have firsthand or secondhand experiences through resources such as media or expatriate English teachers. However, elementary school students do not seem to be exposed to English-speaking cultures to a great degree in either way. On the one hand, elementary school students do not

have many opportunities to experience other cultures in foreign countries. Among twenty

students interviewed, there are only three students who went abroad to English-speaking and

other countries: One in rural areas and two in urban areas. Philip4 in rural areas visited his

uncle's house in the U. S. with his grandmother during the winter vacation when he was in

the third grade. Sarah5 went to China for language training because she wanted to be a

diplomat. Rebekah5 was the student who has the most traveling experiences. She usually

went abroad every vacation because her father worked in the U. S. The situation of

Rebekah5 was an extremely rare case in Iksan. Except for these three, most students never

experienced foreign cultures firsthand.

On the other hand, elementary school students do not seem to have a lot of

opportunities to gain firsthand or secondhand experiences of other cultures inside Korea.

Some students who attend private institutes in which native English teachers instruct, at

least do not have awkward attitudes when they meet foreigners because they are accustomed

to others from different cultures in their private institutes. However, most students in Iksan

have seldom met foreigners inside Korea. As for another source of gaining knowledge about

other cultures, television offers various kinds of English programs such as EBS (Educational

Broadcasting System). Some students watched English programs when they were fun or

when it had a caption in Korean. Without captions, they said that they did not understand

the program very well. Thus, for elementary school students, English programs on T.V. do

not satisfy students' curiosity about other cultures.

These scarce resources of having access to English-speaking cultures do not

contribute to elementary students' knowledge of other cultures as they try to develop

appropriate attitudes to understand others. Most students interviewed did not show any plausible reason for preferring or disliking western food or pop songs. Some of them said that they liked Korean food because it was from Korea. However, if they are told any cultural explanations about other cultures, they must have knowledge of and insight into other cultures. This recognition enables them to have a flexible attitude to see others. Such an attitude and their ways of living and thinking may contribute to their English learning as well.

Accordingly, since students do not have an appropriate cultural learning along with their English learning, they may not know how to adopt a certain attitude towards other cultures. Perhaps they may become extremely nationalistic before having a chance to learn about other cultures. Even though English is taught as a regular subject from a third grade in public elementary schools, students still experience a large discrepancy between linguistic and cultural teaching. In other words, they are more knowledgeable about linguistic features than about culturally appropriate behaviors and thinking.

Socio-cultural Influences between rural and urban areas

Teachers in three elementary schools in both rural and urban areas are exposed to different learning environments depending on varied socio-cultural contexts. Generally, elementary school teachers in both urban and rural areas recognize the importance of English education; yet there exists a crucial difference when teachers prepare for their English classes. For example, teachers in urban areas tend to pay careful attention to their pronunciation and knowledge of English because many of their students are exposed to abundant information about English from a variety of external sources such as private

institutes whose teachers come from English-speaking countries. On the contrary, teachers in rural areas do not exert extra effort in improving their English skills since their students' knowledge of English does not challenge them, nor do they have enough time to prepare for English teaching.

Based on this background as noted previously, I now look at the types of environments students experience in each rural or urban area. I also examine different amounts of effort students themselves exert and parents' influences on learning English.

Different surroundings' influence on English learning

There are so many factors that can affect English learning, such as the socio-economic status of the family and the national curriculum. In Korea, a geographical factor, where you live, significantly influences language learners because of the socio-cultural contexts in which English learning occurs. Here, I focus on different English learning experiences in rural and urban areas.

First of all, there is a large gap between rural and urban areas when we look at English teaching and learning. Monica points out students' different preparations for English classes.

시골학교는 그러니까 어... 선수학습이 전혀 안 된 상태라서- 아이들이 학원이나 집에서 비디오 테잎 같은 거 이런 거 안 듣고- 전적으로 학교 교육에 의존하니까 대부분의 아이들이 그래요. 선생님이 그냥 처음부터 기초부터 알려줘야 하는 그런 단계인데, 초등학교 영어 보면 3 학년 하고 4 학년 가면, 4 학년 아이들이 3 학년 내용을 다 알고 있어야 그 다음에 내용이 전개가

I used to teach in a rural area. Students in the rural elementary school did not prepare for an English class at home by going to private institutes or watching videotapes. Since they depended only on a school curriculum, teachers had to teach them a very basic level of English. When students become fourth graders, they normally start to learn a new curriculum for the fourth graders on the basis of the previous learning. However, students in rural areas cannot catch up with the curriculum because they learn English only once a week. As a result, students in rural areas rarely understand the English class because they don't have a follow-up study at home. They struggled with just a couple of sentences during class. In contrast, students in urban areas have

되잖아요? 그런데 일 주일에 한 시간 수업해서는 아이들이 그것을 다 소화할 수가 없잖아요. 그래서 학교 교육에 전적으로 의지하니까 아이들이 전혀 모른다는 거죠. 그래서 그 몇개 안 되는 문장 가지고 한 시간에 소화하기도 힘든데, 여기 시내 아이들은 어렸을 때부터 다 했기 때문에 그 수준 이상이기 때문에 다 뭐 한번만 말해도 알아듣고, 더 높은 그런 수준의 내용도 제가 한번씩 물어보면, 알고 있더라구요.

learned English since an early age and their level of English is higher than what the curriculum requires. They understood what their teacher taught them and already acquired the information that I sometimes asked for an advanced level of English.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

According to Monica, most students in urban areas prepare for English classes by attending private institutes, whereas those in rural areas are completely dependent on only a school curriculum. When I interviewed students in rural areas, some of them attended private English institutes. Since I used to attend those institutes that the students went to, I am sure that the quality of their private English institutes is much lower than that of private institutes in urban areas. In private institutes in rural areas, one or a couple of teachers are responsible for all the main subjects such as Korean, Math, Social science, Science, and English regardless of their major or specialty. In fact, though English does not belong to the four main subjects that hold mid-term and final exams, English is always considered important in those institutes due to its prevailing importance in Korean society. In contrast, lecturers in English private institutes in urban areas need to be qualified; that is, at least they majored in English-related fields or they can speak fluently. Some institutes hire native English speakers. To attract parents' attention, English private institutes in urban areas cannot but qualify their teachers and classes. As a result, the preparation for English classes is related to environmental contexts in which English learning happens.

Secondly, peers play an important role in children's learning in Korea (Patrick, 2003). In urban areas, most students attend private institutes. Some students are eager to go to the private institutes, but many of them automatically register at one of the private institutes because their friends attend. Monica mentions,

아이들도 도시 아이들이 훨씬 적극적이예요. 주위에서 다 하기 때문에 자기들이 꼭 이걸 해야 한다는 생각을 가지고 있는데, 시골 아이들은 그런 게 별로 없는 것 같아요.

Children in rural areas are not exposed to external pressure to learn English whereas those in urban areas are active and enthusiastic in learning English. Children in urban areas have to learn English because most of their friends do.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

This excerpt accords with Patrick (2003)'s story about a young woman who dropped out of a school at her young age and then started to learn English again. Since the woman did not lose her friends who often mix English vocabulary during their conversation, she decided to learn English. In other words, her friends unintentionally prompted her to learn English that she once lost an opportunity to learn. In reality, when I worked with my cousin who was in the fifth grade in Royal elementary school, I was able to have a chance to observe that he had to consider his friends' class schedules in private institutes if he wanted to play with him. In fact, all of his friends attended several private institutes such as either English or Chinese character or both. Likewise, students in urban areas cannot help but attend private institutes because all their friends do. On the contrary, there is not such a pressure on students in rural areas. Students in rural areas neither need to wait for nor be disturbed by a playmate's study plan after school when they want to play. For them, peers do not boost English learning.

Thirdly, it is interesting to look at children's preferences between Korean food and western food such as Pizza or hamburger. Most of children have their favorite food preferences according to tastiness. However, there are several students whose choice results from their patriotic mind. R3 stated that "우리나라 음식이니까 [I like Korean food because it is Korean]" (Interview with R3, 27 May 2004). R4 also said "김치, 우리 나라 음식이구요, ...[Kimchi because it is Korean food, ...]" (Interview with R4, 27 May 2004). For them, western food seems to be correlated with nationality, not just with a matter of taste. At this point, I am curious about why these remarkable answers only come from children in rural areas. As a member of the same community, I am not surprised at those responses from children because I used to think in that way. This following narrative shows how I dealt with others and other cultures.

> I lived in the same village for 20 years without moving elsewhere. Even though I moved out my hometown for further study in my early twenties, I still visited my hometown due to my parents' residence there. This continuous contact enabled me to see social changes of the village. When I was a child, each household was lively and crowded with their offspring. However, these days a number of families left the town and only the elder resides. Nonetheless, I trace back to my old memories.
>
> When I was young, I had never met foreigners nor exposed to foreign cultures. However, since I heard that my uncle lived in Canada, I sometimes imagined the life in Canada. To me, Canada was the unrealistic country that I could not go. During my uncle's visit to Korea, I admired him just because he lived in Canada. At that time, since I did not watch television frequently, I hardly obtained the information about other cultures. As a result, I did not have a balanced view on others and other cultures.
>
> One day, several hot issues came out across the country. Under the power of globalization, the government had to join international associations such as Uruguay Round. Since my father was a farmer, my family could not but be responsive to this convention due to imported agricultural products. A number of farmers gave up farming and many people campaigned "신토불이 [Let's trust our products and not use foreign products]". While observing this situation, I took nationalistic attitude towards others and other cultures. Nobody told me how to deal with foreign-related issues in an appropriate way. I thought that since I was Korean, I should like all the Korean-related things.
>
> (My personal narrative, 21 March 2005

Likewise, because I have had those similar ideas as the children, I had empathy for the children in rural areas. Children may develop such attitudes since social changes and

interchanges in rural communities do not occur as rapidly and frequently as those in urban areas. Even though they have some opportunities to meet foreigners by chance, it does not mean that they have culturally appropriate attitudes and values. If a school curriculum includes cultural content, they may learn how to adopt critical stances on other cultures. However, the current English curriculum does not provide children in rural areas with enlightening insights into being "a culturally appropriate person" referring to a person who can understand other cultures in depth and behave appropriately to a particular culture in which the person is situated (교육인적자원부 [The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development], 1998; 교육인적자원부 [The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development], 1999).

Fourthly, students tend to decide on prospective countries to travel to depending on their experiences of foreign cultures. In rural areas, half of the students wanted to go to the U. S. while three of eight students in urban areas chose Canada and only one student wanted to go to the U. S. I think that this results from their sociocultural differences. According to Rampton (1990)'s notion of affiliation, many students in rural areas tend to be more affiliated with the U. S. than other countries. However, this sort of affiliation seems to be somewhat different from Rampton's students. Students in rural areas could not help choosing the U. S. because they were a little more familiar with the name of the U. S. among many other countries. In other words, they did not have considerable expertise in dealing with other cultures or countries. For example, some of them tend to regard English as the American language. Stephen3 stated,

집에서랑 학교에서요 영어를   The U. S. because I learn English, not any other

배우니까요. 다른 말은 안 배우니까.
다른 나라 말요. 우리 학교에서
미국말만 배우니까요. 미국요.

languages in both home and a school. I learn American language in my elementary school. The U. S.

(Interview with Stephen3, 29 May 2004)

On the contrary, students in urban areas recognize that English is used in other countries as well as in the U. S because they have met other English-speaking people in their private institutes. Many of them mentioned their Canadian or Australian English teachers in their private institutes. As a result, elementary school students are more affiliated to respectively different English-speaking cultures depending on their experiences (e.g. which foreign cultures they encounter and what environmental contexts determine their choice of foreign countries to take a trip).

From the data, my assumption that there are different English learning phenomena between rural and urban areas does not appear to be fully supported. Personal circumstances also affect the quality of English learning. In the case of Claire4, she attends a private English institute whose teachers come from English-speaking countries even though she lives in a rural area. After class, she takes a bus to inner Iksan for approximately one hour to go to the institute that her aunt runs. There, she goes to a private piano institute as well. Then, she comes back home by taking the last bus with her brother. She said that she went to private institutes voluntarily although her parents were sometimes worried about her security due to the quite late homecoming. Generally, the fee for private English classes taught by native speaker is much higher than that of normal private English classes by a Korean teacher. In particular, because Claire4 attends two kinds of private institutes, the expensive tuition fee may place a heavy burden on her family. However, she is lucky enough to have an aunt who owns a private English institute. In her case, she does not pay

for English classes or receives a discount if she has to pay. As a result, the case of Claire4 is

rare in rural areas, but her family background enables her to receive better English education.

As noted earlier, environmental contexts significantly affect the language

socialization of children in Korea (Schecter & Bayley, 2002; Bayley & Schecter, 2003).

Where students live almost determines the quality of English education as well as a pattern

of language socialization in either private or public learning places. In rural areas, teachers

concentrate on delivering content in a textbook because children cannot afford to prepare for

English classes at home. Given this situation, teachers hardly consider cultural content in the

middle of English classes. Also, children do not seem to be motivated to learn English

because they do not find any examples among their peers or siblings. In contrast, teachers in

urban areas utilize various ways of teaching English since their students' English ability is

higher than the one the school curriculum requires. Students in urban areas cannot help but

learn English because all their friends do. In other words, peers play an important role in

language socialization of children residing in urban areas. Learning English is common and

indispensable to students in urban elementary schools whereas it is not always a choice

offered to students in rural elementary schools.

Parents' support for English education

When children learn English in Korea, one of the most important factors may be

parents' excessive enthusiasm and overwhelming support for their children's education. In

Korea, where English is taught as a foreign language, it is difficult to acquire English like

native English speakers. People exert much effort and time in learning English because the

entire Korean society needs people with competent English ability in an era of globalization.

As a result, parents push, or, even worse, force their children to learn English at an early age.

However, all the parents do not have the same enthusiastic support for their

children's English learning. Monica maintained that children's different outcomes of

English learning resulted from the different levels of educational career of their parents.

학력 차이도, 부모님의 학력차이도 좀 나지요. 여기는 대졸 이상이 많고 아마 시골은 고졸 이상이 많을 거예요. 어... 부모님의 학력도 자녀들에게 미치는 영향이 있더라구요?	There is a difference of educational career between children's parents in rural areas and those in urban areas. The parents here in urban areas are college/university graduates while those in rural areas are high school graduates. (Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

In other words, she believes that the more educated parents are, the more supportive they are

of language learning. In reality, rural life does not need English much whereas urban life

ceaselessly pushes people to learn English with regard to opportunities, for promotion in

their job or for a better life. For example, Sophi5 explained her parents' emphasis on

English.

어 나중에요. 나중에. 요즘에는 취직을 할려면 영어나 그런 것을 많이 해야 뭐 상타기도 유리하고 그러잖아요. 그러니까 나중에 고생하지 말라고 그렇게 하는 것 같아요.	Um. For the future. Currently, if people try to get a job, they have to achieve English ability for any kinds of awards. My parents push me to learn English not to experience any hardship to my future life. (Interview with Sophi5, 25 June 2004)

Thus, parents' educational career is circular because it significantly affects the choice of

their job. In return, the job enables parents to support their children's education both

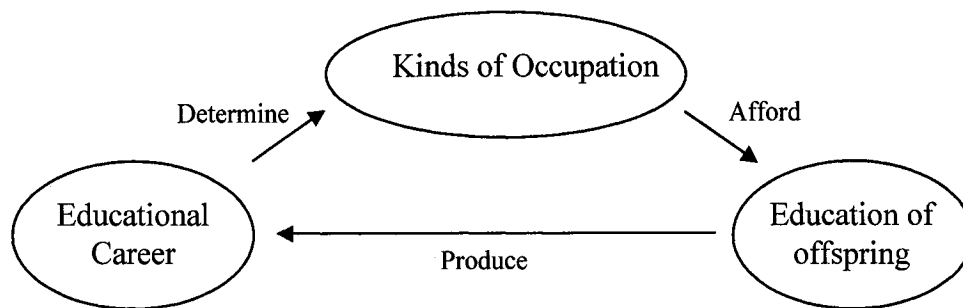financially and socio-contextually as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7. A Circular Model of Education

Along with their educational career, parents in rural areas sometimes cannot afford to pay for private institutes even though they want their children to receive further English education. Monica said,

그리고 사는게 힘들고 경제적인 것이 능력이 안 되서 학원을 보내고 싶어도 못 보내시는 분들도 많이 있지요. 가르쳐야 한다는 것은 알지만.

As well, the economic status in rural areas is lower than one in urban areas. The parents in rural areas cannot afford to send their children to receive additional English education in private institutions.

(Interview with Monica, 17 May 2004)

Children usually start with English under their parents' care and support, but those in rural areas regard English as a difficult and boring subject because their parents can neither afford to give them additional education, nor are they interested in English education. As a result, children in rural areas hardly pay attention to English classes whereas those in urban areas seek higher levels of English education.

With regard to parents' financial support for English education, there is a difference between districts inside Iksan. For instance, parents in Royael-dong and Sinai-dong tend to spend more money on their children's English education than those in other districts such as Pyungga-dong. Maria argued that English education differed even between districts, which are just rural and urban areas.

아니요, 아니요. 아... 있어요. 있어. 그러니까, 이제 전의 학교는 잘하는 아이들이, 그러니까 학원에

No, No. Yes, there is a gap of preparation for English classes between two schools. A few students in the previous school attended private institution whereas most students here

다니는 아이들이 뭐 열 손가락 안에 드는데, 여기 영동초등학교 같은 경우에는 안 배우는 아이들이 열 손가락 안에 들죠. 기본적으로 영어는 할 줄 아는 것 같고. 예를, 한 예를 들면, 자 지난 학교에서 했을 때는 뭐 알파벳 같은 것을 전혀 못 쓰는 사람들이 굉장히 많고 그 다음에 말 발화하는 것도 굉장히 어눌하고 막 안 하려고 하는 아이들도 많았는데, 여기는 그래도 알파벳은 다 쓰니까, 그리고 인제 좀 긴 문장 같은 것만 어려워라 하는 거지, 간단한 거 좀 우리에게 친숙한 거나 잘 얘기를 하는 편이예요. 그러니까 제 생각에는 굉장히 수준이 차이가 있다고 봐요. 아무래도 제가 전에 근무하던 학교가 시긴 시인데, 조금 아무래도 많이 가난한 집 아이들이 있는 동네예요. 좀 할머니 할아버지 밑에 사는. 부모님은 멀리 계시고. 그러니까 학원은 뭐 기본적으로 속셈학원 정도만 다니지, 왜냐하면 영어 학원은 굉장히 시간, 아니 돈도 많이 들잖아요? 그런 것은 많이 받는 사람이 없었던 것 같아요.

in this school go to private institutions. For example, even many students in the previous school neither know English alphabets nor want to participate in English classes. In contrast, most students here can write alphabets from the beginning. They struggle with long sentences, but speak out short sentences with confidence. Therefore, I think there is a big difference of levels of English between two schools. The previous school is in a district that the poor lives. Many students live with their grandparents separated from their parents. They went to private arithmetic institutions, but could not afford to go to English institutes because of a high tuition fee. There, many children did not receive private English education.

(Interview with Maria, 24 June 2004

However, her previous school is located inside Iksan, but its circumstances for English learning is similar to rural areas' because its economic and social status is below that of average urban life. The fact that children live with their grandparents apart from their parents indicates that their parents cannot afford to take care of their children by themselves. Usually those parents are busy in making money from early morning to late night as manual workers in larger cities. Some of them can send a certain amount of money to their parents while others could not. In most cases, many children who their grandparents bring up cannot afford to receive additional private education. This fact does not appear completely contradictory to my assumption about different English education depending on

sociocultural contexts, rural or urban areas because the environmental condition of those poor districts inside Iksan is quite similar to that of rural areas. However, SES seems to play a role as important as a geographical factor in elementary English learning in Korea.

As for cultural education in English classes, parents' support is an important factor that brings different cultural understandings of other cultures. In the case of Rebekah5, she was the only one who watched English television programs. Her father works in the U. S. and comes home once a year. Her mother used to live in Los Angeles. It is no exaggeration that her parents consider English as an important subject in which she has to do well. She has been to many other countries for reasons of both study and travel and continues to attend private English institutes whose teachers are native English speakers. Since her parents can afford to pay for her travel and private English classes, she is curious about others and speaks English with confidence, instead of feeling unfamiliar with foreigners. Therefore, parents' different socio-economic status in each rural or urban area greatly affects their children's overall English education.

Analysis of Current English Textbooks in Elementary Schools

English textbooks in elementary schools consist of two types: a regular textbook and a CD. The textbook provides pictures and some exercises. Most text such as conversations and passages is included in the CD. Since students are given both a textbook and a CD, they are supposed to listen to the CD at home prior to taking English classes and practice the content in English classes. The volume of the textbook for fifth and sixth graders is thicker than the one for third and fourth graders because the former includes many

picture cards for activities. Since the textbook does not provide any written text, students always work with the CD in addition to textbooks according to my observation.

In Korea, there are many studies investigating cultural content in elementary English textbooks, but most of the studies are based on a quantitative methodology (Kim, 2002; Lee, 1997; Lee, 2002; Lee, 2003; Lee & Park, 2001; Yu, 2003). They present statistical evidence, but do not focus on how teachers and students experience and view cultural education from a practical perspective. Therefore, here I present how teachers reflect on cultural teaching in relation to elementary English textbooks and what kinds of cultural education students actually receive.

Focus on children's interest towards English learning

Elementary English textbooks are designed to draw students' interest in English and to regard English classes as joyful and favorable learning. 제 7 차 교육과정 교육부 고시 제 1997-15 호 초등학교 교육과정 [The Seventh Educational Curriculum by The Minster of Education, Notification Number 1997-15, Elementary School Curriculum] (1998) presents,

영어 교육의 도입 단계인 초등 학교에서는 영어에 대한 친숙감과 자신감을 심어 주고, 영어에 대한 흥미와 관심을 지속적으로 유지시켜 주는 것이 중요하다. 이러한 분위기와 학습 태도는 향후 중·고등 학교 영어 교육으로 이어져, 영어 구사 능력을 향상시키는 밑거름이 될 수 있도록 한다. (p. 286)

It is important to build students' familiarity and confidence with English in elementary schools as an introductory stage of English education, and to keep their interest in English. Such a learning atmosphere and learning attitudes are connected to secondary English education and become a basis of improving English communicative ability.

To know how English classes activate this document, let's take an example of Esther's

English class. Generally, a great portion of time in English classes is allotted to classroom

activities such as role-play or games to draw children's interest in English classes and to

minimize the stress of studying English. When I observed Esther's English class, she started

with playing a chant in the CD and singing together to review a previous English class as

shown in Figure 10 and then used picture cards to encourage students' active participation

in her English class. At this moment, teachers sometimes introduced cultural difference

between Korea and English-speaking countries. For example, they explain that English-

speakers generally wear their shoes both inside and outside house whereas Koreans take

them off inside house (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Chant Included in the Sixth Graders' English Textbook
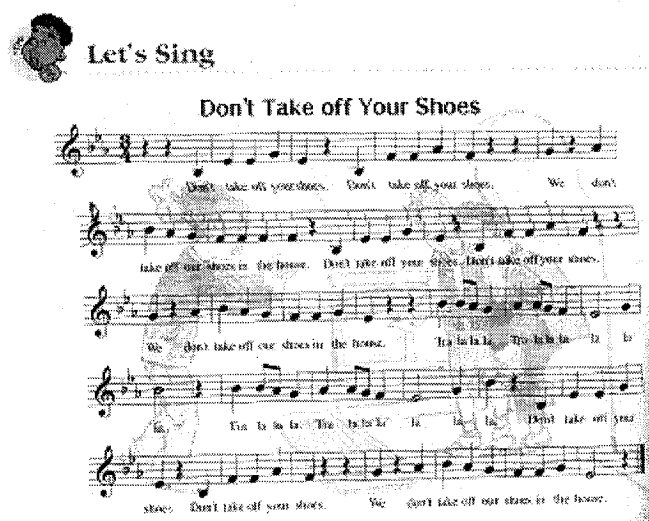
After students are familiar with certain phrases through interactions with a partner or among

classmates, they practiced those acquired phrases playing with dice. They also practice a

writing of new phrases listening to the CD and solving questions in an exercise section of

the English textbook as shown in Figure 12 as well as additional questions teacher created.

In this English class, a half an hour, three quarters of class hour, is used for activities to implement the document. In addition, the textbooks are primarily composed of colorful pictures with photos and animations. When I look at the textbooks, I think that they read like a comic book due to the many drawings and few words.

Figure 9. Illustrations in the Third Graders' English Textbook
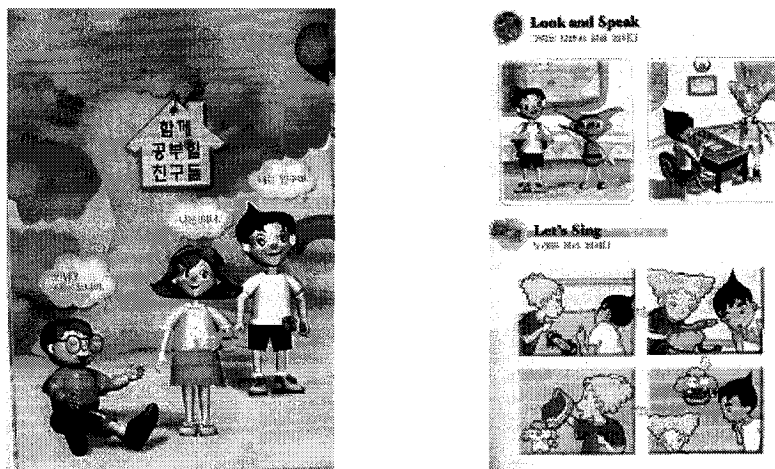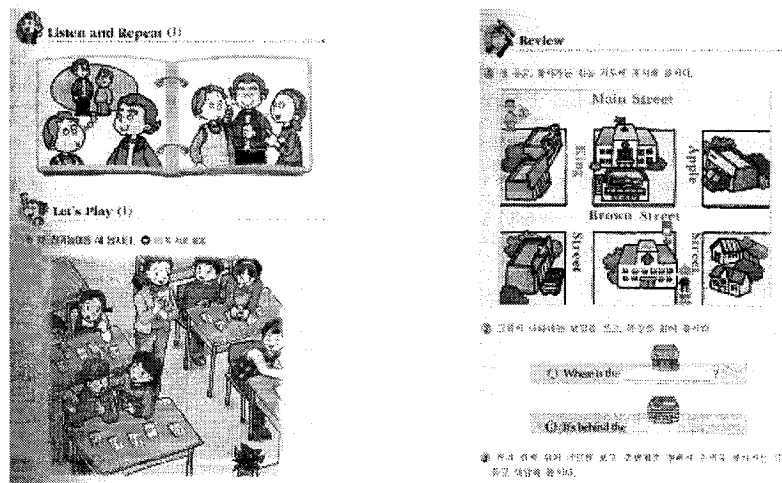

Figure 10. Illustrations in the sixth graders' English textbook

Furthermore, as shown in Table 6 and Figure 10, each chapter includes various activities instead of many tasks to memorize that textbooks in secondary education typically contain.

Table 7. Steps of Each Chapter in Elementary English Textbooks

3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade
Look and Listen	Look and Listen	Look and Listen	Look and Listen
Listen and Repeat	Listen and Repeat	Listen and Repeat	Listen and Repeat
Let's Play	Let's Play	Let's Play	Let's Play
Let's Chant	Let's Chant	**Look and Speak**	Look and Speak
Look and Speak	Let's Sing	Let's Read	Let's Read
Let's Sing	**Let's Read**	Let's Sing	Let's Sing
Let's Role-play	Let's Role-play	Let's Chant	Let's Chant
Let's Review	Let's Review	**Let's Write**	Let's Write
		Role-play	Role-play
		Activity	Activity
		Review	Review

If we take a careful look at Table 7, we can easily discover that four linguistic functions-speaking, listening, reading, and writing- are gradually introduced to students. In the second section of this chapter, I have already delineated a rationale for gradual presentation of each language skill. To remind readers of the seventh curriculum again, the seventh curriculum aims at drawing elementary school children's attention to English learning with fun and at the use of a *whole language approach* (Rigg, 1991), that is, students integrate four linguistic functions. The seventh curriculum developers presume that if children are exposed to procedural presentations of language skills, they are less stressed and reluctant to start to learn English at an early age. Though those developers pursue the ultimate goal of a whole language approach in elementary English education, children separately learn English. For instance, they start with oral communication and then move to written communication. In fact, the seventh curriculum documents that children in Korea learn exclusively speaking and listening at first and then gradually undergo reading and writing (교육인적자원부

[The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development], 1999). Thus, the seventh

curriculum seems to be intrinsically problematic in itself.

Figure 11. Steps of Each Chapter in the Third graders' English Textbook

As shown in Table 6, the third graders focus on *speaking* and *listening* and then the fourth

graders start to learn *reading*. In reality, however, many third graders could read English

text because they learn English in private institutes in which focus more on written

communication in spite of a difference between rural areas and urban areas. From the fifth

grade, students have to be able to use *whole language* including *writing*. The seventh

curriculum tries to attract students' interest in English at the beginning by introducing

written language such as *reading* and *writing* later, which students regard as a difficult task.

However, although teachers try to separate the four linguistic functions depending

on a grade level, they cannot avoid writing vocabulary and sentences on a blackboard even

at the beginning. The intention of the seventh curriculum, that is, to attract students to English, looks ideal, but teachers in practice can hardly pursue it. Esther recommends that writing should be included in lower graders' text.

3,4 학년 때는 거의 듣기 말하기를 하고, 5 학년 때부터 알파벳을 쓰거든요? 5 학년 딱 들어와서 A, B, C 그렇게 써요. 그런데 요즘 애들이 하도 과외 활동이나 사교육이 많아서 이미, 나는 누구다 My name is 누구다. 이렇게 하는데, 5 학년에 때 와서 A, B, C, D 를 쓰고 소문자 a, b, c, d 를 쓰고 교육과정에서 그렇게 나와요. 5 학년때부터 그것을 쓰고, 6 학년에 가서는 문장을 써요. How much is it? 이렇게 문장을 쓰거든요. 그런데, 그것을 굳이 5 학년에 넣을 필요 없이 3,4 학년 때부터도 가능하다고 생각을 해요. 그러면 아이들이 좀더 빨리, 물론 그것을 막 쓰고 단어를 외우고 하는 것이 아니라 이미 다 아니까 아이들이. 5 학년 단계에서보다 좀더 낮췄으면 쓰기 활동하고 듣고 말하기 활동이 자연스럽게 어우러질 수 있다고 생각한다. 그러니까 5 학년 때부터 나오니까 별개예요. 그러니까 5 학년 때 그때 써도 이미 다 알고 있는 아이들이 많으니까.

The third and fourth graders are to listen and speak, and the fifth graders write English alphabet When children become the fifth graders, they start to write A, B, and C. However since children currently receive extra curriculum activities or private education, they can say, "My name is ..." whereas the curriculum presents a writing of A, B, C, and D as well as a, b, c, and d in the fifth grade. The fifth graders write English alphabets and the sixth graders write sentences such as "How much is it?" However I think it is possible to start to write from the third or fourth grade, not necessarily from the fifth grade. If so, I think children can connect speaking and listening activities with writing activities if writing is started from lower grades than fifth grade. It is odd that writing appears in the fifth grade because many of the fifth graders have already known writing.

(Interview with Esther, 27 May 2004)

From a practical perspective, Esther asserts that children can learn writing at an earlier age than the seventh curriculum assumes. The seventh curriculum documents that writing is supposed to be presented at the fifth grade, but children have already acquired written English through private English education. According to her, children are able to employ whole language and learn English in a more effective and harmonized way. Although the

Ministry of Education aims at reducing children's heavy load of studying English and catching students' interest in English by separating linguistic functions in terms of grade level, its intention appears not to be practical, but to be largely theoretical. As Esther describes, to divide four linguistic functions and to teach them separately are not applied to Korea where English education is under high concern and powerful influence. As soon as English education is inserted in elementary education, parents strongly push their children to receive private English education. English ability of many elementary school students is above that stated in the curriculum. As a result, since children reinforce English learning through private education, it is not likely to be meaningful or helpful for them to start with oral communication and learn written communication later.

Furthermore, elementary teachers use different teaching skills to attract students' attention to their English classes. Some teachers use games or role-plays when their students do not concentrate on English classes. Other teachers use chants and flash cards in order to draw their students' interest in English classes. However, there are a few teachers who use cultural content. In the case of Maria, she said,

그런 얘기 해 주면 굉장히 호기심 있게 들어요. 듣고 또 그것에 대해서 수긍을 하고. 올라갔는지 안 올라갔는지는 제가 꾸준히 안해 봐서 모르겠지만, 단계적으로 보면 아이들이 흥미있어라 하고 그래요. 그리고 실제적으로 해 보라고 하면 그때만큼은 하게 돼요. 제가 뭐 "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry"이런 것을 자주 사용하라고 하면 하게 되는데, 이제 좀 며칠 후가 되면 잊죠? 다시. 좋아라 하는 것 같아요. 저 자체도 좀 흥미 있고.

If I talk about cultural differences, students arouse great curiosities. They listen to and accept the cultural explanation. I am not sure whether their interest in English classes due to the cultural content goes up or down. However, students are gradually interested in English classes when I introduce cultural content in a systematical way. If I ask them for practicing some cultural tips, they try to do it. For example, if I push them to use "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry" they use them for a while. Even though they forget using them later, they seem to like it. I myself am interested in and have curiosities about cultural information. I think children do too.

(Interview with Maria, 29 July 2004)

호기심 있고. 아이들도 그런다는 생각이

드네요.

In contrast to Maria, most of teachers do not use cultural content as a strategy to attract

students' attention to English classes because they think that they do not have appropriate

and sufficient knowledge of English-speaking cultures. However, they utilize different

teaching methods to keep their students' interest in English classes.

Introducing English-speaking cultures

Every elementary English textbook includes pictures of famous monuments or

spectacles in English-speaking countries such as the U. S., England, Canada, and Australia

in the front pages. The third and fourth graders' textbooks allotted two pages to the U. S.

and one page to the rest of those countries while those of the fifth and sixth graders

respectively put one well-known exemplar of each country on one page as shown in Figure

15-18.

Figure 12. American Cultural Landmarks in the Third Graders' English Textbook
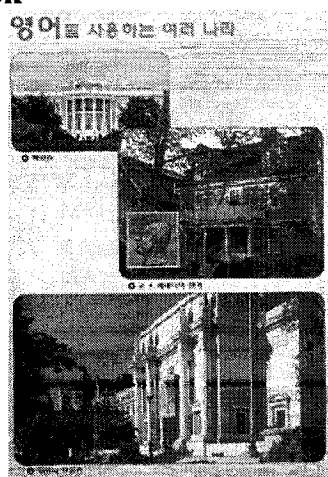
Figure 13. English Cultural Landmarks in the Third Graders' English Textbook
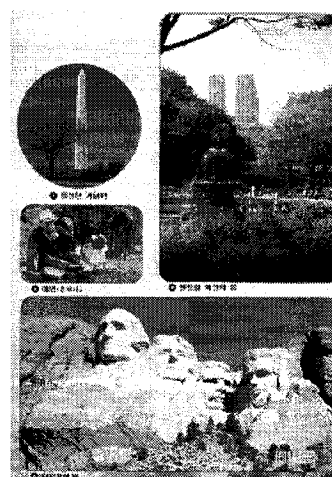
Figure 14. Canadian Cultural Landmarks in the Third Graders'

English Textbook

**Figure 15. Australian Cultural
Landmarks in the Third Graders'
English Textbook**

**Figure 16. Cultural Landmarks in the
Fifth Graders' English Textbook**
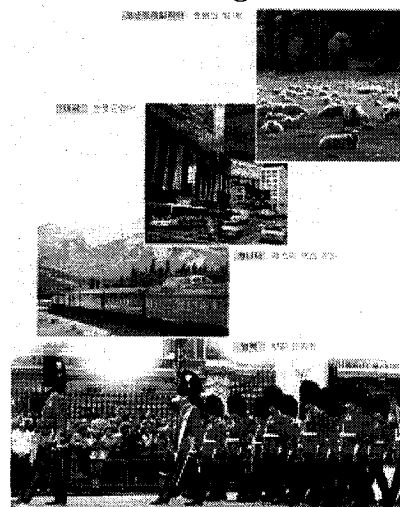
In these pictures, students may get cultural landmarks about four English-speaking countries.

For example, students may be curious about and study the American political history and

culture when they see the picture of J. F. Kennedy in Figure 12. They may also remember

that Canada is filled with plenty of natural resources and beautiful and magnificent scenery

when they look at the pictures of Banff National Park and wild animals. In this way,

students have different cultural impressions and knowledge about each country through

those pictures in English textbooks.

As for the different allocation of pages in the third and fourth graders' English

textbooks with regard to cultural landmarks, I do not know exactly how it is processed

because I was not deeply involved in the industry of textbook publication. Rather I focus on

what a selection of current elementary English textbooks look like. Nonetheless, I dare say

that English education in Korea is inextricably linked to American English and cultures

since Korea has had a close relationship with the U.S. politically and economically.

Differential page allotment of cultural landmarks to English speaking countries- two pages

to the U. S. and one page respectively to England, Canada, or Australia- does not seemingly

influence children's perceptions of English-speaking countries because of its small amount

of cultural information. However, as I mentioned earlier in the third section, it may impact

greatly on students in rural areas, who do not frequently encounter foreign cultures.

If the front pages help students have slight knowledge of other cultures, they should

be designed carefully to help students develop appropriate views of other cultures. In the

fourth graders' textbook, the photo of Canadian Niagara Falls belongs to the American

culture section.

Figure 17. A Photo of Canadian Niagara   **Figure 18. A Picture of American Niagara**
Falls in the Fourth Graders' Textbook   **Falls**
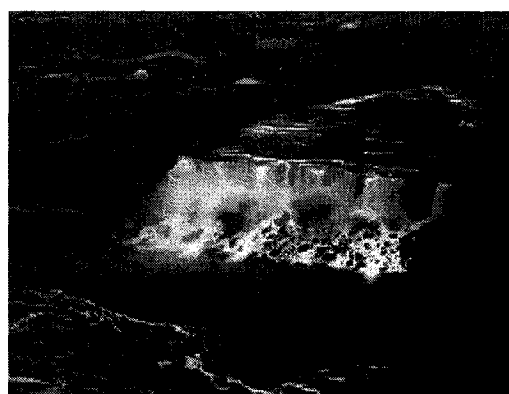
When I discovered this error in the fourth graders' English textbook, I could hardly accept it. When I looked up a list of editorial members at the back of the textbook, I could not help being shocked. The Ministry of Education holds the copyright of elementary English textbooks. There are three groups of educators involved in the process of elementary English textbook publishing: textbook developers, textbook designers, and textbook advisors. Textbook developers and designers are mostly university professors or educational professionals who work in the Ministry of Education while textbook advisors come from elementary schools. I wonder why this sort of mistake occurred despite examinations of 45 educators associated with textbook publishing processes. I do not think that any of them had been to Niagara Falls, nor were they ignorant about the fact that Canadian Niagara Falls differs from American Niagara Falls. Although I have not been involved in textbook publication yet, I am sure that textbook developers and designers do not pay as much careful attention to cultural aspects presented in English textbooks as to linguistic structures or grammar. Another possibility is in their educational career. Generally, most educational professionals engaged in English education have achieved their doctoral degree in English

speaking countries, in particular the U. S. Their friendly attitudes towards the U. S. are often

reflected in the development of textbook, curriculum, and policy at large (e.g., Koreans are

more accustomed to American English than British English because American English is

well known to the whole Korean society including English education). As a result, the error,

that is, regarding Canadian Niagara Falls as a belonging to the U. S. can be minimized or

considered trivial among those textbook developers or designers. However, for teachers and

students who do not have information about Niagara Falls, there is no way to distinguish the

misguided information about the fact that Canadian Niagara Falls looks like a horseshoe

whereas American Niagara Falls looks flat.

In addition, some particular pictures repeatedly appear in textbooks although each

country has many other cultural items. Big Ben is shown twice in the third and fourth

graders' textbooks.

Figure 19. A Picture of Big Ben in the Third Graders' Textbook

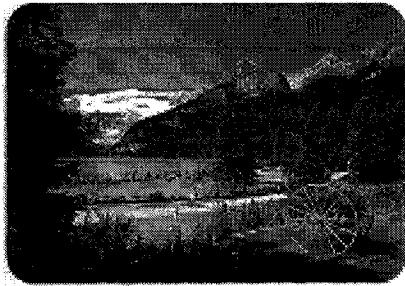**Figure 20. A Picture of Big Ben in the Fourth Graders' Textbook**

Textbook developers and designers are responsible for the content in English textbooks.

They may think that Big Ben is the most famous monument in England and then present it

repeatedly. However, they may deprive students of an opportunity to know more about

England by doing so. In the Canadian section, Banff National Park is shown in the both

third and fourth graders' textbook in spite of different scenery throughout the country.

Figure 21. A Picture of Banff National Park in the Third Graders' Textbook

Figure 22. A Picture of Banff National Park in the Fourth Graders' Textbook
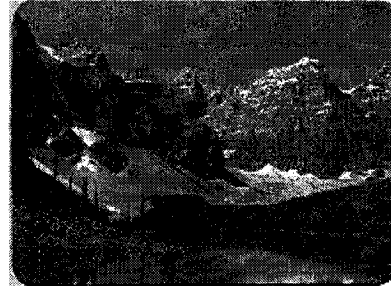
As for Australia, Blue Mountains and the Sydney harbor in the third textbook are also

repeatedly seen in the fourth graders' textbook. The picture of the Royal Guard in England

frequently appears through elementary English textbooks. Likewise, cultural content in

elementary English textbooks is so poor that it needs to be reexamined.

More important, textbook developers do not consider cultural content carefully

related to Korean contexts. In the fifth graders' textbook, there is a 13th lesson titled "What

did you do yesterday?" The pictures that provide possible answers are a museum, park, zoo,

and river. However, those activities after class may not be possible for most Korean students

as their parents are too busy to spend doing such things with them. As a result, when Korean

students learn the 13th lesson, they cannot make different conversations with each other. It's

because most of them have similar daily schedules after school such as going to private

institutes. Monica supports the inappropriateness of cultural content to Korean contexts in

elementary English textbooks.

어. 그런데 또 그게 있네요. 이론적으로 아이들 영어를 가르칠 때, 해석하고 읽고 그런 옛날 기존의 방식을 쓰는 것이 아니고, 실제 생활에, 생활에 접목시켜서 아이들에게 가르치는데, 조금 미국의 그 문화를 바탕으로 하는 내용들도 있기 때문에 좀 아이들에게 생소한 내용도 있어요. 실제 생활과 관련지어서 다르게 해 봐라 하면 하면 너무 안 맞으니까 우리가 교과서에서 배운 내용 가지고는 만들수가 없더라구요. 우리 생활에 맞춰서 만들려면 못 만들겠더라구요. 예를 들면, 스케줄을 짜는 그런 과제가 있으면 교과서 내용은 미국 아이들 위주로 미국 아이들은 방과후에 활동을 많이 하잖아요? 수영하고 테니스 치고, 캠핑가고 하이킹. 뭐 이런 걸로 주로 내용 구성되어 있는데 우리 아이들 오후에 스케줄 짜봐고 하면, 거기에서 하나도 쓸수 있는 단어가 없어요. 그 단어를 이용해서 공부를 해야 하는데... 그래서 아이들이 "선생님 학원가는데요. 어떻해요?" 다 학원 가기예요. 다 학원 가기. 그런 것에서 문제점이 있더라구요. 그래서 우리 아까 제가 말할 때에는 원서가 좋다고 했는데, 원서로 하게 되면, 또 문제점이 있겠다고 생각이 되네요. 아이들에게 미리 이렇게 말을 해야하지요. 외국 문화는 이렇기 때문에 이렇게 되는데, 우리는 우리 문화에 맞추어서 한번 재구성을 해 보자고 할려면, 그럴려면 선생님의 영향이 많이 필요한 것 같아요.

Um. There is one more thing related to this topic. Theoretically when teachers taught English to children in the past, they primarily interpreted and read the text which is quite dated. On the contrary, I teach English related to a real life. However because the content of English textbooks are based on American culture, some of them are irrelevant to Korean students. If I ask them to do activities related to their life, they cannot make sentences using the vocabulary in textbooks. For example, if there is an assignment to plan schedules after class, the content of textbooks mainly consists of American children's activities after class such as swimming, playing tennis, go camping, and hiking. When my students are asked to plan schedules after class, they cannot use any word at all in the textbook. Actually, they would have done the assignment using the vocabulary in the textbook. They ask me "How can I, because I have to go to private institutes?" Every student writes down "To go to private institutes" "To go to private institutes". Here is a problem. As a result, I said that imported English textbooks might be useful in English education a few minutes ago, but I think there is a problem when imported English textbooks are used.

I should tell my students first: While foreign text is as such due to their cultures, we have to reconstruct the text appropriate to our cultures. If students do in that way, they need their teachers' help a lot.

(Interview with Monica, 21 May 2004)

Monica underwent the same dilemma as foreign lecturers did in Hong Kong as shown in the study of Flowerdew and Miller (1995). Foreign lecturers employed during classes failed to increase an understanding of students in Hong Kong and seemed to be irrelevant to students' lives because those instances were based on western culture. In the similar way, Monica points out different after-school activities between the American culture and Korean. Western culture-oriented activities such as playing tennis or camping are not applicable to Korean students who are bound to tight schedules to attend private institutes after school. Here, Monica presents the importance of a concept of *local culture* in English education in Korea and maintains that elementary English textbooks be alert in choosing cultural content

appropriately to Korean contexts because English is taught as a foreign language and most children have little knowledge of its cultures.

To teach cultural content in elementary English textbooks, teachers have to know about the cultural differences described in the textbooks. I wonder whether teachers have knowledge of different road systems between Korean and western cultures. For example, the second lesson titled "Is this York Street?" aims at how to explain a particular place. In most of western cultures, every road has its own name so that it is easy for strangers to find a certain place. In contrast, the roads in Korea have a numerical system instead of a nominal one. To take another instance, the fourteenth lesson in the sixth graders' textbook deals with Thanksgiving Day. In Korea, there is the 추석 [ChuSuk] equivalent to Thanksgiving Day in western cultures. I wonder how many teachers have appropriate knowledge of these topics and how they are to accomplish one of the purposes in the seventh curriculum, that is, "외국 문화를 이해함으로써 우리 문화를 새롭게 인식하고, 올바른 가치관을 기른다 [Students have a new perception of Korean cultures and develop moral value systems by understanding foreign cultures]" (p. 286). All of teachers interviewed felt unanimously unqualified in culture teaching because most of them have little firsthand experience or knowledge of other cultures. Thus, although elementary English textbooks include some cultural content, students are not likely to receive appropriate cultural education in English classes due to the lack of teachers' knowledge of English-speaking cultures.

In summary, the current elementary English textbooks do not include enough information about English-speaking cultures. Worse, cultural content in textbooks is not carefully designed in spite of its small range and amount. The Ministry of Education in Korea pursues a curriculum appropriate to the era of globalization, but current English textbooks do not provide children with appropriate understandings and attitudes of others and other cultures, which are indispensable for "globalized people".

Ideological discussions on elementary English textbooks

As Apple (1990) demonstrates, "if we are to understand why the knowledge of only certain groups has been primarily represented in schools, we need to see the social interests which often guided curriculum selection and organization" (p. 63). English education in Korea cannot be discussed without mentioning political and economic relationships between the Korean government and the U. S. Through the history, the Korean government received a lot of financial support from the U. S. since 1945. Simultaneously, a number of intelligent young scholars were educated in the U. S., returned to Korea, and achieved senior positions in governmental agencies (Eckert, Lee, Lew, Robinson, & Wagner, 1990). Those elites reflected their favorable attitudes towards the U. S. in their decision-making on education. In particular, English education in Korea is still under the powerful influence of the U. S because many English educators and practitioners in governmental agencies receive further education in the U. S. and develop curricula and English textbooks modeled on American education, as I mentioned earlier.

Under the circumstances, language teaching and learning always entail ideological considerations because it is a combination of both language and culture. The current English

textbooks used in public elementary schools do not seem to construct cultural content carefully. In reality, most textbooks in private institutes are imported English textbooks whose authors are native English speakers and content of which is based on English-speaking cultures. Those imported English textbooks are exactly the same as materials that native English-speaking children use to acquire their mother tongue, English. In contrast, public schools use reconstructed textbooks by Korean experts of English and current teachers. I am not sure what kinds of resources those editors use regarding textbook publication. However, I am convinced that they try to modify the content of English textbooks suitable for Korean situations. Nevertheless, reconstructed textbooks still need deeper and sophisticated editorial concerns.

I want to look at which culture teachers and students think of as they learn English and what impressions they receive from English textbooks of other cultures. All the teachers interviewed agreed that the content in elementary English textbooks is based on American culture. Among them, John stated,

우리 나라 교육과정 자체가 미국의 교육 과정을 그대로 답습하는 거나 마찬가지거든요. 다른 제 2 영어권, 영어권, 미국하고 그런 영어권 아닌 데서는 별로 그렇게 많이 접하지를 못해요. 그렇기 때문에 미국의 영향을 많이 받지요. 교과서 내에서도 내용들이. 전부 다 그림 같은 것은 것을 보면, 미국에서 행사했던 뭐 할로윈 데이나 뭐 그런 거. 전부 다 그런 게 그림에 나와요. 애들이 보면, '아! 미국이다. 다른 데에서는 이런 것이 없나보다. 할로윈 데이가.' 그런 식으로 생각을 의식적으로 하게 돼 거든요. 그러기 때문에 교육과정 자체부터가 미국에 대한 그 교육과정을 따르기 때문에, 교과서 자체 편제부터가 그렇게 되어 있으니까요.

It seems that Korean educational curriculum itself copies the American one. It is hard to see other cultures except for the American ones. The U. S significantly influences the elementary English textbooks in Korea. The content in textbooks, all the content. When looking at pictures or illustrations in the textbooks, we can see American activities such as Halloween Day, all the content related to American cultures. Children consciously think of 'Ah! This is America. There is no place to celebrate Halloween Day except for the U. S.' In this way, the Korean educational curriculum copies the American one. So does the construction of English textbooks itself.

(Interview with John, 27 May 2004)

John explicitly mentioned that not only are the educational curricula in Korea quite similar to the American ones, but also American life outweighs other lives consisting of cultural content in English textbooks. Like John, many teachers think that the Korean educational curriculum follows the American one, so that the cultural content of English textbooks mainly consists of American cultural values and activities. Some students also support this idea that when they learn English: they consider the English language as "the American language". As for students' perceptions of others and English-speaking cultures, it is better to say that children's impressions about English-speaking cultures are more determined by their direct or indirect experiences across their life as noted earlier. Cultural content in English textbooks provides children with knowledge about English-speaking cultures, but children seem to have more distinct and vivid impressions about other cultures depending

on their learning environments. For instance, if children watch American movies or are in the neighborhood that sees American cultures with friendly attitudes, they tend to prefer American culture as well as American English to other English-speaking cultures. Thus, the political and economic ties between Korea and the U. S. affect children's cultural perceptions of English learning predominantly by means of both textbooks and individual experiences.

Thus far, I have pointed out the dominance of the American presence in English education in Korea. Now I reveal why teachers have difficulties in taking a critical look at English textbooks with respect to ideological issues. The main reason is lack of time. All the teachers interviewed said that they did not have any different opinions against the content of textbooks even though they agreed that English textbooks were influenced by American culture. Esther followed the same direction as shown in the textbooks because she felt that she did not have an ability to teach cultural differences. Luke, Castell, and Luke (1989) state: "Since schooling aims to transmit to each new generation 'culturally significant knowledge', then, textbooks are an ideal format." (p. 246) and assert a need of critical thinking about textbooks. However, teachers do not seem to figure out subconscious perceptions of culture teaching through textbooks since most teachers do not have enough time to study textbooks in depth. Currently, the Ministry of Education has assigned English specialist teachers and native English-speaking teachers to elementary schools, but this solution can't be comprehensive and satisfactory to teachers due to the limited supply. Teachers want to concentrate on developing teaching materials instead of administrative work such as filling out a large file of official documents. The Ministry of Education needs

to simplify official documents and assign administrative recruitment to school boards. In this way, teachers can have some time to study textbooks.

On the contrary, some teachers sometimes try to reconstruct the content of their English classes because they do not trust the content of English textbooks. Maria was often redesigning English classes because she perceived the danger of textbook editing processes as a result of editors' understanding of elementary English education. However, she focused more on how textbook designers understood elementary school students than on how their values and views subconsciously influence students' perceptions of cultural learning.

예. 염두에는 두고 있죠. 그런 어떤 기본적인 거는 있잖아요. 그게 뒤에 사람 집필진을 보고 '아! 약간 중등 선생님들이 많이 계신다. 아니면 어떤 대학 교수들이 많이 계신다. 또 교대 교수가 아니라 일반 대학 교수들이 연구진에 포진이 되어 있다면, 가끔씩 그런 생각이 들어요. 아! 과연 학생들의 입장에 서서 얼마나 집필을 했을까?' 그런 마음이 들어요. 그리고 이제 다른 과목 같은 것도 보면, 초등학교 선생님 아니면 현직 교사 아니면 장학사들 분장으로 오면은 그것에 있어서는 잘했구나! 하는 생각을 기본적으로 갖고 시작하는데, 영어는 아직 그게 많지 않잖아요? 영어에 대해서 초등학교가 많이 도입이 안 되어 있는 상황이었으니까. 지금 역사가. 아무래도. 일반대학 선생님들이, 교수님들이 많이 계시고. 그렇기 때문에 저는 현재 있는 교과서도 그다지 잘 되어 있다는 생각은 들지는 않죠. 그러니까 가끔씩 저도 제 나름대로 그냥 이렇게 한 번 해보자 하고 재구성할 때가 많이 있어요.

Yes, I keep in mind the danger of textbook writers' personal opinions and thoughts embedded in English textbooks. There is a fundamental principle. If looking at textbooks, I find editors at the back of textbooks and think that there are many secondary teachers or professors not from the universities of Education as editors. I sometimes wonder whether they can edit the content of textbooks appropriate to elementary school students. If I look up other subjects and find out elementary school teachers, current teachers or school inspectors deal with the content I am liable to trust the content. However, I have an emerging question, "Does English not have such editors who come from elementary schools?" As for English, it has not been quite long since English was taught in elementary schools. There are professors from other universities. As a result, I sometimes reconstruct English classes according to my own decision because I do not think that the current textbooks are constructed well

(Interview with Maria, 29 July 2004)

Since Monica studied culture teaching in English classes as a topic for her B. A. thesis, she could be more aware of cultural education in English classes than most Korean teachers. Nonetheless, she had ignored the indirect transmission of textbook editors' views and values.

In conclusion, elementary English teachers do not seem to reflect on their awareness of cultural transmission about culture teaching although they recognize the great influence of American cultures in English textbooks as well as curriculum. Most of them follow the content of textbooks and teacher-guide books without considering the content critically. However, it is noteworthy that some teachers inform students of subconscious or conscious learning of other cultures through language learning because language and culture are interrelated and inseparable. Therefore, elementary English teachers need to teach cultural content more actively, enthusiastically, and critically to escape from the possible danger of producing a culturally dominated person stuck to a particular culture.

Intercultural Competence in Teaching Culture

As previously shown in the rationale section, I wonder whether Bennett, Bennett, & Allen's (2003) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) may be fitted into Korean contexts. Generally, most teachers in Korea give priority to communicative competence rather than to cultural competence. In particular, culture teaching is a vehicle of communicative classes to attract students' interest in English learning. For instance, it is said that if students know about different customs between Korea and other English-speaking cultures, they are motivated to learn English. Within this context, I present why Bennett et al.'s DMIS model turns out to be inappropriate to current elementary English classes in Korea.

First, teachers in elementary schools think that the most important goal in elementary English classes is to make students acquire basic communicative skills, which is the first purpose of the seventh curriculum that pursues four primary purposes for elementary English education. Jasmine mentioned,

그것도 그냥. 점점 요즘에 다 그렇듯이. 교과서에 나오는 영어가 아닌 좀 이렇게 일상생활에서 쉽게 얘기할 수 있는 막 어려운 문법적인 것보다는 일단 말문을 틔워주는 것이 가장 중요하다고 생각해요. 그래서 이런 저런 애들 발표도 최대한 많이 시키려고 하고, 게임 학습 이런 것을 하면 하기 싫은 아이였어도 한 마디라도 하게 되거든요? 그래서 그런 식으로. 교육 과정 자체도 듣기 말하기 위주기는 하지만, 실제 수업도 그렇게 하려고 많이 노력을 해요.

Like the current trend of English education, I consider as the most important making students start to talk in spoken English, not in written English shown in textbooks, which is complicatedly grammatical. As a result, I try to push children to make many oral presentations and if I make them engage in game activities, even a child who used to dislike speaking English speaks English in spite of one word. In this way, I myself exert much effort in doing so although the curriculum itself is composed of listening and speaking.

(Interview with Jasmine, 27 May 2004)

However, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development includes cultural teaching in its purposes as well.

또, 외국 문화를 이해하는 것은, 이를 통해서 지식과 정보를 입수한다는 목표도 있지만 외국 문화를 이해하지 않고서는 외국인과의 의사 소통이 불가능하다는 것을 알려 주고, 수업 중에 외국 문화를 소개하는 것을 의사 소통 활동과 같은 차원에서 중시해야 할 것이다. (p. 136-137)

And to understand foreign cultures not only aims at obtaining its knowledge and information, but also informing children that it is impossible to communicate with foreigners unless understanding foreign cultures. Teachers ought to place the same importance on communicative activities as the introduction of foreign cultures during the class.

Nevertheless, all the teachers tend to emphasize only communicative competence in practice. The teachers themselves recognize the necessity of cultural education in their English

classes, but they maintain that they do not have enough time to gather cultural information and reconstruct their English classes in addition to cultural content due to a lot of administrative work at school. The administrative workload disturbs teachers from studying and redesigning their English classes keeping cultural content in mind. This phenomenon results from the Korean educational system in which there are a great number of competitions such as scientific composition among schools and activities such as physical examinations in the school. Whenever a competition or an activity is planned, every school is required to take part in it and responsible for all the correspondences and procedures between a school and a provincial office of education. This is a teacher's duty. Even one of teachers interviewed appealed to me to be aware and reflect that she was interrupted by at least one official letter during the class. In fact, while I observed her class, a student came by and asked her to fill out a certain official letter in the middle of class. She said that because most teachers have many pressing official documents to deal with, such a phenomenon frequently happens. Under this situation, teachers in Korea do not concentrate on a preparation of classes for children.

Secondly, teaching materials themselves do not provide teachers and students with a proper range and quantity of cultural information. Monica pointed out the scarcity of teaching materials about English-speaking cultures.

초등은 그게 굉장히 미비한 것 같아요. 그... 그 이런 문장을 어떤 상황에서... 미국은 이런 문화이기 때문에 이런 문장을 사용한다. 이런 설명이 있고 그래야 하는데, 그렇지 않고 그냥 듣고 따라서 말하고 하는 위주로 많이 되어 있거든요. 그래서 문화에 대한 언급은 별로 없는 것 같아요.

Elementary English education seems to include poor cultural education. A certain sentence in a certain situation... For example, because the U. S. has such cultures, these kinds of sentences are used. There must be this sort of explanation, but current curriculum mainly consists of just listening to and following to speak the text. Thus, cultural education does not appear in elementary English education.

(Interview with Monica, 21 May 2004)

Although the Ministry of Education distributes some additional teaching materials such as "교실영어 [Classroom English]" or "게임자료집 [Teaching Materials for Games]" at its own expense, most of teachers think that those materials are not useful enough to provide them with creative teaching methods. Teacher-guide books are also filled with grammatical information rather than cultural information of which teachers are less knowledgeable. As a result, teaching materials do not contribute to cultural education in elementary English education.

Thirdly, most of the teachers agree with culture teaching from the beginning level of English education. Such opinions are different from some language teachers such as Byram (1989) and Kramsch (1993) who propose the advanced level of language learners as an appropriate starting point of teaching culture. Maria supports culture teaching in elementary English education.

저도 그냥 3 학년에서 6 학년까지. 그러니까 영어를 배우기 시작하면서 얻는 게 좋다고 생각이 들거든요.

I agree that culture teaching is good for starting from the third grade to sixth grade. In other words, as children start to learn English, they start to receive cultural education at the same time.

(Interview with Maria, 26 June 2004)

Like Maria, many teachers perceive the significance of culture teaching at an early stage of English ability. However, they are not likely to catch up with Bennett et al.'s intercultural model unless the curriculum considers intercultural competence as an important factor in elementary English education. All the circumstances surrounding Korean teachers make it hard to implement Bennett et al.'s model.

To conclude, current English education in Korea does not provide both teachers and students with cultural content appropriately. Nor does Bennett et al.'s DMIS model. Some of the DMIS model can be applied to culture teaching in elementary English classes, but it is almost impossible to do so because current teachers do not have enough time to prepare for their English classes. Therefore, it is premature to adopt Bennett et al.'s DMIS model to elementary English classes at this moment and it is considered a more appropriate time to do so after the national curriculum designers and developers reinforce cultural content and teachers can have more time to develop teaching materials.

Summary

Elementary English education in Korea has undergone a period of transition from a new start of elementary English education to its successful settlement. At this moment, it is crucial to explore culture teaching in elementary English classes because language is inseparable from its culture by nature. Most elementary teachers recognize an importance of culture teaching, but they had several constraints in implementing this in their classrooms: (1) not enough opportunities to go abroad, (2) their poor self-image due to lack of knowledge and information about English-speaking cultures, and (3) ineffective teacher education. Students do not seem to receive an appropriate amount of cultural education in

either private institutes or public schools. Rather, they gain different perceptions of English-speaking cultures from their personal contact with learning environments. As a result, the sociocultural context has a powerful influence on cultural education in Korea. Here I largely divide sociocultural context into two regions, rural and urban areas, to see different practices of cultural education in English classes between them. Through my research, I reveal that students in rural areas are less challenged and motivated to learn English than those in urban areas.

As one of the primary resources of cultural education, textbooks are worthy of discussion because everyone can easily use them. Elementary English textbooks consist of two sources, a textbook and a CD. They are full of illustrations and pictures to attract children's interest in English learning. As for the presentation of cultural content, they need more careful selection and inspection because current edition shows errors and mistakes. More important, language teachers are required to be aware of ideological issues when they utilize textbooks. Finally, I discovered that Bennett et al.'s DMIS model does not seem to be applicable to current elementary English education.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS for the FUTURE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH EDUCATION in KOREA

This chapter consists of two main parts: the overall meanings that resulted from the research findings and recommendations for improving the quality of culture teaching in elementary English education. The first section synthesizes the understandings that emerged from my research and presents further implications as well as my reflections related to the inquiry, that is, how elementary English education is associated with culture teaching in two different contexts, rural and urban areas in Korea. Then, I suggest some recommendations based on the interviews with teachers from a practical perspective. I hope that when the MEHRD develops and designs the forthcoming curriculum, this section will provide the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development with teachers' voices that enable the MEHRD to avoid the danger of developing a superficial and ideal curriculum led by armchair discussion.

Culture Teaching in English Classes in Elementary schools in Korea

I aimed at exploring how teachers and students deal with cultural education in current elementary English classes in both urban and rural areas in Korea for my thesis. English education is one of the main concerns most Koreans have and as a result English has started to be taught in elementary schools since 1997. By this time, now in 2005 when current elementary English education has started to settle down, I wondered whether cultural content has been successfully and systematically managed in current elementary English education.

Of the two key groups of participants, in this study, teachers in elementary schools are most helpful for cultural education in current elementary English education in both rural and urban areas when elementary school students learn cultural content. Their experiences and knowledge of foreign countries help them attract students' attention to English learning. However, teachers do not have many opportunities to go abroad and extend their knowledge of English-speaking cultures, nor can teachers utilize opportunities to encounter and experience other cultures due to limitations of their characteristics. A governmental level of assistance for teacher education abroad is greatly helpful for teachers who want to have deeper knowledge of other cultures, but teachers also need to overcome their shy and timid personalities and adjust themselves to intercultural and multicultural environments. They themselves have to be open-minded to different cultures and understand them. At the time when they take a critical stance on other cultures, they can employ cultural content more effectively in their English classes.

In addition, teachers agree with the merit of culture teaching in elementary English education. Based on a similar conceptualization about culture to Hall's (1973), they take a balanced and critical stance on other cultures. They exclusively accept other cultures that are considered morally and socially appropriate to Korean contexts and then such views and values influence their students' behaviors. Some teachers try to activate cultural education in their English classes, but in most cases teachers describe themselves as "a deficient person" who does not have enough knowledge and experiences to deliver cultural content. For them, the fact that many of them seldom had an opportunity to experience other different cultures seemed to make them lose power as a deliverer of cultural education.

However, I argue that teachers can be confident and professional when they try to be more affiliated to elementary English education. In fact, since English education in elementary schools does not take priority over other main subjects, teachers put less energy and time into preparing for their English classes. As a result, culture teaching in current elementary English education seems to be secondary to overall elementary education.

To provide their students with more updated English education teachers receive teacher education. However, they are not content with the quality of current teacher education due to a lack of recruitment of competent native English-speaking instructors and its limited period of time. Concerning culture teaching, particularly, English teacher education does not include any systematic way of preparing for culture teaching.

Students, the other primary group of participants in my research, started learning English in third grade. Even though they are not supposed to experience excessive study in English in elementary English education, they spend much time in studying and memorizing vocabulary and grammar. As well, they have to learn written English as well as oral English at the same time, which is different from the direction of the English curriculum. The competitive devotion to English education among Koreans seems to supersede the curriculum guidelines.

As for cultural education in elementary English classes, students have some resources for encountering others and different cultures in two ways; they can go abroad and experience foreign cultures at first hand, on the one hand, and they can also have secondhand experiences through mass media or expatriates staying in Korea on the other hand. However, the possibility of going abroad is strictly limited to some privileged students

whose families are affluent enough to support all the expenses of studying abroad. In most cases, students experience other cultures by watching foreign movies or having hamburger or pizza in Korea, but this is not enough for students to understand other cultures fully. Because formal elementary English education does not offer any systematic cultural education, students need various resources for cultural education in order to have a balanced and global view of other cultures.

When students learn English, they receive different qualities of English education depending on their sociocultural contexts. Here, I explore different language learning contexts between rural and urban areas. There are a variety of sociocultural factors to influence English learning in Korea. As one of the most powerful factors, peers play an important role in motivating children to learn English, which is a more outstanding phenomenon in urban areas than in rural areas. Parents' support is also an overwhelming factor in English learning. Most parents in urban areas tend to be more enthusiastic about and dedicated to their children's English learning than those in rural areas. As well, the economic status of parents in urban areas is much higher than parents in rural areas. Parents in urban areas enable their children to receive a high quality of private English education while their rural counterparts cannot. Likewise, different sociocultural contexts bring different outcomes of English learning.

Concerning English education in elementary schools, the textbook analysis is another indispensable element to know about how the content of textbooks influences teachers and students. Elementary English textbooks consist of two types: a textbook and a CD. They are also composed of colorful and various figures and games since current

elementary English education is aimed at attracting students' interest in English learning. Even though textbooks in lower grades emphasize oral functions and gradually introduce written functions, teachers struggle with the gradual presentation of oral functions and written functions separately. In other words, they cannot help combining all the linguistic functions together when they teach English.

In examining elementary English textbooks related to cultural representations, I found several significant errors and defects occurred in the process of textbook publication. Textbooks not only present some wrong information, but they also introduce a variety of English-speaking cultures. Even teachers cannot use the content of textbooks because their presented cultural information is difficult to connect to the Korean contexts. As a result, textbook developers and designers are required to carefully select and reinforce cultural content of elementary English textbooks.

The most challenging concern placed in the textbook publication is an ideological consideration. Since language is inseparable from culture, language teachers should be aware of hidden or explicitly presented meanings in textbooks. Many teachers interviewed point out the American impact on English education in Korea. Most cultural information is predominantly related to American culture. Although they recognize the American power in textbooks, they cannot always incorporate their critical thoughts into their English teaching due to lack of time. There are some teachers who provide their students with critical thinking about other cultures by reconstructing the content of their English classes. Nevertheless, teachers, in practice, need to engage in cultural content more critically and carefully.

Based on these discussions about culture teaching in English classes in elementary

schools, I wonder whether Bennett et al.'s DMIS model would provide teachers with useful

and practical syllabi for effective culture teaching. Although a few teachers think that

culture teaching has to be postponed until secondary education, most teachers agree that

culture teaching is beneficial to children's English learning in a sense that it facilitates

students' curiosity about English-speaking cultures. Some teachers think that a systematic

introduction of English-speaking cultures would be beneficial for students to acquire

cultural competence. However, there still remains a problematic issue such as selection

criteria for selecting cultural features and teachers do not set aside some time and assign it

to culture teaching due to in sufficient class hours. Therefore, teachers had better wait

before adopting Bennett et al.'s DMIS model to elementary English education until teachers

have a passionate belief about the advantage of culture teaching in English classes and other

resources such as textbooks and time are available and reinforced.

Recommendations for the Future Elementary English Education in Korea

Here, I present several constructive suggestions raised by current elementary

teachers to activate culture teaching in elementary English education. I hope that when the

Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development develops the next 8th curriculum,

teachers' practical opinions will be reflected in it and as a result there will be fewer gaps

between practice and curriculum.

First, the assignment of a native English-speaking teacher to every local school

would motivate students' culture learning. Monica states,

현지 선생님들이, 원어민 강사들이 좀 많이   Many native English-speaking teachers need to be
                                          assigned to schools so that children do not learn culture

투입이 돼 가지고, 아이들이 문화를 이론으로 배우는 것이 아니라, 실제적으로 경험할 수 있도록 할 수 있는 기회를 많이 만들어 줬으면 좋겠어요.

in theory. I hope to give students more opportunities to experience culture actually by the help of native English-speaking teachers.

(Interview with Monica, 21 May, 2004

She says that since children are visual learners, to meet and talk with a native English-speaking teacher is exactly culture learning. Since English is regarded as a foreign language in Korea, students need more opportunities to contact English-speaking cultures frequently. Once students meet native English-speaking teachers regularly, students can build appropriate attitudes and views towards other cultures. Other and different cultures are no longer a threat to children.

Secondly, English textbooks need to be designed carefully. Cultural activities have to be suitable to Korean contexts. Monica asked her students to use the vocabulary in the English textbook when students had to engage in classroom activities related to their after-school lives. However, students could not use the words introduced in the English textbook when they tried to make a conversation. Students did not have such lives that the words indicate whereas the words are common among English speakers. As a result, English textbooks should consist of realistic and applicable cultural content. English textbooks also need to include more varied activities to which students can be naturally exposed and through which they can communicate with each other. Those activities related to different cultures facilitate both communicative competence and cultural competence. Moreover, if cultural tips are located in every lesson, teachers at least engage in explicit culture teaching. It enriches students' understanding of other cultures in addition to teachers' explanations.

Thirdly, teacher education abroad should be reinforced and expanded at government's expense. Teachers want to be competent and knowledgeable English teachers by experiencing English-speaking cultures directly. They need more opportunities to receive teacher education abroad in order to connect their firsthand experiences with their English teaching.

Fourthly, current elementary English education needs more teaching materials. There are many useful teaching materials developed by private corporations, which are expensive. Since the allotted budget for the consumption of supplementary teaching materials is limited in each school board, elementary schools can't afford to buy those private teaching materials. As well, even though teachers make teaching materials by themselves, they can't satisfy students due to technical weaknesses. In fact, once Maria tried to develop teaching materials, she discovered that private teaching materials attracted students by means of aesthetically pleasing color combinations and advanced technical devices. However, she couldn't develop them herself more frequently due to the lack of time. As a result, teachers hope that the MEHRD distributes more practical and effective teaching materials.

Lastly, teachers need to have some particular time in studying and preparing for English classes. Currently, teachers are so busy dealing with administrative duties that they could seldom develop teaching materials between English classes. They need to concentrate more on teaching rather than administrative work. Once they are able to prepare for their classes, they can take a critical look at the cultural content presented in teaching materials as well as incorporate culture teaching into English classes systematically.

In conclusion, the MEHRD in Korea should reconsider these teachers' voices and reflect them in the next curriculum development. The most challenging and fundamental question is how much education budget the MEHRD is able to draw up to reinforce current elementary English education. Almost all the recommendations teachers come up with result from a limited education budget. Therefore, current elementary English education needs to receive more government support to foster fundamental innovations and encourage teachers.

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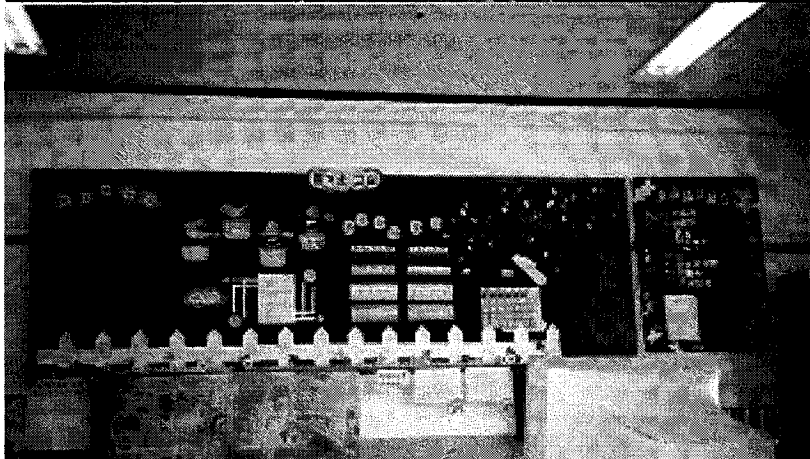
APPENDICES

Appendix I : General Pictures of Classroom in Elementary Schools in Korea
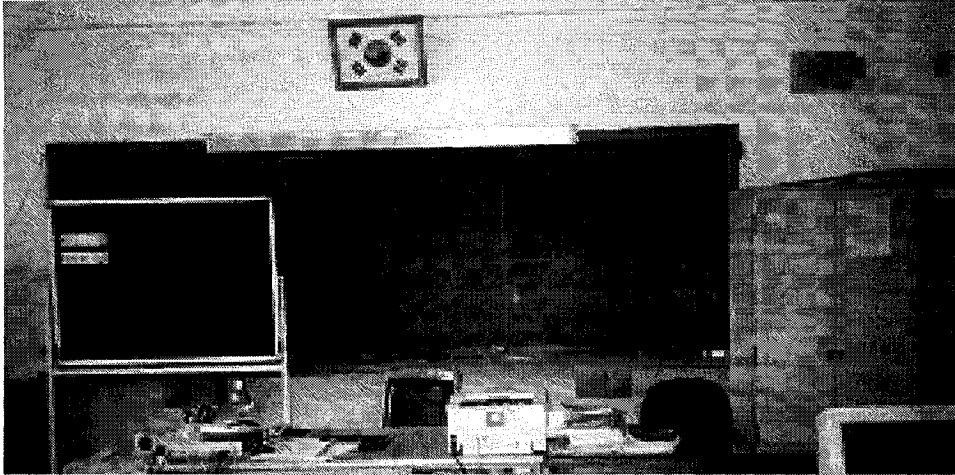
Front

On the
right side
of a
classroom

Rear

Appendix Ⅱ : A Practice of English Learning in Elementary Schools

Appendix Ⅲ : A Sample of Questions in Interviews

Table 1. Questions for English teachers used in the first interview.

First Questions

1   Did you like English subject when you attended at schools?
2   Did you travel abroad with your parents when you were growing up?
3   Did your parents push you to learn English when you were young? Or how did your parents see English learning? Do they think English is very important for your future life?
4   Do you like foreign movies over Korean movies? Why do you like it (either foreign movies or Korean movies?)
5   Do you like western foods like Hamburger or pizza more than Korean traditional food?
6   Did your parents prefer the western way of life to the Korean one? Could you remember their preconception towards the western culture? For example, all the western products are superior to ours.
7   Have you ever met any English-speaking foreigners? Or, have you ever had any foreign friend?
8   Have you ever traveled other countries, especially English-speaking countries? If you have any chance to go abroad, which country do you want to visit? Why do you choose the particular country?
9   Have you ever taught any other elementary school before a current elementary school? Do you feel any difference between elementary schools? If there is a difference, what reasons do you think of?
10 Have you ever participated in the teacher-training program for English? How do you think of its effectiveness for teachers? Do you have any suggestions for better teacher-training program?

Appendix IV : A Sample of Field Notes ay,
Wednesday, May 19, 2004 Observation of the sixth grade's English class in Gana elementary school

Today, I was supposed to visit Gana elementary school for observing a fifth and sixth grades' English class and interviewing teachers. In my last visit, they asked me for coming in the morning. I arrived at 9: 40, which was recess after a first class. I entered a teacher's room. There were teachers I was familiar with except for one person. A teacher introduced me to the person I did not meet before. It was he that was an assistant principal. He made me a cup of coffee and started to talk with me. He pointed out a predicament of current English classes in elementary schools. After the conversation with him, I looked around a corridor and started to write down information about Gana elementary school in a bulletin board. The school was quiet because the second class was on going. When one of teachers saw me, he asked another teacher for giving me a school bulletin. Second recess started. I was preparing for observing a sixth grade's classroom in third class hour. At that time, a teacher who took responsibility of the sixth grade came to me and informed me that he was not going to teach his students English. He said that since he did not want to teach English, he used to ask for another teacher, Esther. As a result, it was said that I was going to see Esther's English teaching instead of his.

I went to a sixth grade's classroom shortly before a bell rang. Esther stood in front and students were making noisy. I sat down at the rear of the classroom. Only 14 students were sitting down face to face in groups of four. Some students turned back to glance at me with curiosity. On the blackboard, Esther had already written today's lesson and a learning goal, which are respectively "단원 (Lesson) 5. May I help you?" and "학습 문제: 여러가지 활동을 통해 물건 사기 표현을 말할 수 있다." (A learning goal: We can speak out expressions of buying things through various activities." Esther tried to calm down students to start an English class. She called a class monitor and let him greet her. He spoke loudly "차렷, 경례" (Attention, bow). Students made a bow to Esther and she responded to students as well. Then, she asked them for greeting me while introducing me. I was a bit embarrassed at receiving a greeting all at once.

Esther began to review what they learned in a last class with a question of "Can you remember?" She spoke both English and Korean. They sang a chant according to a CD that was connected to a television. Most of students were following the CD well. After the review, Esther introduced today's goal and let students practice some important phrases in the lesson 5. She used some picture cards such as pencil case and flower to make students participate in activities actively. Students appeared interested in those colorful pictures and they started to respond to her questions. When Esther asked students "How much is this toy helicopter?" many students raised their hand and answered in this way: "Yes, I'll take it." With a lively atmosphere, students were eager to participate. Esther introduced another conversation pattern, "A: May I help you? B: Yes. How much is this pencil case? A kept one's own price in mind. Then when B said a certain amount of money, A said only "up" or "down". Until B found out the exact price, the activity had not been finished." Esther asked a group of two or entire classmates to engage in this activity. Esther helped them when they needed her.

Around 11:00 a.m., Esther started another activity with dice. She explained how to do the game in both English and Korean. On the television, the important sentences used in the classroom were continuously on the screen. While students were playing the game, Esther walked around them and encouraged all of them to participate in the game. At 11:20 a.m., she let students answer questions in their English textbooks while listening to the CD. Then, she said, "Open your book, page 47." Students became quiet and concentrated on filling in blanks. The text was as follows: "CD 활동 (activity): listen carefully. 1. 잘 듣고 물건의 가격을 써 봅시다. (Let's write a price of a thing after listening to the CD carefully.) The book is __ dollar. The pencil case is __ dollars. The soccer ball is __ dollars." Esther distributed a piece of paper with more questions to students for further practices. Walking around, she led them to do it in a right way. Then, students received peer feedback. At 11:30 a.m., Esther proclaimed a content of next class and assigned students to some homework, "Listen 3 번 이상 듣기 (Listen to the "Listen" section in the CD more than three times." The class monitor stood up and spoke loudly. All the students expressed thanks to Esther. She went out.

Appendix   V : Certificate of Ethical Acceptability

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Received

APR 0 8 2004

**CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR
FUNDED AND NON FUNDED RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS**

McGill University
Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee consists of 6 members appointed by the Faculty of Education Nominating Committee, an appointed member from the community and the Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research) who is the Chair of this Ethics Review Board.

The undersigned considered the application for certification of the ethical acceptability of the project entitled:
_____ Culture teaching in elementary schools either in rural or urban, in Korea _____
as proposed by:

Applicant's Name __Eunyoung Kim__   Supervisor's Name _____ M. Maguire _____

Applicant's Signature/Date _____ 2004/03/22   Supervisor's Signature _____

Degree / Program / Course _M. A. in Second Language Education_ Granting Agency _____

                                                                Grant Title (s)_____
The application is considered to be:
A Full Review _____   An Expedited Review ___ X _____

A Renewal for an Approved Project _____ A Departmental Level Review _____
                                                                Signature of Chair / Designate

The review committee considers the research procedures and practices as explained by the applicant in this application, to be acceptable on ethical grounds.

1. Prof. René Turcotte   4. Prof. Joan Russell
   Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education   Department of Integrated Studies in Education

                                                                     April 19-04

Signature / date   Signature / date

2. Prof. Ron Morris   5. Prof. Helen Amoriggi
   Department of Integrated Studies in Education   Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Signature / date   Signature / date

3. Prof. Ron Stringer   6. Prof. Ada Sinacore
   Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology   Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology

Signature / date   Signature / date

7. Member of the Community

Signature / date

Mary H. Maguire Ph. D.
Chair of the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee
Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research)
Faculty of Education, Room 230
Tels: (514) 398-7039/398-2183 Fax: (514) 398-1527

                                                 4/5/04
Signature / date

Office Use Only		
REB #: 415 -0404	APPROVAL PERIOD: MAY 4, 2004 to MAY 4, 2005	
(Updated September 2003)		

Informed Consent Form

Dear student,

My name is Eunyoung Kim. I am a graduate student in Second Language Education in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University. I am currently doing a qualitative study for my thesis. I would like to interview you in order to know about your values and attitudes towards other cultures, in particular, English-speaking cultures. So, I am asking for your help in this research project.

For the interviews, I will make appointments prior to any contact with you. The time and place will be at your convenience. The interviewing duration will not be longer than 20 minutes per session. Group interviews may be possible if you wish. All personal information and privacy will be protected and confidentiality guaranteed. Your name will be a pseudonym. I wish to remind you that you can withdraw any information or withdraw from participating in this research project at any time.

If you have any questions or doubts about this inquiry, please do not hesitate to contact me. You may reach me by email at ;

Thank you for your concern in this matter. If you decide to participate in the research project, please sign this consent form below.

Sincerely,

Eunyoung Kim
Graduate Student in MA Program
Second Language Education
Dept. of Integrated Studies in Education

I, _____, am willing to participate in this qualitative research project of Eunyoung Kim. I have fully discussed the interview process with my parents/guardians.

Signature: _____

Date: _____.

학생 동의서

친애하는 학생께

안녕하세요.

저는 캐나다 몬트리얼에 있는 맥길 대학에서 제 2 외국어 교육 석사 과정 중인 김은영입니다. 현재, 논문을 위한 자료 수집을 하고 있는데, 다른 문화, 특히 영어권 문화에 대한 여러분의 태도와 가치관에 대해 알아보기 위하여, 여러분과 대화를 나누고 싶습니다. 따라서, 여러분의 관심과 협조의 말씀을 드립니다.

인터뷰를 위해서, 미리 여러분과 약속을 하고 싶습니다. 시간과 장소는 여러분의 편의에 따라서 이루어질 것입니다. 인터뷰 시간은 매 회 20 여 분을 넘지 않을 것입니다. 여러분이 원하신다면, 단체 인터뷰도 가능합니다. 모든 사적인 정보나 내용은 보호와 안전함을 위해, 여러분의 이름은 가명으로 대체될 것입니다. 저는 여러분께서 언제든지 이 조사에 응하고 싶지 않으시다면, 자유롭게 선택하실 수 있음을 다시 한번 말씀드리고 싶습니다.

여러분께서 저의 연구에 대해 궁금한 사항이 있으시다면, 저에게 언제라도 연락주시기 바랍니다. 저의 이메일인   으로 연락주시면, 가능한 한 즉시 회답드리겠습니다.

이 글을 읽어주셔서 감사드립니다. 제 연구에 참여하시고자 하시면, 아래의 동의문에 서명해 주시기 바랍니다.

2004 년 5 월 19 일 수요일

맥길 대학원생   김은영 올림

나 (   )는 김은영의 질적 연구에 참여하기를 원합니다. 나는 나의 부모님들과 인터뷰 과정에 대한 허락을 받았습니다.

사인: _____   날짜: _____