

**CRITICAL PEGAGOGY IN ELT: PERSPECTIVES AND PRAXIS OF WESTERN
ENGLISH TEACHERS IN KOREAN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

by

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ABSTRACT

Presently, there are numerous Native English Teacher (NETs) teaching in Korean post-secondary educational (PSE) institutions. The aim of this thesis is to explore the views held by NETs with regards to their self-perceived teaching perspectives while working in a Korean PSE setting. The thesis also aims to answer the assertion made in the literature that English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers are "acritical and atheoretical". To this end, the thesis intends to identify the extent of the NETs' preference for social reform as a teaching perspective, the NETs stated reasons for identifying with roles as social reformers, how these views are reflected in the NETs' practice (praxis), what the barriers impeding the adoption and enactment of social reform are, and how the NETs' perspectives relate to critical pedagogy. The results reveal that NETs in Korean PSE do not align themselves with social reform, yet categorizing NETS as "acritical and atheoretical" may be overly-simplistic. The results show that there are three kinds of obstacles that prevent NETs from engaging more with social reform and being less acritical and atheoretical: 1) NETs teaching in Korean EFL are conflicted and/or confused about their roles as English teachers; 2) there are significant cultural constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET; 3) there are significant pedagogical constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET.

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Introduction

Background and context

Starting in the 19th century and continuing until today, the increasing popularity of English has become one of the lasting trends of global modern life (Graddol, 2006). The importance of the English language has increased up to the point that today it is considered by many to be the default communication language of the world. What is interesting is that English's vertiginous growth has not been achieved through an increase in the number of its native speakers, but rather through a rise in the number of those who speak English as their second language (Kachru, 1986). Moreover, the margin of non-native versus native speakers of English continues to expand, with some researchers claiming that it is 3 to 1 in favor of non-native speakers (Crystal, 2003) although the actual numbers of native and non-native English speakers are difficult to estimate accurately (Gordon, 2005).

Even though the reasons why English has become such a dominant language are varied and often fiercely contested, it is generally accepted that an important factor in the expansion of English is globalization (Pennycook, 2010; Joseph, 2012). English is considered the de facto communication language of the globalized world, and this trend is likely set to accentuate with no other languages threatening the hegemony of English in the short or long run (Sasaki, Suzuki & Yoneda, 2006).

In order to ensure competitiveness in the modern globalized world, nations where English is not the first language are taking measures to encourage and facilitate English learning in the country. One such country where the importance of English cannot be understated is Korea. Often quoted as a success "rags to riches" story, Korea has been able to lift itself from one of the poorest countries in Asia to one of the richest within a period of four decades (Seth, 2010).

Nonetheless, similar to other regions in the world, Korea continues to be engaged in a struggle to survive in the globalized world. In response, the Korean government has identified the increase in the English proficiency levels of its population as one of its most pressing needs, and it has undertaken measures to ensure that this language goal can be achieved.

One such initiative sees foreign Native English Teachers (NETs) hired by universities to assist students to achieve communicative competence in English. The vast majority of NETs in universities (and secondary schools) are appointed to teach mainly English Conversation classes, which represent mandatory subjects in many universities' curriculums. For a deeper understanding of the EFL landscape in Korea and its inner-workings, one would need to look closely as to why: (a) NETs are preferred over local English teachers, and (b) English Conversation classes are so much more pervasive than more general English classes (covering all the four skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking).

The English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching positions that NETs are offered in Korea are only open to NETs from seven specific countries (Canada, US, UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa), with teachers from the USA and Canada often being favored. Such positions are closed to Korean English teachers (KETs) or teachers from countries such as India and Philippines, regardless of their English proficiency level. The stated reason is that NETs are deemed superior to local teachers in English language ability; their native status is believed to validate them as authorities on the English language and makes them best positioned to impart it (Pederson, 2012). Even so, the *Korean Observer* notes that the number of NETs in Korea is on the decline, primarily due to budgetary constraints; a NET is more costly to the educational system than a Korean English Teacher, not only due to the fact that NETs are offered housing and return plane tickets to their home countries as part of their contractual package, but also because Korean

English teachers “sometimes work Saturdays and do a lot of overtime” (*Korean Observer*, 2014), whereas NETs do not. The downward trend in the hiring of NETs is set to continue, despite the government admitting that the current crop of local English teachers are overall still at a lower English proficiency level than NETs (*Korean Observer*, 2014).

Conversely, teaching English Conversation classes represents the main reason why NETs are employed in Korea. While Korean English teachers (KETs), may possess the training and skills requisite for English teaching, they are lacking the English proficiency to teach English - in particular English conversation classes which call for high oral fluency. The lack of English proficiency of KETs is underlined by Kanter (2013) who claims that only 7% of Elementary School KETs in Seoul are proficient in English.

Kim and Margolis (2000) identify the mid-nineties as the period when Korean universities began instituting mandatory English conversation classes, as a result of a shift occurring at that time towards the development of English oral skills. Kroeker (2009) further argues that these measures were specifically taken in response to government language planning policies (LPPs) which encouraged the development of English oral communication skills. There are various explanations as to why these policies were deemed necessary. Song (2012) claims that such policies have been adopted as result of the undeniable link between “learner-centered, communication-focused, activity/task-based” (p. 36) English language education and Korea’s national development during a time of increasing globalization. Furthermore, due to the over-emphasis on developing the skills needed to pass English proficiency tests (e.g. TOEFL and TOEIC), in which speaking skills traditionally represented only a small part, oral skills failed to improve at a level where Korean learners could carry out conversations in English (Hyun, Finch, & Hyun, 1997). As a result, the need to improve this conversational aspect becomes essential.

Despite the abundance of qualified and enthusiastic NETs teaching at universities throughout Korea, their students' English proficiency as measured by standardized tests such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) remains mediocre. The TOEFL is generally taken by university students before graduation in order to demonstrate their English skills and hopefully increase their chances to secure employment. Statistics show that the poor results exhibited by Koreans in TOEFL, cannot be attributed to either a lack of spending or a dearth of NETs participating in the EFL field in Korea: there were 22,000 NETs working in Korea in 2008 (Dawe, 2013) and the equivalent of 22.8 billion dollars were spent by Koreans on private English education in 2008 (Jeon, 2010).

The substantial participation of university students in the TOEFL, their unsatisfactory scores in such tests, the pervasiveness in many universities of mandatory English Conversation classes taught by NETs, and the poor overall English language proficiency of Korean post-secondary students call for more effective approaches to improving proficiency in the Korean EFL class. These aforementioned difficulties to improving post-secondary students' English language proficiency validate the university context as an appropriate setting for exploring one such approach from the perspectives of NETs - critical pedagogy.

Rationale and personal motivation for the research

Between the years 2010 and 2012, I worked as a NET at Korean university teaching a variety of EFL classes including English Conversation to first year students from various majors.

The typical English conversation class at my university had between 12 and 28 students, and it was imparted for two sessions of 50 minutes each every week or for one 100 minute session per week. The curriculum designated a general English textbook which primarily focused on the

development of speaking skills. I had control over which topics from textbook would be prioritized and also over any extra materials I used in class. Furthermore, I was allowed to rearrange the class seating as I deemed suitable. Students taking English Conversation were assessed with a written test, role-plays, interview style questions and answers, short presentations, attendance and class participation, although there was some flexibility permitted regarding some of the percentages allotted and the types of oral assessments conducted.

During class, students were generally quiet, asked few questions, and seemed to prefer teacher-led lecture style sessions, where the teacher spoke and they listened and took notes. Outside of class, there were few opportunities for the students to speak English in natural settings, a view shared by Kroeker (2009) from her experience teaching English Conversation in Korea. In my case, the students' limited opportunities were accentuated by the location of the university in one of the most rural areas of Korea, 20 km away from a mid-size town.

As an EFL teacher, my students' failure to improve their English to what I considered a reasonable level of conversation preoccupied me greatly. It was quite frustrating after a semester of teaching first year English Conversation to realize that students were, at the end of the course, still making basic mistakes which I believed had been overcome over the semester. Within the environment of a Korean university EFL classroom, which although not overtly restrictive was nonetheless not conducive to language learning, I tried to experiment as much as possible in order to rectify the problem. I read up on different teaching methods and styles, I experimented with different seating arrangements, and I prepared activities which I deemed to be both fun and relevant to the target language being taught. Nonetheless, the students only showed minimal improvement.

At this point, I pondered the possibility that perhaps the problem was caused by issues that went beyond either the specific methodologies that I used or the students' attentiveness in class

and their diligence towards class assignments. I felt that more insidious factors were affecting student learning, and I suspected that these started with the artificial environment and constraints of the EFL classroom but did not end there. My search for alternative explanations to the students' difficulties eventually led me to Paulo Freire and his work on critical pedagogy and the banking model (Freire, 2005). In spite of Freire's ideas being aimed at the social emancipation of South American peasants, I contemplated whether these could be useful in my EFL classes as a way to help students increase their English language proficiency. Subsequently, I made attempts to adapt some of Freire's ideas and use them in my EFL classes. For instance, I looked into Freire's concept of *problem posing* and accordingly aimed to design and implement English lessons that engaged the students themselves in the creation of questions in response to personally relevant problems, as opposed to simply answering questions put forward by the teacher. I was hoping that including critical pedagogy in my EFL classes would help my students not only become more proficient English speakers but better critical thinkers.

In spite of critical pedagogy appearing as a promising alternative to trying out different methodologically driven approaches of teaching English, I was surprised to find very little research in the area of critical pedagogy in EFL. Although considerable research has been conducted on understanding the causes behind the Korean students' limited progress in English, most research has focused on the methods associated with the delivery and mechanics of language learning, as opposed to more holistic and critical questioning of the assumptions underlying EFL education. Specifically, little is known about the views held by NETs with regards to their roles as critical pedagogues - namely, as custodians and guides to English learning from social and emancipatory perspectives.

Therefore, the lack of research on critical pedagogy in Korean EFL in higher education, and my access to capable NETs in Korea, emboldened me to undertake this research in order to understand better how other EFL teachers in Korea perceive critical pedagogy and whether they believe it has a place in their classrooms.

Given the fact that critical pedagogy is a very complex notion that is hard to define in a “brief and compelling manner” (Kincheloe, 2008), I sought to identify a more widely known and semantically clear term that I could use in my research which would not affect the study’s validity. Having been unable to locate any questionnaires or interview questions that purported to identify participants’ alignment with critical pedagogy, I considered it risky to design my own tools for ‘recognizing’ critical pedagogy given its complexity. My search lead to the concept of *social reform*, as defined by Pratt (1998) in his work on teacher perspectives, which I believe is comparable to critical pedagogy when posing research questions and interviewing participants. It should be noted that social reform is not considered an equivalent to critical pedagogy, but as there is no conception or language for critical pedagogy in this context, social reform is considered appropriate. Akin to critical pedagogy, Pratt’s perceives teaching as ideological, and views teaching for social reform as shift from “micro to macro concerns, from finding better technologies of instruction, ways of knowing and means of facilitating personal and cognitive development to issues of a moral and political issue” (Pratt, 1998, p.53). Furthermore, Pratt and Collins (2000; 2010) created the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) which has been developed and refined by them over the years to ask questions that identify a social reform perspective, and as such, in my opinion, a good tool for ‘identifying’ critical pedagogy.

The Problem Statement

When Macedo (2013) argues that the field of ESL/EFL is “acritical” and “atheoretical”, he refers to the fact that ESL/EFL teachers rarely critically question the assumptions underlying practice in their field. Macedo’s assertion, which comes 23 years after Pennycook (1990) stated that teachers were “classroom technicians” rather than educators on a transformative or emancipatory mission, identifies a troubling lack of progress in the area of critical ESL/EFL. In order to provide an answer to this dilemma, and hopefully serve as a stepping stone for further studies on ESL/EFL practitioners from a critical pedagogy orientation, this study intends to explore whether or not NETs in a Korean university perceive themselves as agents and guides to social reform, or as classroom technicians responsible solely for the deployment of institutionally packaged English programs.

The Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to explore the views held by NETs with regards to their self-perceived teaching perspectives as English teachers while working in a Korean university setting. This study intends to identify the extent of the NETs’ preference for *social reform* as a teaching perspective, the NETs stated reasons for identifying with roles as social reformers, how these views are reflected in the NETs’ practice (praxis), what the barriers impeding the adoption and enactment of social reform are, and how the NETs’ perspectives relate to critical pedagogy.

Research Questions

1. What are the NETs’ teaching perspectives?

2. What are the reasons behind the NETs' alignment or lack of alignment with the *social reform* teaching perspective?

3. How does the total or partial support for the *social reform* perspective manifest itself in the NETs' praxis?

4. What are the barriers, identified by NETs, preventing the adoption and implementation of a social reform perspective in the classroom?

This chapter presented the background and the context of the main issues framing this research followed by a discussion of the rationale and personal motivation for undertaking this project. Also, the problem and purpose statements were underlined, and the research questions were put forward. Chapter 2 consists of the literature review, which unpacks the concepts used, overviews the issues and debates pertaining to English Language Teaching and English as a Foreign Language in general and in Korea, and ends with the conceptual framework which highlights the role played by critical pedagogy and any other issues affecting the study. Chapter 3 presents the study's paradigm, design, methods, data analysis, research bias/involvement, ethics, and limitations. Chapter 4 contains the close findings that emerge from the data analysis. The final chapter discusses how the close findings answer the research questions and returns to the literature review to determine how the results compare to the literature. This chapter also offers comments on the study as a whole – what worked and what could be improved, and offers some recommendations.

Literature Review

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it aims to provide an overview of the key issues and debates surrounding the topic – the teaching perspectives of Native English Teachers (NETs) working in the Korean post-secondary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) field and how these align to critical pedagogy - as they relate and identify the knowledge gap the research fills. Secondly, it unpacks the significant concepts and themes used in research, and based on these it puts forward a conceptual framework which frames the study and serves as the basis for the subsequent discussion.

The chapter is divided into three sections pertaining to: English Language Teaching (ELT) and EFL in general, EFL in Korea specifically and the conceptual framework. This latter section combines relevant points from the previous two sections with an in-depth discussion of the issues associated with critical pedagogy in the world and in Korea.

The chapter begins with an exploration of four broad aspects pertaining to the English language teaching and English as a Foreign Language fields. These were divided into four subsections: i) *English as a foreign Language (EFL) versus English as a Second language (ESL)*, which provides an overview of the differences between ESL EFL, and their implications; ii) *English as a global language*, which discusses the important role played by the English language nowadays; iii) *assessments in EFL - TOEIC and TOEFL*, which explores the differences between these two widely-used tests, and explores how and why they are employed; iv) the methodology of EFL, which reviews the theories of language and language learning applicable to EFL education. The chapter continues with a discussion on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Korea focused on three specific aspects: i) *'English fever' in Korea*, which considers the reasons

why Koreans are highly interested in learning English; ii) *‘English communication’ and testing the ability to communicate in English*, which looks at the current emphasis on the English communication skills in Korea; iii) *Native English Teachers as cure to improved ‘English communication’ skills*, which contemplates the preference for Native English Teachers (NETs) in Korean education.

Subsequently, the chapter puts forward the research’s conceptual framework which is divided into seven sections: i) *Critical Pedagogy*, which defines and provides an overview of critical pedagogy in general terms; ii) *Critical Pedagogy in EFL*, discusses the applicability of critical pedagogy to EFL and ESL, including the relevant topic of critical literacy; iii) *Critical pedagogy in Korean EFL*, which discusses the specific case of Korea, previous research in the country and the appropriateness of critical pedagogy in an Asian context; iv) *From critical pedagogy to social reform*, which makes the connection between critical pedagogy, social change and social reform; v) *NETs in Korea*, which discusses why NETs represent worthwhile candidates for a study on critical pedagogy in Korean EFL; vi) *Other considerations*, which includes challenges arising when carrying out a literature review on critical pedagogy and constraints not found elsewhere in the literature review.

Finally, the chapter ends with a conclusion section summarizing the key points presented in the literature review and leading into the methodology section.

English language teaching (ELT) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

This section will provide an overview of the main issues pertaining to the field of English language teaching (ELT) to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in a general context.

The aim here is to provide the broad context for the subsequent section which will discuss the specific case of EFL in Korea.

i. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vs. English as a Second Language (ESL). The numerous acronyms associated with the broad field of English language learning and teaching – ELT (English Language Teaching), ELL (English Language Learning), ESL (English as a Second Language), EFL (English as a Foreign Language), CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), TEIL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and many others – call for a brief discussion of the three abbreviations of particular relevance to this research: ELT, ESL and EFL. In my experience, these three acronyms are often misinterpreted by English teachers despite being essential to how teachers perceive, prepare and carry out their teaching responsibilities.

English language teaching (ELT) is an umbrella term (Scrivener, 2005) that incorporates EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL (English as Second Language). ESL and EFL are often confused as referring to the same concept - teaching/learning English to/for foreigners - with the two different acronyms believed to represent the American name or the British name, respectively. The difference, however, is much sharper; EFL refers to English for learners in a country where English is not spoken as a mother tongue (e.g. Korean university students studying English in Korea), while ESL describes English for learners in country where English is spoken as a mother tongue (e.g. Mexican immigrants studying English in the USA) (Scrivener, 2005). The implications of this distinction can be more severe for ESL learners than for EFL students. In an ESL context, learning English (which is deemed a ‘majority first language’) could destabilize a student’s first language and culture. On the other hand, in EFL, which has also been referred to as

‘additive bilingual situation’ (Lambert, 1980), “the addition of a second language is unlikely to replace or displace the first language and culture” (Lambert as cited in Baker, 2001, p. 66). Since this research was conducted in Korea in an EFL context, the Korean language and culture was thus less affected than it would have been in an ESL setting. Nonetheless, EFL in Korea is impacted by its own set of particular set of challenges and constraints which will be considered in the corresponding section.

ii. English as a global language. The English language has become the most widely known language of the world, with approximately 1.5 billion people able to speak it to varying degrees (Crystal, 2012). Nowadays, English is referred to as a “global language”, even though this terminology leaves its exact meaning unclear. According to Crystal’s (2012) definition, English meets the conditions of a global language because it “taken up by other [not only its native-speakers] countries around the world [who] decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers” (Crystal, 2012, p. 4).

Although the reasons for the expansion of English throughout the world are grounded in history and are complex (Pennycook, 2007; Philippon, 1992), English is regarded by many as the ideal language for a globalized world mainly due to the current economic and cultural status of the United States of America. As a globally influential country, the USA has contributed to the expansion of English into almost all institutions of many societies in the world (e.g. education, science, religion, military) in addition to United Nations organizations, global media and scientific journals (Chua & Baldauf, 2011). This acceleration of English use throughout the world, which shows no signs of abating (Byram, 2000), has led to non-English speaking nations increasing their

efforts to equip themselves with the English language skills necessary to take advantage of the globalised networks driven primarily by English language information (Chua & Baldauf, 2011).

While the status of English as an important global language is not generally disputed, the expansion of English throughout the world remains a highly polemical topic for a variety of reasons. On one hand, the rapid spread in the use of English and in English-medium cultural artifacts (e.g. books, movies) is perceived as eroding the cultural expression of local languages, with English increasingly perceived as a threat to cultural sovereignty (Cummins & Davison, 2007). Additionally, the spread of English is equated by others as an ongoing attempt at colonisation (i.e. neo-colonialism) which is pervasive, subtle and difficult to break out of (Pennycook, 2007). These challenges can be partly traced to ELT teachers (and the cultures they originate from) who focus excessively on linguistic, literary, pedagogical aspects while ignoring that “ELT is an international activity with political, economic, military and cultural implications and ramifications” (Philippson, 1992, p. 8). In fact, there is a strong argument that “English helps produce and maintain inequitable global power relationships” (Pennycook, 2007, p. 18).

Given the perceived benefits of knowing English in the world, the efforts made by governments and individuals to learn it are not surprising, yet at the same time global English is not perceived by all as a panacea. Its critics bring forward compelling evidence urging in the very least a careful consideration of factors contributing to English becoming a global language and perhaps more concerted efforts of taking local aspects into consideration.

iii. Assessments in EFL - TOEIC and TOEFL. The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are widely used English tests that measure non-native speakers’ proficiency in English. More specifically, the TOEFL “measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to use and understand English as

it is spoken, written and heard in academic settings” (Alderson, 2009, p. 621), while the TOEIC is a test designed to reliably and inexpensively “measure business people’s English ability on a scale” (Takahashi, 2011). Currently, the TOEIC and TOEIC are widely used throughout the world - scores from the TOEIC test are accepted by 14,000 companies in 150 countries and seven million individuals sat the test in 2013 (TOEIC, n.d.), while the TOEFL is recognized by 9,000 colleges and universities in over 130 countries (TOEIC, n.d.).

Even though the TOEFL is aimed at individuals wishing to be admitted to post-secondary academic institutions and the TOEIC at those entering the job market, there is overlap as to how the two tests are accepted, with post-secondary institutions and business companies often accepting both. For instance, a Korean study showed that out of 42 universities researched 36 accepted the TOEFL and 21 accepted the TOEIC (Joeon, 2010), while in Costa Rica only 34% of the takers of the TOEIC test took the test for job application purposes (Education Testing Service, 2013).

The fact that the TOEIC is increasingly used in academic settings (Trew, 2007) is linked to the globalization and intensified international trade and communication which have seen the business sector demand graduates capable of communicating well in English (Takahashi, 2011). This in turn has led to post-secondary institutions concentrating their efforts towards TOEIC involvement in specific ways. Post-secondary institutions either test the students with the TOEIC as part of their coursework evaluations, ask for TOEIC test scores from high school graduates wishing to enroll in post-secondary studies, or prepare students to take TOEIC upon graduation to get them ready for the job market (Takahashi, 2011).

Proficiency tests (TOEIC and TOEFL included) are criticized for not testing what is taught in EFL classes. This is claimed by some to be unavoidable as it is impossible to match what is tested in proficiency tests and what is prescribed by course syllabi of an EFL course (Takahashi,

2011). Nonetheless, whether a proficiency test such as the TOEIC is used as a graduation requirement or as a tool to align students' achievement in class learning and preparedness for the job market, the course objectives in EFL classes should contribute to a better performance in the test (Brindley and Ross, 2001). The lack of alignment between EFL course objectives and obtaining good scores in tests like the TOEIC constitutes perhaps one of the principal reasons why test takers in Asian countries, such as Korea and Japan, do so poorly on the test (Education Testing Service, 2013) despite heavy investments in English education.

iv. EFL teaching methodology. The 'methodology' of ELT (and EFL specifically) is often described in terms of: *approach*, which can be conceptualized as the theories of language and language learning that a teacher subscribes to guiding his/her practice and theory; *method*, which is the implementation of approach; *procedure*, which can be thought of as the series of techniques the teacher deploys to fulfil the method; and *techniques*, which are the individual classroom activities that serve as the building blocks to procedures (Harmer, 2007). Richards and Rodgers (2001) further propose *design* as an additional layer of abstraction between approach and method which considers the objectives of method, the selection of language content, types of learning tasks appropriate to the method, and the roles to be played by teachers, learners and language materials.

In the broadest sense, the theory of language comprises three distinct views impacting approaches to language teaching. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 17) describe these as: the *structural view*, which views language as a system of structurally linked parts such as grammatical units and lexical items; the *functional view*, which focuses on the semantic and communicative aspects of language as opposed to its grammatical attributes; and the *interactional view*, which regards language as a means for accomplishing interpersonal relations and conducting social

transaction between persons. Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas (1993) present arguably an even more well-defined representation of these three dimensions of language in terms of *structure, functions* and *notions*, and *situations*.

On the other hand, the theory of language learning is based on which of the two following questions the emphasis is placed: “(a) What are the cognitive and psycholinguistic processes involved in language teaching? and (b) What are the conditions that need to be met in order for these learning processes to be activated?” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 18). Nonetheless, theories of language learning may elect to answer one or both of these questions (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

From a philosophical standpoint, there are two principal competing views of language learning: *behaviourism*, which underlines the primacy of conditioning and reinforcement by repetition when provided a controlled stimulus (Broughton et al., 1993), and *mentalism*, which holds that all people are much more than mere repeaters and have the innate ability to devise rules of language based on received input (Harmer, 2001).

According to Jin and Cortazzi (2011), there are five approaches to second language teaching and learning: classical grammar-translation, wider grammar-translation, audio lingual, mainstream EFL, and humanistic (or alternative). While the first three refer to specific approaches only sparingly used in the present day having been superseded by more modern approaches (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011), the last two are umbrella terms for a wide mix of approaches that are in current use. What is referred to as mainstream EFL is an eclectic mix of approaches that emphasize the communicative orientation of language teaching and learning, including the use of role-plays, scenarios that reflect ‘realistic’ language use, and (to a lesser extent) grammatical explanations.

Conversely, humanistic approaches are not employed on a wide global scale, and are generally considered in teacher training programs to inform teacher thinking (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011).

The approach that warrants special consideration due to its increasing world-wide usage (in both ESL and EFL context) and also its relevance to the present study, is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Although CLT's main aims can be succinctly stated as: "(a) [to] make communicative competence the goal of language teaching, and (b) [to] develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication" (Richard and Rodgers, 2001, p. 155), its comprehensiveness confers it wide scope; CLT can be interpreted in a variety of ways and this allows teachers coming from different cultural and educational traditions to relate to it. As such, CLT is perceived as complementary tool to globalization requiring foreign language education to adapt from its static, functional and linguistic roots of language to a more dynamic processes such as comparison, interpretation, inferencing and re-contextualization (Kramsch, 2014, p. 308) to gain relevance in globalized settings.

In spite of its increased adoption as the principal approach to language teaching under globalization, CLT receives substantial criticism. Block (2010) asserts that "CLT is ideologically loaded...and that there is at present an ongoing struggle...as local educators adopt, adapt, and resist CLT in an attempt to reconcile global flows with local cultures and educational traditions"(p. 300). Yet, such efforts to reconcile the global and the local lead only to a resistance in form rather than in content. For instance, replacing American film stars with local ones in the textbooks used for English teaching amounts to a superficial solution which sees CLT as the latest Western method used to disseminate a Western mindset and ways of thinking in the EFL classroom under the guise of language teaching (Block, 2010).

This tension between CLT and local cultures is also emphasized by Harmer (2001), who states that approaches and methods such as CLT are underpinned by the Western idea of “good learning” which may be incompatible with how “good learning” is perceived in Asian countries. Thorp explains that “it is far too easy to think that our own ideas as to what constitute ‘good’ learning are universal, and to forget their cultural specificity” (as cited in Harmer, 2003, p. 292). The implications of this difference in philosophy are readily noticed in an Asian EFL classroom. For example, what are Asian students to believe when at home they are taught by their parents that teachers are a source of authority and knowledge, yet at school EFL teachers affirm that their role is that of helpers and guides, and that the students themselves are responsible for their own learning?

Understanding the broad context of EFL and ELT including the difference between EFL and ESL, the global role of English, assessments in EFL and EFL methodology (closing with an example underlining a difference in EFL between Western and Asian audiences) sets the stage for the following section, which will look at the specific case of EFL Korea.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Korea

This section will provide an overview of the particular issues associated with the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Korea. The goal is to provide the specific context and details for the subsequent section which will put forward the conceptual framework framing this study.

i. ‘English Fever’ in Korea. Korean peoples’ interest in improving their own and their children’s English ability is substantial. Park (2009a) reports that Korean parents spend the equivalent of 20 billion US dollars a year on their children’s English education. Korean society’s

zeal to learn English has reached such impressive proportions that it is commonly said the population has been seized by ‘English fever’ (Park, 2009a). In the academic literature ‘English fever’, a term coined by Krashen (2003), has a clear negative connotation (Kang, 2012; Park, 2009a; Seth, 2002), with Kang (2012) going as far as calling the Koreans interest in learning English “fanatical” and Park (2009a) referring to it as “obsessive”. According to Park (2009a), ‘English fever’ is rooted in what Koreans themselves refer to as ‘education fever’, which he defines as an impassioned interest in educational attainment, via formal schooling. The preoccupation with obtaining academic credentials, in particular, is extreme in Korea in comparison with other countries (Seth, 2010).

‘Education fever’ is grounded on a complex interplay of factors, which include Korea’s Confucian attitudes towards learning and the high status learned people are conferred, and modern egalitarian ideas originating in the West, which garnered mass acceptance following the end of the Japanese colonization period (Seth, 2002 as cited in Park, 2009a).

The importance of learning English in Korea is reflected in the government’s national educational policies addressing foreign language learning, which are intensely discussed and scrutinized across a variety of domains. These clearly show the public and the government’s interest in improving the English skills of Koreans. A particularly striking policy indicative of this interest, which was enacted in 1997, mandated English become a compulsory subject from grade 3 onwards (Yoo, 2005).

ii. ‘English communication’ and testing the ability to communicate in English.

Government policies pertinent to English Language Learning (ELL) coincide with the national drive towards globalization, which constitutes another determining factor in the Korea’s ambition to learn English. Globalization efforts were initiated in the 1980s, and garnered pace in the 1990s,

at which time an important shift occurred in English language learning from “grammatical knowledge and accuracy towards communicative language use and fluency” (Park, 2009b, p. 40). The Seoul Olympics of 1988, which the Korean government considered an opportunity for Koreans to show the world their friendliness and ability to communicate in English is considered one of the spark plugs to the adoption of “communicative English” in Korea (Park, 2009b) which contributed to the rise of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as discussed in the EFL methodology section.

The emphasis on communicative English skills is perceived as a practical exigency of globalization, which views communication as an essential ability to compete effectively whether as a job-seeker or as a company wishing to increase its revenue. As a result, in the globalized world English is regarded as a commodity, or a “hard currency” (Sung, 2012), not only a language. Speaking English is believed to provide one with access to material rewards, such as getting a good job or advancing one’s social status (Sung, 2012). Furthermore, English is not only a communication tool, but rather a way to access to what the “haves in the era of information and globalization” (Sung, p. 28) possess. As a result of all these factors, Korea’s ‘Education fever’ shows no sign of abating.

To demonstrate their English communication competence, Korean students are asked (often required) to take either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Currently, these tests are required not only of candidates for enrollment at top universities, but also upon graduation, to improve graduates’ chances of securing employment (Park, 2009b). Yet, in spite of the financial efforts made by parents when enrolling their children (be they pre-adolescents, adolescents or university-aged youths) in various English programs, and the government’s efforts to improve English levels in

Korea, Korean students' performance in English tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC is unsatisfactory. The statistics confirm it. Park (2009a) claims that out of students from 143 countries who took the TOEFL test, Korea's test-takers came in the 93rd position.

iii. Native English Teachers as cure to improved 'English communication' skills. To address the generally limited improvement of Korean students in English as shown by their poor performance in English proficiency tests, various initiatives have been taken by the government. One such measure is the establishment of programs employing English native speakers in Korean educational institutions. Examples include the EPIK (English Program in Korea) program, which aims to place native English speakers in every primary and secondary public school in Korea (Jeon & Lee, 2006). Another practice, put into place at a growing number of Korean universities, sees all courses of a program taught entirely in English, an initiative whose efficacy is under question (Kang, 2012) and which has been generating vigorous public debate.

Another measure of particular significance to this study is the hiring of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors in Korean universities, to teach principally English communication (or conversation) classes. The hiring of Native English Teachers (NETs) at Korean universities is generally managed by the institutions themselves with little involvement from the government. These initiatives are underpinned by the controversial belief that native English speakers can teach English more effectively than Korean teachers in a university setting (Ahn, 2011) due to their positioning in Korea as "authentic [English] language users" (Ahn, 2011, p. 692). Nonetheless, the policy of hiring NETs in Korea continues to garner a lot of support both from academics (Jeon and Lee, 2006) and the institutions themselves.

Native English teachers from North-America are preferred and hence more common in Korea than native English teachers of other nationalities, such as British or Australian. According

to the *Korea Times* (2005), approximately 80% of native English teachers in Korea are North-American. One explanation for this is that in Korea American English is considered “standard” and is deemed preferable to other varieties of English, including British English (Shin, 2007). The reasons for this are not only grounded on the phenomenon of globalization, which has enabled American English to become the preferred medium of globalized communications (Yoo, 2005), but also due to: USA’s history of involvement in the East-Asian region starting at the turn of the 20th century, the part played by Christian missionaries from the USA in founding modern schools in Korea, the US’ involvement in liberating Korea from Japanese colonization, and the US’ participation in the Korean war (Sung, 2012, p. 25).

The previous two sections have explored the issues of ELT and EFL in general, and EFL in Korea specifically, and have provided a background of these two areas. As a result, specific issues for discussion have been identified. The next section, the conceptual framework, will attempt to reconcile these with critical pedagogy so as highlight a forward path in the study.

The conceptual framework

The conceptual framework section combines relevant points from the previous two sections with an in-depth discussion of the issues associated with critical pedagogy in the world, and in Korea, in order to frame the study and serve as the basis for subsequent discussions.

i. Critical Pedagogy. The concept of critical pedagogy is associated with the work of Paulo Freire although the term itself was coined by Henry Giroux in 1983 (Groenke, 2009). Although Freire’s ideas are far reaching and applicable to a variety of areas, he was especially concerned with education. Kincheloe (2008) maintains that critical pedagogy is a complex and hard-to-define concept which exhibits various characteristics. These portray critical pedagogy as

“grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality”, “constructed on the belief that education is inherently political” and “dedicated to understanding the context in which educational activity takes place” (p. 10). Alternatively, Kanpol (1999) offers a more concise definition of critical pedagogy which he defines as “the means and methods of testing and attempting to change the structures of schools that allow inequities” (p. 27).

Freire viewed education as a place “where the individual and society are constructed, a social action which can either empower or domesticate students” (Shor, 1993, p. 25). He saw traditional (i.e. lecture style) pedagogy as a faulty model he called the *banking model*. In this model, teachers ineffectively attempt to transfer the knowledge they possess to students who are viewed as bank accounts awaiting deposits. Ideally, in Freire’s model, the teacher’s duty is to concurrently engage the students in the learning process by asking thought provoking questions that allow the students “to question answers not merely answer questions” (Shor, 1993, p. 26). This notion is encapsulated in what Freire referred to as *problem posing* (Freire, 2005). Through *dialogical practice* - another of Freire’s important assertions according to Macedo (2013) – the teacher engages with the student in “the practice of freedom” (Freire, 2005) that commences when the teacher earnestly concerns himself with what he will converse with the student about. The goal of dialogical practice is to give rise to opinions about the world, opinions that include the students’ “anxieties, doubts, hopes and hopelessness [and] implies significant themes on the basis of which education can be built” (Freire, 2005, p. 93). Involving students via *problem posing* and *dialogical practice* allows them to experience education as something that they control rather than something that is imposed from the outside. Shor (1993) argues that contrary to the views of many, the pursuit of critical pedagogy does not mean that students are to make all decisions regarding the content and method of their learning on their own. Rather, they “make some of these decisions in

negotiation with an expert teacher who constantly works to help them develop their analytical and interpretative abilities, their research skills, their epistemological consciousness, and their sense of identity as empowered democratic citizens” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 13).

Freire goes beyond defining what is wrong with the traditional model of pedagogy and provides (general to specific) suggestions on how to implement critical pedagogy in the classroom - what is referred to as *praxis*. Nonetheless, there are a variety of barriers that constrain the application of critical pedagogy (or praxis) as envisioned by Freire, and which make critical pedagogy a problematic issue. For instance, underlining the challenges faced by critical pedagogy as a whole is the case of Brazil, which despite being considered the birthplace of critical pedagogy, is still undergoing a struggle for a wider scale adoption of critical pedagogy in education. Brazil, despite previously implementing policies influenced by critical pedagogy (drawn up with the assistance of Freire himself), has in recent times moved away from those earlier efforts (Crookes, 2010).

ii. Critical pedagogy in EFL. While critical pedagogy’s goal to question the traditional model of education as maintaining unequal situations is well-known, it is often difficult to determine how this would be accomplished in the ESL and EFL fields. Nonetheless, the link between critical pedagogy and EFL and ESL fields is most apparent when language is seen as more than just a means of communication, but rather “as a practice that constructs, and is constructed by, the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future” (Norton & Toohey, 2004, p. 1).

In the case of ESL the link is more straightforward, as ESL learners are often new to a country and have to deal with a range of hardships due to a lack of social, communicative, and linguistic competencies (Ooiwa-Yoshizawa, 2012), in addition to other challenges such as a lack

of moral and financial support. This natural fit between critical pedagogy and ESL is apparent in the breadth of research in the area, which is quite substantial (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Benesh, 2001; Auerbach, 1995).

Although research in critical pedagogy and EFL is much scarcer, Crookes (2010) argues that the few existing studies coming out of countries such as Brazil, Chile, Korea and Singapore demonstrate that critical pedagogies in EFL are as pertinent and valid as those in ESL. This occurs in spite of EFL critical pedagogy having to overcome obstacles not present in ESL. For instance, there is an ongoing debate regarding the appropriateness of critical pedagogy in EFL for some cultures. In particular, research involving critical approaches in EFL has traditionally been rejected by some as incompatible with Asian contexts due to “often oppressive or constraining state education systems” (Crookes, 2010, p.338).

Another important aspect, critically literacy, which Anderson and Irvine (1993) define as "learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming conscious of one's experience as historically constructed within specific power relations" (p.82), is widely considered as an essential part of critical pedagogy and second language education (Shor, 1999; Pennycook, 1999). Without the *critical* dimension of critical literacy, “the cultural and ideological assumptions that underwrite texts” (Morgan as cited in Alford, 2001, p. 2) are ignored, and being literate reverts back to the traditional view of nothing more than “decoding and passively absorbing texts” (Freebody & Luke as cited in Alford, 2001).

This argument that critical literacy is an imperative of EFL studies, is countered by those who claim that critical pedagogy (and critical literacy) are unsuitable for EFL due to the beliefs held by many EFL teachers that “the students’ limitations in English will preclude their engagement with complex social and moral issues” (Ko, 2013, p. 17). This view, found elsewhere

in the literature (Alford, 2001), has been addressed by Ko (2013) who showed that even learners' English proficiency did not hamper their critical literacy achievements.

iii. Critical pedagogy in Korean EFL. Outside of Korea, critical pedagogy in EFL has not been a topic extensively researched (Machado, 2013); however, in the context of EFL in Korean post-secondary institutions the lack of research is even more accentuated and as such it warrants special consideration.

According to Baker and Prys-Jones (1998), Korea is one of the most “linguistically and ethnically homogenous countries in the world” (p. 382). This fact has a clear bearing on the status and the dynamics of English education in the country, with Park (2012) claiming that this idea of linguistic homogeneity has been used to reinforce the concept of national unity. A contributing factor to Korea's monolingualism is the fact that the majority of Koreans are not in regular contact with speakers of other languages and Koreans engage in practically all their interactions in Korean (Park, 2012).

In spite of Korea's high monolingualism, the importance of English in Korea is growing, as previously discussed. Clear evidence of the increase in English use can be observed in representations of the media and popular culture (e.g. the many billboards and advertisements that use English language, TV programs using English words) (Park, 2012). Yet, despite the ubiquitousness of English in the country, there is evidence that English has primarily a symbolic use. A majority of such manifestations of English practically occur in popular culture, and they include a preference for pop music in English over Korean popular songs and a fondness for Saturday morning cartoons in English (Park, 2012). This uncritical acceptance of English symbolism by Koreans in their own lives foreshadows and explains in part the lack of critical questioning of the assumptions leading to English language learning in the country, and hence the

dearth of research on critical pedagogy in the country. Furthermore, it must be noted that lack of critical questioning of the assumptions about English learning goes beyond the acceptance of English symbolism and is underpinned by a broader culture of deference to authority in Korea (Kirby, 1991).

Further explaining the lack of research is the view that critical pedagogy is deemed incompatible with Korean education (McGuire, 2007). Shin and Crookes (2005) note that East Asian students (Korean included) have been traditionally stereotyped as passive and non-autonomous learners, participants in a rigid and teacher-centered classroom hierarchy where the students themselves have little say in the learning process. Furthermore, the perception that communicative and participative approaches have been deemed failures and unsuitable in East Asian classrooms (LoCastro, 1994) could be relied upon to support the view that dialogic approaches where students and teachers are co-creators of knowledge as envisioned by Freire (2005) would be unsuitable.

Pederson (2012) summarizes the lack of criticality in Korean EFL when he affirms that “EFL educators are being influenced, if not programmed, into a specific form of naïveté where ELT is viewed as linguistic exercise with smatterings of culture thrown in to satisfy the illusory curricular dictates of Communicative Language Teaching” (p. 14). Shin (2007) echoes the incompatibility between Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as used in the Korean EFL classroom and helping “students challenge and transform the status quo” (p. 79) which is one of Freire’s (2005) primary goals. Yet, unlike those who claim that Korean EFL education in general is not ideal for CLT, Shin (2007) considers CLT itself incongruous with critical pedagogy due to CLT’s inability to engage issues and students critically akin to Pennycook’s description of communicative learning as the “empty babble of the language classroom” (as cited in Shin, 2007,

p. 79). Furthermore, as discussed in a previous section, CLT is ideologically-loaded and only able to reconcile global issues with local matters at a superficial level – in terms of form instead of content (Block, 2010) – thus contributing to the erosion of Korean culture.

However, there are signs which indicate that some research on critical pedagogy in EFL is being carried out. Shin and Crookes (2005) show that Korean high-school students, despite exhibiting robust idealization about other regions in the world, received well learner-centered approaches employing dialogue. In fact they considered them more effective than lecture-style classes. In spite of the encouraging results of such research, on a wider scale not many teachers in Korea have been exposed to critical pedagogy (Shin & Crookes, 2005). An explanation for this, in addition to the cultural constraints on conducting critical pedagogy in Korea, which have been discussed previously, is that “teachers teach the way they have been taught” (Crawford as cited in Crookes & Lehner, 1998, p. 322) and that being a dialogical teacher is difficult work that requires experience (Shin & Crookes, 2005).

Research on critical pedagogy in the context of Korean EFL is scarce, with only a few notable exceptions (Shin & Crookes, 2009; Sung, 2012). There are few studies on post-secondary education on the teacher’s perspectives (Tanghe, 2014). The continuing lack of research in this arena is surprising given the criticism from famous proponents of critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1992; Macedo, 2013; Pennycook, 1994) who have denounced the lack of criticality in the EFL field. The previous discussion has raised the possibility that Korea may not be fertile ground for critical pedagogy, and most teachers’ lack of involvement with critical pedagogy in Korea appears to provide further credibility to this possibility and in the process reinforce Macedo’s view of EFL teachers as classrooms “technicians”.

Adding further urgency - from a Western mindset - to the study of critical pedagogy in Korea, is provided by Pederson (2012) who claims that in Korea “the extent to which any meaningful critical appropriation of foreign language, culture, and ideology occurs is unclear at best, and is most likely to be minimal” (p. 16). Nonetheless, statements such as this raise the question whether critical thinking is indeed valued in Korea. McGuire (2007) suggests that critical thinking pedagogy (i.e. pedagogy for critical thinking, which is not to be confused with critical pedagogy, although they both share critical roots) is inhibited by features of Korean culture. He views critical thinking pedagogy as an attempt to improve a student’s independence and autonomy to “wean one away from tradition, the hierarchically based authority, especially the authority of teachers, and group oriented conformity” (p. 229) even though these are values which Koreans are socialized into and which they respect. Furthermore, unlike the existing Western dichotomy of good and evil, in Korea the equivalent concepts of *yang* and *eum* (or *ying*) which do “not represent the two competing, opposite ends of a linear spectrum, but encapsulates a dualistic aspect of life and the world” (Shin, 2014, p. 89), are also likely to influence the understanding of critical pedagogy in a Korean context from a Western perspective. Thus, in essence, from a Korean perspective something can be both good and evil concomitantly, as opposed to one OR the other as perceived in a Western mindset.

Even though McGuire’s argument critiques critical thinking as defined in Western cultures, subtler forms of critical thinking more appropriate to societies such as Korea are possible and these can include aspects of critical pedagogy. A closer inspection of visual representation forms of Western origin, which permeate various aspects of Korean life, would undoubtedly benefit from questioning the assumptions – as demanded by critical pedagogy according to Freire (2005) - that contribute to the use of such visual forms. Examples of such visual representation include

advertising of English schools bearing pictures of affluent appearing children or the packaging of products with pictures of white Western people on them (Pederson, 2012). Korean preference for conformity, which results in group values being more important than individual aims (McGuire, 2007), do not preclude the possibility that critical modes of thinking and critical pedagogy can be beneficial to education in the country.

iv. From critical pedagogy to social reform. Even though, as previously discussed, critical pedagogy “cannot be pinned down in a single definition” (Crookes & Lehner, 1998, p. 319), it is generally agreed that one of the primary goals of critical pedagogy is to realize social change. The link between critical approaches to education and social change is reiterated by: Ooiwa-Yoshizawa (2012) who states that “critical approaches to second language teaching focus on the relationship between language learning and social change” (p. 23), Norton and Toohey (2004) who argue that “advocates of critical approaches to second language teaching are interested in relationships between language learning and social change” (p. 1), and also by Crookes (2010) who claims that when “we intend to attempt language teaching of a critical kind, we would presumably doing so in the hope of broader social change” (p. 342).

Even more unambiguously, the direct link between critical pedagogy itself (rather than critical approaches) and social change is made by Pennycook when he asserts that critical pedagogy “seeks to understand and critique the historical and sociopolitical context of schooling and to develop pedagogical practices that aim not only to change the nature of schooling, but also the wider society” (as cited in Crookes & Lehner, 1998, p. 319). Furthermore, Crookes and Lehner (1998) claim “critical pedagogy [is] a theory of education and social change” (p.325).

While the term *social change* is used to refer to changes of a desirable nature in society, there are other expressions in the literature that indirectly point to a link between social change

and critical approaches. For instance, Crookes (2010) associates critical pedagogy to “transformative outcome for society” (p. 343), while Ko (2013) claims “social transformation” (p. 23) to be dependent on critical literacy.

Another dimension is that of *social reform* as posited by Pratt and Collins (2000) as part of their work on designing a tool for identifying teaching perspectives, the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI). The TPI has been used in this present research as one of the data collection methods and will be discussed further in the methodology chapter. However, it is necessary at this point to emphasize that what Pratt and Collins (2000) refer to as social reform is equivalent to *social change* which has been shown in the previous paragraphs to be one of the aims of *critical pedagogy*. Pratt and Collins (2000) claim that:

from a Social Reform Perspective, effective teaching is the pursuit of *social change* [emphasis added] more than individual learning. Instructors holding Social Reform as their dominant perspective are deeply committed to social issues and structural changes in society. Both content and learners are secondary to large-scale *change in society* [emphasis added]. Instructors are clear and articulate about what changes must take place, and their teaching reflects this clarity of purpose. They have no difficulty justifying the use of their teaching as an instrument of *social change* [emphasis added]. Even when teaching, their professional identity is as an advocate for the *changes they wish to bring about in society* [emphasis added]. (p. 3).

In this definition, the link between social reform and social change is clear and repeated various times. Elsewhere in their research, Collins and Pratt further stress the relationship between social reform and social change when they claim that “*Social Reform*...represent[s] the views of a small but important group of adult educators involved in social change movements” (Collins and

Pratt, 1998a), and that “within the Social Reform perspective the ends (goals) of the other perspectives become the means toward the accomplishment of social changes” (Pratt, 1998, p. 52).

v. NETs in Korea. As previously discussed, in Korea, English teachers who are native speakers of English are preferred over non-native teachers. This tendency reflects ways of thinking that are complicit in the native speaker (NS) teacher versus non-native speaker (NNS) teacher dichotomy and, as such, represents a further constraint to critical pedagogy. The notion that the NS teachers make better teachers than NNS teachers is vehemently opposed throughout the literature with some referring to it as a “myth” (Shin, 2007).

In spite of the NS teacher myth lacking a solid theoretical or practical basis, it does exert real power in local EFL contexts as exhibited through government policies and rhetoric involving EFL (Pederson, 2012). In Korea, this power is not only real but also visible. For instance, only teachers from *inner circle countries* (Kachru, 2008), such as Canada, the USA and the UK, can legally obtain work-permits to teach in Korea, as NS teachers are viewed as possessing the ultimate authority of the English language (Pederson, 2012).

While research has been conducted on the perspectives of both Korean teachers teaching subjects in English (Kang, 2012) or teaching EFL (Butler, 2005; Li, 1998), and Korean students taught by NSETs in post-secondary universities (Ahn, 2011; Thornton, 2009), there is a lack of research exploring the perspectives of the NSETs working in Korean postsecondary education themselves (Shin, 2007). Even though Shin (2014) did study the perspective of expatriate teachers, his exploration is somewhat limited by the instruments of research which were questionnaires only. Using questionnaire without interviews would prevent teachers from sharing detailed information and also from providing valuable information which is often available only once follow-up questions are asked.

Nonetheless, uncovering the teachers' true perspectives may prove difficult. According to Sung (2012, p. 25), Korean English teachers (i.e. domestic English teachers) refuse to acknowledge EFL as an area in which neocolonialism, imperialism and critical pedagogy are valid topics, with many either consciously or subconsciously preferring the default modes of discussing EFL in terms of less controversial topics such as teaching methods, activities to be used in class, or technology in the classroom (Sung, 2012, p. 25). Even though questioning this study's participants on critical pedagogy is expected to engender similar resistance and discomfort among NETs, effective research on critical pedagogy involves overcoming resistance and hesitation on the part of the teachers, in order to bring to the surface their true views and opinions with regard to their practice as EFL teachers.

Despite the anticipated resistance, the views held by expatriate English teachers employed in Korean post-secondary EFL need to be considered, especially because their voices often go unheard (Shin, 2014). Do they see themselves as technicians? Why or why not? Do they support teaching perspectives that embrace social reform? What are the obstacles they face? I believe that these are all very important questions that need to be explored, not only for the immediate purpose of revealing how well critical pedagogy "functions" and its relevance in Korea, but with a longer term goal of developing a critical pedagogy relevant to the local Korean setting. This aim further supports the rationale for a study of critical pedagogy despite the critique of the inappropriateness of critical approaches in Korean contexts (McGuire, 2007).

Within this mindset, the present research aims to address a very specific gap in the literature: to respond to Macedo's view of EFL teachers as "acritical" and "atheoretical" and to explore what it means to practice critical pedagogy in the Korean PSE context.

vi. Other considerations. One of the challenges in carrying out a literature review of critical pedagogy resides in the broad, multifaceted and often opaque associations it invokes. Critical pedagogy touches upon notions of neo-liberalism, Marxism, feminism, critical theory, critical literacy, imperialism, colonialism, globalization and oppression among many others. For this reason it is very difficult to identify, in the case of Korea (but not only), the relevant literature to one's own study which can be used as a springboard to further enquiries.

A further difficulty arises due to teachers' or educators' mistakenly reducing critical pedagogy to a "mechanized dialogical practice" (Macedo, 2005). According to Freire (1995) "dialogue is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task" (p. 379). Once dialogical practice strays from establishing a process of knowing and becomes instead an exaggerated celebration of experiences offering a reductionistic view of identity, the key tenets of critical pedagogy of power, agency and history end up being disregarded. Being effective critical pedagogues involves recognizing the social and not only the individualistic aspect of Freire's process of knowing (or acquiring knowledge). However, in the defence of teachers who are thus accused of misunderstanding critical pedagogy, the problem lies perhaps in the lack of meaningful research in analysing how the "institutionalized power imbalances between [educators] and their students" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 306) function. According to Ellsworth (1989), without addressing this matter the authoritarian nature of the teacher/student relationship would persist and any didactical approaches involving dialogue and problem solving offer only the illusion of equality. Furthermore, even for teachers who have a solid grasp of critical pedagogy as intended by Freire and make honest efforts to involve students in the critical, emancipatory and democratic modes of thinking espoused by critical pedagogy, the journey is not easy. Kampil

(1994) warns that transitioning within a traditional environment to a critical pedagogical position will not be easy in spite of teachers' best intentions towards students.

This small sample of contested and varied arguments hint at critical pedagogy as a topic disengaged from its portrayal in education as a common sense practice that any reasonable teacher would have a hard time saying no to. The fact that critical pedagogy is so easy to misconstrue makes further exploration of critical pedagogy in education a pressing and important need. Any such research would contribute to a deeper understanding of critical pedagogy so that its implicit dynamics could be uncovered, understood and then reformulated in different contexts throughout education, as envisioned by Freire.

In addition to these undeniable tensions in critical pedagogy, which I consider fundamental in framing and understanding the concepts that surface in my research, there are other important concepts guiding the thesis as follows:

1) The tensions between critical post-modernism and traditional (i.e. modernism) in education are considerable, complex and should be approached cautiously (Kampol, 1994). Therefore, while the present research adopts a critical post-modern lens, it acknowledges that for certain aspects of post-secondary education, more convincing arguments or views that are in line with modernism may be deemed more convincing.

2) Social constructivism, which posits that the learner constructs knowledge through social interaction, interpretation and understanding Vygotsky (1962), is relevant and compatible to EFL. While some may wonder whether knowledge can be created by students who are only able to communicate in English at a basic level, *consensus* is all that is needed. In social constructivism, "consensus between individuals is held to be the ultimate criterion upon which to judge the veracity of knowledge and not some form of 'objective truth test'" (Adams, 2006, p. 246).

3) “Knowledge can never be abstracted from questions of power” (Pennycook, 2010). Specifically to the current research, English teaching itself is a political not a neutral act (Sung, 2012, p. 36). This is a strong argument against an EFL which functions in the classroom as a collection of transactional processes where mere vocabulary and grammar are transmitted and acquired without any social connotation.

The relevance of all these considerations to the present study are undeniable. Not only will they serve as a reminder that a study on a critical pedagogy is complex venture in which every step needs carefully considered, but they help define how the data obtained will be perceived and studied.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the broad issues and debates impacting ELT and EFL, and subsequently focused on specific aspects of EFL in Korean settings. Following this discussion, a conceptual framework was put forward that identified gaps in the research as well the areas that could benefit from a deeper exploration of the issues associated with the topic of this research.

The discussion carried out in this chapter has helped identify several salient points which point to key issues not being fully addressed by existing research. The literature indicates that: a) Korean English students lack critical literacy skills; b) a lack of English proficiency does not hamper improvement in critical literacy, which would seem to indicate that critical pedagogy is possible with students of low English proficiency; and c) many researchers feel that there is an incompatibility between critical pedagogy and Asian contexts. While there are arguments supporting this last point, few studies have explored this issue in depth. All these points justify the initial premise of the study that critical pedagogy in EFL in Korea warrants further consideration.

Furthermore, the literature review has revealed two areas left largely unexplored in existing literature, which identify a clear knowledge gap. These show that NETs working in post-secondary Korean EFL have not been researched regarding their views about social change/reform, and secondly, that social change and reform have not been indirectly linked to critical pedagogy in a study on EFL.

In the following chapter, the study's paradigm, design, methods, data analysis, research bias/involvement, ethics and limitations will be presented and discussed.

Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in the current research. It starts with a description of the paradigm and design, followed by an explanation of the data collection methods used. Subsequently, it elaborates on how the data analysis was conducted. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ethics and researcher bias, and a section underlining the limitations of the study.

Design and method

The purpose of this study was to explore the views held by NETs with regards to *social reform* as a teaching perspective, their stated reasons for identifying (or not) with roles as social reformers, how these views are reflected in the NETs' practice (praxis). Furthermore, I sought to understand what the barriers impeding the adoption and enactment of social reform are, and how the NETs' perspectives relate to critical pedagogy. I felt that these questions would be best answered with a qualitative research design, and specifically, a case study.

Denzin and Lincoln's (1994) definition of qualitative research as the "study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 2) seemed perfectly appropriate for this research, and I thus opted for a qualitative design. In particular, the qualitative paradigm was preferred to the quantitative paradigm for offering an appropriate (or 'soft' as Gillham (2000) refers to it) mode to shed light on critical pedagogy in the specific context of NETs in Korean higher education, and initiate a discussion on findings and possible explanations. Strauss and Corbin's (1998) definition of qualitative research as "any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (p. 7) served to further validate the use of a qualitative design over a quantitative one.

Furthermore, the qualitative paradigm was deemed appropriate because the study sought to explore in-depth phenomena in a particular setting with the hope of theory generation, as traditionally undertaken in exploratory studies. Such studies, which include the present one, often ask the ‘what’ questions in qualitative research (Yin, 2009). The goal of theory generation is in contrast to the goal of confirming an existing theory which is often accomplished by *statistical generalization*, which Yin (2009) equates to making inferences about a population based on empirical data collected from a sample of that population. For this latter case a quantitative paradigm would have been preferable.

Within the qualitative paradigm, the method selected to conduct this research was case study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) define case study as “a single instance of a bounded system, such as a class, a school or a community...[that provide] a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles” (p. 253). I felt that Cohen et al.’s (2007) reference to “single instance of a bounded system” (p. 253) accurately applied to the participants of the present study as a group; it is this group itself that represents the case of the NETs who worked in ELT in a post-secondary institution in Korea.

The case study method was also selected as an appropriate means to study and understand how individuals behave ‘in context’, and for offering an optimal way to collect the likely various and complex kinds of evidence presented within the case. In particular, the present situation calls for what Yin (2009) refers to as an exploratory case study, which is meant to generate hypotheses that may later be tested by other studies. Nonetheless, the outcomes of the case study conducted here may also touch upon other types of case studies such as the *descriptive* (i.e. giving narrative accounts) and *explanatory* (i.e. testing theories/hypotheses) as defined by Yin (2009), or even upon

what Stake refers to instrumental case studies – “when the case is used to understand more than what is obvious to the observer” (as cited in Tellis, 1997, p. 1).

The study’s participants were selected among contacts I have developed while teaching in Korea. Broadly speaking, the participants were selected because they were NETs in Korean higher education and also because they are professionals and, finally, I had a rapport with them professionally. I believe such an amicable yet professional relationship would allow me to, as Gillham (2000) puts it, “get under the skin” (p. 11) of NETs to find how they really perceive things. As an ‘insider’ (i.e. a NET who worked in Korean higher education and was part of the group), I had access to the informal reality of NETs in a Korean environment, and I felt this would help the case study paint an accurate picture. This privileged position cannot be overstated – NET’ beliefs, intents and actions about teaching perspectives are private matters which might not truthfully be disclosed to outsiders. However, NETs would be more willing to disclose their true feelings (in this case likelihood to help the less fortunate) to an insider, and especially an insider they feel comfortable with.

Having access to this informal reality led to the recruitment process that I employed, which involved explicitly approaching teachers that I knew well and inviting them to participate in the project. I approached participants that I felt would be willing to consider carefully my questions and provide honest and uncensored responses. The specific steps of the recruitment process were: a) contacting the participants informally by email and inviting them to participate in my study. With this initial contact, I included a brief description of the study and the participants’ expected roles; b) if participants agreed to participate (they all did), I sent them an information letter providing a more formal description of the study and their specific involvement, and a letter of informed consent which they signed and returned to me.

The sampling procedure used was purposeful sampling, which is often utilized in qualitative research to allow the selection of information rich cases. Patton (1990) argues that such cases (case here is to be understood as *unit* or individual *participant* and not the case in *case-study* which refers to the whole group of participants being studied) allow “one to learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling” (p.169).

Miles and Huberman (1994) provide a typology of 16 strategies that are classified as types of purposeful sampling. Among these, I decided to employ *typical case sampling*, which Patton (1990) describes as “illustrat[ing] and highlight[ing] what is typical, normal, average” (p. 182), as I believed it would help best attain the goals of this study to explore the NETs’ teaching perspectives and their alignment with social reform. The research looked at a narrow subgroup of teachers - NETs in Korean PSE ELT education who have worked at the same university. I wanted to find typical members of this group who would be illustrative of NETs in Korea. To this end, I questioned what characteristics a typical candidate would need to be included in the sample, and what should the appropriate sample size be. While NETs in Korea come from seven countries (USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa), the large majority of teachers come from either Canada or USA. In addition, the distribution between female and male teachers is fairly even. Thus, I aimed to have an even number of participants where half would ideally be women and half men, and also half American and half Canadian if possible. This was not done for the purpose of generalization – or to make any “generalized statements about the experiences of all participants” (Patton, 1990, p. 173), but rather to highlight and illustrate the views of the NETs in an organized manner which would allow me to draw conclusions with respect to the research questions. By having equal numbers of Canadians and Americans, and females and males, I was

hoping to identify recurring ideas which I could classify into common themes which would be illustrative of NETS in Korea. With this in mind, I decided on four participants rather than two or six. With two participants it would have been perhaps difficult to find common ground (and themes) between the participants while addressing the research questions. On the other hand, with six participants the opposite effect might have been achieved: the uncovering of too many disparate ideas that would have been difficult to classify into themes, and which would have made the research findings unwieldy and confusing. As such, I felt that the depth of information that I intended to acquire from the small sample would be preferable to a large sample with less detailed data.

Data Collection Methods

The data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The first two subsections introduce these data collection techniques and will elaborate on how they were used in the study. The third section discusses the importance of using both questionnaires and interviews. The final subsection consists of a discussion on the issues of reliability and validity.

i. Questionnaire. A questionnaire is a fundamentally simple data collection technique - it asks questions that participants answer. It is, however, worth noting that questionnaires are not intended to “change people’s attitudes or provide them with information...[rather, their] purpose is to discover things” (Denscombe, 2010, p. 155).

Questionnaires are generally associated with quantitative research design and, in particular, with the survey research method (Creswell, 2012). While Gillham (2000) agrees that questionnaires are not traditionally employed in case studies, he concedes that they do have their “niche” in case studies. The present case study constitutes such a niche, as a questionnaire allows

not only a preliminary understanding of the participants before the interviews, but it also lets them develop an awareness of their teaching perspectives that they can use during the interview to articulate effectively their alignment to a specific perspective. This goal was facilitated by making the results available to both the participants and myself as soon as the questionnaires were completed, and also by sending participants a summary of the findings from the questionnaire prior to the interview (Appendix B).

In the present research, a *closed-ended* (i.e. participants had to select from 5 possible choices for every question), *self-administered* (i.e. taken by the participants themselves on their own time), *online* questionnaire (Appendix A) was used. The questions asked were identical to the questions in Pratt's (1998) and Collins' and Pratt's (2010) Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI). In a strict semantic sense, the questionnaire was not made up of "questions", but rather of statements followed by possible answers on a Likert scale (i.e. 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', 'strong disagree'). It is this broad classification of questionnaires, shared by Denscombe (2010), which was applied here.

The design of the current online questionnaire is similar to the original TPI; the content itself is left unchanged, with the exception of various statistical information from the original TPI which was omitted. Conversely, the present questionnaire queried participants on whether it was the first or the second time taking the test, whereas the original TPI did not.

The questionnaire consisted of 45 questions which were divided into 3 groups of 15 questions. Each of the 3 groups explored either the participants' *beliefs*, *intentions* or *actions*. Overall, the questions were designed (Pratt, 1998) to ascertain the participants' self-perceived teaching perspectives according 5 pre-established possibilities - Transmission, Apprenticeship, Developmental, Nurturing, and Social Reform (which is key to this study). Each of the questions

in the questionnaire was intended to measure alignment to one specific perspective; therefore, there are 9 questions that pertain to social reform – 3 each for beliefs, intentions and actions groups. This is important because the 9 questions were used as the basis of the interview phase.

The questionnaire was administered two times to each participant, without any modifications to the content between the first and the second time. The only difference was that on the first take, the participants were asked to respond to the TPI by thinking about their *current* and *real* teaching practices and views; on the other hand, on the second take the teachers were asked to answer the questions *as if* they were teaching in an ideal situation, totally free to carry out their teaching activities without any constraints imposed from the outside or self-censorship. The current study is meant to explore not only if and how teachers think about (and apply) critical pedagogy in the classroom, but how they could hypothetically do so in an ideal situation where there were no barriers.

ii. Interview. Interviews, and in-depth interviews in particular, are a popular data collection technique (Creswell, 2012) allowing researchers to collect data based on: 1) opinions, feelings, emotions and experiences; 2) sensitive issues; and, 3) privileged information (Denscombe, 2010). As the present study was anticipated to reveal information belonging to all these three areas, in-depth interviews were deemed appropriate.

Interviews can be also classified as face-to-face and online interviews. After many decades of being used as the primary tools for data collection in qualitative research, the face-to-face interview has come to be considered the ‘gold standard’ in terms of validity and rigor (McCoyd and Kerson, 2006), while online interviews have come to be perceived as a less desirable alternative (Deaking and Wakefield, 2014). Nonetheless, the increase of online communication tools plus the ubiquity of high-speed internet has seen online interviewing gradually become a

widely used tool in research (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour 2014). One such tool is Skype, an online service offering real-time audio and video communication giving researchers the opportunity to gain access to participants in different geographical locations than the researcher. A further advantage of Skype interviewing, which was especially salient for the present study, is that it is free; this constitutes an important advantage to both researcher and participants. In addition, by dispensing with the logistics and scheduling details associated with face-to-face interviewing, Skype offers great flexibility and ease of access to participants. In fact, research shows that even when researcher and participants were located in the same geographical location and participants were offered to choose between Skype and face-to-face interviews they preferred the former (Deakin and Wakefield, 2014). While all these benefits point to the viability of Skype interviews as a data collection tool, it is its ability to overcome geographical dispersion that made Skype interviewing indispensable in this study. With participants and researcher located in countries throughout Asia, North America or Europe, face-to-face interviews would have been unfeasible.

Despite the benefits, Skype interviews also exhibit some disadvantages, which can often be subtle. For example, the “head shot” view provided by the webcam during a Skype interview can impede the observation of the participants’ body-language by the researcher, which in turn could contribute to the researcher “misreading” the participant (Cater, 2011). This point is underlined by Deakin and Wakefield (2014) who emphasize that in online interviews “subtle visual, non-verbal cues that can help to contextualise the interviewee in a face-to-face scenario are lost” (p. 605).

Beyond their in-depth and online (i.e. Skype) dimensions, the interviews used in this study were *semi-structured* and *open-ended*. Semi-structured interviews are the well-suited to this study;

when properly conducted, they can generate rich data (Gillham, 2004). Denscombe (2010) adds that semi-structured interviews offer flexibility “in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher” (p. 175). This latter point which reveals the link between semi-structured interviews and open-ended interviews will be clarified with the subsequent example.

In the present research, the interview questions are semi-structured in the sense that, on one hand, they are focused on the nine specific questions from the questionnaire which pertain to participants’ adherence to social reform, and on the other hand, they allow for follow-up questions depending on the participants’ initial answers. Specifically, participants were asked to elaborate on their answers from the questionnaire, and to explain the answers between the first questionnaire take (i.e. the real situation) and the second take (i.e. the ideal situation), especially where the answers did not match. Here is an example of how a question was posed: “*The next question (in the questionnaire) was ‘Individual learning without social change is not enough’. You answered ‘strongly disagree’ in the current situation and ‘agree’ if the current situation were ideal. Could you elaborate on your answer?*” Depending on the depth of the participant’s answer, more details could be requested: “*You answered that in an ideal situation you would do more. Could you explain why?*” Questions such as the last one demonstrate the open-endedness of the interview. In open-ended interviews, open-ended questions are posed by the researcher which allow participants to “best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher” (Creswell, 2012, p. 218).

The interviews were started by asking warm-up questions aimed at putting the participant at ease and creating rapport. This was especially important in light of the fact that online interviews

are missing rapport building aspects of traditional face-to-face environment such as shaking hands or offering the participant a coffee (Deaking and Wakefield, 2014).

iii. Using the questionnaire and interview together. According to Collins and Pratt (2010), of more than 116,000 participants who have taken the TPI in a 10-year period, only 3% identified social reform as their dominant teaching perspective. Prior to the study, these findings made it probable that of the 4 participants in my study, none would identify social reform as their dominant perspective. In preparation for such a possibility the interview questions were designed to carefully and non-threateningly query participants so as to uncover their reasons behind not identifying social reform as their dominant perspective. Conversely, participants who identified with social reform as a dominant perspective (if any) were queried on the reasons for doing so, although in their case less resistance to such questioning was anticipated. Subsequently, regardless the degree to which the participants identified with social reform they were asked to identify how their praxis, as extension of their social reform perspective, is applied in the classroom. According to the TPI, even if a teaching perspective is the least dominant perspective, there is no reason to believe it will not have an impact on the teacher's praxis to some degree. Finally, all participants were queried about the perceived barriers impeding their further engagement with social reform.

It was essential for the interviews to be preceded by the TPI. Taking the TPI offered a two-fold benefit. First, it presented the participants with the opportunity to articulate and visualize their teaching perspectives, to understand which teaching perspectives are dominant and which are not, and grasp where social reform was ranked among the other perspectives. Secondly, the interview offered additional objectivity in that participants were queried specifically on their views towards the 'social reform' perspective as manifested in the TPI. Without the TPI, the participants' views towards social reform, and critical pedagogy implicitly, might have been skewed - with

participants identifying with social reform at interview time as a positive or noble undertaking, even though they might not have applied it in practice.

iv. Reliability and validity. The specificity of the data collection methods of this study calls for a brief discussion of *reliability* and *validity* as they apply to qualitative research, which I consider obligatory for the present case study. Richie and Lewis' (2003) argue that reliability is generally concerned with "the replicability of research findings and whether or not they would be repeated if another study, using the same or similar methods" (p. 270). Consequently, in exploratory research studies, which focus on hypotheses/theory generation, replicability is not a goal. Holstein and Gubrium echo this sentiment when they argue that qualitative research is dynamic and works best in a responsive fashion and as a result qualitative studies cannot nor should they be replicated (as cited in Richie and Lewis, 2003). In the present study, the issue of reliability was similarly approached.

Conversely, validity is generally understood to be concerned with the 'correctness' or 'precision' of a research. There are two types of validity: *internal*, which is concerned with whether you are "investigating what you claim to be investigating" (Richie and Lewis, 2003, p. 273), and *external*, which refers to the extent to which the research' constructs and findings are applicable to other groups in the population (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). In this study, I was primarily concerned with ensuring internal validity rather than external validity, as recommended for qualitative studies (Richie and Lewis, 2003). To attain this outcome, I followed the guiding questions suggested by Hammersley that are based on the primary question he suggests: "Are we accurately reflecting the phenomena under study as perceived by the study population?" (as cited in Richie and Lewis, 2003, p. 274)

Data Analysis

Yin (2009) suggests that all case study researchers should follow a general analytic strategy in order to organize the story told by the case study and help the researcher “treat the evidence fairly, produce compelling analytic conclusions, and rule out alternative interpretations” (p. 163). I decided to follow the strategy Ying (2009) calls *relying on theoretical propositions* which involves following the theoretical propositions which lead to the research - in my case, to explore the possibility that ESL in Korean higher education is an acritical and atheoretical field.

The data analysis method used is the constant comparative analysis (CCA). While this method is generally associated with grounded theory research, there is evidence of its wide use outside of grounded theory research (Fram, 2013).

Although the present research could have been carried out along a grounded theory design, making the deployment of CCA straightforward (in that it would have followed the specific steps recommended in the grounded theory literature), a case study design was considered more appropriate due to the exploratory nature of the study, which was not principally concerned with theory development as is the case in grounded theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Furthermore, the CCA was considered appropriate for this research for offering an inductive approach to studying the research problem, namely, by allowing the generation of new meaning from the data, as well as a critical examination of the data.

The CCA is used by the researcher “to develop concepts from the data by coding and analyzing at the same time” (Kolb, 2012, p. 83). At a less abstract level, concepts can be thought of as *categories* and *incidents*. Completing the online questionnaire immediately produced coded and tabulated data, containing for each teaching perspective of each participant scores on *beliefs*, *intention* and *action*, which constitute three principal *categories* (as defined in the constant

comparative analysis method). In addition, the data obtained from the questionnaire allowed the formulation of suitable interview questions.

Following the interviews, *incidents* were identified as the unique participants' individual reactions (or interpretations) to the 3 categories, as expressed in the questionnaires. During and following the interviews, other categories became apparent. To this end, as well as to understand the relationships between categories, I used Scott's (2004) guiding framework, which includes the following questions:

- What is [the category]?
- When does [the category] occur?
- Where does [the category] occur?
- Why does [the category] occur?
- How does [the category] occur?
- With what consequences does [the category] occur or is [the category] understood?

Concurrently, CCA was employed to analyze the interviews by doing comparisons within the same interview and between different interviews.

Ethics

The participants in the study have all previously worked in Korean higher education as NETs. The informed consent of the participants was sought in order to ensure their voluntary participation.

Another important aspect was guaranteeing the participants' privacy and confidentiality. As a result of the data collection methods, which involved one-to-one email exchanges and video

calls between the participants and myself, and hence limit access of third parties to the data, the participants' privacy and confidentiality was and will continue to be protected. Additionally, in the chapter sharing the findings of the research, fictional names were assigned to the participants and the name of the university was not be disclosed.

One potentially thorny issue, both from an ethical perspective as well as from a validity standpoint, was the imperative that I did not pass judgment on the participants' teaching perspectives as reported in the TPI. For example, some participants might have align themselves with a developmental perspective, while others might associate with a social reform perspective. Since the aim of the study was to uncover the teachers' perspective about critical pedagogy, which equates largely with the social reform perspective, participants who did not identify with the social reform perspective were neither overtly nor tacitly condemned by the researcher for selecting the 'wrong' perspective. To this end, I needed to monitor my questions and demeanor closely and to ensure that participants were gently questioned on delicate matters, such as when asked to justify why social reform does not play a more principal role in their teaching. Nonetheless, participants were made aware that the current research was a *critical* study, which by its very nature was intended to question and deconstruct adopted assumptions, and hence possibly unsettle the participants or cause disagreements.

Insider research, which refers to the researcher's direct access and involvement in the research setting (Robson, 2002), constitutes another important ethical concern. While some of its detractors have questioned its utility, I consider insider research a necessary prerequisite for understanding the participants' *real* thinking and hence, completing an effective exploratory study. The implications of insider research on the ethics of the current research were minimal as there are

no norms stipulated by the university or other educational bodies overseeing higher education in Korea that restrict teachers from sharing their opinions on their teaching practices.

Researcher bias

While the discussion on ethics showed that insider research did not adversely affect the study, the question was raised on whether it introduced any bias. Specifically, my tacit insider knowledge and familiarity with the other teachers and my own experiences as a NET working in Korean higher education could have potentially lead to thinking that “I understand all the issues in play” attitude. Such generalizations, which might have indicated a biased attitude, were avoided; to this end, I held myself to approach the project with an open mind and to involve participants not only in answering questions, but also in verifying the validity and contextual appropriateness of my questions.

In spite of these efforts, it must be noted that researchers often bring rich personal experiences, beliefs and opinions with them which are impossible (and often undesirable) to extricate from. Offering the data transcription process as an example, Seidman (2006) argues that “no interviewer can enter into the study of an interview as a clean slate” (p. 132). In light of this, I believe awareness was an essential way to avoid bias – the awareness that I am not a clean slate and as such constant reflect on whether I am introducing any biased view to the study.

Similarly, I was aware of any possible researcher bias introduced as a result of my unstated support for critical pedagogy. To eliminate this kind of research bias I avoided disapproving of participants’ views which counteracted my enthusiasm for critical pedagogy, while also avoiding posing questions in a manner which might have been construed as aiming to persuade participants of critical pedagogy’s qualities.

Also worth considered was the possibility whether the selected sample was biased in favour of people who thought like me because they are acquaintances of mine. However, I found that by being an acquaintance of mine did not mean that a participant and I shared the same thinking – in my opinion, being acquainted with someone means understanding that person only superficially. Rather, to start with, I understood very little of how the participants-acquaintances thought in-depth, yet by virtue of being an acquaintance I had sufficient rapport to ask the difficult questions - “getting under their skin” according to Gillham (2000) - so as to reveal their real thinking.

Limitations

An important limitation involved the issue of accessibility, namely: was the information obtained representative of all available opinions? Gillham (2000) articulates this point well when he claims that some participants who may have interesting information to share may be reluctant to share their views with the researcher as they may feel uncomfortable that their opinions “do not fit the party line” (p. 30). If participants self-censor themselves in such a way this may pose a serious limitation to collecting valuable data.

Another limitation pertained to the potential impact of the current study on future research. Exploratory studies are widely considered a *prelude* to social science research rather than the research itself (Tellis, 1997). Despite that Yin (2009) believes this line of thinking flawed, many others subscribe to it and as a result have contributed a view that exploratory (case) studies are second-rate kind of research.

Finally, the small sample could be perceived as a limitation; however, while a larger sample from multiple universities would have yielded stronger results, the data was still rich from the sample this study achieved.

Conclusion

This chapter, which was divided into six sections, presented an in-depth look into the methodology used in the present research. In the first section, the qualitative design and the case study method were explored, and a justification of why they were utilized here was provided. Subsequently, the recruitment process and the sampling procedure were delved into. The second section, data collection, clarified the use of questionnaire and interview as the data collection techniques, explained why they were both necessary, and ended with a discussion on data reliability and validity. The third section, data analysis, outlined the method for analyzing the data – the constant comparison analysis method, as a result of which the data is organized into incidents and categories. In section four, ethics, the ethical consideration facing the researcher were presented, and the measures taken to ensure participants' ethical treatment were laid out. The following section, researcher bias, underlined the ways in which researcher bias could manifest itself as well as how to mitigate it. The final section, provided some of the limitations of the study.

In the following chapter, the study's close findings emerging from the data analysis are presented.

Results and findings

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the overall findings of the research starting with a section outlining the findings from the questionnaire which is followed by a more voluminous section providing the findings from the interviews.

In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, fictional names were used to replace the real names of the participants. Thus, the study's participants will be referred to as: Gerald, Tony, Ann, and Jennifer. As previously mentioned, all four participants are native English speakers; furthermore, half of them are from Canada and the other half are from the USA, and half are females and half are males. More information about the participants was not provided as it would have increased the probability of breaching their anonymity, and it was not deemed essential to the findings.

Questionnaire findings

After the questionnaires were completed by the participants, the results were compiled and the perspectives for each teacher were ranked from the dominant perspective to the recessive perspective (i.e. the least dominant perspective). The 'dominant' perspective represents the perspective that a participant identified with the most, while the 'recessive' perspective represents the perspective that the participant identified with the least. Ranking a perspective as dominant, recessive or neither of the two was based on the number of points a perspective acquired for the specific questions associated with that perspective in the questionnaire. As such, the maximum number of points a perspective could garner was 45 points, if a 5 point maximum was obtained in

the answer to each of the 9 questions associated with that perspective. Conversely, the minimum was 9 points – 1 point in the answers to each of the 9 questions.

As previously discussed in the methodology section, based on data collected by Collins and Pratt (2011) on other teachers who took the TPI, it was anticipated that of the 4 participants in the present study none were likely to have social reform as a dominant perspective. This held true in this study as shown by Figures 1 through 4.

For Gerald, the results indicate social reform to be recessive both in the current and ideal situation (Table 1). In spite of this, in the ideal situation social reform scored higher (29 points) than in the current situation (22 points), reflecting a 7 points increase.

| Table 1 | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Teaching perspective - Gerald</i> | | | |
| A. Current situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Nurturing | 37 | Dominant perspective |
| 2 | Transmission | 34 | |
| 3 | Apprenticeship | 34 | |
| 4 | Developmental | 26 | |
| 5 | Social Reform | 22 | Recessive perspective |
| B. Ideal situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Nurturing | 41 | Dominant perspective |
| 2 | Transmission | 41 | Dominant perspective |
| 3 | Apprenticeship | 40 | |
| 4 | Developmental | 29 | Recessive perspective |
| 5 | Social Reform | 29 | Recessive perspective |

In the case of Tony, social reform was recessive in the current situation, and it was also recessive in the ideal situation; however, in the ideal situation it was tied with Nurturing and Transmission for last place in its recessiveness (Table 2). In this case, it increased from 34 to 35 points, a 1 point increase.

| Table 2 | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Teaching perspective - Tony</i> | | | |
| A. Current situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Developmental | 43 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Transmission | 36 | |
| 3 | Apprenticeship | 36 | |
| 4 | Nurturing | 35 | |
| 5 | Social Reform | 34 | Recessive Perspective |
| B. Ideal situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Developmental | 43 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Apprenticeship | 36 | |
| 3 | Social Reform | 35 | Recessive Perspective |
| 4 | Nurturing | 35 | Recessive Perspective |
| 5 | Transmission | 35 | Recessive Perspective |

For the third participant, Ann, the social reform perspective was recessive in the current situation; however, it was no longer recessive in the ideal situation being replaced in this position by the transmission perspective (Table 3). Specifically, in the ideal situation social reform scored higher than the real situation by a 36 to 25 point margin, indicating an 11 point increase.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Table 3 | | | |
| <i>Teaching perspective - Ann</i> | | | |
| A. Current situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Nurturing | 39 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Transmission | 32 | |
| 3 | Apprenticeship | 30 | |
| 4 | Developmental | 30 | |
| 5 | Social Reform | 25 | Recessive Perspective |
| B. Ideal situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Nurturing | 44 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Apprenticeship | 38 | |
| 3 | Social Reform | 36 | |
| 4 | Developmental | 36 | |
| 5 | Transmission | 35 | Recessive Perspective |

In the case of Jennifer, the results show that the social reform perspective was recessive in both the current and the ideal situation (Table 4). The point distribution is 25 points for the current situation versus 30 in the ideal situation, revealing a 5 point increase.

The particular set of results shown in Table 1 to 4 indicate that for none of the participants social reform is the dominant perspective, but rather the opposite. Specifically, in the current situation, social reform is recessive (i.e. it is ranked as the least dominant perspective) for all participants, and it is not tied with other perspectives in its recessiveness. Conversely, in the ideal situation, social reform is not recessive for 1 participant and it is recessive for 3 participants. Out of these 3 cases, in 1 case social reform is not tied with other perspectives, while in the other 2 cases it is tied with other perspectives in terms of its recessiveness.

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Table 4 | | | |
| <i>Teaching perspective - Jennifer</i> | | | |
| A. Current situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Nurturing | 39 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Transmission | 34 | |
| 3 | Apprenticeship | 34 | |
| 4 | Developmental | 33 | |
| 5 | Social Reform | 25 | Recessive Perspective |
| B. Ideal situation: | | | |
| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Teaching Perspective Name</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
| 1 | Apprenticeship | 45 | Dominant Perspective |
| 2 | Developmental | 43 | |
| 3 | Nurturing | 42 | |
| 4 | Transmission | 34 | |
| 5 | Social Reform | 30 | Recessive Perspective |

It is worth mentioning at this point that the participants' alignment with perspectives other than social reform does not necessarily indicate that they doubt the importance of social reform or the teacher's roles within it. According to the design of the questionnaire, perspectives are not designated 'good' or 'bad' (Collins and Pratt, 1998). Selecting one of the five perspectives indicates an inclination of a participant towards it at the expense of another perspective, yet partial alignment with other non-dominant perspectives always occurs.

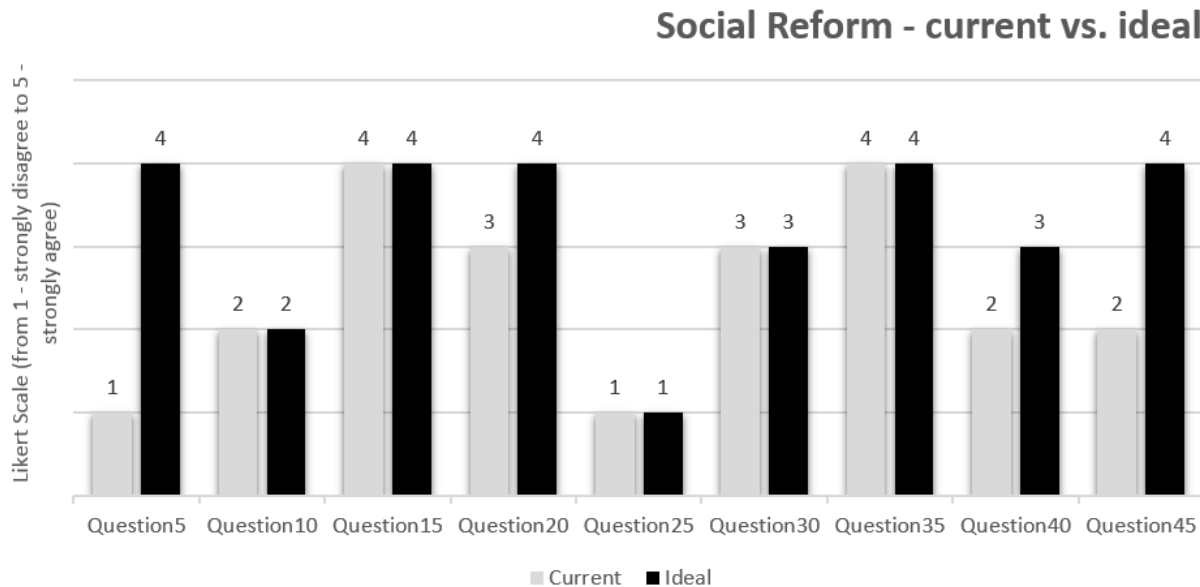
In addition to the ranking of the social reform perspective with regards to the other perspectives, the data contained in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 allows measuring the point increase – it is always an increase – associated with each perspective when comparing the current versus the ideal situation:

| Transmission | Apprenticeship | Developmental | Nurturing | Social Reform |
|--|----------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| +9 | +25 | +19 | +12 | +24 |
| <i>Note: The cumulative point variance from Current to Ideal across all participants</i> | | | | |

The ‘+’ in front of the number denotes that for the ideal situation, when the point variance (i.e. points from ideal minus points from current) for all participants are totaled, there is an increased alignment with the particular perspective from the current. For instance, to the +24 for Social Reform, Gerald contributed a +7, Tony +1, Ann +11, and Jennifer +5. According to this data, Social Reform exhibits the second highest variance, second only to Apprenticeship by a single point. This indicates that in an ideal situation Social Reform would benefit from a high growth in the degree to which participants align themselves to it.

The following graphs (Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4) illustrate the question by question breakdown of only the nine 9 questions in the questionnaire that query the participants on their views regarding social reform. The x-axis comprises the 9 specific questions, and the y-axis contains the 5 possible answers according to the Likert scale. The answers collected are shown by 2 bars – grey for the current situation and black for the ideal situation.

The answers on a question by question basis further accentuate the level to which participants would align to social reform in an ideal situation. In Gerald’s case, for 4 out of the 9 questions, he answered in a manner denoting a higher alignment with social reform in an ideal situation, whereas for the other 5 questions the answers were unchanged between the current and the ideal (Figure 1).

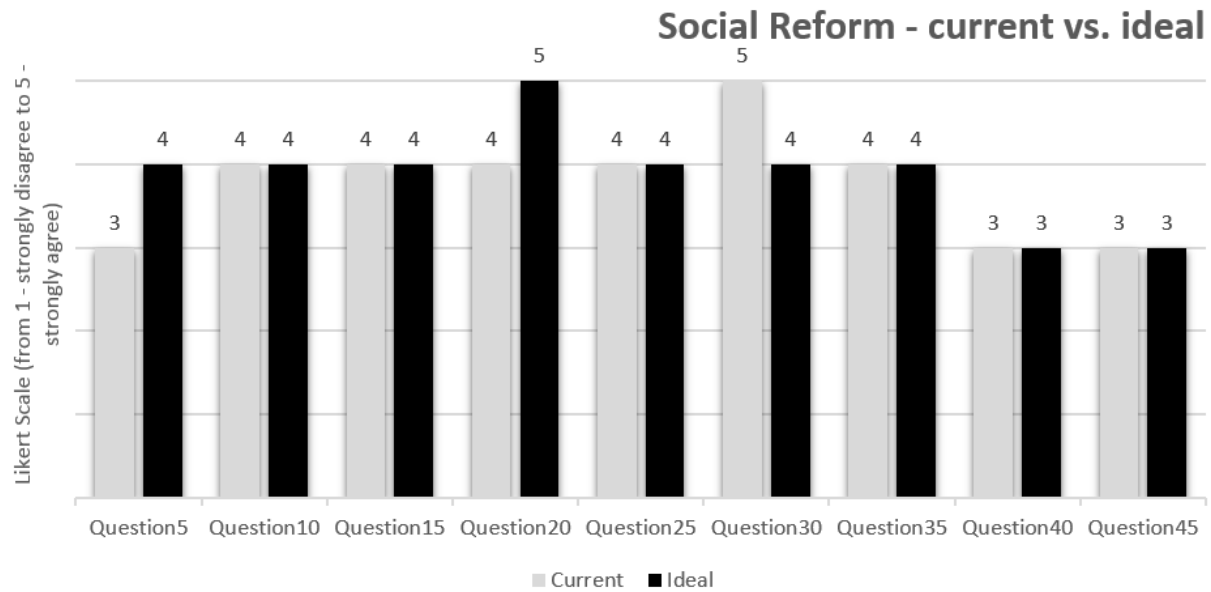


*Figure 1 . The Social Reform perspective for **Gerald** . This figure illustrates the answers (in points) to the 9 questions pertaining to Social Reform in the current and the ideal situation.*

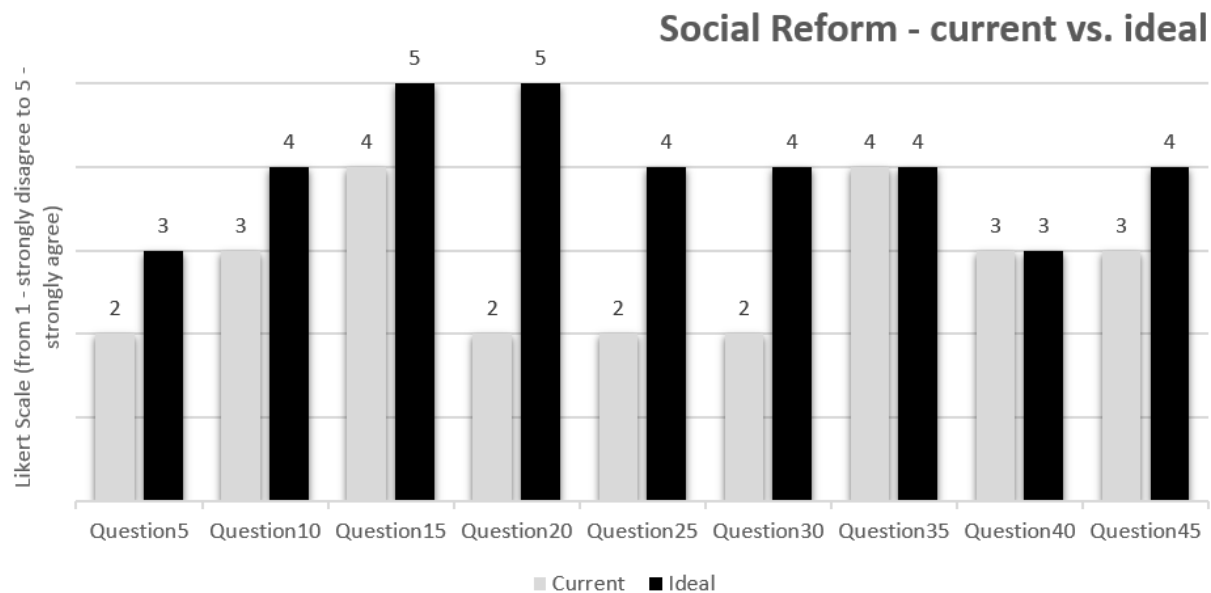
In the case of Tony, 6 out of the 9 questions stayed unchanged (Figure 2). For the 3 remaining questions, in 2 of them alignment to social reform increased in the ideal situation and for 1 question alignment decreased.

For Ann, in 7 out of the 9 questions alignment to social reform increased in the ideal situation (Figure 3), whereas for the 2 remaining questions alignment to social reform stayed constant.

Following the findings exemplified by these two sets of graphs some conclusions can be drawn. First of all, the variance in the answers between the current and the ideal situations justify the deployment of the questionnaire in its present format. If the answers would have been consistent between the two test takes, this would perhaps have raised questions with regards to the usage of the questionnaire in this way.



*Figure 2 . The Social Reform perspective for **Tony** . This figure illustrates the answers (in points) to the 9 questions pertaining to Social Reform in the current and the ideal situation.*



*Figure 3 . The Social Reform perspective for **Ann** . This figure illustrates the answers (in points) to the 9 questions pertaining to Social Reform in the current and the ideal situation.*

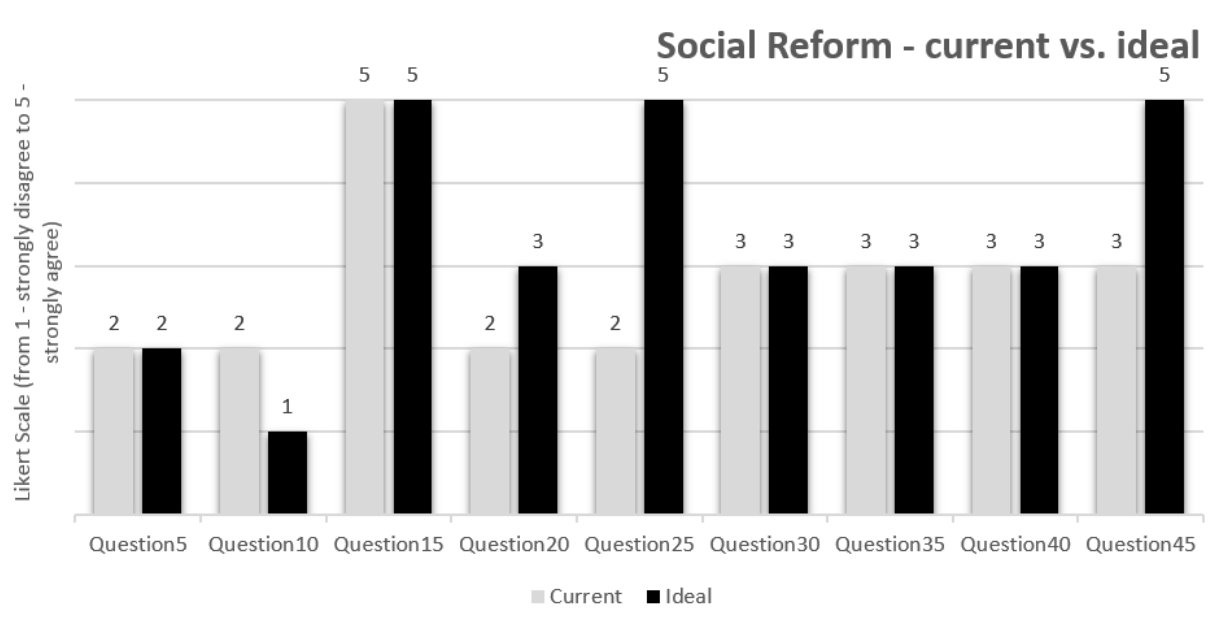


Figure 4. The Social Reform perspective for *Jennifer*. This figure illustrates the answers (in points) to the 9 questions pertaining to Social Reform in the current and the ideal situation.

Secondly, the cumulative increased alignment to social reform from current to ideal of +24 indicates that there are obstacles in the current contexts of the participants which prevent their alignment to social reform at the ‘wished for’ (or ideal) level; therefore, elements of social reform would be pursued more if conditions were ideal. This outcome has two benefits. First, it validates the expected results that were made at the start of this study that in the participants’ present contexts there are obstacles precluding alignment to social reform to an optimal level. Secondly, it justifies the type of interview subsequently used, namely in-depth interviews, which were constructed to uncover, question and explain the discrepancies between the current and the ideal situation. The specific role played by the interviews will be further discussed in-depth in the following section presenting the findings from the interviews.

Interview findings

This section is divided into three parts. In the first part, the process detailing how the final themes were reached from the transcribed interviews is explained. In the second part, each of the 6 themes is broken down into its member parts - first categories, and then the repeating ideas across participants; subsequently, the repeating ideas are individually discussed and exemplified by quotations or examples from the interviews. In the third part, the participants' answers to the question 'Are EFL teachers acritical technical workers?' are provided.

Generating the themes. The data collected from the participants was first transcribed and coded. Subsequently, categories were generated based on the coded data according to a process that can be conceptualized as comprising the following three steps.

In step 1, the coded data was organized into *repeating ideas* which were made up of (or exemplified by) specific details and examples provided by participants at interview time. Here the notion of repeating ideas refers to both ideas that: were restated by more than one participant, or echoed by the same participant in a different context or at a different time during the interview. Next, similar repeating ideas were grouped together according to their similarity into categories which were appropriately named to reflect their content. Table 5 shows the number of categories that emerged per participant according to the particular aspect (i.e. *beliefs*, *intentions* or *actions*) pursued by the questions.

| Table 5 | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>'Raw' themes divided according beliefs, intentions, actions</i> | | | |
| <u>Name</u> | <u>Beliefs (# of themes)</u> | <u>Intentions (# of themes)</u> | <u>Actions(# of themes)</u> |
| Gerald | 6 | 6 | 9 |
| Tony | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Jennifer | 5 | 6 | 11 |
| Ann | 6 | 5 | 10 |

In step 2, all the categories were organized into a table consisting of participants for columns and categories for rows. Next, the categories were color-coded; the same colors were used for the similar categories both across participants and for a single participant (for similar or recurring categories). It should be noted that some categories had a much higher degree of similarity than others.

In step 3, the similar color-coded categories were closely examined to determine the degree of overlap by inspecting the repeating ideas in all the interviews and their supporting evidence (i.e. specific instances and quotations provided by participants). The similar categories were classified together into 6 overarching themes as shown in Table 5. As expected, the theme creation process was not “neat” and straightforward for two primary reasons. First of all, some themes exhibited overlap. For instance, themes 1 and 6 may appear to contain very similar categories; however, the content was sufficiently different to warrant the generation of distinct themes. Another challenge arose due to the fact that some categories were unique to one participant and were not mentioned by others, thus, the information they offered could not be classified into a theme.

It should also be noted that in the generated themes two or all three aspects (i.e. beliefs, intentions and actions) often overlap. While at the start of the study I was hoping that participants’ answers would conform to the specific aspect my questions were targeting, in reality the

participants' answers could not be classified neatly as belonging to one aspect. For example, when I asked a participant questions aimed at uncovering the *actions* she/he took to enact social change in the classroom, given the open-ended nature of the interviews, the participant unavoidably touched upon the *beliefs* and *intentions* aspects.

Summary of themes:

1. Current challenges to social change in Korean ELT
2. Appropriateness of social change in Korean ELT
3. Interpretations of social change
4. Teachers' responsibilities in the Korean EFL classroom
5. Suggestions for integrating (some) social change in the Korean EFL classroom
6. Barriers to social change in Korean ELT

Themes, Categories and Repeating Ideas.

Theme 1 – Current challenges to social change in Korean ELT. This theme comprises three categories, each underlining 3 current challenges to social change in a Korean ELT context:

- Category 1: Social change through/in the EFL classroom is challenging.
- Category 2: Incorporating 'necessary' societal change within 'instructional goals' is challenging.
- Category 3: Teachers have conflicting views on whether 'values' or 'knowledge' (or both) should be emphasized.

The first category set forth the notion that *social change through/in the EFL classroom is challenging*. Three recurring suggestions (or repeating ideas) as why this may be the case were identified in the participants' answers:

- Repeating idea 1: Attempting change in the Korean language classroom is challenging.
- Repeating idea 2: Discussing social change in the Korean EFL classroom is challenging.
- Repeating idea 3: Belief change is challenging in Korea.

First, it was suggested that *attempting change in the Korean language classroom is challenging*. Various reasons were offered as to why this might be the case. Gerald claimed that both cultural and institutional limitations prevent teachers from attempting change; he stated that there "isn't enough [classroom] time to do it [talk about social change]", and that "Korean society is conservative". Ann also identified lack of time as an issue, and concurred that Korea is more conservative than Canada, her home country, and as a result "a more conservative starting position" should be taken by the NETs in the classroom. This repeating idea was contributed to by Tony who felt that belief change in the Korean classroom is difficult because "many classes in Korea are cliquish so the teacher has to engage in constant negotiation and renegotiation to get students to do what he wants". In addition, Tony argued that "the first rule of teaching – 'know your students'" was adversely impacted by EFL teachers teaching too many classes and classes that were too large.

Secondly, it was found that *discussing social change in the Korean EFL classroom is difficult*. While all participants agreed this to be the case, the reasons offered were diverse. Gerald attributed the difficulty of discussing social change in the EFL classroom to the students' low English levels, and Ann concurred with this view by stating that "the level of the students was too

basic to attempt complex discussion[s] on society”. Conversely, Tony argued that students “are struggling to open up to foreign educators”. Tony also added that students are also confused by their dichotomous roles as active/passive learners, which he explained as follows: “On one hand, they are told [by their parents and Korean teachers] to listen to the teacher - be passive learners, which happens in journey through school and their interactions with the Korean teachers; on the other hand, they are expected to speak, especially in the ESL class. Naturally, they are confused!”

The third repeating idea for category 1 was that *belief change is challenging in Korea*. This view was widely supported by participants with a variety of explanations provided. Gerald stated that “Korean culture is restrictive, the Korean work environment is restrictive and Korean language is restrictive”. Ann echoed this view by stating that Korea is conservative and a “monoculture”. When asked to clarify the term “monoculture”, she described it as a homogenous society which includes only a small mix of other cultures. Ann also added that a “lack of [teacher] freedom” was also responsible for belief change being attempted by NETs. Tony claimed that belief change in the context of Korea is difficult because, just like elsewhere in the world, “people usually see only the short-term results” and belief change requires a more ample future-oriented view.

The second category set forth the notion *that incorporating ‘necessary’ societal change within ‘instructional goals’ is challenging*. Three recurring repeating ideas as to why this may be the case were identified from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: The education of students (possible through instructional goals) is essential.
- Repeating idea 2: Linking ‘necessary’ societal change to ‘instructional goals’ is a complex process.

- Repeating idea 3: The students' English proficiency level significantly influences the teacher's 'instructional goals' – whether these are solely technical or include social aspects.

First, participants suggested that *the education of students (possible through instructional goals) is essential, whether it includes social change or not*. Gerald viewed teaching English and changing society as incompatible. He asserted that he tried to keep his focus on teaching English and not attempt changes to Korean culture. He clarified his stance by saying: “they hired me to teach basic English not to talk about my trip to India”. This position is reaffirmed by Jennifer who argued that the teacher's job is not to change society, but rather “to help students individually by focusing on their motivations, interests and needs”. She added that the NETs who “forcefully attempt to engage in social change in Korea... are people who consider their culture superior to others”. She views their intention “to change Koreans and Korean culture” as misguided because “it's very hard for anyone who is new to a new country to even understand things, especially if you don't speak the language and are not *fluent in the culture* [sic]”.

Secondly, it was found that *linking 'necessary' societal change to 'instructional goals' is a complex process*. Gerald argued that he hesitated to make his students aware of what he deemed necessary changes as this might not have been perceived as “necessary” by them, but rather as “insulting” to Korean culture. As such, to communicate to students information not directly related to English, but important to them nonetheless, Gerald argued that it is “the teacher's responsibility to ‘inform’ not to ‘convert’”. In support of this, he claimed trying to: “inform of my point of view, inform of my life experiences, inform of my ideals”. He added that “the wish to inform may not even be a good quality for a teacher, but it's my personality”. Tony provided further reasons why linking instructional goals and necessary changes is complex. He said that “sometimes

instructional goals are framed for the knowledge”, and these are abstract and difficult to link with necessary changes. Still, other times instructional goals are framed for “a certain way to approach a problem, or a certain way to approach an interaction” and these instructional goals are the easiest “to link to some sort of societal change”.

For the third repeating idea of category 2, it was found that *the students’ English proficiency level significantly influences the teacher’s ‘instructional goals’ – whether these are solely technical or include social aspects*. Ann argued that “the students’ level determines the teacher’s instructional goals”; as such, “at lower levels instructional goals should be physical, technical goals, while at higher levels instructional goals could have social discussions as an actual goal”. Jennifer concurred that the students’ English proficiency level is an important factor and that teachers can fall into the trap of planning goals that are beyond the student abilities or doing things that are too radically different and too quickly. Furthermore, “at the basic level (where most students are) it is difficult to get beyond discussing the most basic issues”; therefore, when referring to course materials, she mentioned that “discussion oriented books are incorporated into the curriculum only at advanced conversation levels”.

The third and final category of theme 1 held that *teachers have conflicting views on whether ‘values’ or ‘knowledge’ (or both) should be emphasized*. Three repeating ideas put forward by the participants were found to support this category:

- Repeating idea 1: Neither ‘values’ nor ‘knowledge’ can be emphasized at the expense of the other.
- Repeating idea 2: ‘Relationship’ should be emphasized over ‘values’ or ‘knowledge’.
- Repeating idea 3: If possible, the teacher should emphasize both ‘values’ and ‘knowledge’, otherwise emphasize ‘knowledge’.

The first repeating idea was that *neither 'values' nor 'knowledge' can be emphasized at the expense of the other*. Tony argued that values and knowledge should be placed on equal pedestals. He noted that if “if values are emphasized to the point of that the knowledge is compromised, for [him] that sort of strips away one of the uses of an education”; therefore, in his classes, he aimed to integrate values and knowledge concomitantly to “see how they interact and how they play out”. In order to do this, he recommended that teachers look into combining values and knowledge holistically; still, he acknowledged that this may be more difficult to accomplish for inexperienced teachers “who are still teaching by the book”, as such teachers may “appear inauthentic to the students”. Gerald also considered values and knowledge equally important, yet his approach is different from Tony’s. By altogether avoiding a ‘values versus knowledge’ debate, Gerald alleged that teachers ought to ensure that they inform rather than convert when approaching any topic in class, whether it’s imparting values or knowledge.

The second repeating idea was *‘relationship’ should be emphasized over ‘values’ or ‘knowledge’*. This repeating idea had only one proponent, Jennifer, yet due to the fact that it was mentioned so often and highlighted so intently by her throughout the interview, it was included here. Jennifer explained that *emphasizing* values “is an imposition” that the teacher inflicts on the students; in her opinion, a preferable approach is to *negotiate* values because “negotiating values, negotiating ways of doing things, and ideas, and actions is more important”. This view extends to knowledge (which she referred to as ‘content’) which while she deems “very important in teaching”, she argued that “if you don’t establish the right relationship first then all the knowledge you have may not be transmitted to the students”. However, she added that there are some areas in which a teacher can emphasize knowledge, such as the issue of punctuality which she believes should be firmly enforced by teachers.

Finally, the third repeating idea - *if possible, the teacher should emphasize both 'values' and 'knowledge', otherwise emphasize 'knowledge'* - offered a different perspective. Ann argued that “teachers should never emphasize values over knowledge unless they are teaching classes on societal change or values”; in such a case, the knowledge (or content) to be imparted would comprise of values, so teaching both would be automatic. However, in the case of the EFL classes that participants in this study taught, if the students had the sufficient English level to carry on conversations a teacher should become aware that “students can increase their language skills [i.e. their knowledge] by dealing with the content [by] discussing values, opinions and morals”. On the other hand, Ann suggested that if the students’ English level is insufficient, the teachers should prioritize imparting solely knowledge. Gerald concurred with this view, but without mentioning language level as an impediment. He argued that a teacher’s job is to teach, or to impart knowledge, and that teachers ought to stay away from attempting to change the values of students. He believed that “students should figure out social change on their own... as part of [their] maturing process”.

Theme 2 – Appropriateness of social change in Korean ELT. This theme consists of three categories, with each encompassing the repeating ideas offered by participants regarding the appropriateness, inappropriateness or a view combining the two of social change in the Korean ELT classroom:

- Category 1: Social change is inappropriate in EFL.
- Category 2: Social change is appropriate in EFL.
- Category 3: Only some kinds of social change are appropriate in EFL.

The first category put forward the notion that *social change is inappropriate in EFL*. Two repeating ideas as why this may be the case were identified in the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: Social change should not be pursued by the EFL teacher.
- Repeating idea 2: Discussions of societal change can be inappropriate in the EFL class.

First, participants suggested that *social change should not be pursued by the EFL teacher*.

The main supporters of this point of view were Jennifer and Gerald, who both argued strongly in its favor. Jennifer stressed that she does not “want to have a social agenda, similar to a missionary”; she elaborated that she does not perceive a ‘missionary’ as a person in the religious sense, but rather someone who wishes to convert other people. In addition, she provided two other reasons why she felt that “it is not her place to bring about social change”: a) she is “not paid to follow a social agenda, and b) “as an outsider, [she does not] want to push students too much on social change especially in a new context that [she is] not familiar with”. Conversely, she conceded that having a broader attitude of “confronting students with different views and opinions” is important, but by being careful not to impose social change directly. Gerald agreed with Jennifer that social change should not be pursued by a teacher and he offered a few reasons that are similar to Jennifer’s. For instance, he stated that as an EFL teacher it is not “his mandate” to change society; his job is “just teaching English”. If he were a “sociology teacher”, he claimed that he would feel empowered to do more. In addition, he added that it is not his place to change Korean society, especially “big things”, but changing “small things” would be acceptable. Another reason provided by Gerald is that he is “afraid of repercussions” if he were to engage in social change. According to him, these include: being worried of “not fitting in”, being worried of “losing my job” and being worried of “rubbing someone the wrong way”.

Secondly, it was found that *discussions of societal change can be inappropriate in the EFL class*. Although this repeating idea had only one proponent, Ann, it was included here because it does help to understand better her overall stance. In support of this repeating idea, Ann made two

points. First, societal change does not have to be part of education, and second, it is not appropriate for language teaching to inherently come with social change. She justifies her first point by underlining that not everyone is “committed” to social change, not everyone is “interested” in social change, and not everyone is “focused on” social change. She noted that “if people are happy with their lives they shouldn’t be forced to engage in societal change”. In support of her second point she argued that: a) “people have the right to study English without impositions of societal change”; b) “it’s the people prerogative to study English *only*”; c) it all depends on what students want - if they want “to be able to read their English programming book, that’s all I should help them with”.

The second category set forth the notion that *social change is appropriate in EFL*. While the support for this category was not as pronounced as that for the previous one (i.e. social change is inappropriate in EFL), interesting repeating ideas came to light. There were two recurring repeating ideas that were identified from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: Discussions of societal change have a place in the EFL class.
- Repeating idea 2: Teachers should present alternatives to the students’ perceptions related to education.

First, it was found that *discussions of societal change have a place in the EFL class*. Ann argued that in spite of *societal or social change* being “a broad and difficult to define term”, social change can be part of education. She noted that in an ideal word, “we should change the world [and] ideally we should change our ideas of the world”. Nonetheless, she acknowledged that who a teacher is plays an important part. Considering her own case, she stated that “it’s in my nature, my personality to go beyond teaching English and teach about social matters”. Other participants, while admitting that social change has a role to play in the classroom, agreed that they leaned more

towards achieving the balance act between the appropriateness and inappropriateness of social change in the classroom which will be discussed in category 3.

The second repeating idea for the present category emphasized that *teachers should present alternatives to the students' perceptions related to education*. Tony argued that students often come to school with motivations that are based on premises which do not serve them. For instance, he claimed that “students are motivated by test scores and getting into new school because they don’t know any better”. Faced with such a situation, “teachers should help students appreciate what they are learning for ‘what it is’ not as stepping stone to some other goal. Teachers should want to make the students’ minds *explode*”. He argued that even if one student is reached “with that sort of appreciation, I think I’ve succeeded”. Tony made an additional suggestion he deemed as appropriate for approaching social change in the class; he stated that teachers “should make an honest effort to bridge the similarities and differences underpinning experience”. To do so teachers should start by not letting students get away with saying ‘I understand’ without understanding. In his opinion, “‘I understand’ is useless - students should be made to respond with something more substantial, even if that reflects a major difference/disagreement” and that “the students’ active participation” will lead not only to coming to an understanding, but “realizing the dynamic interpretation of differences”.

The third and final category of theme 2 comprises repeating ideas supporting the view that *only some kinds of social change are appropriate in EFL*. There are two repeating ideas making up this category:

- Repeating idea 1: Attempting small changes, related to teaching, is OK.
- Repeating idea 2: Some changes that are more global need to be put forward to the students.

The first repeating idea for category 3 was: *attempting small changes, related to teaching, is OK*. In spite of all participants agreeing with this idea, their emphatic support for *small* changes should be noted. Gerald argued “that all the small changes have to be related to teaching matters” and when implementing changes the teacher should “avoid shaming students”. He also commented that small exceptions are permissible as long as these are related to teaching matters. To underline one such exception, Gerald described the success he had teaching students to say “I don’t know” (which he viewed as changing ‘values’), when they did not know the answer to a question he posed, as opposed to staying quiet. According to Gerald, benefits of taking this approach included students “feeling relieved that not knowing something was OK”, “feeling less pressure”, and seeing the benefit of being more “natural in their interactions”. Tony agreed that small changes with respect to social change are necessary when he stated that “changing cultural values [should be done] little by little”; however, he did not provide specific examples of how this could be accomplished. Jennifer is also a proponent of doing “small things, or getting students involved in small projects that could in the long term bring about interesting changes in more or less direct ways is possible”.

The second repeating idea found that *some changes that are more global need to be put forward to the students*. It should be noted that here *global changes* does not necessarily refer to *big changes*. Jennifer regards global changes as small changes which become global by virtue of being adopted by all. However, she insisted that in order for these changes to work they have to be modeled by teacher himself/herself. By “saving energy, turning off the lights after class, that kind of thing” and “printing on two sides of the paper when preparing handouts”, the teacher models the kind of small changes of global impact to the students. On the other hand, Ann viewed global changes as big changes. However, she warned that these should not be attempted with all

students, but only with “students who are more equipped - have travelled more or are capable of critical thinking”. She noted that for such students “I expect them, to a certain degree, to change society”.

Theme 3 – Interpretations of social change in Korean ELT. This theme consists of three categories, with each including the repeating ideas offered by participants regarding the multiple interpretations possible when discussing elements of social change such as reconsidering values, changing society and higher ideals:

- Category 1: ‘Reconsider values’ can be subject to multiple interpretations.
- Category 2: ‘Changing society’ can be subject to multiple interpretations.
- Category 3: ‘Higher ideals’ can be subject to multiple interpretations.

The first category dealt with the notion that *‘reconsidering values’ can be subject to multiple interpretations*. Two repeating ideas were apparent from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: Defining ‘reconsidering values’.
- Repeating idea 2: An EFL job in Korea is not compatible with *changing beliefs*, which equates to ‘reconsidering values’.

Through the first repeating idea, *defining ‘reconsidering values’*, participants gave their interpretation of what these terms mean to them. To Tony, ‘reconsidering values’ involved students reconsidering their values on education and reconsidering their approach to education. He also claimed that “values not relating to education are a lot rarer in EFL, but they exist” implying that in the EFL classroom students generally have to deal strictly with their values regarding educational issues. On the other hand, Jennifer was concerned with the wording of the interview question based on the survey question 20 which was *‘My intent is to challenge people to seriously*

reconsider their values'. Jennifer objected to the use of the word *seriously* which she deemed "synonymous with 'forcing' or 'imposing'" and argued that teachers should not be doing this". She suggested that as a teacher she believes that students would respond better if asked to "examine their values' or 'compare their values'".

Secondly, it was found that *an EFL job in Korea is not compatible with changing beliefs, which equate to 'reconsidering values'*. According to Gerald, the EFL teacher should avoid (as he/she is not mandated to) asking students to change their beliefs and should avoid treading on delicate social issues. Gerald argued that belief change should only be attempted when it is related to learning English better, for example, when "drawing [the students'] attention to English related matters, such as syntax or the misunderstanding of when to say 'no' instead of yes". On the other hand, although much less vocal than Gerald with regards to this point, Ann took the opposite view that EFL teacher ought to attempt having students consider their values. She believed this to be important as teachers need to "challenge people to consider their values so they can understand their own positions".

The second category dealt with the notion that *'changing society' can be subject to multiple interpretations*. The three repeating ideas making up this category are less developed than previous repeating ideas, given that the different interpretation were fairly unique to each participant:

- Repeating idea 1: 'Changing society' involves small incremental changes and changing what society thinks most important.
- Repeating idea 2: 'Changing society' should be instead 'improving society'.
- Repeating idea 3: My life-view is not compatible with expecting change.

The first repeating idea for category 2 argued that *'changing society' involves small incremental changes and changing what society thinks most important*. The principal proponent

of making incremental changes was Tony who stated that cultural values need to be changed gradually. Regarding what the changes should consist of, he mentioned that “the need to change has to come from somewhere, and the best place is starting with the values that a society holds dear”.

The second repeating idea for the present category underscored that *‘changing society’ should be instead ‘improving society’*. Here, Jennifer once again urged close attention to the way the interview question, which used the word ‘expecting’, is posed. She argued that *‘expecting people to change society’* is too strong. A preferable working would involve “‘would like people to improve society’”; this would be “utopic, but desirable”. Also, according to Jennifer, deciding what are ‘necessary changes’ in society is challenging.

The third repeating idea argued that *my life-view is not compatible with expecting change*. Although this idea was not unique to Gerald, he is the one who made it explicit and returned to it various times throughout the interview. He stated: “I expect people to give me correct change, not run me over in the street, but [beyond that] I don’t *expect* [Gerald’s emphasis] anyone to do anything. Expecting people to change society is not my business”. He affirmed that people should just “manage themselves” and “change themselves” and things (i.e. society) will be fine – “my philosophy is let it be peace on Earth and let it begin with me”. Gerald explained that when it comes to social change there are two categories of people who can make social changes: a) people such as Gandhi and Mandela but to be like them one would first need to be confronted with “extreme conditions”; and b) someone with power to enact changes, such as a mayor or a politician. He suggests that for normal people (meaning people without the necessary power), such as EFL teachers and other people living normal lives - “mind your business, be a good person and everything will be fine”.

The third category dealt with the notion that *'higher ideals' can be subject to multiple interpretations*. It consisted of two repeating ideas:

- Repeating idea 1: Defining 'higher ideals'.
- Repeating idea 2: Deciding what are 'necessary changes' in society is challenging.

The first repeating idea of this category, *defining 'higher ideals'*, was explicitly addressed by each participant. Tony noted that higher ideals' require being flexible because "not all cultures have the same cultural artifacts; what you consider valuable in Korea is not going to be valuable in other societies". He claimed that in spite of people "knowing this as a difference, they still try to normalize everything into a Korean context". Gerald added that the interpretation of 'higher ideals' is subjective and that one person's higher ideals are not another person's higher ideals. He add that 'higher ideals' can often be subtle and could come in the form of "a smile, a compliment, [or] being a good person in the classroom". Gerald viewed 'higher ideals' in Korea as being presently of a Western origin and including aims such as "being kind of a CEO or a doctor, having a German car or having [the] latest electronic gadget". While he considered these ideals "fine, but kind of materialistic" he felt that higher ideals for Koreans should be more in line with Korean traditional higher ideals, such as Hongik - "widely benefitting everybody". Here Gerald is referring to the principle of Hongik-Ingan which is considered the founding philosophy of Korea, and which can be translated in English as "contributing to the overall benefit of humankind" (Finch, 2002, p. 341). Ann views aligned with Gerald's when she affirmed that one person's higher ideals may not align to someone else's. Since higher ideals are not clear-cut and universal, imposing one's ideals becomes problematic; Ann contemplated "what right do I have to impose my ideals?" and "do I have the right to challenge Korean's students, Korean society and their ideals?".

Secondly, it was found that *deciding what are ‘necessary changes’ in society is challenging*. Jennifer questioned ‘higher ideals’ indirectly in terms of the necessary changes needed for social change. She argued that “we could set up classes to discuss bringing about necessary changes, but who decides what those changes are?” Furthermore, while she claimed that she does not “feel empowered enough to bring about ‘necessary changes’ on a large scale”, she believed that small changes for the positive are desirable. To this end, she “started a class about Global Issues and will start other classes that will address some issues not discussed in English class before, but it will be useful for students to learn to study in this way”. She referred to this type of project as a transition from teaching language to teaching content, so that “language development will occur as we go along rather than be our sole target of the actual class”.

Theme 4 – Teachers’ understanding of their role in their Korean EFL classroom.

This theme consists of two categories. These include the repeating ideas put forward by participants underlining their views with regards to the place of higher ideals in their classroom and the factors impacting the teachers’ roles:

- Category 1: Teacher’s dilemma on whether to approach ‘higher ideals’ in the EFL class.
- Category 2: The EFL teacher role is influenced by an interplay of controllable and uncontrollable factors.

The first category dealt with the *teacher’s dilemma on whether to approach ‘higher ideals’ in the EFL class*. Four repeating ideas were apparent from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: I am conflicted on whether it is the teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’.

- Repeating idea 2: I do not overtly teach about higher ideals.
- Repeating idea 3: I am conflicted about the extent to which I teach about ‘higher’ ideals.
- Repeating idea 4: It is the EFL teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’.

For the first repeating idea in this category, participants stated that they are *conflicted on whether it is the teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’*. Jennifer affirmed that “I don’t know that I should always be [teaching about ‘higher ideals’]...I’m not a missionary”. Her hesitation regarding whether it is the teacher’s job to discuss ‘higher ideals’ or not was shared, to varying degrees, by the other participants.

The second repeating idea for the present category highlights that some teachers do not *overtly teach about higher ideals*. Among the participants, Gerald, is the most vocal proponent of avoiding overtness when discussing ‘higher ideals’. While he admitted that he tries to relate any relevant experiences to classroom situation, he avoids teaching overtly about ‘higher ideals’; what he does instead is “infuse it in my teaching method, I infuse it in my tone of voice, I infuse it in my examples, I infuse it in my life experiences, I include it gently and very delicately”. He claimed that he aim to do “nothing overt...just trying to be the best teacher I can”.

Thirdly, the third repeating idea underlined that some participants’ are *conflicted about the extent to which they teach about ‘higher’ ideals*. Ann claimed being in a state of conflict arising from the fact that she “like[s] preserving culture while at the same time modernization is becoming universal and is making preserving traditions difficult”. She added, that as a Canadian working in Korea, she struggles to decide whether “it may not be appropriate for attempting to overcome these barriers”. Gerald was similarly hesitant about his stance. Although he claimed that it is not a teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’, the teacher responsibility “to be a good teacher” sometimes requires the teacher to go the extra mile. For example, he suggested that he

often tries “to find commonality between Western and Korean ideas”. He does so by attempting to “re-stimulate student interests in their own history, original religion and cultural heritage”, in the face of students being “inundated with so many Western ideas and materialism” which have led to them to forget traditional Korean Culture “except for the most superficial rituals”.

Finally, the fourth repeating idea highlighted that *it is the EFL teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’*. Differently from other participants, Tony was decisive about the EFL teacher’s responsibility to teach about ‘higher ideals’. He claimed that “it is impossible to teach language without teaching about culture” and just teaching from the book without considering higher ideals is “shallow approach”. Tony also emphasized that teaching about ‘higher ideals’ often involves challenging values held by some students. For instance, he mentioned that he “won’t tolerate disparaging remarks about groups of people”. Furthermore, he noted that in spite of students pretending that they are interested in social change, often their actual actions contradict these claims; for example, “they rattle off names of great people to pretend that they would like to live by the ideals of great people, but they do it to show off”, while other times they “are interested in completing the assignments only to make the teacher happy”. Also, Gerald agreed that ‘higher ideals’ are very important to him when he stated that he “wouldn’t do anything that would compromise [his] values”.

The second category, *the EFL teacher’s role is influenced by an interplay of controllable and uncontrollable factors*, consisted of a single repeating idea:

- Repeating idea 1: The teacher’s role in the Korean EFL class is influenced by factors both *within* and *beyond* the teacher’s control.

Jennifer stated that even though for certain issues teachers can get students to reconsider their values, teachers should think carefully about whether they should be doing this. She claimed

that for “serious situations” teachers should take action. For instance, she noted that “some Korean students are a bit closed-minded towards Japanese, who may have committed different types of atrocities against Koreans in the past”. While such students may have been “influenced by their parents and grandparents”, it is important to try to change these students’ views “because we live in a global world...and newer Japanese are not like people in the past”. In addition, Jennifer contended that “for less serious classroom-related matters”, she sometimes tried to have students reconsider their behavior. These include issues such as “plagiarism or having students fall in line with the class requirements if they expect to receive a good grade”.

Jennifer views are shared by Ann, who conceded that teachers can change some things while others remain beyond their control. During the interview she proposed actions for teachers to take on the issues that they can change. First, she suggested that “teachers should do more than deploy the prepackaged curriculum/teaching materials” in order to “expand their students’ world”. Furthermore, she noted that being “a white and Canadian teacher changes the parameters of the material”. Finally, she stated that teachers should change their own behavior depending on whether they are teaching students of a lower or higher English proficiency level. At lower levels, the teachers “should provide students with an English environment, as opposed to a Korean environment which uses English”. Also, she noted that “at lower levels, the teacher is unavoidably more technical”. On the other hand, for higher levels, the teacher is more of “sounding board” and is in a position to offer different perspectives as “someone who has a different background than [the students’] Korean teachers” and “someone who has different ideas”.

Theme 5 – Suggestions for integrating social change in Korean EFL. This theme contains three categories which encapsulate participants’ repeating ideas about possible ways in which social change can be discussed more in the EFL class:

- Category 1: How teachers approach social change with their students is important.
- Category 2: For effective learning, new practical models of teaching languages have to be devised appropriate to the Korean context.
- Category 3: In ideal conditions, social change can be both discussed and attempted.

The first category underscored *how teachers approach social change with their students is important*. Three repeating ideas came through from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: The manner in which social change is proposed is important.
- Repeating idea 2: Teachers must use specific approaches for students to consider what they take for granted in society.

The first repeating idea stated that *the manner in which social change is proposed is important*. Ann’s responses suggest that there are 3 distinct dimensions that need to be understood. First, because foreigners are considered able to offer a different perspective on things, ideas put forward by foreigners are considered differently by students. For instance, foreigners could propose something that Ann felt “would be considered outrageous in his/her own culture, yet in Korea their ideas might be automatically acceptable”. As a result, Ann stated that she “want[s] to be careful about the overtness of the ideas [she] propose[s], as [she] know[s] these might be accepted/adopted undeservedly”. She claimed that in Canada she could put ideas forward to her students “more overtly”. Secondly, “discussions on social changes have differing starting points depending on the audience”; Ann explained that she “will talk differently to someone studying International Politics from someone studying Engineering”, and also given the fact that “Korean[s]

are more conservative than Canadians, [she would] take a more conservative starting position”. Thirdly, Ann argued that knowing the individual is essential. For instance, “those students who have travelled or lived abroad have experienced a more diverse way of thinking than those who haven’t”, and this would likely impact the kind of material and approach that the teacher can discuss. Ann’s ideas on this point are echoed by Tony, who nonetheless provided different examples to support it. He stated that in Korea “calling people out on something you deem wrong is a challenge in itself”. Foreign teachers ought to realize that in Korean society “indirection is key; if you come out and say ‘you’re wrong’ people might just brush it off and say ‘that’s a foreigner for you’”. An alternative proposed by Tony when challenging someone involves “framing the challenge as displeasure, without saying it out loud”. Tony referred to such behavior, which he felt EFL teachers should engage in, as “playing the cultural game”, which extends beyond classroom teaching to interaction with Korean colleagues. He attributes this to the claim that “Koreans can be sometimes be subversive in subtle ways...especially [when dealing with] with fellow Korean colleagues the challenge must be made [so] that it doesn’t seem like a challenge, using humor maybe”.

The second repeating idea found that *teachers must use specific approaches for students to consider what they take for granted in society*. Differently from developing the awareness to approach social change due to cultural difference between East and West, Jennifer offered possible approaches from a broader, universal position. Similarly to Ann, her argument also had 3 dimensions. First, she argued that teachers should confront students with alternative views as people can figure out what they take for granted in society and what needs change only “when confronted with other views”. When learning about new things this would “hopefully make them reflect on their own culture and ways of doing things and by doing that, notice the gaps between

each culture, each way of doing things”. Alternatively, Jennifer mentioned that the teacher must still make some necessary knowledge explicit because “students must know, for example, when they travel to a foreign country what is appropriate and what isn’t”. She conceded, however, that when students are explicitly taught about more delicate issues, it must be undertaken with care because she “understand[s] very superficially [aspects of] Korean society, so to know the kinds of things that are different and important takes time”. Thirdly, Jennifer taught her students “to develop the *awareness* that they only need to alter their way or thinking temporarily once they engage with a foreign culture, and it is not required to change who they are”. Tony’s perspective added to Jennifer’s views when he affirmed that integrating social change is difficult because it is easier to challenge people’s values than “what they take for granted in society”. He argued that values are a somewhat more abstract, so because of their abstractness “it is easier to go after those values”. Conversely, he believed that what people take for granted involves a larger set of answers because “they point to some precise and objective issues – these can include not only cultural values, but just about anything under the sun”.

The second category emphasizes that *for effective learning, new practical models of teaching languages have to be devised appropriate to the Korean context*. It consists of three repeating ideas:

- Repeating idea 1: Teachers should help students ‘shift’ their mode of thinking when they speak English.
- Repeating idea 2: Teachers should help students discover, not ‘teach’.
- Repeating idea 3: A paradigm shift in EFL must occur from language-based to content-based learning.

The first repeating idea for the present category stresses that *teachers should help students 'shift' their mode of thinking when they speak English*. Tony explained 'shifting' as the ability to adapt temporarily one's behavior when communicating to people from other cultures; he argues that "learning about the differences between cultures is not sufficient without appropriate behavior". Tony viewed the teacher's duty as "the effort to explain, using concepts the students understand, why simply transferring something from Korean to English may be inappropriate". For instance, a teacher could teach students that it is inappropriate to ask a Westerner about his/her salary by linking this issue to privacy and subsequently explaining that "privacy is highly valued in the West". If the students were not convinced, this concept could be further elaborated by "linking the violation of someone's privacy with the student losing face, [which] is a concept that the student could relate to". Tony argued that Koreans have a hard time 'shifting' due to interacting with the "same type of people all their lives, people from the same society", while students in the US or Canada have an easier time being "flexible" in interactions with people from different cultures because "there is a lot of cultural variation in Canada and the US".

The second repeating idea found that *teachers should help students discover, not 'teach'*. Tony affirmed that teachers should not just tell students what they should know "about a poem, about a passage or even about a phonetic sound", but students should discover on their own. The teacher should provide the students with the tools to discover, and the students should "use what they know to tell [the teacher] what they see". Tony alleged that this kind of guided discovery is lacking in Korean educational society. If students were presented with the opportunity and tools to discover, they may discover that what they previously learned "may not necessarily [be] all that true". Tony also deemed that it is the teacher's responsibility to help students discover; if not possible, teachers should at least be aware of it.

The third repeating idea of category 2 calls for a *paradigm shift in EFL language-based to content-based learning*. The main supporter of this idea, Jennifer, claimed that the paradigm shift would see students transition from “just focusing on language to learning *through* using English”. She argued that the paradigm shift is complex and requires answering, at a minimum, the following questions: What is considered language learning? What is the student’s supposed role in the language class? What is the teacher’s role supposed to be in the language class? Jennifer also noted that the paradigm shift is dependent on the teacher’s motivation, his/her level of experience, and most importantly, the degree of freedom a teacher has in his/her teaching. According to Jennifer, ESL instructors in Korea are generally “not able to deviate much from the curriculum”; some may even have so little freedom that they are told not only what book to use, but even “what unit to teach within a given timeframe”.

The third category proposed that *in ideal conditions, social change can be both discussed and attempted*. This category consists of two repeating ideas:

- Repeating idea 1: In an ideal situation, social change could be *discussed* more in the EFL classroom.
- Repeating idea 2: In an ideal situation, social change could be *attempted* more in the EFL classroom.

The first repeating idea stated that *in an ideal situation, social change could be discussed more in the EFL classroom*. Ann claimed that her present situation was not ideal because lack of classroom time was an issue. However, even if more time was available, in light of the students’ basic English level, the available time would still only suffice for language study.

According to the second repeating idea, *in an ideal situation, social change could be attempted more in the EFL classroom*. Gerald affirmed that, if he “had more power and no

repercussions”, he would take measures to enact social change, and not only in the classroom but in a general sense. For instance, he mentioned that he would do something about “all the crazy drivers” and “all the prostitute cards” (referring to flyers advertising sexual services that are strewn on the pavement in Korean cities, especially in central areas). He would also “bulldoze the ugly, dirty and impractical street behind the university”. As a teacher, he felt he could also do more in an international setting or in a setting where there would be no repercussions, or where he would have more of a “mandate” to do so.

Theme 6 – Barriers to social change in Korean EFL. This theme includes the types of barriers that prevent teachers from enacting a higher degree of social change in their EFL classroom. It consists of four categories:

- Category 1: Barriers to learning English in Korea for social change.
- Category 2: Barriers to teaching English in Korea for social change.
- Category 3: Barriers to teaching about ‘higher ideals’ in the EFL class.
- Category 4: Barriers to prioritizing ‘values’, ‘knowledge’, both or neither in the EFL class.

The first category discusses the *barriers to learning English in Korea*. Three repeating ideas of note were identified from the participants’ answers:

- Repeating idea 1: It is challenging to overcome Koreans’ difficulties in learning English.
- Repeating idea 2: Korean teachers are unable to deal with the students shortcomings in learning English.

- Repeating idea 3: The subject matter used in EFL is diverse and often inadequately transferable from Korean to English.

The first repeating idea was that *it is challenging to overcome Koreans' difficulties in learning English*. While initially stating that Koreans have just as a difficult time with English as foreigners with Korean language, Gerald attributed Koreans' difficulty with learning English to several factors. First among these is the claim that "they don't have a proper understanding of the value of English and its potential utility to them". Secondly, Gerald mentioned that "they are forced since they are kids that they should learn English, but they don't know why". A third factor suggested by Gerald claimed that Koreans' struggle with learning English because "they are a closed culture, they are not receptive – they just don't get it". However, Gerald conceded that Koreans are struggling, regardless of volition, because it is neuro-linguistically and physiologically difficult for them to pronounce certain words or differentiate between the 'l' and 'r' sounds, for instance.

The second repeating idea found that *Korean teachers are unable to deal with the students' shortcomings in learning English*. Gerald felt that "they don't understand confusing things that are different in English from Korean", such as the mistakes many Koreans make when answering negative questions with 'yes' although their intention is to transmit a 'no'. For example, if asked the question 'Don't you like French fries?' they respond 'yes' which in their view conveys the idea that they do not like French fries, when in fact they should be answering 'no' in such a circumstance. Gerald claimed that Korean teachers "are not equipped with the subtlety of things like that" or similar issues such as teaching students to differentiate between the 'l' sound and the 'r' sound, as previously mentioned. "Korean teacher don't care about things like this"; either

because they think “it’s too much trouble for them” or because they would rather focus “on bigger grammatical issues”.

The third repeating idea found that the *subject matter used in EFL is diverse and often inadequately transferable from Korean to English*. According to Tony, EFL subject matter includes many things such as model conversations, talking about jobs/family and so on. Approaching subject matter such as this in a Korean EFL classroom may not be compatible with how similar activities are carried out in Korean language or situation. Students thus often mistakenly assume that “if something is acceptable in [the] Korean context, once I learn how to say it English, I can just transfer it”. For instance, asking someone how much money they make is inappropriate in English, and so is asking someone’s age. According to Tony, “Koreans generally do this to decide how to interact with others, because Korea is very stratified, yet English language is not as marked and “it doesn’t take as much...effort to go from formal to informal”.

The second category emphasizes that there are *specific barriers to teaching English in Korea*. It consists of four repeating ideas:

- Repeating idea 1: There are universal barriers to social change.
- Repeating idea 2: There are Korean EFL-specific barriers to social change.
- Repeating idea 3: High expectations of change may be unreasonable.
- Repeating idea 4: Barriers to teachers combining ‘instructional goals’ with ‘necessary’ societal changes.

The first repeating idea stresses that *there are universal barriers to social change*, which go beyond EFL and the Korean classroom. Tony argued that people usually see only the short-term results; while “changing societal values is important, people must realize what such a change might mean not only now, but in the future.” Tony noted that in spite of people claiming that they

are thinking about the long-term, they are usually not. According to him, this can have two negative consequences. The first is “that we’ll end with no idea of what the future will hold for us, [and the second] danger is that the future will become even more unpredictable with people increasingly focused on the short-term”.

The second repeating idea highlights that *there are Korean EFL-specific barriers to social change*. First, all participants stressed throughout their interviews the fact the students’ English level is too low for meaningful discussion on social change. Gerald affirmed that classes with low level students generally involve “miming” and are “demonstrative”, and that “subtle conversations were difficult”. In addition, Ann mentioned that a low English level “implies a certain insecurity about [the students’] language ability, which leads to feeling secure about the things they know, which is their culture”. She concluded that, as a result, “the less English [the students] know, the less likely they would be to question their own culture/society”. Ann also noted that a lack of sufficient classroom time for learning English is another significant constraint. Finally, Jennifer added that “the textbooks we use are full of biases”, and their low level precludes the teacher from broaching more advanced topics.

The third repeating idea found that *high expectations of change may be unreasonable*. Jennifer mentioned that at her university, expecting students to be “motors of change” is difficult because students are not “the most motivated in Korean society” and because her university “is not a high-ranking university, so many students enrolled because it was the only university that accepted them. This is not caused by lack of intelligence, [but] maybe a little laziness on preparing for their Korean SATs”. A further reason offered by Jennifer as to why expecting change may be unreasonable is that “in Korean universities there’s little bit of a caste system”. She elaborated on this by claiming that “in Korea, the people who are more likely to change society are the ones who

have more means although there have been changes brought about by popular revolutions”. Nonetheless, Jennifer acknowledged that she is not sufficiently informed to provide an answer when she remarked: “I don’t know how much Koreans fight for change...I don’t know if they demonstrate as much as Canadians do, I don’t know how strong unions are in Korea”. Ann echoed Jennifer position of not expecting too much in terms of social change from students, although, in her opinion, this is has more to do with experience and capability than other factors. For instance, those who have experienced other cultures by travelling, or who have attained a higher English proficiency, could be asked to do more in terms of social change.

Finally, the fourth repeating idea underlined that there are *barriers to teachers combining ‘instructional goals’ with ‘necessary’ societal changes*. All participants agreed that such barriers exist and they need to be overcome.

Gerald affirmed that even though “there were things [he] didn’t like in Korea” discussing ‘necessary changes’ - not to mention the ensuing step of combining ‘necessary changes’ with ‘instructional goals’ – would be not appropriate as the students might feel insulted. Only “occasionally, [he] mentioned them to students to make them aware”.

Tony claimed that there are 3 types of barriers: institutional, personal, and those related to time. Example of institutional barriers provided by Tony include: a lack of computer labs for teaching with technology, and a lack of outside materials and resources; furthermore, even when these materials are obtainable, teachers “don’t have ready-made access” which requires extra planning on their part. On the other hand, Tony suggested that ready-made access can be part of the teacher’s personal obstacles; namely, he claimed that “if you go buy the book, then your ability to come up with something creative might be stagnant”. Lack of experience in the area being taught is also underlined by Tony – “if you haven’t done something before then you’re not going to think

of that as an option for your students”. Finally, time barriers refer to a lack of time to engage in and combine instructional goals with necessary societal changes.

In addition to the barrier articulated by Tony, Jennifer proposed 5 of her own. The first involved not having a realistic outlook; she stated that “doing anything that would have a significant and direct impact [on society] is idealistic”. The second barrier is linked to the “lack of willingness of students to be cooperative with other students or the teacher...some students were ‘cliquey’”. The last three barriers proposed by Jennifer relate directly to teachers. Firstly, teachers often make the mistake of doing things that are too radically different and too quickly; Jennifer thought that “change has to be brought about step by step”. Secondly, teachers “try to implement something without explaining [their] reasons”. Jennifer claimed that in her class she “gave students the possibility to do 10 assignments of which only 6 would count” and explained her reasons for doing so. She did it because she “thought that would be more just and flexible, and I wanted students to have the opportunity to improve without being penalized”. Thirdly, Jennifer argued that “teachers are not being afforded the flexibility to teach the material they want and how to teach it. The curriculum that the teachers must follow emphasizes testing, so outside the mandated two exams, plus the obligatory oral and writing assignments, teachers would have little time to do anything else”.

Finally, Ann provided her views regarding the barriers posed by attempting to combine “necessary changes” and “instructional goals”. She explained that the first challenge is identifying ‘necessary changes’, which is difficult in itself to accomplish because ‘necessary changes’ are “not straightforward and universal”. Furthermore, she stated that in Korea she is less comfortable than in Canada declaring what the necessary changes are because she is “part of a very small minority and if I propose changes it’s just *my* decision as an individual”. Also, “in Korean society, different

thoughts, opinions and viewpoints are not as prevalent and hence things are not critiqued as much”. On the other hand, she claimed to be more comfortable in Canada at “deciding what the necessary changes are, because I am *of* this culture meaning that I understand better the social trends and I understand better what the average person thinks”. Moreover, because of Canada’s “size and variety of people who come from different cultures, it is more socially appropriate to challenge people, as ideas are generally ‘peer-reviewed’, and to have different ideas than others is common”.

The third category encapsulates the *barriers to discussing ‘higher ideals’ in the EFL class*.

Two repeating ideas were identified:

- Repeating idea 1: Barriers to teaching about ‘higher ideals’ as envisioned by the teacher.
- Repeating idea 2: Barriers to discussing original Korean ‘higher ideals’ in the classroom.

The first repeating idea in this category highlights the *barriers to teaching about ‘higher ideals’ as envisioned by the teacher*. In support of this point, Ann argued that some “isolationist students want the influence of English only”, and are not interested in discussions on ‘higher ideals’ or having their values questioned. As a result, such students may have pre-set ideas of what the “foreign teachers’ roles are” and they expect teachers to not deviate from these. Ann further emphasized this point when she stated that students think inappropriate for her to “bring [her] Canadian ideals and shove it down their throats”.

Jennifer argued that beyond the students’ speaking level which is not high enough to broach ‘higher ideals’, “students need to be taught how to think critically, before [they are expected] to do it”. While some might reason that engaging in critical thinking is possible with beginners in a foreign language, Jennifer contended that “teaching critical thinking is more difficult with

beginners because they might be able of critical thinking, but be unable to express it in English”. Teaching critical thinking as prerequisite step is important, for it would provide teachers with the means “not necessarily [of] teaching about what ideals to have, but teaching students to think about issues and topics in a critical way”. A last barrier envisioned by Jennifer to teaching about ‘higher ideals’ was an excessive student focus on language and achieving language related goals, such as “grammar and vocabulary development”.

While Tony was quite vocal throughout his interview about various constraints that prevent teachers from bringing up social change in class, in terms of specific barriers he offered 3 succinctly-described institutional barriers. These consist of: insufficient class time to approach issues not directly related to language, lack of student time to explore social change due to busy academic schedules, and lack of teacher time, due to demanding schedules, to prepare and explore how to incorporate social change in the class.

The second repeating idea stresses *barriers to discussing original Korean ‘higher ideals’ in the classroom*. Although Gerald admitted to being generally reticent about bringing up ‘higher ideals’ in class, he is the only participant who stated that occasionally he discussed *Korean* ‘higher ideals’ specifically. For instance, he claimed that he tried to “make them proud of their own culture...so, of course, I got no complaints”. Nonetheless, at times even his moderate efforts to discuss Korean ‘higher ideals’ were not universally welcome; for instance, he says that “the Christians would feel uncomfortable when I told them to pay respect to their ancestor’s tombs”.

Finally, the fourth category consists of the *barriers to prioritizing ‘values’, ‘knowledge’, both or neither in the EFL class*. It consists of three repeating ideas:

- Repeating idea 1: Barriers to including both ‘values’ and ‘knowledge’ in the EFL class.
- Repeating idea 2: Barriers to emphasizing ‘relationships’ in the EFL class.

- Repeating idea 3: Barriers to discussing ‘values’ more in the in the EFL class.

According to the first repeating idea, there are *barriers to including both ‘values’ and ‘knowledge’ in the EFL class*. The participants reiterated here that that lack of time and the low English proficiency of students are both factors that limit discussing ‘values’ more as opposed to focusing on ‘knowledge’. With respect to barriers not previously mentioned, Tony underlined a previously unmentioned way in which lack of time is an issue; he argued that the semesters were too short to experiment with integrating values in the curriculum, and if he “could teach classes for 2 semesters in row that would be better”. He added that, with respect to the low English level of students being a problem, “some attempts should still be made to integrate this...[it] is just that you are not probably see the results right away”.

The second repeating idea emphasizes the *barriers to emphasizing ‘relationships’ in the EFL class*. The only proponent of emphasizing ‘relationships’ over ‘values’ or ‘knowledge’ was Jennifer. Once again the first barrier is posed by lack of time; Jennifer noted that recently the class time had been reduced from two 75-minute sessions per week to two 50-minute session, “with the quantity of the material remaining the same”. In addition to the constraint of time, she mentioned other obstacles to emphasizing ‘relationships’. First, she claimed that if the students are “totally unmotivated [and] see no point to learning the language, that would possibly shut down the option of creating a relationship”. A second factor is class size. Smaller classes would allow the teachers to know the students better on an individual basis; “it’s difficult to build relationship if you don’t know the students names, which is common in big classes”. Thirdly, because the teacher speaks in a language the students have not yet acquired “it is tougher to build relationships than if addressing the students in their first language”.

The last repeating idea discussed *the barriers to discussing 'values' more in the in the EFL class*. Gerald argued that the barriers preventing the discussion of 'values' to a higher extent can be categorized as: language limitations, cultural limitations, and job limitations, the latter referring to the requirements of EFL teacher position. Gerald claimed that he tried to overcome these limitations "by always starting with a light experience story or a dumb joke, but to break things up, not to inculcate".

On the other hand, Ann discussed further barriers to discussing 'values' in the classroom. The first applies to the term 'values', which she considered overly-broad: "'values' can refer to our opinions... 'values' can mean our expectations... 'values' can mean our higher ideals". Ann conceded that regardless of the interpretation assigned to 'values', there are barriers to discussing it more in class. These include: the students' level being too basic to discuss values, a lack of teacher freedom to deviate from the mandated curriculum, the fact that "Korea is a conservative society", and "it's not up to me to change everyone".

'Are EFL teachers acritical technical workers?'

As discussed in the introductory section of this paper, this research was motivated by my preoccupation with a statement made by Machedo (2013) affirming that "EFL teachers are acritical technical workers". In spite of the importance of this statement, I felt that asking the question 'Are EFL teachers acritical technical workers?' as a research question would not have been appropriate; I needed more manageable and specific questions whose answers could hopefully start to build a case on whether EFL teachers are acritical technical workers or not.

Nonetheless, the question itself was quite compelling and had to be posed directly to candidates. I believed this to be important for two reasons. First, it would allow participants to

articulate their views and address any points that were left unsaid (despite them perhaps wanting to share them) after all the interview questions were asked – all the unvoiced opinions and thoughts underpinning one’s philosophy with regards to social change and about being critical or acritical, which might come to light only if a broad and potentially disconcerting enough question would allow them to. Second, all questions in the semi-structured interviews asked participants only about THEIR beliefs, intentions, actions; this last question would offer participants the opportunity to look outside themselves and reflect on what other EFL teachers are doing.

Gerald stated that he “never observed other teachers teaching so [he] can’t pass judgment on them”. He stated that he was happy to have “made an honest attempt to understand Korean culture and make Koreans proud of their culture”, and also for having received “high ratings from students”. On the other hand, he admitted that “possibly, other teachers haven’t made as much of an effort to immerse themselves in Korean culture” and it is possible that other teachers arrived to Korea with the intention to stay only “a short time and approach it as a job – very technically and superficially”. He ended by stating that “I know one teacher had a dour personality”, and explained that the type of teaching approach adopted is very dependent on teacher’s personality and that some teachers perhaps did not have the right personality for the job.

Tony admitted that foreign EFL teachers in Korea can indeed be technical and acritical. He claimed that this can be attributed to the institutions that hire them which often “take an acritical stance on the education of English”. He suggested that the thinking at these institutions is along the lines - “you just teach English to these folks, just go from the book otherwise their parents are going to be angry or someone is going to be angry”. Tony provided an example of another institutional constraint which applies to the materials selected by the teacher. He recounted that “my higher-ups always ask me what textbook I am going to use. I normally plan to take samples

off the internet and have students take a look because most textbooks I've looked at are crap. So, I just say 'I am going to use this textbook' and then never use it". Tony also proposed that some imperatives and policies put into place by institutions "enable foreign teachers to become technicians [as they] don't have the capability of extending their roles any further".

Jennifer's views were dissimilar to Tony's in that she did not focus on institutional constraints which contribute to EFL teachers being acritical, but mainly looked at teacher himself/herself when discussing "being acritical". First, she argued that many EFL teachers in Korea are not trained as teachers – they don't have a professional background at all in terms of education or training. For instance, "some people just go in the class and say 'OK, what page are we on today?'". Secondly, she felt that some teachers may not be motivated; perhaps, "some teachers may have gotten bored with the job but are sticking with it until retirement". Thirdly, the teacher's initiative is key; "if it's someone who is just going to come over to earn some money to pay their student loan, [and] really spends all their free time in the bars, then they are probably not likely to care enough about their jobs to do more than just basic stuff". "To be more than a technician a teacher needs to be "serious" about his profession – attend professional conferences, association meetings etc". She agrees that "idealistic teachers, who are not educators, are likely to do more, but their efforts might be misguided". Fourthly, she mentioned that "some teachers are hired as instructors with short-term contracts and other as professors with longer contracts. This affects how one sees himself and functions. Instructors are likely to be more like technicians than professors".

Jennifer also saw students and the institution as playing a role to creating technical and acritical teachers. She stated that it is dependent "on what students expect from you; if they expect you to go through every exercise in the textbook, [it] can be hard not to be technician". She added

that a teacher “can only be as creative as students are willing to accept, and administration as well”. Secondly, she proposed that at the basic English level, where most students are, “it is difficult to get beyond discussing the most basic issues [as] discussion oriented books are incorporated into the curriculum only at advanced is conversation levels”. She underscored this point further when she noted: “I don’t know if it’s possible not to be a technician if you are dealing with people who have a difficulty communicating basic things”. Thirdly, if the curriculum is rigid and it has to be “followed in the strictest sense...and you have people breathing down your neck, such as parents, it might be difficult to do anything but be a technician, although there is some leeway when teaching adults”. Jennifer summarized her overall position by concluding: “I don’t know if our job is to educate as much as to facilitate learning and sometimes train people, but we should definitely not be technicians”.

Finally, Ann argued that she does not believe EFL teachers in Korea to be technical workers because if “they would have been considered only technical workers, why hire foreigners? - Korean English teachers would have sufficed”. Ann provided further arguments to defend this point. First, she stated that “foreign teachers are not hired only for their language ability, although that plays a part”. Secondly, she explained that “we are not technicians because we are outside the Korean social strata and students can talk to and perceive us differently”; specifically, “our presence alone provides a new perspective” and “the things we say and our relationships we have with students make us more than technicians”. Nonetheless, Ann contended that when they teach grammar and structure EFL teachers unavoidably “play the role of technicians”, and that the whole issue can be “dependent on the school and on the teacher too”. Ann noted that the whole issue pertaining to teacher being acritical and technical “is a complicated situation” and “that Korea is changing”.

Conclusion

This chapter, which was divided into three sections, presented a detailed account of the findings in the present study. The first section shared the findings from the questionnaire, and the second section provided the comprehensive findings from the data collected in the semi-structured in-depth interviews. The findings from the interviews were organized into themes, categories and repeating ideas, which were exemplified with quotations and examples provided by the participants. The last section, presented the views offered by participants when asked the question that motivated this research: ‘are EFL teachers acritical technical workers?’

In the following chapter, a discussion of the study’s findings will be carried out. The emphasis will be on determining how well the findings answer the study’s research questions and how well the findings addressed the gap in the literature review.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore NETs' teaching perspectives in a Korean EFL setting. Particularly, it sought to investigate the ways in which NETs perceive social change in the classroom and how they act on it. To this end, three research questions were posed and have been subsequently answered by the research data. The research questions were asked in order to garner a more complete understanding of NETs' affinity for social change and its possible place in the EFL classroom, and to explore whether EFL teachers were acritical and atheoretical "technicians". Nonetheless, conclusions can be drawn only on what the participants in this study said and not all EFL teachers. While the findings may apply to other EFL teachers, it cannot be concluded that they apply to all.

Research question 1 - What are the NETs' teaching perspectives?

The teaching perspectives subscribed to by the 4 participants were as follows. In the current (or real) situation, for three participants *Nurturing* was the dominant perspective, and for the fourth participant *Developmental* was the dominant perspective. For all the participants, *Social Reform* was the least dominant (or recessive) teaching perspective. In the ideal situation, two participants subscribed to the *Nurturing* perspective, one participant adhered to the *Developmental* perspective, and one participant supported *Apprenticeship*. *Social Reform* was recessive (although tied with other perspectives this time) for three participants and was ranked third for the remaining participant. Even though the participants' lack of alignment with *Social Reform* can be attributed to simply different teachers identifying with different perspectives, the complete answer is more nuanced and complex.

Research question 2 - What are the reasons behind the NETs' alignment or lack of alignment with the social reform teaching perspective?

and

Research question 3 - How does the total or partial support for the social reform perspective manifest itself in the NETs' praxis?

The second and third research questions are best answered concurrently as separating the participants' views and reasoning (question 2) from their actions (question 3) would not only be difficult in a practical sense, but it might skew the findings. Following the in-depth interviews with the participants, it was found that even if presented in isolation (i.e. with no other perspectives presented as alternatives) participants had difficulty aligning themselves with Social Reform not only from a theoretical standpoint (research question 2) but from a practical standpoint (research question 3). The study's findings point to significant barriers to teaching in Korean EFL which can partly explain the lack of alignment with social reform (research question 2) and the lack of practical manifestations of social reform in the teaching activities of participants (research question 3). These barriers are much more considerable than initially anticipated and go beyond the scope of social change in the EFL context; furthermore, they were found to adversely affect the engagement in meaningful teaching and learning experiences in Korean EFL.

Specifically, this study has found that NETs who experience teaching EFL in a Korean post-secondary institution must face several challenges and constraints. It was determined that these constraints are present regardless of the degree that social change is pursued by the teacher. Moreover, these constraints impact how teachers approach their EFL classes in Korea at a fundamental level before any discussion on social change can be contemplated. This important finding partly addresses Macedo's (2013) view of EFL teachers as acritical and atheoretical. There

are so many barriers to, not only discussing social change, but even teaching language in the most basic sense, that teachers have no choice but be acritical and atheoretical. It must be reiterated that the findings apply to participants in the current study and no claims are made here about all EFL teachers.

This being said, Macedo's claim that EFL teachers are atheoretical and acritical technicians is overly-simplistic, and it obfuscates the complexity of teaching EFL in a country subscribing to an entirely different cultural values, sets of rules and miscellaneous constraints from the country of origin of the NET. This study has found that these constraints can be categorized into three types:

- I. NETs teaching in Korean EFL are conflicted and/or confused about their roles as English teachers.
- II. There are significant cultural constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET.
- III. There are significant pedagogical constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET.

Each of these findings are subsequently discussed and their link to the literature review established.

I. NETs teaching in Korean EFL are conflicted and/or confused about their roles as English teachers.

It must be clarified that the teachers were not found to be conflicted and/or confused about their roles in the sense that their job duties were not clearly explained to them by the university when hired. Rather, NETs seemed well aware that in addition to the official contract that stipulates the teacher's duties, there are other implicit aspects not clearly specified in the contract, employee manuals or other institutional documentation, which are just as important to defining the NETs

behavior and approach with regards to their teaching and the roles they play as teachers. It is with regard to these implicit expectations and requirements vis-à-vis their roles that NETs are confused and conflicted about.

When answering questions where abstract concepts such as ‘higher ideals’, ‘social change’, ‘values’, ‘necessary changes’ were interwoven with more easily definable concepts such as ‘knowledge’, ‘English teaching and learning’, ‘instructional goals’, participants exhibited either conflict or confusion regarding their roles as NETs in Korea. This state of conflict and/or confusion appeared to be underpinned by a dichotomy arising from deciding whether one’s job involves: a) teaching English only, or b) teaching English in manner that goes beyond strictly language issues into a more holistic view of life and society.

In spite of the limited number of participants, no two participants aligned to the same view regarding their roles as NETs. Their answers indicated that participants subscribed to various degrees to both these views concurrently while teaching. This is surprising given that the two options are mutually exclusive – *EFL as language teaching only* versus *EFL as more than language teaching*. First, Tony supported the view (and claimed to take actions in line with this view) that teaching English goes beyond language instruction; he was the candidate who felt the strongest about any one view. On the other hand, Ann and Gerald perceived their roles in EFL as involving language teaching only although they admitted to taking more holistic approaches at times. Even so, Gerald was less consistent than Ann in his support for his role as a language teacher only; while on some occasions he claimed to follow his language teaching duties without including any topics unrelated to language, on other occasions he claimed to go out of his way to educate students on their ancient traditions or correct behavior which he felt was not appropriate. On the other hand, Ann was more firm about her view that language teachers should teach only language,

yet she conceded that in a different context she would be willing to consider more holistic approaches. Finally, Jennifer supported firmly the view that teachers should focus on language teaching while avoid discussing social change which she considers outside the scope of her job; even so, she argued that on specific issues she is in favor of teachers adopting approaches that appear to support social change. These include what she regards as small issues with a wide impact (e.g. turning off the lights after use or using double sides of paper when printing) as well as broader global issues.

The often inconsistent support for one view and then for another by the same participant unambiguously points to the element of confusion or conflict with respect to their roles as EFL teachers. Still, I was left with the undeniable feeling that teachers were generally more conflicted than confused about their roles. This sense of conflict appeared to arise not from being unsure whether it was their place fix the problems they saw in Korean EFL, but rather from a more hopeless general outlook, one in which the problems seemed beyond repair.

Nonetheless, participants repeatedly voiced the idea that some sort inclusion of social change would be acceptable in normal circumstances and preferable in an ideal situation. It must be noted that none of the teachers claimed their current situation as ideal. Also uniform among participants was the dilemma of how much social change should be discussed exactly. While they all agreed that teaching towards social change is recommended up to some point, approaching topics on social change “too much” is not advisable. They each offered specific examples of how they would (or do) approach social change, with some participants suggesting dealing with micro issues while others preferred macro issues.

The participants’ state of confusion and conflict offers an alternative to the view held by Sung (2012) and presented in the literature review, that of the Korean English teacher as an

individual who refuses to acknowledge EFL as an area in which neocolonialism, imperialism and critical pedagogy are valid topics, with many either consciously or subconsciously preferring the default modes of discussing EFL in terms of less controversial topics such as teaching methods, activities to be used in class, or technology in the classroom (Sung, 2012, p. 25). In addition, the present study responds to Pennycook's affirmation "knowledge can never be abstracted from questions of power" (cited in Sung, 2012, p. 36) by offering a glimpse into teachers thinking and behavior which indicate that knowledge often is separated and treated in isolation from other issues.

II. There are significant cultural constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET.

Teachers pointed to significant cultural barriers to teaching EFL in a Korean post-secondary institution. According to the participants, these constraints were present regardless whether the teachers' approach focused on language study only or was more holistic (i.e. contained discussions on social change).

When a more holistic approach was adopted, the appropriateness of discussing social change with the students was key. In these cases, teachers exhibited conflicting views, and often these were exhibited by the same participant. These conflicting views were: a) social change should not be pursued by the EFL teacher as discussions on social change can be inappropriate in class; b) discussions of societal change have a place in the EFL class as teachers should present alternatives to the students' perceptions related to education; c) attempting small changes related to teaching are acceptable, yet other times more global changes need to be put forward to the students.

Conversely, when participants subscribed to a ‘teaching English only’ approach, cultural constraints were still noted although in this case these were more specific and more consistent among participants. Participants referred to such constraints as factors considered beyond a teacher’s control when teaching Korea students. One such factor is Koreans’ overly traditional view of the world, which affects areas such as education, view of foreigners, and the way in which language learning should occur. These conservative attitudes point toward the underresearched suspicion made in the literature review that there is an incompatibility between critical pedagogy and Asian contexts (Crookes, 2010); this is a subject that could be investigated further by future research. Participants provided different examples of how these “conservative” attitudes impede discussion on social change or any issues except for the most basic. Gerald pointed to students not voicing their lack of understanding of concepts taught in class as it might trigger a ‘loss of face’, or not asking questions in class as this might be perceived as challenging the teacher’s authority. He also noted that Korea is a closed and unreceptive culture – “they just don’t get it”. Cultural constraints suggested by Tony include the struggle of Korean students to open up to foreign educators, and the uncertainty of Korean students on whether to be active or passive learners. As obedience is highly valued in Korea, the students do not know if they are supposed to be passive or active learners in the EFL. On one hand, they are told in their journey through elementary and secondary school to listen and obey the teacher (i.e. be passive), while in the EFL class at university they are expected to speak (i.e. be active) in order to improve their English. Jennifer pointed to students as being cliquey and unwilling to cooperate with other students outside their clique. This can also be considered a cultural constraint because in Korea if one is not in a clique he/she could be considered an outcast and be shunned by the larger group (e.g. the EFL class) and be treated badly. Dealing with cliques can be challenging for foreign teachers as they are not privy to how

group dynamics work in Korea, and in addition, teachers would need to engage in constant negotiation and renegotiation to get students to do what they want.

This issue of negotiation and renegotiation points to NETs trying to overcome cultural constraints to instill values in their students that the NETs believe to be right. This attitude confirms the idea discussed in the literature review that Korean inclination for conformity with group values at the expense of individual goals (McGuire, 2007) might not preclude the possibility that critical modes of thinking and social change can be beneficial to education in the country. Nonetheless, the NETs' admitted efforts in this regard were hesitant and inconsistently adopted among participants. Furthermore, the view that critical pedagogy is inhibited by features of Korean culture which can be partly overcome by NETs' understanding of concepts specifically Korean such as *yang* and *eum* (Shin, 2014) has been answered indirectly by NETs admission that they do not understand sufficiently Korean culture to propose changes.

Finally, the overly traditional views that students have of the world and the fact that students struggle with issues such as the active/passive learner dichotomy, the preponderance of cliques and immutability of teacher authority in the mind of students support the point advanced in the literature review that Korean English students lack critical literacy skills (Ko, 2013).

III. There are significant pedagogical constraints to teaching in Korean EFL as a NET.

In this case, pedagogical constraints were deemed to include not only obstacles of an educational nature but also institutional constraints that impact teaching and learning. Furthermore, while some of the constraints discussed may have a cultural component in addition to the pedagogical one, the dominant presence of the latter warranted their inclusion here.

There were seven specific constraints pertaining to pedagogy that were found from participants to impact teaching in Korean EFL as a NET:

1) Low student English proficiency levels

All participants generally agreed that in the context of post-secondary Korean EFL the students' English levels were too low to discuss anything but the most basic concepts. As a result, most interactions between teacher and students have to be demonstrative and/or involve miming. Secondly, because the teacher speaks in a language the students have not yet acquired, it is tougher to build relationships than if addressing the students in their first language. Furthermore, some teachers admitted that in spite of attempting to awaken the students' interest in social change issues, or at an even less complex level respond to interests that some students may already have (or need), the students' low English level posed an often insurmountable barrier. In spite of the low-level, some participants argued that attempts should still be made to integrate discussions related to social change in the curriculum, and accept that results may not become apparent immediately.

2) Large class sizes

Some participants argued that the class sizes were too big for effective teaching; this was regardless whether the teacher's approach focused on language learning only or was more holistic and included discussions on social change. Jennifer argued that smaller classes would allow the teachers to know the students better on an individual basis, as it is tough to build relationship if the teachers do not know the students' names, as it is common in large classes. Tony echoed this view by stating that having large classes prevent teachers from adhering to "the first rule of teaching – know your students"; nonetheless, he argued that the teacher should make the effort to know his/her students even if the classes are large.

3) Limited classroom time

All participants pointed to the lack of classroom time not only as a significant barrier to discussing social change but to covering the languages issues mandated by the curriculum. More worryingly, in some cases the limited class time was reduced even further; Jennifer mentioned that her class time was reduced recently, with two weekly 75 minutes sessions replaced by two weekly 50 minutes sessions.

Gerald claimed that the limited class time led teachers to avoid spending too much time on “non-academic things” (which he categorized social change issues under). Conversely, Tony considered the semesters as too short to experiment with integrating values in the curriculum; he argued that ideally he would prefer teaching classes for two consecutive semesters. Finally, Ann agreed that classroom time is insufficient to address discussions on social change, yet she added that even if more time was made available, in light of the students’ low English levels, all the allotted time would still only suffice for language issues.

4) Lack of teacher freedom

The general consensus among the participants was that they lacked freedom as teachers. First, it was suggested that in spite of EFL field being diverse and the materials available to teachers being virtually limitless, teachers were forced to often use materials (e.g. textbooks) that could not be changed and were not appropriate for Korean students. While some NETs had some leeway in the materials they used, the majority could deviate very little from what was proscribed in the curriculum. Secondly, the students’ interpretation of what the teacher’s role in the class should be was also a contributing factor to the teachers’ perceived lack of freedom. Jennifer stated that teachers could only be as creative in their teaching as the students and university management staff are willing to accept.

The lack of freedom was perceived by some participants as immutable and they refused to fight against it claiming that they were afraid of repercussions. These included the fear of losing one's job, not fitting in, or upsetting people. Gerald also attributed the lack of freedom to the lack of power to make changes.

Not all participants, however, viewed the lack of freedom as unassailable. Tony suggested that teachers will not be bestowed freedom but rather they have to earn it. He argued that teachers need to learn how to bypass unreasonable constraints imposed on them in order to be free. This involves living by one's own high standards on issues such as higher ideals and social change, while giving lip service to unreasonable and immovable policies which a wise teacher should not to fight against openly.

Another facet of the teachers' lack of freedom is that it insidiously affects teachers due to the acritical stance that universities have towards teaching English in Korea. Tony explained it aptly via a fictional dialogue taking place between a program director and a NET in a hypothetical world where more direct discussions would be acceptable: "Oh, you just teach English to these folks, so just go from the book; otherwise, their parents are going to be angry or someone is going to be angry".

Finally, participants affirmed that having more freedom would allow teachers to discuss higher ideals and social change, not only in the sense they would act on it in practice. Rather, more freedom would allow teachers to enable a paradigm shift from language-based to content-based learning to take place in their classroom. With this new paradigm in place, the inclusion of behavior and actions conducive to social change would become unavoidable.

5) Lack of common ground between NETs and Korean students

Tony argued that in order for the students to respond to the teacher's lessons, teachers and students need to reach common ground which he defines as the teacher coming to know his/her students. Also, an additional type of balance should be pursued by the teacher – the balance between inculcating and not inculcating but rather gently prodding students to explore and discover possibilities inherent when learning. However, Gerald argued that even this kind of prodding has to be structured because the limited environment in Korea does not allow for a “free flowing expressive style”.

Participants indicated that teachers have difficulty finding the common ground between themselves and their students for a number of reasons. These include a combination of either not being trained as teachers or being inexperienced, possible teacher jadedness towards teaching English or a lack of teacher motivation.

Another contributing factor to the lack of common ground was the busyness of both teachers and students; students were busy due to very demanding academic schedules, whereas teachers were occupied with delivering and preparing an increasing number of courses without the requisite time available to reflect on issues such as building common ground with students - which they considered significant but not pressing.

Finally, participants espoused conflicting views about the relation between foreign teachers and Korean students. Some participants claimed that students have difficulty opening up to foreign teachers due to language and cultural barriers, while others claimed that the difference in culture makes it easier for students to open up to foreign teachers. The proponents of this latter hypothesis argued that as foreign teachers come from a different culture, the students would consider them more approachable than Korean teachers because they would not judge the students according to Korean standards, and would thus be easier to openly talk to.

6) Poor learning/study habits of students

Participants emphasized that Korean students exhibit very poor understanding of studying and learning habits, and methods. Tony, for instance, pointed to a lack of understanding on how to separate big tasks into actionable smaller tasks when doing an assignment. He believed that this is as much a cultural constraint as a pedagogical one: culturally, this behavior occurs as a result of cramming which Tony considered a pervasive social phenomenon, and pedagogically, Tony contended there is a lack of simple understanding of effective ways to study such as categorization which involves “dividing the subject matter into the known and the unknown and then studying the unknown”. Although cramming is widespread in Korea, participants suggested that cramming can be replaced with better studying habits that teach students how to study more efficiently for exams, while also remembering the information in the long-term; however, this takes work and time on the part of the teacher.

Participants also argued that some poor learning habits occur as a result of Korean students’ past experiences with Korean teachers. For example, Gerald claimed that Korean teachers are good at inculcating students, and that they are unable to deal with the students’ shortcomings in learning English. As such, by the time they reach university, Korean students’ English level is still very basic despite having taken English classes for years.

7) Lack of student motivation

The findings revealed that there are a few factors which contribute to the Korean students’ lack of motivation in the EFL classroom. First of all, participants claimed that Korean students do not have a proper understanding of the value of English and its potential utility to them. They are “forced-fed” since childhood that it is imperative that they learn English, yet they do not know why.

Secondly, Jennifer argued that at her university, students were not very motivated to start with, so expecting them to be “motors of change” was difficult. She explained that as her university was not a high-ranking university, many students enrolled there because it was the only university that accepted them. She asserted that this should not be attributed to a lack of intelligence on the part of the students, but rather on “some laziness on preparing for exams needed for admission”.

Conversely, participants suggested ways to deal with a lack of student motivation. Some have argued that if unsatisfactory engagement is obtained, teachers should change their approach; however, the challenge here is that there is not enough time for corrective action if the lack of motivation culminates later during the semester.

In addition, some participants maintained that the teacher should not be satisfied with pleasing the students and letting them get away with saying “I understand” without understanding or by moving on to the next topic when students appear confused (despite not admitting to be so nor asking questions). Tony maintained that foreign teachers, given that they are in a foreign context and their students’ level is low, often make the mistake of interpreting any response from the students as progress. Teachers ought to urge students to respond more substantially than “I understand” even if this would reflect a major difference/disagreement.

Revisiting the literature review

As discussed in the literature review, social change is dependent on critical literacy and previous research has agreed that Korean students lack critical literacy skills. Nonetheless, until the present study no specific pedagogically-oriented obstacles explaining the lack of critical literacy skills in Korean students had been identified. Moreover, of the seven pedagogical obstacles found, number 4 (i.e. lack of teacher freedom) and number 6 (i.e. poor learning/study habits of

students) have been directly found to be contributing factors to keep the critical literacy levels of students low.

The literature also mentions that a lack of English proficiency does not hamper improvement in critical literacy (Ko, 2013), which would seem to indicate that critical pedagogy is possible with students of low English proficiency. Nonetheless, it should be noted that Ko's (2013) study has shown that critical-literacy is "more acceptable to students who English proficiency is high", and that her study was carried out with Taiwanese students and not Koreans. The current study, however, identifies all the pedagogical constraints discussed as playing a part in preventing students of low English proficiency from becoming more critical literate and engaging in discussions on social reform.

Overall, the students' low English proficiency and the focus on the technical aspects of the language point to potential difficulty in implementing a *dialogic approach* (Freire, 2005). Nonetheless, participants have indicated that there are ways to move towards social reform (and critical pedagogy) even though these may not be drastic. For instance, one participant mentioned a paradigm shift from language teaching to content teaching in a language. Perhaps, this in itself can be deemed a move toward critical pedagogy – focusing on the broader context of the actual specific *content* the students are wishing to learn rather than the preliminary tool (i.e. learning the language) that prepares them to eventually tackle the content. A second example of a small step towards critical pedagogy, could be the one provided by Gerald regarding teaching students to say "I don't know". This could be another way to bring in critical pedagogy.

The lack of critical pedagogy in Korean EFL can also be partly attributed to the methodology used in the EFL in Korea which can be quite prescriptive. This drawback is further weakened by the seven pedagogical obstacles found in this research. Together, the implementation

of critical pedagogy in a Korean EFL classroom becomes even more difficult. Also, the ‘English fever’ phenomenon taking place in Korea further supports an environment with little room for critical pedagogy. ‘English fever’ is not about learning the language but rather about passing the tests to get to economic rewards – so there are structural constraints to a critical pedagogy. The whole environment is geared towards testing rather than language learning specifically.

Furthermore, the literature has indicated that not many teachers in Korea have been exposed to critical pedagogy on a wider scale (Shin & Crookes, 2005). An explanation for this, in addition to the cultural constraints to conducting critical pedagogy in Korea, which have been discussed in the respective section, is that “teachers teach the way they have been taught” (Crookes & Lehner, 1998p. 171) and that being a dialogical teacher is difficult work (Shin & Crookes, 2005). While the literature was referring to Korean English teachers, the present research has found these findings to be valid also for NETs teaching in Korea. Pedagogical constraints 5 (i.e. lack of common ground between NETs and Korean students) and 6 (i.e. poor learning/study habits of students) have been identified as responsible to for their adverse impact on undertaking teaching in line with critical pedagogy.

In response to Shin and Crookes (2005) research which points to the traditional stereotype of East Asian students (Korean included) as passive and non-autonomous learners, the participants in the present research have indeed pointed to students as generally passive and non-autonomous. However, participants have attributed this attitude to various pedagogical oriented constraints, such as 5 (i.e. lack of common ground between NETs and Korean students), 6 (i.e. poor learning/study habits of students) and 7 (i.e. lack of student motivation).

In addition, there is a point raised in the literature review which this research has not been able to provide a satisfactory answer to. When Pederson (2012) summarized the lack of criticality

in Korean EFL, he affirmed that “EFL educators are being influenced, if not programmed, into a specific form of naiveté where ELT is viewed as linguistic exercise with smatterings of culture thrown in to satisfy the illusory curricular dictates of Communicative Language Teaching” (p. 14). While the three groups of obstacles discussed – teacher conflict/confusion, cultural constraints and pedagogical constraints – indeed point to “ELT as linguistic exercise with [only] smatterings of culture”, it remains debatable whether this can be considered “programming” or “naiveté” as argued by Pederson.

Finally, it is worth noting that it was beneficial to use ‘social reform’ as a concept instead of solely critical pedagogy. Using social reform has granted me access to Pratt’s and Collins’ (1998) ready-made, exhaustively tested Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) to understand participants’ perspective about social reform and thus to critical pedagogy. Without making the link between social reform and critical pedagogy it would have been very difficult to unpack critical pedagogy and to obtain participant responses relevant to critical pedagogy as effectively as it was accomplished.

Conclusion

The present research started out with the goal of responding to the Macedo’s (2013) allegation that EFL teachers are acritical and atheoretical. Although not directly stated, Macedo seemingly held EFL teachers responsible for *electing* to be acritical and atheoretical. On completing my research, I learned that although teachers could indeed be perceived at times as being acritical and atheoretical, it is not necessarily by choice. Macedo regards EFL teachers as totally autonomous individuals who are not behaving autonomously; he appears to expect EFL teachers to subscribe to the academic model of a professor – to consider issues carefully,

completely and free of artificial constraints, to identify problems, and to set about implementing better approaches in their practice. However, this research shows that in reality EFL teachers have very little control over how they teach and are faced with crushing and often insurmountable obstacles. Despite this aspect not being articulated as such yet plainly clear in the accounts provided by the participants in the study, NETs are hired as acritical and atheoretical teachers. They are expected to behave acritically and atheoretically – to be technicians and to follow the assigned curriculum to the letter. Therefore, while I believe Macedo's is correct about his assessment as EFL teachers being acritical and atheoretical, his premise that EFL teachers can simply choose to be critical and theoretical is overly-simplistic.

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Appendix A

Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI)

This inventory will help you identify your perspectives on teaching. As you consider the following statements, think of specific content and learners and the settings in which you meet them for instruction and learning.

Instructions

Because these statements represent contrasting views of teaching and learning, you will agree with some of them, but you must logically disagree with certain others. Be sure to discriminate between statements that are both consistent with -- and contrary to your personal views. You cannot agree with all statements.

All points from this inventory were taken from the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI) which can be accessed at www.teachingperspectives.com

This inventory has 45 points and will take roughly 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

As previously discussed, you are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire two times. The first time you are urged to approach the questionnaire by thinking about your *current* and *real* educational beliefs, intentions and practices. The second time please answer the questionnaire *as if* you are teaching in an ideal situation in an ideal world, were no restrictions, either tacit nor overt, are imposed or manifest themselves in your educational beliefs, intentions or practices.

Please enter your name: _____

Please enter your email address: _____

Is this the first or the second time you are completing the survey? _____

Educational BELIEFS

What do you believe about instructing or teaching? For each statement, select the response that best represents your Agreement or Disagreement.

SD = Strongly Disagree **D** = Disagree **N** = Neutral **A** = Agree **SA** = Strongly Agree

1. Learning is enhanced by having predetermined objectives

☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA

2. To be an effective teacher, one must be an effective practitioner

☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA

3. Most of all, learning depends on what one already knows

☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA

4. It's important that I acknowledge learners' emotional reactions

☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA

5. My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
6. Teachers should be virtuoso performers of their subject matter
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
7. The best learning comes from working alongside good practitioners
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
8. Teaching should focus on developing qualitative changes in thinking
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
9. In my teaching, building self-confidence in learners is a priority
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
10. Individual learning without social change is not enough
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
11. Effective teachers must first be experts in their own subject areas
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
12. Knowledge and its application cannot be separated
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
13. Teaching should build upon what people already know
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
14. In learning, people's effort should be rewarded as much as achievement
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA
15. For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an intellectual activity
☐ SD ☐ D ☐ N ☐ A ☐ SA

Educational INTENTIONS

What do you try to accomplish in your instruction or teaching? For each statement, select the response that best represents how **OFTEN** it represents your educational intention.

N = Never **R** = Rarely **S** = Sometimes **U** = Usually **A** = Always

16. My intent is to prepare people for examinations
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
17. My intent is to demonstrate how to perform or work in real situations
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
18. My intent is to help people develop more complex ways of reasoning
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
19. My intent is to build people's self-confidence and self-esteem as learners
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
20. My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
21. I expect people to master a lot of information related to the subject

- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
22. I expect people to know how to apply the subject matter in real settings
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
23. I expect people to develop new ways of reasoning about the subject matter
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
24. I expect people to enhance their self-esteem through my teaching
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
25. I expect people to be committed to changing our society
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
26. I want people to score well on examinations as a result of my teaching
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
27. I want people to understand the realities of working in the real world
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
28. I want people to see how complex and inter-related things really are
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
29. I want to provide a balance between caring and challenging as I teach
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
30. I want to make apparent what people take for granted about society
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A

Educational ACTIONS

What do you do when instructing or teaching? For each statement, select the response that best represents how OFTEN you do that action.

N = Never **R** = Rarely **S** = Sometimes **U** = Usually **A** = Always

31. I cover the required content accurately and in the allotted time
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
32. I link the subject matter with real settings of practice or application
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
33. I ask a lot of questions while teaching
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
34. I find something to compliment in everyone's work or contribution
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
35. I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
36. My teaching is governed by the course objectives
☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
37. I model the skills and methods of good practice

- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
38. I challenge familiar ways of understanding the subject matter
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
39. I encourage expressions of feeling and emotion
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
40. I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
41. I make it very clear to people what they are to learn
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
42. I see to it that novices learn from more experienced people
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
43. I encourage people to challenge each others' thinking
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
44. I share my own feelings and expect my learners to do the same
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A
45. I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society
- ☐ N ☐ R ☐ S ☐ U ☐ A

Appendix B

Information letter and participants' answers to questions pertaining to Social Reform

---letter start---

Dear Gerald,

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, I would like to provide you with more information about the questions that I will ask during the interview.

Below, I have included specific questions that were asked in the questionnaire, and your answers for both times you took the questionnaire. The interview will primarily focus on these specific questions (especially your answers on the FIRST time you took the questionnaire, but will touch on SECOND time answers too), and will aim to explore why you answered these questions in the way that you did. For example, I will ask questions such as: "In question #5, you disagreed with the statement that *my teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner*. Could you explain why you feel this way?" and so on.

During the interview, I think it would be helpful if you had a copy of this file, so that you may remember your answers to the specific questions, as well as having an idea of the upcoming questions.

Thank you!

Regarding your BELIEFS:

| Question #5 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner | Strongly disagree | Agree |
| Question #10 | First time | Second time |
| Individual learning without social change is not enough | Disagree | Disagree |
| Question #15 | First time | Second time |
| For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an intellectual activity | Agree | Agree |

Regarding your INTENTIONS:

| Question #20 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values | Sometimes | Usually |
| Question #25 | First time | Second time |
| I expect people to be committed to changing our society | Never | Never |
| Question #30 | First time | Second time |
| I want to make apparent what people take for granted about society | Sometimes | Sometimes |

Regarding your ACTIONS:

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Question #35 | First time | Second time |
| I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals | Usually | Usually |
| Question #40 | First time | Second time |
| I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching | Rarely | Sometimes |
| Question #45 | First time | Second time |
| I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society | Rarely | Usually |

---letter end---

---letter start---

Dear Tony,

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, I would like to provide you with more information about the questions that I will ask during the interview.

Below, I have included specific questions that were asked in the questionnaire, and your answers for both times you took the questionnaire. The interview will primarily focus on these specific questions (especially your answers on the FIRST time you took the questionnaire, but will touch on SECOND time answers too), and will aim to explore why you answered these questions in the way that you did. For example, I will ask questions such as: "In #5, you replied 'neutral' to the statement that *my teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner*. Could you explain why you feel this way?" and so on.

During the interview, I think it would be helpful if you had a copy of this file, so that you may remember your answers to the specific questions, as well as having an idea of the upcoming questions.

Thank you very much!

Regarding your BELIEFS:

| Question #5 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner | Neutral | Agree |
| Question #10 | First time | Second time |
| Individual learning without social change is not enough | Agree | Agree |
| Question #15 | First time | Second time |
| For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an intellectual activity | Agree | Agree |

Regarding your INTENTIONS:

| Question #20 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values | Usually | Always |
| Question #25 | First time | Second time |
| I expect people to be committed to changing our society | Usually | Usually |
| Question #30 | First time | Second time |
| I want to make apparent what people take for granted about society | Always | Usually |

Regarding your ACTIONS:

| Question #35 | First time | Second time |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals | Usually | Usually |
|--|---------|---------|

Question #40

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| First time | Second time |
|-------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching | Sometimes | Sometimes |
|---|-----------|-----------|

Question #45

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| First time | Second time |
|-------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society | Sometimes | Sometimes |
|--|-----------|-----------|

---letter end---

---letter start---

Dear Ann,

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, I would like to provide you with more information about the questions that I will ask during the interview.

Below, I have included specific questions that were asked in the questionnaire, and your answers for both times you took the questionnaire. The interview will primarily focus on these specific questions (especially your answers on the FIRST time you took the questionnaire, but will touch on SECOND time answers too), and will aim to explore why you answered these questions in the way that you did. For example, I will ask questions such as: "In question #5, you disagreed with the statement that *my teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner*. Could you explain why you feel this way?" and so on.

During the interview, I think it would be helpful if you had a copy of this file, so that you may remember your answers to the specific questions, as well as having an idea of the upcoming questions.

Thank you very much!

Regarding your BELIEFS:

Question #5

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| First time | Second time |
|-------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|--|----------|---------|
| My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner | Disagree | Neutral |
|--|----------|---------|

Question #10

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| First time | Second time |
|-------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|---|---------|-------|
| Individual learning without social change is not enough | Neutral | Agree |
|---|---------|-------|

| Question #15 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an intellectual activity | Agree | Strongly agree |

Regarding your INTENTIONS:

| Question #20 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values | Rarely | Always |

| Question #25 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| I expect people to be committed to changing our society | Rarely | Usually |

| Question #30 | First time | Second time |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| I want to make apparent what people take for granted about society | Rarely | Usually |

Regarding your ACTIONS:

| Question #35 | First time | Second time |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals | Usually | Usually |

| Question #40 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching | Sometimes | Sometimes |

| Question #45 | First time | Second time |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society | Sometimes | Usually |

---letter end---

---letter start---

Dear Jennifer,

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, I would like to provide you with more information about the questions that I will ask during the interview.

Below, I have included specific questions that were asked in the questionnaire, and your answers for both times you took the questionnaire. The interview will primarily focus on these specific

questions (especially your answers on the FIRST time you took the questionnaire, but will touch on SECOND time answers too), and will aim to explore why you answered these questions in the way that you did. For example, I will ask questions such as: “In question #5, you disagreed with the statement that *my teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner*. Could you explain why you feel this way?” and so on.

During the interview, I think it would be helpful if you had a copy of this file, so that you may remember your answers to the specific questions, as well as having an idea of the upcoming questions.

Thank you very much!

Regarding your BELIEFS:

| Question #5 | First time | Second time |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner | Disagree | Disagree |
| Question #10 | First time | Second time |
| Individual learning without social change is not enough | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| Question #15 | First time | Second time |
| For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an intellectual activity | Strongly agree | Strongly agree |

Regarding your INTENTIONS:

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Question #20 | First time | Second time |
| My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values | Rarely | Sometimes |
| Question #25 | First time | Second time |
| I expect people to be committed to changing our society | Rarely | Always |
| Question #30 | First time | Second time |

| | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| I want to make apparent what people take for granted about society | Sometimes | Sometimes |
|--|-----------|-----------|

Regarding your ACTIONS:

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Question #35 | First time | Second time |
| I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals | Sometimes | Sometimes |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Question #40 | First time | Second time |
| I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching | Sometimes | Sometimes |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Question #45 | First time | Second time |
| I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society | Sometimes | Always |

---letter end---

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

I am a graduate student at Memorial University of Newfoundland in the Faculty of Education. As part of my M.Ed. thesis I am conducting a study under the supervision of Dr. Cecile Badenhorst.

I invite you to participate in my study. Your points of view and feedback would be greatly appreciated!

This study is aimed at understanding the teaching perspectives of Western teachers who have experienced teaching English in a Korean institution of Post-Secondary Education. This study will help me explore the self-perceived beliefs, intentions and actions of English teachers, and contemplate possible implications.

I am hoping that this study will contribute to a better understanding of teaching English in a post-secondary setting in Korea so that English Language Teaching (ELT) can be improved. I am also expecting this study to benefit you personally by offering the opportunity to articulate your teaching perspectives and determine if these align with your teaching goals.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Activities and length of time:

I am requesting your consent and permission to conduct a questionnaire and a one-on-one audio-taped interview (via Skype) with you. The questionnaire will require that you complete it two times - taking approximately 10 to 15 minutes each time. The interviews, which will be semi-structured and will explore some of your answers from the questionnaires, will last approximately 1 hour. A date and time for the questionnaire/interviews will be agreed at your convenience.

Confidentiality and storage of data:

To ensure confidentiality, I will be the only person with authorized access to your personal information, including your name or physically identifying characteristics. The collected data will be stored on my personal password-protected computer and backed-up on my personal password-protected storage device. The data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as per Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research.

Anonymity:

Every reasonable effort will be made to safeguard your anonymity. All your identifying information (name, age, physical characteristics etc) will be kept confidential. Following the questionnaires and interviews the real names will be removed immediately and replaced with pseudonyms. Also, in the data reporting these pseudonyms will be used instead of your real name. Your individual nationality will not be specified in relation to your pseudonym, however, the

nationalities of participants as a group will be mentioned in the study, as this information is considered relevant to the research.

Limits to confidentiality and anonymity:

Although I will make any reasonable effort to do so, the participants' confidentiality and anonymity cannot be guaranteed. The questionnaire will be hosted online (with the answers only accessible by myself) on Google Docs, an application of Google Inc., while the interviews will be conducted via Skype, a Microsoft Inc. company. Both Google and Microsoft are located in the USA making them subject to USA laws. As such, USA authorities can gain access to Google's or Microsoft's data, making our questionnaire and interview data potentially vulnerable.

Results sharing:

Upon research completion, a summary of the results will be provided to you.

Possible risks:

I do not anticipate any possible risks (physical, emotional, social or otherwise) to you. You have the right to abstain from answering any questions.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions at any time before or during your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact me via email: dragosbrad@gmail.com, or by telephone: +40214116697. You are also welcome to get in touch with my supervisor, Dr. Cecile Badenhorst at cbadenhorst@mun.ca, or by telephone at (709) 864-8553 x:7654.

Thank you for considering my invitation to participate.

Sincerely,

Dragos Brad
M.Ed. Candidate, Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

ICEHR Approval Statement:

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.

- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that data cannot be removed from the study once it is submitted.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

- ☐ I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
- ☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation at any time.
- ☐ I agree to be audio-recorded during the interview
- ☐ I agree to the use of quotations and understand that my name will be replaced with a pseudonym in any publications resulting from this study.
- ☐ I do not agree to the use of quotations and understand that my name will be replaced with a pseudonym in any publications resulting from this study.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

Signature of participant

Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Dragos Mihai Brad
Signature of Principal Investigator

December 9, 2013
Date