

# English Teachers' Experiences of Participating in a Long-Term Professional Development for Teaching English through English<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

As additional preparation while teaching for the K-12 medium of instruction, the Korean Ministry of Education has actively promoted diverse professional development (PD) programs to promote English teachers' *Teaching English through English* (TETE) implementation. This study explored Korean K-12 English teachers' self-efficacy about TETE implementation and their experiences of participating in a long-term PD program (six-months). Through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and teachers' after-PD evaluations, the data analysis showed that PD could enhance English teachers' self-efficacy about implementing TETE, and that the PD site provided a professional learning community for English teachers to reflect on what they had learned from their training. However, further data analysis found that self-efficacy and experiences in the PD program were different for elementary and secondary English teachers. Several suggestions are provided in terms of effectively preparing K-12 English teachers for TETE implementation through the long-term PD program.

## Resumen

Como preparación adicional para maestros mientras enseñan K-12, el Ministerio de Educación de Corea ha promovido activamente diversos programas de desarrollo profesional (PD) para la implementación de Enseñanza del inglés a través del inglés (TETE). Este estudio exploró la autoeficacia de los maestros coreanos de inglés K-12 sobre la implementación de TETE y sus experiencias de participación en un programa de desarrollo profesional a largo plazo (seis meses). A través de entrevistas semiestructuradas, observaciones en el aula y evaluaciones de los docentes posteriores al desarrollo profesional, el análisis de datos mostró que el desarrollo profesional podría mejorar la autoeficacia de los docentes de inglés sobre la implementación de TETE, y que el sitio de desarrollo profesional ofreció una comunidad de aprendizaje profesional para que los docentes de inglés reflexionaran en lo que habían aprendido de su entrenamiento. Sin embargo, un análisis posterior de los datos encontró que la autoeficacia y las experiencias en el programa de PD eran diferentes para los profesores de inglés de primaria y secundaria. Se brindan varias sugerencias en términos de preparar efectivamente a los maestros de inglés K-12 para la implementación de TETE a través del programa de desarrollo profesional a largo plazo.

## Introduction

Due to globalization and the emergence of English as an international language, many countries with English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs strive to enhance English Language Learners (ELLs) communicative competence by implementing different teaching pedagogies and approaches (Butler, 2004; Coleman, 2006; Deller & Price, 2007; McKay, 2009). *Teaching English through English* (TETE) is one approach that many have implemented since it proposes that frequent exposure to the target language can facilitate foreign or second language learning, and it has the capacity to positively motivate students to acquire the target language (Willis, 1981; Williams & Burden, 1997).

Recognizing these potential advantages of TETE, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Korea promoted the implementation of TETE to enhance ELLs' communicative competence from elementary classrooms to university coursework (Butler, 2004; Lee, 2007; Pak, 2005). The new focus on TETE was mandated in the revised 7<sup>th</sup> National English Curriculum in 2008 by the MOE in Korea. This mandate established that the purpose of English education was to develop ELLs' communicative competence for everyday life activities (Kim, 2017; Lee, 2014). Based on this mandate, English teachers should allow students to interact through English more frequently in English classrooms. The use of English as the medium of instruction allows the teacher to adopt various teaching methods to support verbal and non-verbal communication with the students. English teachers focus on the students' target language used to increase the learner's exposure and the opportunities that students have to communicate (Butler, 2004; Coleman, 2006; Deller & Price, 2007; McKay, 2009).

However, TETE implementation created a new issue for English teachers in Korea. English teachers across the country had previously not been required to teach English subjects in English because there was no government mandate for K-12 English teachers (Kim, 2008; Pak, 2005). To adhere to the new government mandate, English teachers were provided with professional development (PD) opportunities where they

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could develop TETE competency and practice under structured supervision so teachers could apply TETE in their English classrooms (Choi, 2015). In this regard, the 7<sup>th</sup> National English Curriculum provided avenues for K-12 English teachers to develop their knowledge, pedagogy, and expertise of TETE implementation through the PD program (Park & Kim, 2014).

Previous research examined PD with different context populations, such as elementary and secondary English teachers (Cabaroglu, 2014; Karimi, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Posnanski, 2002). Nevertheless, the research on long-term PD for TETE implementation in Korea has yet to compare and contrast how these diverse populations (elementary and secondary) perceive the training and evaluate its usefulness to their context (Hong & Kim, 2016). The purpose of the current study is to explore elementary and secondary English teachers' self-efficacy about TETE implementation and their experiences of participating in a professional learning community after the long-term (six months) PD program.

## Literature Review

### *Teacher self-efficacy and professional development*

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE), or teacher perceptions of their confidence and preparedness, can provide important insights relevant to teacher professional development (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy defined TSE as "a self-assessment of the competence to perform a specific task within a certain context, or a judgment of the ability to perform a desired activity" (p. 9). In other words, when teachers are familiar with certain teaching tasks, their TSE tends to be higher and stronger as it closely corresponds to the required teaching task and performance (Zee & Koomen, 2016). When certain teaching tasks are unfamiliar, teachers recall prior experiences that are similar to the required task to measure their TSE in relation to the new teaching requirements (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Previous studies have shown that TSE could have a positive influence on students' learning outcome and satisfaction. For instance, Tai et al (2012) argued that TSE shows a strong connection with students' learning satisfaction and outcome, which indicated that TSE could be a predictor of students' success in school. In other words, teachers with high TSE were more likely to teach effectively and increase students' academic achievement (Tai et al., 2012)

Previous studies have shown that effective PD could positively influence TSE (Lee et al., 2013; Posnanski, 2002; Powell-Moman & Brown-Schild, 2011). For instance, Posnanski (2002) explored science pre-service teachers' changing self-efficacy beliefs and their PD experiences. The analysis of the quantitative data supported the claim that a PD program can positively influence the science teaching self-efficacy beliefs of the PSTs. Although the results of this study do not yield a statistically significant impact on the participants' outcome expectancy beliefs, the analysis of the qualitative data suggests that a change in those expectancies might have taken place as the participants planned future instructional planning. Powell-Moman and Brown-Schild (2011) investigated the impact of a two-year PD on teacher self-efficacy for inquiry-based instruction. The results suggested the benefits of teacher participation in PD as a way to increase teacher use of inquiry-based instruction and self-efficacy.

Among previous studies regarding the relationship between professional development and EFL teachers' self-efficacy, Safari et al. (2020) examined how PD influences English teachers' self-efficacy. The study results showed that English teachers' PD had the highest effect on their self-efficacy compared to other variables. In another study, Ravandpour (2019) suggested teachers' PD has the highest positive correlation with English teacher self-efficacy on instructional strategies. Choi and Lee's (2018) study also showed that the PD could enhance EFL teachers' self-efficacy and teaching practices.

Other research has examined how the amount of previous PD experience impacted EFL teachers' self-efficacy (Karimi, 2011). The results showed that teachers with previous PD experience had higher self-efficacy than the teachers with no prior experience. This suggests that PD experience might help teachers develop EFL teachers self-efficacy, and by participating in more PD programs, EFL teachers might benefit from increased self-efficacy. In other words, more opportunities to participate in PD programs may help EFL teachers increase their self-efficacy with English language teaching.

A 14-week PD program designed to explore pre-service English language teacher candidates' self-efficacy indicated similar findings. Cabaroglu (2014) reported that participants discovered the need to improve their classroom practice, and the benefits of adopting an inquiry-based approach that also contributed to their own increase in knowledge. The author concluded that the PD program helped the pre-service English language teacher candidates teach with more efficacy, heightened their sense of self-awareness, improved problem-solving skills, and led to an enhanced feeling of autonomous learning.

Similarly, Zonoubi et al. (2017) examined the self-efficacy of two six-month Professional Learning Community (PLC) interventions that consisted of ten novice and experienced teachers of EFL. Through multiple data points, such as pre-and post-interviews, reflective journals, and PLC meeting recordings, the results indicated that self-efficacy improved in both groups, but in different areas according to experience. Experienced teachers' self-efficacy benefited from the use of innovative instructional strategies; whereas, novice teachers' self-efficacy improved in areas of classroom management and autonomy within the context. Both groups of teachers indicated their self-efficacy was higher with language proficiency after the program. Various studies regarding how PD impacts teacher self-efficacy have effectively documented that there is a positive correlation between PD and increased EFL teachers' self-efficacy (Cabaroglu, 2014; Goker, 2006; Karimi, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Zonoubi et al., 2017).

### *TETE implementation in Korea*

Regarding Korean K-12 TETE implementation in K-12, previous studies have summarized that English teachers' perceived effectiveness of TETE could vary depending on the classroom activities, indicating that some activities are better suited for using TETE (Kim et al., 2017). These studies have also noted that there were substantial differences between teachers' and students' perceptions about the effectiveness of teachers' English use through TETE implementation (Kang, 2009; Kim, 2008).

For instance, Kim (2008) noted that teachers' perceptions of TETE could be different based on grade levels, teaching experiences, and often they used English in classrooms. The research found a couple of important aspects of using TETE. First, primary school teachers experienced lower levels of anxiety and believed more strongly in TETE's beneficial power for students than secondary school teachers. Second, English teachers believed TETE benefited both teachers and students. From the teachers' perspective, most responded that TETE assisted in developing their speaking skills, promoted self-confidence in teaching, and enhanced their professional careers. In terms of students' benefits, English teachers responded that TETE encouraged students to develop listening skills, speaking skills, and vocabulary knowledge.

In research examining the perception of English usage in the classroom, Lee (2007) examined the effectiveness of teachers' English use based on teachers' and students' perceptions of classes taught using TETE. In total, 152 English teachers and 250 students were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers' English use in secondary school English classes. The results showed that (a) students' perception of effectiveness depended on the activity the teacher was implementing, which suggested that some activities might be better suited for TETE use in the classroom; (b) middle school teachers felt TETE was more limited in their context, while high school teachers thought TETE was effective for a larger number of situations; and (c) the effectiveness of the teacher's use of TETE was perceived differently between teachers and students.

These studies have summarized that TETE implementation could vary depending on teachers' English use, various classroom activities related to TETE, and students' language proficiency. These findings showed that English teachers were not only able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of TETE, but also critically examined how to effectively implement TETE in Korean English classrooms (Jeon, 2008; Kang, 2009; Kim, 2008).

### *Different PD experiences between elementary and secondary English teachers*

Previous studies have pointed out that K-12 English teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the PD could be different in regard to how their field implements and practices TETE. For instance, Lee (2012) conducted research involving semi-structured interviews with eleven secondary English teachers and two TETE certificate examiners during a long-term (six months) PD program in Korea. The research findings suggested that there was a discrepancy in terms of how the PD program for TETE was developed and completed among the stakeholders. Specifically, those who held positive perceptions and attitudes toward the methodology viewed TETE as an effective teaching approach for English teachers to develop their language teaching competence. However, those who had negative attitudes and perceptions of TETE pointed out the negative aspects, such as creating additional burdens to be managed by the English teacher. These findings showed that preconceived attitudes and perceptions prior to PD could influence the acceptance of TETE during and after the training.

While these results suggest potential issues with long-term PD programs, studies have not compared and contrasted how different Korean teaching populations respond to long-term PD for TETE. However, other PD programs focusing on communicative language teaching (CLT) have shown that the context of the teacher makes a difference with the perception of the training. For instance, Lee & Davis (2020) examined the

impact of short-term PD (one week) on Korean English teachers' self-efficacy to implement the CLT method. The study found that elementary English teachers had higher self-efficacy than secondary English teachers due to the CLT field adaptability. Secondary English teachers felt burdened by having to accommodate students' varying English proficiency levels in larger classes as opposed to the small classroom sizes in elementary English teachers. Furthermore, secondary school teachers thought the English training programs were not as practical for their context because they had to prepare students for the Korean college entrance exam that primarily focused on grammar and reading.

Therefore, the current study explores the gap in the literature with the lack of comparing elementary English teachers and secondary English teachers in long-term TETE PD programs. Thus, the purpose of this research is to explore and compare elementary and secondary English teachers' self-efficacy about TETE implementation and their experiences of participating in a professional learning community after the long-term (six month) PD program.

Specifically, the research questions for this research are:

RQ1: How do Korean elementary and secondary school teachers' self-efficacy about TETE implementation compare before and after PD training?

RQ2: How do Korean elementary and secondary school teachers describe their experiences of participating in a PLC after the TETE PD program?

## Method

### Research context

This study explored a six-month PD program that aimed to improve Korean K-12 English teachers' teaching competence in TETE implementation. The intensive PD lasted six months, including 1) two months in the language teacher PD institution in Korea, 2) two and a half months at three different universities in Korea, and 3) a month in a university that has a TESOL program in Australia. Under the partnerships and funded by the Korean MOE, all these institutions were interconnected and affiliated. The language teacher PD institution and three universities were located in the northwest of Korea. The study abroad program was located in the southeast of Australia.

During the first two months, forty in-service teachers were trained in the language PD institute. The teacher-trainers of the PD institution were all native-English speaking teacher-trainers who had various teaching experiences from elementary to university in Korea. After completing the PD program, English teachers were transferred and separated into one of three universities in Korea for two and a half months. One university focused on the elementary teacher education program, and the other two universities concentrated on secondary teacher education programs. The professors at three universities were mostly Korean professors who had received a Ph.D. in TESOL, TESL, and TEFL from Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. In the final stage of the PD program, a month's study abroad program was conducted at a university in Australia that had an affiliate TEFL program. All English teachers' PD participation was voluntary, but full participation could increase job promotion opportunities in the future. Table 1 shows an overview of professional development. The purpose of long-term PD is to facilitate Korean EFL teachers' ability and competency to teach English subject through English. The PD program includes various hand-on activities to promote English teachers' TETE competency so that these teachers could increase their self-confidence after completing the PD program. After this PD program, it is expected that these teachers could implement what they learned from the PD program in their own English classrooms.

1. PD program objectives	A. Improving the quality of curriculum for effective English teaching-learning methodology B. Cultivating English skills for elementary and secondary English teachers' TETE implementation C. Preparing teachers for successful completion of an entire intensive training program that will take place at both the PD site and other universities
2. Program directions	A. The program consists of core modules, club activities, CALL labs, idea shares, field trips, TETE contests, and various other activities B. The program provides opportunities for teachers to participate in various activities and improve their English proficiency and the use of TETE methodology and techniques C. The program aims to foster teachers' confidence and provide support and feedback in organized teaching practices
3. Program summary	Name of the program: Intensive teacher training program for elementary and secondary English teachers Duration: March 2019 ~ August 2019 Participants: 15 Elementary school teachers, 25 Secondary school teachers

Table 1: The overview of PD program

### Study participants

This study consists of fifteen in-service teachers from elementary schools (Grade 1-6) teachers and 25 in-service secondary school teachers (middle schools – Grade 7-9, and high schools – Grade 10-12) from a central province in Korea. In accordance with the Institutional Review Board's (IRB) protocol, the researchers explained the purpose of the study at the beginning of the PD program (week 2). All participants received an opportunity to read through the IRB consent form and agreed by signing the document. For the 1:1 interview, the researchers visited the PD site and explained the purpose of the study. Through a snowball sampling method, the researchers recruited study participants during the last week of the PD program. A total of six English teachers voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. Table 2 shows information about the interview participants.

Teachers	Schools	Teaching years	Previous PD experience	Gender
Teacher 1	Elementary	9	1	Female
Teacher 2	Elementary	11	2	Female
Teacher 3	Elementary	5	0	Female
Teacher 4	Secondary	8	1	Male
Teacher 5	Secondary	10	1	Female
Teacher 6	Secondary	13	2	Female

Table 2: Interview participants

### Data Sources and Data Analysis

The data consisted of in-depth individual interviews with volunteered teachers (n=6), researchers' classroom observations from the PD institution, and teachers' evaluations after the PD program (n=40). During the PD, researchers visited the PD institutions to observe the PD courses. After the PD, teachers' evaluations were collected and handed to researchers. After analyzing teachers' PD evaluations, 1:1 interviews followed. The 1:1 interviews lasted 30-40 minutes in Korean. The purpose of the interview was to understand English teachers' experiences and self-efficacy changes before and after the long-term PD program. Interview questions included: Can you explain your experience of the TETE PD program? What is your confidence in implementing the TETE before and after participating in the PD program? Do you have any suggestions to improve the TETE PD program?.

To analyze qualitative data sources, the six phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were implemented. In the first phase, all data sources were saved to a *Dropbox* folder. As a second phrase, codes, and sub-codes were developed while working through the data. The third phase was theme development; several codes were read and reread to identify significant broader patterns of meaning or potential themes. Fourth, these themes were further reduced to the most frequently referred to categories. As a fifth phrase, themes were defined and renamed for abstraction and data reduction. In the last phrase, all data analysis was triangulated to create a final report. See Appendix 1 for data analysis.

### Results

The data analysis showed several similarities and differences among interview participants. The noticeable similarities are: 1) English teachers' improved teacher self-efficacy after finishing the PD program; 2) The benefits of PD programs due to the environment of the professional learning community. The noticeable differences are: 1) different satisfaction levels about the PD program between elementary and secondary school teachers; 2) different opinions about TETE field adaptability based on school contexts. Appendix 1 shows a thematic analysis with a coding table.

#### *Similarities between elementary and secondary school teachers*

The data analysis showed that there was a similar pattern of teachers' increased self-efficacy of TETE implementation. Many teachers who participated in the interview said that they were not generally confident and felt a lack of preparation to conduct TETE before the long-term PD. However, after they completed PD, their self-efficacy generally increased, and they had a clear mindset on what to do and how to conduct TETE implementation.

*Before PD, to be honest, I had a lack of confidence. I was not quite sure which activity could be effective and how I could make them more interesting for my students. But, after the PD, I believe that my confidence was improved, and I am equipped with the capacity to demonstrate TETE better (After-PD evaluation, Teacher #30).*

This interview data clearly showed that long-term PD helped teachers improve their self-efficacy for TETE implementation. This theme consistently emerged from all interview participants.

### Fostering the PLC

When asked about teachers' interactions with their peers and mentor teachers, the concept of 'professional learning community' frequently emerged. Most interview participants said that their collaboration with peers and feedback sessions with teacher-trainers was a valuable experience for their intellectual growth. In other words, teachers in the PD program exchanged their knowledge and expertise as well as provided and received feedback. At the PD site, they reflected on materials that they learned and discussed how they could implement TETE related activities and teach them differently in the future.

*During the six months, I think that we critically reflected on what we learned. Some materials we learned had to be modified to make them fit better and more relevant for my teaching context. In that case, I sought advice, and many teachers were willing to share their knowledge and expertise. One thing I liked about the long-term PD was that we are all teachers and students at the same time (After-PD evaluation, Teacher #20).*

These comments supported the idea that the PD site was a place for teachers to pursue teacher learning and development. This unique opportunity with long-term PD could lead them to enhance intellectual and professional growth under the concept of the professional learning community.

Differences between elementary and secondary school teachers

### Different Satisfaction Levels for PD Courses and Materials

Although some teachers showed positive satisfaction about the overall PD program, it was found that their perceptions and attitudes were different based on their school context. Specifically, secondary teachers did not show high satisfaction with PD courses and materials compared to elementary school teachers. Secondary teachers said that some materials in the PD were redundant and repetitive because they already knew the basic theory and principles of TETE. Thus, they felt that they were doing repetitive work and thought that they were wasting their valuable time. In addition, secondary teachers wanted to receive hands-on activities that could be directly applicable to secondary English classrooms, but some PD courses and materials did not specifically focus on higher levels or higher grades of students.

*Unfortunately, some materials in the PD were redundant because I already have learned from my previous PD experiences. Also, I feel like some materials are more suitable for the low grade of students or younger students, which made me think that some of the PD courses did not specifically focus on secondary school ELLs (Interview transcript, Teacher #3).*

*I had attended several PD about TETE previously. I am satisfied with this PD, but I felt that certain PD materials could not be applied in the secondary English classrooms. I hope that more hands-on examples and activities should be provided for middle and high school students. This is one of the suggestions that I had for better PD program (Interview transcript, Teacher #6).*

These comments showed that secondary school teachers could have lower satisfaction with PD courses and materials as opposed to elementary school teachers as they wanted to receive some suggestions that could help overcome issues in the high school context so that they can have a better implementation of TETE for secondary ELLs. The data analysis provided evidence of the different experiences of PD programs between two groups of teachers.

### Different opinions about TETE field adaptability

The data analysis also demonstrated that teachers' perceptions of TETE field adaptability were different. When asked, elementary school teachers responded that the field adaptability of TETE is highly suitable because the English curriculum in elementary schools mainly focuses on promoting ELLs' communicative competence without having the pressure of standardized instruction and assessment. They also mentioned that they could implement TETE for their classrooms during the following semester.

However, when secondary English teachers were asked, they mentioned several limitations and difficulties of TETE implementation. More specifically, high school English teachers explained the limitation of their TETE implementation due to standardized testing as assessment tool and curriculum, as well as a strong focus on preparation for the college entrance exam. One of the secondary English teachers pointed out that although he is willing to implement TETE in the near future, he had to consult with other English teachers in terms of how to assess students' performance because several English teachers shared the same grade. Due to limited space for him to conduct TETE differently, he may not be able to fully implement TETE for his English classroom, although he successfully completed the long-term PD.

*One of the difficulties I had with TETE implementation is an alignment of assessment with other teachers who are teaching the same subject. Since four English teachers instruct the same grade, let's say grade 10, one teacher will be responsible for teaching only four classes out of a total of twelve classes. I can do the TETE with four classes, but when it comes to assessment, all four teachers should discuss together how to assess students. If other teachers do not teach using TETE, then the assessment could not be unified. If other teachers do not agree with the assessment based on TETE implementation, I have limited space to do things differently (Interview transcript, Teacher #5).*

Another issue for TETE implementation in the high school context was different ELLs' proficiency levels in the class. Although students in each grade have routinely progressed through the educational system, not all students have equal English proficiency, which creates instances where some students may not be able to follow a TETE-designed class. Thus, TETE could be negatively influenced by ELLs' inability to comprehend the content. While TETE might be too advanced for some students, another high school teacher worried that some students might not have the opportunity to obtain good scores with TETE instruction. She expressed strong concerns about TETE implementation and students' complaints if she does not consider standardized assessment and university entrance preparation.

*If I try to implement TETE in my classroom, some students whose English proficiency is low can show a lack of motivation and confidence in classroom participation. In this case, they may not understand and follow the content and do not want to voluntarily participate in classroom activities. These students may tell me that TETE is not fair for them because they cannot get a good score on the exam (Interview transcript, Teacher #6).*

These comments showed that there is a clear difference in TETE field adaptability between elementary and secondary English teachers. Elementary school teachers showed strong confidence in implementing TETE for their future classrooms, but secondary teachers, especially high school teachers, showed reluctance of TETE due to standardized instruction, testing system, and some ELLs' low English proficiency in the school context.

### Discussions and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to explore and compare elementary and secondary K-12 English teachers' self-efficacy about TETE implementation after a long-term (six months) PD program. Data analysis showed several key findings. First, before having PD, English teachers were generally not confident because they were unsure how to effectively conduct a class using TETE. However, after completing the PD program, their self-efficacy in TETE implementation was generally improved with knowledge and expertise. Second, the long-term PD program was a place where many English teachers felt they could develop their expertise and pedagogy of TETE implementation. Throughout the PD program, teachers could reflect on their knowledge and experience while collaborating with their peers to enhance their professional and intellectual growth. Additionally, English teachers receive valuable feedback from teacher trainers; thus, the PD program provided an avenue for Korean English teachers to improve their TETE while being actively involved in the professional learning community.

These findings are aligned with previous studies in terms of a positive relationship between English teacher self-efficacy and professional development. Previous research has summarized that the PD could enhance English teachers' self-efficacy in developing innovative instructional practices (Cabaroglu, 2014; Goker, 2006; Karimi, 2011; Locke et al., 2013; Zonoubi et al., 2017). Thus, this study has contributed to the previous literature that echoed the positive impact of PD on EFL teachers and their self-efficacy. In addition, this study showed that the PD site could foster the concept of a professional learning community so that these teachers could receive critical insights and feedbacks while collaborating with their peer teachers and teacher trainers during the PD program (Kang, 2009; Karimi, 2011; Lee et al., 2013; Zonoubi et al., 2017).

Despite the fact that study findings showed a general improvement of teachers' TETE implementation after the PD program, the data analysis also revealed some critical differences in terms of teachers' self-efficacy of TETE implementation between the two groups of teachers. Specifically, elementary English teachers showed more satisfaction with the PD courses and materials, and they showed higher self-efficacy with the idea of implementing TETE after the PD program. For elementary school teachers, the school curriculum allows the teachers the ability and flexibility to implement TETE since there is less disparity between students' English language levels, and the curriculum is not connected to high-stakes testing such as that in the secondary context. On the other hand, secondary English teachers responded that their self-efficacy and their ability to implement TETE was slightly increased after the PD program, although they suggested some limitations in TETE implementation in their context.

Some of the limitations that secondary English teachers mentioned were: 1) the emphasis on standardized instruction, assessment, and high school curriculum that focused on college entrance exam preparation, which limited their ability to conduct classes in only English as dictated by TETE, 2) the collection of various language levels within a class may marginalize some students based on English ability if secondary English teachers were to implement English as a medium of instruction, and 3) since the PD courses and materials were viewed as repetitive and redundant, secondary school teachers did not feel TETE or the PD program produce anything brand-new that would be useful in their context. These findings clearly show that the field adaptability was clearly different between elementary and secondary English teachers (Lee, 2012).

These study findings can add critical insights to the previous literature. Although a few studies have documented the differences between elementary and secondary English teachers' self-efficacy in terms of the CLT method (Lee & Davis, 2020), this study showed a unique perspective that the PD had a different impact on EFL teachers' TETE implementation due to different school contexts, high-stake testing in secondary schools, and a lack of cooperation of peer teachers. These aspects have not effectively been discussed in the previous literature that needs to be more explored and investigated.

### Suggestions

This study provided several suggestions on how to make an effective PD program for TETE implementation in EFL contexts. First, it is necessary to input materials related to how K-12 English teachers differentiate their instruction based on ELLs' proficiency levels (Choi, 2015; Kim et al., 2017). When students of various levels are present, teachers need to recognize that some ELLs will struggle with comprehension and may not be able to follow the teachers' use of TETE, which could be a deterrent because the PD program has not fully prepared the teacher to handle the complexity of instruction needed to address lower-level ELLs, thus making the field adaptability less applicable (Argudo et al., 2021; Jeon, 2008; Lee, 2014).

One of the ways to resolve this issue through PD is to make teachers prepare different TETE lessons that are scaffolded for different ELL proficiency levels and practice them through intensive micro-teaching activities. During micro-teaching sessions, it is also important for PD programs to create individual feedback sessions with teacher-trainers and expert teachers (Ping, 2013; Savas, 2012). Micro-teaching sessions can create a professional learning community for teachers to receive constructive criticism that could allow them to alter their teaching approaches or teaching philosophies when confronted with a mixed-level classroom (Ping, 2013; Savas, 2012).

Second, to make PD programs using TETE more effective, coordinators and supervisors of long-term PD need to develop materials that are up-to-date, and more relatable to a practice-based program (Ahn, 2011; Pak, 2005). A few teachers mentioned that while the theory courses from the PD program are beneficial, what the teachers actually need are courses that focus on the practical application of TETE theories and concepts into the English classroom (Ahn, 2011; Pak, 2005). In other words, English teachers felt that they could understand the theoretical reasons why TETE would be beneficial for ELLs, but struggled to transfer those ideas into practice. In addition to being more practical, it should be necessary to differentiate the long-term PD curriculum so that elementary English teachers and secondary English teachers can have information tailored to their context (Kim, 2008).

Since the secondary English teachers showed lower satisfaction with the PD program, and did not show as much improvement in their self-efficacy to use TETE, it is important to create PD courses and materials that can help secondary teachers resolve the issues and difficulties they experience in their context (Lee & Davis, 2020). The needs of the elementary school teacher and the secondary school teacher are vastly different based on the disparity between language ability amongst students and the inherent difficulty of courses taught at a higher level (Lee, 2012). Therefore, long-term PD programs that focus more on the practical application within that teacher's learning environment could lead to PD programs that are seen as more effective.

### Limitations of the Study

There are a couple of limitations to this research. First the results of this study are not generalizable to other contexts as the PD program was isolated to one area that is subject to geographical, sociocultural, and political factors. Second, the results are limited in scope. Furthermore, evaluations such as post-PD classroom observations might allow researchers more opportunity to understand how TETE is being implemented after such a program. This data highlights the teachers' intentions after training, but fails to follow up to assess implementation.

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## Appendix 1

Themes regarding similarities among interview participants.

Themes	Descriptions	Codes
1. English teachers' self-efficacy in TETE implementation	English teachers expressed their self-efficacy in TETE implementation through an intensive professional development	1.1. Before PD, teachers generally showed low confidence of TETE implementation due to lack of knowledge, expertise, and practice 1.2. After PD, teachers showed high confidence of TETE, indicating an improvement of TSE
2. Benefits of PD programs	English teachers explained several benefits of PD  The noticeable theme was that teachers came up with the PLC concept without prompting by the interviewer.	2.1. Engaging in professional learning community 2.2. Critical reflections and feedback with co-teachers 2.3. Critical reflections and feedback with teacher trainers

Themes regarding differences among interview participants.

Themes	Descriptions	Codes
1. Different satisfaction levels for PD program	Elementary and secondary English teachers showed the different levels of satisfaction after finishing the PD program	1.1. Elementary school teachers showed higher satisfaction after the PD due to their school curriculum 1.2. Secondary school teachers showed low satisfaction after the PD due to their school curriculum
2. Different opinions about TETE field adaptability in the future	Elementary and secondary English teachers showed the different opinions how TETE should be implemented in their future English classrooms	2.1. Elementary school teachers mentioned high field adaptability of TETE due to no pressure of high-stake testing in elementary schools 2.2. Secondary school teachers mentioned low field adaptability of TETE due to severe pressure of (Nationality)SAT in high schools