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교육학박사학위논문

**Competent Korean English Teachers'
Perceptions of Instructional Context
and Classroom Practices:
A Case Study from a Sociocultural Perspective**

유능한 한국 영어 교사들의
교수 맥락 인식과 실제 교수 양상:
사회문화적 관점에서 본 사례 연구

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서울대학교 대학원
외국어교육과 영어전공
이 윤 희

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by
Yunhee Lee

A Dissertation Submitted to
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

Competent Korean English Teachers' Perceptions of Instructional Context and Classroom Practices: A Case Study from a Sociocultural Perspective

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Recently in Korea, the CLT-based National Curriculum was consecutively revised to urge innovations in English education. This study examines Korean teachers' English teaching in secondary education under the curricular reform with the purpose of exploring the nature of foreign language teaching. Specifically, it focuses on understanding two competent teachers' classroom instruction from an insider's point of view.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) and Activity Theory (Engeström, 1987, 1993; Leont'ev, 1978) are adopted as the theoretical framework, by which a teacher's classroom instruction is defined as an instructional activity system. In particular, the framework is used to understand the holistic nature of teaching by indicating that classroom instruction is a goal-oriented, tool-mediated, and co-constructed activity. It is also useful to examine the dynamic nature of teaching by demonstrating the interplay between the teachers and the contextual factors.

The participants were two English teachers and their students of a middle school and a high school. The participant teachers were selected based on “purposeful sampling” (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998) in terms of their English teaching competence. The class of each teacher was examined qualitatively over a one-semester period to answer the following research questions: 1) how do two competent English teachers perceive their instructional context? 2) how do two competent Korean English teachers actually teach in the classrooms?

Data were collected through class observation and interviews along with relevant documents and then analyzed through a grounded content analysis following ethnographic traditions (Bogdan & Biklin, 1998; Creswell, 2013; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Several significant findings emerged from this study. First, the two teachers perceived the instructional context in different ways and anticipated different educational objectives accordingly. The middle school teacher projected an orderly class to teach grammar to the test while the high school teacher envisaged a motivating class based on communicative language teaching. Second, the teachers’ classroom instructions were constructed toward the objectives. In particular, the middle school teacher gave an effective lecture on grammar, covered the textbook effectively, and controlled the students’ learning while not boring them in class. On the other hand, the high school teacher made efforts to actualize CLT, kept the students interested, and engaged them in class while giving some control to them.

Third, the results of the theoretical analysis unfolded the dynamics of teaching. Not all the goals the teachers pursued were fully achieved because of emerging conflicts. In both teachers' instructional activities, there existed an inherent tension between the competing objectives, which was accompanied by various conflicts. The teaching outcomes were attributed to the ways in which the conflicts were resolved by the teachers. It was concluded that the class of the middle school teacher functioned very well in the exam-oriented secondary education in Korea but diverged from the orientation of the National Curriculum. In contrast, the class of the high school teacher was very communicative as well as aligned with the curricular reform, but it remained to be seen how the experimental class would endure the exam-oriented Korean educational situation.

Based on the findings, the study discusses issues on English classroom instruction and instructional innovations. It also provides some pedagogical implications concerning the transformation of English teachers and the orientation of educational innovations in Korea.

Key words: competent English teacher, the nature of foreign language teaching, perceptions of instructional context, classroom practices, communicative language teaching, activity system model

Student Number: 2011-30431

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study looks into English classes in secondary schools within the context of the CLT-based curricular reform with the purpose of exploring the nature of foreign language teaching. Specifically, it focuses on understanding two competent teachers' classroom instructions. This introductory chapter describes the contextual background within which this study is situated (Section 1.1), states the purpose of the study (Section 1.2) and the research questions (Section 1.3), and presents an overview of the dissertation (Section 1.4).

1.1 The Context of the Study

The social interest in English education has increased in Korea since English was officially taught in Korea (Kwon, 2000). Korea's amicable relations with the U.S. and the globalization process gave prominence to English, and English still serves as a powerful means to enter a prestigious university, to gain a good job, to get a promotion, or to get opportunities to move up in social class (Song & Kim, 2013, July 24). In these situations, most people have invested great time and energy in English education. The investment has tended to focus on the private education industry (Song, 2013, July 23) and fostered a trend towards young children studying abroad (Kim & Park, 2013, August 22) or enrolling in English kindergartens (Lee, 2012, December 6; Lee, 2013, July 16). When the press reported on these types of excessive interest in English education and its negative influence on society and education, the public school system has often

been accused of not providing quality English classes that meet the needs and expectations of the society.

The Ministry of Education in Korea has made continuous efforts to improve English education in the public schools. One of the most salient efforts was the reformation of the National Curriculum. In particular, the 6th curricular reform (effective in 1995) marked a revolutionary turning point in English education history in that the goal of public English education was shifted from acquiring grammatical knowledge to developing communicative competence (Kwon, 2000). Since then, the development of communicative competence and communicative language teaching (CLT, hereafter) have been pursued in the 7th curricular reform (effective from 2001) and in its two successive revisions (effective in 2007 and in 2011 respectively).

Along with curricular reform, English education policies to improve public education have been enacted and implemented. The most recent policies were proclaimed in 2008, which are still effective now. The educational authorities have directed their commitment to improve public English education in two main ways (Chang, 2012; Ministry of Education, 2006b).

First, effort was made to create an environment fostering CLT. For example, the National English Ability Test (NEAT) was proposed to reform the grammar-focused school exams and reading-based College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT, hereafter)¹. English classrooms were renovated to provide separate spaces to boost CLT in class, and class materials were also updated and made available through online data bases so that teachers would have access to quality class

¹ Recently, the Ministry of Education made a pronouncement on the withdrawal of the proposal to replace CSAT with NEAT (Oh, 2013, August 28).

materials.

Second, a substantial amount of the government's budget was allotted to secure competent English teachers. According to a governmental website², the government hired about 8,500 native English-speaking teachers and about 6,200 Korean English conversation instructors as assistant teachers to promote teaching English in English (TEE, hereafter) in 2010. TEE certificates have been granted to competent Korean English teachers as well. English-teaching competitions are now being held every year to seek out good teaching models or examples, which are disseminated nationwide. The government has also put an emphasis on the re-education of English teachers through in-service teacher training programs, and about 1,500 English teachers have been taking part in the programs every year since 2009.

As such, English education has been experiencing more turbulent changes within a short period than ever before. Situated within this historical and social context, the current study examined how competent Korean teachers perceive their changed contexts and teach English in their classrooms.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

The success of government-led innovations in English education would be dependent upon the change of classroom instruction at local schools, and at the center of classroom instructions are English teachers. Many researchers emphasized the active roles of teachers who are the ultimate key to innovations

² The English education policies proclaimed in 2008 are presented along with their outcomes on the homepage of the Ministry of Education: <http://english.go.kr/english.html>.

(e.g., Borg, 2006; Hargreaves, 1994; Hayes & Chang, 2012).

When the innovative CLT-based curriculum was first introduced in Korea, the majority of the English teachers felt frustrated and bewildered. The physical educational settings were perceived to be inadequate, and the teachers were unprepared for CLT (Li, 1998). For those reasons, the government has put their utmost efforts into the improvement of the settings and in-service teacher education as mentioned above.

Nonetheless, the classroom instructions at local schools were not changed notably as per the National Curriculum guidelines (Hahn & Jeon, 2005; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Kim, 2008b, 2009; Seong, 2004). It was found that most of the teachers reinterpreted the curriculums in a non-communicative way and adhered to a traditional way of teaching. One of the main reasons was found in the teachers' negative perceptions of the context in implementing the curriculum (Choi, 2008; Jeon, 2009; Kim, 2008b, 2009; Park, 2011). They perceived that the settings were not improved enough or that the goals of the National Curriculum and policies were not aligned with the immediate concerns of their teaching.

On the other hand, some teachers strove to change their classroom practices in alignment with the Curriculum (Chang, Kim & Cheng, 2011; Choi, 2002; Lee, 2006). They tried to provide their students with the meaningful learning experience to develop their communicative competence. By reflecting on and changing their classroom practices, the teachers were seen to continue their professional development. The current study focuses on those teachers who continue to pursue their own professional development and thus would be able to change their classroom practices in time.

Many studies examined teachers and classroom instruction, but they might

present rather different findings depending on the research viewpoints they take. The perspectives on teachers and teaching have changed notably over the past 40 years (Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 2006). In the past, teachers were considered as passive doers who received theoretical knowledge and implemented it in their classrooms. In such a research paradigm, the target of studies was only the teachers' classroom behaviors leading to the learning outcome while their thinking and mental processes were overlooked. Classrooms were also seen just as stable physical settings. Gradually, the behavioral standpoint was perceived to lack an explanatory power for school effectiveness and the improvement of teaching, so an interpretative approach emerged to understand the complexity of teachers' mental processes and teaching (Freeman, 2002). In the new paradigm, teachers' mental processes became the focus of the investigation since teachers were valued as active decision-makers. The notion of classroom was also changed from physical sites to interpretative contexts where teachers used and created knowledge about teaching. A growing body of research has provided a deeper understanding on what and how teachers learned about teaching in the context (e.g., Borg, 2003, 2006; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2011). The idea is now widespread that teachers have special knowledge about teaching and teaching should be examined in its own right.

According to Freeman (2002), the contemporary research on teacher learning and teaching is based on a post-modern perspective from which teachers' unique knowledge reflects a plurality of views. Based on the postmodern frame, many teacher educators and researchers argue that knowledge about teaching emerges out of and through their experience in social context and that the way they use

the knowledge is socially negotiated and constructed in the context where their teaching is situated (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 2006, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Thus, the understanding of context becomes crucial in studying teachers' learning and teaching.

This study takes a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) and activity theory (Engeström, 1987, 1993; Leont'ev, 1978) as a theoretical framework. In a sociocultural perspective, a teacher's cognition emerges and is developed in the social activities in which the teacher is involved within the context. Here, the notion of context is not viewed as "containers of behavior" as seen from a determinist environmental view nor as "situationally experiential space" as seen from an ethnomethodological view (Engeström, 1993, pp. 66-67). According to activity theory, the context refers to an activity system which integrates the subject, the object and the mediational artifacts into a unified whole³. Based on the theoretical framework, the study takes a dynamic view on how competent teachers perceive the instructional context and how their classroom practices are co-constructed in the contexts.

In analyzing the classroom instruction of the competent teachers, the present study adopts an activity system model (Engeström, 1987, 1999a). Under the model, the classroom instruction is defined as a goal-oriented activity which entails the mediation of other people and teaching tools. The model enables the researcher to investigate it holistically by considering the system as a whole as well as analytically by identifying the contextual factors and the conflicts between them. In addition, the model is a valuable framework to understand the competent teachers' innovative classroom practices, if any, since the strength of

³ The activity system will be explained in detail in Section 2.3.2.

the model is its sensitivity to the tensions between the inventiveness of human activity and the pressures to normalize human behaviors (Thorne, 2004).

Several studies examined the classroom instructions of Korean English teachers, but there were some limitations. They investigated generally apparent aspects of teachers' instructions without understanding its hidden complexity. Classroom instructions were usually studied by conducting extensive teacher surveys (e.g., Guilloteaux, 2004; Hahn & Jeon, 2005; Jeon, 2009) or at best by interviewing several teachers (e.g., Chang, Kim, & Cheng, 2011; Kim, 2009; Lee, 2006; Li, 1998). Those studies did not focus on a complicated interplay between the teachers and the contextual factors by which their classroom practices were constructed. In interpreting the meaning of the practices, an emic view of teachers and students were not taken into consideration as well. It is the teachers and students who make sense of the practices in the contexts, and thus their perceptions and interpretation are crucial in understanding classroom instruction. Thus, a study is needed to delineate the dynamic process in which a teacher's classroom practices are constructed and interpreted. Without the understanding of the nature of classroom instruction, research findings may not provide comprehensive and practical suggestions for the improvement of teaching or the educational innovations.

Therefore, the first and foremost purpose of the study is to explore the nature of foreign language teaching. The study looks into the classroom instructions of English teachers without disruption of the natural settings. The teachers' classroom practices are the focus of investigation, and the practices are interpreted from the viewpoint of the teachers and their students.

Specifically, the study focuses on two competent Korean English teachers.

English teachers' lack of theoretical knowledge or language proficiency was pointed out as one of the significant factors impeding educational innovations in Korea (e.g., Guilloteaux, 2004; Kim, 2002; Kim, 2008a; Li, 1998). The participant teachers of the study, however, are competent in terms of their theoretical knowledge and language proficiency, so they may take the leading role in bringing about changes to classroom instruction in alignment with the government-led innovations. The present study examines their changed or non-changed classroom practices within the context of the curricular reform. By looking into teaching of the competent teachers and discussing the innovations from a bottom-up approach, this study may make some fruitful suggestions for improving Korean secondary English education.

To serve the purposes, the competent teachers' classroom instructions are examined through long-term class observations and on-site interviews following the tradition of qualitative research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Spradley, 1979). A multiple case study is conducted in the research: one case of a middle school English class and the other of a high school class. Even though the two cases should be viewed differently in terms of educational objectives and students, they have not been studied so in the related literature. Rather than comparing or contrasting the two classes, the study illustrates how differently the classroom instructions can be constructed and interpreted in a middle school and a high school under Korean secondary English education system.

1.3 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to understand the complex nature of foreign

language teaching. The focus of the study is mainly on the teachers' classroom practices, but their perceptions of the instructional context are also investigated. Perceiving is a form of action to pursue some meaningful activities, by which a human selectively picks up what is available to him in the context (van Lier, 2004, 2008). By examining the teachers' perceptions of the instructional context, it can be better understood what contextual factors affect their forming teaching goals. Thus, the first research question is about the teachers' perceptions.

The second research question is about the teachers' classroom practices. The practices are interpreted based on the teachers' own viewpoint, and the students' experience and perceptions of the practices are also examined.

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

- (1) How do two competent Korean English teachers perceive the instructional context?
- (2) How do two competent Korean English teachers actually teach in the classrooms?

1.4 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces historical, social and contextual background of the study and states the need of the study along with the research questions. Chapter 2 presents the reviewed literature relevant to this study, which is organized into three areas: 1) the evaluation of CLT-based educational innovations in terms of theory and practice, 2) innovations of English education in Korea fostered by curricular reforms and in-service teacher education, and 3) a sociocultural perspective, the theoretical

framework of the study to understand the teachers' instructional activity system. Chapter 3 provides methodology of the study including research approach, research design, and data-collection and analysis procedures. Chapters 4 and 5 illustrate the analysis results of the two teachers' perceptions of the context and classroom practices along with its theoretical analysis. Chapter 6 discusses several issues with regard to English teachers' classroom instructions and educational innovations. Chapter 7, the final chapter of this dissertation, presents major findings, pedagogical implications, and some suggestions for future research based on the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed on the related topics of the current study. Section 2.1 illustrates how communicative competence and communicative language teaching, the theoretical base of the current Korean National Curriculum, were proposed in theory and interpreted in practice. Section 2.2 outlines how the educational reform geared towards CLT has unfolded in Korea in terms of the curricular reform and teacher education. Lastly, Section 2.3 presents Vygotskian sociocultural theory and activity theory as a theoretical framework.

2.1 Educational Innovations Based on CLT

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is being pursued in many parts of the world, especially in East Asia as the advanced approach in English language teaching (Ho, 2004; Littlewood, 2007; Nunan, 2003). However, its definitions and interpretations have varied considerably. Thus, CLT is reviewed from its original proposals to the currently accepted definitions in Section 2.1.1. Section 2.1.2 presents how CLT was actually interpreted and realized in other countries.

2.1.1 CLT in Theory

CLT is an approach to foreign or second language teaching in which the goal is the development of communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

The concept of communicative competence was proposed by Hymes (1971) as a response against the Chomskian pure linguistic competence of ideal native speakers. According to Hymes, communicative competence was defined as the ability to communicate with members of society in an appropriate and meaningful way. Therefore, sociocultural and interactive factors were emphasized rather than the linguistic characteristics of the target language. Later, communicative competence was further developed into four components of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale, 1981; Canale & Swain, 1980) and has been more elaborated so far in theory (Bachman, 1990; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1997; Savignon, 1983).

Based on the theories, studies on second language acquisition (SLA, hereafter) have focused on pedagogical questions of how to develop communicative competence. As a result, some important hypotheses were proposed including Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1993) and Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1981, 1985), which are now being called the interaction approach (Mackey & Gass, 2006). The interactional aspect of communication has been emphasized and intensively studied ever since then (e.g., Gass, 1997; Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Panions, & Linnell, 1996).

Applying the findings on SLA to teaching languages in classroom, CLT was developed from various viewpoints such as syllabus design (Munby, 1978), methodology (Brumfit, 1984), or teachers' roles and classroom practices (Brown, 1994). However, CLT became widely understood as an approach rather than a specific method in teaching language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), and a class is accepted as CLT when learning opportunities are given to use language in

communicating with others (Howatt, 1984). Several methods to foster communicative opportunities have been suggested such as learner-centered learning, content-based learning, cooperative learning, and task-based learning (Brown, 1994; Littlewood, 2007; Nunan, 1999; Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Savignon, 1983).

However, these methods tended to remain ideal in theory and actually produced a great variation of practitioners' interpretations at the level of classroom procedures and techniques (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). These various interpretations of CLT frequently raised debates on the suitability of CLT in terms of its original concept suggested by SLA researchers. The skeptical views on CLT can be summarized into two parts. First, CLT is argued to be inapplicable to Eastern contexts because it is based heavily on the Western social and cultural value system (Brown, 2000; Coleman, 1997; Ellis, 1996; Holliday, 1994; Sullivan, 2000). For instance, an ideal type of classroom interaction initiated by students is not acceptable in Eastern cultures where Confucian behavior norms dictate and encourage teacher-directed interaction (Holliday, 1994). Also, meaning-focused instruction contrasts with the value of Asian countries where knowledge and form are prioritized (Ellis, 1996). Ellis (1996) cautioned that "in the confusion between Eastern and Western world-views, it is quite natural to fall into the trap of assigning one's own hierarchy of goals and value orientation to our counterparts from the other culture" (p. 216). Second, CLT is criticized as being more suitable in ESL situation than in EFL situation in terms of teaching purpose and environment (Bax, 2003; Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Guilloteaux, 2004). For example, CLT seemed to be unfit for teaching English in China as a foreign

language while it is suitable in the situation of teaching French in Canada as a second language (Burnaby & Sun, 1989).

In spite of these arguments against the application of CLT for non-western or non-ESL contexts, efforts have been made to embrace CLT by reinterpreting its principles rather than abandoning it (Brown, 1994; Celce-Murcia et al., 1997; Holliday, 1994; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). It is argued that CLT can be adapted in a culturally or contextually sensitive way while adhering to its primary goal of developing communicative competence. CLT is still supported in that language learners are valued as autonomous persons communicating rather than as passive learners receiving knowledge (Holliday, 1994). Therefore, defenders of CLT argued that it should be reinterpreted and adapted to meet local communicative needs.

In sum, there exists no single model of CLT that can be accepted and be universally applicable (Li, 1998; Littlewood, 2007; Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007; Sullivan, 2000). Its primary goal of developing communicative competence, however, is still receiving maximum agreement as mentioned above. Thus, efforts should be made to understand local contexts where the language teaching is situated and to find a CLT model suitable for the contexts.

2.1.2 CLT in Practice

The concept of CLT has been reinterpreted at multiple levels including the government, intermediary organizations, and finally, the local teachers (Honig, 2004; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Silver & Steele, 2005). At the macro-level, governments in many countries have reformed their national curriculums in

alignment to CLT principles and at the micro level, local schools and teachers have interpreted and implemented governmental policies by means of school curriculums or classroom practices.

The CLT-based educational reforms in many countries were started using a top-down approach (Butler & Iino, 2004; Hu, 2005). In other words, the reform policies tended to be imposed and encouraged by the government. For that reason, many researchers have criticized the hasty manner of implementing CLT-based curricular reforms. They argued that governments worked only to improve the physical educational environment such as the syllabi, teaching materials, or classrooms, while neglecting the local teachers' lack of preparedness or disapproval related to the policies (Gorsuch, 2000, 2001; Hu, 2005; Hu, 2007; Wang & Cheng, 2005). As a result, there were few reports of the successful implementation of CLT-based curricular reforms worldwide.

Several studies have focused on the causes of the reform failure, and the teachers were often criticized for their inability to implement government-led educational reform (Ho, 2004; Hu, 2005; Nunan, 2003). For instance, Nunan (2003) compared the situations of six Asian countries i.e., Mainland China (with Hong Kong as a separate locale), Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam. In all of the countries, CLT principles were the theoretical bases of the national curriculums, and task-based language teaching (TBLT, hereafter) was suggested as a desirable method. However, it was found that TBLT was poorly implemented in local classrooms, and teachers' low qualification in terms of English language skills was one of the main failing causes.

However, the same findings can be interpreted in a very different way depending on whose perspective was the concern (Littlewood, 2007;

McLaughlin, 1987). For example, Silver and Steele (2005) did not attribute the cause of the policy failure to the language teachers' insufficient qualification. In English language classes in the U.S., China, Japan, Singapore, and Switzerland, they found that the teachers reinterpreted the governmental reform to meet the immediate learners' needs and school expectations, whereupon the guidelines of the government affected the local classrooms only indirectly. The reform was not implemented as the government intended because the local teachers' priorities were on the local needs, not because the teachers were unable to do. Based on the findings, the authors maintained that language policy should be interpreted in a multidirectional way considering not only the governmental perspective but also each individual teacher's perspective on classroom instruction.

The significant role of teachers as agents of educational innovation has long been highlighted (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Stritikus, 2003; Wang & Cheng, 2005). Some studies surveyed how local teachers perceived or reacted to the CLT-based reform policies (e.g., Gorsuch, 2001; Li, 1998) while other studies examined how an individual teacher implemented the policies in their classrooms (e.g., Hiramatsu, 2005; Stritikus, 2003). In these studies, most local teachers were found struggling to implement CLT-based curriculums while accommodating it to various degrees.

Meanwhile, two studies reported noteworthy cases of English teachers adapting CLT in their classes. Ouyang (2000) introduced a Chinese teacher's painful story to find a CLT model fitting the local context. The participant teacher had been committed to CLT for seven years since it was first introduced in China. Through seven years of dealing with interfering contextual constraints in China, the teacher believed she had integrated CLT into the local context in a

way that combined CLT principles and the traditional teaching method. Her effort was highly appreciated in the study. The teacher's determination and confidence to adapt CLT in her class was stated as follows;

Now we dare to use both English language and the mother tongue in teaching and teach through translation [using Grammar-Translation Method, which was forbidden by some radical CLT authorities in China], according to the students' specific needs or background. For instance, we ourselves were studying Japanese as a second foreign language, and we found that translating the grammar instruction into Chinese can greatly enhance our understanding about the Japanese grammar, and it was more efficient than just learning it through experience, process, and discovery. Of course, we need to have CLT nativized (Ouyang , 2000, p. 421).

Likewise, Carless (2004) also positively evaluated local teachers' efforts to nativize a strong version of TBLT imposed by the national curriculum. In the study, the researcher examined three different English classes in Hong Kong and found that the teachers practiced a weaker version of TBLT in their classrooms. That is, the students were encouraged to practice English communication using some linguistic forms that the teachers taught in advance. With this weak version of TBLT, the teachers were able to deal with the local issues effectively concerning the use of the mother tongue, classroom management, and target language productions. Based on the findings, the nativized TBLT was proposed to be more feasible in the Hong Kong context than the strong version of TBLT manifested in the curriculum. The researcher emphasized that the imposed national curriculum be reinterpreted by the local teachers in a way to reflect "their own abilities, beliefs, experiences, the immediate school context, and the wider sociocultural environment" (p. 659).

In sum, there exist multilayered factors in putting CLT into practice. The adapting process entails the interpretation of the government in terms of education reform, and that of local practitioners in terms of classroom practices.

However, local teachers were indicated as the most important agent to bring about innovations in education. The agentive teachers did not just accept imposed CLT-based reforms but actively reinterpreted them through the lens of their beliefs and experiences. Therefore, studying the teachers and their classroom practices should be the starting point in discussing educational innovations.

2.2 Recent Innovations of English Education in Korea

Innovations in Korean English education were led by the government through the curricular reform. In particular, the 7th National Curriculum was recently reformed and revised based on CLT and since then, subsequent English education policies have been enacted. Section 2.2.1 examines how CLT in theory was interpreted and represented in the 7th National Curriculum and how the curricular reform took effect. Section 2.2.2 reviews how in-service teacher education, one of the core English education policies, has progressed and taken effect.

2.2.1 CLT-based Curricular Reform

The National Curriculum was reformed seven times in Korea reflecting the historical, political and social changes of the days (Jeon, 2011; Kwon, 2000) and the current education is now under the newly revised 7th National Curriculum

(the 1st revision was proclaimed in 2007, the 2nd revision, in 2011)⁴. The main goal of English education has been the development of communicative competence since the 6th National Curriculum (effective in 1995) and accordingly, CLT has been suggested as an appropriate approach. When the 7th National Curriculum was reformed and revised, its details changed slightly but the governmental effort continued to encourage CLT in the classroom.

As reviewed in Section 2.2, the theory-based CLT is bound to be reinterpreted at the macro-level by the government of each country. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to examine the key premises of the CLT-based National Curriculum in Korea to understand the interpretations of the Ministry of Education (MOE, hereafter). Since this study is interested in English classrooms under the current secondary English education system, the review will be restricted to the 7th National Curriculum and its successive revisions.

The 7th National Curriculum is characterized by its two distinct orientations: learner-centered education and autonomous management of the curriculum (Seong, 2004). The former aims at developing the learners' creativity and self-directed learning ability, and the latter, at implementing the National Curriculum appropriately according to the local contexts of education offices, schools, and teachers. In particular, local teachers, as agents, are encouraged to take responsibility for reconstructing the local curriculum based on the guidelines of the National Curriculum. Thus, it is a prerequisite that the local teachers should understand the guidelines of the National Curriculum first to reconstruct the local curriculum which fits their contexts.

⁴ The general guidelines of the 7th National Curriculum were revised first in 2006 and second in 2009. According to the guidelines, the English curriculums were revised in 2007 and in 2011 respectively.

The explicit goals in the 7th National English Curriculum were stated as follows: 1) understanding the necessity to communicate in English 2) effectively communicating in daily life and about general topics 3) understanding diverse foreign information in English and putting it into practical use 4) appreciating diverse cultures and introducing our culture in English (MOE, 2009, p. 298). Clearly, the goals of the curriculum were oriented towards the development of English communicative abilities in daily life.

Still, further interpretations are needed about what the ability refers to in principle and how it can be developed in practice. In Kim's (2008a) and Ahn's (2009) studies, those interpretations of MOE were examined based on the content analysis of the 7th National Curriculum manual which was issued in 1998. In the studies, four common characteristics were extracted: the development of communicative competence, English as a classroom language, task-based language learning, and learner-centered learning.

First, communicative competence was interpreted consistently with the concept suggested by Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990). The components of the competence were listed as grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (MOE, 1998).

Second, teaching English in English (TEE) was recommended to develop students' communicative competence based on the theories of Input Hypothesis and Interaction Hypothesis (MOE, 2000). Initially, teachers were advised to use English only in teaching listening and speaking but to mix Korean in teaching reading, writing, and culture (MOE, 2000). Later, TEE became an obligation to use English in all class communication including explaining, asking, and

answering (MOE, 2002 cited in Kim, 2008a, p. 70).

Third, tasks were emphasized to promote interaction between teacher and students and amongst students. Here, the specific definition of tasks was not provided and the terms were used interchangeably among tasks, communicative activities or communicative practices. In addition, communicative activities were meant to include written language activities as well as spoken language activities. Spoken language activities were proposed to focus on communicative functions while written language activities, on both linguistic forms and functions. In this regard, communicative competence seemed to be interpreted as the development of communicative ability both in spoken language and in written language.

Lastly, learner-centered learning was pursued instead of the teacher-directed and monotonous class. It referred to “offering a diverse program where students’ interests and needs are respected, their proficiency levels are considered, and their potential and creativities are developed” (MOE, 1998 cited in Ahn, 2009, p. 113). In reality, the learner-centered learning was implemented based on a tracking system⁵. In the system, the notion of semester was substituted for the notion of level, and students were advanced to a higher level only when their performance met the achievement criteria at the low level.

Since then, there were two revisions of the 7th English curriculum (proclaimed in 2007, in 2011 respectively). The first revision was motivated mostly by the impracticality of the tracking system which had drawn negative responses from teachers, students, and parents (MOE, 2006a; Jeon, 2011). The

⁵ According to Kim (2008a), the tracking system aimed at providing the most effective instruction by dividing the levels according to the students’ proficiency and by giving assistance to low-level students. In reality, tracking was realized either as group-division in a class or as class-division in a grade. The Curriculum provided a separate achievement criteria for each level, and accordingly the level-divided textbooks were developed (pp. 74-74).

second revision was the concomitant of the revised general guidelines of the 7th National Curriculum in which the period of Common Basic Curriculum was reduced (MOE, 2011). In English curriculum which was promulgated in 2011, the comprehensive English language education policies were proposed accordingly (Chang, 2012).

The successive revisions brought slight changes into the interpretations of the above-discussed characteristics of CLT-based curriculum. First, TEE was softened. According to a report issued by the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (Lee, 2009), teachers were advised to use an appropriate amount of English in class based on their understanding of students' level. Considering the Korean context as EFL situation, teachers' English proficiency was also evaluated by the criteria of ESP (English as a Special Purpose) rather than EGP (English for General Purpose). More importantly, the attention was focused not on teachers' use of English, but on their ability to plan, carry out and evaluate a skill-building and communicative class. Thus, it is speculated that the notion of TEE has been reinterpreted in consideration of its practicality in Korean situations. Second, learner-centered learning, after the tracking system was abolished, was reinterpreted to mean to provide differentiated classes in a grade according to the student's proficiency (Chang, 2007). Accordingly, graded textbooks were developed and are still being used in middle schools. In this sense, it can be said that learner-centered learning was interpreted to take into consideration the students' proficiency rather than their diverse interests or needs.

As reviewed so far, the educational policy makers in Korea have changed the curriculums to promptly meet the socio-political demands for English education. In spite of some positive changes, the curricular reforms and its revisions were

criticized for pursuing only short-term effectiveness (Choi, 2006; Jeon, 2011).

When the CLT-based curriculums first became effective in secondary schools in the mid 1990's, Korean teachers responded somewhat negatively to it mainly because of practical difficulties. Li (1998) pointed out four sources of difficulties in implementing CLT in Korea based on surveys and interviews with 18 teachers. First, teachers lacked English speaking proficiency and teaching expertise. Second, students had low English proficiency, low motivation and low preference for CLT. Third, teachers were constrained by discouraging situations such as overcrowded classes, grammar-oriented examinations, and unsatisfactory funding. Lastly, CLT itself was perceived inadequate in Korean EFL situations especially due to the lack of efficient assessment instruments. These findings were reconfirmed in later studies (Choi, 2000; Kim, 2002; Nam, 2005).

Even though some obstacles, especially the physical environment, have been improved to some extent (Chang, 2012), significant changes remain to be seen yet in local classrooms. Many studies found that most of the teachers were reconstructing the curriculum in non-communicative traditional ways (Guilloteaux, 2004; Hahn & Jeon, 2005; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Kim, 2008a, 2009; Seong, 2004). For example, Kim's (2008a) qualitative study showed how and why the English classes did not align with the orientations of the National Curriculum. The failing reasons were complex arising from the sociocultural aspects as well as the personal aspects. The exam-oriented school and society had a strong influence over the teachers' classroom practices. In addition, the teachers' unwillingness and unreadiness to actualize CLT was pointed out to be "an insurmountable obstacle for them to implement the curricular mandates" (p. 220); not only did the teachers reject CLT principles but also they had an

insufficient understanding of the curricular reform and low confidence in actualizing TEE.

Recent studies showed that teachers' negative perceptions were one of the main causes impeding innovations of classroom instruction (Choi, 2008; Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Jeon, 2009). For example, Jeon (2009) found that English teachers' positive attitudes and motivations concerning CLT had decreased. The survey compared the perceptions of 172 teachers in 1996 with that of 305 teachers in 2008 on various issues regarding the implementation of CLT. The result showed that the teachers' initial approval of CLT declined and their classroom practices had barely changed for twelve-year intervals while their self-perceived English proficiency increased. Prospective teachers' perceptions were of no difference. According to Choi (2008), most of the prospective teachers expressed negative opinions about the ideal goals of the current National Curriculum. Instead, they argued for usage-based teaching, explicit grammar knowledge in proficiency building, and teacher-centered classes. The results drew skeptical views on the successful implementation of CLT-based curricular reform regarding the prospective teachers' future influences in local classrooms.

To sum up, recent educational innovations in Korea were led by the curricular reform based on the governmental reinterpretation of CLT. However, the CLT-based National Curriculum has not been successfully implemented in the classrooms. One of the factors to slow down the change in classroom instruction was the teachers' negative perceptions about the curriculum. In this regard, the importance of in-service teacher education is highlighted more than ever to change teachers and their practices.

2.2.2 In-service Teacher Education

Since the CLT-based curriculums were put into effect in Korea, the government has invested a massive budget to reeducate English teachers through various in-service teacher training programs. In particular, the MOE has strengthened 6-month intensive in-service English teacher training programs (IETTP, hereafter) according to its innovative plans (MOE, 2006b), and over a thousand teachers have participated in IETTP every year. IETTP was aimed at improving teachers' teaching skills as well as their English proficiency (Chang, Kim, & Cheng, 2011).

Originally, the recent in-service teacher training was proposed based on a new paradigm on teacher education. The new paradigm advocates the concept of continuing professional development instead of competency-based teacher education⁶ (Chang, Lee, & Cheng, 2011; Hayes & Chang, 2012; Hayes, Chang, & Imm, 2011). Under the new paradigm, English teachers are provided with awareness-raising opportunities and ultimately encouraged to change their beliefs and classes by putting theory into practice. Accordingly, in-service teacher training programs, especially IETTP, created curriculum consisting mainly of three parts: language skill improvement, theories of teaching methodology, and teaching practicum (Chang et al., 2011).

Research on the effects of in-service teacher training is in its early stage since suitable training models are still being searched (Chang, Lee, et al., 2011; Cheng & Chang, 2009; Lee, Lee, & Cho, 2010). Nonetheless, several studies reported positive short-term effects of the programs (e.g., Ahn, 2011; Chen, 2012; Kim &

⁶ The two different paradigms on teacher education are contrasted in Chang (2000) (cited in Chang, Lee, & Cheng, 2011, p.178).

Ahn, 2008; Na, Ahn & Kim, 2008). Most of the studies compared the trainee teachers' pre-to-post English language skills and teaching skills based on the statistical analysis of language tests, microteaching assessment or large-scale questionnaires. Meanwhile, Yeum (2012) and Ko (2013) examined how IETTP was positively experienced by the teachers through a qualitative case study. In the studies, the teachers were given experiential opportunities to understand CLT principles through various learner-centered tasks. As a result, the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards CLT, or TEE changed to some degree. The degree of change was affected by the socio-contextual factors of and beyond IETTP, such as the interactional aspect between the trainers and the trainees or the discrepancy between the IETTP practicum and local contexts.

There were only a few studies examining the long-term effect of the programs (Chang, Kim, et al., 2011; Kim, 2009; Lee, 2006). Kim's (2009) study examined one teacher's classroom practices two months after the program. It showed that the English teacher did not change her practices after finishing IETTP. The teacher was found to adhere to previous practices because her established teaching belief, in fact, did not change at all in IETTP. Lee's (2006) study also investigated how English teachers changed their classroom practices after various in-service teacher training programs. The results of a large-scale survey indicated that the teachers' instructional changes lasted only for a short time even though the individual teacher strove to put into practice what they had learned in the programs. The struggles and frustrations were found amongst most of the teachers regardless of the length of their careers or the types of programs they had participated in. Along with the survey, the same researcher selected four focal teachers and analyzed their journals and interviews qualitatively to see

what kinds of struggles they had. The result showed that most of the teachers returned to previous instructional practices due to macro sociocultural factors such as the discrepancy of goals between the National Curriculum and CSAT. Interestingly though, one middle school teacher continued her professional development adhering to CLT. Even though she had the shortest career length and had participated in a training program other than IETTP, she strove to align her practices with CLT principles by actively dealing with interfering factors arising within the classroom instruction. In a similar vein, Chang, Kim, et al. (2011) reported a hopeful case in which an elementary school teacher pursued professional development after IETTP. The teacher was involved in cooperative learning as a mentor of novice teachers in her school. By exchanging views based on the observation of each other's classes, both the mentor and mentee teachers were perceived to enhance their professionalism.

What is the difference between teachers whose classroom practices remained the status quo and those who transformed after participating in the in-service teacher education? Hayes and Chang (2012), in discussing the theoretical perspectives on in-service teacher education, emphasized the role of English teachers. The teachers were expected to change their practices by analyzing their own classes and receiving feedback from the public under the collaborative professional learning environment. In other words, for professional development and changes to be successful, the starting point must be the teacher themselves who "acknowledge his or her agency" (p. 124).

The teacher's agency to change the classroom practices interacts with the contextual factors of the local school (Martin, 1993; Verity, 2000). Even an expert teacher may feel confused and be unable to exercise his agency when

being placed in a completely new context (Verity, 2000). Thus, an innovative teacher should deal with the contextual factors to practice his agentive actions. The two innovative teachers in Lee's (2006) and Chang, Kim and Cheng's (2011) studies were the cases. The teacher in the former study tailored the use of communicative activities as well as TEE facing the local context of low-proficient students and the exam-oriented school culture. The teacher in the latter study continued to learn through mentoring in a supportive context for the professional development in terms of school administration and colleagues' cooperation. In this regard, the contextual factors, especially the teacher's working conditions and the related people's cooperation, are very influential for teachers to exhibit their agency (Martin, 1993).

To sum up, many English teachers were not willing or ready yet to change their classroom practices in spite of in-service teacher education. The reasons were found in their unchanged beliefs and interfering sociocultural factors. However, some studies shed some light on the possibility of change by highlighting some agentive teachers. It would be worthwhile to do research on those agentive teachers to understand how they construct their classroom practices interacting with the interfering sociocultural contexts. Through the research, it can be discussed how classroom instruction in Korean secondary English education would and could improve further.

2.3 Theoretical Framework: A Sociocultural Perspective

This study adopts Vygotskian sociocultural theory and activity theory as a framework to understand the teachers and their teaching. Specifically, the

activity system model is used as an analytical tool for data analysis. Section 2.3.1 introduces a sociocultural theory and its perspectives on teachers and their practices, and Section 2.3.2 describes the activity system model as a framework to analyze the instructional activities of teachers.

2.3.1 Teachers and Their Practices in Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory

Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory (SCT⁷, hereafter) is a theory of the human mind which focuses on the development of higher mental functions such as voluntary memory, rational thinking, or learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). SCT can be represented in three principles: the social origin of human cognition, transformative mediation, and mediated agency.

In SCT, human cognition is viewed as “a dialectic unity of biological and cultural processes” (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008, p. 6). Biological process indicates the biologically endowed neural system. Cultural process represents social activities in which humans interact with other people by using cultural artifacts of physical tools and symbolic tools. Specifically, humans are able to act on the physical world with the mediation of physical tools, and relate to other people as well as to themselves with the mediation of symbolic tools, especially language. What is radical about SCT is that the cultural process is seen as playing a fundamental role, not an ancillary role, in forming higher mental functions. In other words, the quasi-social nature resides in human consciousness because of

⁷ There have been many terminologies to refer to Vygotskian theory of mind, but ‘sociocultural theory’ is used in this study since it has been most widely recognized in this field (See Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, pp. 2-3 for detailed discussion).

the origin of cognitive development (Wertsch, 1985). After all, human cognitive development is a transformation of the biological process as a result of internalizing the cultural process. The mental activity of the developed cognition is, in turn, externalized by means of speech, which potentially transforms the social activities in the physical world (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

In SCT, the transformational aspect of internalization and externalization is emphasized (Johnson, 2004; Leont'ev, 1979; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). Internalization is the mechanism through which the mediational means, especially symbolic tools such as language, are appropriated by humans. The symbolic artifacts which once were used in communicative activity are converted into psychological tools and then mediate the mental activity. Internalization is not simply a transmission process such as emulation or mimicry (Lantolf, 2006). Rather, it occurs through a transformative activity of imitation. Through the complex mechanism of imitation, humans can recognize and understand the goal of an activity and map it on to the means. By internalization, the biologically endowed elementary mental function is totally changed and developed into a higher function. In turn, humans externalize the conceptual knowledge through the mediational means, which is called externalization. Like internalization, externalization is also a transformative process. Humans find the most effective and appropriate ways to externalize the knowledge by constructing and reconstructing the functions of the given mediational means. Central to the mechanisms of internalization and externalization is mediation. Thus, mediation is a fundamental concept in SCT.

According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006), mediation is “the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to

regulate the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (p. 79). That is, it is a two-sided process of internalization and externalization, and thus makes the two different processes a unity. There are three types of mediational means: cultural artifacts, concepts, and activities.

First, the cultural artifacts can be both materialistic and conceptual, so they are utilized to attain a goal in the human activity and simultaneously constitute the activity itself. For example, PowerPoint slides (PPT) are used in a teacher's instructional activity to teach effectively. However, the PPT exists first in a teacher's mind as a plan, or a conceptual form. Only after the teacher actually makes it does the PPT take a material form. In this regard, the conceptual artifact of PPT is constitutive of a PPT-making activity. Second, the concepts also function as a tool to shape the mental activity. There are two kinds of concepts in SCT: everyday concepts and scientific concepts (Vygotsky, 1986). Everyday concepts are created based on practical experiences while scientific concepts are constructed based on theoretical investigations. For instance, CLT is a scientific concept but some Korean English teachers misunderstood it as a method to focus only on meaning and fluency and neglect form and accuracy (Guilloteaux, 2004). The teachers' misunderstanding of CLT was based on every concept that has arisen from their practical activities or insufficient knowledge. Thus, it is important for scientific concepts to be learned accurately, and education should provide learners with "the systematically organized experience of ascending from the abstract to the concrete" (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008, p. 12). The last mediational means is the activity, and it will be presented in detail in the next section.

In SCT, human agency, antonym of passivity, plays a central role in cognitive

development (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; van Lier, 2008; Wertsch & Rupert, 1993; Wertsch, Tulvister, & Hagstrom, 1993). The individuals are agents who determine what is internalized by both appropriating and reconstructing the mediational means. The agents also determine the ways to externalize their understanding by choosing and creating means. There is no operational definition of agency in SCT and the notion of agency is still being constructed (van Lier, 2008). Nonetheless, agency does not refer to a property of the individual, or “the ability to act on one’s own, without outside interference or subordination to outside authority” (Taylor, 1985, p. 5 cited in Wertsch, Tulvister & Hagstrom, 1993). Rather, it is understood as “individual(s)-operating-with-mediational-means” (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993, p. 230). It is assumed that an autonomous human mind cannot be isolated from other minds because even an activity out of an individual’s solitary thinking can be carried out by means of cultural artifacts which were developed by other minds. In other words, human agency is mediated.

The notion of mediated agency implies three factors. First, agency is mediated by cultural artifacts, so even an agentive individual act should be interpreted in its social and cultural context (van Lier, 2008). Second, it is also mediated by other people, so it is co-constructed as a person participates in the community of practice (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001). Third, there is an inherent tension between an individual and mediational means. So it is not assumed that human freewill is totally subjected to mediational means or vice versa. The tension becomes a trigger factor to enable both the agent and means to be transformed (Wertsch, Tulvister, & Hagstrom, 1993).

These principles of SCT are sharply contrasted with that of cognitive theories

in which cognitive development is viewed as an inherently internal psychological process while external factors play only indecisive roles (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Leont'ev, 1979; Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Instead of taking the dualistic approach separating mind and body or biological and social process, SCT provides the dialectic understanding of the internal plane of mental activity and external plane of social activity (Johnson, 2004; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Accordingly, the solution to any problems in human cognition is not reduced either to the human organism or to the external world. The investigation to find the solution converges on the human's activity in which cognition has originated and is developed (Leont'ev, 1979).

SCT provides a new perspective on teachers and their classroom practices (Edge & Richards, 1998, Freeman & Johnson, 1998, Johnson, 2006). Teachers are considered knowledge creators who continue to develop new understandings based on their teaching experience. Furthermore, the teachers are the agents “who both appropriate and reconstruct the resources that have been developed and made available to them while simultaneously refashioning those resources to meet new challenges” (Johnson, 2009, p. 13). As for the classroom practices, they are viewed as teachers' purposeful actions to attain teaching goals. The goals are formulated in a sociocultural context where teaching is situated and are pursued by means of the resources. Thus, classroom instruction reflects the interplay between teacher agency and the context.

In teacher education, the construct of praxis was suggested to catch the dialectical and transformative relation between the teacher's understanding and activity (Edge & Richards, 1998; Johnson, 2006). The construct of praxis entails

both processes of putting theory into practice and theorizing about the practices. In other words, the educational theory developed by the researchers offers a basis to the classroom practices of teacher, and simultaneously the practices function to refine and extend the theory by externalizing the local understanding of the practitioners. This alternative view on teaching disapproves of the dichotomous view on theory and practice, especially on teacher's theoretical knowledge and classroom practices. Praxis precludes any discussion emphasizing only one side of teaching: teaching as an array of specific classroom practices or as the materialization of knowledge base. In order to understand the nature of praxis, therefore, the teacher's classroom practices need to be examined with their informed understanding on the practices, and a teacher's understanding of theory should be investigated with the teachers' practices (Edge & Richards, 1998). Moreover, the context where the instructional activity is situated should be studied in-depth because the activity is made possible by means of cultural artifacts available in the context and teaching goals have been formulated and constrained in the context (Johnson & Golombek, 2011).

In sum, SCT provides a new perspective on the development of human cognition. Specifically, it introduces useful concepts of mediation and agency in understanding how higher mental function of human is developed. It also provides new insight into teachers and their classroom practices in terms of teachers' agency and praxis. Since this study is interested in how competent English teachers exercise their agency in the contexts where the CLT-based curriculum was imposed, the SCT framework is considered to fit the purpose of the study.

2.3.2 Instructional Activity in Activity Theory

Activity theory (AT, hereafter) was developed based on SCT by later generations of followers of Vygotsky such as A. N. Leont'ev and Engeström⁸, and the current study adopts the model suggested by Engeström (1987, 1993, 1999a, 1999b) to analyze the teachers' instructional activities. The goal of activity theory is to provide a unified account on the nature and development of human behavior by analyzing the activity (Lantolf, 2000).

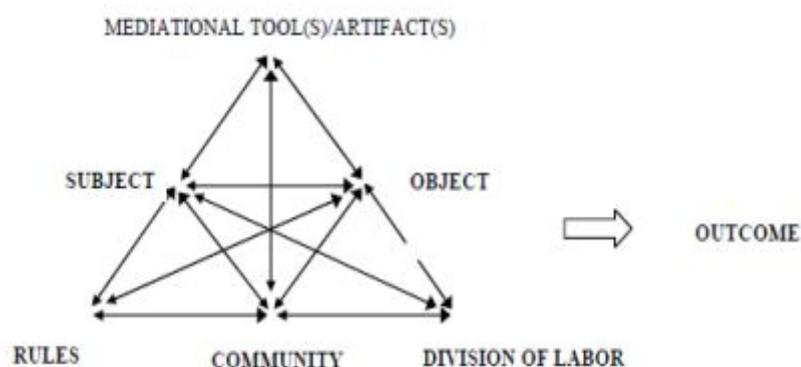
In AT, the activity is suggested as a basic unit of analysis to understand human behavior. Activity is defined “not as a reaction and not a totality of reactions but a system that has structure, its own internal transitions and transformations, its own development” (Leont'ev, 1978, p. 50). The structure of an activity is composed of three levels: activity, action, and operation (Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Leont'ev, 1978; Wertsch, 1979). The levels initially implied the functional classification (Wertsch, 1979) but were later understood as hierarchical levels (Engeström, 1987; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). The highest level of activity is oriented at the object or the motive of an individual. The activity consists of concrete actions that are directed at its goals. Actions are carried out by operations that are based on conditions. In other words, a human activity is realized only in the forms of various goal-directed actions which are carried out under specific spatial and temporal conditions.

However, the concrete actions are not the criteria to distinguish one activity from another in that the same actions may manifest the different activities. For example, some teachers may use group work in their class from a motive to

⁸ The three generations of AT are briefly summarized in Engeström (2001).

entertain the students while others may do the same from a motive to encourage peer interaction. The former teachers are engaged in different activity from that of the latter teachers. What differentiates one activity from another is the object of the activity, or the motive of the subject who constructs the activity. Thus, goal-directed actions should not be confused with object-oriented activity (Engeström, 1999a)⁹. The situated actions should be accounted for by analyzing them with relation to its higher level of activity (Engeström, 1999b).

Engeström (1987, 1999a) elaborated on the structure of activity and suggested an activity system model. The model schematizes a human activity which is oriented towards the object and mediated by instruments and other people. To unify both the instrumental and the communicative aspect of a human activity, this model postulates that an activity is a system consisting of seven components (Figure 2.1).



(adopted from Engeström, 1999a, p. 31)

FIGURE 2.1
Activity System Model

⁹ In a similar vein, the notion of object should be distinguished from that of goal in that it is attached to the abstract activity while goals are related to specific and concrete actions.

As shown in the triangle model, the essential components of the system are *subject*, *object*, *mediational tools*, *community*, *rules*, *division of labor* and *outcome*. *Subject* is an individual performing the activity whose agency will be the focal point of the analysis. An entity of the world becomes an *object* of human activity when it meets a need and motive of the human. It determines the orientation of activity, and there is no activity without an *object*. *Object* initially emerges from the problem space, formed into a clear *object*, and ultimately transformed into *outcome* by means of *mediational tools* (Engeström, 1994). The activity is also mediated by the *community* who share the same general *object* with the *subject*. The *subject* and the *community* are seen to collaborate to achieve the general *object* in terms of *rules* and *division of labor*. *Rules* refer to any norms or conventions that regulate actions and interactions within the system. *Division of labor* is vertically divided power and horizontally divided tasks among community members. Applying the model to an ideal CLT proponent teachers' activity, for example, a teacher's classroom instruction (activity system) can be analyzed as a system which entails *subject* of the teacher, *object* of developing communicative competence, *mediational tools* of student-centered tasks, classroom *community* of the students, *rules* to allow the students' active participation, and negotiated *division of labor* based on students' autonomy, and the *outcome* of students' improved communicative competence.

The model suggests that the activity should be analyzed as a systemic whole, not as separate elements (Engeström, 1999a; Leont'ev, 1979). The systemicity is captured by the interrelations between the components. The multidirectional arrows in Figure 2.1 indicate the interactional influence and potential conflicts between the components within the system. These internal tensions, namely

inner contradictions are the driving forces that bring about potential changes to the original activity.

The contradictions are postulated to be multilayered. Engeström (1987, 1993) classified the contradictions into four levels: primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary. *Primary contradictions* are defined as conflicts within each component of an activity system, and *secondary contradictions* as those between the components. *Tertiary contradictions* occur when *object* of the focal activity is conflicted with that of “a culturally more advanced activity” (Engeström, 1987, p. 43). Lastly, the *quaternary contradictions* refer to the misalignment between the focal activity system and its neighboring activities. Specifically, the *secondary contradiction* is the most important in understanding any change in the activity because it is “the moving force behind disturbances and innovations, and eventually behind the change and development of the system” (Engeström, 1993, p. 72). In theory, the *secondary contradiction* may occur when a new factor enters from outside, turns into the internal components of the central system, and then forms an imbalance. Thus, the activity will be transformed only when the other three types of contradictions trigger the secondary contradiction within the activity system. Therefore, it is crucial to diagnose the contradictions, especially *the secondary contradictions* to understand any innovative activities.

All of the four layers of contradictions can appear in a teacher’s instructional activity. For instance, a teacher may recognize the competing *objects* between preparing the students for the test and developing their communicative competence (*primary contradiction*), or the conflict between *tool* of student-centered tasks and *rules* of Confucian classroom norms (*secondary contradiction*). Sometimes, a teacher’s *object* to prepare the students for the test

may contrast with the orientation of the CLT-based curriculum (*tertiary contradiction*) and with that of in-service teacher training programs (*quaternary contradiction*).

Several studies examined Korean English teachers' classes using Engeström's model, but the participant teachers were either student teachers without teaching experience (Ahn, 2009) or teachers without self-confidence in TEE (Kim, 2008a, 2008b). In contrast, this study focused on the competent teachers who the government have tried to secure through the in-service teacher education and thus are thought to be able to enact the government-led educational innovations.

Thorne (2004) emphasized that the strength of Engeström model is "its inherent dialectical sensitivity to the inventiveness of human activity *and* the normalizing pressures of expected forms of behavior" (p. 53, italics in original). The activity system model serves as a valuable framework for this study in understanding the competent teachers' classroom practices and the various pressures on them in class. It also enables the researcher to illuminate the teachers' resolution of the conflicts, their inventiveness, or creativity. Based on the diagnosis of the classroom instructions of the competent teachers, the model can provide plausible and productive suggestions on how to improve the English teachers' classroom practices to meet the needs of the government-led curricular reform.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter starts with the rationale of taking a qualitative research approach in conducting this study (Section 3.1). Following the qualitative research method, the subsequent sections present a research design (Section 3.2), and procedures of collecting data (Section 3.3) and of analyzing data (Section 3.4). Section 3.5 describes the techniques employed in this study to ensure trustworthiness followed by Section 3.6 which addresses the ethical issues related to this study.

3.1 Research Approach

This study takes a qualitative research approach. The basic assumption of qualitative research is sharply contrasted with that of quantitative research because the two approaches are based on different philosophies. The former, based on constructivism, states that reality is constructed and interpreted by humans through their experiences and existing knowledge, while the latter, based on objectivism or positivism, states that the real world exists externally beyond humans' subjective experience¹⁰ (Jo, 1999; Jonassen, 1991). In essence, qualitative research is concerned with *how* humans construct reality or knowledge through their experiences in a situated context (Stake, 1995). That is, it is an inquiry to focus on the understanding that the participants hold toward the world by collecting multiple data in a natural setting, analyzing and finding the emerging themes, and developing a holistic account (Creswell, 2013).

¹⁰ In terms of the distinctive philosophical traditions of the two approaches, Jo (1999) pointed to constructivism versus positivism while Jonassen (1991) compared constructivism and objectivism.

Qualitative researchers do not intend to test a theory-driven hypothesis. Rather, they seek to understand a complicated nature of the focal issue first and foremost, to delineate the contexts where the participants are situated, and to explain the mechanisms in causal relations. More importantly, the researchers try to interpret the meaning of social phenomena “with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible” (Merriam, 1998, p. 5). These philosophical assumptions and characteristics of qualitative research approach are well aligned with the focus of the current study in that classroom instruction is a complex set of actions situated in a natural classroom setting and is constructed through the negotiated experiences of the teachers and their students.

Among several types of qualitative research, a case study is used in this study. According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry that examines “a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context” (p. 18). What distinguishes a case study from other types of qualitative research lies in its research object of context-bounded phenomenon. Therefore, a case study is well-suited for the object of this study, or one-semester long classroom instructions in Korean secondary schools.

In a case study, the selection and definition of *a case* is crucial. Since the researcher is interested in understanding the classes of competent English teachers, purpose sampling (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998) was used to select the teachers. Based on the review of the literature, the researcher extracted four descriptive characteristics of competent teachers.

First, a teacher’s speaking proficiency is important since teachers’ lack of confidence or ability in speaking English was pointed out as one of the interfering factors to CLT (e.g., Kim, 2008a; Li, 1998; Nunan, 2003). Competent

teachers would have high English speaking proficiency so that they could communicate with students using English only. Second, a teacher's understanding of CLT-related theories or the curricular reform is another important factor. Some teachers had a negative attitude toward a CLT-based class because they were uninformed of or misunderstood theories or the National Curriculum (e.g., Guilloteaux, 2004; Johnson, 2009; Kim, 2008a). Competent teachers are expected to have accurate knowledge of CLT and the curricular reform. Third, teachers are encouraged to continue their professional development (e.g., Chang, Lee, & Cheng, 2011; Hayes & Chang, 2012). Competent teachers would continue to learn through in-service teacher education and their own teaching experience. Last, SCT does not define a teacher's expertise on the basis of theoretical knowledge he possesses. Instead, expertise is found in a teacher's concrete classroom practices situated in instructional context and is recognized by the relevant community of practice (e.g., Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Traianou, 2007). Thus, competent teachers would be locally recognized as expert or competent teachers. In total, four criteria were set to select the competent teachers: (a) demonstrating high English speaking proficiency, (b) having accurate knowledge of CLT and the curricular reform, (c) continuously striving for professional development, and (d) being locally recognized as a competent teacher.

Based on the criteria, the participants of the study were selected as follows. The researcher decided to use a TEE certificate to measure the criterion (a). The Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education has been granting the certificate since 2009 to teachers who can teach English only in English based on the classroom observation and the assessment of knowledge about CLT-related theories (Lee,

2009). The researcher contacted an administrator of a TEE program to ask for recommendation for several TEE-certified teachers. Then, an email was sent to all of the candidates to introduce the purpose and procedures of the study, as well as to ascertain the qualifications of the participants. Several teachers showed interest in the study, and the researcher had a conversation with each of them on the phone. The researcher explained a research design in detail and answered their questions about the study. She also checked the teachers' competence in terms of the rest criteria (b), (c), and (d). Eventually, one middle school teacher and one high school teacher agreed to participate in this study. The following section will describe the qualifications of the participant teachers to meet all four criteria. Though the selected participant teachers are not representative of all the competent English teachers in Korea, they can be considered a *critical case* (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

3.2 Research Design

This section provides an in-depth description of the natural settings in which the study was conducted. Section 3.2.1 describes the two schools to which the participants belong, and Section 3.2.2 introduces the participants of the study.

3.2.1 Research Sites

The research sites of this study were a middle school and a high school where the participant teachers were working. Both schools were located in Gangnam District, the southern part of Seoul. Gangnam District is well-known

for its excessive zeal for education, especially English education (Jo, 2013, August 14). The focal schools were no exceptions, so most of the students and their parents were much concerned with exam scores and acceptance to a good high school or a prestigious university. The middle school was a public school, to which the students were allocated by the local district. The high school was an autonomous private high school¹¹ that many of the local students were eager to enter. Officially, the high school was known to select their students by a lottery system among candidates whose middle school records were in the upper 50%, but in reality, most of the candidates had been placed higher than required.

In the middle school, one 9th grade English class was chosen for the present study based on the recommendation of the participant teacher. There were 10 classes in the 9th grade, and three Korean teachers and one native English-speaking teacher were in charge of the classes. The 9th graders had English lessons four times a week, one with the native English-speaking teacher and three with a Korean teacher. In the lessons, they were learning from the textbook *Middle School English 3* published in 2010 under the revised National Curriculum (2007) along with worksheets made by Korean teachers. As far as the textbook was concerned, the listening and speaking parts were taught by the native English-speaking teacher while the rest were taught by Korean teachers.

In the high school, there were twelve classes in the 10th grade, and three Korean teachers and one native English-speaking teacher were in charge of the grade. Among them, one class was recommended for this study by the participant teacher. As in the middle school, the 10th graders took three English lessons with

¹¹ It is a type of high school in Korea. Autonomous private high schools are guaranteed autonomy in managing school curriculum and administration (see Oh's (2011) study for high school diversification in Korea).

a Korean teacher and one lesson with the native English-speaking teacher per week. The Korean teachers were using the textbook *High School English 1* published in 2012 under the revised National Curriculum (2011) along with worksheets that they made. They taught only the reading and grammar sections from *High School English 1* while excluding the rest sections. They also used a second textbook, a book issued by a private publisher. The supplementary book had been chosen in a meeting of the Korean teachers. The native English teacher did not teach from *High School English 1* or the supplementary book at all.

3.2.2 Participants

The participants of the study were two English teachers and their students. Section 3.2.2.1 describes the profiles of the teachers according to the descriptive criteria mentioned in the previous section, and Section 3.2.2.2 introduces the students of the participant teachers who agreed to take part in the study.

3.2.2.1 Teachers

Ms. Sun, a 38-year old English teacher in the middle school, had taught English for 9 years, all at middle schools. She had been working at this particular school for 5 years and taught 9th graders for two years. From her two-year teaching experience, she was well-informed of the 9th graders in this school in terms of their English levels, study motivations, and behavioral characteristics. She was also well aware of the expectations of the students, their parents, as well as those of the school administrators, and was good at meeting the expectations.

Ms. Sun received a TEE certificate in 2012 and continued her efforts to improve her English oral proficiency. At the time of the study she was quite confident in speaking and communicating in English as well as in TEE.

She was involved in developing *Middle School English 1, 2 and 3* from 2007 to 2010. She analyzed the guidelines of English curriculum (2007) to develop the textbooks, so it was assumed that she had sufficient knowledge of the National Curriculum (2007). In addition, she studied CLT and the latest theories on SLA through her master's course and in-service teacher education.

As for professional development, she continued to study through her master's course. She was interested in the effect of affective factors on students' learning and was planning to write a master's thesis on the topic. She had been attending in-service teacher training programs every vacation because she enjoyed learning something new as well as meeting other English teachers. She was an enthusiastic teacher who tried to apply the new techniques or materials she had gained or learned about in the programs to her classes. For example, she attended an in-service teacher training program during the previous winter vacation and learned how to utilize group work in class, so she was planning to apply it to her class in the current semester.

Ms. Sun was recognized as a competent and hard-working teacher by her colleagues and the administrators of the school, so she opened her classes several times to other English teachers of neighboring schools. Consequently, she earned a reputation as a competent English teacher in the local area.

Mr. Hyun was 34 years old and had a two and a half year teaching career. He had worked in a high school for six months as a substitute teacher before he was hired in the current high school. When Mr. Hyun was hired as a regular teacher

at the focal school two years ago, he was required to teach the 10th graders four special English subjects of *Global Leadership, Junior MBA, English Conversation, and Creativity Development*. The lessons for the special subjects were content-based and taught only in English. The special subjects were introduced in the school for the first time, and he was solely in charge of them with no assistance from the other English teachers. A year before the study, he was allowed to teach a regular English subject along with those special subjects. However, he taught the regular subject to only one class out of twelve so he put more effort into teaching the special subjects rather than the regular one. The semester in which the present study was conducted was the first time he was teaching just the regular English subject, so he was able to focus on the subject. Like Ms. Sun, he was well aware of the characteristics of the 10th graders in that school in terms of their English proficiency, study motivations, and behavioral characteristics due to the past two-year teaching experience.

He earned a TEE certificate in 2012. Even though he had never been abroad to study, he spoke English with great confidence and also showed confidence in his ability for TEE.

He was involved in developing *High School Textbook 1* and *Teacher's Guide Book* from 2011 to 2012. He needed to study the guidelines of English curriculum (2011) to develop the textbooks. Thus, it was assumed that he was knowledgeable about the latest National Curriculum (2011). He was also well aware of CLT principles because he continued to learn them through graduate school courses and the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) course.

As for professional development, he received his master's degree in 2009. He

continued to take part in in-service teacher training programs as well as online and off-line programs provided by University of Cambridge such as CELTA. In 2012, he participated in an online master-degree course to get a certificate of teacher educator.

Mr. Hyun was a highly enthusiastic and adventurous teacher who enjoyed taking on new challenges. He won a prize in a competition of the best English teaching in 2011. He also appeared on a TV program called *The Best English Teacher* in 2012, and as a result was widely recognized as a competent teacher despite his short teaching career.

To sum up, Table 3.1 shows the profiles of the participant teachers.

TABLE 3.1
The Profiles of the Participant Teachers

Name	Gender	Age	Teaching Career	Education	Expertise
Ms. Sun	Female	38	9 years	MA course completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · TEE-A · textbook development · professional development (in-service teacher training programs) · locally recognized teacher (open-class experience)
Mr. Hyun	Male	34	2.5 years	MA Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · TEE-A · textbook development · professional development (in-service teacher training programs) · locally, and widely recognized teacher (winner for the best English teaching)

3.2.2.2 Students

There were 33 students of mixed levels in Ms. Sun's class, 16 boys and 17 girls. According to Ms. Sun, most of their parents belonged to upper-middle or upper classes in terms of their socio-economic status, and almost every student

planned to enter a high school. Some of the good students wanted to enter prestigious schools, so they were much concerned about the school exams.

Mr. Hyun had 34 students of mixed levels in his class, and they were all boys. Their academic records in middle school were within the top 50%, and it was believed that most of them were quite good at English. Similar to Ms. Sun's case, the parents of the students were regarded to be in the higher socioeconomic class particularly since the tuition at this high school was at least two to three times higher than that of a normal public high school. Most of the students had strong motivation for entering a prestigious university, so they took classes quite seriously.

All the students in Ms. Sun's and in Mr. Hyun's classes were observed to see how they reacted and responded to the teachers' instructional practices. Among them, five students in each school were recommended for the interview by the teachers based on their grades and class participation. With the consent of the recommended students, they were audio-recorded while doing group or pair works and were interviewed at the end of the semester. The background information of the interviewed students is summarized in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2
Background Information of the Interviewed Students

Teacher	Students' Name	Gender	English Level
Ms. Sun (Middle School)	Seo-jun (group leader)	Male	High
	Yu-seon (group leader)	Female	High
	Ho-ik	Male	Intermediate
	A-ran	Female	Intermediate
	Sang-min	Male	Low
Mr. Hyun (High School)	Ho-chan	Male	High
	Su-ha	Male	High
	Jun-su	Male	Intermediate
	Ji-wuk	Male	Low
	Yun-do	Male	Low

3.3 Data Collection

The data of the study were gathered in three ways. First, the participant teachers provided the researcher with the related documents and video recordings of their previous classes (Section 3.3.1). Second, the researcher had interviews with the teachers and their students (Section 3.3.2). Third, the researcher observed the classes of the teachers, video/audio-recorded them, and took field notes (Section 3.3.3).

The procedures of data collection are summarized in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3
The Procedures of Data Collection

	Participants	Phases			
		1 st (March~May)	2 nd (May)	3 rd (May~July)	4 th (July~August)
Class Observation	Ms. Sun	10		8	
	Mr. Hyun	8		12	
Structured Interview (Semi-structured Interview)	Ms. Sun	1 (3)	1	(2)	1
	Her Students				1
	Mr. Hyun	1 (5)	1	(4)	1
	His Students				1
Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · school curriculums · textbooks · teacher's guide books · class materials (worksheets, PPT) · video footage · mid-term / final exams · Mr. Hyun's reflection papers 				

The data was collected in four phases. The first phase was the time from the beginning of the semester to the mid-term exam during which related documents were collected along with interviews and observations. The second phase was the mid-term period at which time structured interviews with the teachers were

carried out and the exam papers were collected. The third phase was between the mid-term and the final exams. In the phase, the same types of data were gathered as in the first phase. Last, the fourth phase was the time from the final exam to the end of the summer vacation, in which the interviews with the teachers and their students were conducted and the exam papers were collected.

3.3.1 Documents and Video Footage

The 2013 school curriculum of each school and its related documents were collected in order to understand the immediate context in which the participant teachers' instructional practices were situated. All materials related to English class were collected including teachers' guide books, the middle school and high textbooks, PPT, and worksheets. In addition, school exams from both schools were gathered. Along with the official documents, Mr. Hyun provided his self-reflection papers which he had written during in-service teacher training programs and in graduate school courses.

There was video footage of the two teachers' previous English classes. Ms. Sun provided two types of video footage: her two open classes (May 2012; September 2012) and a TEE demo class (July 2012). Mr. Hyun also gave two types of video footage: his class that appeared on a TV program (May 2012) and his TEE demo class (September 2012). The footage helped the researcher to understand the teachers' perceptions of instructional context.

3.3.2 Interviews with Teachers and Students

Three structured interviews and five semi-structured interviews were carried out with Ms. Sun and three structured interviews and nine semi-structured interviewed were conducted with Mr. Hyun (see Appendix A for interview questions). The first structured interviews with the teachers were conducted in the second week of March, 2013. In the interviews, the researcher asked each teacher about their previous English learning and teaching experience, their English proficiency, professional development, educational philosophy, and the intended classroom instruction of the current semester. In addition, the teachers were asked how they perceived their students as well as themselves as an English teacher. The second structured interviews were carried out during the mid-term exam period of each school. In the interviews, it was investigated how each teacher understood and interpreted the main themes of the National Curriculum, of CLT, and of the local curriculum. The final structured interviews were done during summer vacation and covered overall classroom practices, the teachers' own self-evaluation of the semester-long class, and any changes they made during the semester. As for informal semi-structured interviews, the researcher conducted on-site interviews whenever she had something unclear about lessons that had just been completed. In the interviews, the teachers were asked about the rationales behind some specific classroom practices or their perceptions of some specific classroom incidents.

As for the interviews with the students, there was only one structured group interview after the final exam of each school. The students were asked how they perceived and experienced the teachers' classroom practices. They were also asked about their previous English learning experience, motivation to study English, the expectation of English class and teachers in general, and the

evaluation of the class (see Appendix B for interview questions).

3.3.3. Class Observation

Before video-recording the participant teachers' classes, the researcher paid a casual visit to each participant teacher's class twice. During these visits, the researcher first introduced the purpose and the procedures of the study and tried to establish rapport with the teachers and their students. As the teachers and their students seemed to feel comfortable with the researcher's presence, the researcher started video- and audio-recording the lessons beginning the second week of March. The class was observed three times a week at each school until the final exam period. In general, six lessons covered one chapter of the textbook in the middle school, and two lessons covered one chapter in the case of the high school. A lesson lasted for forty-five minutes in the middle school class, and for fifty minutes in the high school class. In total, 18 lessons were observed and recorded in Ms. Sun's class and 20 lessons, in Mr. Hyun's class. The researcher took field notes about note-worthy points while observing the classes.

Along with the teachers' lessons, the interviewed students' group or pair works were observed and audio-recorded to examine how the teachers' classroom practices were actually experienced in class.

3.4 Data Analysis

All of the interviews and recorded lessons were transcribed verbatim and the data was organized using the computer program NVivo 10.0, a qualitative data

analysis software. The detailed coding and analyzing procedures are described in subsequent sections. In relation to the two research questions of the study, Section 3.4.1 explains the procedure in identifying the themes about the participant teachers' perceptions of instructional context, and Section 3.4.2 describes the procedure to find the emergent themes about their classroom practices. Section 3.4.3 describes how the identified themes were reanalyzed under the framework of the activity system model.

3.4.1 Teacher's Perceptions of Instructional Context

The first research question was about the teachers' perceptions of instructional context. To answer the question, a data set was created which included transcripts of the footage of their previous classes, Mr. Hyun's reflection papers, and interviews with the teachers and students. The researcher read the data thoroughly to understand the teachers' emic perspectives following the principles of ethnographic semantics (Spradley, 1979). That is, the researcher tried to uncover the process of meaning making of the participants in their verbal expressions. For example, when Ms. Sun described her students as "not humans" (Interview, March 8) it was interpreted that she was referring to their undisciplined behaviors in class or at school. Likewise, when Mr. Hyun mentioned "an easy trap that teachers easily fall into" (Interview, March 12) it was understood that he was referring to the tendency for teachers to teach too much based on the misbelief that teaching would result in learning.

The data was then analyzed using the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklin, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative method was

originally used to develop a theory grounded in data, but it has been adopted in other types of qualitative research. The basic steps of the method are the following; (a) to identify recurring and salient instances or concepts in the first data, (b) to compare them with others in a constant and cyclical process, and (c) to categorize them and eventually set conceptual themes (Merriam, 1998). The primitive instance or concept, or a unit of data, should reveal information relevant to the research questions and simultaneously be “interpretable in the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context in which the inquiry is carried out” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 345).

The researcher identified the salient and repeated concepts which were related to the teachers’ perceptions of instructional context. Then, the identified concepts were coded¹² and categorized into emerging themes¹³. The final themes show how the participant teachers perceived the instructional context as it related to them. According to the themes, each teacher’s perceptions are described in detail in Sections 4.1 and 5.1 respectively.

3.4.2 Teacher’s Classroom Practices

The second research question of this study is targeted at the teachers’ classroom practices. To analyze the teachers’ actions from multiple perspectives, a data set was created including interviews with the students as well as the teachers, class transcripts, field notes, and class materials such as worksheets and

¹² Creswell (2013) described coding as “aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from a different database being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code” (p. 184).

¹³ Creswell (2013) defined themes as “broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (p. 186).

PPT. The data analysis procedures for the second research question were basically the same as those for the first research question. That is, the researcher analyzed the data set using the constant comparative method and identified emerging themes. The emphasis was placed on salient and recurring actions.

The final themes uncover the classroom practices as the teachers experienced them within the instructional context. In order to reveal the teachers' emic view, the themes were presented in the participant teachers' own terms. For example, Section 4.2.1.1 was titled "Teaching Grammar Properly, My Mission" to illustrate the participant teacher's strong statement of intent to achieve the goal of teaching grammar properly. Based on the themes, the teachers' actions were illustrated in detail with the instances in Sections 4.2 and 5.2 respectively.

3.4.3 Teacher's Instructional Activity System

In activity theory, an activity system contains the traces of all previous activity systems in it (Engeström, 1993). In this study, each teacher's perceptions of the context were reanalyzed in the framework of Engeström's (1987, 1993) activity system model, and the instructional activity of each teacher in the previous semester was sketched out. The previous activity system helped the researcher to understand the motive and orientation of the current activity system.

As for the current activity system, the main themes found in each teacher's classroom practices were framed into the activity system model. Each component of the system was identified from the viewpoint of the teacher, namely the subject of the activity. The inner conflicts within the system were also analyzed and interpreted. By doing this, the teachers' classroom practices

were understood holistically as being interwoven with the individual and contextual factors. More importantly, by presenting how the inner contradictions emerged and were resolved, the complex nature of teaching was deeply explored.

3.5 Ensuring Trustworthiness

Ensuring trustworthiness is essential in qualitative research as frequently indicated in the literature relating to the research method (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mackey & Gass, 2006). In order to increase the credibility of the study, the researcher utilized several techniques. First, the study was conducted in the classroom over a semester to obtain data without the researcher's presence creating a disturbance. During the prolonged period, the participants became used to the research situation and behaved naturally. Second, the data was collected from multiple sources to triangulate the positions of the teachers, their students, and the researcher. Multiple methods were used in collecting the data including documents, interviews, direct class observation, and field notes. Third, the findings were presented with in-depth description of the context where teaching was situated. This in-depth description would help readers compare the context of this study with their own and, hopefully transfer the findings to their relevant settings (Jo, 1999; Merriam, 1998). Fourth, the identified themes were shown to each participant teacher with the coding descriptions and examples to verify the results of the analysis. The teachers reviewed and gave feedback, and some themes were slightly modified to reflect their interpretations. Fifth, the researcher used peer debriefings to increase the validity of data analysis. There were three debriefers, and two of them had Ph.D.

degrees in English Language Education. The other debriefer gained training in qualitative research and learned SCT in graduate school courses. They gave feedback concerning the data analysis and interpretation. Lastly, the Korean data were translated and presented in English in this dissertation through a double checking process by three fluent bilingual people and one native speaker of English.

3.6. Ethical Issues

The researcher completed an online-course on research ethics before starting this study. The research proposal was approved in accordance with the formal review procedures set by Institutional Review Board of Seoul National University (SNUIRB). The researcher used the research consent form approved by the SNUIRB, which the participant teachers, the students and their parents signed before the research. Through the consent form, the participants were informed of the way to withdraw the consent. In addition, they were encouraged to express their concerns at any time during the observation and interview sessions.

In the process of collecting data, the researcher video-recorded the class from the back of the classroom to prevent any possible identification of the participant students. In a similar vein, the students' group or pair works were only audio-recorded without video-recording.

In reporting the findings, pseudonyms were used to protect the participants' identities. The identities of the participants and their schools were known only to the researcher and her academic advisor.

CHAPTER 4

THE CASE OF A MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER: A GOOD PRESENTER

This chapter describes how Ms. Sun, the participant teacher in the middle school perceived her instructional context and constructed her classroom practices in the context. Ms. Sun's perceptions are first examined in Section 4.1, which answers the first research question. Her classroom practices are then illustrated in Section 4.2, which answers the second question. Lastly, her perceptions and practices are accounted for holistically based on the activity system model in Section 4.3.

4.1 Ms. Sun's Perceptions of Instructional Context

In SCT, the perceptions and actions are seen to be closely connected, and in fact, perceiving is a form of purposeful action (van Lier, 2004, 2008). In perceiving the outer world, humans do not receive the information passively or unintentionally. They actively screen and select the information in the pursuit of their meaningful activity. In other words, the outer world is full of potential meaning, and the agent humans pick up some features out of the world. Thus, the current study examined how the teachers pick up the relevant information out of the context in pursuing their instructional activities. The notion of context, however, is not a perfect synonym for the physical environment. As discussed in the review of the literature, the context is synonymous with the activity system which consists of subject, object, tools, community, rules and division of labor as well as outcome.

This section presents Ms. Sun's perceptions of her instructional context around the main themes. The themes represent how Ms. Sun perceived the context not "as it is" but "as it is to me" (van Lier, 2004, p.91).

4.1.1 To Be a Competent Teacher

In the first interview, Ms. Sun stated a strong belief that a teacher's qualifications were some of the most important attributes to foster students' learning (Interview, March 8). This belief originated in her previous learning experience. When she was a secondary school student, she usually respected capable teachers because teachers were the only source that she could get help from in those days. One of her favorite teachers was such "a competent teacher" (Interview, March 8), and her class was always fun. Ms. Sun really enjoyed her class, and English became her favorite subject. The teacher had become her role model. Like the teacher, Ms. Sun wanted to be "a competent teacher" who would be respected and liked by the students. For Ms. Sun, a teacher's competence was compatible with three attributes: knowledge, English proficiency, and authority (Interview, March 8).

First, a capable teacher would have sufficient knowledge about SLA and English teaching methods. Through undergraduate and graduate courses, she became knowledgeable about advanced theories about English language teaching and learning. She thought that it was necessary for her to have that knowledge because an effective class could only be created by applying the knowledge to concrete situations. As for teaching methods, she believed that every method was useful in some way so she had been taking part in in-service teacher training

programs every vacation to stay abreast of the latest teaching techniques. However, not every technique she had learned in the programs could be applied directly to her class because the situation in her classroom was different from that in the programs. She believed that a capable teacher could select an appropriate method depending on the situation. Her criteria to select effective teaching methods are illustrated in Data Excerpt 4.1.

Data Excerpt 4.1 Ms. Sun_ Interview (March 15)¹⁴

*Honestly, I don't think there is a single answer to this. **Anything could be an answer as long as it's helpful for me to teach effectively.** I would choose this particular teaching method because it was helpful **to keep my students active and concentrated in class** while meeting the time frame. On the other hand, I think about **what works best for me.** At the end of the day, I need to handle 30 students on my own and any proven teaching method is useless unless the teacher can use it effectively or it fits **the physical situation** such as the size of a class, number of students in the class, and the motivation level of the students.*

As indicated above, Ms. Sun, as a knowledgeable and experienced teacher, had a capability to take a suitable method for teaching in terms of students' attention, teacher's convenience, and the physical classroom situation.

Along with the teacher's knowledge, she mentioned over multiple interviews that the teacher's language proficiency was very important. To become a fluent English speaker, she had participated in in-service teacher training programs every vacation. She was able to improve her speaking ability by communicating in English with other English teachers of her level. Soon, she felt confident in speaking in English. She also gained more confidence while she lived in the U.S. for two years. There, she frequently got compliments from several USA citizens

¹⁴ In Chapters 4 and 5, English translation of the original Korean data is presented in italic while the original data in non-italic. Some statements are bold-faced to focus the readers' attention, and these may be discussed within the text. The contextual events are noted in (()).

saying “Hearing you speak English, I didn’t think you were a foreigner” (Interview, May 10). Now she believes herself to be “very able” (Interview, July 29) in TEE.

Lastly, Ms. Sun had desired to be an authoritative teacher. An authoritative teacher, most of all, was believed to have controls over the students to provide them an optimal learning space. In middle school classes, controlling students meant “to keep them quiet in class” (Interview, March 15). She mentioned that the students also preferred a controlling teacher. After a good class atmosphere was created, an authoritative teacher would transmit her knowledge to the students in the most effective ways. However, she recognized that many teachers including her had difficulty teaching middle school students because they did not obey the teacher’s authority as they used to do (Interview, May 8). To regain authority, she believed she first needed to be recognized as a competent teacher by the students. Ideally, she wished that her students would respect and follow her in class without disrupting or criticizing what she intended to teach.

4.1.2 Teaching Grammar to the Test

Ms. Sun became a regular teacher in a middle school nine years ago. When she was a novice teacher, she did not have distinct teaching goals. She just tried many methods and techniques she had learned in pre-service teacher education and focused only on the “variety of classroom instruction” (Interview, March 15) in those days. Gradually, she became aware of what she should teach to the middle school students. In the previous semester, she had two clear teaching goals: teaching grammar and teaching to the test.

As for teaching grammar, she acknowledged that it was not aligned with that of the National Curriculum, namely the development of communicative competence. From her M.A. courses and undergraduate studies, Ms. Sun fully understood the concept of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980). She agreed that the development of communicative competence should be the ultimate goal of English education in general but disagreed that it should be the goal of middle school English education. In other words, she believed that the ability to use conversational English was not needed immediately in the current Korean secondary educational situation. Rather, the students should be able to use academic or advanced English especially in written form, which is elaborated in Data Excerpt 4.2.

Data Excerpt 4.2 Ms. Sun_Interview (May 10)

Well, I can communicate well in English, but in my opinion, one needs to have something foundational. To push the students to have communication in English without that base would only result in the development of survival English. But what we want students to do is not to just survive in the English-speaking world, but to be able to read books written in English, academically. That is, students should learn such things (academic English) as well as survival, daily conversation or, they may end up with using English only at a restaurant after graduating from middle school. Communication is not just speaking but also writing. That means we should focus both on the speaking and writing components.

In this segment, Ms. Sun stated that if CLT was actualized in middle school classes, the students would improve only “survival English” without learning “something foundational”. In other words, a hasty application of CLT might result in pushing the students “to have communication in English without that base”. She believed that middle school students were required to learn “that base” which would be needed for academic English as well as conversational English.

For Ms. Sun, the “base” was the knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structure, or grammar because “the grammar is a rule to dictate the usage of vocabulary, after all” (Interview, May 10). She asserted that middle school students, the beginners, should learn grammar first to develop communicative competence. That is to say, among the components of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1990), she thought that the development of grammatical competence was the top priority in middle school education. She believed that grammar was “the building block of communicative competence” (Interview, March 15).

As for speaking, Ms. Sun thought that the grammatical knowledge could be developed into speaking ability with practice (Interview, May 10). Her belief was rooted in her own successful learning experience. During her secondary school years, the main focus was on grammatical knowledge and a little bit of listening. She had to understand and memorize English grammar to be one of the top students in her class, and she did it very successfully. In her mid-twenties, however, she experienced a shocking incident. At that time, she needed to speak with foreigners in English for the first time in her life, but was “dumbfounded and didn’t know what to say” (Interview, May 10) though many words popped up in her mind. That incident led her to practice speaking very hard. She took various English conversation classes. In class, she maximized her opportunities to speak in English by initiating talks with foreign teachers or asking many questions. At home, she reviewed and practiced what she had learned in the classes. Looking back to her successful learning experience, Ms. Sun stated that students could also develop speaking abilities with practice as long as they had grammatical competence.

In middle school class, however, it was very difficult to provide the students with the opportunities to practice English communication (Interview, July 29). One of the obstacles was overcrowded classes, which prevented students from having talks with the teacher. Even though group work might be a good alternative for peer interaction, Ms. Sun denied that it could be a solution in that the teacher could not keep students from making too much noise or from doing something else. Another obstacle was the Korean EFL context itself. Even though the students were advised to use English in class, they were likely to use Korean because it was their mother tongue. Even in the native English-speaking teacher's class, they used Korean exclusively. That was not because they could not speak English at all but because they could not overcome "the awkwardness" (Interview, July 29) of using a foreign language in their own country.

Along with teaching grammar, it was another goal of Ms. Sun to prepare her students for school exams. Many of her students voiced that the school exam was the ultimate goal for them to study. Yu-seon, one of the students interviewed, admitted that taking English class meant preparing for the exams because the exam was "the goal of studying in middle school" (Students' Interview, July 17). Since Ms. Sun was well aware of the learning goal of her students, she wanted to teach to the test.

Ms. Sun believed that she would prepare the students for the exam if she could teach grammar well. According to her, school exams, especially the English exams, were very important and influential in determining the students' success in entering good high schools (Interview, April 25). The Foreign Language High School and International High School select incoming students based only on their English grades. As a result, middle schools set a high value

on test discrimination rather than on test validity of English exams. If an English exam failed to discriminate well between good and poor students, the parents would make a strong complaint against the school and English teachers. Thus, English teachers were required to make good test items that discriminated well, and the good items were usually grammatical items. For that reason, Ms. Sun only needed to teach grammar to the test.

Along with test discrimination, test fairness was very important in middle school because different teachers taught the same grade. For test fairness, Ms. Sun and the other English teachers had agreed that they should use the textbook only and share all worksheets (Interview, April 25). In that way, the teachers could increase inter-teacher reliability by not giving the students of a particular teacher an advantage or a disadvantage for taking the exam. Thus, Ms. Sun followed the textbook faithfully when she taught grammar to the test.

4.1.3 To Tame the Teens

Ms. Sun confessed that a middle school teacher's job seemed to be mostly managing and controlling students rather than teaching itself. Middle school students tended to "get out of line" (Interview, March 15) and she sometimes did not know how to deal with them. She perceived middle school students mainly as teenagers rather than as learners. In other words, they were perceived to be immature youngsters in terms of emotion, behavior, and learning attitude.

First, middle school students were "immature children" (Interview, March 8) who could not restrain their emotion. They were in contrast to the high school students, which she clearly realized when assessing a speaking test of middle and

high school students in the previous year. The test takers were required to audio-record their self talks in English. It was such an unnatural testing situation that the middle school students could not endure the awkwardness, so some of them did not speak English at all and even made fun of their friends speaking English in the next booth. In contrast, the high school students did their best focusing on the test just as adults would do. With the experience, Ms. Sun was convinced that middle school students were “emotionally immature” (Interview, March 8).

The immature emotion sometimes brought about peer quarrels and a tense class atmosphere because they were easily led by their annoyance or anger. A quarrel was found in the footage of an open class when the students did a group quiz activity (Open Class, September in 2012). At that time, the class atmosphere became heated as the students shouted to get a chance to answer the quiz questions. Suddenly, one student yelled angrily at some other students and they yelled back. In the end, the teacher had to stop the quiz for a while to calm them down. Reflecting on the moment, Ms. Sun confessed that she had been “panicked” (Interview, July 29) at not knowing how to deal with such a charged atmosphere.

What was worse, there were always the “leave-me-alone rebels” (Interview, March 8) in her class. Those students usually behaved poorly in class. Some of them refused to study and just sat doing nothing in class. When Ms. Sun first came to this school five years ago, she used to discipline her students very strictly and it was quite effective. For example, she once scolded a boy in a very loud voice when he behaved poorly in class. After the class, she made him sit on his knees in the teachers’ office and rebuked him again in the other teachers’ presence. The students regretted his wrongdoings and apologized to Ms. Sun.

The news of the incident spread fast among the rest of the students and they came to behave themselves in class. Since then, it became “so easy” for her “to control the classroom” as she reflected in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.3 Ms. Sun Interview (March 8)

After that single incident, the next couple of years became so easy. Ah, it became so easy. I was able to control the classroom while getting along with the students.

However, students “had changed completely” (Interview, March 8) while she took maternity leave and was away in the U.S. for two years. When she came back a year ago, she tried to maintain the strict discipline, only to fail. The students reacted against it. In the previous year a boy swore at Ms. Sun while being disciplined in class, which deeply hurt her. Sometimes the misbehavior of some students was beyond her disciplinary abilities. This year several students committed serious crimes such as thefts and were also involved in motorcycle accidents. To deal with these serious cases, the Violence Prevention Committee of her school, of which Ms. Sun was a member, held several meetings. Ms. Sun sighed saying the students’ smoking was thought to be a relatively “minor problem” (Interview, June 14). When she lamented her life as a middle school teacher, some high school teachers advised her to move to a high school mentioning that there were few disciplinary problems in high school. Overall, Ms. Sun stated that middle school students were very different from the other age groups and sometimes she felt they were “not humans” (Interview, March 8).

Along with misbehavior, Ms. Sun pointed out her students’ lack of study motivation and irresponsibility as big problems (Interview, May 15). She mentioned the students seemed to dislike English more than other subjects

because it was more difficult. This was confirmed by the student interviews as shown in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.4 Interview with Ms. Sun' Students (July 17)

- Ho-ik: *Well, English seems to be difficult somehow.*
Researcher: *In what way is it difficult?*
Ho-ik: *Well, it's easy trying to understand (the English sentences) and to memorize the words, **but learning the grammar is somewhat difficult.***
Seo-jun: *For me, reading is easy but **learning vocabularies and grammar is very difficult.***
Researcher: *Why? Is it difficult to memorize?*
Seo-jun: *Yes. It's easy to forget them because I don't use them often.*
Sang-min: ***I hate English.***
Researcher: *You hate it, in what aspects?*
Sang-min: ***I just hate memorizing.***

The students perceived English to be “difficult” because they thought it was all about “memorizing” the grammar.

Since most of the students hated English, some of them did not take the class seriously. It was often shown in the video footage of previous classes that some students switched their seats to talk with their friends, exchanged notes secretly, looked in the mirrors, or checked out the lunch menu without concentrating on the class (Open Class, May in 2012). Other students did not take out their textbooks or worksheets because they had lost them (Open Class, September in 2012). Most of all, the student were so unpunctual that they were always late for class, which drove Ms. Sun “crazy” (Interview, March 8). They wandered around the hallway or other classrooms during breaks and often returned late, so it took a lot of time for her to get them ready for the class. It was just “beyond comprehension” (Interview, March 8).

However, Ms. Sun did not give up on the students at all. She really cared

about their feelings and responses and wanted to create a fun English class. She mentioned that one of her goals was “not to make the students hate English” (Interview, March 8). She expressed the goal in a rather passive voice because she understood it would be difficult to interest her student intrinsically in this test-oriented situation. It was an urgent but difficult job to help them enjoy her class and to prepare them for the exam at the same time.

4.2 Ms. Sun’s Classroom Practices

In activity theory, an action is viewed to be oriented at a goal. However, it does not mean that the preset goals or plans determine actions. The goals and plans emerge and take shape in action so they are usually explicated only in retrospect (Engeström, 1999c).

This section describes Ms. Sun’s teaching goals and actions, which were found in her classroom instruction. The goals which emerged in her classroom practices are presented with the following themes: giving a better lecture (Section 4.2.1), covering the textbook effectively (Section 4.2.2), controlling the students’ learning (Section 4.2.3), and not boring the students (Section 4.2.4). Her concrete actions are illustrated in each subsection. The actions are presented in Ms. Sun’s terms with quotation marks to reflect her vivid experience in the classroom.

4.2.1 Giving a Better Lecture

Ms. Sun’s educational objective in the previous semester was teaching

grammar to the test as revealed in Section 4.1.2. In teaching grammar to the test, she thought that a lecture was the most effective as she had done so far. In the current semester, she strove to improve her lecture on grammar. For the purpose, Ms. Sun elaborated on her previous teaching techniques (Section 4.2.1.1) and chose Korean as the medium of instruction (Section 4.2.1.2).

4.2.1.1 Teaching Grammar: “Teaching Grammar Properly, My Mission”

For the current semester, Ms. Sun set the same educational objective as the previous semester: teaching grammar to the test. She strove to teach focal words and grammatical forms in every class. The students also perceived that she emphasized grammar the most in class as illustrated in Data Excerpt 4.5.

Data Excerpt 4.5 Interview with Ms. Sun’s Students (July 17)

- Researcher: *Then, what do you think Ms. Sun emphasizes the most in class?*
Students: **((in unison)) Grammar, grammar.**
Ho-ik: *That’s true. She spends most of her time teaching the ‘Language in Use’, probably about an hour.*
Researcher: *Ah, so you think she has her emphasis on grammar. Do the rest of you agree with Ho-ik?*
Students: *Yes.*
Ho-ik: *Also, there are many grammar questions on the exams and we need to study them.*

As shown above, the students perceived that class time was spent mostly in learning grammar. They seemed to understand Ms. Sun’s teaching goal because they wanted to get the correct answers to “many grammar questions” that appeared on the exam.

Ms. Sun asserted that it was very important “to teach properly” (Interview,

March 8). In her opinion, the students in this school were studying English inefficiently by wasting their time memorizing “tiny little details” (Interview, May 10). The neighboring English cram schools, “rubbish” (Interview, May 10) in her term, should be blamed for the inefficiency because they had been guiding so. When Ms. Sun happened to see a student’s worksheets given by a cram school, she sighed for her unfortunate students. The worksheet was in fine print explaining grammar in completely abstract terminology, and the students were pushed to memorize it “from A to Z” (Interview, May 10). In addition, it was all about CSAT-related grammar which was far beyond the students’ current English proficiency. In a situation where most of her students go to a cram school, it would be natural for them to perceive English to be boring and difficult. Ms. Sun emphasized that it would not be helpful at all for the students to learn in such cram schools considering its time and cost. In that respect, she was eager to help them study English effectively. Thus, she believed it her “mission” in this school to teach properly and effectively (Interview, May 10).

“To teach properly”, Ms. Sun utilized three teaching techniques in class: teaching to the point, tailoring it to the students’ level, and providing learning strategies. First, Ms. Sun presented the focal grammatical forms to the point. She extracted the main points related to the grammatical concept and explained each point with examples. The main points were presented in terms of its usage, forms, and exceptions or confusing points. For example, in teaching relative adverbs, she listed four headings on the blackboard as shown in Data Excerpt 4.6. Each heading in the writings above represented the key points concerning relative adverbs. She expected her students to understand the concept of relative adverbs more clearly around the main points instead of memorizing “tiny little details”

about the adverbs.

Data Excerpt 4.6 Ms. Sun_Writings on the Board (June 14)

Relative Adverb

1) Usage: antecedent + ()+ a sentence

2) Four Types: when, where, why, how

* cf. 1) relative adverb vs. relative pronoun

2) omission of relative adverbs

Ms. Sun also extended her effort to tailor her lecture to the level of the students' understanding. She usually weaved narratives using rhetoric of personification and metaphors when introducing a new grammatical concept. For example, she explained the concept of relative pronouns using a metaphor of “a wedding ring” as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 4.1.

Classroom Excerpt 4.1

Ms. Sun_Grammar Lesson on Relative Pronouns

- 1 T: *When a man and a woman have a blind date at a cafe, what do they*
2 *usually do?*
- 3 Ss: *((saying various answers simultaneously))*
- 4 T: *“What is your name? Where do you live?” and so on. After covering all the*
5 *basic questions, then what would they ask each other?*
- 6 S1: *“What do you like to do?”*
- 7 T: *Yes. They would ask, “Do you like movies?” These questions will let them*
8 *move on to the next step because there is a common ground, the things that*
9 *both of them like. But if the man asks “do you like English?” and then the*
10 *woman replies “No, not really”, he cannot find the connection with that*
11 *person, can he?*
- 12 Ss: *((laughing lightly))*
- 13 T: *So, for example, “Do you like movies? What kind of movies do you like?”*
14 *Then, the other, “I like horror movies. I like stabbing, bleeding.”*
- 15 S2: *((surprised)) Do you really?*
- 16 T: *((smiling with faking sincerity)) Oh, yes. Sure.*
17 *So after asking the woman out to go see a movie and things move on fast, is*
18 *that all they are going to do? Go on dates all the time? ((pointing to the*
19 *sentences on the board))Then, they will be informal, grammatically*
20 *unacceptable sentences. What should they do to be an official couple?*
- 21 Ss: *((saying various answers simultaneously))*
- 22 T: *They should have an engagement ceremony, wedding, shouldn't they? At*

23 *that time, what do they exchange as a token of an agreement? The thing*
 24 *represents the agreement that they would do things together which they*
 used to do separately.
 25 Ss: *((in unison)) A wedding ring!*
 26 T: *Yes, wedding ring. The wedding ring is the very relative pronoun. It is the*
 27 *link that holds two sentences together which contains a common word.*

As seen in the excerpt, Ms. Sun started telling a story in order to get the students to understand the concept of relative pronouns. The topic was “a blind date” (line 1) which they surely had much interest in. In the story, the sentences to be combined were personified as “a man and a woman” (line 1), disconnected fragments as the couple who “go on dates all the time” (line 18), and connection of the two sentences as “wedding” (line 22). Lastly, the relative pronoun was presented as “a wedding ring” (line 26). While inducing the students to understand the concept, Ms. Sun tried to hold their interest by inserting humor (lines 9-11) or a sensational talk (line 14). It was observed that the students concentrated on the teacher’s lecture while not losing their interest.

The students seemed to have understood the concept of relative pronouns as “link that hold two sentences together” (line 27 in Classroom Excerpt 4.1), and the evidence of their understanding reappeared in Classroom Excerpt 4.2. The lesson was given a few weeks later in which Ms. Sun reviewed the relative pronoun.

Classroom Excerpt 4.2
Ms. Sun_Grammar Lesson on Relative Adverbs

1 T: *Listen, before we learn about relative adverbs, we have to understand*
 2 *relative pronouns first. “I don’t understand what the relative pronouns*
 3 *are”, that’ll be a big problem. **But, let’s review again now. It is not too***
 4 ***late.** When I explained relative pronouns before, what did I say having two*
 5 *(sentences) connected is similar to in terms of human relationship?*
 6 Ss: *((in unison)) **Wedding.***
 7 T: *Yes, I said it is similar to wedding. Like having a very close relationship,*

- 8 *right? And relative pronoun is like?*
9 Ss: ***((in unison)) A wedding ring!***
10 T: *Correct. I said it's like the link between them, a wedding ring, didn't I?*

Before explaining the concept of relative adverbs, Ms. Sun tried to make a link between relative adverbs and relative pronouns because the latter had already been taught. At the same time, she tried to review the relative pronouns because there could be some students who did not understand them yet (line 3). Fortunately, most of the students still remembered the metaphorical story of “wedding” (line 6) and the metaphor of “a wedding ring” (line 9) which referred to relative pronouns. Since the review part went along well, the lesson of the day proceeded as Ms. Sun had planned and she felt satisfied (Interview, June 14).

In a similar vein, Ms. Sun used a metaphor of “frozen pollacks in Noryangjin Fisheries Wholesale Market” (Grammar Lesson, April 25) for passive voice, which was caught, cut, sold, and eaten by people against their will, and “a butterfly effect” (Grammar Lesson, July 5) for subjunctive mood by saying that the past should be changed to bring about any differences in the current situation. She often used such metaphors with everyday episodes to prevent the students from being confused by abstract grammatical terminology.

Last, “to teach properly” meant to teach effective learning strategies as well. After explaining the main points of a grammatical concept, Ms. Sun usually advised her students to memorize those points to prepare for the exam. She helped them to memorize by presenting mnemonics and mathematical signs. For example, she showed how easily she memorized the list of exceptional verbs in

the tense agreement with the help of her own mnemonic¹⁵ (Grammar Lesson, May 30). She also presented sentence structure rules simply by using mathematical signs. For instance, square root was used to stand for bare verb form, the parentheses for the ellipsis, and plus sign for sequence of words as shown in “make (have, let) +  + √” (Grammar Lesson, April 12). Other times, she drew a diagram of the intersecting circles and explained the concept of present perfect tense as combining one circle of the past and the other circle of the present (Grammar Lesson, June 13). With the help of those tools, Ms. Sun guided her students to memorize the grammatical rules as “the formula” (Interview, May 30). However, in a case where the rule was too complex for the students to understand, Ms. Sun would rather let them learn by rote as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 4.3. Ms. Sun was reviewing the text by emphasizing some important sentences within it in the scene.

Classroom Excerpt 4.3 Ms. Sun_ Grammar Lesson on Subjunctive Mood

- 1 T: *((reading verbatim the sentence in the textbook))* “If there had been fear in
2 his voice, the passengers would have been very scared.” *This is a sentence*
3 *in subjunctive mood. It’s too difficult to understand, so **just put it in your***
4 ***head.** Now, as soon as you get home, how many times do you need to repeat*
5 *this sentence?*
6 S1: *Five times.*
7 T: *Is five times enough? **100 times, okay?** You can surely do it. 10 times before*
8 *sleep, 10 times whenever in the bathroom, 20 times while eating, 30 times*
9 *while watching TV, then **you can memorize it perfectly.** As soon as I call on*
10 *you saying “If there...” **you should say the rest of it automatically.***

In fact, Ms. Sun had already explained the grammatical rules to make a sentence

¹⁵ The exceptional verbs were ‘require, insist, suggest, order, advise’. Ms. Sun wrote “**Yo jujedo** moreuneun **meongchunga** (You, a fool who forgets himself)” on the board by combining the first letter of Korean meaning of the verbs ‘require, insist, suggest, order, advise’. Here, Yo signifies ‘yoguhada(require)’, ju ‘jujanghai (insist)’, je ‘jesihada (suggest)’, meong ‘myeonglyeonghada (order)’, and chung ‘chunggohada (advise)’.

in subjunctive mood, but the students kept complaining they could not remember them at all. So she just had them memorize the sample sentence that appeared in the text as shown above. They were required to repeat the sentence “100 times” (line 7) enough to say it “automatically” (line 10).

Her students seemed to acknowledge Ms. Sun’s passion and effort in teaching. Ho-ik described her as “an accurate instructor for test prep” (Students’ interview, July 17) in recognition of her clear explanations. Data Excerpt 4.7 illustrates how Yu-seon felt about her earnest attitude in teaching.

Data Excerpt 4.7 Interview with Ms. Sun’s Students (July 17)

*Reflecting on the past, or reflecting on myself and on the remarks of other classes, other English teachers taught grammar, vocabulary, or something difficult from the textbook without consideration although the students did something else or slept not understanding what the teacher was teaching. **But Ms. Sun taught us (English grammar and vocabulary) thoroughly from the bottom up, excluded useless points and kept explaining again, such as the relative pronouns, even if she taught them before.** So, the students were engaged in her class and paid attention to her.*

Yu-seon was full of praise for Ms. Sun’s teaching expertise, especially for her efficient lectures. She liked how Ms. Sun tailored to the students’ level by teaching “from the bottom up” and excluding “useless points.” She also appreciated Ms. Sun’s patience to repeat what she taught before. She acknowledged Ms. Sun’s excellence over other English teachers who tended to show indifference to the students’ understanding and learning.

In spite of all the efforts of Ms. Sun, the students were found to have trouble in studying grammar in terms of understanding abstract grammatical concept and memorizing the rules by rote. Grammar was perceived “always new” (Students’ Interview, July 17) to them. As an example, Classroom Excerpt 4.4 illustrates the

bewilderment and frustration that the students felt after Ms. Sun explained the concept of English tense agreement.

Classroom Excerpt 4.4 **Ms. Sun _ Grammar Lesson on Tense Agreement**

- 1 Ss: *((looking at their worksheet with a sigh))*
2 T: *Don't sigh, guy. Guys, look, number one and three in the worksheet are not*
3 *about the tense agreement. There is not a conjunction.*
4 Ss: ***It's difficult.***
5 S1: ***Why should we learn the tense agreement? Isn't it okay to use the past if***
6 ***it's about the past, and the present if it's about the present?***
7 S2: *((asking to his friends with loud voice))* ***What is the tense agreement? Does***
8 ***it refer to what we've learned so far? ((asking to Ms. Sun)) Ms. Sun, does***
9 ***it refer to what we've learned so far?***
10 T: *Yes. But number one and three are about the general tense.*
11 S3: ***The case where the present tense replaces the future tense, it is not the***
12 ***tense agreement, is it?***
13 T: *No, it isn't.*
14 S1: ***Then, what number is about the tense agreement?***
15 T: ***None.***
16 Ss: ***Then, why are we doing this?***
17 T: ***That's what I'm saying. But this will be helpful to understand the tense***
18 ***agreement.***
19 S3: ***What is the tense agreement at all?***

As revealed in the excerpt, some students had trouble understanding the concept of English tense agreement (line 4). Before going over the worksheet, Ms. Sun had used the metaphor of the master and his servant to compare their relation with the tense agreement between an independent clause and its dependent clause. Nevertheless, some students seemed to be frustrated not understanding the concept at all (lines 4, 19). There were several reasons for that. First, the concept itself was too abstract for the students to understand (lines 7-9). Second, the concept itself might be simple (lines 5-6) but the given worksheet confused the students by introducing some other learning points irrelevant to tense agreement (lines 2-3, 14-16). Ms. Sun also recognized the problem (lines 17-18)

but she had to cover the worksheet because it would appear in the exam (Interview, March 15). Third, the grammatical knowledge which the students learned out of school functioned as interference in learning the new concept (lines 11-12). Along with the difficulty of grammatical concepts, the students confessed that they could not memorize grammatical rules well even with the help of the strategies suggested by Ms. Sun (Students' Interview, July 17). Ho-ik mentioned that Ms. Sun's formula sounded fun and helpful at first glance but became useless when he forgot the grammatical concepts. Seo-jun agreed with him in that all the grammatical forms became mixed and confusing when he reviewed three to four lessons for the school exam. Sang-min even confessed that he just ignored the part of grammar in class because he could not understand it at all.

4.2.1.2 Teaching in Korean: "Korean is More Effective"

Ms. Sun taught grammar mostly in Korean. Using Korean was essential for her to give an effective lecture because she wanted to explain a lot of content within the limited class time. Korean was also an inevitable means to teaching her students of low proficiency because it helped them thoroughly understand the lecture. She voiced her opinion on using Korean as the medium of instruction as stated in Data Excerpt 4.8.

Data Excerpt 4.8 Ms. Sun _Interview (July 29)

*I hate the comments that Korean English teachers cannot teach English well because of their low English proficiency; I hate that comment. **The reason why I teach English in Korean is because I think it's more effective, not because I can't speak English well.** I still think so. TEE would be helpful in the case of*

personal English conversation. But it's just a waste of energy to speak to 30 students in a class who don't understand me at all, saying "What is she talking about? What?"

In the above excerpt, Ms. Sun stated clearly that the choice of Korean came from her belief in its effectiveness, not from her excuse for linguistic inability.

In fact, there were two lessons at the beginning of the current semester which Ms. Sun taught using English only. Through the two TEE lessons, the students became aware of the reason for her to switch the medium of instruction from English to Korean. The students expressed their understanding of Ms. Sun's using Korean in class as shown in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.9 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Researcher:* Sang-min, do you remember Ms. Sun's class when she spoke only in English? How was that?
- Sang-min:* I didn't get some part of it...
- Researcher:* Ah, you didn't get some of it? **How would you guys feel if she continued to teach in English only?**
- A-ran:* **Impossible.**
- Seo-jun:* Right, some friends next to me asked me, "What is she talking about?", and they kept asking. Well, when I sometimes saw other friends, they kept asking others next to them, "What is she talking about?" I did see it. So I think some of them would have difficulty in understanding her.
- Ho-ik:* Right. **I think that would be too much for every student to understand.**
- Seo-jun:* **I think that's why she decided to speak Korean in class after teaching only in English in March.**

The students learned from their TEE class experience that it would have been "impossible" or "too much for every student to understand" if the lesson had been taught only in English. They also understood "why she decided to speak Korean in class". In this sense, Ms. Sun's intention of using Korean in class seemed to be understood and consented by the students.

However, Ms. Sun admitted that teaching English only in Korean appeared and sounded like “a class which didn’t seem like an English class was supposed to be” (Interview, May 30). To make up for the weakness, Ms. Sun used some techniques. First, she made every student do a presentation in order to provide them with opportunities to speak English in class. The students’ presentations were always done after group work, and they only needed to read the answers they had found with their group members. She made the students’ task somewhat mechanical because she wanted to lower the students’ anxiety and burden to speak English while not stressing them out (Interview, April 12). She also tried to use classroom English as often as possible as shown in Classroom Excerpt 4.5.

Classroom Excerpt 4.5
Ms. Sun_Reading Lesson (Directions)

- 1 T: *Wae i sarami i mareul haneunji.* What’s the reason the person says this
2 *sentence? Wae i mareul haneunji jom salpyeo bosigo.* Why don’t you look on
3 the back of your handout? *Ja, dwitjang hanbeon bopsida.*¹⁶

The students did not have any problems understanding classroom English because it was usually repeated in Korean and vice versa. The students did not have to understand “What’s the reason the person says this sentence?” (lines 1-2) because they already listened to Korean which were spoken before the English question (line 1). A student who might not understand “Why don’t you look on the back of your handout?” (lines 2-3) would be able to understand the instruction because of the following Korean (line 3). Like this, Mr. Sun, translated classroom English into Korean. Thus, the students did not notice much

¹⁶ Korean is romanized based on the standard Korean pronunciation. The romanization of Korean is presented on the homepage of the National Institute of the Korean Language: http://www.korean.go.kr/eng_new/document/roman/roman_01.jsp.

difference when Ms. Sun used classroom English. The students perceived that Ms. Sun's use of English in class meant "not teaching in English but providing opportunities just to hear English" (Yu-seon, Students' Interview, July 17).

4.2.2 Covering the Textbook Effectively

Ms. Sun was required to cover the textbook within the time limit to prepare the periodic school tests. However, she wanted to cover it efficiently and effectively in the current semester. Section 4.2.2.1 presents how she covered the textbook efficiently keeping pace with her colleagues, and Section 4.2.2.2 describes how she taught the textbook effectively using her own strategies.

4.2.2.1 At a Pace with Colleagues: "As Other Teachers Do"

Ms. Sun expressed her determination to "rely on" (Interview, March 8) the textbook from the beginning of the semester. She taught using the textbook only. The reason for her to adhere to the textbook was that it was a strict rule shared between the colleagues. She had to keep the rule because she was required to make the school exams based on the textbook in cooperation with her colleagues. Ms. Sun's reason to rely on the textbook was in contrast with that of the experienced teacher in Kim's (2008a) study. In the study, the experienced teacher believed that the textbook contained legitimate knowledge and that using the textbook put her in alignment with the National Curriculum. However, Ms. Sun did not believe so. In fact, she criticized the textbook; some grammatical points were presented in a confusing order, most of the tasks were simple question

types, and the communicative activities were inapplicable to class. She felt that the textbook did not improve much compared with the previous one developed based on the 7th National Curriculum (2001). Thus, it can be said that Ms. Sun stuck to the textbook because of the institutional rule rather than her own belief.

The explicit rule was stated clearly in the school curriculum and confirmed in the teachers' meetings. The students and their parents were notified of this rule through a school newsletter (Data Excerpt 4.10). The letter indicated that all third graders would cover the same content, use the same materials, and progress in the same order.

Data Excerpt 4.10
Ms. Sun_Part of School Letter on Test Range (April; June in 2012)

<i>Test Range (Third Grade)</i>	
<i>Mid-term Exam</i>	<i>Final-term Exam</i>
<i>Middle School English 3 & Activity Book 3 (Lesson 1~Lesson 3), worksheets</i>	<i>Middle School English 3 & Activity Book 3 (Lesson 4~Lesson 6), worksheets</i>

Even though Ms. Sun was not satisfied with the textbook, she taught it faithfully in class “as other teachers do” (Interview, March 8). As her colleagues agreed to make test items out of the communicative functions and grammatical forms presented in the textbook, she set her lesson aims as such. In fact, the lesson aims were always presented in the textbook on the first page of each lesson as shown in Data Excerpt 4.11. For the lesson, Ms. Sun talked about the “School Newspaper” (lesson theme) and presented “expressing a long-standing wish and one’s anticipation” (communicative functions). She also explained the future tense of passive voice appearing in “will be loved” and the perfect present progressive presented in “have been hoping” (grammatical forms).

Data Excerpt 4.11
Ms. Sun_Middle School English 3 (Lesson 1, p. 1)

[Lesson Aims]	
<i>Theme</i>	School Newspaper
<i>Expressing a long-standing wish</i>	I've always wanted to be a reporter.
<i>Expressing one's anticipation</i>	I can't wait to read it.
The new uniform will be loved by everyone.	
Many students have been hoping for a big and clean school cafeteria.	

That was the way the other English teachers taught in their classes. By covering the content of textbook in a way that the institutional *rule* dictated, Ms. Sun was able to keep pace with the other teachers, and prepared her students for the school exams efficiently.

4.2.2.2 Intensive Lessons: “Let’s Break It Down”

Ms. Sun wanted to relieve the students’ study burden while covering the textbook. So she strove to find effective ways to cover the textbook, and what she did was to select only a few parts and concentrate on them. The less important parts of the textbook were presented in Classroom Excerpt 4.6 in which she notified the coverage of the upcoming test in the Activity Book.

Classroom Excerpt 4.6
Ms. Sun_Notice on Test Range

- 1 T: *Look, I'll tell you what is on the exam again, which I showed you before.*
2 *Well, what this means is that you should do most of the questions **except***
3 *for listening and speaking. I excluded the **silly questions, something not***
4 *helpful. Specifically, I excluded **all the writing and free writing parts.***

As illustrated above, she intended to skip listening, speaking, and writing because those were “silly” (line 3), “not helpful” (lines 3-4), or unlikely to appear on the school exams.

Ms. Sun focused on dialogs, reading texts, and grammar in the textbook. As for dialogs, the students had already learned them with the native speaker teacher, but she reviewed them again in her class because the native speaker teacher’s lesson was not enough to prepare her students for the exam (Interview, March 15). In the dialog section, she explained the communicative functions and some grammatical points in detail instead of letting them practice speaking. The students acknowledged that her teaching of dialogs was helpful in preparing for the exam but, at the same time, they regretted that she had not given them a chance to practice the dialogs (Students’ Interview, July 17). Their regrets, however, were not from their wish to practice speaking but from sheer boredom in studying the textbook. For example, A-ran mentioned that if opportunities to practice the dialogs had been given, she would have had fun talking with her friends, and Seo-jun said that he had been bored with studying the dialogs. Yu-seon, one of the high achieving students, stated explicitly that she did not want Ms. Sun to focus on speaking in a dialog because speaking itself was irrelevant to school exams.

As for reading, Ms. Sun frequently said to the student, “Let’s break down the reading” (Reading Lesson, March 21) or “Let’s break down this expression” (Vocabulary Lesson, April 2). She provided intensive reading lessons following the routine procedures: vocabulary, grammatical points, the organization and the main points of the reading, and the main sentences. First, she had the students do a group work to study the new words appearing in the reading text (see Appendix

C for the vocabulary worksheet). While giving out the answers, Ms. Sun led them to preview the reading text. Then, she explained the grammatical forms appearing in grammar section in detail and checked the students' understanding with worksheet shared by other English teachers. As the third step, she had the students do a group work again to complete the given worksheet, in which the organization of the whole text and the main points of each paragraph were presented (Appendix C for the reading worksheet). In the last step, she reviewed the main sentences in the reading text, which contained the focal grammatical forms. Ms. Sun sometimes skipped the group works when there was not enough time before exams (e.g., Reading Lessons, April 18, June 28).

As for grammar, Ms. Sun put a great emphasis on the focal grammatical forms presented in each lesson of the textbook. Ms. Sun believed that the grammatical concept presented in the forms was one of the most important studying points for the students to learn "surely" (Interview, April 12). Thus, she let the students "underline and asterisk" (Reading Lesson, March 21) the forms whenever they appeared in sentences. She purposely reorganized the presenting sequence of the textbook in order to teach the grammatical forms first before reading the text. She believed that her students would read the text fluently if they were not interrupted by the grammatical forms.

In effect, Ms. Sun seemed to draw her students' attention only to grammatical forms by emphasizing and reviewing them over and over again in each reading step presented above. Some students noticed forms first rather than meaning when they read the text, while others did not. The different responses are illustrated in Data Excerpt 4.12.

Data Excerpt 4.12 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Yu-seon: *We study grammar in "Language in Use" before reading. **Then, we start to notice the expression that we just passed by before, for example, (pointing to the text) if you look here, the expression such as "hadn't eaten anything" is past perfect tense, isn't it?, like this.***
- A-ran: *As for me, even though we learned grammar before reading, **I didn't notice which grammatical forms were used in the text. When Ms. Sun points them out, I can find the forms, but that's it.***
- Sang-min: ***We just pass them by without noticing when we read.***
- Ho-ik: ***Well, taken as a whole class, it seems that the teacher focuses on the superficial things, but goes over the reading text very quickly.***

Yu-seon confessed she became aware of grammatical forms after Ms. Sun's grammar lesson. She could point to a sample fragment of "past present tense" in the text, but she did not try to understand the fragment in a meaningful context. Unlike Yu-seon, the rest of the students did not find the grammar lesson helpful at all in understanding the text, so they did not find any connection between "the reading text" and "the superficial things."

Ms. Sun was fully aware of the possibility that her style of teaching textbook might focus the students' attention too much on the grammatical forms. She sometimes considered another style of teaching the textbook, for example teaching for extensive reading, but she became worried about the school exams. After all, she justified her teaching style since she had successfully learned English in the same way as she was teaching now. With the constraint of school exams and the apprenticeship of observation as a learner, she decided to stick with her style of teaching textbook effectively focusing on grammar (Interview, July 29).

4.2.3 Controlling the Students' Learning

Ms. Sun realized that it was very important to control the students' learning process because they were apt to be distracted in class or to disregard teachers' instructions, which sometimes caused "a chaotic class" (Interview, March 8). Section 4.2.3.1 presents Ms. Sun's endeavor to clarify the roles of a teacher and students in class. Section 4.2.3.2 illustrates her efforts to regulate the classroom behavior of the students.

4.2.3.1 Teacher's Authority: "Listen to Me"

Ms. Sun was keenly aware of the need to clarify the duties of a teacher and students in her class because she had perceived that the teacher's authority was collapsing rapidly in middle schools. She needed to regain her authority in class and to have the students clearly recognize their duties and works.

Ms. Sun gave TEE lessons twice in the beginning of the semester. One of the reasons was that she wanted to get recognition from her students as "a competent teacher" by demonstrating her fluent English, which is illustrated in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.13 Ms. Sun Interview (July 29)

TEE was the action of establishing my authority by ability and capability. Students may fear male teachers but they are unlikely to fear female teachers like myself in terms of physical power. Also, they don't usually listen to me. So I'm establishing my authority by saying 'I can speak English very well', 'I am a competent teacher.' In a way, that (fluent English) is my weapon.

As Ms. Sun confessed, she recognized her weakness as a female teacher whom the students did not "fear" or "listen to". She needed to reestablish her authority with "ability and capability" instead of with "physical power" so she used TEE

as a “weapon”. In other words, she “showed off” (Interview, July 29) her high English proficiency to get respect from her students.

In addition to TEE, she frequently mentioned the school exam in her class. She sometimes gave important information about the test items to be included in the upcoming exam (e.g., Grammar Lesson, April 25), or implied the likelihood of some items to appear on the exam (e.g., Dialog Lesson, April 18). Other times, she “crossed out” (e.g., Grammar Lesson, June 20) some parts in the textbook lest her students should waste their studying time when preparing for the exam. With her discretion as a member of the authoritative examiners, Ms. Sun could be in effective control of the students’ distractions. She decided and dictated what and how to prepare for the exam, and her students depended on her guidance to get a better score on the exam.

In addition to regaining the teacher’s authority, Ms. Sun redistributed the students’ duties and works in class. She discriminated in favor of some students who were called Managers. Managers were chosen among good and smart students and were given some of control by Ms. Sun in the beginning of the semester. Managers were expected to help the students in their group following Ms. Sun’s instructions, and Ms. Sun usually communicated with them when giving directions. The example is given in Classroom Excerpt 4.7.

Classroom Excerpt 4.7
Ms. Sun_Reading Lesson (Directions)

- 1 T: *Now it’s your turn, **Managers, you remember all (the procedure), don’t***
2 ***you?** You should do all the parts. All of them: part C, D, E, and F. But, you*
3 *don’t have to write the key expressions. Okay, questions? **Managers, do you***
4 ***have any question?** Any question? No? Then, let me divide you into groups,*
5 *but how should we do this? **Well, Group A, where is your Manager?***

Ms. Sun delivered her directions directly to the Managers (lines 1-2) and allowed their questions only (lines 3-4). She even designated places for each group around Managers' seats (line 5). During group work, she tutored Managers when the group could not do their work properly and complimented them according to the level of the other students' participation (e.g., Reading Lesson, April 9). Moreover, when skipping a group work in class due to the time limit, she had the Managers complete the worksheet as homework on behalf of other members (Reading Lesson, April 18). In appreciations for the service of the Managers, she sometimes presented them with extra marks. In effect, Ms. Sun was actually giving absolute authority to the Managers. She assumed that any group work could be successful if she chose the right Managers who would help the others "like how a mom teaches her child" (Interview, May 10). In this way, the power and the task in Ms. Sun's class was distributed hierarchically from the teacher to the Managers and from the Manager to the rest of the students.

4.2.3.2 Class Rules: "Do as I Say"

Ms. Sun thought anything good would be "useless" (Interview, May 10) if the class management failed. So she strove to keep her class in order. She set class rules from the beginning of the semester. The rules were about the routine tasks the students had to perform and about codes of classroom behavior.

The class routines were explicitly demonstrated in order to "train" (Interview, May 10) the students to get accustomed to the tasks in a lesson. The teaching procedures were made up of the teacher's lectures and learning tasks, and the students' tasks were designed as simply as possible. They only needed to listen

carefully to the teacher's explanation and then complete the given worksheet individually or in a group.

In the process of training the students, the worksheet was seen as serving a double function in Ms. Sun's class. It was a tool not only to help the students learn and review what the teacher taught but also to measure the students' level of obedience. In other words, Ms. Sun checked how well the students followed her instructions by setting strict guidelines to complete worksheets. This control function of worksheets was obviously shown in group work. The group work worksheets were created by Ms. Sun but not shared with the other English teachers because group work was not used in their classes. Thus, the worksheet itself was not an important tool to achieve the goal of teaching to the school exam. Nonetheless, Ms. Sun wanted to watch the students' learning process during group work and expected them to do as she said (Interview, May 10). She had the students fill in worksheets and hand them in. She returned it after giving grades and detailed comments. The students often double-checked Ms. Sun's instructions in order to complete the worksheets to her expectations, which is illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 4.8.

Classroom Excerpt 4.8
Ms. Sun_Reading Lesson on Advertisement

- 1 T: *((reading the worksheet)) "Advertising is", where is its definition in the*
2 *book? ((looking at the textbook)) Look, the first sentence in the second*
3 *paragraph, I'll play the CD for it. ((playing CD))*
4 S1: *Then, where should I write it?*
5 T: ***Write it down in the first paragraph of the worksheet that I gave you.***
6 *"Advertising is a message that tries to sell something." Write it down, word*
7 *for word. Do not miss a word.*

In the scene, a student was asking "where" he should write the answer (line 4),

and Ms. Sun gave very precise and specific directions about filling in the answer (lines 5-7). If a student had not followed the directions, his marks would have been deducted. In this way, Ms. Sun was manipulating the learning process effectively during group work by using the worksheets as a tool.

Even though Ms. Sun exercised rather rigid control over the learning process, her students seemed to be motivated to do the tasks thanks to her comments on their work. The students' positive responses on doing the worksheets are indicated in Data Excerpt 4.14.

Data Excerpt 4.14 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Ho-ik: *Well, some points were deducted because of my bad handwriting, by 0.5 point. Then, I was **motivated to do better next time.***
- Seo-jun: *And when I handed in (the worksheet) and got it back, **I liked seeing my teacher's feedback** written on it such as "Good!" or "Excellent!"*
- Researcher: *Sang-min, how about you? Wasn't it hard for you to follow?*
- Sang-min: *My wrist hurt, but **I felt proud of myself (when handing in the worksheet).***

The students stated that they felt "motivated" and "proud" after getting recognized for their hard work in spite of the deducted points or wrist-hurting labor. Considering those students' positive attitudes, it can be said that Ms. Sun's class rules to set task routines was accepted by the students.

In addition to setting class routines, Ms. Sun strove to regulate the students' behavior in class. She usually guided the students implicitly on how to behave themselves in class. For example, the greeting in English was "a sign" (Interview, June 14) to officially start the class, so the students were supposed to pay attention after the greeting while being allowed to chat with classmates before

the greeting. Ms. Sun's attitude and body language were also the signals by which the students could judge how well they were doing at the moment. She embraced her students warmly as long as they behaved themselves in class. She friendly asked for and heard of her students' daily life (e.g., Lesson, March 12), exchanged jokes with them (e.g., Lesson, April 23), or woke sleepy students up by massaging their shoulders (e.g., Lesson, June 27). On the other hand, she stopped talking and frowned at them when they behaved badly. She stared at the noisy or disruptive ones with a sharp look (e.g., Lesson, May 21), or pointed at the talkative ones with her finger with a serious look (e.g., Lesson, March 26).

With repeated training, the students seemed to adjust to her class rules as indicated in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.15 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Researcher: *During class, are you able to bring up any topics to talk about?*
Seo-jun: *No, not any time. I'm afraid of her.*
A-ran: *She sometimes speaks with a serious face. That is, we are not allowed to speak any time we want.*
Seo-jun: *So, she reprimands us when we interrupt her suddenly.*
Yu-seon: *That way, she keeps us on track when we get off, so the class can proceed.*

As A-ran and Seo-jun indicated, the students became aware of what was allowed and not allowed in class. They also acknowledged that Ms. Sun's "serious face" or reprimands were the methods to keep them "on track". As for the behavior codes in Ms. Sun's class, Ho-ik described it as "something to accept and follow like a rule" (Students' Interview, July 17). That way, the students learned and accepted class rules and behaved themselves according to Ms. Sun's expectations.

4.2.4 Not Boring the Students

Ms. Sun noticed that the students were bored in English class. She thought that there were mainly two reasons for that. First, it was tedious to sit still and to concentrate for 45 minutes. Second, it was boring to study the English textbook. She always wanted to hear them saying “Oh, the class has already ended!” (Interview, March 8), so she made great efforts not to bore them in class. Section 4.2.4.1 describes how Ms. Sun helped the students endure the long class periods, and Section 4.2.4.2 presents how she entertained them in class.

4.2.4.1 Long Class Periods: “Hold on for 45 Minutes”

Ms. Sun mentioned that “spending the entire 45 minutes just teaching is too dry” (Interview, July 29). She strove to find ways to break up the boredom of long class periods, and decided to use *tools* of the aims of the day and interesting stories.

Ms. Sun always wrote the aims of the day on the board before she started a lesson. The aims, written in terms of the subtitles of the textbook, functioned as a kind of promise between her and her students. In her position, the aims were a teacher’s promise not to do more for the day as well as the official notification of her teaching plans of the day. In the students’ views, the aims were their promise to cooperate with the teacher to that extent as well as the day’s coverage of class. Ms. Sun confessed that with the notified aims, in fact, she was asking the student a favor to endure the class until she finished her teaching (Interview, April 25). When some students appeared to be distracted or bored, Ms. Sun would say,

“This is the last thing. I will teach no more than this” (Lesson, May 28) pointing to the aims on the board. It was observed that the promises were kept by both Ms. Sun and the students. For example, Ms. Sun finished the class early when the planned parts were all covered (Lesson, April 11). The students mentioned that they preferred being informed of the class plans as in Ms. Sun’s class to just following teacher’s lead blindly. Specifically, Ho-ik mentioned that he could stay focused on the class because he knew that “Even if her pace is fast, she would only teach up to a certain point” (Students’ Interview, July 17). With the presented aims of the day, the students seemed to be willing to endure the boredom of long class periods while Ms. Sun could teach what she had prepared with her students’ cooperation.

Ms. Sun also told some interesting stories when there were many students dozing or distracted. The story included her life in the U.S., her personal life with her son, or her favorite dramas, movies and sports. The reason to tell the stories is given in Data Excerpt 4.16.

Data Excerpt 4.16 Ms. Sun _Interview (July 29)

I am afraid that the students get too bored during my class. Because it’s way too obvious, I try to get their attention by telling them any kind of story. I just can’t ignore it, though the other teachers just keep teaching whether the students sleep or not.

As she stated above, the stories were a tool to let her students not “get too bored” with her class, so “any kind of story” was thought to be good as long as she could “get their attention”. There were several times when she told a story off topic. For example, when she was giving a vocabulary lesson she started a story about a swimming pool which was irrelevant to the topic as shown in Classroom

Excerpt 4.9.

Classroom Excerpt 4.9
Ms. Sun Lesson on “useful” vs. “useless”

- 1 T: *Now, are you ‘useful’ people or ‘useless’ people?*
2 Ss: *useful.*
3 T: *((gesturing swimming)) What? ‘Yusupul’ (Lazy River)?*
4 Ss: *((shouting with boos as teasing Ms. Sun))*
5 S1: *Well, I thought the same thing.*
6 T: *((laughing)) But, ‘yusupul’ (Lazy River) is the perfect combination of*
7 *Chinese and English, isn’t it?*
8 S2: *Really? Wasn’t it ‘Youth’s pool’?*
9 T: *No. ‘yu’ means flowing, and ‘su’ is water in Chinese. What is ‘yusupul’*
10 *(Lazy River)? It’s a pool with flowing water.*
11 S3: *((showing glue to Ms. Sun)) What pul is this?*
12 Ss: *((shouting with boos as teasing her))*
13 T: ***You, do you have a problem today? Are you becoming useless?***

In the scene, Ms. Sun thought the students were not concentrating at the moment, so she suddenly brought up a topic of “*Yusupul (Lazy River)*” (line 3), after which the lesson went off track. Most of students got interested as they were “shouting” and “teasing” the teacher (line 4). Ms. Sun proceeded to explain the origin of the Korean word “yusupul” (lines 9-10), and a student joked about the word (line 11). Fortunately, however, Ms. Sun focused the students’ attention again on the lesson by mentioning the focal word, “useless” (line 13) at the end of the joke.

In fact, the students confessed that they were attracted more to such “useless stuff” (Students’ Interview, July 17). From those stories that Ms. Sun told in class, they often learned something useful. For example, Ho-ik learned how Konglish (broken English used by Koreans) is misunderstood in the U.S., and Snag-min got to know how Americans go shopping. Recalling Ms. Sun’s stories, Seo-jun paid her a compliment on her ability to notice the students’ boredom immediately

and to entertain them with such stories (Student's Interview, July 17). Nonetheless, the stories were usually irrelevant to the studying points so they did not serve her teaching purpose of teaching grammar to the test.

4.2.4.2 Group Work: "Have Fun"

In general, the students hated studying the English textbook. The students interviewed confessed that the real problem was not in the textbook itself but in the way the book was dealt with as indicated in the following excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.17 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Yu-seon: *Ah, in fact, there is not that big a difference between the elementary school textbooks and our textbook. The thing is that, I think, **the way we learn things differ in middle school. We should understand the sentences in a grammatical manner.***
- A-ran: *That's true. We learned things **by singing in elementary school.***
- Ho-ik: *((smiling)) Yes, **chanting.***
- Yu-seon: *Yes. **And the test is totally different.** In elementary school, the question asks 'Which is not appropriate to fill in the dialogue?', but in middle school, it is like 'Choose the answer with the most appropriate grammatical sentence'...*
- A-ran: *((sighing)) We're learning English in a dry way.*

The students noticed a clear difference in learning English between in elementary schools and in middle schools. They used to enjoy learning English by "singing" and "chanting" but now were forced to understand the grammaticality of sentences. That disparity was actualized with completely "different" test forms. Thus, the middle school English textbook became difficult and boring. Even though there were some interesting readings, they confessed that they lost interest as soon as they heard the readings would appear in the

exam. As such, the student regarded the textbook just as a tool to take exams and not to improve their English ability.

Ms. Sun was well aware of the students' negative perceptions of the textbook but could not stop using it because of the school exams. Instead, she decided to use group work to add variety in using the book. It was the first trial in her teaching career. Ostensibly and ideally, the group work is encouraged to boost the students' autonomy and learning but in reality, Ms. Sun used it in order to entertain the students. Her intention to use group work is clearly shown in Data Excerpt 4.18.

Data Excerpt 4.18 Ms. Sun _ Interview (July 29)

*Well, the reading is the longest and can be boring when I read and translate it alone. **But when they stand up, move back and forth or have chitchat, they may have fun (during the group work)...** Besides, it is possible that the students have a serious talk more (to do the task) unexpectedly.*

As shown above, the group work functioned as a tool to entertain the students by making them “stand up, move back and forth” and by allowing them to “have a chitchat” with friends. She did not expect them to complete the group task by having “a serious talk”, or a discussion. For example, when Ms. Sun gave a group quiz to review a lesson, it was clearly shown that she used it as entertainment rather than as a learning opportunity (Lesson, March 16). The questions included some nonsense quizzes as well as studying points, and the groups competed with each other to obtain snacks. She even chose the last winning group by giving extra points for neat handwriting. Nonetheless, the students seemed to enjoy it without expressing any dissatisfaction. Ho-ik remembered the group quiz as a game of competing, shouting, betting and

winning (Students' Interview, July 17).

However, the group work with its entertaining purpose was less effective than her lectures in terms of its time efficiency. Namely, the class hour was being wasted while the students got together, completed worksheets, and presented it in class. For that reason, Ms. Sun once received a complaint from a student, a Manager in another class. The student expressed his strong disapproval of doing group work, saying it was ineffective and unhelpful in preparing for the exams. She replied that the effectiveness was not the only value of her class (Interview, July 29). She felt frustrated at that time because her efforts to entertain the students had not been recognized. Nonetheless, she did not give up the group work even after the incident and expressed her determination to use the group work in the following semester so far as class time permitted.

The students interviewed doubted the usefulness of group work as well. Seo-jun as a Manager was not satisfied with group work because he actually did the work alone while the other members were chatting and waiting for him to finish. He confessed that he had not learned through group work because he “simply copied down the text book mechanically” (Students' Interview, July 17) in completing the worksheet. Ho-ik and A-ran, the group members of Seo-jun, did not find it helpful, either. They copied Seo-jun's worksheet and only recited what was written when they were called on to present their work. All of the interviewed students mentioned that group work did not help them understand the reading text and that a lecture would have been more effective for that purpose. Moreover, the group work was not perceived to be useful for the school exam, so the students confessed they did not review the group work worksheets at all. Nevertheless, group work was “fun” (A-ran, Students' Interview, July 17).

The students could have chats with friends during group work and get a chance to speak English with their presentation after the work. The work was more entertainment than learning, which is illustrated in Seo-jun's group work (Classroom Excerpt 4.10).

Classroom Excerpt 4.10
Ms. Sun' Students (Seo-jun's Group)_Group Work

- 1 Seo-jun: **Ms. Sun, who's gonna present today?**
- 2 T: **The last number of each group.** ((walking away to the groups))
- 3 A-ran ((pointing his worksheet)) Seo-jun, **do it faster, please.** I can't read
- 4 your handwriting. Seo-jun, will you write neatly?
- 5 Seo-jun: ((faking an angry voice)) No.
- 6 ((reading his own handwriting)) "Dr. Fry!"
- 7 Ho-ik Where are we?
- 8 Seo-jun: ((pointing to the part of the worksheet)) Here.
- ((While Seo-jun answered the worksheet, Ho-ik and A-ran were talking about their appearance while copying Seo-jun's work. Then, A-ran started singing a song and Seo-jun kept writing.))
- 9 Seo-jun: ((calling Ms. Sun)) **Ms. Sun, I don't know what I should write for**
- 10 **this column.**
- 11 T: ((coming to Seo-jun and reading aloud what he wrote)) "Dr. Fry, One
- 12 day," Oh, good job. Read this part. ((pointing to some part of the
- 13 textbook)) Then, what? "The little piece of paper kept falling out of
- 14 the book of a choir member at church." So then he used Dr. Silver's
- 15 glue and he was the very first person to create this bookmark.
- 16 Seo-jun: Then, should I write it here? "used it made of"?
- 17 T: Yes. ((walking away to the groups))
- 18 A-ran May I read the book for you?
- 19 Seo-jun: ((faking an angry voice)) No.
- 20 A-ran: ((started singing again))
- 21 Ho-ik ((started singing along with A-ran))
- 22 Seo-jun: ((in a teasing voice)) Stop singing and write now.
- 23 A-ran ((making a copy of Seo-jun's worksheet and pointing to some part))
- 24 This, what did you write?

As shown above, Seo-jun first checked out who would present after the work (lines 1-2), which helped him to prepare the presenter in his group (Seo-jun,

Students' interview, July 17). He was completely in charge of filling in the worksheet by asking questions to Ms. Sun if he did not know (lines 9-17). In contrast, the other members only waited for him to "do it faster" (line 3) and made a copy of his work. With their Manager's sacrifice, the other members seemed to enjoy the activity time chatting and even singing a song together (lines 20-21).

On the other hand, Yu-seon, the Manager in another group, mentioned that the work was helpful to her group because they cooperated to complete the worksheet. However, a closer look at how her group members participated in the activity revealed that it was not true. Their work was presented in Classroom Excerpt 4.11.

Classroom Excerpt 4.11
Ms. Sun' Students (Yu-seon's Group)_ Group Work

- 1 Yu-seon: *First, we should... As you know, we are supposed to do up to this*
2 *part only. So let's read pages 152 and 153 first. Guys, I'll read them*
3 *out loud and you read them along silently. ((reading the pages*
4 *aloud)) Now, let's do page 152. **I found the answer of number one***
5 ***here, top of the page.***
((As Yu-seon read the first sentence of the page, the other members wrote it on their
worksheet.))
6 Yu-seon: *But about 'a good use for the group', I don't know what I should*
7 *write here frankly.*
8 Sang-min: *((pointing to the page of the textbook)) Is this the answer?*
9 Yu-seon: *But that is page 151. **Oh, I see. It might be about who sang in***
10 ***church, something like that. Then, 'who sang in church?' Dr.***
11 ***Fry. 'Who' is Dr. Fry.***
((Yu-seon filled in her own worksheet and the other members copied it down.))
12 Yu-seon: ***'When'? One day in nineteen... one day in nineteen seventy four.***
13 ***Well, let's not write in Korean. Korean answers are longer. Let's***
14 ***just write in English 'one day in 1974'. 'Where'? In church.***
((The other members kept writing the answers listening to Yu-seon.))

As indicated above, Yu-seon alone answered the questions in the worksheet (lines 4-5, 10-11, 12-14), and the others made a copy of hers. She even gave a

direction to the members about what language to use in answering (lines 13-14) just as Ms. Sun usually did. Even though she seemingly asked the other members (lines 10, 12), but the questions were not for discussion, but for clarification for herself. The seemingly cooperative work of Yu-seon's group was, in fact, an individual work of Yu-seon. As such, the group works in Ms. Sun's class were not to foster learning but to relax the students or entertain them.

Overall, the students mentioned they truly enjoyed having class with Ms. Sun. Her class was so fun that they felt "time flies" and that they were "willing to engage in the class" as presented in the last excerpt.

Data Excerpt 4.19 Interview with Ms. Sun's Students (July 17)

- Ho-ik:* ***Time flies in Ms. Sun's class even if we do not participate.***
Seo-jun: ***We're willing to engage in the class.***
A-ran: *My classmates do not sleep in English class.*
Yu-seon: *That's true, there's nobody sleeping in English class.*
A-ran: *Ah, it's true only for English class.*
Yu-seon: ***Well, 45 minutes felt so short in Ms. Sun's class compared to other class.***
Ho-ik: *I agree. It feels short. That's really true.*
Yu-seon: *Maybe, all the other students will agree with me, too.*

Nonetheless, fun that the students perceived in Ms. Sun's class was quite different from "playfulness" in Sullivan's (2000) study in which having fun was used as a mediation to foster CLT. In Ms. Sun's class, fun functioned as a means to entertain the students in general in order not to bore them in class rather than to mediate students' learning itself.

4.3. Ms. Sun's Instructional Activity System

In general, an individual does not clearly recognize the relationship between his or her single action and the complex activity system that gives rise to it (Engeström, 1987). The seemingly unrelated actions of a person can be fully understood as a unity when they are analyzed in the entire context. The framework of Engeström's (1987, 1993) activity system model serves the purpose of understanding Ms. Sun's various actions as a whole unity. In this section, Ms. Sun's perceptions of the instructional context and classroom practices are accounted for in the framework.

Before presenting Ms. Sun's current activity system, Section 4.3.1 gives a brief general description of her instructional activity in the previous semester. Based on the sketch, the motive and orientation of the current activity system can be better understood. Section 4.3.2 presents the configuration of the current activity system by identifying its components and the inner contradictions.

4.3.1 Previous Activity Structure and Contradictions

To understand Ms. Sun's current activity system, it is crucial that the researcher detects the orientation of the system, the *object* component. Since an *object* is seen to emerge out of the problem space (Engeström, 1994), the researcher needed to know the immediate problems that Ms. Sun had perceived in her own context. Then, the *object* she anticipated in the current activity would be fully understood.

To understand the problem spaces of the teacher, the researcher reconstructed Ms. Sun's instructional activity system in the previous semester based on her perceptions of the context. The configuration of the system is briefly described

as in Figure 4.1.

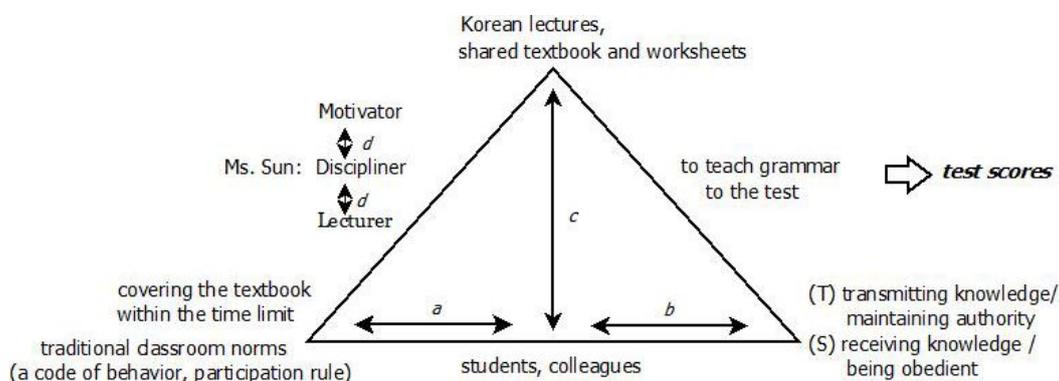


FIGURE 4.1
Ms. Sun's Activity System in the Previous Semester

Ms. Sun (*subject*) used to have two educational objectives (*object*). The first objective was to teach grammar, and the second one was to prepare her students for the school exams. She had not perceived any conflicts between the two objectives because grammatical test items had functioned as key factors to increase the test discrimination in the school exams. Therefore, she only needed to teach grammar well to prepare the students for the exams. In other words, the main objective of her instructional activity in the previous semester was 'to teach grammar to the test'. To achieve the objective, Ms. Sun taught the textbook and worksheets faithfully by delivering lectures in Korean (*tools*). The objective was shared by her colleagues and students (*community*), and they collaborated with one another according to the institutional or class rule (*rules*) and roles (*division of labor*). For example, Ms. Sun and her colleagues were to honor their mutual agreement of covering the textbook within the time limit. Ms. Sun and her students were also expected to abide by a code of behavior and the participation

rule based on traditional classroom norms. In terms of roles and duties, Ms. Sun was to transmit her knowledge maintaining the teacher's authority while her students were to receive the knowledge obediently.

However, Ms. Sun had recognized serious conflicts in her classroom instruction. The conflicts formed around her students (*community*). Some of the students disrupted her class with undisciplined behavior (see *a* in Figure 4.1) and challenged the teacher's authority (see *b* in Figure 4.1), by which a whole class got distracted. The more serious problem was that the students disliked English class because they found the textbook and lectures difficult (see *c* in Figure 4.1). Those conflicts made Ms. Sun recognize her roles as the lecturer, the discipliner, and the motivator (see *d* in Figure 4.1). She would give lectures on grammar as she had done so. To play a role of lecturer, she first needed to discipline the students and have them concentrate on her lectures. At the same time, she should motivate them to enjoy English class. She was bewildered and challenged by the different roles. In other words, the primary contradiction emerged in the *subject* component. The awareness enabled her to do something new in the current semester; she projected a new objective of not boring her students in class.

4.3.2 Current Activity Structure and Contradictions

Ms. Sun anticipated two objectives for the current semester. The first one was 'to teach grammar to the test' which was the same as that of the previous activity, and the second one was 'not to bore the students' which was newly projected in the current semester. Ms. Sun was aware that the first objective was not aligned with the orientation of the National Curriculum. In fact, she intentionally rejected

the goals mandated by the Curriculum because she had perceived that it was inappropriate and unattainable in middle school classes. Thus, the conflict between Ms. Sun's anticipated *object* and the goals of the National Curriculum remained as the tertiary contradiction, which did not bring about any change to her current activity system.

The current activity system was configured toward the two distinct *objects*, and a separate activity was oriented at each *object* in the system. The first activity was oriented at the educational objective of 'to teach grammar effectively to the test' and focused on the improvement of the previous activity system. To improve the classroom practices, Ms. Sun took some action as a lecturer (Actions A and B) and as a discipliner (Actions C and D).

Ms. Sun strove to teach the students effectively because the students had found English difficult (see *c* in Figure 4.1). Thus, the goal of 'to give a better lecture' was formed. She extracted the main points from grammatical concepts and tailored her lectures on those points to the students' level by using metaphors. She also provided learning strategies to help the students memorize grammatical rules. In addition, Korean was chosen as the medium of instruction because it had been effective in giving lectures. That was an action to improve the *tool* of the previous activity system (Action A in Figure 4.2). She also made efforts to effectively adhere to the rule of the colleagues, or covering the textbook within the time limit. She recognized that the students felt burdened and pressured because of wide coverage of the test, so she selected only some parts of the textbook. Then she reorganized and explained them intensively while focusing on the grammar presented in the selected sections. That action was to improve the *rule* of the previous activity system (Action B in Figure 4.2).

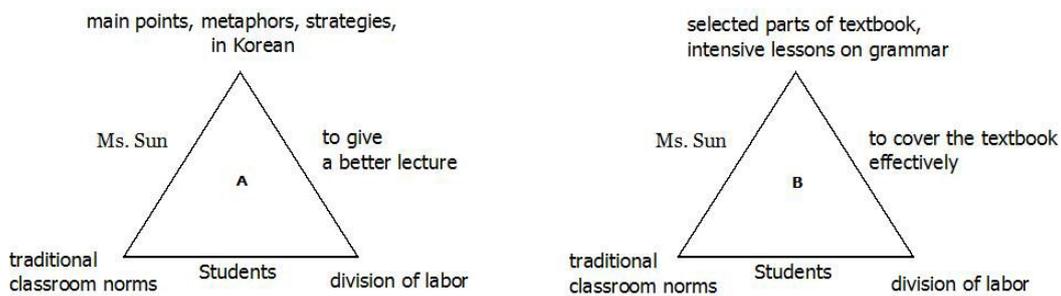


FIGURE 4.2
Actions to Improve the Components of *Tool* and *Rule*

Ms. Sun exerted more control over the students' learning process because she had perceived serious conflicts in managing them in class (see *a* and *b* in Figure 4.1). The goal of 'to establish power' was constructed. She gained the teacher's authority by using TEE and school tests and relinquished some power to the Managers by using group work. The rest of the students followed the instructions of Ms. Sun and their Managers. That action was to reestablish the *division of labor* according to traditional class norm (Action C in Figure 4.3). Second, the goal of 'to control class behavior' was projected. Ms. Sun got the students accustomed to a routine procedure and a code of class behavior. That action reaffirmed the traditional *rule* concerning classroom behavioral norms. (Action D in Figure 4.3).

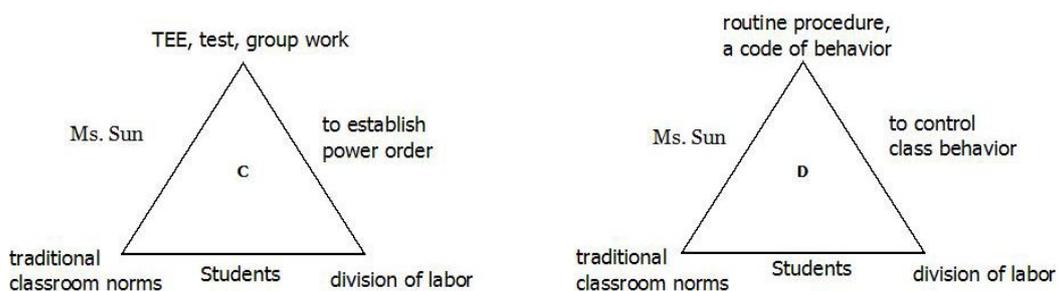


FIGURE 4.3
Actions to Improve the Components of *Division of Labor* and *Rule*

Those four actions were interrelated within the activity directed at the *object* of ‘to teach grammar effectively to the test’, and the first activity was eventually configured as in Figure 4.4. In this activity, the secondary contradiction emerged between the *community* and the *tool* (see *a* in Figure 4.4). In other words, the students confessed that Ms. Sun’s lectures on grammar were still difficult to understand. To resolve the contradiction, Ms. Sun had the students memorize the grammatical forms by rote. In fact, the contradiction remained the same in nature in that rote memorization did not help the students understand grammar that much. She could have resolved it by utilizing other teaching tools, but she did not take any alternative actions for that.

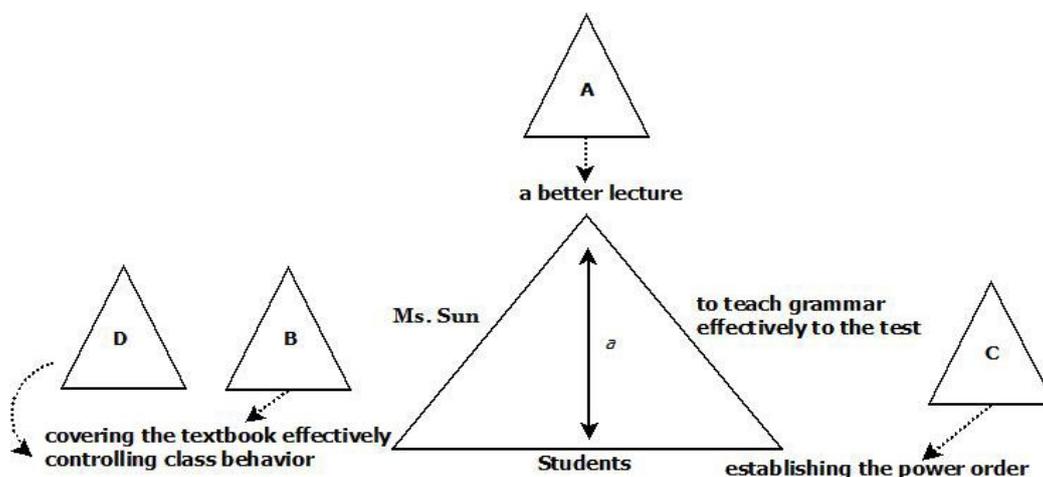


FIGURE 4.4
Ms. Sun’s First Activity

The second activity was directed at the objective of ‘not to bore the students’. Towards the *object*, two goals were projected: ‘to break up the boredom of long class periods’ and ‘to introduce group work’. The first goal indirectly mediated the *object* by relieving the strict institutional *rule* of holding 45-minute classes,

and the second goal directly served the *object* by introducing a new tool of group work to entertain the students. Ms. Sun used the aims of the day and interesting stories to break up the boredom of long class periods (Action E in Figure 4.5). In introducing group work in class, she needed to set a new operation system because group work was used for the first time in her teaching career. She used the *tool* of worksheets she designed and set a *rule* for the students to turn the worksheets in to be marked. In terms of the *division of labor*, she created and graded the worksheets and the students completed it following their Managers' lead (Action F in Figure 4.5). Since Ms. Sun was satisfied to entertain the students and the students enjoyed the class in the current semester, no contradictions were detected in the second activity (Figure 4.5).

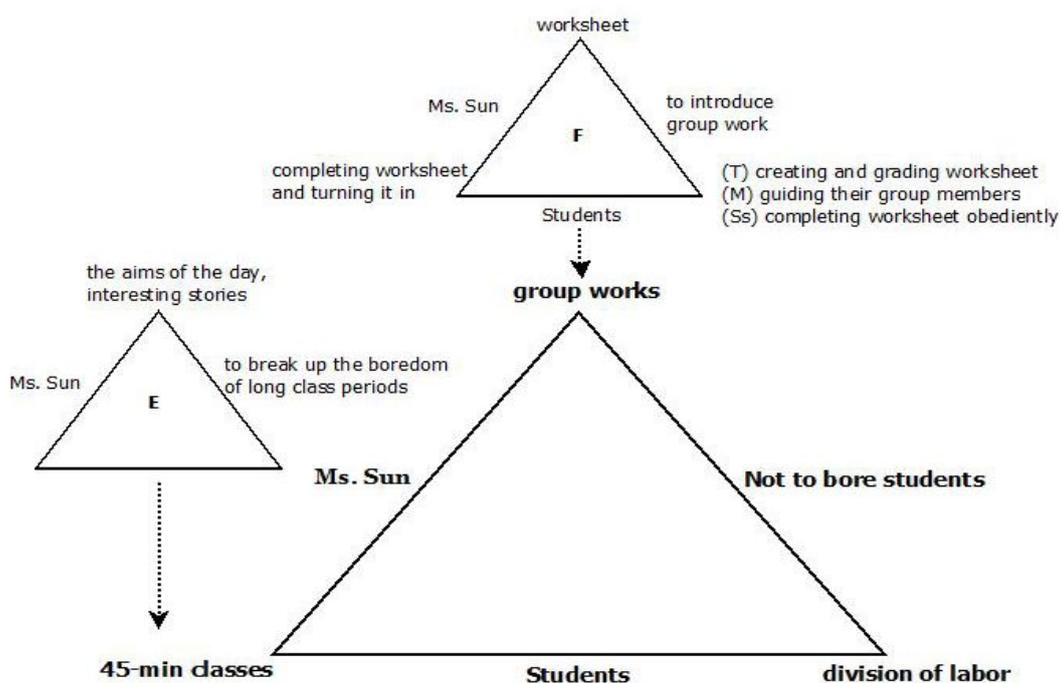


FIGURE 4.5
Ms. Sun's Second Activity

When the first and second activities were incorporated into the activity system, some conflicts emerged (Figure 4.6). The contradiction between the students and lectures (see *a* in Figure 4.6) did not come from the incorporation of the two activities. It was the same one found in Ms. Sun's first activity (see *a* in Figure 4.4). Two types of discoordination newly arose from group work. The first one arose between 'group work' (*tool*) and 'to cover textbook effectively' (*rule*) because doing group work required a sufficient amount of class time (see *b* in Figure 4.6). Ms. Sun resolved the secondary contradiction by withdrawing the group work for a while. That is, she periodically skipped the group work when she did not have enough time to prepare for the exam. The second contradiction occurred between 'group work' (*tool*) and 'to teach grammar effectively to the test' (*object*) (see *c* in Figure 4.6). The students perceived group work unhelpful or ineffective in preparing for the exams. Even though Ms. Sun fully recognized the contradiction and got frustrated, she left in unresolved.

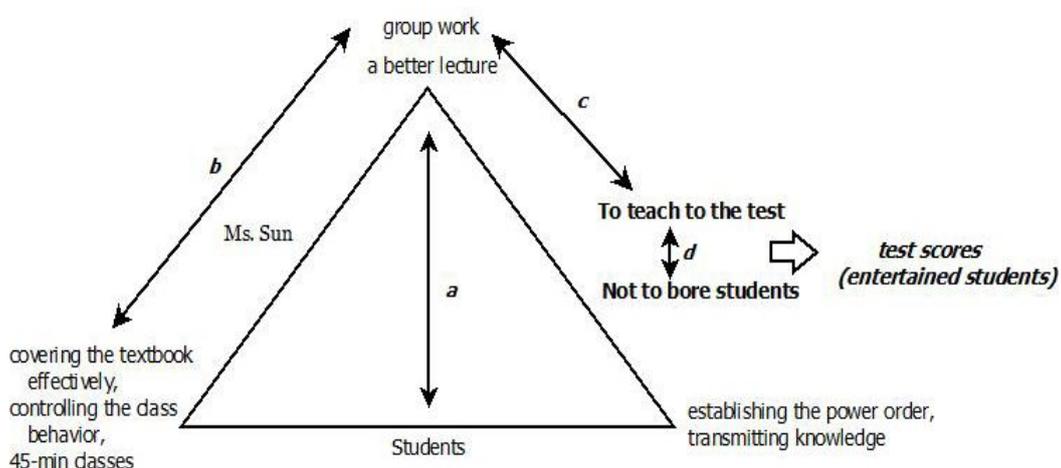


FIGURE 4.6
Ms. Sun's Activity System in the Current Semester

Group work which caused the new discoordination was the main *tool* to mediate the *object* of not boring the students. Ms. Sun introduced this new tool to her activity in the current semester, and the tool, as a strong novel factor, formed an imbalance in the system. Ms. Sun's activity system would have qualitatively changed if she had dealt with the imbalance actively, but she left it partially resolved or unresolved. Why did she behave in that way?

In order for Ms. Sun's activity system to change, a dilemma within the *object* component needed to be dealt with. The two educational objectives were contradictory in that 'to teach grammar to the test' would bore the students while 'not to bore the students' would waste class time and energy to teach to the test (see *d* in Figure 4.6). The primary contradiction within the *object* component needed to be balanced. Engeström (1987) mentioned that the primary contradiction was inherent in any component of activity system and that the competing elements in a component needed to be balanced in some ways instead of reducing or subjugating one to the other. However, the *object* of 'not to bore the students' was not realized in an educational sense in Ms. Sun's case. She entertained the students in general rather than interesting or motivating them for the educational purpose. There was no meeting point for the two *objects*, so Ms. Sun subjugated the *object* of 'not to bore the students' to the other of 'to teach to the test'. As a result, the latter *object* led the central activity and was transformed to the direct *outcome* of 'test scores' while the former *object* was transformed into the indirect *outcome* of 'entertained students'. Eventually, Ms. Sun's activity system in the current semester did not change much compared to that in the previous semester and remained the status quo. Her future activity system will evolve depending on how she solves the dilemma in the *object* component.

CHAPTER 5

THE CASE OF A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER: AN INSPIRER

This chapter examines the classroom instruction of Mr. Hyun, the second participant teacher who works in the high school. The chapter is organized in the same manner as Chapter 4. Section 5.1 illustrates how the teacher perceived the instructional context and Section 5.2 describes his instructional practices in the classroom. To reveal the complex nature of his teaching, Section 5.3 reanalyzes his perceptions and practices based on the activity system model.

5.1 Mr. Hyun's Perceptions of Instructional Context

To answer the first research question of the study, this section examines the ways Mr. Hyun perceived his instructional context as it related to him. Specifically, the section presents his perceptions about himself (Section 5.1.1), about teaching goals (Section 5.1.2), and about his students (Section 5.1.3).

5.1.1 To Be a Teacher Learner

Mr. Hyun had always wanted to become a good English teacher. He realized his educational background in English language education or his current English proficiency did not guarantee “a good teacher” (Reflection Paper, July in 2011), so he pursued his professional development by taking in-service teacher training programs. However, some of the useful teaching techniques provided in the

programs were not appropriately integrated into his actual teaching, or worse, soon forgotten. Mr. Hyun confessed he had been “very frustrated” (Interview, March 12) with the ineffectiveness of those types of programs.

However, the graduate school courses greatly changed his educational philosophy and classroom practices. During the course, he was provided with plenty of opportunities to observe and analyze other teachers’ classroom practices as well as his own. After the class observations, he had discussions with professors and other teachers on how to improve students’ learning. His beliefs in teaching and learning were challenged when a professor criticized that Korean English teachers tended to explain too much and thus deprived their students of learning opportunities. The professors described Korean English teachers as being caught in “a trap that teachers easily fall into” (Interview, March 12) and argued that it was wrong to think that the more a teacher taught, the more students would learn. Reflecting on the professor’s argument, Mr. Hyun confessed in Data Excerpt 5.1 that it was “quite a shocking but a meaningful realization” that challenged his educational philosophy.

Data Excerpt 5.1 Mr. Hyun _Reflection Paper (August, 2011)

This was quite a shocking but a meaningful realization to me, a person who was educated in Korea, where there has been a very strong Confucian influence in education: in class, teacher’s role is to ‘transfer’ all of his knowledge to the students. Thus, a good teacher ‘teaches’ a lot. However, CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) tutors kept telling us teaching doesn’t always mean learning. **In fact, too much teaching prevents learning.** If you talk too much, it takes time away for students to talk. **Thus, you should always try to ‘hand over to the students’ whenever it is possible. Still, for me, handing over to the students in a way contradicted the conventional classroom culture in Korea and it even made me feel slightly ‘guilty’ for not ‘teaching hard’.**

As stated above, the new educational philosophy that Mr. Hyun learned about in the course was in conflict with Confucian traditional classroom norms. Instead of “teaching” and “transferring” knowledge, “learning” and “handing over to the students” were emphasized in the new philosophy. He clearly acknowledged the conflicts between the philosophies, and it was never easy for him to change his established educational philosophy. He experienced inner conflicts and went as far as to feel “guilty.” In the end, he changed his beliefs and accepted the new philosophy of “student-centered communicative learning” (Interview, March 12) which focused exclusively on learning rather than on teaching.

Mr. Hyun continued to attend other similar off-line and on-line in-service teacher programs until recently in order to learn how to integrate the student-centered learning into his own classes. As far as he understood, student-centered learning referred to letting students learn by doing tasks instead of listening to teachers’ lecture (Interview, May 15). It also meant letting students check their own understanding by eliciting answers from them rather than giving away the answers (Interview, August 5). In effect, student-centered learning would increase the amount of students’ talk while decreasing the amount of teachers’ talk, so it can be called “a communicative class” (Interview, March 12).

In the helpful programs, Mr. Hyun’s understanding on student-centered learning was put into practice through micro-teaching and practicum. In other words, he was given opportunities to teach the students in a way as he had learned in the course. After the practicum, he was also provided with feedback from the trainers and other trainees on how his class improved his students’ learning. In that manner, he had learned how to actualize communicative student-centered learning in class and now became confident to give a CLT-

based class. He believed that learning had enabled him to give a better class, so he still had “a thirst for new learning” (Reflection Paper, April in 2012).

5.1.2 Communicative Language Teaching

Mr. Hyun had a good understanding of the concept of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980) due to his academic studies in the graduate school. He also acknowledged that CLT was emphasized in the National Curriculum and he agreed to the orientation of Curriculum.

Mr. Hyun had not been sure if CLT would have ever been feasible in regular English classes of a Korean high school. However, his own teaching experience convinced him that it could be achieved to some extent. For the previous two years, he had taught special subjects of *Global Leadership*, *Junior MBA*, *English Conversation*, and *Creativity Development* and been required to do content-based instruction for the subjects. At first, he taught them “out of order” (Interview, March 12) in spite of all the previous trainings. That was because those special subjects were experimentally chosen in the high school for the first time so there were no precedents, no textbooks, and no other teachers. He was completely in charge of those subjects; he designed the syllabus, prepared every teaching material, and evaluated students’ learning. In addition, he was required to teach only in English. The only good point of the subjects was that it was not mandatory for the teacher to give tests. Without the burden of giving tests, he could focus on teaching, and his classes gradually improved. He experimented on CLT and TEE in classes and learned by trial and error. He believed that CLT had been successfully actualized in the classes in the end.

In the previous year, Mr. Hyun was required to teach *High School English 1*, which was a regular subject, along with the special subjects. He taught the subject only to one class and the special subjects to twelve classes. He worked harder to give better TEE classes for the special subjects. In contrast, he taught the regular subject in Korean because he did not want to spend much time and energy in preparing TEE lessons just for the one class. When using Korean in the class of *High School English 1*, he tended to explain more and the students did not speak English at all. From this experience, he understood that TEE was very important in a communicative class as indicated in Data Excerpt 5.2.

Data Excerpt 5.2 Mr. Hyun _Interview (August 5)

It doesn't make sense to ask students to use English when teachers don't. Teachers need to show examples or demonstrations first, and then the students will learn.

He believed that teachers' use of English in class acted as "examples or demonstrations" of how English was used in a meaningful situation and that the students would naturally learn how to communicate in English from the examples. In this sense, TEE was believed to be a prerequisite of CLT.

He admitted, however, that the success of CLT-based classes for special subjects had been due mostly to his students' high English proficiency. Half of his students had been at the top level in terms of mock CSAT English scores and could understand and speak basic conversational English. The high proficiency of his students surprised the other high school teachers he had met in an in-service teacher training program because there were few students, if any, obtaining such top level scores in a high school. He admitted that his students'

high proficiency had given him an advantage over those teachers in actualizing CLT. Nonetheless, he emphasized that students' low proficiency was not a determining factor in preventing teachers from pursuing CLT. He knew one female teacher in a public high school who endeavored to pursue CLT in her class of low proficient students. He also observed that the other English teachers in his school were teaching English based on the grammar-oriented method. Thus, he came to believe that "a teacher's willingness to take on challenges and his or her desire for change" (Interview, August 5) were the factors that most affected the actualization of CLT.

Mr. Hyun stated he had willingness and desire to improve his class in the current semester. For the semester, he was required to teach only the regular subject, *High School English 1*. He set a goal to actualize CLT by adhering to TEE in the class, but it would be a new task for him in that he had never taught the regular subject in English. He was not sure that how his previous successful experience of actualizing CLT would be integrated into the regular class. In addition, he needed to prepare the students for school exams because he clearly recognized that the educational priorities of his students and their parents were given to the exams; it became another teaching goal for him. However, he acknowledged that CLT and school exams might be incompatible. It was a big challenge for him to deal with the tension the two goals and to find a way to combine CLT with school exams.

5.1.3 To Motivate the Learners

Mr. Hyun believed that his students would learn for themselves only if they were motivated enough. His strong belief on learning motivation was formed from his previous learning experiences. When he first learned English at school, he asked many questions in class, some of which were quite strange and stupid. The teacher not only answered them in a kind manner but also appreciated his attempt to ask questions. Since then, he made a long list of questions by looking into the textbook and “bothered” (Interview, April 9) English teachers. As a result, he received a good grade, which motivated him to study even harder. When he was motivated enough, he did not depend on the praise of his teachers or on grades any more to continue studying. Since that point in time, he set study goals for himself and felt a sense of accomplishment when he attained the goals one by one. Based on his own experiences, he was convinced that his students would study autonomously if they were fully motivated.

Mr. Hyun made an effort to search for ways to motivate the students in class. He thought the students’ motivation came from engagement in class as illustrated in Data Excerpt 5.3.

Data Excerpt 5.3 Mr. Hyun _Interview (March 12)

It’s about motivating the students to participate in my class. To make them have a desire to give full attention to this class, I need to manage class time well, to make the class fun and so on.

In his opinion, by working “to manage class time well” or “to make the class fun” he could motivate the students to have “a desire to give full attention” to English class. He hoped that the motivation would in the end grow into intrinsic motivation for learning English. The ultimate goal for his class is explicitly

illustrated in Data Excerpt 5.4.

Data Excerpt 5.4 Mr. Hyun _Interview (May 16)

Helping them attain both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, just letting them enjoy speaking in English is, in fact, another goal for me. Just let them know how fun it is to speak English, and how nice it is to express what they want to say, that's what I can do for them.

Mr. Hyun envisioned motivated students who would “enjoy speaking in English” and “express what they want to say”. Since his students, aiming to enter a good university, already had some extrinsic motivations, they would study English by themselves only if he helped them have intrinsic motivations. Therefore, he made up his mind to “inspire the students to know the love of learning” (Interview, May 16).

5.2 Mr. Hyun’s Classroom Practices

Mr. Hyun’s teaching goals emerged in Mr. Hyun’s classroom instruction, and this section presents them around the main themes. The themes are as follows: actualizing CLT in class (Section 5.2.1), interesting students in class (Section 5.2.2), engaging students in class (Section 5.2.3), and giving control to students (Section 5.2.4). His actions oriented at the goals are fully described in each subsection. The themes in subsections are expressed in Mr. Hyun’s terms with quotation marks to illustrate the way he experienced the practices in the context.

5.2.1 Actualizing CLT in Class

Developing communicative competence was the educational objective that Mr. Hyun anticipated in the current semester. However, he first needed to redefine it as a teaching goal attainable in his class and at the same time compatible with another goal of “to teach to the test” (Interview, May 16). Section 5.2.1.1 presents his action of keeping the teaching goal realistic and manageable. Section 5.2.1.2 describes how he worked to actualize CLT by adhering to TEE.

5.2.1.1 Teaching Language Skills: “Language Skills, My Class Goal”

The teaching goal in Mr. Hyun’s class was to improve students’ language skills. The goal was formed based on Scrivener’s (2005) teaching guide which he had learned in the graduate course. According to Scrivener (2005), the subject matter of language teaching can be classified mainly into two areas: language system and language skills. Mr. Hyun was advised and trained to focus more on language skills in class to actualize CLT. He also recognized that the goal of improving language skills was in alignment with the National Curriculum which emphasized the development of four language skills. Thus, he interpreted that the development of communicative competence was to improve language skills rather than knowledge on language system.

On the other hand, Mr. Hyun had to take CSAT or school exams into consideration. While reading skills were necessary for CSAT and school exams along with some listening and speaking skills, neither of them was relevant to writing skill. Thus, he came to a compromise; he focused more on reading and speaking skills, and his teaching goal was set to improve those skills.

Mr. Hyun designed tasks that helped the students to improve their reading and speaking skills; reading tasks were the main while speaking tasks were the supplements. The tasks were presented according to routine procedures, or “formula” (Interview, March 28) which he had learned and practiced in the past training courses. Following the “formula”, he believed that he provided the students with the opportunities to improve their skills every class. The “formula” is the following:

1. Lead-in (a brief introduction to the topic).
2. Set up the activity (i.e. you give instructions).
3. Students do the activity in pairs or small groups.
4. Close the activity and invite feedback from the students.

(Scrivener, 2005, p. 35)

In the ‘Lead-in’ step, he presented a speaking task: the students were expected to talk about their experience related to the reading topic. In the ‘Set up’, he first taught new vocabulary from the reading text, and presented some while-reading questions. The questions were usually designed to build the strategies of reading for gist and for details. In the ‘Activity’ step, the students were instructed to read the text as fast as possible and find answers to the given questions. Then, some of the students were called on to present their answers. Finally, in the ‘Close’ step, he let the students read the text again and answer the comprehension check-up questions presented in the textbook. He sometimes explained important language forms after the task.

In the procedures, Mr. Hyun did not translate the text into Korean at all nor explained it line by line while the other English teachers usually did so. He thought it would be “a waste of class time” (Interview, March 19). He believed

that each student should translate or study the lines “by himself at home” (Interview, March 19), if needed.

Since Mr. Hyun focused more on language skills, the class time for teaching language system, or grammar was relatively reduced. For that reason, the students perceived his class to be very different from typical classes they had taken before. Their opinions are given in Data Excerpt 5.5.

Data Excerpt 5.5 Interview with Mr. Hyun’s Students (July 26)

- Su-ha: ***It seems that Mr. Hyun does not want to teach grammar to us and that is very unique compared to other classes. Students are stressed out because other teachers put so much emphasis on grammar. To be honest, grammar is of no use when we go abroad. In that sense, Mr. Hyun’s class is not a grammar-based class...***
- Researcher: *Then, what can you say Mr. Hyun’s class is based on?*
- Yun-do: ***On students’ interest.***
- Jun-su: ***He encourages us to keep interests in English.***
- Su-ha: *That’s true. Even though grammar is a part of English.*

In the excerpt cited above, the students pointed out that the “not a grammar-based” aspect of Mr. Hyun’s class was “very unique”, which clearly contrasted with other teachers’ classes. As such, Mr. Hyun’s class was perceived to be based on “students’ interest” while putting the least emphasis on grammar.

In fact, Mr. Hyun did not skip the grammar part in the textbook because he needed to teach some grammatical forms for school exams. In teaching grammar, he made grammatical concepts understood rather than explaining the forms in detail. However, he perceived that the given materials were inappropriate to teach the concepts. The textbook provided few meaningful exercises, and the worksheets made by other English teachers were “a motley collection” (Interview, April 9) of decontextualized grammatical forms. So, he usually

explained the forms as briefly and simply as possible and instead tried to elicit the answers from the students to check how well they understood the concept. An example is given in Classroom Excerpt 5.1.

Classroom Excerpt 5.1
Mr. Hyun_ Grammar Lesson on Participle Adjective

- 1 T: ((reading aloud PPT)) "*Participle adjective is an adjective ending '-ing' or*
2 *'-ed' like participle forms of a verb*", yeah?
3 **You don't have to memorize the name, but you just have to know how**
4 **to use it.** ((showing on PPT and reading the sentence)) "**Grag's classes**
5 **interest him."** Who is "him"?
6 Ss: Grag.
7 T: Yeah, Grag. **Is he a student or a teacher?**
8 Ss: A student.
9 T: Yeah, a student. Grag takes a lot of classes, like math, science and English.
10 **So who's the most hard-working boy in this class?**
11 S1: ((answering his own name)) Su-ha.
12 Ss: ((laughing))
13 T: ((laughing)) Yes, you can say **Su-ha's classes interest him**, right? **So how**
14 **can you change the sentences with the same meaning?**
15 **"Grag's or Su-ha's classes are..."?**
16 Ss: Interesting.
17 T: ((nodding and showing the answer on PPT))
18 ((going over to next PPT and reading)) Or "**Suha is an _____ boy**"?
19 Ss: Interested.
20 T: Yeah, "interested boy". Okay, now I'm going to give you a handout.

In the scene, Mr. Hyun emphasized the use of the "participle adjective" over its linguistic term (lines 3-4). Then he presented a sample sentence given in the worksheet (lines 4-5) and asked questions to elicit answers from the students (lines 5, 7, 13-15, 18). By asking those questions, he could check the students' understanding of the concept of participle adjectives. He also brought up a vivid example by putting one of his students' name in the sentence (lines 10, 13, 15, 18). By giving that example, he tried to help the students use the participle adjective in their "meaningful context" (Interview, April 12). Like this, he

believed that it was enough for him to check the students' understanding of the grammatical concepts rather than explaining the forms one by one.

5.2.1.2 Teaching in English: “English, Please”

In Mr. Hyun's class, one of the most salient characteristics was that English was the only means to communicate between him and his students. Mr. Hyun chose English as the medium of instruction and utilized every possible strategy to make his English understood. For example, he always used PPT in his classes. He titled each page of the PPT to let his students know what section of the textbook they were working on. His English instructions and questions were also shown in PPT to help them understand what he was saying. In addition, he always asked comprehension-check up questions after giving instructions. What was the most helpful to the students was his demonstrations (Students' Interview, August 5). He usually demonstrated what the students should do especially when they were required to do multiple tasks, as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.2.

Classroom Excerpt 5.2 Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson (Directions)

- 1 T: So my question is, ((reading the questions on PPT)) “What do you think
2 they do each day?” Maybe you can take turns, ask two questions and
3 answer two questions. **For example, Yun-do, you're my partner. What do**
4 **you have to do?**
5 S1: ((reading the first question on PPT)) “What do you do each day?”
6 T: **On? (pointing to the picture of “Red Nose Day” on PPT)**
7 S1: On Red Nose Day?
8 T: Yeah. I think they drink beer on Red Nose Day. **And? ((pointing to the**
9 **second question on PPT))**
10 S1: ((reading the second question on PPT)) “How do they raise money?”
11 T: I think they sell beer to students.
12 ((saying to the whole class)) So you can use your imagination, and talk
13 about these things.

In the excerpt, Mr. Hyun called on a student (lines 3-4) and showed a pair work demonstration between the student and him to the class (lines 5-11). While demonstrating, he helped the student to ask the right question using PPT as a tool (lines 6, 8-9). The class watched the demonstration and could envisage the pair work they would have to do.

Along with his uses of classroom English, Mr. Hyun regulated the students' language as well. To encourage them to speak English, he continuously said to them "Can you say that in English again, please?" (Lesson, March 12), criticized them jokingly by saying "Did you just speak Korean?" (Lesson, May 23) or just ignored their Korean by saying "What did you say?" (Lesson, June 4). The students gradually accepted the rules as shown in the Classroom Excerpt 5.3.

Classroom Excerpt 5.3 **Mr. Hyun_ Lesson on "name but a few"**

- 1 T: ((writing "name but a few" on the board)) What does "name but a few"
2 mean? ((underlining "but")) What does it mean? You can replace it with
3 another word. ((writing "on ___" on the board and looking at students))
4 Ss: "only"
5 T: Yeah, so the Korean translation is, we use this for what? to give an
6 example, so "myeot gajiman yereul deulmyeon (*to give only a few*
7 *examples*)" ((writing the Korean meaning on the board))
8 S1: **"for"do doeyo? (Can we use "for" as well?)**
9 T: ((pretending that he didn't hear and pricking up his ears)) **What?**
10 S1: **"only" daesine "for"do doeyo? (Can we also use "for" instead of**
11 **"only"?)**
12 T: **What? ((continuously pretending that he didn't hear))**
13 S1: **'for' , 'for'yo, 'only' daesine ("for", "for" instead of "only")?**
14 T: **What?**
15 Ss: ((in unison)) **English, please!**
16 S1: **Ah! "for" instead of "only"?**
17 T: ((smiling)) No. here, "but" means "only" but we can't use "for" instead of
18 "only".

In the scene, Mr. Hyun was determined not to answer a question when asked in Korean (lines 9, 12, 14). The student who asked the question did not recognize that he broke the class rule about the language code and felt bewildered (lines 10-11, 13). Soon, he realized it with the help of his classmates (line 15), and was able to get the answer from Mr. Hyun only after he used English (lines 16-18). It was obvious that all of the students in the class were well aware of the rule (line 15), and they had to use English if they wanted to communicate with the teacher in class.

Mr. Hyun paid scrupulous attention to having the students maintain the “English, please!” rule even during pair work. The students interviewed confessed that they enjoyed “having chitchats in Korean instead of doing the task” (Students’ Interview, July 26) during pair work time. As Mr. Hyun fully recognized the tendency for the students to play than to study, he always monitored their pair work while walking around the classroom, listening to what they were saying, and sometimes interjecting a few comments. After the pair work, he often called on a few students and asked them to stand and present what they talked about or what their partner said to check whether they had actually used English in pair work, which is illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.4.

Classroom Excerpt 5.4 **Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson (Presentation)**

- 1 T: And Jun-su, did you ask the second question? You just asked or also
2 answered?
3 S1: I asked.
4 T: Okay, you ask the second question to someone here... ((searching for a
5 student to present)) Maybe Su-ha can answer. ((to Su-ha)) **I saw you**
6 **answer.** Jun-su, ask the second question to Su-ha.
7 S1: ((reading the question on PPT)) “Which do you think is the most reliable?”

When called on to present their work, the students usually preferred asking to answering because it was less demanding. Thus, Jun-su in the scene first chose the role of the questioner (line 3), and Mr. Hyun was to pick someone to answer. Then, he chose Su-ha because he watched the student answer during pair work (lines 5-6), and Su-ha had no choice but to take the role. As such, the students were well aware that they were being watched all the time during the pair work.

When talking about the “English, please!” rule, Ji-wuk confessed that he was very “confused and shocked” (Students’ Interview, July 26) at first because he had not had a TEE class before. Agreeing with Ji-wuk, Su-ha also recalled the moment presenting in English worrying about “losing face” (Students’ Interview, July 26). Yun-do even resisted the rule and used Korean “intentionally” (Students’ Interview, July 26) in the beginning of the semester. As time went by, however, the students got used to using English in class. It seemed that the strict rule Mr. Hyun set without his students’ approval was eventually accepted in his class. Now the students admitted that they preferred using English in class, and English became a “natural” means to communicate in class as mentioned in Data Excerpt 5.6.

Data Excerpt 5.6 Interview with Mr. Hyun’s Students (July 26)

Well, in this class, it seems to be very natural (to use English) at some point. ‘Isn’t it too obvious that we should speak English in English class?’ We came to agree on that. But in the other (English teachers’) classes, it seemed very awkward (to speak English). But here in this class it has become very natural. Of course, it should be.

The interview shows that the students came to realize that it was quite “obvious” that English should be used in English class. So they felt “very natural” instead

of feeling “awkward” when they used English in Mr. Hyun’s class.

However, there were some students who could not keep up with Mr. Hyun’s class because of the language barrier. For example, it was observed that Yun-do, one of the lowest achieving students in his class, did not discuss at all in pair work in which he was asked to talk about the efficient robots (Lesson, May 21) and that Jun-su could not participate well in pair work because he did not understand the text fully (Lesson, April 16). Mr. Hyun recognized the difficulties of the weak learners and grappled with “learning with the fastest” (Interview, May 16), or the possibility that weak learners were left behind. So he allowed an exception to the “English, please!” rule in two cases. The grammar lesson was one case. When most of the students did not understand the grammatical concepts which were taught in English, he explained them again in Korean (e.g., Lesson on ‘passive voice’, May 23). In discussing the concepts in pairs, the students were also allowed to use Korean. The other was the case where students asked questions after class. After class, the teacher communicated with them in Korean. Except for the cases, he adhered to the rule strictly.

5.2.2 Interesting the Students in Class

Mr. Hyun tried to find ways to stimulate his students’ interest. As long as his students were interested in his class and paid attention, he could provide “learning opportunities with which they could understand, consolidate, and eventually internalize what they learned” (Interview, August 5). In addition, he believed that “the class preparation is a key to good class management” (Interview, August 5); class management would become very easy only if the

class was interesting enough for the students to willingly take. To interest the students in class, he used fun materials (Section 5.2.2.1) and also presented them in a most effective way (Section 5.2.2.2).

5.2.2.1 Fun Teaching Materials: “It’s Fun, Isn’t It?”

Fun was essential to excite the students who would become bored with the academic text and to draw their attention to the current topic. To make a fun class, various materials were provided, for which a computer and Internet were “must-haves” (Interview, May 16). There were three types of fun material that Mr. Hyun used in class to stir up the students’ interest: humorous visuals, shocking news, and new information.

First, Mr. Hyun searched for humorous visual materials which were related to the reading topic. For example, instead of using pictures of commercial advertisements presented in the textbook, he showed a funny commercial film advertising medicine which he had found on the internet. In the film, an auction dealer broke a very expensive Ming vase by mistake and was advised to take the medicine to prevent a heart attack, and his students seemed to be “hooked in” (Interview, March 12) the topic as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.5.

Classroom Excerpt 5.5 Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Commercials

- 1 T: I'm going show you a video and you have to guess what product is
- 2 advertised here.
- 3 **((playing the video and pausing)) Where is it?**
- 4 Ss: Gyeongmae (*auction*)
- 5 T: Yeah, what is 'gyeongmae (*auction*)' in English?
- 6 S1: Auction.
- 7 T: Yeah, auction, auction site. This is a real auction. What do you think is

8 being auctioned? A vase, right? Does it look expensive? It is a Ming vase.
 9 What is Ming?
 10 S2: Myeong Nara (*Ming*).
 11 T: Yes, Myeong Nara (*Ming*). **So you need to find out what is advertising.**
 12 **I'll stop, pause in the end. Are you ready? Okay, I'll give you a hint. It's**
 13 **a kind of medicine.**
 14 Ss: Aspirin, dutongyak (*headache pill*), gamgiyak (*cold medicine*) ...
 15 T: We'll see.
 16 **((playing the video, and pausing at the last scene)) Okay, you may**
 17 **already know the answer. No? What will happen? ((waiting for the**
 18 **students' response for a while and playing the last scene))**
 19 Ss: **((laughing very hard))**
 20 T: **((laughing))** "Aspirin Cardio". What does it mean? It's a medicine for your
 21 heart. Do you want to watch again?
 22 Ss: **((in unison with a loud voice)) Yes!**
 23 T: **It's fun, isn't it?** ((playing the video again))
 ((The students enjoyed watching the video while laughing and talking with their friends.))
 24 T: Did you like it? It was a commercial for "Aspirin Cardio". Even just a usual
 25 Aspirin, if you take it, it's known to be good for, to your heart, preventing
 26 heart attack. **Anyway, today we're going to read more about**
 27 **commercials in the textbook.**

Here, Mr. Hyun tried to arouse the students' curiosity by pausing the screens repeatedly (lines 3, 16) and by giving a kind of quiz (lines 11-13). The last scene was a punch line from the film in which the dealer tapped hard on the Ming vase, by mistake, instead of the table in the excitement of selling the Ming vase at a very expensive price. The Ming vase shattered, and subsequently advertising phrases were shown in bold: "Avoid unnecessary drama. Check your heart attack risk in time." At that hilariously funny scene, all the students as well as the teacher laughed aloud for a while (lines 19-20). The students seemed to be entertained, so they wanted to watch it again (lines 21-22). Not to let the lesson get off track, Mr. Hyun soon introduced "commercials", the topic of the day when the students still held interest in the advertisement (lines 26-27).

In addition, Mr. Hyun found some shocking news and used them in class. For example, on the topic of hormone effect in growing animals, he told his students a shocking news report of a 6-year old girl in Cuba whose breast got larger due

to the chicken she ate (Lesson, March 14). On the topic of the function of physiological phenomenon, he played a video clip of the burping performance of a man, the winner in a burping championship, and a farting performance of a man appearing on TV (Lesson, May 16). His students reacted in shock, and they kept interested when they read the boring texts.

Mr. Hyun also introduced new information that the students did not know much about. He explained the function of the hippocampus, a part of the brain by showing the superior intelligence level of a London taxi driver over the GPS (global positioning system) receiver in terms of the speed of finding locations (Lesson, March 26). Other times, he interpreted the meaning of ancient Egyptian by showing real hieroglyphics (Lesson, April 16) and introduced various contemporary robots such as mosquito robot, lizard robot called Gecko, or boxfish robots (Lesson, May 21).

However, Mr. Hyun really struggled to maintain the fun aspects in his class because he still needed to prepare his students for the school exams. For school exams, it would be more efficient to use only the textbook and the shared worksheets than to use the fun materials because the latter would not appear on the exam. Furthermore, it would be more effective to focus more on grammatical forms than reading topics because most of his students had missed the questions related to the forms on the test. In this regard, the school exam was “an obvious limitation” on him, but he could not give up the fun in his class as strongly expressed in Data Excerpt 5.7.

Data Excerpt 5.7 Mr. Hyun _Interview (May 16)

*In fact, there is **an obvious limitation**. If I focus only on the exams, I can probably teach poorly and still get my students to get good marks on the exam.*

*But it's not fun at all to teach to the test. So I need to combine it with some communicative tasks. If I prepared the students only for the exam, of course the exam is the goal, but **teaching only to get better marks on the test is not fun at all, and not meaningful, either.***

He felt that “fun” and “good marks” were contradictory. A class would be “not fun at all” and “not meaningful” if the exam was to be the only goal.

Mr. Hyun struggled to find a compromise between tests and a meaningful class and was determined to modify the format of the school exams. That determination came from the mid-term exam of that semester. When he previewed the test questions that the other teachers had written, he found that they had taught in a different way from him though they used the same textbook and worksheets. The questions were “so outdated” (Interview, August 5) only focusing on minor grammatical forms. He did not change the questions at that time lest he should insult the others. Instead, he decided to suggest a new test format to the teachers for the final exam before they wrote the test questions. His intention for the action is indicated in the following interview.

Data Excerpt 5.8 Mr. Hyun _Interview (August 5)

*It (the mid-term exam) was not a valid way to assess what my students had studied in my class. It had lower validity. **I wanted to assess my students in a way that reflected my teaching, according to my style.***

He hoped that his “teaching” and his “style” would be reflected in the final exam of the school. He also wanted to increase the face validity of the test. To find a valid test-format, he classified the test items of CSAT and chose several types suitable to school exams. Then, he showed the selected types to the other teachers. Fortunately, they accepted his suggestions and agreed to notify the

students of the new test-format before the final exam. The notice on the new format is presented in Data Excerpt 5.9.

Data Excerpt 5.9
Mr. Hyun _Part of School Letter on Test Types (June in 2012)

<i>Number</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Question (Direction)</i>
1	<i>multiple choice</i>	<i>Choose the appropriate place to put the given sentence.</i>
2	<i>multiple choice</i>	<i>Choose the sentence which is unrelated to the whole text.</i>
3	<i>multiple choice</i>	<i>Choose the appropriate word to put in the given summary.</i>
<i>(From numbers 4 to 11, the questions were all multiple-choice type and asked about the coherence of the text, the main idea or main points, summary, and so on.)</i>		
12	<i>open-ended</i>	<i>Among the given expressions, choose one to put in the blank. (The expressions are those presented in "Language Practice" of textbook.)</i>
13	<i>open-ended</i>	<i>Fill in the blanks with the correct word forms of the given words. (The words are presented in "Vocabulary & Idiom Review" of textbook, but the sentence may be different from the text.)</i>

As shown above, most of the types were about reading strategies shown in CSAT such as understanding the logical coherence (numbers 1, 2) or summing up the text (number 3). To increase the discriminatory power, the test should include some open-ended grammatical questions such as number 12 or 13. Even though the format did not assess the students' speaking skills, he thought it increased the face validity because it was aligned with CSAT and "trivial details" (Interview, August 5) were excluded. For his students, the types were similar with the tasks that they were given in the class.

There seemed to have been some positive effects on the students' performance from the new format. Some students interviewed noticed that the numbers of grammatical questions decreased in the final exam, so they did not invest as much time and energy to studying grammar as before. For example,

Ji-wuk found out that it would have been “stupid” (Students’ Interview, July 26) if he had memorized the text rote. Instead, he tried to memorize vocabulary and understand the text. Nonetheless, the test was still not perceived to be a completely valid tool to assess the students’ learning. The students stated that “learning is one thing and testing is another” (Students’ Interview, July 26) because test discrimination was more important than validity in school exams. Ho-chan mentioned that there seemed to be “no alternative” to increasing the validity of school exams. If so, they agreed that they were satisfied more with the current “fun class” of Mr. Hyun than that of teaching to the test (Students’ Interview, July 26).

5.2.2.2 The Effective Presentation: “Can You Guess?”

According to Mr. Hyun, another way to interest the students was to tap into their curiosity. He tried to stimulate the students’ curiosity with effective presentation skills.

Mr. Hyun enjoyed “leaving some clues here and there” (Interview, May 28) to keep his students in suspense. When he presented interesting pictures, he always showed a part of them and let his students guess what it would be. For example, when he showed a picture of a celebrity to introduce TV ads, he asked his students to guess who she was by showing her body without her face. After hearing various funny responses from them, he eventually showed her face, which was followed by their shouts and cheers (Lesson, April 23). When he taught new vocabulary, he sometimes presented them with some blanks or wrote only the first few letters to encourage the students to figure out the words. When

he often delayed telling his students the answers they were eager to know, it seemed that he was giving a quiz to them as in Classroom Excerpt 5.6.

Classroom Excerpt 5.6
Mr. Hyun_Lesson on “satnav”

- 1 T: ((showing a GPS receiver on PPT)) What is this?
2 Ss: Navigation.
3 T: Navigation, but in U.K. and other English-speaking countries, **they have a**
4 **shorter name.**
5 Ss: GPS.
6 T: GPS is one name, **but what does it communicate with? ((pointing to the**
7 **sky with his finger circling))**
8 S1: Satellite.
9 T: **((nodding)) So satellite what?**
10 S2: Navigation.
11 T: No. **Make it shorter.** They use a shorter version. **I’ll give you a hint.**
12 ((writing 'sat ___' on the board))
13 S3: Nev.
14 T: Yes, it's a “satnav”. They actually use this name. Everyone, “satnav”.
15 Ss: ((in unison)) “satnav”.
16 T: Yes, meaning ((showing the definition on PPT and reading)) “a satellite
17 navigation” or “a GPS system”.

Here, Mr. Hyun did not correct wrong answer immediately and gave them clues little by little (lines 3-4, 6-7, 9, 11). With this technique, he could attract the students’ attentions (line 5) as well as involve as many students as possible in the task (lines 8, 10, 13).

Mr. Hyun frequently gave vague responses to the students’ answers in order to make the students get puzzled. An example is given in Classroom Excerpt 5.7.

Classroom Excerpt 5.7
Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Tarot Cards

- 1 T: Where were playing cards invented? Where do you think?
2 S1: India.
3 T: **India? Why?**
4 S1: Um...((thinking))
5 S2: China.

- 6 T: **China? Why?**
 7 S2: Ah... ((murmuring))
 8 S3: Europe.
 9 T: **Europe? Maybe.**
 10 S4: Korea.
 11 Ss: ((laughing and shouting with boos))
 12 T: ((smiling)) **Korea? That's very interesting.** From when tarot cards was
 13 used for fortune-telling? Think about that.

The text which they were going to read was about the origin of tarot cards which the students were so familiar with and thus would be a boring topic. Mr. Hyun tried to arouse the students' curiosity by asking a question (line 1) but not giving out the answer (lines 3, 6, 9, 12). He succeeded in getting the students' attention and increasing participation by making them wonder (e.g., lines 4, 7). Without the presentation skill, the students would not have paid their attention to the topic.

It seemed that Mr. Hyun's presentation skills to stimulate the students' curiosity worked quite well, and they enjoyed the class. They sometimes excitedly shouted out "uneducated guess" (Ji-wuk, Students' Interview, July 26) and laughed at their friend's "dumb answers" (Ho-chan, Students' Interview, July 26). There were few students who dozed off in his class. Su-ha even joked that if a student did doze off in the class, he must have been "ill" or "out of his mind" (Students' Interview, July 26).

5.2.3 Engaging the Students in Class

Mr. Hyun struggled to engage his students in his class. According to him, "engaging in class" was defined as "concentrating attention on the class" (Interview, August 5), and the degree of concentration could be detected by their participation in the given tasks. He first tried to create an optimal atmosphere for

the students to stay focused (Section 5.2.3.1) and then provided many participation opportunities in class (Section 5.2.3.2).

5.2.3.1 An Optimal Class Atmosphere: “Putting up a Stage, the Key”

Mr. Hyun mentioned that a proper class atmosphere was very important to encourage his students to participate in class. He created an optimal atmosphere by balancing safety and tension.

Most of all, he endeavored to make a comfortable and safe class because he perceived most students had some anxiety about English. The anxiety seemed to result from mainly two factors: the fear of communication failure and of peers’ negative evaluations. To relieve the anxiety of communication failure, Mr. Hyun always waited with patience for his students to speak and then showed appreciation for their attempts however poor or inappropriate their English was. He never rebuked his students when they could not answer at all or their answers were not enough as shown in Classroom Excerpt 5.8.

Classroom Excerpt 5.8 Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Universal Design

- 1 T: Did you think of any solutions? Jun-su, you still keep talking. **Do you have**
2 **a good idea?**
3 S1: **No.**
4 T: **No? Then what were you talking about?**
5 S1: **We were talking about the solutions, but, but, ((finding words to say))**
6 T: **Oh, you're talking but can't find a good idea.**
7 S1: **((nodding))**
8 T: **I see.** Anyone? Any good ideas to solve the problem? Come on! You're
9 creative. I know how creative you are. Ho-chan, what did you think of?
10 S2: Universally designed scissors.
11 T: **Universally designed scissors? What do you mean? Can you explain**
12 **more?**
13 S2: Design for all.

- 14 T: **For example, ((pointing to the picture of a man in wheelchair in front**
 15 **of stairs on PPT)) how can you design it for all?**
 16 S2: Make it slide.
 17 T: Ah, make it into slope! ((making a gesture of rolling a wheelchair)) You can
 18 use it as well. But it'll be still steep even if we make it into slope. Anyone
 19 else?

In the excerpt above, when a student could not answer (line 3) Mr. Hyun did not criticize their laziness or inability but listened to them first (line 4). Even if their response could have possibly been an excuse, he believed them (lines 5-8). When the answer given by a student was not adequate, he did not correct it right away but elicited more responses from him by asking questions (lines 11-12, 14-15). This kind of attitude made Mr. Hyun's students feel comfortable in class. For the comfortable class, Jun-su expressed his sincere appreciation to Mr. Hyun because he used to "be penalized" in middle school classes when he did not answer correctly, but now he could "give it a try" at least (Students' Interview, July 26).

Concerning negative peer pressure, Mr. Hyun carefully distributed presentation opportunities to every single student by calling their names on a regular basis. By doing this, he expected the students not to tease or criticize their classmates' presentation because they would be in the others' shoes next time. His tactic seemed to work well as shown in the students' interview (Data Excerpt 5.10).

Data Excerpt 5.10 Interview with Mr. Hyun's Students (July 26)

- Researcher: *When you heard your friends' saying, have you ever thought that his English was terrible?*
 Students: **No, not at all.**
 Yun-do: ***Who am I to judge others? ((Other students laughed.)) And the native English-speaking teachers said that **grammatical order is not that important, only if you can understand.*****

As indicated in the excerpt, the students got to understand each other's situations because their English was not perfect, either. They got to see that it was more important to focus on the message itself rather than "grammatical order" when their classmates presented their work.

With Mr. Hyun's efforts to minimize the risks the students would take in class, his students seemed to feel safe and relaxed. This relaxation sometimes led them even to play a joke out of their inability to answer the teacher's question. An example is presented in Classroom Excerpt 5.9.

Classroom Excerpt 5.9 **Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Plants**

- 1 T: How can plants help each other grow?
2 S1: They can cooperate with each other.
3 T: **Yes, but in what way? Can you say little bit specific?**
4 S1: **Healing?**
5 T: **Healing? No.**
6 S1: **Ah, I have no idea.**
7 T: Okay, who's got an idea? Do they give something, and get back? Su-ha,
8 what do you think? **In what ways, do they cooperate?**
9 S2: **I have no idea.**
10 T: Oh, come on. You're a smart guy. How about Ho-chan? **Do you have any**
11 **idea?**
12 S3: **Of course not.**
13 Ss: **((laughing))**
14 T: **((faking a bewildered look)) Of course not? Of course you should.**
15 S4: **Neomu Jeonmunjeogin Jisikindeyo. (The question is too professional.)**
16 **Professional.**
17 T: Is it too professional? Okay, don't worry now. I understand. You're not
18 professional farmers. But you'll find interesting facts about plants soon.
19 How about # 3? You just guess about them. It's like gaekgwansik (*multiple*
20 *choice*), right? Ji-wuk, which group did you bind together?
21 S4: Bean and pumpkin.
22 T: **Do you have any reason?**
23 S4: **Of course not.**
24 Ss: **((laughing hard))**
25 T: **Don't be stupid today. ((laughing with the students))** What's the problem
26 with you?

In the scene, the first two students could not give an answer to Mr. Hyun's question because they actually did not know it (lines 6, 9) or the question was too difficult (lines 15-16). However, the other students answered jokingly to disclose their inability and at the same time to make a funny rhyme of "Of course not" (lines 12, 23). Their intention was understood by the other students (lines 13, 24) and the teacher (lines 14, 25). The students preferred playing in class rather than studying earnestly, and they were quite skillful at catching a chance.

Mr. Hyun needed to create class tension lest the students should become too relaxed and lose their attention. He sometimes controlled his students' excessive chitchat by warning them if they did not stop talking, he would continue to teach during the break time (e.g., Lesson, April 2, June 18) or if they did not focus on the class, they would fail the upcoming exam (Lesson, May 28). Other times, he suddenly called on distracted students to present. What worked best was the effective allocation of tasks and time. He scheduled multiple tasks in a class and gave short time limits to complete each task to keep his students focused. For example, two to three minutes were given to a task of reading for gist, and an electronic timer was set as such. When the teacher manipulated the tension, his students "trembled" as described in the following interview.

Data Excerpt 5.11 Interview with Mr. Hyun's Students (July 26)

- Yun-do: *Ah, but I read it under the time pressure.*
Students: *Right, that's true, really.*
Su-ha: *When I realized there was only thirty seconds left, I could not focus on reading.*
Yun-do: *My legs trembled.*
Ji-wuk: *Mr. Hyun used the timer alarm with the sound of a bomb and I felt like having a heart attack at that time.*

Yun-do: *Yes, I have a sort of obsession with **time pressure**. And Mr. Hyun did not give extra time to read after the timer stopped and gave the after-reading task to us right away.*

As indicated, the students usually were made to concentrate on the given task because only a few minutes were given for each task. Even though the “time pressure” was sometimes too tense to the extent of students feeling “like having a heart attack”, it really made them stay focused on the given task.

The students spoke highly of Mr. Hyun’s tight class management. Ho-chan exaggerated by saying that if the teacher had spent all the class translating lines of the text and the class had been monotonous, he would have “died of boredom” (Students’ Interview, July 26). Ji-wuk’s comment seemed to summarize the atmosphere quite well: “When he put up the stage, we come on the stage and play” (Students’ Interview, July 26).

5.2.3.2 Participation Opportunity: “It’s Your Turn”

Mr. Hyun utilized strategies to have his students participate in class as actively as possible. Two strategies he chose were asking questions and giving tasks that demanded their engagement.

Mr. Hyun asked as many questions as possible because it was the easiest way to engage his students in class. By doing so, he could also increase the students’ talking time while decreasing the teacher’s explaining time in class. As he had practiced asking techniques in the teacher training programs, he was pretty good at eliciting answers from the students as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.10.

Classroom Excerpt 5.10
Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Craig's List

- 1 T: It is called Craig's list, **because? ((looking at the class while waiting for**
2 **the answer))**
- 3 S1: Craig made it.
- 4 T: Yeah, Craig made it. Good. What about, What happen to the belongings of
5 Salisbury? **It was stolen by whom? Thieves?**
- 6 Ss: No.
- 7 T: **The user of?**
- 8 Ss: Craigslist.
- 9 T: Craigslist. **Because, because of what?**
- 10 S2: Donate.
- 11 T: Donated? Really? Yeah, they believed so.

In the excerpt above, Mr. Hyun checked the students' understanding of the text after the reading. He could have given a summary of the text, but instead he asked questions and waited for the students' answers (lines 1-2). Some questions were easy enough for most of students to answer (lines 5-6, 7-8) and others were somewhat challenging, so only a few students tried (lines 1-3, 9-10). That way, Mr. Hyun gave students opportunities to get involved in the class communication.

Second, Mr. Hyun utilized student-centered tasks in every class. There were two types of task, individual work and pair work. There was also a routine for the students to do the tasks and thus participate in class. For example, the reading task was always individual work. Each student was required to read alone and answer the comprehension-check up questions presented in the text. Later, some of them had to come up to the board and write their answers for the others to check. On the other hand, the speaking task was pair work. The pair work was usually given twice, before and after the reading. Before the reading, Mr. Hyun gave some general questions related with the topic of the reading and had the students ask and answer in pairs. That task was expected "to activate their schema" (Interview, March 28). After the reading, he had them check each

other's understanding of reading in pairs by comparing their answers to the while-reading questions which he gave. During pair work, it was observed that the students checked their understanding of the reading and got help from their partner if needed, which is well shown in Classroom Excerpt 5.11.

Classroom Excerpt 5.11
Mr. Hyun's Students (Yun-do and Su-ha)_Pair Work

- | | | |
|---|---------|--|
| 1 | Yun-do: | “What is Craig's list?” |
| 2 | | Neo aljana. Igeo mwo gyeongmaegateun geoya?
<i>(You understood it, didn't you? Is it like an auction?)</i> |
| 3 | Su-ha: | Geureonikka gwanggogateun geo itjana.
<i>(Well, it's like, sort of an ad.)</i> |
| 4 | Yun-do: | Auction? E-bay? |
| 5 | Su-ha: | Geureonikka sinmunjigateun geo mite gwanggonaeungeo |
| 6 | | itjana. <i>(Well, it's like an ad presented in the bottom part of newspaper.)</i> |
| 7 | Yun-do: | Ah, ah, ah. “Igeoseul chatseumnida” mwo geuleongeo?
<i>(Ah, ah, ah. Is it like “Lost” ?)</i> |
| 8 | Su-ha: | Eo, mwo geuleon geo <i>(Yes, something like that).</i> |

In the excerpt above, “What is Craig’s list?” was the question to which the students were required to find the answer while reading. Yun-do and Su-ha were supposed to find the answer individually and compare it with each other, but Yun-do was not sure of the answer at all. So he asked Su-ha if Craig’s list was an auction (line 2), which was his understanding of the text. Su-ha explained what he understood (line 3), but it was not clear enough for Yun-do to understand (line 4). Su-ha explained it again by taking an example of a newspaper (lines 5-6), and then Yun-do eventually understood (line 7). In fact, the pair work was not successful in terms of Mr. Hyun’s expectation in that the students did not check each other’s answers or talk in English. Nonetheless, the two students stayed focused on task, and their talks fostered Yun-do’s learning. As such, every student participated actively in class by doing the given tasks which were

carefully planned and designed by Mr. Hyun. So the students evaluated the class as “a class with everyone’s participation” (Students’ interview, July 26).

Mr. Hyun was usually pressed for time because it took a substantial amount of class time to use the student-centered tasks, and therefore he could not cover the textbook within the time limit. However, he did not give up using the tasks in class and tried to find ways to make up for lost time. He gave the students an assignment for mechanical tasks such as learning vocabulary, but the temporary solution was not enough. He struggled to keep pace with the other teachers. Thus, he took a more active action at the end of the semester. He opened up his difficulties in the teachers’ meeting and proposed that the test range be reduced (June 11). Fortunately, the other teachers understood his situation and agreed to his proposal. Thanks to the change, he could utilize the student-centered tasks until the end of the semester.

5.2.4 Giving Control to the Students

To “hand over to the students” (Reflection Paper, August in 2011), Mr. Hyun was determined to give rightful autonomy to his students. Since he recognized that it would contradict the traditional view on the relationship between teacher and students, he carefully redistributed the works of a teacher and the students in his class. First, he tried to give some power to the students by respecting and seriously taking their thoughts and opinions (Section 5.2.4.1). Then, he helped his students become independent learners by fostering discovery learning (Section 5.2.4.2).

5.2.4.1 Respect for the Students' Opinions: "Do You Agree?"

Mr. Hyun thought that a teacher should share his power with the students to make "the class of all, not of the teacher only" (Interview, August 5). The steps to give the students some power would start from supporting student ownership of the class by taking their thoughts and opinions seriously. To encourage them to express their thoughts and opinions, he employed various interactive skills of questioning and giving feedback.

Mr. Hyun encouraged the students to make their voices heard by asking questions tactfully. He usually asked easy and general questions concerning their previous experience or everyday life to induce them to speak out in public (Interview, April 12). For example, on the topic of "Playing Cards", the questions Mr. Hyun designed were "How often do you play card games?" and "How can you win the game?" (Lesson, June 4). Since they were easy questions and also fit the students' interests, the students were willing to answer and voluntarily spoke out in class as illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.12.

Classroom Excerpt 5.12 **Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Playing Card**

- 1 T: Can you tell us the card games other than this ((pointing to a card game on
2 PPT))? What other games did you talk about?
3 S1: **I play BC card. I love credit card.**
4 T: Oh, no fun.
 ((One student raised his hand, and Mr. Hyun nodded his head to allow his saying.))
5 S2: **'yoriking joriking'.**
 ((The students started laughing hard. Mr. Hyun was trying to calm them down while also
 laughing. Then, another student raised his hand, and the teacher nodded.))
6 S3: **I play 'gaepan chukgu (crazy football)'.**
7 T: What is it? Is it a card game?
8 S3: Yes.
9 T: Oh, really? And...

- 10 ((looking at Ji-wuk)), **Ji-wuk, you've mentioned a very interesting story.**
11 **What was it? It was related to a card. What was it?**
12 S4: 'Steal your mothers' credit card'.
13 T: **Yeah, ((laughing)) 'steal your mother's credit card', eomka humchigi**
14 **(steal your mother's credit card), yeah? But it's not a card game, though.**
15 **Any other games?**
16 S5: **((saying aloud)) Poker.**
17 T: **Poker? yeah.**
18 S6: **((saying aloud)) Black Jack.**
19 Ss: **((saying various games simultaneously again))**

In the excerpt, a student's participation started with a joke (line 3) and the next students continued to maintain a joking tone by naming weird card games (lines 5, 6). Then, Mr. Hyun invited one student to join this joyful conversation by mentioning the interesting talk the student had had during pair work (lines 10-11). He expressed his interest after the student answered by laughing and echoing the answer (lines 13-14). Since this eliciting strategy worked well, the students became eager to share their stories with the entire class by naming the card games they had experienced (lines 16, 18, 19). This showed how well the tactful questioning strategy of Mr. Hyun tapped into the students' desire to make their voices heard.

When the students were perceived to get ready to speak out, Mr. Hyun strove to elicit their opinions by giving feedback skillfully. First, he let them have their opinions prepared in pair work and then present them in class to lower their burden. When the students presented their opinions, he always accepted them without giving any corrective feedback. He sometimes paraphrased each student's opinion to make it clear and other times invited others to express their opinions for or against it. An example is given in Classroom Excerpt 5.13.

Classroom Excerpt 5.13
Mr. Hyun_Reading Lesson on Information Source

- 1 T: "What do you think is the most reliable?" **Any ideas? Su-ha?**
2 S1: Internet is the most reliable.
3 T: Do you think so? Really? Can you tell us why?
4 S1: TV news is only sway with broadcasting company so they can't control. But
5 Internet you can choose.
6 T: **Wow, good point, good point! You have lot of sources on the internet, so**
7 **it's more likely that they're accurate. Maybe it's possible. Any other**
8 **ideas? Who think the newspaper is the most reliable? Anyone?** ((One
9 student raised his hand and the teacher nodded to allow presenting))
10 S2: Newspapers have many history and practical ways so I think newspapers is
11 more reliable.
12 T: **Yeah, actually he has a point. Newspapers have one thing that the**
13 **internet doesn't usually have. Who filters the information?**
14 S2: Editor.
15 T: Yeah, editor. **They have editors, usually very experienced and**
16 **knowledgeable. Any other ideas?**
17 S3: ((voluntarily raising his hand and getting the teacher's approval)) The most
18 reliable is friends.
19 Ss: ((saying "Oh~" in unison))
20 T: Really? Do you have an example? You just know this from experience?
21 S3: **When I have a conversation with girls, I can believe them all.**
22 Ss: ((laughing aloud))

Before the scene, the students had been asked to exchange their opinions in pairs about the most reliable source to get information among TV news, newspapers, the internet, and friends. Mr. Hyun first designated one student to present his opinion (line 1). When the student answered in ungrammatical sentences (lines 4-5), Mr. Hyun accepted it with compliment based on the meaning he tried to convey without correcting the grammatical mistakes at all (line 6). He also clarified the student's comment to make it easily understood (lines 6-7). Then, he induced others to argue against his opinion (lines 8-9). When another student expressed his own opinion, Mr. Hyun again accepted and agreed with it (line 12). He asked the student a question to make his opinion clearer (lines 12-13). By answering the question, the student could also see that his utterance was made understood by the teacher (line 14). With Mr. Hyun's good techniques to give

acceptance feedback, the students became free and relaxed in expressing their opinions in class, so some of them even made a joke in class (lines 17-18, 21).

Mr. Hyun’s questioning and giving acceptance feedback enabled the students to present some creative ideas or to raise a point for discussion. For example, the students sometimes suggested, on a topic of universal design, a foldable cell-phone for very young children, a motion-capturing phone for those who could not use their fingers or a guitar whose neck could be flipped over for left-handed people (Lesson, June 11). Other times, they expressed their strong objections to the answers given by the textbook or by the teacher, which is illustrated in Classroom Excerpt 5.14.

Classroom Excerpt 5.14 **Mr. Hyun_ Comprehension Check-up**

- 1 T: Number 4, “myth”. The answer is a, b, c, d?
 2 Ss: ((saying different answers))
 3 T: Let me ask you this question. The “myth”, I know you already learned the
 4 word in the textbook, but the “myth” in the textbook means positive or
 5 negative? In the textbook?
 6 Ss: Negative.
 7 T: Negative. But in ((pointing to the text they were reading)) this context?
 8 Ss: Positive.
 9 T: Yes, very positive. So what's the only positive answer?
 ((The students differed in their answers. Some said “a” while the others, “b”))
 10 T: “a” is just neutral, I think. “b” is better. But I wouldn't say, I'm not happy
 11 with “b. legendary story” but still, “myth” and “legendary story” are very
 12 similar words.
 13 **Ss: ((saying their opinions while not agreeing with Mr. Hyun))**
 14 T: “a. invented idea”? Why do you think so? Was it invented? It was already
 15 there in the movie. She didn't invent anything.
 16 **S1: “legendary”nikka “invent”ga doen geojyo. “invent”ga**
 17 **“balmyeonghada’nikka** (The word “legendary” entails the meaning of
 “invented” in it. Because “invent” means ‘first think of and make’).
 18 T: ((saying to himself)) Invent idea, made idea... Why is it “invented idea”?
 19 **S2: Because that movie made the cafe somewhere, and,**
 20 T: ((interrupting)) But Rick's Cafe does not really exit.
 21 **S3: Yes, also it is not registered in reality, so.**
 22 **S4: Controversial.**
 23 **T: Okay, we'll talk about it after break...**

In the excerpt above, the students first gave different answers (line 2), and the teacher tried to elicit the correct answer “b” from them by asking questions (lines 3-9). When the students did not get it right, he gave the answer out (lines 10-12). However, the students did not agree with him and objected to the given answer (line 13). When asked their reasons, the students took turns to express their thoughts against Mr. Hyun’s (lines 16-17, 19, 21, 22). Since their argument was quite persuasive, Mr. Hyun decided to rethink the answer (line 23). In the next lesson, Mr. Hyun accepted the students’ opinions and changed his answer by saying “I was wrong. I think “a” is a better idea. Sorry about that. I changed my mind” (Lesson, June 27). As seen in the incident, the students improved their ability to express the opinions and have a discussion.

When asked about his feeling about having a discussion and receiving the students’ objections, Mr. Hyun confessed that he did not feel bad or agitated at all. He respected his students’ right to express their opinions and thought himself to be “not perfect” (Interview, May 14) about English knowledge as a non-native speaker. He thought it would be far “wiser” to acknowledge the teacher’s mistakes rather than standing firm on the error. Thus, he tended to ask for his students’ agreement when presenting the answers as shown in Classroom Excerpt 5.15.

Classroom Excerpt 5.15
Mr. Hyun_ Comprehension Check-up

- 1 T: Do you agree with these answers?
2 Ss: Yes.
3 T: Yeah, I agree. Let’s move on.

The non-authoritative attitude of Mr. Hyun was appreciated by his students. The students described him as “an open-minded and non-authoritative teacher” (Ho-chan, Students’ interview, July 26) who was willing to relinquish power to students and try sincerely to communicate with them. In a sense, Mr. Hyun was akin to a “dialogic teacher” (Verplaatse, 2000) who provided the students with the opportunities to speak out in class and encouraged them to freely express their thoughts and opinions.

5.2.4.2 Discovery Learning: “Have You Figured It Out?”

Mr. Hyun wanted his students to take a more active role in learning, so he made his students discover answers for themselves rather than presenting them. He hoped that they would become autonomous learners, not passive knowledge receivers. His teaching orientation was clearly shown in grammar lessons. He recognized the pros and cons of deductive and inductive grammar instructions, and he believed in the latter as mentioned in Data Excerpt 5.12.

Data Excerpt 5.12 Mr. Hyun _Interview (May 16)

*On the other hand, the inductive method, with which I can provide a context first and let the students find the focal grammatical form used in the context, has **the merit to motivate them.***

Since the merit of inductive method, or “to motivate them”, was aligned with his teaching goal, Mr. Hyun chose the inductive method over the deductive method.

The students welcomed the method as indicated in Data Excerpt 5.13. Inductive grammar instruction was well appreciated by the students to the extent of being compared to the Socratic method. His students were led “to find a rule”

by themselves rather than to memorize “by rote”, which helped them understand better and remember longer.

Data Excerpt 5.13 Interview with Mr. Hyun’s Students (July 26)

*Ji-wuk: The most distinct characteristic of Mr. Hyun’s class is that **he leads the students to make discovery using the Socratic method.** It’s natural and **I can remember longer** with the method. Because, when I was taught by rote, I said ‘Ah, I know that’ and just passed it. Then I cannot solve a similar type of questions because I did not understand it perfectly. But with the same material when I learned with such a (Socratic) method, **I tried to find a rule by myself so it helps a lot more.***

Since learning by discovery would be unfamiliar and difficult for his students, Mr. Hyun asked them to work in pairs and allowed them to use Korean. He also helped them find an answer by interrupting them. Sometimes, he tried to activate in-depth discussions by questioning what they memorized by rote as shown in Classroom Excerpt 5.16.

Classroom Excerpt 5.16 Mr. Hyun_Pair Work

- 1 T: All right. When we use verb 'demand/suggest/insist', we use wonhyeong (a
2 verb root), not hyeonjaehyeong (a present form). **Why? What do they**
3 **have in common?**
4 S1: Yogu (*asking*)
5 T: Yogu (*asking*)? **How about this one? 'demand' will do, but 'suggest' may**
6 **not.**
7 S2: Kangyo (*request*), Jean (*propose*).
8 T: Really? **Can you think of one word that can summarize this? I'll give**
9 **you time, and you find the answer together.**

Before the conversation took place, the pair had been asked to find what the verbs of “demand, suggest and insist” have in common. They found the answer easily because they had memorized it before: “when we use verb 'demand/suggest/insist', we use wonhyeong (a verb root), not hyeonjaehyeong (a

present form)”. However, they did not know there was a common grammatical concept which entailed the forms. So Mr. Hyun stimulated them to think about it by echoing their answer (lines 1-2) and questioning “Why? What do they have in common?” (lines 2-3). When the students gave a hasty answer (line 4), Mr. Hyun pushed them to really think by presenting a counter example (lines 5-6). In this manner, the students were encouraged to discover the answers (lines 8-9).

Gradually, the students came to take an active role in discussing with their pair as shown in Classroom Excerpt 5.17.

Classroom Excerpt 5.17
Mr. Hyun’ Students (Ho-chan and Ji-wuk)_Pair Work

- | | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 1 | Ho-chan | <i>Let’s discuss, now.</i> |
| 2 | Ji-wuk | <i>As for “by”, we should think about time, or the past tense. Time always follows “by”.</i> |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | Ho-chan | <i>But, well, “not until” is a phrase meaning ‘something doesn’t happen during the period before that time’.</i> |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | Ji-wuk | <i>Let’s do it with a tone of an interview.</i> |
| 7 | Ho-chan | <i>((jokingly with an interview tone)) Well, it became a habitual expression. But about “by”, I cannot say for sure.</i> |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | Ji-wuk | <i>But when looking at the sentence, isn’t “by” always followed by time? Looking at the other sentence, there’s not time after “until”. So, “by” seems to express the concept of time,</i> |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | Ho-chan | <i>((interrupting)) But “until” is also followed by time, but the range is wider than that of “by”, humbly I think.</i> |
| 13 | | |
| 14 | Ji-wuk | <i>Anyways, thank you for your participation in the interview.</i> |
| 15 | Ho-chan | <i>Yes, thank you.</i> |
| 16 | Ji-wuk | <i>((in a serious tone)) Is “until” also relative pronoun expressing time? Oh, you’re right. “until” is a time clause.</i> |
| 17 | | |
| 18 | Ho-chan | <i>Ah, I mean, “not until” itself leads a clause.</i> |
| 19 | Ji-wuk | <i>I understood, time clause. And what is “by”?</i> |
| 20 | Ho-chan | <i>I just used to translate it as “when”.</i> |
| 21 | Ji-wuk | <i>Let’s discuss in depth. For example, when we should finish the homework till tomorrow, we use “until”.</i> |
| 22 | | |
| 23 | Ho-chan | <i>No, we don’t. In that case, we use “by”.</i> |
| 24 | Ji-wuk | <i>((looking it up in his smart phone)) Is it “by”? Looking up “by”,</i> |
| 25 | | <i>((trying to read it)) ah, why does something weird keep coming up?</i> |

((Then, the Timer went off to signal the ending of the pair work. Mr. Hyun asked some of the students for their opinions and explained that “by” represents the completion of an action while “until”, the continuation of an action.))

26 Ho-chan *Ah, I see! There is such a profound difference!*

As seen above, the two students really engaged themselves in discussing the different grammatical concepts of “by” and “until”. Ho-chan knew the Korean meaning of “until” and “by” (lines 4-5, 20), but the knowledge came from rote memory (lines 7-8). He seemed to perceive the difference between “by” and “until” only vaguely (lines 12-13, 23). On the other hand, Ji-wuk did not know the difference at all, so he kept asking Ho-chan by taking an interviewer’s role (line 6). However, he was never a passive questioner but an active participant who tried to find a rule in the given examples (lines 2-3, 9-11), to understand what his partner said (line 19), and to lead a deeper discussion (lines 21-22). He tried to find every possible way to discover the answer even by using his smart phone (lines 24-25). Thanks to their active participation, the two students became eager to learn the answer so they were very happy and excited to understand “such a profound difference” (line 26) in the end. It seemed that Ho-chan and Ji-wuk actually learned by questioning, discussing, and discovering the answers. Reflecting on the pair work, Ji-wuk, one of lowest achieving students, mentioned that the pair work itself, rather than Mr. Hyun’s explanation, greatly helped him understand the concept. He confessed that Ho-chan’s explanation was “catchier” and the pair work was like an “oasis” for him (Students’ Interview, July 26).

By fostering learning by discovery, Mr. Hyun’s intention to make the students more autonomous learners was acknowledged and appreciated as presented in the students’ interview (Data Excerpt 5.14).

Data Excerpt 5.14 Interview with Mr. Hyun's Students (July 26)

*Ho-chan: Mr. Hyun seemed to make a free atmosphere in class, not forcing us to do something. People would not like to do something when they were forced. So it seemed that he was making **such an autonomous class where every individual student took an active part.***

As such, Mr. Hyun was perceived to create “an autonomous class” in order for every member of the class to take “an active part”, which ultimately gave the students autonomy for their own study.

5.3 Mr. Hyun's Instructional Activity System

Similar to Section 4.3, this section shows the analysis results of Mr. Hyun's classroom practices in terms of Engeström's (1987, 1993) activity system model. Section 5.3.1 sketched out Mr. Hyun's activity system in the previous semester. The description helps understand the orientation of his current activity system. Section 5.3.2 presents the configuration of the current activity system and its inner contradictions by framing the identified actions into the activity system model.

5.3.1 Previous Activity Structure and Contradictions

Mr. Hyun had been challenged to change his educational philosophy through the graduate school courses and in-service teacher training. He felt frustrated and guilty when putting into practice what he had learned from the course because the practices were in contrast with the educational philosophy he had held before. Nonetheless, he eventually accepted a new philosophy through the reflections

and practices in the classes for the special subjects. He managed to give CLT-based classes by using communicative tasks and materials and by adhering to TEE in the previous semester.

In activity theory, such a cognitive and behavioral change in Mr. Hyun can be explained as a result of his resolving contradictions. Mr. Hyun's initial feeling of guilty indicated that there had been the quaternary contradiction between the teacher education (subject-producing activity) and his teaching (central activity). Based on the fact that Mr. Hyun accepted a new philosophy and changed his classroom practices, it can be said that the quaternary contradiction had been resolved and injected into the *object* component of his activity system at some point. His instructional activity was oriented at the new *object* of actualizing CLT since then. The system gave rise to some actions toward the *new object*: creating new teaching tools, adhering to TEE, and having the students communicate in English. Based on the analysis, Mr. Hyun's instructional activity in the previous semester is reconstructed as in Figure 5.1.

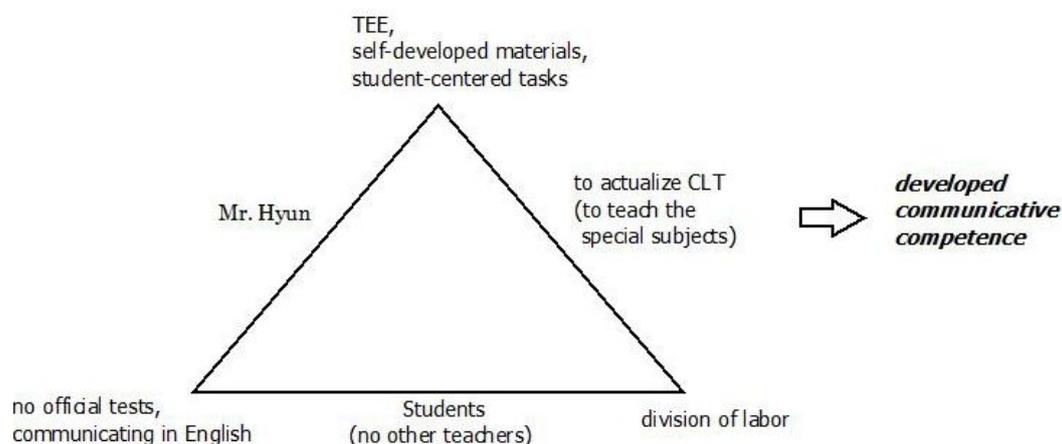


FIGURE 5.1
Mr. Hyun's Activity System in the Previous Semester

As seen in Figure 5.1, Mr. Hyun's activity system was characterized by its *community* and *rule*. Since there were not any other teachers (*community*) and official tests (*rule*), he could use his discretion to create the teaching materials and to set class rules. He taught the special subjects with self-developed materials and tasks and chose English as the medium of instruction. The only rule in the class was to communicate in English. No contradictions were perceived in the system.

However, the activity system of the current semester was very different from the previous one in two ways. First, there were two other English teachers (*community*) with whom Mr. Hyun was required to cooperate in choosing the teaching materials and more importantly creating the school exams. Second, there should be official school exams twice a semester (*rule*), for which all teachers should cover the same textbook and materials within the given time. The two components of *community* and *rule* were connected to the *object* of 'to teach to the test', which was predetermined by the institution of school. Mr. Hyun was not sure how this *object* would be compatible with that of his previous activity. It would be a big challenge for him to integrate the two objects in the current semester. In other words, he recognized the primary contradiction within the *object* component from the beginning: 'to actualize CLT' versus 'to teach to the test'.

5.3.2 Current Activity Structure and Contradictions

Similar to Ms. Sun's case, there were two distinct activities in Mr. Hyun's current activity system since the system was oriented at two *objects*. In the

current semester, Mr. Hyun anticipated the two educational objectives: ‘to actualize CLT’ and ‘to teach to the test’. What he first needed to do was to make a healthy balance between the objectives since he had perceived that they were contradictory.

Mr. Hyun wanted to stick to the objective of actualizing CLT in the current semester as he had done so in the previous semester. Since he recognized this objective would be in conflict with the predetermined objective of teaching to the test, he needed to reconstruct the former in a situation-suitable way. For the purpose, he rephrased the communicative competence as language skills, especially reading and speaking because those two skills were related with school exams and students’ grade. Furthermore, he wanted to integrate the motivational aspect into the objective since he had perceived that the students needed to be motivated in class. As a result, his educational objective was modified into ‘to motivate the students to develop language skills’. He was satisfied with the objective because it was also aligned with the goals of the National Curriculum.

Toward the newly modified *object*, Mr. Hyun took actions to introduce new *tools* (Action A) and *rules* (Action B). First, ‘to teach English in English (TEE)’ was essential to achieve the objective of developing the students’ language skills. Mr. Hyun gave English instructions in every class using PPT, check-up questions, and demonstrations. He also had his students use English only in class. He held fast to the rule by monitoring and praising them (Action A in Figure 5.2). In the beginning of the semester, the students resisted the requirement of ‘using English only’ (see *a* in Figure 5.2), and some of them complained they could not understand the teacher’s instructions (see *b* in Figure 5.2). So he set a new rule

regulating cases where Korean would be allowed. This included discussing grammar in pairs, explaining what most of the students could not understand, and asking questions privately. In other words, the secondary contradictions between *community* and *rule* and between *community* and *tool* were solved by setting an additional rule allowing exceptions (see *c* in Figure 5.2). This action functioned as a *tool* as well as a *rule* of the central activity system (Figure 5.5).

Second, ‘to present fun materials’ was necessary to interest the students and ultimately to motivate them to develop language skills. Mr. Hyun prepared fun materials for every class using PPT and the internet, and the materials were presented in a way to stimulate the students’ curiosity (Action B in Figure 5.2).

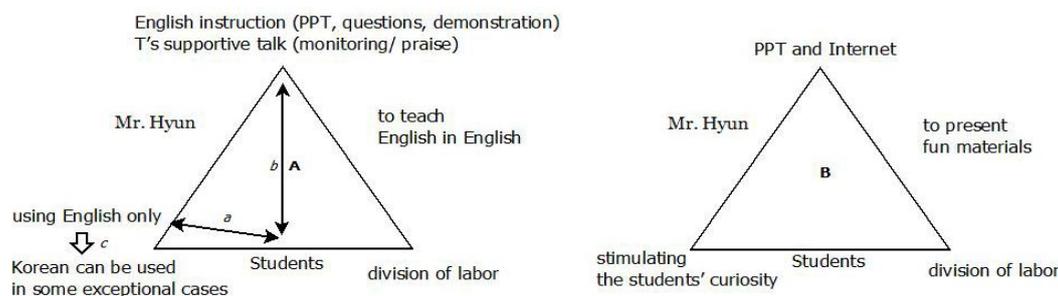


FIGURE 5.2
Actions to Introduce New Components

On the other hand, the *object* of teaching to the test was given and predetermined by the institution of Korean high school, and there was a traditionally expected activity system which reflected a standard image of teaching (Engeström, 1994). In the system, an English teacher (*subject*) was expected to teach the textbook and materials (*tools*) shared by his or her colleagues (*community*) because all of the students had to be evaluated by the same tests twice a semester (*rule*). For the test, the teachers agreed to cover the

material within the time limit (*rule*). It was very important to discriminate the students by their test scores in high school, so teachers tended to create grammar-focused test items. Thus, an English teacher was expected to transmit knowledge about English grammar while students received it (*division of labor*). The knowledge was transmitted according to traditional classroom norms (*rule*). The system is presented in Figure 5.3. Mr. Hyun, as a high school teacher, felt pressure to accept the system.

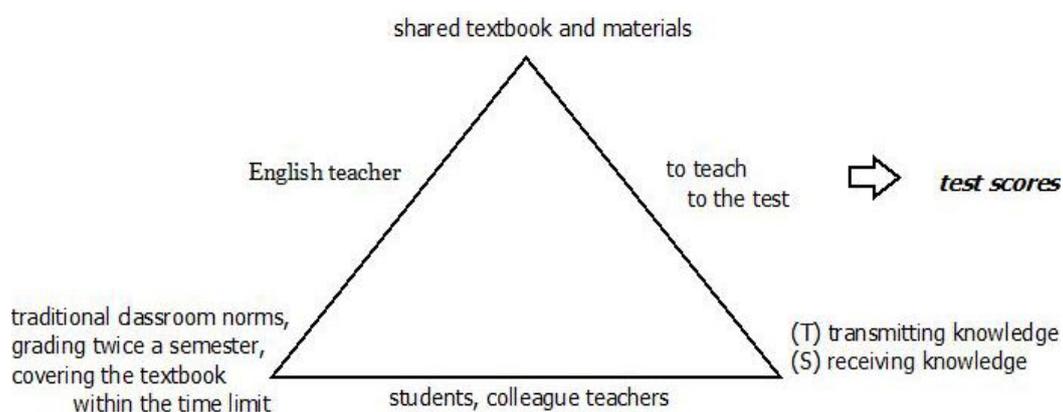


FIGURE 5.3
Expected Activity System in High School

Mr. Hyun's second activity was directed at the object of 'to teach to the test', but he tried to modify the rules (Action C) and the division of labor (Action D) in the expected system. Traditional classroom norms were substituted for 'to engage the students in class'. To accomplish the goal, Mr. Hyun utilized eliciting questions and student-centered tasks. He also created optimal conditions by setting the task rule and the participation rule (Action C in Figure 5.4). In addition, the traditional roles of a teacher and students were modified in a way

‘to give control to the students’. As a non-authoritative teacher, he employed interactive skills to elicit the thoughts and opinions from the students. He also utilized inductive grammar instruction and had the students learn by discovery (Action D in Figure 5.4).

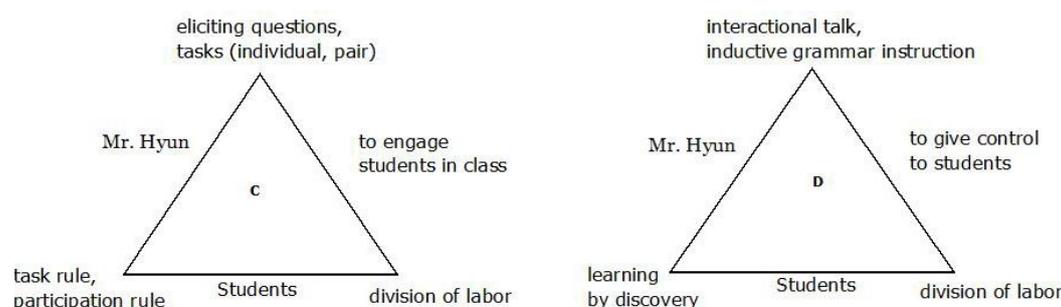


FIGURE 5.4
Actions to Modify Predetermined Components

When Mr. Hyun’s two activities were incorporated in the system, some conflicts emerged between the new and the predetermined components (Figure 5.5). First, the shared textbook and materials (*tool*) did not serve the objective of motivating the students (*object*) because they were not interesting enough to keep them focused (see *a* in Figure 5.5). To resolve the contradiction, he made his explanation about the shared materials short and instead secured the class time to provide them with fun materials. Second, student-centered tasks (*tool*) did not answer the purpose of teaching to the test (*object*) because they were mostly irrelevant to grammar-focused school exams (see *b* in Figure 5.5). This contradiction was hard to resolve within the system, so Mr. Hyun attempted to change the test format in a way to assess the reading skills rather than grammatical knowledge. Third, the actions of using student-centered tasks (*tool*) and engaging the students actively in class (*rule*) came into conflict with the

action of covering the materials within the time limit (*rule*) because they wasted class time to cover a large amount of shared materials (see *c* and *d* in Figure 5.5). To resolve the contradictions, Mr. Hyun took an active action to reduce the test range through the teachers' meeting.

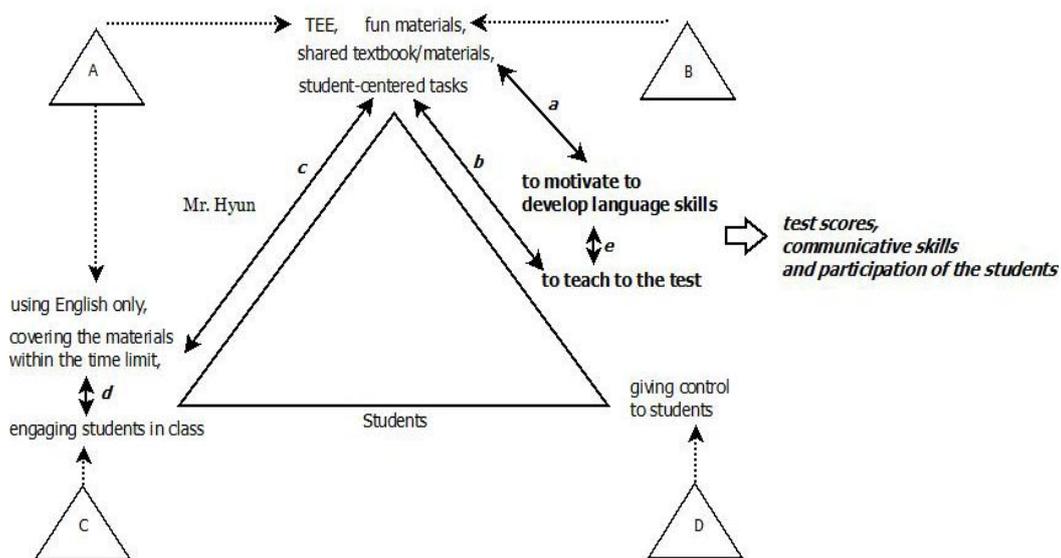


FIGURE 5.5
Mr. Hyun's Activity System in the Current Semester

As in Ms. Sun's case, the secondary contradictions in Mr. Hyun's system indirectly reflect the tension within the *object* component, namely the primary contradiction (see *e* in Figure 5.5). Mr. Hyun had been keenly aware of the tension enough to verbalize it in his interviews; he had perceived the fun class was incompatible with the test-prep class. With the recognition, he had gotten ready for any possible conflicts from the beginning.

Mr. Hyun actively resolved the second contradictions when they emerged. He solved the problem by rearranging or modifying the components of the

current activity system as discussed above (see *a* in Figure 5.5). When some problems were impossible to resolve within the system (see *b*, *c* and *d* in Figure 5.5), he took more active actions to change the components of other activity system. For example, he modified the institutional *rule* by changing the test format and the *rule* of colleagues' community by reducing the scope of the test. By actively resolving the secondary contradictions, he managed to create a new balance between the competing *objects*. The balanced *objects* were transformed to the *outcomes* of students' communicative skills and participation as well their test scores. In the end, the current activity system qualitatively changed compared to the traditionally expected system as well as to his previous activity system. It is yet to be seen how this tentative balance of the competing *objects* will endure the sociocultural pressure to emphasize students' test scores.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

This study looked into the two competent English teachers' classroom within the social context where the Korean government has been leading educational innovations in secondary English education. This chapter discusses the issues concerning the classroom instruction and instructional innovations. Since the classroom practices were found to form a complex unity, the unity is discussed as a constructed activity system in Section 6.1. In addition, the teachers' classroom practices were seen to be interrelated with their perceptions of the context, so the dynamic interplay between the two is addressed in terms of praxis in Section 6.2. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the educational innovation of the English classroom in terms of mediated agency in Section 6.3.

6.1 Teacher's Practices as a Constructed System

Many researchers criticized that teachers' instructional practices had been studied as an array of separate behaviors or as the application of theory to improve the students' learning outcome (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1999; Johnson, 2006; Thorne, 2004). They called for a holistic and interpretive approach to the studies of classroom instruction, and the current study served the purpose.

As in other studies examining classroom instruction from a sociocultural perspective (e.g., Ahn, 2009; Kim, 2008a, 2008b), the current study showed that the competent teachers' instructional practices can be better understood as a

whole. The two teachers' classroom practices were generated by a system where educational objectives were pursued by the mediation of teaching tools and other people. That is, the practices were about how to utilize various teaching tools and about how to collaborate with the students in order to attain the objectives. For example, Ms. Sun's instructional actions of giving lectures, covering the textbook and controlling the learning cannot be fully understood without considering the orientation of the activity, 'to teach grammar to the test'. In a similar vein, Mr. Hyun's actions of adhering to TEE, utilizing fun materials, engaging the students in class and relinquishing some of his control to his students can be justly evaluated when the direction of the activity, 'to motivate to develop language skills', is taken into consideration.

The systems of Ms. Sun and Mr. Hyun were not same at all because of the components and the interrelationship between them. In terms of the object component, Ms. Sun and Mr. Hyun had had seemingly similar instructional motives: in general, teaching to prepare the students for the tests and motivating the students to study. The former motive was directly converted into a teaching goal in both teachers' cases. The latter one, however, was modified and reconstructed in a different way in each teacher's instructional context since the context was different and also was perceived in a different way by the teachers. Thus, the latter motive was converted to the educational objective of not boring the students in Ms. Sun's case and of motivating to develop language skills in Mr. Hyun's case. In addition to the object component, there were other different components in the teachers' classroom instructions in relation to teaching tools, students, class rules, and division of labor. The interplay between the components created different systemic dynamics, and each teacher's activity

produced different outcomes. Overall, Ms. Sun's teaching constructed an effective class in helping the students get a decent grade in school exams, and that of Mr. Hyun produced an inspiring class to foster the development of the students' communicative skills.

Those outcomes, in fact, did not coincide with the teachers' original instructional motives in that Ms. Sun could not motivate her students to study and Mr. Hyun could not actively prepare his students for the tests. In the case of Ms. Sun, she regressed to her previous activity by subordinating the new objective of 'not to bore the students' to the previous objective of 'to teach grammar to the test'. In contrast, Mr. Hyun's instructional activity expanded into a new type by making a balance between the objectives of 'to motivate to develop language skills' and 'to teach to the test'. In that regard, the outcomes reflect the objectives transformed through the systemic dynamics (Barab et al., 2002).

The results of this study suggest that a teacher's practices in the classroom should not be assessed and evaluated based on the apparent behavioral aspect. It means that even a seemingly teacher-led lecture like Ms. Sun's should not be viewed simply as outdated or undesirable classroom instruction because it was the outcome which was negotiated and constructed by contextual factors (Johnson, 2006; Martin, 1993). This viewpoint will not take the teachers as the target of criticism on the failure of educational innovation (Jo, 2001; Engeström, 1993). Rather, in discussing the innovation, the contextual factors will be taken into full consideration including the educational objectives, mediational teaching tools, and people who have a stake in the outcomes. Indeed, proper teaching is bound to be socially constructed and thus, should be defined in a way reflecting the instructional context in Korea (Johnson, 2009; Sullivan, 2000).

To sum up, classroom instruction of teachers needs to be accounted for as a whole in terms of a unity of the interrelated actions and a goal-oriented system generating purposeful actions. The dynamic nature of classroom instruction should be understood as well because the educational objectives are formed, mediated and transformed in many different ways according to the instructional context where it is situated.

6.2 Instructional Praxis and Its Evolving Nature

According to Tsui (2003), teacher's expertise was traditionally defined in terms of "mental processes in planning and decision-making, which were seen as a link between thought and action, and were heavily influenced by an information processing model of the mind" (p. 22). The expertise was presented based on the sophisticated and complex knowledge base of expert teachers in contrast with that of novice teachers. Novice teachers were encouraged to learn from the exemplar to get the expertise. However, the current study found that competent teachers' expertise came from not just by acquiring the knowledge base but by understanding the instructional context and classroom practices, which echoes the recent research findings on teacher learning and teaching (Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson, 2006).

The two teachers in the study were qualified enough to meet the criteria which the government set for in-service teacher education. Both Ms. Sun and Mr. Hyun were competent teachers in terms of their knowledge of SLA and teaching methodology along with their English proficiency. However, the findings of the study showed that even qualified teachers would not change their classroom

practices as they had learned in teacher education. Specifically, the theoretical knowledge that the teachers had did not necessarily lead to changed classroom practices. The knowledge should be understood in the instructional context, and the understanding of knowledge emerges out of classroom practices.

For example, when Ms. Sun decided to utilize group work in her class in the current semester, she had been anxious about its success in spite of her full theoretical knowledge about group work. Only after she experienced to successfully use group work for her own purposes, she became confident and was determined to use it again in the following semester. That is, Ms. Sun's actual classroom practices resulted in her understanding of knowledge. In turn, a teacher's understanding which came from experience is reflected in the future classroom practices. For instance, Mr. Hyun had already known the theories about CLT, and his understanding of CLT was renewed through teaching experience in the previous semesters; he got to understand how to make CLT attainable in Korean high schools. Based on the renewed understanding, he could project and pursue the educational objective of motivating to develop language skills for the current semester. As such, the two teachers' understanding and practices created a virtuous circle in which they evolved to improve their classroom instructions. In this sense, teaching of the two teachers can be seen as praxis (Edge & Richards, 1998; Johnson, 2006).

The findings of the study also indicate that the teachers' classroom instructions evolved continuously. This evolving nature of teaching is aligned with the new paradigm on teacher education, namely continuing professional development (Chang, Lee, & Cheng, 2011; Hayes & Chang, 2012; Hayes, Chang, & Imm, 2011). The evolvement can be discussed in two aspects on short

and long-term bases.

First, teaching reflects the teachers' perceptions of on-site conflicts and their immediate reaction to the conflicts. When Ms. Sun perceived that her students had difficulty in understanding some grammatical concepts, she used everyday episodes and created various metaphors. When Mr. Hyun perceived that the students had difficulty in understanding English instruction of grammar, he set a special rule to allow exceptional cases of using Korean. The participant teachers accommodated themselves to unexpected conflicts and produced actions to get them resolved. With those actions, the everyday lessons developed into different forms from what they were initially intended to.

Second, teaching is to evolve due to the continuously transformed instructional context. From a macro point of view, it is obvious that the instructional context has been changed by the sociopolitical and socioeconomic factors. From a micro point of view, it also keeps changing by a teacher's activity. To take an example, the two teachers' instructional context of the following semester cannot be said to be the same as those of the current semester. Group work was tested in Ms. Sun's class as a tool to entertain the students and simultaneously to control the learning for the current semester. It turned out to function well to ease off the rigid activity system oriented at the objective of teaching to the test. Now, the tool became available in the following semester, and Ms. Sun was provided with more options to pick up tools. In this regard, Ms. Sun's instructional context was transformed. Likewise, the students in Mr. Hyun's class were transformed during the current semester. They used to be passive students who only listened to and received knowledge from teachers. However, they became accustomed to participating voluntarily in class and to

learning by discovery for themselves. The students were transformed to quite autonomous learners. In this sense, Mr. Hyun's instructional context was also transformed. As such, the two teachers' instructional context kept changing, and teaching of the teachers will evolve reflecting the context in any way even though it may not be changed or improved drastically.

Overall, teaching can be seen as praxis which implies a virtuous circle between theoretical knowledge and classroom practices. Teachers come to understand the theory in practice and the new understanding renews their instructional activities. Instructional praxis continues to evolve since the instructional context is ever being changed by both external influences of society and internal influences of the teachers' instructional activities.

6.3 Teachers' Agency and Instructional Innovations

The traditional views on teachers have been critically reflected on and modified to a marked degree (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). In the past, teachers had been considered as passive implementers of others' theories or as skillful technicians to produce good learning outcomes, but in recent studies, they were considered as the agents to make autonomous decisions about teaching in a way to meet the needs arising from the local contexts. The current study also demonstrated that the teachers constructed and pursued teaching goals contingent on the instructional context in Korean local schools. On the other hand, the study showed that their classroom instructions could diverge from a normative way of teaching according to how they exerted their agencies.

The educational settings were constructed in a way to reflect the common social, cultural and historical contexts in Korea, so the physical settings of Ms. Sun's and Mr. Hyun's classes were quite similar in terms of institutional rules, teaching tools, and people involved in class. Korean English teachers are usually forced to make and carry out school exams, to use textbooks issued by the educational authorities, and to collaborate with the community consisting of a large number of students and other teachers in charge of the same grade. In fact, the similarity of the physical settings resulted from the educational objective of teaching to the test, which was given and predetermined by the institution and CSAT to the ultimate.

Nevertheless, the similar physical setting may result in different instructional activities as shown in the present study. Ms. Sun's classroom instruction was constructed in a way to reflect a standard image of teaching (Engeström, 1994), but that of Mr. Hyun deviated from that standard. The change in Mr. Hyun's teaching was possible because he incorporated some new elements into the given setting. Most of all, he constructed the new educational objective of motivating to develop language skills, which was aligned with the goals of the National Curriculum. Since the objective of Mr. Hyun's instruction and the goals of National Curriculum converged, Mr. Hyun's teaching was also aligned with the principles of the Curriculum: 'English as a classroom language', 'task-based language learning' and 'learner-centered learning'. That is to say, he adhered to TEE to develop the students' language skills while providing student-centered tasks to promote interaction and decreasing teacher's lecture to escape from teacher-directed class. In contrast, Ms. Sun rejected the goals of the National Curriculum from the beginning, so the seemingly CLT-based mediation in her

class diverged from the principles. For example, she used classroom English but only to establish a teacher's authority by showing her capability. In addition, she utilized seemingly student-centered tasks including worksheets and group works, but those were for preparing for the exams or entertaining her students.

What made difference between the two teachers' classroom instructions? What made Ms. Sun stick to a normative way of teaching but made Mr. Hyun attempt to change it? In terms of activity system model (Engeström, 1993), what enabled Mr. Hyun to resolve and even to create the secondary contradictions which are a powerful driving force to any change in activity? According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001), agency can explain the links between the motivation and actions and among the different choices which an individual makes. Agency is a still-developing complex construct which is closely related to other constructs such as motivation, autonomy, identity, or participation. Nonetheless, many scholars in SCT agreed that agency is human's behavior, or their ability to do some actions rather than human's property, or their competence (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; van Lier, 2008; Wertsch et al., 1993). Recently, van Lier (2008) raised the possibility of degrees or levels of agency and illustrated various classroom behaviors of students in terms of their learning agency. The unresponsive actions of passive students were the demonstration of the least agency while the voluntary actions of committed students were that of the most agency. Following the arguments, it was Mr. Hyun's greater agency that enabled him to construct a non-normative way of teaching. He analyzed and saw through the conflicts in the previous teaching, took on the challenge to resolve them, and eventually formed new teaching goals in the current teaching. The new goals created new secondary contradictions, but he actively tried to resolve them. On

the other hand, Ms. Sun exhibited less agency and just accepted a normative way of teaching as imposed by the institution.

There have existed two educational objectives in Korean English education. A good English teaching in Korea was defined as an interactive and meaningful class which would foster learning opportunities for the development of communicative competence (Choi, 2002). However, developing communicative competence remains as an ideal objective in Korean education and is represented only in the National Curriculum. The local institutions' primary concern is to produce good learning outcomes in terms of achievement tests, and that of students and their parents is to enter good high schools or universities. Thus, teaching to the test becomes a practical objective in education, and teachers pursued it in their classrooms (Choi, 2002).

Ms. Sun's classroom instruction was a typical case to show how English teachers effectively achieved the practical objective in their classes. In the current semester, Ms. Sun taught English to the test by reinforcing her previous way of teaching. As an outcome, her students perceived that her classes were helpful for test preparation and were also satisfied with the classes. In a sense, Ms. Sun's instructional activity can be redefined as the "optimalization in teacher behavior" (Jo, 2001, p. 263) in a given school system because her activity functioned perfectly in the local middle school where tests and students' learning outcomes were the top priority.

However, Ms. Sun's classroom instruction cannot be said to be best instructional practices in terms of the ideal objective in Korean English education. In fact, Ms. Sun rejected the ideal objective even though she knew that it should be the ultimate goal in English education. From the perspective of

activity theory, her agency was not greater enough to form new teaching goals in alignment with the orientation of CLT-based National Curriculum, or the advanced activity. Thus, she used CLT-related teaching tools such as the newly developed textbook and group work in a way not to create any conflicts in the current activity which was oriented at teaching to the test. Furthermore, she exhibited less agency in keeping a balance between the two competing objectives of ‘to teach grammar to the test’ and ‘not to bore the students’. She recognized only vaguely the tension between the competing objectives, and the awareness was not enough to infuse the new objective of ‘not to bore the students’ into the current activity system. As a result, her classroom instruction of the current semester was not that different from a normative teaching as well as that of her previous way of teaching.

In contrast, Mr. Hyun’s classroom instruction was an atypical case to demonstrate how English teachers could achieve the ideal objective against all the odds. Due to SCAT, high school teachers are believed to be more tightly bound to the practical objective of teaching to the test compared to middle school teachers. Nevertheless, Mr. Hyun pursued the ideal objective of developing communicative competence in his classes. From the perspective of activity theory, he had more agency to recognize the conflicts between the competing objectives and to resolve the contradictions. He keenly recognized the inherent tensions between the two objectives of ‘to teach to the test’ and ‘to develop the communicative competence’ and once stated the awareness verbally: *“Teaching only to get better marks on the test is not fun at all, and not meaningful, either.”* The keen awareness became a driving force for him to introduce the new objective in a way to make a balance between his anticipating way of teaching

and a normative model of teaching. In order not to lose the balance, he actively resolved many contradictions not only by modifying the predetermined elements but also by introducing new tools, class rules, and class roles or duties. Specifically, his attempt to change the school test format can be evaluated as an agentive action to resolve the conflicts between the contradictory objectives. As a result, each component of the system was transformed, and his current activity could depart from a standard image of teaching and be closely aligned with the orientations of the National Curriculum. It remains to be seen how this new type of activity will endure the exam-oriented Korean educational situation.

How the two teachers exhibited their agencies in teaching is closely related to what they think, know, or believe about teaching¹⁷. Ms. Sun strongly believed that the mastery of language system was a prerequisite for oral communication, and the belief was formed by her prior learning experience. She had learned language system in schools by memorizing the sentence structure rules. Based on the linguistic knowledge, she had successfully developed communicative competence by practicing speaking. Those learning experience exerted a strong influence on her forming a goal of teaching grammar in class. In a similar vein, Mr. Hyun knew that motivating students was a best way to teach well since he had experienced it as a learner. As a very motivated student, he had enjoyed studying and continued to learn English without external stimulus. That belief led him to form a goal of motivating the students in class. However, he did not set a goal of teaching grammar even though he had a school learning experience similar to Ms. Sun. That was because he was greatly influenced by in-service teacher education which led to modification of his belief about teaching and

¹⁷ Borg (2003) referred the teachers' mental lives to teacher cognition.

learning. After all, teachers' prior learning experience and the teacher education had an impact on what goals teachers would form in their classes, but the impact of those factors on classroom instruction differed among individual teachers¹⁸.

It is misleading, however, to regard the teachers' agency as their own will or determination. The agency should be seen to be "socially distributed and shared" (Wertsch et al., 1993, p. 352) as reviewed in the related literature. Mr. Hyun recognized himself as a teacher learner and continued to learn and improve his teaching with the help of others. For example, his new understanding of CLT was possible with the mediation of other people in teacher education, that is to say the teacher trainers and the other trainee teachers. At first, Mr. Hyun was "shocked" by the criticism of the mediators on the Korean traditional way of teaching and felt bewildered confronting the tension between Confucian teaching and student-centered learning. He even felt "guilty" when putting the new way of teaching into practice. Through discussions with and support from others, he eventually gained a new understanding and modified his beliefs on English language teaching. Furthermore, Mr. Hyun's agentic actions of changing the test format or reducing the test range were possible thanks to the agreement and collaboration of the colleagues in the high school. That is, he could exercise his agency with the mediation of the community. Therefore, Mr. Hyun's agency was not only intramental but also intermental (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993; Wertsch et al., 1993). On the other hand, Mr. Hyun's agency was exercised through tool-mediated actions. In other words, his agentic actions to actualize CLT were possible only by the means of the tools such as TEE, the internet, and tasks.

¹⁸ Since the current study focuses on teaching of the two teachers rather than their learning to teach, it does not discuss this topic any further. See Borg (2003) for research review on teacher cognition in relation to prior language learning experience, or teacher education.

Those mediational tools were not his original creation. They were culturally, historically, and institutionally created, developed and made available in his class. In this regard, his agency was socially and culturally mediated as well.

In sum, teachers do not just take a given normative model of teaching. Some teachers continue to improve their classroom instructions to meet the needs of educational innovations. Truly, they have potential powers to escape from the normalizing pressure and to invent something new. The power is based on the teachers' agencies which are collaboratively formed and mediated by available tools.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

The final chapter presents the summary of the major findings (Section 7.1), followed by the pedagogical implications of this study (Section 7.2) and the limitations and suggestions for further study (Section 7.3).

7.1 Major Findings

The aim of this study was to understand the dynamic and complex nature of English teachers' instructional activities. For the purpose, two competent English teachers' classroom instructions were examined based on the two research questions concerning their perceptions of instructional context and classroom practices. Their classes were observed over a one semester period, the related documents and video footage were collected, and both the participant teachers and their students were interviewed. The data were analyzed to understand the insiders' interpretations and experiences of the classroom instruction.

The two teachers perceived their contexts in a different way and formed different educational objectives. The middle school teacher intended to teach grammar to the test while taming the students. The high school teacher anticipated communicative language teaching while motivating the learners.

The teachers' classroom practices were about how to utilize the available teaching tools and about how to cooperate with the students to achieve the objectives. The middle school teacher gave an effective lecture on grammar,

covered the textbook effectively, and controlled the students' learning in order to teach grammar to the test. In addition, she utilized many techniques in order not to bore them in class. On the other hand, the high school teacher motivated the students to develop reading and speaking skills by actualizing CLT, interesting them, engaging them in class, and relinquishing some of his control to them.

A theoretical analysis of the teachers' perceptions and practices demonstrated that the teachers' instructional practices were object-oriented, tool-mediated and co-constructed activities. It also revealed that the classroom instructions were constructed in a dynamic and complex way reflecting the interplay between the teachers and the instructional contexts. In both teachers' instructional activities, an inherent tension existed between the competing objectives, from which various conflicts emerged. The middle school teacher resolved the conflicts in a way to conserve the previous system and a normative way of teaching. In contrast, the high school teacher resolved them in an active way to change the quality of the previous system, and thus the classroom instruction became different from a normative way of teaching.

In conclusion, the teacher's classroom instruction in the middle school was depicted as effective teaching which fully functioned in the current Korean exam-oriented setting, while that in the high school was seen as innovative teaching which was aligned with the orientations of the curricular reform.

Based on the findings, three issues were discussed regarding English classroom instruction and instructional innovations. First, teachers' classroom instruction should be understood holistically within the instructional context where it is situated. In particular, a teacher's classroom practices should be fully appreciated without overlooking its dynamics. Second, teaching at any given

time should be evaluated in terms of evolving praxis. Teachers continue to learn in their classroom practices, and their understanding of knowledge about teaching is deepened. Lastly, the teachers should be acknowledged as agents in the Korean educational reform. Teachers play agentive roles in constructing situation-specific educational objectives and pursuing them through classroom practices. Classroom instruction will diverge from or converge at the orientation of the curriculum according to how they exercise their agencies which are collaboratively formed and mediated by available tools.

7.2 Pedagogical Implications

The participants in this study were competent English teachers who may be able to play leading roles for Korean educational reform in the future. Thus, the investigation of their classroom practices sheds some lights regarding the government-led educational reform and the corresponding changes in local classrooms.

In relation to a lag between the curricular reform and the local classroom, the study implies that the key solution is to transform teachers into more active agents. That is, teachers should be given enough opportunities to reflect their current instructional activities and encouraged to take on possible challenges. The suggestion is quite different from previous governmental efforts to improve the educational environment and the quality of the teachers' performance. It was argued in the study that neither the physical settings nor the quality of teachers was a necessary and sufficient condition for the success of the educational reform. That was because settings and teachers are just parts of the instructional

context and because the final output is produced from the interrelations between the contextual components. Therefore, the problems related to educational reform may not be solved by reductive solutions such as upgrading educational instruments or securing competent teachers. Along with such efforts to upgrade each component of the context, the focus should be on the systemic relations as a whole because the transformation of an activity lies behind those relations (Leont'ev, 1979). In other words, teachers should be encouraged to identify, face and resolve the conflicts in their own classroom instructions. Teachers should be guided to understand the principles of the National Curriculum such as 'English as a classroom language' or 'student-centered learning' within their own instructional context. They need to reflect on how the innovative notions of the Curriculum are aligned with their educational objectives, with available teaching tools, or with the goals of people involved in their classes. For example, an English teacher who is determined to adhere to TEE needs to check his or her educational objectives for which TEE is implemented (Consolo, 2000). Then, the teacher should get ready to resolve some expected conflicts including students' resistance or the inefficiency of TEE as a test-prep method.

As for the issue of how to transform the teachers, this study puts an emphasis on the in-service teacher training programs. The more agentive actions of the high school teacher in the study were possible due to the quality education of in-service teacher training programs he had participated in. These helpful programs should provide teachers with two types of learning opportunities.

First, effort should be made to help the teachers build up their agency through the mediation of people and tools. The programs should provide them with opportunities to reflect on their own teaching with public scrutiny. By

discussing their own classroom practices with other people and learning from the others' experience, the teachers can detect the conflicts in their classroom instructions. The experiential and experimental settings should also be provided in the programs in order for the teachers to appropriate mediational tools to resolve the detected conflicts. One of the settings is teaching practicum. With the experience using different and new tools in a concrete setting, they are able to deploy the tools in their own classrooms. The high school teacher's case can be an example. He experienced and learned how to incorporate TEE, or how to use the internet and PPT to interest and then engage the students in class through the practicum. This kind of experience would be different from that of the middle school teacher who had also taken part in many in-service training programs. Unlike the high school teacher, she was only presented with updated techniques which were not reflected on or actually used in her own instructional context, so the tools remained inert after the programs. She did not learn how to find a way to incorporate the tools into her own classroom.

Second, the programs need to challenge the teachers to create new conflicts in their classroom instructions by scrutinizing everyday concepts they may have and connecting them to scientific concepts. In the case of the high school teacher, he could bring about a change into his class because he had learned to convert a scientific concept of 'student-centered learning' into everyday concepts of having students do tasks by themselves while decreasing lectures and teacher talk. As such, the other abstract principles of the National Curriculum should be understood connected to the everyday concepts first and then be experimented with various meaningful activities in the programs (Johnson, 2009). In addition, to support teachers' professional development, the institutions, including

educational districts and schools, should give more discretion to them in terms of teaching and testing in their own classrooms (Martin, 1993).

On the other hand, the view on English teachers' practices as evolving praxis calls into question the idealized CLT models in terms of its goal. Magnan (2008) raised a question of the feasibility of idealized CLT. He argued that communicative competence might be an unrealistic goal in its original definition suggested by Hymes (1974) when seen from the sociolinguistic and sociohistorical perspectives. L2 classroom is a community of practice which is situated in and is regulated by its historical, social and cultural contexts, so the classroom discourse cannot be the same as "*genuine or natural communication*" (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 67, italics in original). In Korea, the English classroom is not the same as the target communities of practice such as the communicative situations in the USA or other ESL countries. Even though continuous effort has been made to close the gap between the target community and the English classroom, it has its limits as shown in the failure of the English policy to inject the native English-speaking teachers into classrooms (Hong et al., 2009). To ignore the inherent limitations of English teaching in Korean classrooms is both misleading and unhelpful for productive discussion on the successful implementation of the Curriculum. By acknowledging the limitations of EFL classrooms, we can address the issues of the necessary communicative competence in the Korean EFL situation and the corresponding goals in the Curriculum.

The attainable and realistic goals in Korean English education can be discussed in terms of classroom communicative competence (Johnson, 1995). According to Johnson (1995), classroom communicative competence is defined

as “the knowledge and competencies that second language students need in order to participate in, learn from, and acquire a second language in the classroom communication” (p. 160). Following the argument, the educational authorities, at the macro-level, may be able to revise the standards of achievements in the National Curriculum to reflect the reality of secondary school classroom community and its communication (Lee, 2003). At the micro-level, teachers can redefine the classroom communicative competence in a way to reflect the goals of their students and of the local institutions.

Of course, there always exist tensions between the goals of the students and of institutions and even between the students’ immediate and ultimate goals. Nonetheless, some of competent teachers such as Ms. Sun and Mr. Hyun have put and are putting their effort to manage the tensions, and their actual teachings represent the effort. So far, those efforts of the teachers seemed to have been criticized for producing deficient or deviant CLT. However, their effortful instructional activities may be transitional trials to localize CLT in Korea. When these teachers’ efforts and struggles are appreciated and accumulated, CLT can be elaborated in a context-sensitive and situated way by redefining the classroom communicative competence in Korea (Holliday, 1994). The situatedness, however, should not be interpreted as an argument for giving absolute freedom to local authorities because if so, the regional imbalance would be a social issue in a Korean situation where one single standardized CSAT exists. Rather, the situatedness means acknowledging many possibilities of teaching in different ways under different local contexts (Lantolf, 2000; Tsui, 2003). Then, the public opportunities and spaces should be provided to make the possibilities explicit in

order that the collective activity may find a CLT model more suitable to Korea by comparing and contrasting the local teachers' innovative efforts.

7.3 Suggestions for Further Study

Several limitations of the study must be mentioned to provide productive suggestions for future studies. The current study examined two distinct cases, one in a middle school and the other in a high school. Even though the cases provided some insights into secondary English education in Korea, the findings may not be generalizable. In particular, the settings of the two cases were extraordinary in that the local area was famous for its educational zeal, and that the high school students had high-level English proficiency. Investigation of different cases in other instructional settings would provide a more comprehensive understanding of Korean secondary English education. Furthermore, this study did not examine other activities closely related to the teachers' current instructional activities. For example, the social and political pressures to produce high accountability had an impact on the teachers' classroom instructions. The classroom instructions were also influenced by the official colleague meetings, online training programs, or the textbook development process which the participant teachers had participated in. The two teachers' previous learning activities in schools and in teacher education also affected the current way of teaching. By looking into the interrelations between those activities and the teachers' current classroom instructions, the study could have revealed the dynamic nature of teaching more deeply.

Despite of the limitations, this study contributed to the body of literature on

classroom instruction of Korean English teachers and CLT-based curricular reform in Korea. The previous studies tended to make somewhat basic suggestions for educational innovations based on the general descriptions of classroom instruction in Korea. On the other hand, the current study provided a deep understanding of English teaching of Korean teachers by looking into their classes in the natural settings for a relatively long time. Integration of voices of the teachers and their students also broadened an understanding of foreign language teaching. Based on the findings, the present study could make practical suggestions for educational innovations in secondary English education. In addition, the study focused on teaching of the competent teachers who would play leading roles in bringing about changes in classroom instruction. Based on the understanding of their classroom practices, it could suggest concrete solutions to unchanged classroom practices lagging behind the innovations.

By adopting a sociocultural perspective and the activity system model, the current study made another contribution to understanding of teacher cognition and their activities in context. In particular, it detected the various contextual factors which affected the teachers' goal formation and classroom practices, including people involved in classroom instruction, division of labor between them, teaching tools of cultural artifacts, and multi-level rules.

The researcher hopes that this study would provide some insights into research on teachers and foreign language teaching as well as on educational reform by corroborating the importance of teachers' mediated agency and the influence of contextual factors in relation to classroom instruction.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A

Interview Questions (Teachers)

The 1st Structured Interview

1. [Learning Experience]

What kind of learner were you when you studied English? What was the most (least) effective way for you to learn English? What do you think is the best way to learn English?

2. [Teaching Experience]

How would you describe your teaching practices? What were the teaching goals of your English class? Have your practices changed since you first became a teacher?

3. [Professional Development]

Have you ever lived or studied abroad? What kinds of in-service teacher training programs have you attended to improve your practices since you became a teacher? What did you learn from the experience? What efforts have you made towards your professional development?

4. [English Proficiency]

What do you think about your English proficiency? How confident are you in teaching English in English?

5. [Teaching Beliefs]

What is your philosophy of English education in general? What do you think is the purpose of learning English in Korea? What is your philosophy about and attitude towards your students?

6. [Intended Practices of Current Semester]

What concerns do you have about teaching this semester? What are your teaching goals this semester? What do you expect from your students in class?

7. [Perception of Self and Students]

What kind of ideal teacher do you want to be? How would you describe yourself as an English teacher? How would you describe your students?

The 2nd Structured Interview

1. What is your understanding of the goal of the National Curriculum, namely developing communicative competence?

2. What is your understanding of these principles of the National Curriculum? a) English as a classroom language, b) task-based language learning, and c) learner-centered learning.

3. Do you agree with the orientation of the National Curriculum, why or why not? How do you implement the curriculum in your class, why or why not?

4. Who wrote the school curriculum? What is its orientation? Do you agree with it, why or why not?

The 3rd Structured Interview

1. What were the prominent characteristics of your practices this semester? What do you think the students enjoyed the most (least) in your class? What practice do you think was the most (least) effective?

2. Were your teaching goals achieved as you intended, why or why not?

3. What change did you make during this semester in an unplanned way and why?

4. What change will you make next semester and why?

Appendix B

Interview Questions (Students)

1. [Learning Experience]

When did you start learning English? What word comes to your mind when you think of English subject and English class in general? Have you attended to English cram schools, why or why not?

2. [Motivation]

Do you like studying English? Why are you learning English? What are your goals in learning English this semester?

3. [Expectation]

What kind of English class do you want to take? What kind of English teacher do you want to learn from? What kind of learners do you want to be?

4. [Class Evaluation]

What do you enjoy the most (least) in English class this semester?

What was the most (least) helpful in English class this semester?

How did you participate in English class this semester?

What do you think of your English teacher in terms of English proficiency and teaching ability?

How would you evaluate the class in general, and why?

Appendix C

Worksheets in Ms. Sun's Instruction

(Developed by Ms. Sun)

First Group Work_vocabulary

Words (단어) & Phrases (어구)

Meanings	Groups	Answers	교과서 필수, 분장 확인해서 쓰기(전체분장)
-을 찾다(2)	A		
온라인쇼핑몰(3)			
광고하다			
믿다, 신뢰하다			
후기, 논평			
상상하다	B		
메시지			
제품, 물건			
직접적인			
심지어	C		
다른 방식으로(3)			
질, 품질			
어구, 표현			

Second Group Work_reading

도입 (Group A)

	중요 내용 정리(영어로 쓰기)	중요표현
<광고란?> Advertising is	Ads make us ... 1) 2) 3) 4)	1) 2)

How ads do their jobs _____ different ways (광고의 4가지 방식) (Group B,C,D,E)

4 Ways of Ads: 1)우리말설명, 2)중요영단어	Examples of phrases in ads(광고문구 예)	중요표현(Group B)
1)		1)
2)		
1)		2)
2)		
1)		3)
2)		

정리 & 결론 (Group F)

중요내용 정리(한국어로 간단 요약)	중요표현
1) We live in a world where _____	1) 2)
2) Ads' common goal: _____ → 교문(영어단어쓰기): We need to _____ ! / be a _____ !	

국 문 초 록

최근 한국에서는 영어 교육을 개혁하고자 의사소통중심 언어교수법에 기반한 교육 과정이 연이어 개정되고 있다. 본 연구는 외국어 교수의 본질을 이해하고자, 개정 교육 과정의 적용을 받는 한국 중등 영어 교사들의 실제수업을 연구하였다. 특히, 두 명의 유능한 영어 교사들의 수업을 내부자의 시각으로 이해하고자 노력하였다.

본 연구에서는 사회 문화적 관점(Vygotsky, 1978, 1986)과 행위 이론(Engeström, 1987, 1993; Leont'ev, 1978)에 근거하여 교수를 교육 행위 시스템(instructional activity system)이라고 정의함으로써, 이를 기존과 다른 시각으로 이해할 수 있는 가능성을 보여 주었다. 즉, 교수란 교육 목적을 달성하기 위해 교사가 교육적 도구들을 이용하여 타인과 함께 구성해가는 총체적인 활동이라고 재해석하였다. 또한 교사가 교수 맥락적 요소와 복잡하게 상호작용하는 교수의 역동적인 면도 조명하였다.

본 연구의 연구 참여자는 서울의 한 중학교와 고등학교에 각각 근무하는 영어 교사 두 명과 그들의 학생이었다. 연구에 참여하는 교사는 그들의 영어 교수 능력과 관련하여 유목적 표집법(Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998)으로 모집하였다. 한 학기 동안의 교실수업을 질적 사례연구 방법론을 이용하여 탐구하였는데, 연구의 초점은 다음 두 개의 연구 질문으로 기술하였다. 1) 유능한 영어 교사는 자신들의 교육적 맥락을 어떻게 인식하는가? 2) 유능한 영어 교사는 교실에서 실제 어떻게 가르치는가? 이 연구 질문에 답하기 위해 관련된 문서와 더불어 인터뷰와 교실 관찰을 통해 자료를 수집하였으며, 자료는 민족지학적 연구 전통에 입각한 근거이론적 접근(Bogdan & Biklin, 1998; Creswell, 2013; Glaser & Strauss, 1967)으로 분석하였다.

본 질적 연구에서 도출된 주요 결과는 다음과 같다. 첫째, 두 명의 교사는 자신의 교수 맥락을 다른 방식으로 인식하고 있었으며, 그에 따라 서로 다른 교육 목적을 상정한다는 것을 알 수 있었다. 연구 참여자인 중학교 교사는 학교 시험에 대비하기 위해 문법을 가르치는 질서 있는 수업을 의도한 반면 고등학교 교사는 의사소통중심의

동기유발적인 수업을 구상하였다. 둘째, 두 교사의 실제교실수업 행위는 그 교육 목적을 향해 구성되어 왔다. 중학교 교사는 문법에 대한 강의 중심의 효과적인 수업을 하였고, 효율적으로 교과서를 사용하였으며, 학생들의 학습 과정을 통제함과 동시에 수업 시간에 그들을 지루하지 않게 하였다. 반면에 고등학교 교사는 의사소통중심의 수업을 실현하고자 노력하였고, 학생들의 흥미를 끌면서 수업에 참여시킴과 동시에 학생들에게 일부 권한을 부여하였다. 셋째, 실제수업을 이론적인 관점에서 재해석한 결과, 교수의 역동적인 특성을 파악할 수 있었다. 교사가 추구하는 모든 교육 목표가 의도한 대로 실현되는 것은 아니었는데 이는 다양한 갈등 상황이 나타났기 때문이었다. 두 교사 모두의 경우 모순되는 교육 목적간의 내재적 긴장이 존재했는데, 그 긴장으로 인해 다양한 갈등 상황이 야기되었다. 한 학기 동안 교사의 교수 행위가 이끌어낸 최종적인 성과는 그러한 갈등 상황이 처리되는 방식에 의해 결정되었다. 결론적으로 중학교 교사의 실제수업은 시험을 강조하는 한국의 중등 교육 상황에 적합한 효과적인 수업인 반면 교육과정의 개정 방향과는 일치하지 않았다. 이와 대조적으로 고등학교 교사의 실제수업은 의사소통 중심적이고 교육과정의 개정 방향과도 맥이 닿아 있었지만, 이러한 실험적인 수업이 시험을 강조하는 한국의 교육적 상황에서 앞으로 어떻게 유지될 수 있을지는 더 지켜봐야 할 일로 남았다.

이러한 연구 결과를 바탕으로, 본 연구는 영어 수업과 교육 개혁에 관련한 이슈를 심층적으로 논의하였다. 마지막 장에서는 영어 교사의 변화와 더불어 한국 영어 교육의 개혁 방향에 대하여 교육적인 시사점을 언급하였다.

주요어: 유능한 영어 교사, 외국어 교수의 본질, 교수 맥락 인식, 실제 교수 양상, 의사소통중심 언어교수법, 행위 시스템 모델 (activity system model)

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