The Effect of a Short-Term Professional Development on K-12 Korean English Teachers' Self-efficacy to Implement Communicative Language Teaching: A Mixed-Methods Study[1]

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Abstract

Since the early 2000s, much emphasis has been placed on adopting the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in the Korean K-12 context, however, such efforts have been largely unsuccessful. In order to shed light on some of the reasons for such failures, this study examined the impact of short-term professional development (PD) on primary and secondary Korean English teachers' self-efficacy to implement the CLT method. The data consisted of an end-of-the-course survey distributed among teachers (n=131), in-depth individual interviews with teachers (n=10), and researchers' classroom observations. The findings suggested that PD could help teachers feel more confident and prepare them to implement CLT. In addition, PD seemed to enhance teachers' motivation to adapt CLT into their future English classrooms. The findings of this study confirmed previous global research regarding two major difficulties regarding implementing CLT: 1) grammar-based national college entrance exams, and 2) large class sizes of mixed proficiency levels. In conclusion, several suggestions on how to increase the effectiveness of the CLT method successfully through PD in Korea are provided.

Resumen

Desde principios de la década de 2000, se ha hecho hincapié en la adopción del método de enseñanza comunicativa del lenguaje (CLT, por sus siglas en inglés) en el contexto coreano de la escuela primaria y secundaria, sin embargo, tales esfuerzos han sido en gran parte infructuosos. Con el fin de arrojar luz sobre algunas de las razones de tales fallas, este estudio examinó el impacto del desarrollo profesional a corto plazo (PD) en la autoeficacia de los maestros de inglés coreanos de primaria y secundaria para implementar el método CLT. Los datos consistieron en una encuesta de fin de curso distribuida entre los docentes (n=131), entrevistas individuales en profundidad con docentes (n=10) y observaciones de los investigadores en el aula. Los resultados sugieren que el DP podría ayudar a los maestros a sentirse más seguros y prepararlos para implementar CLT. Además, PD parece incrementar la motivación de los maestros para adaptar CLT en sus futuras aulas de inglés. Los hallazgos de este estudio confirmaron investigaciones globales previas sobre dos dificultades principales con respecto a la implementación de CLT: 1) exámenes de ingreso a la universidad nacionales basados en gramática, y 2) clases grandes de niveles mixtos de competencia. En conclusión, se proporcionan varias sugerencias sobre cómo aumentar la eficacia del método CLT con éxito a través del DP en Corea

Introduction

There have been many different teaching methods implemented in English language teaching (ELT) worldwide. For example, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) dominated English teaching globally from 1970 until the 1990s because English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers believed that studying grammatical rules and memorizing vocabulary was the key to successfully learning to communicate in a second language (Kong, 2011). However, due to globalization and a desire to compete in the global economy, Korea needed more people with literacy in English, hence found it essential to increase the number of people who could efficiently communicate in English (Ansarey, 2012; Choi, 2000). Like many other countries striving to enhance English language learners' communicative competence, Korea began implementing different teaching pedagogies and approaches to move away from GTM (Ansarey, 2012). As Korea and other countries have attempted to stay competitive in today's increasingly globalized world, there has been a transition from understanding the grammatical function of English to recognizing the necessity to interact in English. This new emphasis has required education systems worldwide to emphasize the four skills of English language learning alongside learning the culture associated with the language as a priority. For this reason, the Ministry of Education in Korea adopted Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to boost English language learners' (ELLs) communicative competence (Choi, 2000).

CLT has been a popular teaching method in Korea since 2001 when the Korean Ministry of Education announced its sixth curriculum which altered the policy of learning English in Korea (Cook, 2010). The sixth curriculum's primary goal in using CLT was to enable Korean ELLs to effectively communicate with English speakers from all over the world (Cook, 2010). To achieve this goal, the policy aimed to build communicative competence by implementing CLT in English classrooms.

Teachers' professional development (PD) was an important practice in alignment with the national curriculum, which required English teachers to keep up with changes within the English educational paradigm (Atay, 2007; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). In this vein, providing PD opportunities for English teachers in Korea was critical for them to develop their own CLT-based teaching strategies and classroom activities. Some studies have suggested that PD helps teachers acquire new knowledge about CLT as well as encourages teachers to be more dedicated to continuous PD that impacts their future career potential (e.g., Hong & Kim, 2016; Ko, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2015).

Recognizing the importance of the CLT method for EFL teachers in Korea, this study aims to understand how short-term PD influences English teachers' self-efficacy to implement the CLT method in their own English classrooms. Thus, the following research question guided the current study:

> How do teachers attending a short-term PD on CLT rate with trainees in terms of their satisfaction with its organization, quality, and adaptability to their own teaching context including their feelings toward the national English curriculum of Korea?

Literature Review

Defining the CLT Method

In ELT-related literature, CLT has been defined broadly depending on the learning outcomes the teacher desires to achieve. For example, Nunan (2003) defines CLT as a "language teaching method based on the concept that interaction is the key to language learning and that students must have opportunities to communicate during class" (p. 330). According to Nunan, teacher-student interaction in the classroom plays a significant role in using CLT; therefore, teachers can help students balance the emphasis of accuracy and fluency by encouraging the students to communicate in English.

Likewise, Richards (2005) recognizes the need for communication, but acknowledges the need for language to be contextualized. Richards (2005) explains communicative competence as "[k]nowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies)" (p.3). This indicates that EFL learners can develop communicative competence through many different activities using CLT, and it can also boost students' second language (L2) understanding in a given context.

Although students are responsible for creating and using language to navigate the activities and interactions within a CLT class design, the teacher still maintains an important role in the class (Farooq, 2015). In order to improve students' communicative competence, the language classroom has to become student-centered, not teacher-dominated. This indicates that EFL instructors who adopt CLT offer opportunities for students to practice their L2 as much as they can in class. Instructors would ideally also teach students how to acquire L2 communication skills through a variety of speaking and writing activities such as negotiating meaning, group-work, role-plays, and problem-solving (Farooq, 2015). In other words, the instructor sheds the traditional "teacher's role" and becomes more of a facilitator to help students experience the target language.

Communicative Language Teaching in Korea

The Korean Ministry of Education put forth the sixth curriculum policy for learning English in 2001. According to the government's policy, Korean EFL learners should learn English by using authentic materials such as English newspapers, magazines, news on the radio, and TV programs. The purpose of adopting authentic materials in the curriculum was to promote learner-centeredness, so teachers were encouraged to organize these materials based on their students' needs (Littlewood, 2007).

However, Shin (2007) argues that in Korea the "goal for English education implied in the government's policy was not congruent with the English teachers' immediate goals to implement CLT for English education" (p.83). This point indicates that there are many differences between government and teacher expectations where the methods of how English should be taught are concerned. This conflict has caused and continues to cause complications regarding the implementation of CLT in the Korean context.

Previous studies from a cultural context similar to Korea have shown two primary underlying issues preventing the widespread adoption of the CLT method by instructors: 1) pressure to prepare students

for a standardized university entrance exam, and 2) large class sizes with students of various English proficiencies (Shin, 2007). Along these lines, Cook (2010) interviewed Japanese EFL teachers who received CLT method training in English-speaking countries. The teachers indicated that they were willing to use the CLT in their own classrooms but felt pressured by other stakeholders such as administrators, colleagues, parents, and students who were solely focused on preparation for the National College Exam so that students could compete for acceptance at a top university. As Cook stated, "the reasons for no change in classroom practice [were] entrance examination preparation pressures and resistance from students, parents, and colleagues" (p.102). This indicates that teachers faced resistance to implementing CLT in language classrooms at multiple levels when dealing with stakeholders. It was easier for teachers to abandon the methodology than to create buy-in from these distinct levels of opposition.

The Korean education is also nationalized, which means every school adheres to the same government mandated policies across the country. Even though there are Korean secondary schools with high-quality English teachers, students often do not accept CLT because of the grammar-based exams they are expected to take in the future. To receive more buy-in from the students, Lee (2014) suggests that the Korean College Entrance Exam needs to be changed to evaluate students' communicative competence instead of heavily emphasizing grammar.

Due to many English teachers' concerns about the English section in the national college entrance exams, the Korean Ministry of Education made decisions in 2008 to change the English test system by developing a test similar to the TOEFL. They developed the National English Ability Test (NEAT), which included speaking and writing portions to evaluate students' communicative competence. However, Lee (2014) identified three important reasons NEAT was never successfully implemented. First, there was a lack of preparation to implement this testing method. Educators did not have a clear understanding of how to prepare students for the new test, which meant that they were inadequately prepared to evaluate their ELL's performance. Second, there was a lack of PD for English teachers in Korea. Because the teachers were not properly trained to prepare students for the NEAT exam, many stakeholders, especially parents, were concerned about any student preparation that could negatively impact students' chances at college acceptance. Due to these first two concerns, the third apprehension about implementing NEAT was that the test would boost private English academies, a situation that might negatively impact the public school system. Since parents would not be confident in the public school teachers' ability to prepare students for the exam, they would seek out private English institutes. This would place an extra financial burden on families, which would benefit students from affluent families while providing less financially stable families with limited opportunities.

Moodie and Nam (2016) asserted that students' different proficiency levels in English might be another reason inhibiting the successful implementation of the CLT method in Korea. The authors point out that the "mixture of students of different levels of English proficiency within a class makes it difficult for teachers to select a teaching method suitable to meet the students' diverse expectations or needs" (p.157). In Korea, secondary English classrooms are usually made up of thirty students, so instructors have to accommodate the diverse English levels in order to reach every student. As a result, it has been challenging to implement the CLT method with differentiated assessments that accommodate the unique needs of each ELL.

Professional Development in Korea

The current research has been modeled after several important PD studies conducted in the Korean K-12 context. However, due to lack of literature on short-term PD in Korea, professional development will be examined through longer programs that are prominent in South Korea.

Recently Hong and Kim (2016) conducted a meta-analysis on the effects of in-service Korean English teacher training in areas of teaching methods, English proficiency, and affective attitudes. To meet inclusion guidelines, research had to be conducted in the Korean context and had to study intensive PD, which meant training was delivered for at least 15 days or more than 90 hours. A mixed-method approach explored 29 papers (13 applying a quantitative approach and 16 a qualitative approach) for the meta-analytic comparison. The quantitative results found in-service teachers felt their listening ($d=0.79$), speaking ($d=0.75$), reading ($d=0.96$), and writing ($d=0.69$) significantly improved after the intensive PD programs with effect sizes ranging from medium to large. Likewise, qualitative analysis revealed that teachers felt their teaching proficiency, language proficiency, and affective attitudes had improved after completing intensive PD training. However, the authors suggested that longitudinal studies should be conducted to further understand how PD can actually influence English teachers' practice in their own classrooms. Furthermore, the authors indicated that there were not sufficient studies assessing how intensive PD programs helped teachers six or more months after completion.

In addition to the meta-analysis, Kim and Kim (2015) compared pre- and post-intensive Korean English teacher training programs in terms of their effectiveness in developing teaching skills with an emphasis on teachers' in-class communicative skills. The study participants included 32 elementary school teachers whose pre- and post-training classes were filmed and utterances were transcribed for comparison. The data were analyzed quantitatively for the mean differences between pre- and post-training classes. A qualitative analysis was also made to interpret and evaluate the results when the difference was found to be statistically significant. The findings were as follows: 1) the teachers' communicative language had not changed to encourage and maintain students' English communication, which was different from previous studies, and 2) explicit grammatical explanations were significantly reduced in their classes, which indicates that teachers' perceptions and attitudes had changed toward communicative classes.

Another study demonstrated the potential positive impact of PD in a Korean context. Ko (2014) investigated how in-service Korean English teachers changed their teaching methods and techniques during a four-week teacher-training program. Among 15 teachers, one teacher, along with her students, was selected to participate in the study as a foci-participant. Her practicum classes were audio-recorded and transcribed. In addition, the teacher's reflective essays, comments from her trainer, and conversations about the class observation with her peers were collected. The data were analyzed in terms of teaching vocabulary and giving instructions. The foci-participant (selected teacher) who received PD allowed the students to ask more questions, which led to more student-initiated questions and established a better rapport with her students in a more positive classroom environment. Additionally, the teacher covered form, meaning and use for all the lexical words that she learned from PD. Lastly, she modeled the technique for her students more effectively and provided comprehension check-up questions during her instructions. Thus, the teacher was able to adapt teaching methods that more closely align with CLT methodology after receiving PD.

Likewise, some studies showed the beneficial impact of the PD on Korean English teachers' CLT method in terms of their own English speaking ability. For instance, Gye et al (2008) developed a 5 month online in-service English teacher training program consisting of 10 courses that enhanced teachers' communicative skills in English and improved their teaching skills. A learning management system (LMS) was developed to provide the trainees with academic support. Decisions on the trainees' achievements were made on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from on-going assessments performed during the course. Program evaluations concerning the level of trainees' satisfaction and the content of the course were conducted to identify areas of improvement for the course. In order to measure teachers' ability to speak English in classrooms, the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) was implemented. The ACTFL's speaking guidelines (1996) include 5 different levels from level 1 (beginners) to level 5 (highly proficient). Based on the pre- and post-test self-evaluation measurement, study participants felt that online PD helped them improve their English communication skills as well as improve their teaching skills. Specifically, teachers in level 1 (82%) and level 2 (59%) felt their English had improved from the online PD training. Conversely, those teachers in level 3 (8%) and level 4 (14%) did not feel their English communication skills improved. Thus, this study concluded that online PD might benefit teachers with lower levels of English communication abilities than those with higher levels. These findings indicated that the PD could encourage English teachers to improve their own English-speaking ability, so these teachers could receive higher self-confidence and better communicate in English during instruction.

Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy theory comes from the field of psychology and is based on social cognitive theory. Previous scholars have explained that "one's self-efficacy operates as a key factor in a generative system of human competence" (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011, p.4). Previous research supports the claim that self-efficacy is an important influence on human achievement in a variety of settings (Bandura, 1986).

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy refers to "individuals' beliefs about their capabilities to successfully carry out a particular course of action" (p.3). He argued that when people perceive themselves as efficacious at certain tasks, they are generally able to handle tasks with a positive attitude. On the other hand, when people perceive themselves as less efficacious in certain tasks, they are fearful and try to avoid dealing with certain tasks or situations (Bandura, 1997). Thus, the author suggested that people who have a high level of self-efficacy develop resilience and learn to persevere when facing difficult tasks.

In the context of education, teacher self-efficacy has been applied to teaching and teachers because it is considered to be an influential factor on their educational practices and outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Previous studies have explored factors that contribute to teacher self-efficacy based on

Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy expectations. The four sources proposed were: 1) enactive mastery, 2) vicarious modeling, 3) social (verbal) persuasion, and 4) emotional arousal (Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009).

Applying these sources to teacher self-efficacy in EFL contexts, Bandura's self-efficacy sources suggest that teacher self-efficacy can be shaped by: 1) mastery experience - an individual teacher's past positive teaching experiences in mastering a specific teaching task, 2) vicarious modeling - observation of co-teachers' successful teaching experiences through modeling, 3) verbal persuasion - others' positive encouragement and reinforcement through social and verbal discussions, and 4) emotional arousal - individual mental states, such as teaching anxiety (Eslami & Fatahi, 2008) . With this in mind, the current study was designed in order to analyze Korean English teachers' self-efficacy of implementing CLT based on four sources of Bandura's self-efficacy framework after participating in short-term professional development.

Research Method

Research Context

This research was conducted at a language teacher PD institution located in the northwest of Korea. Under the Ministry of Education in Korea, this institution provides several PD programs, including 1-day seminars, 3-day workshops, week-long intensive PD programs, and long-term PD connected with local universities and faculty. This study examined a short-term program that aimed to improve English teachers' implementation of CLT methods. The teacher trainers of the program were native-English speaking teachers who had received TESOL, TESL, or TEFL Master's degrees from Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. All trainers had diverse teaching experiences in Korea from elementary schools to university level, which indicated that these instructors knew the teaching context and were effectively prepared to train in-service teachers in a PD program. The Korean English teachers' PD participation was voluntary, but once they participated and completed the PD program, it helped with future job promotion opportunities.

Study Participants

Study participants totaled 131 in-service teachers who worked in either elementary schools (Grade 1-6) or secondary schools (middle schools - grade 7-9 / high schools – grade 10-12) in a single province in Korea. There were 66 elementary school teachers and 65 secondary school teachers. Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol, the researchers explained the purpose of the study on the first day of the PD orientation. All participants received an opportunity to read through the IRB consent form and subsequently signed it. The survey was administered on the last day of the PD as an exit-survey. The researchers recruited study participants for one-on-one interviews on day 3 during the PD program. In total, 10 teachers voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. Table 1 shows information about the interview participants.

Teachers	Schools	Teaching years	Previous PD experience	Gender
Teacher 1	Elementary	12	X	Female
Teacher 2	Elementary	10	1	Female
Teacher 3	Elementary	5	1	Female
Teacher 4	Elementary	3	1	Female
Teacher 5	Elementary	2	2	Male
Teacher 6	Middle School	15	1	Female
Teacher 7	Middle School	12	2	Female
Teacher 8	High School	10	1	Female
Teacher 9	High School	5	1	Female
Teacher 10	High School	3	2	Male

Table 1. Interview Participants Information

Data sources and Data Analysis

At the completion of the short-term PD, participants filled out a survey to assess their satisfaction in four areas. First, the survey asked the participants to report their self-effort during the PD program. Second, to provide their opinions on the organization of the PD curriculum, including courses. Third, to assess the field adaptability of what they learned, that is, their thoughts on how feasible it would be to implement what they learned in the training in their own classrooms. And fourth, the general quality of the training they received. Survey items were analyzed and rank-biserial correlation effect sizes were reported. Effect sizes were assessed according to Cohen's (1988) scale of small (.10), medium (.30), and large (.50). In total, 66 elementary school teachers and 65 secondary school teachers participated in training and subsequent survey. The data consisted of a post-PD survey distributed to teachers (n=131), in-depth individual interviews with teachers (n=10), and researchers' classroom observations.

To begin the analysis, qualitative data sources were analyzed to capture Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy framework. After the initial analysis with the self-efficacy framework, it was necessary to further understand the emerged themes from the dataset that were not directly relevant to self-efficacy framework. Thus, as a second analysis process, six phases of thematic analysis were implemented (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, all data sources were saved to a Dropbox folder and imported into Nvivo software. Codes and sub-codes were developed while working through the data. Many codes in Nvivo were read and reread to identify significant broader patterns of meaning or potential themes. These themes were then aggregated into small numbers and further reduced to the most frequently referred to categories. Then themes were defined and renamed for abstraction and data reduction. Finally, all data analysis was triangulated to create a final report.

In order to ensure the trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004) of this research, member checking methods were implemented. After finishing the data analysis, the research team sent an interpretation of the analysis to study participants and used it as the process for member checking. In addition, the research team kept recordings from the initial analysis to final analysis in terms of how initial codes and themes were developed and interpreted as a final product. Lastly, the research team collected multiple data sources and types of data. The goal of using multiple data sources was to develop a rich set of data in consideration of triangulating themes and patterns within the data. The triangulation of data helped ensure research trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004).

Study Findings

Survey Results

Before data analysis could be performed on the survey data, a Levene's Test was performed to assess if the data violated the assumption of homogeneity. The results found that data did violate the assumption of homogeneity for self-effort ($F=214.73$, $p<0.001$), curriculum ($F=25.02$, $p<0.001$), field adaptability ($F=70.61$, $p<0.001$), and training ($F=17.23$, $p<0.001$). Since the data found evidence of heterogeneity, inferential statistics could not be performed and a non-parametric test, Mann-Whitney U, was administered.

Results of the Mann-Whitney U test found significant differences on all measures. Elementary school teachers rated their self-effort ($U=2815$, $p<0.001$, $r=0.31$), the curriculum ($U=2568$, $p=0.003$, $r=0.19$), field adaptability ($U=3030$, $p<0.001$, $r=0.41$), and training ($U=2505$, $p=0.005$, $r=0.17$) significantly higher than secondary school teachers. See Table 2 for the means and standard deviations for the survey measures.

Group	N	Self-effort	Curriculum	Field adaptability	Training
		M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
Elementary Teachers	66	9.98 (0.12)	9.83 (0.62)	9.94 (0.35)	14.88 (0.62)
Secondary Teachers	65	9.35 (0.99)	9.43 (1.05)	9.15 (1.19)	14.54 (1.06)

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviation for Survey Measures

These results suggest that elementary school teachers found the short CLT PD course more beneficial than the secondary school teachers. Although elementary school teachers rated their satisfaction with the PD significantly higher than the secondary school teachers, the effect sizes provide better insight into these results. The curriculum ($r=0.19$) and training ($r=0.17$) would be considered small effects, while self-effort ($r=0.31$) and field adaptability ($r=0.41$) would be classified as medium effects. It is possible that assumptions about field adaptability negatively influenced the secondary school teachers' self-effort during the program which in turn might have also negatively altered their assessment of the curriculum and training as a whole. This theme will be explored more in the interview data.

Findings from Interviews

Several themes emerged from the interviews and classroom observations. These were: 1) the PD led teachers to report feeling positive about implement CLT in the future, 2) anticipated challenges teachers foresaw in implementing CLT in their classrooms, and 3) the different impact the PD had on elementary school teachers compared to secondary school teachers.

1) Beneficial Impacts of the PD

One positive outcome of participating in the PD program was that the PD could help teachers acquire knowledge about new teaching methods and techniques related to CLT. In addition, it generally made teachers feel more confident and prepared to implement CLT. During interviews, some teachers mentioned that the PD might boost their motivation to implement CLT in their own future English classrooms. In other words, after finishing the PD program, English teachers' self-efficacy was mostly enhanced by the PD and they were willing to implement some activities they learned into their own English classrooms. These findings were linked to the first source of Bandura's self-efficacy framework, which interpreted that the PD provided an avenue for English teachers to demonstrate and practice a specific task (CLT method) with a mastery experience. Here is one of the teacher's illustrative comments:

> During the PD, I learned many hands-on activities. For example, providing visuals for comprehensible input of materials, creating various collaborative activities, focusing on key vocabulary, and creating sentence frames for ELLs' academic language development. I will definitely try out some of activities I learned from the PD into my own classroom once the new semester starts. It was really helpful to listen and learn from the trainers who shared their know-hows, including various ideas and knowledge with us. (Interview transcript from Teacher 5)

In addition, participating teachers shared their own experiences and tips with each other throughout the PD program. In this way, the PD site created a professional learning community that allowed teachers to exchange their knowledge, teaching skills, and techniques. The opportunity to interact with professional peers enabled participants to modify and create different activities while exploring the CLT method for future implementation. Also, during the PD, teachers received some opportunities to apply learned knowledge from PD courses to demonstrate their practices through microteaching experiences (10-15 minute mock-lessons). In addition to this, native English-speaking teacher trainers in the PD institution shared successful CLT activities through modeling. Throughout the PD courses, these expert trainers provided helpful comments, tips, and advice for Korean English teachers to better implement CLT in K-12.

Here is one of the teacher's comments that represented the other teachers' thoughts well:

> Although it was a short PD, listening to peers' teaching ideas and tips helped me to think of all of the different ways I can do for my own classroom [...] I learned some different activities I can do and all the different accommodations [...] That was a super great experience, so it gives me a fresh perspective on things that I never even thought about, and it helps me to reflect back on it and kind of see what I could've done better and differently. (Interview transcript from Teacher 1).

These findings were also closely related to second and third sources of Bandura's self-efficacy framework, which suggests that teachers provide their own teaching expertise and receive opportunities to observe their peer teachers' successful microteaching demonstrations. In addition, the instructors in the PD program also provided verbal encouragement and positive reinforcement through feedback. By participating in these discussions and conversations, many Korean English teachers felt more prepared to implement CLT in their classrooms.

2) Challenges in Implementing CLT in the Classroom

Although many of the participating teachers believed they were more prepared to implement CLT-related activities as a result of the PD program, some teachers still showed concerns about using CLT in their teaching contexts. During interviews, some high school teachers mentioned two major difficulties of implementing the CLT method in high school English classrooms. These teachers mentioned that high school English teachers in particular are under pressure to focus on grammatical instruction to prepare

students for the English section of the national college entrance exam. Also, English proficiency varies greatly amongst students in high school classrooms, making it difficult for teachers to use all of the CLT techniques (Moodie & Nam, 2016).

To be sure, the English section of the national college entrance exam in Korea does not contain any sections which measure writing or speaking in order to evaluate the students' communicative competence. Consequently, some teachers in the study were worried that students, who were focused on passing the grammar-based national exam, would not be motivated to develop their communication skills, even if they spent time and money studying English. A few of them criticized the English section of the national college entrance exam:

> The current national college entrance exam does not allow testing the students' communicative competence. How can test-makers evaluate students' English communicative competence without evaluating their speaking and writing ability? (Interview transcript from Teacher 8)

Another potential challenge that teachers foresaw was large class sizes, which might make assessing student communication skills difficult. The average English class size in secondary schools in Korea is thirty. Several teachers mentioned that evaluating thirty students' communication skills in one class creates difficulties. The following depicts the feelings one teacher had which are similar to those shared by the other teachers regarding class size:

> If one class consists of thirty students, there are thirty different levels of students. Must instructors consider thirty different levels of students when evaluating communication skills? Is it possible for the instructor to make a clear teaching guideline and instruction for their students? (Interview transcript from Teacher 10)

Some teachers mentioned that the evaluation of thirty different levels of students by only one instructor might not be possible because there are many variables that the instructor must think about and take into consideration. This implies that having students with multiple proficiency levels along with different assessment methods could make their teaching significantly more challenging. These findings could be interpreted to the fourth source of the self-efficacy framework, which focuses on the mental state of the teacher. The individual teacher showed their teaching concerns and anxiety due to the fact that their teaching context did not align with the national English curriculum and the purpose of the PD program by focusing on CLT. This type of teaching anxiety clearly emerged from the secondary English teachers during interviews, but was not present with elementary school teachers.

3) Teachers' Different Experiences of the PD

From the interview data analysis, it was noted that there were some differences between the participants from an elementary context and those from a secondary one. In terms of their experiences after finishing the PD, elementary teachers showed higher satisfaction with the PD program and most of them agreed that PD was effective at promoting their motivation to implement CLT. In addition, regarding possibilities of how they could effectively implement CLT in their own classrooms, elementary school teachers showed a higher level of field adaptability as opposed to secondary school teachers because elementary school teachers did not have severe pressure on teaching and preparing their students to take the English section of the national college entrance exam.

 Although many secondary school teachers mentioned that the PD program did have some positive effect, a few of secondary teachers noted that the PD program might not have been as effective as they had expected. More specifically, they pointed out that some content and materials from the PD seemed redundant because they had already covered them in previous PD programs and seminars. Also, the PD program could benefit from inviting experienced in-service teachers with CLT to provide a deeper connection between theory and practice. Thus, they said that the PD program might not have expanded their interest in learning new content and materials about how to better implement CLT in secondary school English classrooms. One teacher noted:

> This is my fourth PD participation about the CLT. So, some materials might look the same and somewhat redundant. Unfortunately, the PD was not that satisfactory as I expected. To solve this issue, one suggestion is to invite more in-service teachers who had been successfully implementing the CLT in secondary English classrooms so that he or she can share her expertise, knowledge, and know-hows with us. (Interview transcript from Teacher 8)

In essence, some participants felt it might be beneficial for PD programs like this to avoid redundant concepts that fail to facilitate a deeper understanding, and in turn, provide more instruction from experienced Korean teachers currently in their context to help make the concepts more applicable.

Conclusion

Practical and Pedagogical Implications

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers attending a short-term PD on LT rate with trainees in terms of their satisfaction with its organization, quality, and adaptability to their own teaching context including their feelings toward the national English curriculum of Korea.. Study findings revealed that many teachers learned various hands-on activities from the PD program and acquired knowledge about new teaching methods and techniques related to CLT. Thus, most teachers could feel more prepared to implement aspects of CLT after completing the PD program. Although elementary school teachers had not received a pressure to teach their students for a national standardized exam, the secondary school teachers faced challenges due to their teaching context that focuses more on grammar-based tests and their students' expectation to spend most class time preparing for the English portion of Korea's national college entrance exam.

In addition to this, secondary school teachers felt they would be burdened by having to accommodate students' varied English proficiency levels if implementing CLT into their classroom, as opposed to the small classroom sizes in elementary schools. Previous studies conducted in a same context have shown two issues in adopting the CLT method, including: 1) pressure to prepare students for a standardized university entrance exam, and 2) large class sizes with students of various English proficiencies (Shin, 2007).

The important role of PD in English teachers' self-efficacy can be interpreted when considering Bandura's framework of four sources of self-efficacy (Bray-Clark & Bates, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). First, the PD experiences provided opportunities for teachers to master various CLT-related activities. Second, the PD program created a professional learning community for teachers to observe peers' successful experiences and received modeling from the instructors in the PD institution. Third, English teachers emphasized that positive verbal conversation and encouragement at the PD site could help them better reflect on what they had learned from the PD courses. However, the PD could not resolve the individual secondary school teacher's concerns and teaching anxiety due to the context of grammar-focused national college entrance exam and different student's level of English proficiency.

Based on these findings, several suggestions on how to employ the CLT method successfully through PD in Korea are provided. First, the Ministry of Education and PD institution should consider differentiating their PD curriculum, courses, and materials based on English teachers' previous PD experiences and participation. Also, the PD curriculum should contain more intensive courses on how to differentiate the CLT method based on the diverse English proficiency and learning needs of students. When the PD curriculum is more specialized based on participating teachers' previous experiences and expertise, more and more Korean English teachers gain confidence in the practical application of CLT in the classroom (Lee, 2012).

Second, while the testing culture heavily influences the secondary teachers' hesitance in using CLT, another factor is the self-perceived inability to properly facilitate a class focused on using CLT. Therefore, more guided experience can increase the confidence of teachers to facilitate and manage a curriculum designed for the use of CLT. Additionally, the Ministry of Education should explore opportunities for selected English instructors to visit English-speaking countries in order to receive adequate training in the CLT method, and then designate those instructors as lead trainers to deliver workshops in selected areas of South Korea (Ko, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2015).

Third, the learning emphasis needs to be shifted away from the grammar-focused examination that is currently in place. Even though some education experts are worried about the potential side effects of changing the exam system, such as boosting the private English education industry, the test should include speaking and writing sections. Changing the test would refocus teachers' efforts on helping students develop communicative skills such as speaking and writing which would in turn help students be successful in our global society (Choi, 2015; Moodie & Nam, 2016).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

This study has a few limitations to consider that affect its outcomes. First, the study focuses on only one PD institution within a specific geographical, sociocultural, and political context. These findings may not be generalizable to other contexts. Second, the limited number of hours in the short-term PD program may have affected the results. Also, the study might have been affected by how many similar PD teachers attended in the past. Some teachers had been to multiple PD programs related to CLT. Future research should compare teachers who are attending a CLT related PD for the first time, as opposed to those who have attended multiple PD programs. Lastly, the current study did not consider changes in participating

teachers' self-efficacy over time. Other data sources, such as follow-up interviews and post-PD classroom observations of participants' actual teaching practices in the field, would be necessary to capture each individual teacher's trajectory and response in terms of implementing CLT in their own classrooms (Hong & Kim, 2016). The only way to study whether teachers actually had an uptake of CLT methods post-PD would be to follow up by studying their classes, classroom observations, post-interview after they implement the CLT in their classrooms (Hong & Kim, 2016).

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