The Practicum and its Effects on the Development of Korean Pre-service English Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Speaking

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Abstract

There has been a gradual change in Korean English curricula and education systems over recent decades to enhance the ability to communicate in English confidently in an increasingly globalized society. The Korean government has been initiating new policies in English curricula to improve the quality of English education in state schools; accordingly, English teacher education has also been intensified, with more attention to teaching speaking. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the impact of teacher preparation on classroom practice through empirical research considering Korean educational contexts. This study explores pre-service English teachers' learning through initial teaching practice in the area of teaching speaking in Korea, which has seen major policy changes in recent years but has had limited empirical investigation. Two pre-service English teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching speaking are examined, from the perspectives of influences on, and changes in their cognition. Data include classroom observations, semi-structured interviews in sequence, documents, and qualitative questionnaires. The overall findings show limited impact of the practicum on their cognition development, and incongruence between their cognitions and practices of teaching speaking due to the gap between theory and practice. Implications for improvements are discussed, as well as suggestions for further study.

Keywords: Teaching speaking, teaching English in English, communicative language teaching, pre-service teacher education, teacher learning, teacher cognition, teaching practicum

Over the last two decades, there have been rapid changes in English education policies in Korea. In line with the emphasis on improving communicative competence in English, the teaching of speaking has been given more attention. To improve the quality of English education, the policies recommended teaching English in English (TEE) in state schools (Moodie & Nam, 2016) and creating English-friendly educational environments (Min, 2008). The English

national curriculum has been reformed continuously (MOE, 2015), with a movement toward de-centralisation. Great efforts were also made to encourage students' autonomy and creativity based on learner-centred pedagogy (MOE, 2015). The quality of pre-service English teacher education has also been much emphasized as a way of enhancing the quality of English education.

However, despite intensification of policy initiatives and curriculum reforms over the past decade, a gap between policy and practice in Korea is still apparent (Ahn, 2011; Moodie & Nam, 2016). While the development of speaking skills was emphasized in state schools, English teachers were found to lack the necessary skills for teaching English as a medium of instruction (Kim & Lee, 2015), and communicative language teaching (CLT) under the existing education system. Their perceptions and practices have often been inhibited due to the inflexibility of material selections and classroom activities prescribed by the school textbook (Shin, 2012), in addition to the difficulties of classroom management (Ahn, 2011). There is clearly a need for more teacher support regarding the practical skills entailed in teaching speaking and teaching English in English through effective pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Given these far-reaching changes in English policies and curricula in Korea, exploration of the impact of pre-service English teacher education on classroom practice is important. However, there has been relatively little qualitative empirical investigation into pre-service English teachers' learning during the practicum for teaching speaking and teaching English in English (Moodie & Nam, 2016; Park & Kim, 2014). The teaching of speaking remains underresearched in relation to teacher cognition in TESOL (Borg, 2015; Farrell & Vos, 2018; Wyatt, 2009). Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap in literature and contribute to an understanding of teacher learning during the practicum, considering the factors influencing teaching speaking in state secondary schools in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. Research questions examine the impact of the practicum on pre-service English teachers' cognition development with a specific focus on teaching speaking:

To what extent do pre-service English teachers' experiences during the practicum affect their perceptions of the teaching of speaking?

- What were the pre-service English teachers' perceptions of the teaching of speaking before and after the practicum?
- What are the challenges faced during the practicum by pre-service English teachers in learning to teach in the manner recommended by the national curriculum?

The Korean EFL Context

English Education in Secondary Schools

Since CLT was introduced in the Korean English national curriculum in the 1990s, there have been changes in English education policies. Nevertheless, there has been a lack of change in classroom contexts (Lim, 2007). English education in Korea has been traditionally teachercentred with a teacher as an authority figure playing a central role in the process of

teaching and learning while students remain passive. This vertical teacher-student relationship was influenced by the Confucian tradition (Lee, 2006; Littlewood, 1999). Students' reticence is also caused by anxiety provoked by speaking in a foreign language in a large class (Horwitz et al. 1986; MacIntyre et al. 2003). Though the roles of teachers and students have been challenged to move towards more learner-centred communicative classrooms, traditional concepts or expectations prevail in the wider Korean socio-cultural contexts which govern teachers' and students' perceptions and still act as barriers to communication-oriented English education.

There is very limited exposure to English, especially spoken English, as secondary schools allocate only three or four 45-minute lessons per week to English, where the focus is largely on grammar and written English to prepare for the national scholastic aptitude test (NSAT) for the university entrance. English is a foreign language in Korea, and therefore there is no need to communicate in English outside the classroom. In addition, it has been indicated that English teachers' lack of oral proficiency and skills in spoken English, as well as large class sizes, consisting of 25 to 30 students, is also a hindrance to providing communicative opportunities in classroom contexts.

Pre-service English Teacher Education

Pre-service English teacher education is provided in teachers' colleges and departments of education in universities (MEHRD, 2007), which award an English teacher certificate upon completion of four-year teacher training. Subsequently, pre-service English teachers sit national open competition to be employed as an English teacher in secondary schools. Preservice English teacher education is organized according to the curricula of teacher colleges or education departments in universities (Kim, 2009), and is trainer-centred with little interaction and collaboration between trainers and trainees. It has been traditionally centred on theoretical lectures with relatively little training in oral proficiency, with a very short period allocated for in-school teaching practice. The practicum takes place in the final year between March and May for four weeks, comprising a short period of classroom observations and supervized teaching, and two weeks of intensive independent teaching experience. There is no formal support organized by the mentor in secondary schools or by the trainer in teacher colleges. The teacher certification system has been criticized as too theory-focused, and consequently ineffective as a measure of teaching quality (Im, 2008; Kim, 2009). Though there have been some changes with an emphasis on teaching practice in recent years, further reformation of pre-service English teacher education is needed in order to better incorporate recent innovations in English curricula. **Literature Review**

Teacher Learning and Teacher Cognition during the TESOL Practicum

Teacher cognition has been studied increasingly in recent decades in TESOL teacher education, with a growing awareness of its importance in relation to classroom practice and professional development. From the late 1980s, language teacher cognition has been systematically examined regarding the relationships of theory and practice to teacher learning (Korthagen, 2001) and the relationships between cognition and practice (Borg, 2015). Pre-service English teachers' cognitions have also been widely researched in TESOL (e.g., Da Silva, 2005; Farrell, 2008; Polat et al. 2019; Qiu et al. 2021; Serdar Tülüce & Çeçen, 2016, Urmston, 2003) with

attention to the role of prior cognition or the impact of initial teacher training. Many studies reported that teacher cognition is resilient to change (Richardson & Placier, 2001) and the apprenticeship of observation during schooling influences pre-service teachers' decisionmaking on teaching during the practicum as their existing beliefs act as a filter of their perspectives on practice (Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre-Hernández, 2018; McGarr & McCormack, 2016). For example, Liaw (2012), Peacock (2001), and Urmston (2003) indicated the limitations of initial teacher training in terms of positively affecting pre-service English teachers' core beliefs. Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre-Hernández (2018) reported that Colombian pre-service English teachers perceived the practice of teaching English mainly in terms of a rule-transmitting technical activity, as influenced by their prior cognition as a learner. Whilst prior cognition is not easy to change, a strand of research has also reported practical knowledge being constructed and reconstructed by teaching. Pre-service teachers tend to hold unrealistic expectations of teaching due to lack of practical knowledge about school and classroom contexts, and teaching and learning processes in relation to students, and therefore simplistic and optimistic views on the application of theory to practice (Richardson, 1996). It is also well documented that pre-service teachers often misconceptualize pedagogy because of teacher training that focuses on theory disconnected from context, but their rather naïve theorybased pedagogical understandings evolve gradually toward more learner-oriented and sophisticated knowledge through practice (Furlong & Maynard, 1995). For example, Tang (2004) observed that pre-service teachers' practical knowledge grew by developing more understanding of teaching and the teaching self. According to Schepens et al. (2007), preservice teachers' practical knowledge was facilitated through collaborative mentor and trainer support. Debreli (2016) reported a positive impact by the practicum on Turkish pre-service English teachers' beliefs, the more practical knowledge they gained over the nine-month practicum. Similarly, a longitudinal study by Serdar Tülüce and Çeçen (2016) showed that there were qualitative changes in pre-service English teachers' beliefs after the practicum towards more learner-oriented reflective views of teaching. An experimental study conducted by Qiu et al. (2021), based on questionnaires, journals, and a few interviews, also found that Chinese pre-service English teachers' beliefs changed significantly regarding student management, student learning, and teaching and assessment, after the three-month practicum. Based on an understanding of the significant contribution of practice to teacher knowledge, this study explored the nature of pre-service English teachers' learning during the practicum with a particular focus on teaching speaking and whether any changes occurred in their cognition.

From socio-cultural and constructivist perspectives, teacher learning is viewed as school-based knowledge-building through experiential learning of teaching (Richards and Farrell, 2005. As teacher cognition and practice are embedded in school culture (Freeman & Johnson, 1998), contextual factors have a direct influence on pre-service English teachers' learning experiences during the practicum (Ye, 2016). For example, Da Silva (2005) indicated that Brazilian preservice English teachers' teaching of speaking was constrained by large class sizes and the use of the mother tongue (L1). Similarly, Ahn (2011) and Lee (2007) reported on Korean preservice English teachers' challenges in CLT because of mixed student proficiency in large classes. Zeichner & Gore (1990) also found that under a school system unsupportive of teacher development and innovative practice, pre-service teachers adopted traditional teaching methods. This confirms that without a supportive school context, the transfer of teacher training

to the practicum will be unsuccessful. As addressed by Rahayuningsih (2016) and Rivera & Gómez (2017), with a lack of practical skills for effective teaching, pre-service English teachers struggle with CLT, face challenges in utilizing alternative methods according to student dynamics (Farrell, 2008), and often perceive teaching in terms of affective aspects rather than professional qualities (Thomson et al. 2012). It is also acknowledged that preservice English teachers' oral proficiency correlates to their teacher identity and self-efficacy in teaching (Lee, 2009). A study by Dinçer and Yeşilyurt (2013) examined Turkish pre-service English teachers' perceptions of speaking instruction, whereby self-reports followed by a few brief interviews revealed their negative views of teaching speaking due to lack of prior experience and confidence in speaking. Similarly, a more recent study by Kurnaz & Özbay (2020), based on questionnaires and a few focus-group interviews, found that Turkish preservice English teachers' beliefs concerning communicative approaches were positively correlated to their oral proficiency and self-efficacy. Though it is important to understand and support pre-service English teachers' learning experiences, previous studies in TESOL were mainly conducted using quantitative methods in relation to grammar or writing (Borg, 2015), and there is still limited qualitative investigation of pre-service English teachers' cognitions of teaching speaking in EFL countries through mixed methods.

Contemporary Approaches to Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking is a less widely researched skill compared to other language skills because of the complexity involved in its acquisition based on real-time processing of language input and output (Bygate, 2006). Spoken discourse is often realized by colloquial routines with a frequent ellipsis as well as repetition (Carter & McCarthy, 1995) and is dynamic, interpersonal, and contextual (Hughes & Reed, 2016). Since speaking develops by conceptualizing meaning (Bygate, 2006), task interaction improves the comprehension of input through the negotiation of meaning (Pica et al. 1987), and task modifications through planned, structured or repeated tasks promote speaking through input enhancement (Goh, 2017; Van Patten, 2015). For example, studies by Lambert (2020) and Qiu & Lo (2017) report that effective pre-task planning or repetition of the same or similar communicative tasks can promote speech performance by decreasing the cognitive demands on the learners while expanding their linguistic repertoire through real-time speech processing. Research has also shown that the type of communicative task undertaken has a significant influence on oral proficiency development (Skehan & Foster, 1999; Qiu & Lo, 2017). Two-way communicative tasks were found to be effective for modified comprehension of input and output. For example, communicative exercises such as information-gap activities or jigsaws (e.g., Doughty & Pica, 1986; Skuse, 2014), problem-solving or decision-making tasks (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Hwang, 2010), and role-plays or simulations (e.g., Byrne, 1986; Park & Cho, 2012) have been widely adopted through pair or group work in language classrooms. Particularly, information-gap tasks have been viewed as most effective for two-way communication as the information gap facilitates information exchanges (Nunan, 1989). Pica et al. (1993) studied native versus non-native interaction and found that information exchange tasks generated modified output. Skuse (2014) and Doughty & Pica (1986) also showed how information exchanges boosted turn-taking and conversational modification. Similarly, opinion-gap tasks or discussion tasks have also been seen as beneficial in articulating diverse speech (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). For example, Kim

(2014) studied the effect of different speaking tasks on Korean university learners of English and reported that discussion tasks were better suited than information exchange tasks, based on learners' level.

According to Galante & Thompson (2017), however, drama-based speaking activities were found to be more effective than traditional communicative tasks in promoting learner interaction. For example, the study by Uştuk & Van Gorp (2020) shows how task-based process drama was implemented as a useful tool in learner-centred communicative interaction, enhancing attention to language through authentic simulation in a Turkish EFL classroom. Many studies recently conducted in Korean primary or secondary schools also explored the effect of drama or storytelling. For example, Kim & Kim (2013) reported that drama facilitated secondary school students' speaking skill development. Similarly, Jung (2015) and Jung & Kim (2012) found storytelling as a useful tool in promoting primary school students' fluency and positive motivation for speaking. A breadth of recent research has also given attention to the quality of peer interaction in relation to speech production and learner engagement in communicative tasks. Studies reported that whilst native-English speaking interlocuters were found to enrich comprehensible input, the quality of social interaction amongst learners working in pairs or groups was the most important contribution to better output (Sato, 2017). As reviewed above, communicative tasks have been widely researched as a way to increase communicative interaction and task engagement. However, as Hwang (2010) indicated, many studies reviewed above or elsewhere examined speaking activities in relation to learners' oral proficiency by means of statistical analyses, and thereby provided a lack of contextual information related to language learning processes and learner factors. Therefore, this study employed a qualitative approach to unveil a fuller, context-based, picture of the quality of teaching speaking and communicative interaction in EFL classrooms.

Debates on Speaking Practice in EFL Contexts

As English is an international language, acquiring communicative competence in EFL countries is crucial to developing the ability to communicate effectively across diverse cultures and nations (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Jenkins, 2007). However, despite English policies stressing teaching speaking and using English as a medium of instruction, acquiring speaking skills is difficult because of English not being officially spoken outside the classroom, and speech processing relying on real-time spoken interaction in socio-cultural contexts (Bygate, 2006). Moreover, as there is no formula for speaking instruction, the teacher needs to be trained to improvise the approach that works best for their context. It is necessary to understand teaching speaking in classroom contexts where meanings are socially constructed through classroom discourse (Freeman, 2004). Though CLT has shifted focus from traditional methodology to language learning through communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), debates continue on pedagogical implementations of CLT in EFL countries. The major obstacles facing CLT are documented as: lack of oral proficiency in English amongst teachers and students; insufficient teacher training in teaching methodologies; large classes; traditional textbooks; grammar-based examination systems; limited materials; difficulties in assessment, and teachers' and students' reluctance to embrace curriculum reforms (Littlewood, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Previously many studies reported that Korean English teachers' low oral proficiency impeded teaching in English (Jeon, 2008; Kim & Lee, 2015). However,

according to Ahn (2011) and Shin (2012), despite newly recruited English teachers' strong oral accomplishments, students' low oral proficiency still prevented English from becoming a medium of instruction. Lee (2016) also indicated English teachers' critical attitudes towards English-only instruction due to students' varying oral proficiency in large classrooms in secondary schools. In addition, exam-centred school education leaves little time for speaking practice (Shin, 2012), and as previously reported, a lack of authentic spoken discourse examples in English textbooks as well as in the English teacher's guidebook still hinders to effective use of classroom English as suggested by the revised national curriculum of 2015 (Kong & Sung, 2021; Jung & Shin, 2021). EFL teachers also possess insufficient understanding of communicative teaching of speaking (Li, 2012) and adapt it in the traditional teaching context (Littlewood, 2013). Although this adaptation is necessary (Garton, 2014), more contextually appropriate communicative approaches should be developed in EFL countries, reflecting socio-cultural school contexts.

Methods

Qualitative research is equated with interpretive inquiry, acknowledging the co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and participants (Reynolds, 1980). Based on the interpretive paradigm, this study explored how pre-service English teachers perceive and practise the teaching of speaking in communicative ways through detailed observation field-notes and indepth semi-structured interviews. To gather rich information on their interpretations of practices and socio-cultural contexts, purposive sampling (Patton, 1990) was used, and two cases were selected to present enhanced analytical findings, strengthening an in-depth contextual understanding of each case by offering comparative perspectives on the emerging similarities and contrasts (Miles et al. 2014).

The researcher was part of the qualitative research processes of generating and analysing data (Neuman, 2011) but precautions were taken to prevent any bias throughout the study. The researcher's language, attitudes, and background as an English teacher were continuously reviewed after each interview to minimize any potentially subjective interpretation or presentation of the findings. Care was also taken during observations to construct fieldnotes in two columns, respectively comprising what was actually observed, and what the researcher interpreted. Reflective journals were kept throughout data collection and analysis concerning critical self-appraisal (Stynes, 2018), thus validating the researcher's position as a reflexive inquirer.

Participants

The participants of this study were selected from the final-year pre-service English teachers enrolled in two teacher colleges, who had no formal classroom teaching experience and were expecting to take the practicum. Pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality. Eunhae was 24 years old and was enrolled in a teacher college in the capital city, Seoul. She had a gap year studying spoken English in Canada and her practicum took place in her old secondary school in a suburban area. Her school was partially streamed according to students' English proficiency (as this was typical for most suburban areas) and her students were in a Grade 3 (Year 3) mixed-ability class. She taught 3 or 4 English lessons per day for three weeks. Haewon was 27 years old and was enrolled in a teacher college in the south-eastern province, Pusan.

She also had a gap year studying spoken English in Australia; her practicum was held locally in a secondary school appointed by her teacher college. Her school was fully streamed by students' English proficiency, and she was in charge of a Grade 2 (Year 2) high-ability class. She taught 2 or 3 English lessons per day for two weeks. Both Eunhae and Haewon had taught some English privately for their families or relatives but had no previous classroom teaching experience; their respective practicums were held in lower-level secondary schools.

Table 1. Pre-service English Teacher Profiles

Names	Gender	Age	Year (Teacher College)	English Learning Experience	English Teaching Experience	Practicum School	Student Level (Class Size)
Eunhae	Female	24	Year 4	Studying Spoken English Abroad in Canada	No Formal Teaching but Private Tutoring	Lower Secondary School	Grade 3 (34 Students)
Haewon	Female	27	Year 4	Studying Spoken English Abroad in Australia	No Formal Teaching but Private Tutoring	Lower Secondary School	Grade 2 (26 Students)

Data Collection

The data were collected before, during, and after the practicum through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and documents. The study followed the codes of ethics set by the research institutions, and informed consent was obtained with a consent form signed by each participant along with the study plan and purpose explained.

The primary source of data were semi-structured interviews and direct classroom observations. As supplementary data, documents were gathered consisting of governmental documents (e.g., national curricula, curriculum reforms, educational policies), institutional documents from teacher colleges and secondary schools (e.g., teacher college curricula, course outlines and materials, practicum guidelines, textbooks, lesson plans, PowerPoint slides, handouts), and researcher-generated documents (e.g., observation field-notes, questionnaires).

First, initial documents were gathered in teacher colleges and after reviewing initial information, a preliminary questionnaire was distributed to the final year pre-service English teachers in teacher colleges. It was designed using open questions to gather background information on the teacher college contexts and the pre-service English teachers in general before the practicum. Once the questionnaires were collected, based on information gathered, initial interviews were conducted with a few pre-service English teachers to understand their initial pedagogical perspectives of teacher training and teaching speaking. Once the 4-week practicum started, the pre-service English teachers' lessons were observed producing detailed manually written field-notes to enrich contextual information, and semi-structured interviews were conducted before and after observations. Lesson plans, handouts, and PowerPoint slides were also collected for each lesson. After the practicum, there were follow-up questionnaires and interviews in teacher colleges. Each observation comprised a 45-minute lesson, and interviews lasted from 1 to 2 hours. **Data Analysis**

The interview and observation data which were audio-recorded with permission were fully transcribed and translated to English. The classroom dialogue in English, whether spoken by the pre-service English teachers or the students during the lessons was written as italics to distinguish it from the researcher's translation from Korean. All the collected data were thematically analysed based on the grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Data analysis involved an ongoing process of constant close comparison and interpretation of data to discover patterns emerging from the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first stage of open coding was a line-by-line approach to the properties and dimensions of the interview data. An empty column was created on the right side of each interview transcript, and a line-by-line summary was written on this column for each segment of the interview transcript. This was not only to become familiar with the data but also to conduct non-subjective data-driven analyses. Once a line-by-line summary was completed, initial codes were assigned to similar texts and numbered in order. When interpreting the interviewees' views, care was taken to record their own words, thus minimizing the researcher's influence, and texts unrelated to the developing themes were separated through repeated open coding. Initial codes were tentative and revisited or reworded while developing an initial category. Initial codes were descriptive codes summarising the text in a word or short phrase and sub-coding was also used to add further information in the manner of summarising action using gerunds, for example, 'CLT approach (mixing CLT with the mentor's style).' Each transcript was at least double coded to develop a consistent coding scheme. Once initial categories emerged, axial coding began to relate initial codes to further categories. For example, initial codes such as 'exam preparation' and 'textbook focus' were merged under the further code 'school context', and then again under 'contextual constraints for teaching speaking.' Further coding continued, comparing all the properties under initial codes and examining their relationships in search of patterns (Miles et al. 2014). Further categories emerged through grouping and re-grouping and finally, there was selective coding by further grouping of codes according to the research questions.

Once interview data were analysed, observation fieldnotes were analysed in the same way by the constant comparative method. Coding started based on the themes identified in the interview analysis and there were emerging codes gradually developed in line with the patterns of pedagogical themes as well as social or cultural themes for each of the classroom context. Key points in classroom dialogue between the pre-service English teachers and the students were marked in bold while assigning emerging codes. The field-notes were initially analysed after observations, looking for preliminary patterns, and after the fieldwork systematically coded and analysed.

Questionnaires were qualitatively analysed and reviewed as documents to compare and validate the study participants' views with those of their contemporaries. Textbooks and lesson plans as well as PowerPoint slides and handouts were analysed to validate the observations and supplement information on the contents of the lessons. To augment credibility, the interview analyses were compared to analyses of observation field-notes and documents for triangulation, and member-checking was conducted during each stage of data processing to enhance the quality, reliability, and validity of the study. For example, interview transcripts, observation field-notes, and drafts of the findings were sent via email to the study participants to seek their comments on whether the researcher accurately reflected their accounts, in the belief that

involving them in reviewing the research reports would increase the trustworthiness of the study.

Findings

The findings of the study present the pre-service English teachers' initial understandings of the teaching of speaking, their actual classroom practices, and their perceptions after the practicum using the key extracts.

Pre-service English Teachers' Initial Pedagogical Perspectives of Teaching Speaking and Teacher Training

Initial pedagogical perspectives of teacher training. Eunhae and Haewon perceived their teacher training courses on spoken English very positively. Eunhae noticed many changes in her teacher college curriculum in line with governmental emphasis on practical training in spoken English, and this helped her to receive intensive training in spoken English:

> *In this term, I take courses on teaching speaking, teaching reading, teaching writing, and teaching listening… all the courses are taught in English. So, after one semester is finished, we all say that speaking and writing in English are more comfortable than using Korean.*

She was very confident in oral proficiency in English as she had taken a year off to study English speaking in Canada, and she valued all the courses being taught in English which maximized the opportunity to practise speaking in English. She found microteaching-based courses very useful in preparing lesson plans or communicative activities which she could apply to the practicum, and in developing her perspectives on the practicum practically in terms of applying theory to practice through peer feedback. She was particularly interested in the teaching speaking course as it increased her awareness of the importance of elicitation in relation to students' learning styles. However, she was concerned about the difficulty of teaching speaking and elicitation in the real classroom and commented that more practical training on elicitation is needed because of discrepancies raised between theory and practice in the classroom. As she mentioned, though the teaching speaking course helped to enhance her awareness of and motivation for elicitation in terms of learners' styles, her ideas were driven by learning from the coursebook, therefore her initial perceptions of elicitation seemed rather vague in terms of the application of theory.

Haewon also perceived that the early years spoken English courses helped her to develop oral proficiency and form initial ideas of CLT by being based on CLT lessons. On the other hand, she expressed regret that some courses taught during the early years fell short in terms of theoretical depth and essential teaching skills. However, she felt that teaching methodology courses provided in the third year helped her to learn CLT through intensive microteaching. Haewon also had a good command of spoken English after spending a year in Australia.

Initial beliefs and expectations of teaching speaking. During the initial interview, Eunhae shared her plans for speaking-centred lessons:

> *During the practicum, I would like to teach speaking-centred lessons even by making an extra class at least once. […] If I can design any extra class based on speaking, I*

will try anyway to help the students to be able to actually speak through various activities, no matter whether their grammar is correct or not, and I will try to make communication-centred or meaning-focused speaking lessons.

She was interested in encouraging students to speak as much as possible by creating a learnerfriendly classroom atmosphere and making use of pictures and various activities. Her desire to create 'a completely different classroom environment' seemed, however, rather ambitious for a novice English teacher. She regarded classroom English very positively, preferring to use as much English as possible.

Haewon's views on spoken English policy were rather negative regarding the education system's focus on university entrance exam preparation. She was concerned about students' generally passive attitudes towards speaking. Her concerns were driven by her experience of learning speaking and after-school teaching organized by her teacher college. She perceived that the role of a teacher is to minimize students' psychological obstacles and hoped to help students overcome their fear of speaking and increase motivation by enabling a speakingfriendly environment and using various input materials before speaking. She was very keen to apply CLT to her lessons by connecting speaking to students' everyday lives:

Based on what I learned here from the trainer, I would like to teach my lesson in a way to combine students' real life, in another word, by making students talk about their real-life in English.

Haewon seemed determined to adopt CLT as taught in her courses though she felt nervous, as a novice English teacher. She believed that classroom English would not cause a problem at any student level, so she planned to teach fully in English.

Overall, the initial perceptions of Eunhae and Haewon concerning the practicum were very positive and demonstrated their confidence and understanding of possible challenges to some extent, but their plans for teaching speaking were rather imprecise and naïve. The summaries of their perceptions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Pre-service English Teachers' Perceptions before the Practicum

	Eunhae	Haewon
Elicitation / Participation	- perceives students' learning styles as important in teaching speaking - perceives students' reticence and peer pressure as main barriers to elicitation and participation	- perceives students' fear of speaking and low motivation as main barriers to elicitation and participation
Plan for Teaching Speaking / Speaking Activities	- expectations for the practicum: to implement speaking-centred lessons and meaning-centred speaking activities; to use pictures to increase elicitation; to change classroom environment/atmosphere to maximize elicitation and speaking practice	- expectations for the practicum: to provide rich spoken input materials to reduce fear, increase elicitation and motivation, and guide speaking step by step; to link real life to speaking; to design interactive activities as well as integrating language skills to maximize speaking practice

Teaching in English / CLT	- holds positive views on CLT - plans to use as much English as possible - perceives ambiguity of students' level in teaching in English	- holds positive views on CLT - plans to teach fully in English - perceives classroom English as input
Theory and Practice / Curriculum Policies in Contexts	- perceives a dilemma between the theory and practice of teaching speaking - perceives ambiguity of applying CLT to teaching speaking based on textbooks - has concerns about difficulties of individual support due to large classes, individual differences in terms of proficiency and motivation, and generally low oral proficiency in a local province	- perceives a possible gap between the theory and practice of teaching speaking - holds negative views on English policies because of the exam system - has concerns about students' passive attitudes and fear of speaking

Pre-service English Teachers' Practices of Teaching Speaking during the Practicum

The findings from the pre-service English teachers' lessons are presented verbatim as regards their practices of classroom English, elicitation, and speaking activities: pair work, quiz, group work, and presentation.

Classroom English and elicitation. The pre-service English teachers' lessons differed in terms of the extent to which they used English in the classroom. Eunhae's lessons used hardly any classroom English as her lessons were taught almost entirely in Korean. She only used English when quoting the textbook, or occasionally when responding to students' answers, but this was very simple English as shown below (Classroom dialogue spoken in English is marked in italics):

Extract 1

Eunhae: *OK*. The next one is '*Let's Talk*'. Before we go through '*Let's Talk*', let's look at the pictures first. In the pictures, what kind of situation is this?
Students: *Fire.*
Eunhae: Yes, fire on the mountain. To say the fire on the mountain, we can say, *fire breaks out.*
Eunhae: We also say, *the bomb explodes.*
Eunhae: (Write on the board) What is the meaning of '*fail*'?
Students: Fail.
Eunhae: *Yes, very good.*
Eunhae: *OK*, what is the meaning of '*succeed*'? Students: Succeed.

This extensive use of Korean ran counter to her pre-practicum beliefs but her limited use of English seemed to be based on her perception of the students' generally low understanding and large class size. On the other hand, in Haewon's lessons, I noted her frequent use of English. This seemed to be because she taught a high-level class where students' level of spoken English is quite good on average. However, once the lesson began, she code-switched to Korean to direct students' attention and grammar was mainly taught in Korean. Her practice of teaching

in English seemed consistent with her initial aspirations, and her frequent use of classroom English seems also to have been supported by her school where classroom English is preferred.

Throughout the lessons, Haewon's main strategies for elicitation were direct nomination and questioning. She frequently called out individual students' names to elicit their speeches in response to video clips or pictures displayed on the PowerPoint screens or to involve them in speaking activities. Her frequent use of questions and multimedia resources seemed to be consistent with her initial beliefs in input materials as a way to increase motivation and elicitation. Eunhae's main elicitation strategy was also nomination, but in the forms of competition and peer support as shown below:

Extract 2

> Eunhae: *OK*. So, let's do speaking practice with the next dialogue. *One, two, three.*
> Students: (Put hands up) Eunhae: Who was the first?
> Student 4: Dongsu.
> Eunhae: Yes. You were the fastest. Everyone was really fast. I was very impressed by your speed. (Laugh) In this time, I will give a chance to speak to those who haven't participated.

Eunhae encouraged students to participate in speaking practice by making them compete with and nominate each other. Her strategy for elicitation was consistent with her initial beliefs before the practicum in ways to maximize opportunities for students to speak including the less willing participants. She often intervened in participation to encourage the least willing participants in speaking practice. Pictures, via PowerPoint, were preferred by Eunhae at the beginning of each lesson, but whilst her main interest before the practicum was in making use of pictures to elicit students' speech in English, the use of the pictures seemed to be merely to introduce and translate vocabulary in Korean and did not help students to speak in English.

Speaking activity: pair work and quiz. The most frequent speaking activity by both preservice English teachers was pair work. The speaking section in the textbook was taught integrally either with the teaching of listening or reading during the lesson and was practised only by pair work, in the form of reading the model dialogue aloud. For example, in 'Let's Talk', Eunhae asked a few students to stand up and read aloud the model dialogue in pairs, after which whole class chorus reading aloud followed. This repeated practice of reading aloud seemed to be mechanical drilling, as this type of practice did not encourage students to engage in meaningful communicative interaction, as shown below: **Extract 3**

> Eunhae: *OK*. All of you who put your hands up will stand up and practise this dialogue with your partner. So, let's read the first one. Speak loudly so that everyone can listen to your voice.
> Student 7: *Excuse me, could you tell me where the nearest bus stop is?* Student
> 8: *Sure, it is just one block away.*
> Student 7: *Thank you.*
> Eunhae: *OK*. Next team.
> Student 9: *Excuse me, could you tell me where the bank is?*
> Student 10: *Sure, it is across from the restaurant.*
> Student 9: *Thank you.*

Another type of speaking activity often adopted by Eunhae and Haewon was a short quiz which involved competition between the students. A very short quiz was implemented throughout their lessons. The extract below shows Eunhae's frequent mode of quiz practice:

Extract 4

Eunhae: (Write on the board) OK. Now we can do a quiz. I'm going to ask you a question. So please make any sentence using the phrase *replacing A with B*. *One, two, three.*
Students: (Puts hand up)
Eunhae: (Pointing out student 3) *OK*. You raised your hands faster than the others. So, you can tell us.
Student 3: *Replace dog with balloon.*
Eunhae: Yes. *Replacing a dog with a balloon.* Hey, everyone, please add '*a*' to the noun, or it isn't grammatically correct, *OK*? Students: Yes.

During the quiz, students participated willingly, but they were merely repeating expressions in the textbook and her direct error correction followed. This activity resembled grammatical pattern drilling rather than speaking practice. However, her effort to support less proficient students was noticeable as she offered them a chance to participate in the activity by controlling the others; this seemed consistent with her initial belief in maximizing students' speaking practice. Overall, her speaking activities were based on reading aloud, that is, oral practice, and though she provided students with opportunities to speak in English, such practice did not seem to generate natural communicative interaction between the students.

Speaking activity: group work and presentation. Haewon adopted speaking activities in similar ways to Eunhae, but in addition to a quiz and pair work, she also implemented group work and a presentation. In one of the observed lessons, she started by briefly reviewing the speaking section and a quiz was employed but as also observed in Enhae's case, students merely repeated the textbook dialogues. For the last half of the lesson, she implemented a jigsaw group activity using extra-reading materials. For the jigsaw, students had to compete in groups and participated enthusiastically. Some students were able to speak English quite fluently in response to Haewon's questions. However, most students were silently writing answers on the handout provided to each group and there was no communication between the students. At the end, she asked a few students to come to the front and make a presentation: **Extract 5**

> Haewon: *One more team. Please let me have one more team present your answers to us.*
> Students: (Chatting in groups)
> Student 10: (Puts hands up) Haewon:
> *OK.*
> Student 10: (Points out one student in the group) *He will do for our team.*
> Haewon: *OK.*
> Student 11: *If I have a chance to travel to South Africa, I would like to go to Cape Town. Because there are beautiful waterfalls and um, climbing...*
> Students: (Clapping)
> Haewon: *OK. Say a little more about what you mean.*
> Student 11: *I will go... go to Cape Town...* Haewon:
> *Why?*
> Student 11: *Cape Town is, um, the most popular place in South Africa for tourism.*
> Haewon: *OK. Good.*
> Student: (Clapping)

During the presentations, Haewon tried to elicit more extended speech from the students by asking follow-up questions, and while most students merely recited their written answers, others were able to express their opinions fluently. The presentations seemed to provide a few students with opportunities to modify their speeches, but, as a mainly teacher-controlled activity, were limited in terms of developing students' oral proficiency; students were not engaged in a speaking activity centred on meaning rather than form, nor based on communicative interaction that facilitated the negotiation of meaning.

Pre-service English Teachers' Conceptualizations of Practices of Teaching Speaking and Context factors

The findings from the interviews conducted after observations are presented in relation to the main issues identified.

Perceptions of basic classroom English and differentiation of teaching in English according to students' level of understanding. Eunhae rarely spoke classroom English during her lessons. She gave an account of this related to students' low oral proficiency:

> *In fact, in the first lesson, I used English very much, and I almost taught only in English, but students looked like they felt so difficult to follow. [...] In my English, there was an accent and intonation, so even though they already knew the expressions that I spoke, they were not able to understand what I was saying. So, after that, I used simple classroom English occasionally, and only the expressions in the textbook which are familiar to them.*

Eunhae's perception of teaching students of mixed ability with a generally poor understanding of spoken English in a large classroom in a suburban lower secondary school made her rely on Korean in opposition to her initial belief. She used very basic classroom English, directly quoting from the expressions in the textbook. On the other hand, Haewon taught almost wholly in English apart from when teaching grammar:

> *I am trying to use classroom English as much as I can, but this section was grammar… because the terminology of the relative pronouns was very difficult for students to understand, I also used Korean during this lesson. However, for other sections in the textbook, I always teach them completely in English.*

During the first few days, Haewon noted considerable proficiency differences. While highlevel students had advanced oral proficiency because of private teaching, low-level students had difficulty following basic classroom English. Therefore, she used basic classroom English in the low-level class and taught in English in the high-level class. However, she still had to employ code-switching when teaching grammar, which is not easily understood by every student.

Perceptions of exams and time constraints, communicative approaches to learner-centred elicitation, and pair work for textbook-based oral practice. Eunhae's teaching of speaking was based on pair work whilst occasionally employing a short quiz. She found pair work outcomes highly satisfactory. She preferred this activity because of the difficulty in otherwise monitoring students' work in groups in the large classroom, and, moreover, within the timeframe allowed to cover the textbook's contents, pair work was most effective in maximizing students' participation in speaking practice:

> *So, pair work was good to give an opportunity to speak to both of them in pairs because for the participatory student, she was very happy to get my attention and speak once more, and her partner, who was less participatory and shy, was also given a chance to speak this time…*

She viewed pair work as effective for peer support as the less proficient could be helped by the more proficient partner. This seemed consistent with her initial beliefs in the importance of accommodating learners' styles in teaching speaking. She explained further the reasoning behind her communicative approach. In her early teaching week, she noted that her school's teachers often used the textbook CD, occasionally utilising the activity book attached to it, but their attention was given to grammar, and they hardly ever adopted CLT practice. As the contextual reality did not match with her expectations of teaching speaking, she had to adjust her plan but kept her initial focus on students' participation in speaking. Her perceptions of the textbook's excessive focus on the grammar-based exam, and lack of time for building students' proficiency in speaking, seem to have influenced her to adjust her communicative approach to be more suitable for her large class. As she identified the gaps in students' motivation levels, she used her own PowerPoint slides containing pictures and devised a short quiz game as a way to foster speaking. She commented further on the role of a quiz in increasing students' motivation and participation in speaking practice, and the advantages of competition as a stimulus to increase low-ability students' concentration and off-task students' attention. Through teaching, her sensitivity to students' cognitive and affective needs seemed to increase, and this seems to have enabled her to devise appropriate elicitation strategies as her interventions were effectively utilized to increase students' opportunities to speak. Her increased understanding of difficulties in learning speaking seemed to motivate her to develop more inclusive instruction. Her initial beliefs about providing students with maximum chances to speak were reflected in her intensive practice of pair work, but as observed, this was mainly based on reading aloud from the textbook. She also employed a warming-up activity using

pictures before teaching speaking with an intention to 'elicit students' English as a whole class', but this was used only to translate vocabulary into Korean and seldom elicited students' speech in English. Her speaking activities did not encourage communicative interaction between the students except for textbook-based oral practice. Therefore, an incongruence between her stated account of her practice and her actual practice was noted.

Understanding of theory and practice of teaching speaking. As Eunhae explained, the large class of mixed-ability students constrained her choice of speaking activities, and, obviously, she had undergone many challenges under contextual constraints. However, despite such challenges, she perceived the relationships between theory and practice very positively. The interview extract below shows her perception of how she applies theory to practice:

> *In my opinion, theory and practice were not very different compared to what I thought before the practicum. For example, during the microteaching at the teacher college what I usually did was matching pictures with new words and I made speaking practice naturally follow. [...] Actually, I was able to apply what I knew exactly to my practice during the practicum.*

From her account, she was satisfied that, to some extent, she was able to apply the theory she learned during microteaching to her practice. This implies that she must have developed high self-efficacy during teacher training which, though focused on a technical application of theory, nonetheless enabled her to interpret challenges positively. With greater teaching experience and understanding of students' cognitive and affective factors, her initial views of communicative teaching of speaking seem to have been enhanced. She explained how her perspectives of CLT had shifted during the practicum:

> *While trying to teach my lessons communicatively, what I've felt about communicative teaching is… CLT is not just making students produce a lot of speech, but it is more like understanding students' characteristics and styles first, therefore being able to make students participate in speaking as a teacher, even though they are saying not very much. When we talk about CLT, we usually think that CLT is to make students say a lot, but now from my point of view, CLT is a classroom where students are actively participating and interactively engaging in the lesson…*

Before the practicum, she perceived CLT in terms of maximizing each student's speech, but after the practicum, she seemed to perceive CLT as regards teacher support in the process of encouraging students' interaction and participation. However, her sense of success in applying theory to practice seems to be attributed to her strong self-efficacy or self-confidence in CLT, which was developed in her teacher college through intensive microteaching. She was highly motivated to apply what she had learned in her courses to her classes but whilst she made great efforts to increase students' motivation to speak, her practice did not encourage communicative interaction through the negotiation of meaning. It can be inferred that she did not seem to have fully conceptualized CLT beyond her initial understanding based on idealized practice of microteaching, given the shortage of time for further examination and development of her pedagogical perspectives in the teaching context. This incongruency between theoretical understanding and the actual practice of communicative teaching of speaking was also found in Haewon's lessons. Although there was no pressure from either Eunhae's or Haewon's

mentors to cover the textbook, their perceptions of students' poor comprehension of spoken English and the importance of the exam, have also influenced them to adjust their practice to that of their mentors, and the extent to which they could have developed speaking activities.

Perceptions of model practice of CLT in task-based group work, and integrated teaching of speaking. Haewon preferred group work for speaking practice. Whilst trying to implement as many speaking activities as possible, she experienced emotional tension due to a lack of practical skills. She felt uneasy handling the highly proficient, who dominated opportunities to participate in speaking activities, and the process of involving students equally in speaking activities sorely tested her classroom management skills. Therefore, she designed a jigsaw to integrate speaking with reading using extra-reading materials and encourage more natural communication amongst the students. The jigsaw was designed as informed by teacher training but it went less well than intended:

> *Actually, I learned extensive reading is very important and we should provide much input during reading, so I tried to give them more detailed information about each part of the reading text using extra-reading materials... and then during the jigsaw activity, I wanted them to discuss in groups by thinking about the answers together. However, I'm not satisfied with the jigsaw activity as students didn't do very well for communicative practice as I intended.*

She felt that her communicative task design caused insufficient communicative interaction amongst the students during the jigsaw. Though she was frustrated with the outcome, it offered her a chance to learn the importance of structuring communicative tasks carefully. From her account, she seemed to perceive a communicative activity as a kind of task-based group work, with its main goal being task achievement amongst students competing in groups. The less than satisfactory outcome of this could be due to her lack of practical skills in communicative task design as she mentioned, but also to her incomplete understanding of CLT. Even after her twoweek teaching experience, she still felt ambiguous about how to conceptualize CLT and the relationships between theory and practice:

> *In fact, it is quite a sensitive and also ambiguous issue to apply theory to practice in relation to the teaching of speaking... To be honest, we keep saying about CLT lessons or emphasize CLT... but I'm not sure what is really CLT, and how we should teach it if it is going to be truly like CLT or CLT-like lessons in the schools...*

Whilst she acknowledged the importance of acquiring contextual knowledge of CLT by teaching, she still felt ambiguous about how to teach it. Her uncertainty may have been caused by her prior misconception of CLT. That is, since her understanding of CLT was based on theoretical learning during her courses, when she started the practicum, she may have had an unrealistic expectation of model CLT practice. This may have posed more challenges for her when she encountered unexpected factors which interfered with teaching in classroom contexts. In addition to challenges caused by her lack of practical skills, her efforts to encourage natural communicative interaction were frustrated by students' passive attitudes. Though she tried to implement extra materials to elicit natural communication between the students, their continued lack of communication meant that she could not continue speaking-centred CLT lessons. Moreover, as school education is based on the grammar-centred exam, there was a shortage of

time for speaking activities during the class hours in addition to insufficient time for task design apart from exam preparation. Hence, she mixed speaking practice with explicit grammar instruction. She integrated the teaching of speaking with the teaching of reading, but speaking practice was relegated to a relatively minor role in the reading and grammar exercises, though her mentor supported her in exploring communicative methodology - in this reputable school with a record of high achievement, students' speaking skill development was strongly encouraged. Eunhae also adopted an approach integrating speaking and listening, but with speaking being only a subsidiary part of the teaching of listening. For both Eunhae and Haewon, their perceptions of the importance of preparing for the school exam according to their students' expectations seem to have influenced them to constrain their practice of communicative teaching of speaking in English.

Despite the flexibility of teaching styles allowed in school contexts, the pre-service English teachers' lessons were largely based on grammar and reading to meet exam-based demands. However, whilst trying to integrate speaking with written skills by adjusting their initial expectations, their later perceptions of teaching speaking seemed to be more realistic and practically modified based on their teaching contexts, having gained an increased understanding of their students. Their perceptions of teaching speaking after the practicum are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Pre-service English Teachers' Perceptions after the Practicum

	Eunhae	Haewon
Speaking Activities	- perceives pair work as effective in maximising the chance for each student to speak, but perceives group work as ineffective due to difficulties in classroom management as well as monitoring off-task students - recognizes the need for material development and integrative approaches to facilitate speaking practice	- recognizes students' lack of autonomy, focus on grammar accuracy, and fear of speaking as barriers to speaking practice, in addition to the exam system as a major obstacle - perceives group work as effective to maximize speaking practice through competition and interaction - recognizes the importance of helping students to become familiar with speaking and to make a habit of speaking in the classroom to overcome psychological barriers

Elicitation / Participation	- recognizes the importance of teacher support and attention to maximize participation - recognizes peer support as effective in increasing student autonomy and voluntary involvement - develops more awareness of the importance of students' learning styles and cognitive and affective factors in increasing participation	- recognizes the importance of teacher support and guided questions to increase elicitation but recognizes the difficulties of natural elicitation from the students due to lack of practical skills - develops more awareness of student variables and psychological factors as important influences on actual practice and participation and the need for developing context-sensitive strategies
Teaching in English / CLT	- perceives difficulties of teaching in English in large classes because of students' proficiency differences - perceives CLT more positively than before with no problems in its adoption even in a large classroom - recognizes changed perspectives on CLT after the practicum in terms of teacher support for students' participation	- perceives the effect of teaching in English more positively than before as a means of both spoken input and output across different levels - perceives the effect of CLT very positively on students' motivation and participation but acknowledges ambiguity of how to apply CLT effectively in the classroom
Theory and Practice / Curriculum Policies in Contexts	- perceives no difference between theory and practice of teaching speaking - perceives limitations of implementing curriculum policies under the exam system, and difficulties in providing individual support in large classes	- recognizes the ambiguity of the relationship between theory and practice of CLT, or ideal practice of CLT, within the constraints of the exam system - perceives the impact of the supportive policy of the school on teaching speaking positively

Discussion

Limitations Involved in the Development of Pre-service English Teachers' Cognitions of Teaching Speaking during the Practicum

Overall, the findings showed that the pre-service English teachers' cognition was broadened to some extent by gaining contextual knowledge of communicative teaching of speaking and classroom English. For example, pre-service English teachers' initial, theory-based, pedagogical perspectives were enhanced in practical ways by experiencing practical aspects of CLT and teaching in English in classroom contexts whilst before the practicum they possessed naïve ideas about teaching speaking based on the principles of CLT, which were very positive expectations in terms of the application of theory to practice. However, in general, there was little change or development in their cognition. This bears out the study by Borg (2005).

The pre-service English teachers' experiences of teaching speaking facilitated practical knowledge development, to some extent, deepening their understanding and contextual knowledge of teaching speaking and teaching in English in relation to students' characteristics, as they developed their own strategies, adjusting their initial plans and approaches according to students' proficiency. However, there were limitations in the extent to which their practical knowledge was able to develop as their learning was bound to their school contexts which caused incongruence between their beliefs and practices. This confirms previous studies which have found that practical knowledge development is situated in the teaching context (Johnston,

1992). The main hindrance was the severe limitations on time available to teach speaking because of the exam system centred on grammar and reading. In addition, the pre-service English teachers seemed also to be more attentive to students' motivation and affect rather than teaching instruction as previously reported (Thomson et al. 2012). Moreover, their theorybased pedagogical views of communicative teaching of speaking caused misconceptions or confusion in terms of practical applications of what they had learned from microteaching. For example, Haewon encountered ambiguity in conceptualizing CLT and how to apply it effectively into her classroom. Eunhae's understanding of teaching speaking also remained naïve until after the practicum. Though her previous perspectives of CLT were shifted and modified practically by practice, her ideas did not seem to have developed further with more professional perspectives and practices of effective instruction on communicative teaching of speaking in classroom contexts. The pre-service English teachers did not seem to have enacted effective applications of CLT in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to support students' learning of speaking though this may be attributed to difficulties in re-conceptualizing their beliefs and practices within a short period in addition to contextual constraints.

Lack of Coherence in Teacher Training Curricula relating to the Practicum

The study identified that there is a need for providing coherence between teacher training and the practicum with reflection on the reality of school contexts in Korea. This reinforces the needs which were previously identified. The pre-service English teachers were well aware of contemporary pedagogies of learner-centred communicative teaching and were highly motivated to teach speaking as recommended by the national curricula. The findings clearly showed evidence of some positive influence of initial teacher training on the pre-service English teachers' practices of teaching speaking, for example, in their use of strategies for elicitation and their utilization of multimedia or audio-visual resources, the PowerPoint slides, and communicative tasks to increase students' motivation and participation in speaking. However, their communicative practice was notably teacher-focused and took the form of textbook-based mechanical oral practice, while meaning-centred speaking practice was barely noted, in marked opposition to their beliefs before the practicum. This seemed to be a result of their insufficient understanding and practical skills for communicative task design, as well as their misconceptions of 'communicative pedagogy-in practice' as an ideal model practice, as mentioned earlier. Safa & Tofighi (2021) similarly reported a disparity between Iranian preservice English teachers' beliefs in intercultural communicative competence and their practices due to lack of training in practical skills. The findings of the present study indicate that practical training based on theory seems to have had an inadequate effect on the actual practice, and imply that the importance of field experience should be appropriately incorporated within the teacher training curricula. This study has illustrated practical changes which have been made in pre-service English teacher education in Korea, in line with the emphasis in English policies on teaching speaking in the recent decade. Courses are running in English and centred on microteaching and teaching methodologies with a focus on the teaching of spoken English, and training in oral proficiency has been greatly intensified. All these changes seem to indicate a transition taking place towards more inquiry-based teacher learning. However, though the amount of training on microteaching has increased, there was still a lack of real connection between teacher education and school education. This could be attributed to

a lack of collaboration or partnership established either internally or externally between teacher colleges and secondary schools in Korea, thus continuing the theory and practice dichotomy. Though principals, headteachers, expert teachers, or representative mentors are invited to orientation and feedback programs before and after the practicum, collaboration between the trainer and the mentor was not in place for effective scaffolding of pre-service English teachers. The study confirms that decontextualized top-down innovation renders the implementation of English policies ineffective.

Challenges to Teaching Speaking in State Schools as recommended by English Policies and Curriculum Reforms

The findings also confirm many previous studies which suggest that what pre-service teachers learned from teacher training is often superseded during the practicum when they are confronted with contextual challenges (Shkedi & Laron, 2004). Though the curriculum reforms recommended using English as a medium of instruction, there were clear limitations in the extent to which the pre-service English teachers could teach in English due to students' limited understanding, and their teaching practices were largely merged with traditional teaching methods in school contexts. These findings indicate the need to re-examine teaching in English only, and re-evaluate strategic use of the mother tongue as well as the need to establish an appropriate standard of classroom English for EFL classrooms. On the other hand, the findings showed a positive influence of supportive school policies for the practicum on the pre-service English teachers' self-efficacy development. As compared to other studies, the mentors and headteachers tended to be very positive in their attitudes to innovation and encouraged the preservice teachers' experiment with their communicative approaches. The transfer of teacher training into existing teaching was favourably considered, and the pre-service English teachers' strong self-efficacy built on teacher training seemed to some extent to motivate them to remain resilient. However, the main challenges to teaching speaking were time constraints caused by the utmost priority placed on preparing for the standardized school exam in addition to the constraints caused by the inflexibility and inauthenticity of the textbook for teaching speaking. This highlights that for English policies and curriculum reforms to take effect in EFL state schools, it is important to develop communicative pedagogies, approaches, and resources that can be situated in EFL classrooms in accordance with the realities of Asian sociocultural and educational contexts.

Overall, the study revealed the limited impact of a short practicum. The four-week practicum during which two or three weeks were allocated to teaching practice was insufficient for indepth learning of teaching speaking. The practicum provided the pre-service English teachers with teaching experiences in real classroom and school contexts but under the exam preparation-centred education system, opportunities to teach speaking were very constrained, resulting in limitations in the extent to which the pre-service English teachers were able to learn to teach speaking in practical ways. As their success in applying theory to practice depended on their personal decision-making qualities relating to innovation, there seemed to be limitations in the ways in which they were able to continue to modify their cognitions and practices beyond contextual constraints. Therefore, for pre-service English teachers to take full advantage of the practicum experience, there remains a need to consider ways of extending the practicum with more mentor and trainer intervention, and increased field experience.

Furthermore, establishing a coherent infrastructure which connects English policies, teacher education, and school education, and encourages more inter-communication amongst all parties involved, is necessary.

Conclusion

This study has shown the difficulties of teaching speaking during the practicum in communicative ways as recommended by the national curriculum policies. There were practical challenges, but institutional constraints significantly influenced the pre-service English teachers' practice, the main cause of which was the school exam.

Overall, learning speaking, and teacher training and teaching practice on speaking seem to have a holistic influence on constructing and reconstructing the pre-service English teachers' cognitions. Their cognitions changed to some extent, allowing them to create cheerful and interactive classroom environments for communicative lessons, but their practical knowledge of communicative pedagogies showed relatively little development. This again suggests the importance of reflecting the reality of the classroom in theoretical training, and of developing more context-sensitive innovation at policy, curriculum, and practice levels. Based on the findings of the study, implications arise in terms of the ways in which the effects of pre-service English teacher education and teaching speaking pedagogies and methodologies can be enhanced in EFL contexts.

Factoring School Culture into Strengthening Systematic, Reflexive, and ContextSensitive EFL Initial Teacher Training

Initial teacher training and the practicum have an important role in supporting pre-service English teachers' personal preparedness and self-efficacy in terms of oral proficiency, practical skills, and personal strategies for communicative teaching of speaking. As the findings showed that the pre-service English teachers' difficulties in applying teacher training to the practicum contexts stemmed from a lack of practical skills of teaching speaking, the focus of pre-service English teacher education in Korea can shift to incorporate more field experience. The field experience should then be followed by further discussion on context-sensitive communicative pedagogies and materials, and the relationships between theory and practice of teaching speaking with regard to Korean school culture. While teacher learning is facilitated by reflection on practice in context, the findings showed that there was not enough time to develop reflection during the practicum under the conservative school system. Therefore, more systematic teacher training on critical reflection seems necessary to raise and deepen preservice English teachers' pedagogical perspectives of social and cultural school contexts and help them make best use of the practicum. To enhance the quality of the practicum, ways to establish, monitor, and intervene in mentoring and supervision processes should also be considered in pursuit of more liaison with placement.

Reconsidering and Developing English Examination Systems, Standards of English, and Communicative Activities and Resources Situated in School Contexts

This study has confirmed the difficulties of implementing communicative pedagogies and teaching in English in an EFL context under the traditional assessment system, which is centred on written English skills, and has raised the need to reconsider the efficiency of the existing

English examination system at state schools in line with the direction of innovations in English curricula over recent decades. The study has also called into question the feasibility of English pedagogies as recommended by the policy and whether necessary adjustments may be required according to the realities of state school education. To use English as a medium of instruction as suited to an EFL context, more appropriate instruction, and guidance for classroom English, should also be developed in terms of strategic L1 use and differentiation in teaching in English in response to students' needs for language support (Brevik & Rindal, 2020). Since English is used for international communication, standards of English may also need to be adjusted accepting more varieties of English instead of pursuing native-like American or British English as an ideal goal (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Li, 2016; Park & Kim, 2014). There is a need to develop more context-fit communicative activities and resources which can be adopted more flexibly by English teachers and students in line with the realities of Korean secondary schools.

Throughout the study, it was anticipated that light would be shed on the teaching of speaking, and the complexities involved in teacher learning in pre-service English teacher education, English policies, and classroom practice in EFL contexts. The study reports findings based on a small number of participants, and as qualitative research, the main purpose is to search for the particular over the general. Therefore, the study should not be over-generalized as the findings are embedded to the specific contexts of the research inquiry. However, insight gained from the study can be transferred to a wide range of comparable situations and readers. For example, the study can be applicable to teachers and teacher trainers in other TESOL contexts. Further studies are recommended ideally through more large-scale or longitudinal research using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, recruiting more participants across the regions of Korea or in the wider English education contexts of EFL countries to increase validity and transferability.

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Acknowledgements

To Cite this Article

Jang, H. (2023). The practicum and its effects on the development of Korean pre-service English teachers' perceptions of teaching speaking. *Teaching English as a Second Language Electronic Journal (TESL-EJ), 27* (1). https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.27105a6

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