

Localizing English-Only Policy at a University English Reading Program in Korea

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This study investigates Korean English instructors' perspectives and their local practices concerning a potential English-only policy at a university English reading program. English medium instruction has recently been encouraged at the university, in alignment with globalization fever. Korean English instructors have wondered whether instruction exclusively in English is the best policy for their program if English medium instruction is implemented. Six Korean English instructors in the program were interviewed on their attitudes towards a potential English-only policy. Their discursive protocols were categorized according to themes emerging in the data: (a) attitudes towards English medium instruction; (b) local constraints for English-only; (c) transformative solutions; and (d) localized professional development. The data revealed that English language policy has to consider local contexts for L1 incorporation because of, (a) the possibility of developing an unnatural classroom atmosphere in a homogeneous classroom; and (b) teachers' and students' proficiency. Accordingly, instead of mistakenly adopting an English-only policy which might prove problematic, a more mixed language approach with a rate of either 70:30, 80:20, or 90:10 was proposed in order to maximize students' learning. Participants' code switching practices in the classroom were discussed as an example of localizing English language policy.

Key words: English-only policy, localized English-only policy, localized English language policy

INTRODUCTION

An English medium instruction (EMI) policy has been around since the Korean government declared a new nationwide English program for elementary and secondary schools in 1997. The EMI policy or Teaching English through English (TETE) was the result of recommendations made by the Presidential Committee for Globalization Policy, which is geared towards rapid economic expansion and full integration of Korea into the globalized capitalist economy (Jung & Norton, 2002). However, this policy appears, to many Korean English teachers (e.g., Kim, 2002), to be paying only lip service to English teaching, because it was hastily established without examining local contexts.

Recently, a university in Korea encouraged EMI for all kinds of subjects, including English reading courses, and it promoted the program with a globalization slogan. It seems that the school sees a competent command of English, in both oral and written modes, as an important aspect of participating in the globalized world. “EMI” in this paper refers to instruction carried out mainly in English but not necessarily exclusively. Accordingly, the amount of English used is on a continuum from English exclusively to varied degrees of mixture of L1 and L2. The term, “English-only” means English instruction exclusively.

All Korean English instructors at the university have wondered whether English-only instruction is the best policy for their program if EMI is implemented. Many Korean English instructors are concerned about its feasibility. Unsettled feelings about an English-only language policy are prevalent. Given the fact that language policy is very closely intertwined with language use and language pedagogy, instructors’ perceptions of the feasibility of a new language policy may determine the success of the innovation, because instructors are central to long-lasting change (Li, 1998). Hence, the purpose of this study is twofold: (a) to investigate, in advance, Korean English instructors’ perceptions of a potential English language policy for the program; (b) and based on the data, to discover the most

feasible and appropriate form of the local English use policy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Language policy plays an important role in English language education since it shapes language learning and use. Studies in language policy examine the roles of governments or other powerful institutions because policy making is often a top-down process, generated from high-level administration, but it influences language learners and teachers in the classroom (Tollefson, 2002a). Given the fact that a language policy is mainly formulated by high-level administrations of educational institutions or governments, a discrepancy between language ideology and language practice exists and can be problematic, as many cases have shown (e.g., Kim, 2002; Li, 1998; Liu, Ahn, Baek, & Han, 2004; Moon & Lee, 2002; Nunan, 2003; O'Donnell, 2005; Ouyang, 2000).

Based on generally accepted theories and beliefs and without testing or investigating local contexts, language ideology is what administrators think should be put into practice when teaching and learning a language. On the other hand, language practice is what people actually do in the classroom or outside the classroom when teaching and learning a language (Spolsky, 2002). In order to minimize the gap between language ideology and language practice, local concerns such as class size, course schedules, teachers' time for course planning, teaching methods, and materials, need to be taken into account because these local conditions are crucial to the success of language programs in institutions (Tollefson, 2002b).

Canagarajah (2005) addresses the importance of local contexts and knowledge. He defines local knowledge as "knowledge that diverges from what is established or legitimized in the [academic] disciplines" that is, knowledge generated from our daily experience of language teaching and learning in a professional arena. According to this definition, local knowledge is context-bound, community-specific, and non-systematic. Canagarajah states

that learning and using local knowledge involves two phases: deconstruction and reconstruction. Deconstruction involves analyzing current situations and interpreting them with a critical eye to how dominant theoretical knowledge fits with local needs and interests. Based on the findings of a deconstructive approach, the knowledge base must be reconstructed by taking into consideration local needs and interests. In shaping a language policy for implementation on a local level, we need to be more critical and reflexive in deconstructing our local contexts and reconstructing our local knowledge. Instead of adopting the dominant discourse blindly, we must look for more relevant approaches for the sake of effective L2 education.

An English-only policy is an ESL-based notion. It is borrowed directly from teaching English in an ESL context rather than considering what Korean EFL students and teachers might need or be able to do. The English-only policy has mainly been practiced in ESL contexts where learners' L1 backgrounds varied. However, EFL contexts are different in that most learners and teachers share the same L1 backgrounds. As a consequence, an English-only policy should not be taken for granted in various Korean contexts (Kachru, 1994; Sridhar, 1994; Weschler, 1997; Wigglesworth, 2002).

Wigglesworth (2002) offers a critical view towards the English-only policy. She argues that English should be the medium of instruction but that learners' L1 can be used effectively as a valuable resource. She claims that the L1 can be a building block or a scaffold for improving the L2. Besides, careful use of the L1 can also save class time designed to promote L2 development. She also shows concern at the danger of not using the L1 in the classroom because ignoring the L1 might waste a useful resource. In short, the incorporation of the L1 into the English learning classroom is recommended.

Several studies have shown that where an English-only policy has been implemented in the Korean context, it was not successful. Moon and Lee (2002) investigated teachers' perceptions towards TETE in elementary and secondary schools. They reported that the majority of the teachers agreed on the need to use the target language in the classroom, but that they evaluated the policy negatively, due to both students' and teachers' limited English

proficiency. They suggested that a more gradual change would be desirable. Kim (2002) surveyed elementary school teachers for perceived difficulties in TETE. The findings showed that teachers were positive towards the purpose of TETE, but that they perceived that it might result in negative effects due to students' lack of proficiency. She proposed a code switching approach depending on learner's proficiency and the context.

Using a self-assessment survey, Bultler (2004) attempted to uncover perceptions of their L2 use in the classroom by Korean, Japanese, and Chinese primary school teachers. She intended to uncover discrepancies between teachers' current L2 proficiency and their desired proficiency for classroom practice. Findings showed that Korean teachers perceived their L2 oral skills to be lower than the minimum levels they need in order to be in line with current educational policies. Liu, *et al* (2004) investigated Korean high school English teachers' code switching between L1 and L2 in the classroom. The Korean Ministry of Education has proposed that English teachers begin to use English exclusively (or almost exclusively) only gradually in class. However, their study revealed that average use was lower (32%) than the amount both teachers and students expected to be appropriate (58% and 53%, respectively). Instead of near exclusive or exclusive use, they suggested that about 50% English use seems an achievable policy at the present point, considering current prevailing instructional practices (exam oriented) and teachers' and students' oral abilities.

Overall, it appears that ESL-based notions of an English-only policy do not fit automatically into various contexts of Korean EFL teaching. Language policies need to be reflective of local needs and constraints in order to meet realistic educational goals.

An English-only policy has been framed as an all or nothing choice; however, many studies related to this issue have shown that there needs to be a middle ground (Dash, 2002). Lin (2006) presented a good example of localized language use in the classroom at a university in Hong Kong. She reports on how code switching enables limited-English-proficiency students to access English science discourse.

Based on several Korean English instructors' experiences in EMI, this study reports on teachers' perspectives toward the English language policy of the program. It also reveals how they practice EMI when teaching reading. Any discrepancy between the ideology that the school pursues and the instructors' real practices may highlight distinctions between language ideology and language practice (Spolsky, 2002). In this respect, this paper may be a case study that demonstrates how teachers at the Korean university context skillfully adapt the English-only policy in their teaching. As Kim (2008) has shown, teachers in primary and secondary schools appear to perceive TETE differently in terms of the amount of L2 used in the classroom: 84.9% TETE as "using English mostly"; 16.7% as "English only"; and 9.1% as "half and half." Their perceptions may influence their use of L2 in the classroom. If it is the case that using L1 in an EFL classroom is inevitable, it is worth examining the situations in which teachers take advantage of teachers' and students' shared L1 backgrounds: When and how should L1 be used (Wigglesworth, 2002). Thus, this report offers one way of presenting instructors' voices to the top-level of a school, as well as to the Korean and eventually the Asian English education communities. Accordingly, localized practice of EMI policy may provide a good data base of English language policy in Korean and Asian contexts.

METHOD

Participants

In general, the instructors in the reading program have Ph.D.s in English literature and Applied Linguistics (English education), with a few in Linguistics. Their ages range from the mid 30s to the mid 40s. Their teaching experience ranges from a few years to more than 10. When selecting the participants, I tried to choose a mixed group in terms of gender, living abroad experience, areas in Ph.D., and teaching experience in EMI, in order to come

up with a representative group of faculty. I interviewed six instructors selected from among about 20 teachers. Pseudonyms were used for the sake of anonymity. They were informed of the purposes of this investigation before interviews were carried out.

Data Collection

Data collection carried out during 2007 summer session. I met the participants individually in order to conduct face-to-face interviews. They seemed to be comfortable talking with me about a potential English language policy. I started out with two broad questions: “What do you think about current EMI classes in the English reading program?” and “What are your perceptions concerning an English-only policy in the English reading program?” In response to these questions, they naturally talked about many other issues related to the topic. Whenever they stopped, I provided further questions/prompts on the topic. Participants’ responses were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Responses reported here are English translations of the transcripts.

In addition to the face-to-face interviews, follow-up questions were asked online when necessary. The participants’ responses were compiled and analyzed by a researcher, by similar themes as they emerged in the data. These themes fell into four major categories: (a) attitudes about EMI classes; (b) local constraints for English-only; (c) transformative solutions; and (d) localized professional development. The participants’ views were presented as excerpts translated from Korean into English. Pseudonyms were used instead of the participants’ names for each response/quotation taken from the original data.

FINDINGS

The findings revealed that a potential English-only language policy needs

to be accompanied by consideration of local contexts in order to maximize benefits to the English reading program. The majority proposed a mixed language approach based on the current state of the program (which features a homogeneous L1 background) and current students' and instructors' proficiency. Apparently, instead of an English-only policy, a mixed language approach (e.g., 90%:10%; 80%:20%; or 70%:30% ratio of English to Korean) was proposed, depending on the classroom context, as a more feasible policy for the English reading program at the university. Instructors suggested that the proportion of L2 use may be increased gradually as the local context becomes ready. Along with a localized EMI approach, instructors also suggested localized professional development to improve their oral ability and teaching methods. Regarding their oral ability, they indicated that instructors need to become more confident in their Korean English discourse and in accented English pronunciation. With respect to teaching methods, they proposed sharing teaching experiences through teachers' workshops and creating a materials resource center.

Attitudes about EMI classes

Instructors reported both favorable and unfavorable reactions towards EMI classes. In general, the majority supported the trend towards EMI; however, they were also critical about its consequences. Among the most positive comments on EMI classes was, "Students improved general English proficiency due to exposure to English." One instructor mentioned that students may become more confident when they actually face situations where they have to communicate in English because they are being trained through EMI. Students may become more comfortable, and eventually this experience may lead them to use English naturally when they are put in situations where they have to use English in the real world. The following is a typical response:

The most important benefit may be that students will get accustomed to using English. EMI classes may provide an opportunity to train them to

read in English, to listen to English, to organize their thoughts in English, and to express themselves through English. By doing so, they may feel comfortable with English in the long run. Recently, a lot of our students go abroad to places such as America, Canada, England, and Australia during vacations and in the semester, in order to enhance their oral English skills. If we find a way to expose them to English within this country, it may be one type of solution for saving money (Mi-Ae).

These data are in line with Kim's (2008) findings that teachers from primary and secondary schools reported that the TETE policy may help their students develop language skills, especially oral skills. Hae-Ri expressed an interesting view, that if EMI is conducted by Korean English instructors (NNSs), students may develop a lower affective-filter and learn that English does not belong only to native speakers (NSs) but that it is, in general, a means of communication between individuals all over the world.

If students have a Korean English instructor instead of NS instructors in EMI classes, they may develop a lower affective-filter which may bring with it more confidence and participation. In general, many students think that only NSs' English is perfect and that NNSs' English is deficient. However, through interaction between a teacher and students in the class, students may learn that English is just a means of communication between individuals. Once they realize this, they may get rid of a fixed idea that NSs own perfect English (Hae-Ri).

Along with the advantages of EMI classes, a few instructors also commented negatively on this issue. Moo-Hyun questioned whether English reading courses need to be taught through EMI:

Our English reading program is a little different. It is based on reading skills. It is not an English conversation course. We focus on using rich content to enable students' high level thinking skills. So, reading courses may not have to be English medium classes since we read in English all the time (Moo-Hyun).

The main reason that the majority of the instructors showed favorable reactions toward EMI may be the effect of globalization on the Korean society. In the last decade, globalization has affected English education in Korea. Oral skills in English have been emphasized and, as a result, a grammar translation method was replaced by a communicative language teaching approach. Changes in society, along with the rapid industrialization of the country, have led more than ever to a demand for good oral English abilities. This trend has also brought about growing demands from students and from society in general that college English focus on developing competence in practical English skills (Kim, 2002; Kwon, 2000; Shim & Baik, 2004). The university sees that obtaining a good command of oral English skills is important for globalization, so students should be prepared, in line with this societal demand.

From this critical point of view, a few participants were concerned over whether the English reading program really needs EMI--some students are not ready for this change and will not make choices in the way we might presume. However, in general, Korean English instructors were supportive towards the innovative EMI approach. They view EMI as a means of improving students' general English skills, especially the oral skills, which society is demanding. Since students encounter very limited environments for using English in an EFL circle, instructors seem to think that this new approach may provide students with opportunities to practise their English as much as possible.

Local Constraints for English-Only

Although Korean English instructors exhibited positive attitudes toward EMI, they wondered whether an English exclusive policy will be beneficial for the English reading program at the present time. Some instructors indicated that an English-only policy may bring about more negative consequences. They were concerned that the program is not ready for an English-only policy due to three shortcomings of English-only teaching in

Korea: (a) the unnatural classroom atmosphere it might produce, (b) teachers' lack of proficiency, and (c) students' lack of proficiency.

An Unnatural Classroom Atmosphere

Mi-Ae mentioned class atmosphere. She worried that English exclusive instruction would result in a very unnatural feeling class and nervousness in both instructors and students. Moreover, it would cause relatively low proficiency learners to shut their mouths during class.

If the class is pressed to communicate in English only, everybody may experience psychological uneasiness. If Korean language is prohibited entirely, ignoring the fact that everybody in the class is Korean, it will surely cause a strange atmosphere. Those who are not proficient may feel more oppressed and uncomfortable. Accordingly they may not open their mouths at all. Another drawback is that a stiff or uncomfortable classroom may not facilitate the teacher-student relationship as much as if L1 is also used. For the sake of effective education, I believe that achieving a good teacher-student rapport is very desirable. But it does not seem easy to accomplish using English-only instruction (Mi-Ae).

Teachers' Lack of Proficiency

Two instructors commented on instructors' lack of proficiency in the target language. They claimed that instructors might end up giving only surface level explanations when it comes to complicated parts or issues in the readings if they have to use English only. They emphasized that there are certainly cases where Korean is much more effective. Moo-Hyun said the following:

Well, I think it may depend. If both teachers and students are very proficient, an English exclusive class will be ok. However, if this is not the case, then I have doubts whether English only is the best policy since we are dealing with reading skills, not speaking skills. So, not being a native

speaker, my opinion is that there are some instances where English may be better and there are some where Korean has to be used for the sake of getting the meaning across to students more accurately (Moo-Hyun).

Students' Lack of Proficiency

When I asked Oh-Keun, who had seemed to support English exclusive instruction, he contradicted his previous claim. When I asked for his experience in English-only instruction, he described a very interesting phenomenon in his classroom, which may be a very typical classroom experience and one that many instructors have already noticed.

Once I initiated the class, I thought they would automatically discuss things naturally although their English might not be perfect. However, I've learned that college students' oral ability has not much changed even in 10 years. Only 4-5 students among 20-30, that is, those from foreign language high schools or high schools with special streams for talented kids, were talking in English. The majority of the students just put their heads down while these students were presenting or talking in English fluently. What happened was that these few proficient students eventually assimilated to the majority who kept silent. In Korean culture, you know that standing out is not valued. I guess that is why. So, those who put down their heads did not try to imitate the few expressive/talkative ones, but the few fluent speakers assimilated to the silent majority (Oh-Keun).

He said that there were a very few students who did make an effort to express their thoughts in English imitating the few fluent students; however, the rest seemed to have given up on the English course when English-only was required in the class. These reports align with previous findings in Kim (2002), Moon and Lee (2002), Liu *et al* (2004), although learners in these studies were in either elementary or secondary schools. It seems that an English-only policy needs to be adjusted to local contexts in order to meet local teachers' and students' needs.

Transformative Solutions

Due to these local constraints and needs, several instructors in EMI classes have been mixing the L1 and L2. However, they seemed to be uncertain whether it was legitimate to use the L1 in EMI classes. Instructors indicated that there are situations where the L1 is better or more effective for saving time and for clear understanding. They reported successful situations involving code switching in the two languages.

First, the L1 seems efficient for explaining difficult proverbs or idioms. Han-Yong reported that when teaching vocabulary, there are cases where giving a Korean translation is quicker. For example, in the case of explaining difficult proverbs or idioms, he often uses Korean.

Idioms or proverbs can be taught effectively by comparing with Korean values and culture. For example, the meaning of the idiom, *tighten your belt*, can be delivered most effectively through Korean equivalent expressions, instead of explaining it in English. If you just continue explaining in English, it may make your students more confused, especially when the expression is not related to the literal meaning (Han-Yong).

Second, the L1 appears to be more efficient when explaining terms related to Korean culture or food. Two teachers, Ok-Keun and Hae-Ri remembered that they occasionally mixed the L1 with L2 when explaining terms related to Korean culture and Korean food, areas a teacher finds complicated to explain in English.

Concepts related to Korean food or culture are better to be explained in Korean first and then translated into English. By doing it this way, students understand faster and you may not waste class time. For example, if you try to explain the Korean food, *Danjang-chigae* (soybean paste stew), it is better give the term in Korean quickly and then explain again in English (Ok-Keun).

Third, the L1 is used when explaining something complicated and not directly related to the lesson. Moo-Hyun reported that he tended to use Korean in order to save time and for clarity, when going over the syllabus, delineating tables, or explaining something complicated which was not actually related to the content of the lesson.

When explaining the syllabus, complicated charts, or tables, if English-only appeared not to be effective, I often use Korean. Students have difficulty in comprehending and I also have difficulty in explaining solely in English. I first start with English, but I switch to Korean if I feel it is not working well. In that case, using Korean is more efficient (Moo-Hyun).

Fourth, the L1 seems a very effective tool for clarifying the ambiguities of reading between the lines of a text. Min-Soo, who mostly teaches advanced reading classes, mentioned that he uses Korean when translating and explaining difficult or ambiguous content to his students. Advanced readings carry deeper meanings, so he has to switch to Korean when explaining important parts of the texts in order to assist his students in comprehending accurately.

I am using literature, such as English short stories or Greek mythology, in teaching upper reading courses. Sometimes there are parts which have underlying meanings, and these are different from the surface meanings. I mean sometimes we have to read between the lines. In these cases, I use Korean because I have to explain precisely so that my students can comprehend accurately. When I use English, they may grasp overall meanings, but it certainly is less useful for analyzing and understanding the context. Occasionally, I talk about socio-cultural aspects related to the story, and then I feel Korean is better since what I am discussing may involve a lot of social and cultural issues that we share (Min-Soo).

Finally, the L1 appears to be useful in developing rapport with students. Two teachers, Han-Young and Hae-Ri, reported that they tend to use the L1 with their students for establishing trust. They believe that teaching involves

human relationships, so establishing a good relationship between themselves and their students creates an enjoyable classroom atmosphere. Hae-Ri reported that she often uses the L1 when interacting with individual students before and after class.

I usually use English during the class period. However, I use Korean before the class or after class. For example, if I go to class a little early, my students tend to ask me, "What did you do on the weekend?" Then, I talk to them in Korean. This is to establish rapport with my students. If I kept using English in that situation, they might feel psychological distance and might not talk to me anymore. And, after class, if they have questions about the assignments or the next class, they ask me in Korean. In those cases, I answer them in Korean. Of course, if they talk to me in English, I answer them in English (Hae-Ri).

Participants reported that the L1 can be a resource rather than a barrier, based on their teaching experiences in monolingual classrooms. They use the L1 when teaching vocabulary, especially idioms or proverbs; when explaining terms related to Korean culture and food; for explaining complicated tables and chart; when dealing with delicate meanings and reading between lines, and for establishing a rapport between teacher and students. However, the university appears to believe that English exclusive may be the best policy for students to attain their desired English proficiency. Accordingly, NNS instructors tend to feel uneasy about not conducting English-only classes. Many of these instructors have practiced mixing languages for more flexible instruction.

Along with whether to use the L1 or not in the classroom, the participants had another dilemma, which was, if they do not use the L1, to what extent should they use it. Participants proposed optimal use of L2 with a rate of 90:10, 80:20, or 70:30. They were concerned with maximal use of L2 in order to give students exposure to the target language during the class period. Mi-Ae reports her opinion on the optimal use of L2 in the class:

I think a realistic approach may be 70:30. If I consider those issues I

mentioned, such as explaining difficult vocabulary and other things, I guess approximately 30 % needs to be in Korean (Mi-Ae).

Considering local contexts, such as students' proficiency, teachers' proficiency, and classroom atmosphere, the participants tried to figure out the proper balance of the L1 and L2 in the classroom. As shown in the local constraint section, Oh-Keun's anecdote indicated that English-only instruction did not work well and instead caused students more frustration. Participants' proposals on mixing the L1 and L2 in the class are similar to previous findings (e.g., Kim, 2002; Liu *et al*, 2004; Moon & Lee, 2002). Elementary and secondary Korean English teachers have practiced in the TETE classroom, although the proportion of L2 use was different. Instead of accepting a fallacy proven in practice as workable, we need to consider students' backgrounds and English proficiency level, and classroom culture, along with teachers' proficiency levels when planning an English learning program. Analyzing and knowing local contexts is the first step toward implementing any ideal policy. The proportion of L2 use may increase according to constantly changing local contexts. As Canagarajah (2005) mentioned, language policy development is an ongoing process that has to be reinterpreted and reconstructed according to changing local needs.

Localized Professional Development

Along with an approach mixing the L1 and L2, many instructors mentioned the need for professional development in alignment with the potential policy. They were concerned about two matters: improving oral ability and developing localized teaching methods. While reporting on improving their speaking ability, some of them proposed decentering native-norm based English. Han-Yong indicated that instructors need to become more confident in their oral ability in Korean English discourse.

I think we need to make Korean English instructors clearly aware of the fact that English today is no longer the property of what we call native

speakers. Instead, it belongs to the people that use the language. There are now more non-native people in the world using English to communicate with one another than there are native speakers. I think the spontaneity of English produced by Korean English instructors is all right. They do not have to compare their language use with that of American or British instructors (Han-Yong).

Hae-Ri also commented that native-like pronunciation is not the priority, but, rather, Korean English instructors should develop the more important skill of getting the meaning across.

Of course, if s/he is an English instructor, then s/he has to be good at English language skills. This does not mean having native-like pronunciation. The important thing is getting the intended message across accurately to the students. So, it is not pronunciation that we need to focus on improving but developing skills to convey the intended message/meaning (Hae-Ri).

Both Han-Yong's and Hae-Ri's thoughts about Korean English instructors' discourse and pronunciation are aligned with the new role of English as an international language. They advocate not conforming to a native-norm but having competence in their own discourse and with their own accent (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Jenkins, 2006; McKay, 2002; Smith, 1976).

Along with adjusting to English as an international language, instructors were interested in searching out localized teaching methods for their EMI classes. They mentioned that, in line with a potential English-only language policy, ideally a systematic approach should be taken in order to prepare the instructors. They named some possible in-service teacher training methods, such as university courses, summer/winter workshops, and study abroad programs. However, the school is not ready to run professional development programs at the present time, although they may be available in the future.

Meanwhile, the participants discussed ways of developing localized teaching methods. Three instructors suggested that if the school cannot provide systematic professional development programs, it may be a good idea to share teaching experiences through teachers' workshops and to create

a materials resource center. Three types of suggestion came up:

It is ideal that the school offer teacher development programs but this is not likely to happen at this point, so one feasible thing I can think of is having teachers' workshops as often as possible. At the workshops, we can share our experiences about EMI classes. For example, I'd like to hear about difficulties in planning lessons, implementing activities, and assessing students. And I'd also like to hear various possible solutions to solve these constraints (Min-Soo).

It might be a good idea to hear from those instructors who received good evaluations in previous semesters. They can explain how they carried out their classes from the beginning to the end of the semester. In addition, it may be helpful if we share portfolios, in case we use them, with instructors who teach the same courses (Hae-Ri).

Mi-Ae suggested that one possible solution could be running a materials resource center for the sake of efficiency.

We can run a materials resource center. Once we produce materials together, we can share tailor-made activities for our instruction. By doing this, teachers may save much time and feel less burdened with preparing an overwhelming amount of materials. Once a resource center is available, we may just need to think of how we are going to use those materials. It may make our teaching easier (Mi-Ae).

As seen in the participants' reports, they are very concerned about their professional development in relation to a potential English-only language policy. As some researchers mentioned, one of the most important professional duties of NNS teachers is to make linguistic improvements in their English, along with improving their teaching skills (Goto Butler, 2004; Liu, 1999). Participants were searching for feasible ways to deliver English speech with confidence and to come up with localized teaching methods for EMI.

CONCLUSION

Korean instructors' self-reported data suggested that a potential English language policy needs to be accompanied by two factors in order to maximize benefits to the English reading program: (a) consideration of local contexts and (b) instructors' professional development. Most of them were favorable towards EMI when it is tailored to the constraints and needs of the local context. The majority proposed a mixed language approach based on the current state of the program, which features homogeneous L1 background, and a particular students' and instructors' proficiency. As their protocols produced transformative solutions, their English use in the class uncovered discrepancies between language policy ideology and language practice in reality. This phenomenon was very similar to the results of previous studies in many Asian EFL contexts (e.g., Kim, 2002; Liu *et al.*, 2004; Moon & Lee, 2002). Apparently, instead of an English-only policy, a mixed language approach (e.g., the ratio of English and Korean as 90%:10%; 80%:20%; or 70%:30%) seems to be a more feasible policy for the English reading program at the university at present. Teachers and students seem to feel much more comfortable with a mixed language approach. The proportion of L2 use may be increased gradually as the local context becomes ready.

The findings indicate that an English-only ideology should not be taken for granted without critical questions and investigations. It seems that Korean English instructors need to work with the natural tendencies in the classroom rather than work against them. Their reports appeared to be consistent with the concept of local needs and local knowledge shown in previous studies (e.g., Dash, 2002; Degen & Absalom, 1998; Ouyang, 2000). As failures of the CLT approach in Asian countries have shown (eg, Degen & Absalom, 1998; Hu, 2002; Li, 1998; Nunan, 2003; Ouyang, 2000; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004), policy makers should not overlook the local context of a reading program if they wish it to succeed. In alignment with localized language policy, participants are searching for localized teaching methods. Given the constraints in the current training program at the school and until

they have more available resources, they are making efforts, through teacher-led workshops and development of a materials resource center, to come up with teaching methods which fit their EMI classes.

In order to provide more evidence concerning a localized English-only policy and TETE, more research should be carried out in schools from primary to secondary to tertiary level. The findings from these studies may provide valuable information in guiding Korean English teachers as to how to use the L2 in the classroom in order to maximize their teaching and students' L2 development. As Kim (2008) mentioned, besides interviewing teachers, it may also be worth investigating the actual classroom context where English-only or TETE is being carried out in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of this issue.

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