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Hyo-Jin Lee

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**STORYBOOK TO ENGAGE IN LITERACY PRACTICES
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN KOREA**

by

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates ways to promote English literacy through storytelling methods based on sociocultural perspectives of literacy in Korean public elementary school settings. As a teacher researcher, I ran a storytelling afterschool program to develop English literacy using English storybooks. 14 of 3rd and 4th graders including 6 focal students participated in the study.

The research findings show that storybook was useful to engage students in literacy practices in Korean elementary school context where English is taught as a foreign language. While implementing English storybooks, strengthening affective aspects within ZPD was significant. Also, scaffolding should be done in various ways.

Even though the class was pursuing literacy development, oral language development was also followed. Storybook made it possible to implement literacy knowledge with ease. In teaching English storybooks in Korean context, teacher needs to consider characteristics of foreign language learners, take advantage of teaching strategies used by regular classes, and make students reflective on themselves.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Statement of the Problem: English Fever in Korea

Promoting English competency seems to be everybody's concern in Korea. In addition to the old-faithful hardworking population, middle, high, and university students, even infants have joined in this English education trend. It may sound like a joke, but English education can start as early as pregnancy. Many Korean women expose their unborn to the English language by learning while they are pregnant. Mothers strive to send their toddlers to an expensive English pre-school not knowing enough about the quality of the native speaking teachers employed by the school and its significance on their child's development. The Ministry of Education asserted the effectiveness of early English education and required several example elementary schools to start teaching English in the 1st grade beginning in 2008. If these exemplary cases had positive feedback, English would be included in the national curriculum officially from the 1st grade at the beginning of the next national curriculum announced. People who have already graduated and found employment should not be relieved yet. There are many companies that are beginning to periodically test the English competency of their employees and the results are reflected in promotion and salary. Nobody is free from learning English in Korea.

There has been a shift towards the thought that English education should aim at the practical command and usage of the English language rather than treating it as a subject to be studied in a similar way to mathematics or science. This change has resulted in the focus of English education moving more towards developing the ability to communicate effectively with native speakers. This is one of the major reasons why

people believe that English should be taught from elementary school thereby stressing earlier exposure to the language and potentially increasing the chance of acquisition and competency. However, even though English education is aiming towards these practical goals, students have not yet matriculated into the suggested method of practice; they still rely on rote memorization. Students quickly become bored with assigned meaningless reading and memorizing countless words. Even though they have chances to interact with native speakers in public school, one hour a week is much too small to expect any change or significant impact. Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education announced that they will not set aside any budget for native speaker English teachers beginning in 2012, and teachers welcomed the decision. However, other education offices in different provinces have maintained their native English speaking teachers.

According to the current amended 7th national curriculum of English announced by the Ministry of Education in 2011, the purpose of English education in elementary school is to promote communicative competency in English in everyday life. The curriculum emphasizes oral communication more than literacy competency based on the presumption that emphasis on literacy could lead to grammar-centered written English which cannot be used practically in life. The curriculum notes that literacy education should be done only in relation to the oral language education, which leads me to two questions. First, in order to improve the communicative competency in English, should English education in elementary school be mainly focused on oral practice? How can oral proficiency be acquired and maintained in an English as a foreign language (EFL) environment where speakers of English cannot be found nearby? This statement seems to expect students to promote English communication in an artificial environment and

maintain it in their imagination. I wonder if it is meaningful and even desirable. Second, I wonder what the ultimate goal of learning English in Korea is and how elementary education is supposed to play a role in facilitating arrival at this destination. As mentioned above, no matter what the national curriculum suggests as the purpose of elementary English education, English education in the actual classroom environment does not seem to reflect the suggested methodologies and focus stated in the national curriculum. There is no clarity in regards to why students have to focus on listening and speaking in order to improve communicative competence. There is no explanation how communication centered English education is related to a reading and grammar centered pedagogy in middle and high school and how elementary, middle and high school English education curriculums are harmonized to scaffold students' English competence to be proficient orally and literally. Parents of students in elementary school hope and realistically demand that English education results in their children receiving high scores on the college entrance exams as well as developing their ability to communicate with native speakers. If the national curriculum ignores this demand, students will ignore the national curriculum in return.

Purpose of Study

Significance of English literacy education in Korean context. Learning English for the purpose of communication is necessary in a globalized society, and the national curriculum emphasizes promotion of this capacity. Communication presupposes speaking and listening of the target language. Communicative ability can be best achieved through the contact with speakers of the language. The national curriculum emphasizes communicative ability in English when public elementary schools cannot

afford to facilitate such an environment. Promoting communicative competency is not undesirable but what could promote communicative competency more efficiently under a Korean cultural environment should be contemplated. Communicative competency in English cannot simply be achieved through communication. Communicative competency requires communication, but communication should be supplemented with English knowledge such as vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, phonics, support in the affective aspect such as motivation, sustained curiosity, confidence, background knowledge such as native language proficiency, and cultural understanding.

English literacy education should be more emphasized in an EFL context where there is rare contact with native English speakers. Reading and discussing literature allows students to interact with each other by sharing personal ideas with the class. Collins (1996) says literature helps develop students' interactive abilities, which can eventually lead to communicative language competency. Promoting English literacy does not require one-on-one interaction with native English speakers and is influenced by one's first language literacy. School is a place where Korean literacy is promoted while students learn English literacy. The classroom teacher can best realize a student's literacy level because he/she spends a great amount of time teaching literacy to his/her students. School should not sacrifice English literacy education for the price of oral communication of English. Literacy education has its own value and it fosters communicative competency in the long term.

An unknown author quoted by Nuttall (1996) advises that the best way to improve knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers and the next best way is to read extensively in it. Steiner (1995) suggests teachers assert the significance of

reading for pleasure in a foreign language to their students, that it not only enables the reader's "vocabulary and understanding of the structure of the language, but it also gives a feeling of satisfaction to be able to read a book in English" (p. 51). Raemer (1996) argues that extensive reading in a foreign language is an effective way of improving writing, enlarging vocabulary and general improvement of the language proficiency in addition to the general acceptance of the dictum that one becomes a good reader through reading.

Ever since English education started in an elementary school in Korea in 1997, elementary students came to have positive attitudes toward English compared to the old generation who were scared of it. The elementary national curriculum of English emphasizes that English should be taught in fun ways, so the textbook suggests activities such as games, songs, chants, and artwork. The elementary national curriculum of English minimizes literacy education in order to lessen students' workload. However, language centered English education is criticized because it is not very productive in an EFL environment and it does not fulfill students' curiosity in written language (Kwon, 2006). Minimizing written language is inappropriate and unnatural in language education. Individual needs of students who are genuinely interested in literacy cannot be satisfied as well.

The current national curriculum of English indicates that the purpose of elementary English education is to achieve basic communicative competence that can be used in everyday life. The Ministry of Education (2011) pointed out that communicative competence should not be misunderstood as being limited to oral language communication. In other words, reading and collecting information and conveying that

information through written language should also be regarded as communication. The Ministry of Education (2011) also notes that teaching of written language should be only in relation to oral language.

Jung (2008) argues that English takes a significant role in sharing information around the world as 80% of information on the internet is written in English. People communicate more through the internet than in person. The education of communication through written English should be given more serious consideration than before and that is where the significance of literacy education lies.

Why storybook? As is mentioned above, Korea is a country where English is spoken as a foreign language, which means there are rare opportunities to speak or hear English in a natural setting. This EFL environment is the biggest challenge for teachers in teaching English. Even though many elementary schools have a facility called English Village, which is a simulated model of different English-speaking countries' typical environments, a physical place alone cannot produce an English-speaking environment automatically. Learners need to be exposed to various English speaking contexts or situations, interact with each other in them, and gradually acquire English competency through repeated practice in the process.

Thousands of books have thousands of stories. Thousands of stories display thousands of contexts, characters, and lives. Books provide chances for learners to indirectly experience and eventually understand important aspects of life as a native English speaker. This exposure is significant in an EFL environment, because students do not have the opportunity to see closely how English speaking people conduct daily life. Students do not essentially need an artificial environment that includes an airport,

hotel, living room, or kitchen. A more practical and effective solution is simply a book!

Students learn English grammar, memorize English words and phrases, sing songs, chant, and play games in order to improve English. One specific method is not always better than the other. All these have their respective educational value and should be used in balance. One of the convenient ways for a teacher to use these methods in balance is to place a story in the center of instruction. As Wright (2012) suggests, we can design lessons in the frame of before, during, and after the story activities and efficiently coordinate various teaching strategies in it.

Purpose of study. This study strives to figure out ways to promote English literacy through storytelling methods in Korean public elementary school settings. I worked as a regular 2nd grade classroom teacher and ran an English storytelling afterschool program for 3rd and 4th grade students to read English storybooks. 14 of 3rd and 4th graders including 6 focal students interested in English storytelling participated in the afterschool storytelling class that took place from September, 2012 until July, 2013. By investigating how students changed through the process and thinking over how storytelling could be better put into practice, I examined how English storytelling can be realized in the elementary school context in Korea.

Research Question

The following research questions were part of this study. They were the main focus while I was managing the storytelling class.

Main question: How can I as an elementary school teacher use English storybooks to engage students in literacy practice?

Sub questions:

1. How can I extend students' zone of proximal development in English using English storybooks?
2. What would be the effect of literacy education by using English storybooks?
3. How can I better implement the teaching of English storybooks in the Korean context?

Significance of the Study

Korean parents are very obsessed with English education. With the huge demand for English language competency in Korean society currently, parents in extreme cases are even willing to be separated between countries. Mothers travel periodically between Korea and the United States where their children attend school. Fathers stay in Korea because of their jobs and occasionally visit the United States to reunite with their wives and children. Families who do this are called *wild geese family* (Korea: Wild Geese Family, 2010). Onishi (2008) explains that, initially, wild geese fathers were relatively wealthy and tended to send their families to the U.S., but in the last few years, more middle-class families have been heading to less expensive destinations like Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Wild geese families go against the old belief that families should live together. Family members are separated for educational achievement and especially English competency. Wild geese family may be an effective system to learn English like how a factory divides their labor to promote efficiency; however, being separated for the purpose of education does not bring the desired outcome as expected in many actual cases. Parents expect that their children will be able to swim and survive in the sea of English but many children suffer and get hurt. There are many cases of difficulties in

terms of family relation as well as education; however, those are rarely reported and easily ignored. Onishi (2009) reports that unlike other foreign students in East Asia, Koreans tend to go overseas starting in elementary school in the belief that they will absorb English more easily at that age, however living apart for years strains marriages, undermines the role of a father, and finally some marriages end in divorce. In addition, Millar (2011) examined children's cultural adjustment during transition to a South Australian junior primary school setting and found that language difficulties were a major concern for these children in adapting to an Australian educational setting. Students who experience language problems are susceptible to other difficulties that can lead to gradual family breakdown.

In Korean society, excessive English education worsens the inequity of social class. Previously school was perceived as an opportunity for everyone. School provided educational service and whoever worked hard in it was able to open the door to success in society. Students felt equal in terms of educational opportunity, and the only variable that decided one's success was how hard one had worked under the given educational opportunity. Nowadays, what school does is not very different from before, but school is criticized for being a place of reproducing the same social class as students' parents. Bourdieu (1977) asserts, "an educational system which puts into practice an implicit pedagogic action, requiring initial familiarity with the dominant culture, which proceeds by imperceptible familiarization, offers information and training which can be received and acquired only by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and of the inculcation of the culture" (p. 494). English education is at the center of reproducing the same social class, as it is

closely related to cultural contact that requires so called *capital*. Some students can travel abroad at any time, but others cannot even afford access to a private institution or worksheet service which is an educational practice provided by a company where an instructor from the company visits student to check their progress once a week using the worksheet.

The national curriculum sets a purpose that students should be able to communicate in English, but there are no native speakers to practice the language around in Korea. The national curriculum provides various resources to help achieve communicative competency within EFL environments but any resource could be better than going to the country, and living in it, and using the language. People who put up with the high cost of education do not simply rely on school English education, but search for the best way including the wild geese method in order to learn to communicate in English fluently. If communicative competency is really a significant skill for Koreans, high cost of English education might be worth sacrificing for. However, the heated debate over whether the whole population really needs this thorough English education or not continues.

In reality, many students simply place the purpose and importance of English education at acquiring a high score on a test rather than effective communication. From the students' point of view, English is not used to communicate in Korea, but they need good test scores to function successfully in society. The national curriculum of English provides the cause of learning English, but it does not seem to motivate students appropriately because the need to communicate in English is missing in students' daily lives.

Emphasis on literacy explains why students have to learn English. They surf the internet and are exposed to enormous amounts of English. They enjoy on-line games and have to understand pop up messages written in English. They walk out on streets and read many English signs. The name of their favorite restaurant is in English. They like certain brand of fashion items written in English. They want to read *Harry Potter* in English, and show off to their friends that they can enjoy the original version of the book. Of course, they might go to Hawaii for summer break or explain where the post office is to the English-speaking tourist on the street, but how many students do this? And how often is this situation likely to happen? Oral communication is significant, but in a Korean environment English literacy is a more practical way of communication momentarily. In addition, literacy education does not cost a lot!

Rote memorization of words or analyzing English texts that all the complicated grammar factors are wired is not the essence of literacy education. Elementary school teachers are supposed to get English teaching training regularly and they can make full use of various teaching strategies. Why would Ministry of Education not take advantage of this well-educated force but spend great deal of resources for the accommodations of native speakers? Why should literacy education be sacrificed over oral language competency of English?

As a classroom teacher in a public elementary school in Korea, I would like to demonstrate students can be engaged in literacy practice in English without going to English-speaking countries or practicing with native speakers. English education does not have to break up families or influence the decline of social equity. It can be fun and practical. It can also prepare students to achieve high scores on the college entrance

exams. I hope my students develop the confidence to be literate in English with the resources available for them to access without difficulty. They will not be left behind.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

The current amended 7th elementary national curriculum established by the Ministry of Education in Korea upholds *constructivism* as its major philosophical tenet. Constructivism regards the product of meaning-making of individuals with great significance because it will finally frame social performances (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The Vygotskian notion of the social source of development (Vygotsky, 1998) is emphasized through subjects and realized through various teaching-learning strategies such as cooperative activities in groups and problem-solving activities. English education goes without exception. The national curriculum of English denotes how English should be taught based on a constructivists' point of view and introduces teaching methods grounded in Vygotskian ideas.

The current national curriculum of English (2011) sets the primary purpose of English education in elementary school into three criteria:

1. English education should help raise interest and confidence in English.
2. English education should help promote communicative competence in life.
3. English education should help understand other people's culture (p. 7).

However the emphasis on practical aspects of teaching without enough understanding of the background philosophy sometimes misleads English education. Especially at the elementary level, English learning experiences can make it much easier or difficult to learn the English language for the duration of their exposure to English. Teaching English is not simply conveying or transferring superficial information, but rather facilitating the students' understanding of the native speakers' culture and how the

language works in that cultural context.

In this chapter, I will explain how second language literacy competency can be promoted from sociocultural perspectives according to literature. Using English storybooks as a way to develop English literacy in the Korean context will be highlighted as well.

The 7th Korean National Curriculum and Constructivism

The Ministry of Education announces the national curriculum in order to set clear goals and explain the philosophical background behind each goal. The Korean national curriculum suggests the list of objectives to be reached for each subject, in addition to strategies or methods that can be used. The national curriculum is changed whenever there is a major transition in philosophical inclination and currently the amended 7th national curriculum is in effect grounded in constructivism.

Constructivism is rooted in cognitive psychology. Piaget is the representative figure in the constructivist approach. This approach pays close attention to how individuals come to make sense of the world on their own because constructivists believe that individuals try to find personal meaning to their worlds. As everyone constructs personal meaning from their experiences surrounding them, learners should be the central focus in learning (Williams & Burden, 2010).

In the teaching and learning phase, constructivism emphasizes the student rather than the teacher. Teachers are regarded as facilitators or coaches who help students construct their own conceptualizations and solutions to problems (Boger-Mehall, 1995). As learning is possible through one's personal experiences, teachers need to be concerned more with the process of learning rather than with what is learned. Also, education should

be action-based (William & Burden, 2010).

Williams and Burden (2010) note four significant points to the language teachers from constructivists' point of view. First, as learners should be actively involved in constructing meaning, teachers should not simply convey knowledge regarding learners as passive receivers but help and encourage learners in the learning process. Second, teachers should be well aware of the fact that the development of thinking is related to the development of language. Third, learners' cognitive level should be considered in language teaching. Fourth, accommodation and assimilation should be considered. Accommodation is to modify what we already know about the language, and assimilation is to fit the new information into our existing knowledge.

Williams and Burden (2010), however, point out that this view does not consider the significance of the social context where learning takes place. With over-emphasis on individual development and individual search for personal meaning, teachers can overlook the significance of the social environment for learning. They wrote with the words of Piaget that language follows behind the development of thought, which underestimates the influence of language in the development of thought.

The subject of English is also based on constructivist's perspective along with the 7th national curriculum. The teacher's guide for English textbook provides five teaching suggestions in specific: (a) learner-centered language teaching; (b) task-based language teaching; (c) content-based language teaching; (d) experiential language teaching; and (e) whole language approach. Following is the summarization of how the teacher's guide (2011) explains these teaching strategies.

Learner-centered language teaching is based on two notions. First, the learner's

necessity is significant in communicative language, and the others are individual differences in learning style and the level of cognitive development. As communicative language teaching aims at promoting language competence to be able to achieve social purposes, the learner's necessity and purposes play a significant role in choosing teaching content and the teaching-learning process. Learners are motivated when their practical necessities are reflected in their class objectives, and that's where the learners come to be active in learning.

Task-based language teaching means students can learn English by solving any task or problem that would happen in realistic situations. Tasks or problems should contain clear purposes and consequences, suggest language to be used, and provide obvious interaction patterns between students. Students are able to learn the language while they interact with each other in order to work out the problem given, which is significant because students make use of the language in a meaningful way. Students do not simply recite the memorize phrases or sentences. Students have actual motives to use the language, which will lead to positive attitudes in learning the language.

Content-based language teaching is explained as a kind of task-based language teaching in subjects other than English. English can be taught in science or mathematics classes using English as the language of instruction. This method is meaningful because it coincides with the thought that English can be best taught when it is practical and used often. Content-based language teaching is not like making up a story as is done in English class, but an actual use of English in itself. Students will have the strongest motive to learn English under this situation. However, beginning learners of English can lose confidence in English when the vocabulary or expressions used are above the level of

competence. In addition, content-based language teaching is not very applicable or practical in Korean situations.

Experiential language teaching is based on the notion that students can learn better through experience. Total physical response (TPR), games, and role playing are used as experiential language teaching methods. Students have to learn English in terms of how to utilize it effectively and practically in their lives, not simply as set of knowledge. The practical use of English will help elementary students maintain interest in English if combined with meaningful activities.

Whole language approach is a perspective to see language as a whole. From this perspective, language education cannot be separated into four functions as is usually done; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Instead they are integrated as a whole. Expression and understanding, and oral language and written language are supplementary and strengthen each other, so they should be taught inter-relatedly in order to promote the efficiency of language learning. In the process of making meaning through the use of English, the four functions of English can be learned naturally.

Even though the 7th Korean national curriculum of English denotes constructivism, the social constructivist's point of view cannot be ignored because it emphasizes whole language approach instead of regarding English education as a set of skills for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Also, various approaches based on Vygotsky's psychology are tried through many subjects in the field of education in Korea including English (e.g. zone of proximal development, collaborative work activity) and gain more and more attention.

Vygotsky and Sociocultural Perspectives of Second Language Learning

In stressing the social origins of language and thinking, Vygotsky was the first modern psychologist to suggest the mechanism by which culture becomes a part of each person's nature. Vygotsky (1978) argues that human mind is mediated. Humans rely on symbolic tools or signs to mediate their relationships with others. Human social and mental activity is organized through culturally constructed artifacts such as music, arithmetic systems, and above all language. These artifacts are modified according to the needs of its communities and individuals when inherited to the next generation. In terms of second language learning, mediational means is in the process of reformation rather than formational because one's first language works as an internalized mediational means. Vygotsky believed that the internalization of culturally-produced sign systems brings about behavioral transformations and forms the bridge between early and later forms of individual development. Thus for Vygotsky, in the tradition of Marx and Engels, the mechanism of individual developmental change is rooted in society and culture (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory sets the foundation of social constructivism. He believes that cognitive growth becomes possible through social interaction. Children develop their intelligence through interacting with others like caregivers, teachers, peers, and the society-at-large. Vygotsky states,

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level: first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of

concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

Vygotsky (1978) argues the significance of interacting with others in terms of language development. Interaction is not simply limited to speech, but encompasses signs and symbols as well. Through language thought develops, learning becomes possible, and culture is transmitted.

Williams and Burden (2010) writes that Vygotsky takes a holistic point of view in terms of learning by mentioning ‘meaning’ constituting the central aspect of any unit of study. He does not believe that what is learned can be separated into small subcomponents and taught as discrete items and skills. Therefore, any unit of study should be provided in all its complexity, not as isolated or individual skills and knowledge. Williams and Burden (2010) explain that teachers, learners, tasks, and contexts are the key factors influencing the learning process by suggesting a social constructivist model of the teaching-learning process as follows.

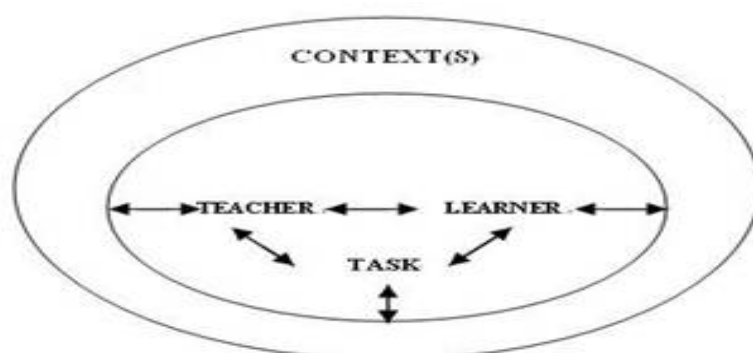


Figure 1. Social constructivist model of the teaching-learning process. Adapted from “Further Schools of Thought in Psychology: Humanism and Social Interactionism,” by Williams, M. & Burden, R., 2010, *Psychology for Language Teachers: A Social Constructivist Approach*, p. 43. Copyright 2010 by Cambridge University Press.

Figure 1 implies that teachers select tasks up to their values and beliefs and

learners interpret them in a personal way that is meaningful to them. The task is the interface between the teacher and learner. Teacher, learner, and task stay in a dynamic equilibrium. Encompassing all these, there is the context. Emotional environment such as trust and belonging, the physical environment, the whole school ethos, the wider social environment, the political environment and cultural setting compose the context. Each part influences each other, so a change in any one part of the model will affect the balance.

Social constructivism regards that communities of like-minded peers generate reality, knowledge, thoughts, facts, texts, selves, and so on (Bruffee, 1986). In other words, we can construct knowledge in the environment of shared understanding, not in isolation (Schwandt, 1994).

Social constructivism is purported for its strengths in emphasizing the dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners, and the task, and because it views learning as arising from interactions with others (Williams & Burden, 2010). Learning is regarded as a self-regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts through concrete experience, collaborative discourse, and reflection (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Lemberger (2000) notes that in a classroom where social constructivism is based, students are the center of learning and teaching, and they learn by understanding and revising concepts rather than learning by rote.

Halliday (1980) explains learning language is a process of construction. He asserts that a child has to construct language by actively engaging in the construction at a three-level system: (a) meanings, (b) wordings, and (c) expressions. Learning language should be done naturally, always, and most importantly in interaction with others. The

child starts from protolanguage, which consists of meanings and expressions only without wordings, grammar, or vocabulary. This protolanguage develops into adult kind of language through interaction with significant others who can share the language creating process with the child.

According to the social interactionist' point of view, children acquire language in part through the mediation and help of others, rather than purely through their own mental activity in processing adult language. Thus, interaction, rather than exposure, is seen as necessary. Children cannot acquire language simply by observing adults in conversation with one another, or by watching television or listening to the radio. Social interactionists point to the fact that there are special ways of talking to young children all over the world and that the special language used by adults appears tailored or fine-tuned to the cognitive and communicative needs of the children. This *child directed speech* is believed to make the job of segmenting the speech stream and decoding the language easier for children acquiring language (Ratner, 1986).

Acquiring a new language is like a process of acculturation and social factors are significant in second language acquisition. Schumann (1978) says when we look at how people from one cultural group are transplanted into another, we can understand how language is acquired. He focuses on eight sociocultural factors that influence the language learner: social dominance, integration pattern, enclosure, cohesiveness, size, cultural congruence, attitude, and intended length of residence. He also mentions that there are three main factors that determine the psychological distance a second-language learner has from the target language and culture: motivation, attitude, and cultural shock. Schumann's theory provides useful ideas about the effects of external social and cultural

factors on learning. Concepts such as social and psychological distance help us understand why certain people succeed or fail to learn a new language.

Gee (1992) offers a definition of acquisition which includes a social component: Acquisition is a process of acquiring something subconsciously by exposure to models, a process of trial and error, and practice within social groups, without formal teaching. It happens in natural settings that are meaningful and functional in the sense that acquirers know that they need to acquire the thing they are exposed to in order to function and that they in fact want so to function (p. 113).

Gee speaks of people in social groups who acquire language through social interactions. The development of communicative competence comes from knowing the appropriate language for the social situation. This kind of competence develops naturally in social settings. In social groups, people receive demonstrations from others who use the target language. They take the information from the feedback and integrate it with current knowledge as they acquire the new language (Freeman & Freeman, 2001).

Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky (1978) denies the notion that only those things that children can do on their own are indicative of mental abilities. Instead, what children can do with the assistance of others might be in some sense even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone.

For learning to take place, instruction must occur in a student's *zone of proximal development* (ZPD), which Vygotsky (1978) defines as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in

collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). According to Vygotsky, learning happens when we talk with someone else, an adult or a more capable peer, in the process of trying to solve a problem. Central to the concept of the ZPD is the view of learning as a process of internalizing social experience. Vygotsky emphasizes the role of social forces working on the individual.

Vygotsky (1978) argues the value of imitation needs to be reevaluated by denying imitation as purely a mechanical process; a person can imitate only that which is within their developmental level. A child’s level of development is based on the end result of their actual development. Functions in the ZPD are in the process of maturation, and will mature in the near future but are currently in an embryonic state like flower buds. Therefore, educators need to pay attention to those processes that are currently in a state of formation, in the course of maturing, and the dynamic developmental stage. “What is in the zone of proximal development today will be the actual developmental level tomorrow” (p. 87). Properly organized learning results in mental development and makes a variety of developmental processes possible. “Learning is a necessary and universal aspect in the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human, psychological functions” (p. 90). Therefore, the developmental processes do not coincide with learning, but lag behind the learning process.

Understanding of Literacy from Sociocultural Perspectives

The term *literacy* used to be defined within the literacy-illiteracy dichotomy. In this context, many perceived literacy to be the rather simple definition of the ability to read and write, most often in the standard national language. Definitions of literacy could cluster around two major dimensions, “the individual dimension and the social

dimension” (Green & Dixon, 1996, p.292). In the individual dimension, literacy is defined as a person’s ability to read and write; it becomes a personal mental attribute to be used for individual purposes and for individual benefit (Ferdman, 1991). In contrast, the social dimension sees literacy as a social practice and a cultural phenomenon; it is defined more complexly in terms of function and context as a set of social activities involving written language, that is, the ways that people use literacy to achieve their goals in a variety of sociocultural contexts (Cazden, 1988; Gee, 1992, 2000; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984).

Sociocultural perspectives of literacy argue that writing, reading, and language are not isolated and decontextualized, nor are they generalized skills separate from specific contents, contexts, and social-communicative purposes. Rather there are multiple literacies, and reading, writing, and language are embedded in and inextricable from discourses (the way the communicative systems are organized within social practices). Since we use language for social interactions, it is important to also consider the social aspects of acquisition (Freeman & Freeman, 2001).

In a Vygotskian perspective, children learn literacy as a set particular social- interactional practice as they engage in interaction with others in the interpsychological category. The practices emphasized most depend on the dominant values of the community and the relative needs of individuals to be a part of the community. It is only after learning in social interactions with others that the child begins to internalize that learning in his or her mind and in more abstract forms in the intrapsychological category. Viewed from a Vygotskian perspective, literacy is an important intellectual tool with the power of transforming higher psychological processes (Greenfield, 1991).

Literacy as social practice. Street's (1984) early work demonstrates that there are various ways people use reading and writing for different purposes in everyday lives. He is opposed to the idea of autonomous models of literacy which conceptualize literacy in technical terms; Literacy as a set of neutral, decontextualized skills which would be applicable to any situation. From this perspective, literacy competency can be said to be literate or illiterate. In contrast, he was in favor of an ideological model of literacy which regards literacy as a set of practices that are grounded in specific contexts and "inextricably linked to cultural and power structures in society" (p. 433).

Barton and Hamilton (2000) assert that literacy is what people "do" with reading, writing, and texts in real world context. They summarize the nature of literacy as follows;

1. Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts
2. There are different literacies associated with different domains of life
3. Literacy practices are patterned by social instructions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible, and influential than others
4. Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices
5. Literacy is historically situated
6. Literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making. (p. 8)

They differentiated literacy events which are observable and focus on print and written texts, and literacy practices which are unobservable beliefs, values, attitudes, and power structures. As illustrated in *Figure 2*, the central, shaded layers of the model

represent observable literacy events, beginning with the agent's intent for reading or writing, and then moving to the text itself. Communicative intent, along with the actual text, mediates the agent's purpose, or social goal, for engaging in the event. This immediate social goal is shaped by larger domains of social activity, which are in turn shaped by various other layers of context.

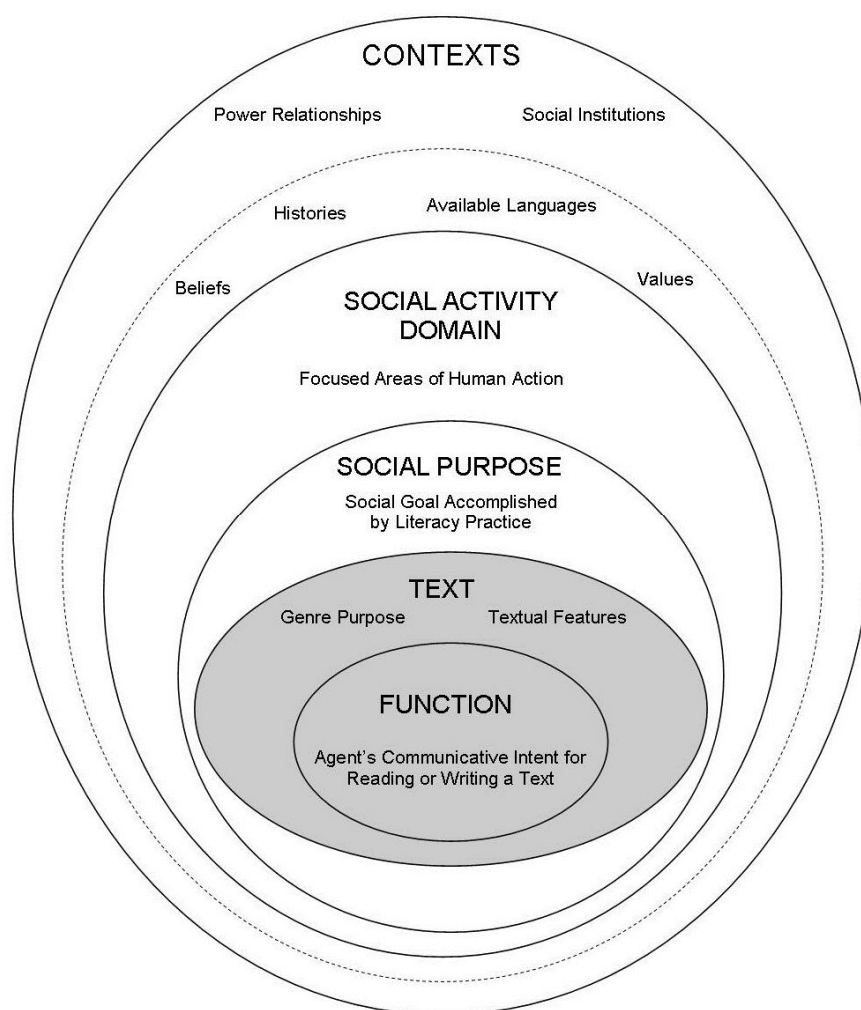


Figure 2. Model of a literacy practice. The gray area represents an observable literacy event, and the rest represent inferred aspects of the larger literacy practice that contextualize and shape the event. From Purcell-Gates, V., Perry, K. H., & Briseno, A. (2011). Analyzing literacy practice: Grounded theory to model. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 45(4), 439-458.

According to Perry (2009), Sudanese refugees were seeking informal help with texts and literacy practices using the practice of literacy brokering. Literacy brokering occurs when individuals seek informal help with unfamiliar texts and literacy practices. Brokering is not simply a matter of translation, but a complex activity that may involve mediation of cultural content, explanation of genre aspects of a printed text, or many of these aspects all at once. It is a strategy for sense-making around texts. People draw upon a variety of resources as they work to make sense of and engage with the texts and literacy practices they encounter on a regular basis. Similar concepts to brokering are literacy mediation (Malan, 1996), paraphrasing (Orellana et al., 2003), and guiding lights (Gregory, 2005).

As is illustrated in Figure 3, three broad aspects of knowledge are needed to be engaged in literacy practices: lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and written genre knowledge. Lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge is composed of knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, knowledge of decoding or encoding method. Cultural knowledge is composed of beliefs, values, and expectations. Genre knowledge is composed of knowledge of the textual features, uses, purposes for use, and organization of given genres. The idea of literacy brokering demonstrates that literacy is a set of social practices in which cognitive skills are only one part, in contrast, context-dependent knowledge to engage in a literacy practice is significant to be literate.

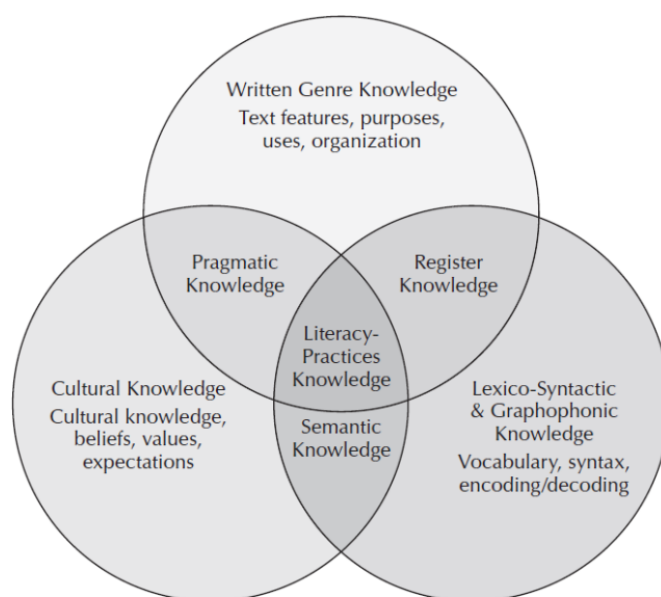


Figure 3. Aspects of knowledge needed in order to engage in literacy practices. From Perry, K. (2009). Genres, contexts, and literacy practices: Literacy brokering among Sudanese refugee families. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 256-276.

Multiliteracies. According to Cope and Kalantzis (2000), the concept of multiliteracies is derived from the theory of literacy as social practice, but has some obvious differences from it in terms of two aspects ; “The first argument engages with the multiplicity of communication channels and media; the second with the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity” that “focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone” (p. 5). The definition of literacy includes all semiotic systems. Multiliteracies focus on the real-world contexts where people practice literacy, the role of power relationships in shaping literacy, and literacy learning (Perry, 2012). Kress (2000) criticized focusing mainly on print literacy practices and used the term “multimodality” which views literacy as involving multiple modes of visual, gestural, spatial, and other forms or representation. As opposed to “text” as defined as print in the theories of literacy as social practice, multiliteracies defines text as a variety of forms and semiotic systems such as multiple media and modes of representation, digital

technologies, and their associated literacy practices (Perry, 2012). Lankshear and Knobel (2003) uses the term “new literacies” referring to literacy practices that are associated with digital technologies or practices associated with a rapidly changing social context.

Critical literacy. Freire (2001) notes that literacy is not simply a cognitive skill, but more of power relationships mentioning “to understand literacy as the relationship of learners to the world” (p. 173). He explains

To acquire literacy is more than to psychologically and mechanically dominate reading and writing techniques. It is to dominate these techniques in terms of consciousness; to understand what one reads and to write what one understands; it is to communicate graphically. Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, words, or syllables – lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe – but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one’s context (p. 86).

Freire (2001) defined literacy as a process of consciousness, meaning taking the printed word, connecting it to the world, and then using that for purposes of empowerment. “Literacy makes sense only in these terms, as the consequence of men’s beginning to reflect about their capacity for reflection, about the world, about their position in the world, about the encounter of consciousness” (p. 106). He expanded the definition of literacy to include “the relationship of learners to the world” (p. 173).

Why sociocultural perspectives on literacy? Perry (2012) asserts “conceptualizing literacy as something one does, as opposed to a skill or ability one has, helps us understand the real-world ways in which real people actually engage with real texts, which ultimately could help educators make formal literacy instruction more

meaningful and relevant for learners” (p. 62). He summarized positive aspects of sociocultural perspectives on literacy into 3 points.

First, sociocultural perspective on literacy focuses on what people actually do with text in real-world contexts. This information helps researchers and practitioners understand how people use literacy in their everyday lives and complex knowledge that users need to have in order to practice literacy effectively. This understanding will facilitate tailoring literacy instruction to meet the needs of learners because learners’ use of literacy is intimately connected with the contexts in which they exist. In this respect, “instructors use real-world texts for real-world purposes, not simply for the purpose of learning to read and write”, which would make literacy instruction relevant and meaningful (Perry, 2012, p. 62). Even though the focus on real-world practices does not specifically explain how people become literate, it suggests ideas how informal literacy learning occurs, especially in out-of-school contexts.

Second, sociocultural perspectives on literacy redefines functional literacy as multiplicity of ways in which people meaningfully engage with print in everyday lives, as opposed to “the acquisition of technical skills involving the decoding of written texts and the writing of simple statements within the context of everyday life” (p. 7). Therefore, under the umbrella of sociocultural perspectives on literacy, individuals who might be considered “illiterate” may, in fact, be able to engage with text effectively through reading and writing. Functionally literate person are able to use texts in the world to achieve social goals and purposes.

Third, researchers and practitioners can gain insight into which literacy practices are available, which are dominant, and which are marginalized through sociocultural

perspectives on literacy (Barton & Hamilton, 2000). Perry (2012) takes the work of Street (1984) as an example of how the written practices associated with schooling are valued by those in power, and thus privileged, and supports the claim of Kress (2000) that a focus on written texts and practices further privileges some practices and modes at the expense of other meaningful and valuable modes.

Education of Oral Language vs. Literacy

Oral language vs. literacy in national curriculum of English. The purpose of English education stated in the national curriculum (2011) currently in effect in elementary education is to help students have interest and confidence in English by promoting communicative competence. The national curriculum explains that “communicative competence” means the ability to communicate both through the oral and written language of English. The definition of communicative competence is not simply limited to oral language competence as is understood in general. Reading texts, collecting information, and writing sentences to convey information is all significant capacity for communication.

Language competence consists of four parts; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of these four functions complements each other to achieve communication. None of these works exclusively or separately but establishes a harmonious relationship to make sense of the language. However, the national curriculum of English (2011) notes that in elementary school, oral language education should be the focus and written language education should be done supplementary to oral communication. In fact, the English alphabet is introduced in second semester in the 3rd grade and writing takes very little part of the textbook even for 5th or 6th graders. Elementary English education is

mainly oral-language centered. Would this be appropriate?

Ever since English was included in the national curriculum in 1997, it has gained attention from many educators and students with the wave of globalization. Before the 7th national curriculum, English was taught 1 hour a week for 3rd and 4th graders and 2 hours a week for 5th and 6th graders. Written English including alphabet was taught from the 4th grade. After the 7th national curriculum in 2000, literacy education started earlier than before as it was taught in the second semester of the 3rd grade, and the total number of vocabulary words acquired at the elementary level increased from 450 to 520. However, the ratio of literacy education takes almost 20% of the total English class.

Many educators teaching and researching English education in Korea argue that the oral-language centered English education is not very good idea. First, it is not quite effective. For example, 3rd graders who are not supposed to learn written English can learn songs and chants only through listening and speaking. As 3rd graders have been depending on written language in Korean literacy classes, they use written language, but they do not easily adjust to new information when the information is presented without written language. In effect, it takes more time for them to learn something new. In order to get over the difficulties involved with learning the new information, they utilize their mother tongue to facilitate learning in this case, a foreign language. It is like learning pronunciation without referencing an actual word. The Ministry of Education is concerned about the over-heated English education by introducing written language early but students are stressed not with speaking English but with having to memorize it without any text or written language for them to reference. Krashen and Terrell (1983) point out that if a second language is taught only through oral language without any

alphabet, text, or script, it takes 3 to 4 times the amount of time to internalize. In addition, students are liable to use their first language in order to note what they need to memorize. Therefore, Kim (1994) suggests that it makes long-term memory and recall possible by teaching written English, which will lead students to have more of a sense of accomplishment.

Learning English using only oral language is not only inefficient but it can also be boring. As 3rd grade students do not have literacy competence yet, the teacher has to repeat the same expressions over and over until all the students memorize the expression and reach the purpose of the study unit. For some fast students this repetition can be extremely boring.

Kim (1998) contends that it is almost impossible to raise oral language proficiency in an EFL environment without any written language input because there is almost no chance of practice English outside of classroom in an EFL environment. 25% out of total English education time allotted to literacy education is too short.

The content of literacy education is problematic as well. In the current amended 7th national curriculum of English, the level of literacy education in 5th and 6th graders is the oral language education for 3rd and 4th graders. In other words, the level of literacy education is very low compared to oral language education, so they are not balanced. For English education to be effective, it is necessary for students to listen, speak, read, and write simultaneously, which will help internalize the language intended to be taught.

Promotion of oral language and literacy. How proficient must a student be before beginning literacy instruction in English? There has been a belief among educators (e.g., Wong Fillmore & Veladez, 1986) that students must be fluent in oral English before

they can be literate in it. A *National Research Council Report* (Snow et al., 1998) and an *International Reading Association* (1998) suggest that if native language reading instruction does not precede or coincide with English reading instruction, then English reading instruction should be delayed until a modicum of oral English proficiency has been achieved. However, Fitzgerald (1999) notes, "...these correlational studies do not provide support either for the position that English orality must precede English reading or vice versa" (P. 22). She maintains that findings are mixed, and the direction of the relationships has not been fully investigated. Furthermore, she cites evidence that orality and literacy can develop together (Fitzgerald & Noblit, 1999).

Geva and Petruilis-Wright (1999) examined the relationship between three aspects of oral language proficiency (OLP) – vocabulary, grammar, and listening comprehension – and three aspects of English reading skills – pseudo-word decoding, word recognition, and reading comprehension. 31 first graders beginning English reading in their first language (L1), and 63 Punjabi children beginning English reading in their second language (L2) participated in this study. Among those, children who had not lived in an English-speaking country for at least four months were excluded. In terms of OLP, L1 and L2 children showed differences, but surprisingly they were not different on reading skills in spite of the OLP differences. This study demonstrates that lack of general oral language proficiency should not explain consistent difficulties in acquiring decoding and word recognition skills among L2 learners. Even in the absence of linguistic fluency, normally developing children can learn to read words and decode nonwords accurately.

Hudelson (1984) criticizes that many teaching innovations have been limited to or

have concentrated on oral language and regard literacy practices not as significant as it should be. She argues that English language learners (ELLs) do not have to be orally proficient in their second language before they can read and write it. She found that

“even children who speak virtually no English read English print in the environment; that English as a second language (ESL) learners are able to read English with only limited control over the oral system of the language; that the experiential and cultural background of the ESL reader has a strong effect on reading comprehension; that child ESL learners, early in their development of English, can write English and can do so for various purposes” (p. 221).

Elley (1981) says language-minority students seem to be able to learn oral and written language at the same time. Elley and Mangubhai (1983) identify five critical differences between first and second language learning in context where the language of the school is not the language of the home: strength of motivation, emphasis on meaning vs. form, amount of exposure to language, type of exposure to language, and the quality of models. The L2 teacher needs to minimize the five differences above and make L2 learning more efficient. They suggest that the use of high-interest, illustrated storybooks, printed in the target language can facilitate L2 learning, which was quite alien to conventional L2 teaching methodologies where audio-lingual approaches were favored. They assert, “when children read high-interest story books, they are engaging in an activity that reduces the effect of the five listed differences. Thus, it makes L2 acquisition considerably more like L1 acquisition, and consequently facilitates the acquisition process” (p. 55).

Education of Literacy

Literacy impacts on cultural and social development a great deal. According to Olson (1994), the graphemic or alphabetic system brought verbal form into awareness as opposed to the notion that “writing maps onto preexisting models of language” (Wertsch, 1998, p. 62). Even though early pictorial writing systems brought meaning into consciousness, the relationship between writing and language comes to be reversed. Alphabetic writing systems make things explicit.

Vygotsky (1978) says we can expect enormous cultural development of children once they can read and write. He suggests that there are three important points we should keep in mind when teaching literacy. First, reading and writing should be something needed by children, not simply as a motor skill. Written language can be taught as long as children are well aware of the symbolic function of writing. Mastery of arbitrary signs can progress attention and memory. The important thing is teaching should be organized in a way that reading and writing are necessary for something and relevant in life. Children’s needs should primarily be considered to make the literacy education useful. Second, writing should be meaningful, in other words, it should be necessary and relevant for life. For this, children should be intrinsically motivated and writing should be incorporated into a task that is meaningful for life. Third, writing should be taught naturally in the course of children’s play so writing can be “cultivated” rather than “imposed.” Through this teaching approach writing becomes a part of natural developmental process, not a kind of training that children have to undergo. It would be desirable that letters become a significant part of children’s life in some way as is speech, so that children learn to read and write in the same way they learn to speak. He concludes

by saying "...children should be taught written language, not just the writing of letters" (p. 119). Even though Vygotsky mentions these in the context of first language literacy, they are still meaningful for second language literacy education in Korea as the age children are taught English literacy gets younger and school is the site where the learning of Korean and English literacy takes place, learning of other subjects serving as building background knowledge, physical education, and playing with peers happen simultaneously. Also, John-Steiner (1985) uses the words of Vygotsky in her paper "The Question of Multilingualism in Childhood" (1935) to stress the unification of diverse processes of acquiring first and second language:

Different paths of development, which take place under different conditions, cannot lead to completely identical results. It would be a miracle if the acquisition of a foreign language through school instruction repeated, or reproduced that which was done earlier, under different conditions, for the development of the native language. These differences, no matter how different they are, should not distract us from the fact that both of the processes of the native and foreign language have between them a great deal in common...they are internally united (p. 26).

Vygotsky (1986) also mentions that there is the meditative role played by the native language and by spontaneous concepts. A foreign word is not related to its object immediately, but through the meanings already established in the native language. Similarly, a scientific concept relates to its object only in a mediated way, through previously established concepts. In Korea, native English teachers tend to be preferred to Korean English teachers, which results in the increase of unqualified native English

teachers with a high demand and low supply of them. English teachers who speak Korean as a native language have greater advantage since he/she shares the same language medium as students. He/she can conduct the meditative role as a native Korean speaker.

Purcell-Gates (1995) explored how sociocultural factors like socio-economical status (SES), religion, family education history, gender, ethnicity, and sociopolitical status affect the learning of a second language. In terms of literacy, she says children born into a rich and varied literate world, in the sense that significant others in their lives use print often for many reasons, find learning to read and write in school relatively easy. They understand reading and writing as something one does just to live. It is a process over which they expect to gain control as soon as possible, like walking or driving. They already know, or acquire implicitly as they develop, the varying registers of written language with the accompanying “ways of meaning” and “ways of saying,” the vocabulary, the syntax, the intentionality. This makes learning the “new” so much easier. At the beginning of formal schooling, these children need to focus simply on the ways in which print encodes a familiar language, about which they already know quite a bit. As this knowledge becomes automatic, they develop as users of print, learning new concepts and accompanying language as they read and write to learn and communicate at increasingly more complex levels.

Hudelson (1984) mentions that research findings about second language literacy provide ideas to innovate ESL classroom practices. Practical guidelines are as follows.

First, even though children can speak very little to no English, they are able to read English materials and make use of those reading materials in improving English competency. Also, children from places where English is not mainstream can read some

advertisements by major corporations like Coca Cola, McDonald's, and Cheerios, which are familiar based on exposure to media outlets or environmental availability. This implies that children can learn from their environment a decent amount of vocabulary. Therefore, teachers can bring that environmental vocabulary in the literacy instruction and encourage children to see themselves as an English reader as well as develop their level of English vocabulary.

Second, even though ESL learners are not able to speak English completely, they are able to read English. Hudelson writes referring to Grove (1981) "reading in a second language is a psycho-sociolinguistic process, an interaction between reader, print, and the reading situation, an experience in which readers build meaning by interaction with print, and by utilizing these interactions their own background of experiences and personal information, as well as their developing knowledge of the language" (p. 224). This has implication for ESL classroom practices such as:

- Teachers can offer reading materials to children before they are very fluent in English.
- Even though children make some error in their oral language, they might be a good reader.
- Do not try to make corrections often while students are reading.
- Check how much children understand the text material and return to the part not fully understood.
- Allow children to discuss texts in their native language as well as in English for the teacher to know how well the children understand.

Third, the background knowledge and cultural schemata are significant for ESL

readers. This finding implies:

- Teacher should choose reading materials based on children's cultural and experiential background if possible.
- Before children read materials culturally unfamiliar to them, teachers need to provide them with background knowledge.
- It is useful to use instructional strategies based on children's cultural and experiential background.
- Writing and reading processes are closely intertwined and complement each other, so for some writing may precede reading. This implies that teachers should encourage children to write in order to develop English proficiency because children already know about English without any instruction from environmental print or other influences, and older ESL students may feel much more comfortable writing as opposed to speaking, which promotes rich expression. Activities such as interactive journal writing or guided writing procedures can facilitate students' understanding of the text material as well as enriching their expression in English.
- Teachers should let children write even when they do not have complete control over the written system in English, because it still reflects their development status at that point. It would be possible to notice the improvement of their writing in terms of both quantity and quality.

Fourth, children make sense of English as a totality, not separately like reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Therefore, it is not meaningful to separate the language processes in the teaching of English.

Translanguaging in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages

The term translanguaging was first used by Cen Williams (1994) as a pedagogical practice in which students were allowed to alternate languages for receptive or productive use. Theoretical grounding for translanguaging in classroom was provided by Garcia and Li Wei (2014) in the sense of flexible use of linguistic resources by bilinguals in order to make meaning of the world in the classroom context to liberate the voices of language-minority students. Translanguaging is a soft-assembled mechanism of the language practices of bilingual speakers to fit their communicative situations. The concept of translanguaging is significant in the English education context in Korea because “what is needed in today’s globalized world is the ability to engage in fluid language practices and to soft-assemble features that can ‘travel’ across geographic spaces to enable us to participate fully as global citizens” (Garcia, 2014, p. 4).

Garcia (2014) asserts that through the lens of translanguaging, current English education is counter-narrated in terms of five elements in the context of English as a second language (ESL) context, which could be significant in a Korean context as well where myths in English education are prevalent. First, “English is not a system of structures; rather, languaging through what is called English is practicing a new way of being in the world” (p. 5); second, “Native” English speakers are neither the norm nor the objective fact as is mentioned in the second language acquisition literature which regards the native speaker as an ideal. There needs to be a constructed English standard validated in schools, however, as a social construction, “being a native English speaker is not simply being monolingual or speaking a certain way” (p. 5). Third, learning English does not proceed from scratch, it is not linear and does not result in English monolingualism.

Students' language practices in their first language do not disappear to take up English, instead they "do" language and languaging including English practices to negotiate communication. Fourth, bilinguals are not simply speakers of a first and a second language. This view rejects the idea of "first" and "second" language and balanced bilingualism, but argues that new language practices emerge in interrelationship with old ones, and these language practices are always dynamically enacted. Fifth, the teaching of English cannot be enacted in total separation from other language practices. This view is against language-separation approach in which teaching English as a second language or English language arts took place in English only. By leveraging the children's entire language repertoire in making meaning through translanguage, it is possible to develop the children's metacognition and sense of self-regulation.

Storytelling for the Promotion of Second Language Literacy

Benefits of storytelling in language competence. Ray (1999) says students need to be fortunate enough to be read aloud to every single day by someone who values wondrous words and knows how to bring the sounds of those words to life in the listening writer's ears and mind and heart. Storytelling has a lot of benefits to teach language. First, storytelling can facilitate motivation, especially an intrinsic one. Wright (2012) says storytelling is a good way to motivate children to learn because children constantly need stories and they are willing to listen or to read when stories are given at the right moment. Korean learners are afraid of losing face, which seems to be the case of many other Asian students. Storytelling reduces anxiety because it provides repetitive listening before encouraging sharing of the story. Therefore, it can alleviate the affective filter when doing activities related to the story. Krashen (1988) asserts that affective variables such

as motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and low level of anxiety are significant in second language acquisition. However, low motivation, low self-esteem, and anxiety can help raise the affective filter which impedes language acquisition. Storytelling provides excitement and drama, which makes it possible to hold students' attention. It can best attract listeners and finally lead to communication. Most importantly, storytelling promotes intrinsic motivation. Students listen from stories with a purpose. "If they find meaning they are rewarded through their ability to understand, and are motivated to try to improve their ability to understand even more" (Wright, 2012, p. 4).

Second, stories make it possible to experience diverse language treasures and it is easy to access. Cullinan (1992) asserts that reading helps us to understand other people, their customs, and their cultures, which could lead to appreciate their point of view in historical issues and sympathize with their feelings. There are thousands of stories passed down in every culture, and thousands of stories are now being created worldwide. What we have to do is to pick up a piece that we can enjoy. Books are always available in the libraries and bookstores nearby, and even on the internet. Zable (1991) says storytelling does not cost a lot of money, is fun to do, and available any time and place.

Third, according to Ellis and Brewster (2002), stories build children up as autonomous learners by developing their general learning strategies such as "planning, hypothesizing, self-assessment, and reviewing," (p. 3) specific strategies for learning English such as "guessing the meaning of new words, training the memory, self-testing, and predicting," (p. 3) and study skills such as "making, understanding and interpreting charts and graphs, learning to use and making dictionaries, organizing work" (p. 3). Stories model to them the use of "visual clues (high quality pictures and illustrations

which support children's understanding), audio clues (sound effects, onomatopoeia), their prior knowledge of how language works, and their prior knowledge of the world" (p. 2). Jennings (1991) observed children who listened to stories often and found out that they could make predictions successfully when reading stories by themselves. Mallan (1991) mentions that students can encounter literacy conventions, such as point of view, plot, style, characterization, setting and theme in storytelling, which finally enhances comprehension skills. "When storytelling is combined with judicious questioning and retelling strategies, comprehension skills at the literal, inferential and critical levels can be developed (Dwyer, 1988)" (Mallan, 1991, p. 13).

Benefit of storytelling for foreign/second language learners. Young learners tend to be holistic learners. For second or foreign language teachers of young learners it is significant to remind them that, "younger learners respond to language according to what it does or what they can do with it, rather than treating it as an intellectual game or abstract system" (Phillips, 1993, p. 5). According to this, it would be the best for children to be in real situations to use the language with purpose and facilitate their exposure to realistic and practical opportunities to use the language. However, it is non-economical and even nonsense that a single person goes through every life experience and has the opportunity to communicate as such. Where English is spoken as a foreign language, it seems especially difficult to speak English with practical and realistic purpose. Then, what would be nice alternatives for children to learn a new language in an environment where it is not commonly used? Literature can replace or simulate real experiences and to convey how people who use the language think and behave in their lives.

On top of the benefits of storytelling improving student's language competency in general, it helps children understand the foreign language better. It exposes children to the sound of the language repetitively, so they can easily pick up the general 'feel' of the language (Wright, 2012) as well as the features of the language such as sentence structures or new vocabulary. Children can notice rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation of language without any instruction with strategies but simply by reading or listening to stories over and over (Ellis & Brewster, 2002). Snow and Tabor (1993) argue that understanding sound-symbol correspondences is significant in reading. Dyson (1993) claims that rhyming language can lead to early spelling. While children play with words through rhymes or tongue twisters, storytellers can easily invite them to participate in various activities. By repeating vocabulary, phrases, or sentences, children come to gain confidence to join in the narrative, so they have chances to practice language patterns in meaningful context. This participation can lead to story sharing which is significant in developing communicative competency like speaking or writing. Wright (2012) says "it is natural to express our likes and dislikes and to exchange ideas and associations related to stories we hear or read. In this way stories can be a part of a set of related activities" (p. 5).

Another important point in learning a foreign language through storytelling is that it makes use of written language. Snow and Tabors (1993) define writing as a system of its own that builds on the base of oracy, and then grows far beyond it. They say that in order for reading and writing, educated English speakers might know as many as 100,000 words, but they need only 10,000 words in speaking. Cooper, Collins and Saxby (1992) assert that if young children regularly experience new words through storytelling, they

can increase their vocabulary level. Therefore it can be assumed that “when children are learning to read and write, their oral language vocabulary will obviously be greater” (Phillips, 1993, p. 3). However, oracy should not necessarily come before literacy, especially for EFL learners. Even though children are not fully fluent in oral language, they might be a good reader (Hudelson, 1984). Therefore, literacy education does not have to be sacrificed for oracy, but find ways to accommodate literacy education, and storytelling is a great choice for this accommodation in an EFL context.

Stories can enhance multicultural understanding for foreign/second language learners. Dyson (1991) regards it significant to experience diverse social and cultural influences for young children’s literacy development. “...young children from diverse sociocultural backgrounds bring their symbol producing prolificacy to school – their talking, drawing, playing, storytelling, and in our society, some kind of experience with print, all of which offer resources with which both teachers and children can build new possibilities” (p. 117). Ellis and Brewster (2002) describe “storybooks reflect the culture of their authors and illustrators, thereby providing ideal opportunities for presenting cultural information and encouraging cross-cultural comparison” (p. 2). In addition, they mention that storytelling can foster citizenship explaining that “helping to teach the notion of citizenship and multicultural education includes developing cultural awareness and tolerance for other cultures and speakers of other languages, promoting of the sexes and avoiding sexism, developing attitudes of democracy and harmony” (p. 3).

How to choose storybooks. Choosing a storybook is a significant matter for a teacher to design a unit of study as well as manage the curriculum. There are many

factors to consider achieving the purpose of a lesson that a teacher expects. Wright (2012) summarizes ways to choose a story as follows:

The story

- is a story you like (to tell it well, you must like it or value it in some way).
- is one you feel you can tell effectively.
- will engage the children (children often accept and like a story in the foreign language which they might feel would be childish in their own language).
- is one the children can understand well enough to enjoy (perhaps with teacher's help).
- offers the children a rich experience of values, perceptions, and behaviors.
- offers the children a rich experience of language in a form relevant to them and acceptable to a native speaker.
- helps you to fulfill your language-teaching purpose: developing listening skills for gist or detail; recycling known language; introducing language items (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, functions).
- provides a rich starting point for cross-curricular or topic work.
- is a starting point for creative work and productive use of language in speaking and/or writing.
- offers a deepening of the bond between you and the children.
- is the right length or can be divided up into the lengths you want (p. 10).

Storytelling method. Storytelling can be simply explained as telling a story to people who listen. Ellis and Brewster (2002) state that, "storytelling can be telling a story

from a book by reading it aloud, telling a story without a book by word of mouth in the age-old oral tradition or telling an anecdote or even a joke" (p. 18).

Reading or telling stories. In an elementary classroom in Korea, not only students but also teachers themselves are English language learners (ELL). Most of them feel uncomfortable telling a story in English, so storytelling is usually done by reading a story aloud. Teachers do not have to feel guilty about this. Both telling and reading aloud has its own pros and cons. Following is the summarization of those according to how Wright (2012) explains them.

Good points of telling a story are

- children feel as if the teacher speaks to them personally;
- powerful because children nowadays do not have many chances to hear a story; and
- natural, responsive, and adaptive, so easier for children to understand and to enjoy.

This positive aspect makes the teacher's role richer as provider, teller, sharer, adapter, listener, and incorporator. However, especially for an ELL teacher in EFL context, it takes more time to prepare to tell a story than to read one and teachers get pressured with making mistakes in English. Reading aloud is good because:

- The teacher does not have to learn the story, so the pressure of making mistakes in English is much less.
- It demonstrates positive images about books and reading.
- Pictures in the book facilitate children's understanding of the story.
- Children can read the book after the storytelling, which can lead to reading

other related books.

In order for reading aloud to be very effective, teachers should be careful with reading speed, voice, tone, and other reading strategies depending on the listeners and story context, and most importantly, never forget the listeners' point of view.

Other techniques. In order to make the most of a story's potential, teachers need to practice skills or techniques for storytelling. Before reading a story, a teacher should be sure that everyone can be seen and that he/she can make eye contact with all the students. When reading, teachers should read slowly, clearly, and pause sometimes, which will allow students and teachers time to look at the pictures, think, make comments or ask questions. And also help students to continue focusing and be actively involved. In order to maintain the students' attention, teachers can use gestures, mime, facial expressions, and voice variations such as pace, tone, and volume. Following is a storytelling self-assessment checklist suggested by Ellis and Brewster (2002):

- Pronunciation. Did I have problems with any vowels or consonants?
- Stress. Did I have any problems with stress in individual words or in sentences?
- Rhythm. Did I read too slowly or too quickly? Did I pause in the right places?
- Intonation. Did I sound interesting or boring and did I vary my intonation where appropriate? Did I use the appropriate intonation for questions, statements, lists, and so on?
- Variation. Did I vary the pace and the volume of my voice where appropriate? Did I adapt my voice enough for the different characters?
- Pupil participation. Did I pause in the correct places and use appropriate

intonation to invite pupils to join in? Did I ask the appropriate questions to encourage pupils to predict what comes next?

- General impression. How did I sound in general? Clear? Expressive? Lively?
- What do I need to improve? What shall I focus on this week? (p. 20)

The Plan-Do-Review model. According to an article in *Hightscope Educational Research Foundation* (2011), it is important to have a framework for the day's events because it supports children's security and independence. As one of the routines, Hightscope includes a plan-do-review sequence. It includes (a) a 10 to 15 minute period during which children plan what they want to do during work time, (b) a 45-60 minute work time for children to carry out their plans, and (c) another 10 to 15 minute period for reviewing and recalling what they have done and learned. Ellis and Brewster (2002) adapted this idea to the case of storytelling. This is similar to the pre- (before), while- (during), and post- (after) stages suggested by other scholars including Wright (2012), but this emphasizes the incorporation of the opportunities for reflection, experimentation and further reflection. The plan-do-review model is not only for an individual lesson, but also for a program of work constituting a mini-syllabus that can include up to 6-10 hours of work around a storybook. I will focus on an individual lesson in my study. It provides a structure that enables children to perceive a clear progression of work from pre- to post-storytelling activities in the form of a concrete outcome. *Figure 4* illustrates how Ellis and Brewster adapted it for storytelling from Hightscope.

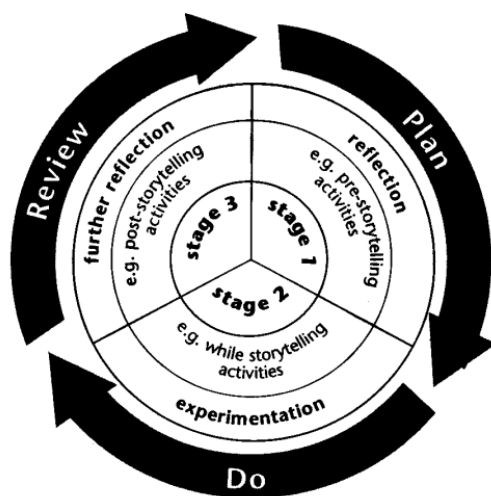


Figure 4. Framework for storytelling – the Plan-Do-Review model.

In the Plan stage, students think about what they are going to do and why. They also think about what they already know in relation to the story. This is a beginning part of the lesson, so the teacher does a warm-up activity, reviews work covered in the previous lesson, and informs pupils of the aim for lesson. In the Do stage, students experiment and do activities. Students listen to the story and participate appropriately. There can be several activities in the Do stage. Each activity cycle follows the plan-do-review sequence so that children are properly prepared for an activity, know what they have to do and why, and are involved in some form of review after the activity which will provide them with feedback. The Review stage is the ending of the lesson. Students engage in further reflection to extend, consolidate, and personalize language presented through the story, as well as reviewing and assessing what has been done and learned.

Plan stage. The Plan stage is done in the beginning of the lesson. Wright (2012) says activities before stories aim at "getting the children's attention, focusing their mind on the content, arousing their predictive skills, and giving them a task to fulfill" (p. 31). He emphasizes the significance of prediction in storytelling, language learning, and even

in one's life. He explains that by letting students predict before the storytelling, they can get ready for what the story is about and the language used in the story, which can promote a deeper level of understanding when they hear it. The Plan stage is composed of warming up, reviewing work covered in the previous lessons, and informing pupils of current lesson aims.

The teacher can build rapport with students by singing a song, chanting a rhyme, or conversing informally such as talking about the weather. When students are relaxed and motivated to study, the teacher starts to review the previous lesson. The teacher can ask what the previous lesson is about, what they have learned, play a short game, or practice key structures and vocabulary. For students, reviewing can offer a chance to reflect, and for teachers, reviewing can indicate where his/her students are. Finally, the teacher introduces what he/she is going to do in the lesson by simply informing students about the overall aims and how they are going to work to meet those goals.

Do stage. Several activities are done during the Do stage. The most important thing in the Do stage is to let students just enjoy the story. Wright (2012) argues that we should not spoil the story with a passion to get as much as we can out of it. Sometimes children can best enjoy the story by sitting and listening with no special activity involved.

When designing activities for the Do stage the teacher needs to consider if (a) activities check understanding, (b) analyzing and predicting what is coming next, and (c) reflecting, imaging, and creating (Wright, 2012). First, the teacher does not have to test but rather figure out if the students understand the story. Especially for low proficiency listeners, it is important to check if they are at the right stage. The teacher can do this by letting students mime, display pictures, play with word cards, retell the story, label a

picture according to story, etc. Second, the teacher can help students predict what comes next by analyzing where the story is. The teacher should stop and ask what students are thinking and what they think will happen next and why. This can enhance students' analytic competency as well as skill of listening fluency. Beginning level ELL students can respond in their mother tongue and gradually turn into English words or phrases toward sentence level. Third, teachers can raise the understanding level of the story by letting students reflect the impressive parts of the story, imaging through five senses, and creating simple rhymes and sounds to express characters, actions, and feelings.

Review stage. The teacher wraps up in the review stage of storytelling. Activities at this stage are geared for ending the lesson by rounding up, reviewing and summarizing the lesson, setting homework (e.g., to complete an activity, to find something out, to collect, bring or prepare something for the next lesson, and a routine fun activity) (Ellis & Brewster, 2002). Wright (2012) notes some exemplar exercises to check understanding such as the use of true/false questions, comprehension questions, jumbled sentences, non-verbal activities, and retelling. The teacher should be careful that these exercises do not spoil the spirit of using stories, so interesting variations should be considered. In addition, teachers should facilitate students by letting them reflect, imagine, and create, so that students can finally internalize the story.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed sociocultural perspectives of second language literacy. Vygotsky suggests that individuals can be developed based on society and culture, so children learn literacy when they are engaged in interaction with others in the interpsychological category. Literacy can be defined as a way to achieve goals in a

variety of sociocultural contexts from this perspective. In other words, there are multiple literacies and reading, writing, and language that are embedded in and inextricably from discourse. For second language literacy, storytelling has great benefits. It facilitates intrinsic motivation, provides diverse language experiences, is easy to access, and develops children's general learning strategies. Especially for foreign language learners, storytelling helps them to get the general feel of the language and enhance multicultural understanding. Ellis and Brewster's (2002) plan-do-review model provides a detailed guideline about how storytelling can be implemented in lessons with other related activities.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Introduction

As a classroom teacher, I have the responsibility of contributing to the development of my students and progressing in my teaching ability. This requires constant critical reflection on my teaching practice. Classroom research would be one of the best methods to recognize any problematic aspects in my teaching and provide useful feedback by discovering questions, collecting data, analyzing the data, and reconstructing instruction based on the data obtained. Teacher's observations, reflections, and writing should be the primary source of understanding the classroom environment. This chapter will investigate why teacher research is a meaningful methodology in improving the quality of classroom education. Furthermore an explanation of the methods for this study will be described in detail.

Definition of Teacher Research

Even though "teacher research," "action research," "classroom research," "practitioner inquiry," "teacher inquiry," and "teacher self-study" are all names that are often used interchangeably with some differences in theoretical grounding in the practitioner research process, in general, teacher research is defined as systematic, intentional study of one's professional practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). It needs to be systematic in order to gather and record information, document experiences inside and outside of classrooms, and make some kind of written record in a systematic order. For unwritten records such as recollecting, rethinking, and analyzing classroom events, the researcher also needs to be systematic to get some critical ideas out of them. Teacher research is a planned activity not a spontaneous one, so it is intentional. Teachers try to

make sense of their experience through *REsearching* (Berthoff, 1987). This means that teacher research interprets the information one has already acquired; therefore, it is an inquiry process.

Teacher Research to Improve the Learning Environment

Every classroom teacher is faced with an agenda; to create the best possible learning environment for students. A primary purpose of teacher research is to help the teacher-researcher understand his/her students and improve his/her practice in specific and concrete ways. Chism, Sanders, and Zitlow (1989) say that practitioners including teachers are always engaged in practice-centered inquiry:

We recognized that teachers naturally do seem to use a form of inquiry to help deal with the problematic realities of teaching...In a given situation, effective teachers often (a) consider the situation based on the information available to them as participants in this particular teaching-learning process and select some action (a practice) tentatively based on their understanding of what is educationally desirable in that situation, feasible and likely to be effective in the sense of resulting in desired outcomes, (b) try out the practice and observe its results, and (c) revise the practice if necessary, correct for flaws observed and try it again (p. 2).

Traditional research has a generalizing nature, so large numbers of people are studied and the effects of particular individual differences are easily ignored (Bissex, 1987). This makes it difficult for a classroom teacher to transport anything discovered into their classroom. Rawlings (1942) states “a man may learn a deal of the general from the specifics, but it is impossible to know the specifics by studying the general” (p. 359).

In terms of English education in Korea, it is important to understand many specific cases of learning English to gain insight of individual, social, cultural, and so on other variety of differences.

Traditional research studies are written in a distant, their-person voice that tends to create a gap between research and practice. Bolster (1983) suggests that compared to other professions, education is least affected by the findings of professional research. He argues that “the minimal effect that university-sponsored research has had on classroom practice is itself a forceful argument that our traditional modes of inquiry are inappropriate to the production of knowledge that teachers will believe in and use” (p. 308). Florio-Ruane and Dohanich (1984) realize that many research findings written in technical jargon and offering theoretical constructs do not in fact address teachers’ needs or experiences. They write “even when researchers have completed rigorous studies and reported them responsibly to the research community, they are likely to miss entirely the community of teachers for whom their research is thought to be useful” (p. 727).

Therefore, Mohr and Maclean (1987) and Bissex and Bullock (1987) urge teachers to “identify their own questions, document their own observations, analyze and interpret data in light of their current theories, and share their results primarily with other teachers” (p. 9) which finally can lead to more participatory democracy (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) argue that teachers have chances to observe learners over long periods of time in various academic as well as social situations based on the culture of the community, school, and classroom. Therefore, perspectives through their lenses could be different from those who look into classrooms as observers.

Teachers pursue change by reflecting on their practice. As seen in figure 5, they

are engaged in a cyclical process of posing questions or “wonderings,” collecting data to gain insights into their wonderings, analyzing the data along with reading relevant literature, taking action to make changes in practice based on new understandings developed during inquiry, and sharing findings with others (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009). This inquiry process is useful for in-service teachers as it helps teachers scaffold learning during their work process and for pre-service teachers as it helps them prepare to enter the profession (Dana, Thomas, & Boynton, 2011; Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2010).

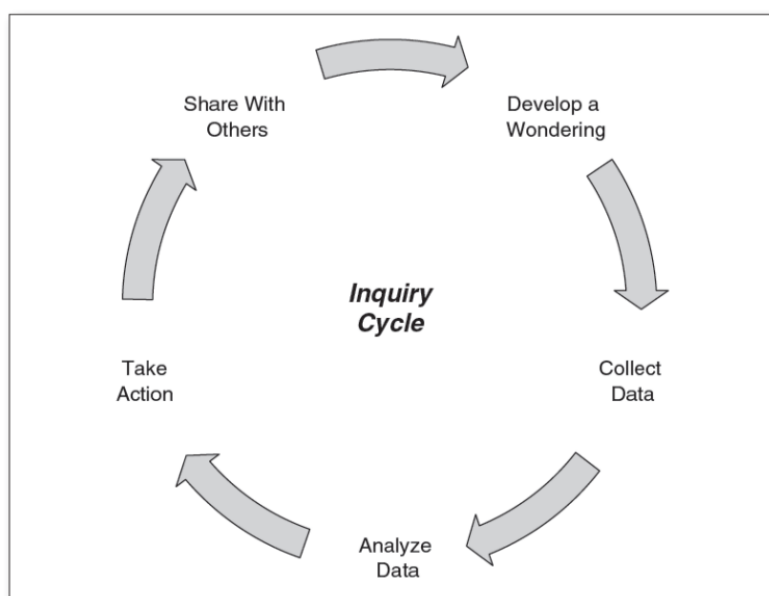


Figure 5. The inquiry cycle. From Dana, Thomas, and Boynton, 2011, Inquiry: A Districtwide Approach to Staff and Student Learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Generalizability in Teacher Research

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) explain that understanding one classroom helps us to understand better all classrooms. It is possible to increase the single teacher’s effectiveness with classes with similar situations. Practitioner research does not pursue generalizations across educational contexts. However, teacher research can be seen as social and constructive activity because “not only can each separate piece of teacher

research inform subsequent activities in the individual teacher's classroom, but also each piece potentially informs and is informed by all teacher research past and present...it may in fact be relevant for a wide variety of contexts" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 24).

Zumwalt (1982) points out that in order to understand educational phenomena, it is not appropriate to formulate general laws originated from positivism. He mentions that we need insight into the particulars of how and why something works and for whom it works within the contexts of a particular classroom. The point is it is impossible to understand human behavior without a particular context. Holt (1964) emphasizes that only teachers can look closely into their daily work; therefore, teacher questions and classroom inquiry have unique potentialities.

Setting

I used a pseudonym for the place where I conducted my research to protect the anonymity of the school and the students that I taught. This study took place at DS Elementary School in one of the smaller cities in Korea. DS Elementary School is located in a school district where SES is very low. More than 50% of the students' parents only graduated from high school, which is not common in Korea where more than 70% of the population goes on to university. The principal of the school mentions that parents make education a priority; however, they cannot afford to take more time and energy on education. Many of the students' parents work till late at night and about half of the students' families suffer from economical predicaments as to get government support or relationship problems such as divorce or separation. Students whose parents work until late spend time at *hagwons* which is a private tutoring academy for a fee, with other adults, or by themselves after school. Going to hagwons may not be a bad case, but being

alone until late at night sometime leads to other problems such as stealing or hanging out with gangs in the neighborhood. Under this environment, sometimes basic and fundamental home care sounds more desperate than school education. In terms of learning, some students' Korean language literacy competency, which should be the basis of English education, was very low. For example, in the 6th grade classroom that I taught in 2011, two students out of 30 were beginner level in Korean literacy. They could barely read Korean sentences and could not dictate accurately. Their vocabulary level was that of 2nd graders, so even when they read sentences, they could not understand them completely. They were able to adapt school life and participate in the activities during the instructions. But, they needed more background knowledge to learn the 6th grade curriculum, so they had to be supported in basics throughout the year after school. They both had serious economical and relationship problems in their family, which were in the way to get over the difficulty in school. However, these two students were not the only ones who had problems. This school had a lower achievement level than other schools in Korea according to the yearly standardized test nation-wide. Students in this school need a richer Korean literacy experience overall.

In spite of these difficulties, students and parents of students were anxious for quality English education. Students had to reach a certain level of English proficiency because English was a required subject throughout compulsory education from elementary to high school. Students from middle class families in Seoul have various costly English education opportunities such as overseas English camp, private tutoring, or native speaker tutoring. On the contrary, it was very rare to have overseas experience for students at this school. They usually went to hagwon, took worksheet services, or

attended afterschool programs.

The academic school year starts in March and finishes in February in Korea. I've been teaching at this school since March of 2011. In 2011 I was a 6th grade classroom teacher and implemented storytelling as part of my classroom routine. Beginning in 2012 with the change of the school year, I began to teach 2nd graders. Because English was not part of the national curriculum for 2nd graders, I did not implement storytelling as a classroom routine. Instead I set aside two hours of afterschool class a week for English storytelling to 3rd and 4th grade students that were interested. Data collection was done beginning in September, 2012 until July, 2013 as soon as IRB was approved and got consent and assent forms from parents and students (see *Appendix B, C*).

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study are of 14 3rd and 4th grade students in DS Elementary School who attended the English storytelling class that I opened. Even though I got consent and assent forms signed by all those 14 students, only 6 did not miss most of the classes. The rest of them came in and out at their convenience as the afterschool program was not a required class by the national curriculum. So the 6 students were chosen as focal students and their writing work, achievement in the classroom, and conversations were mostly collected.

I chose 3rd and 4th grade students as potential participants of my study for three reasons. First, it was convenient to put 3rd and 4th graders in a group. Currently, Korean schools operate under what is known as the '6-3-3-4' system; 6 years of elementary school, 3 years of middle school, 3 years of high school, and 4 years of college. Elementary school covers first through 6th grade. Within elementary school, grades are

divided into three units considering students' development level for management of the school curriculum; 1st and 2nd grade as lower grade, 3rd and 4th grade as middle grade, and 5th and 6th grade as high grade. Many of the extracurricular programs were managed depending on the unit of grade because it was appropriate in terms of development level and also it was contingent on the school schedule. Second, there was no wide achievement level between individual students in 3rd and 4th grade as they were first taught English in a public school. Even though some were taught English before public education, the difference was not as wide as students from the higher grades. When I taught English 6th graders in my classroom in 2011, some high achievers were eligible for middle school level English storybooks, but some lower achievers were not even well aware of the English alphabet completely. In the afterschool program, it seemed hard to cover these wide differences, especially when the class was supposed to be held only twice a week. Third, according to the afterschool program coordinator, 3rd and 4th graders preferred the afterschool program the most. According to her, 5th and 6th graders did not register in afterschool programs a lot because it was not directly related to their school records. As these high graders had more pressure on school records, they preferred hagwon where learning the middle school curriculum was possible. As 1st and 2nd grade curriculum did not have English yet, 3rd and 4th grade students were the best group of students to choose as my potential participants. Other than the three reasons above, 3rd and 4th graders generally have already established good first language literacy competency, so it was expected to be an appropriate timing to introduce another language. In addition, in terms of participants of a study, they were expected to express their opinion clearly, which, I assumed, could make the data collection process such as

interview or answering a questionnaire easier. I kept on asking the participants about their storytelling experience through conversations, interviews, questionnaires, and continuously considered how storytelling could be better implemented in an elementary school in Korea. Table 1 shows the list of 6 focal students in the storytelling class.

Table 1

Focal Students in the Storytelling Class

Name	Grade	Male/Female
Soyoung	4 th	Female
Sohl	4 th	Male
Hangyul	4 th	Female
Eunjin	4 th	Female
Chaeun	3 rd	Female
Seungjae	3 rd	Male

In implementing teaching practice of English storybooks, I was careful not to see my students as those who lack English by referring to their language use as “fossilized interlanguage” (Selinker, 1972). As was described by Garcia (2014), they are not in the blank stage to be filled with English knowledge, instead they bring knowledge, imagination, and sophisticated language practice. In other words, they are “emergent bilinguals with full capacities” (p. 6). Their English capacity emerges in interrelationship with these previously established language practices as a flexible continuum in order to negotiate communicative situations.

Brief Sketch of Focal Students

Even though there were 16 students in the first class, the number of students kept on decreasing and finally it ended up with 6 loyal students. The rest came in and out at their convenience. On average 10 students attended the class at one time. Even though the school policy indicated there should be at least 15 students to conduct an afterschool

program, the actual number of students who participated was not checked once the class started. The following description is based on the initial encounter with the 6 focal students, their introduction paper and questionnaire, and interview with their classroom teacher and English teacher. I interviewed the teachers once at the beginning of the storytelling class for about 30 minutes in order to understand the participants and design the lessons. Interviews were done informally because they were close colleagues of mine and informal interviews were better for building rapport in a natural atmosphere. For a year in the storytelling class, students kept on going through changes.

Soyoung. Soyoung is a 4th grader and one of the most confident students in the class. When I visited each class to advertise the storytelling class, she showed great interest in the content of class specifically and asked “what kind of books are you going to read?” and “would there be many activities related to books?”, which gave me an impression that she identifies herself well as an English language learner as she was interested in kind of books and activities in choosing to register English storytelling class. She was the first one registered for the class and attended to it throughout. She said she started to learn English in a hagwon when she was in the 2nd grade. English was included in the national curriculum beginning in the 3rd grade, so she had a head start compared to others in English competency thanks to earlier English education. She learned English from a Korean teacher both in a hagwon and at school using a textbook. She did not have opportunities to speak English in natural situations but she was not reserved or hesitant when communicating in English during the storytelling class and regular English class. The English teacher said her vocabulary was richer than the level of 4th grade according to the national curriculum and she was very participatory in the activities done in the

English class. According to her introduction paper, her knowledge in phonics was almost complete for her grade level as the phonics knowledge required for 4th graders is pronunciation of single consonants.

According to my observation and interaction with her in the first few classes, she was well aware of how all the consonants and vowels were supposed to sound as is illustrated in *Figure 6*. She was in the middle of learning how vowels played depending on their location, accent, and combinations with other vowels. She was not able to read storybooks fluently as she was in the beginning to intermediate stage of her development in English. She always read aloud even when there were difficult words to pronounce such as *wood* or *hazel*. Even when some students giggled, she was not discouraged and did not hesitate to speak audibly and with confidence. It seemed like she did not care what others thought of her when she read aloud, which was different from other students who were self-conscious when reading in English. There were some English pronunciations that students were embarrassed to attempt as they were like typical ‘Americanized’ sounds. Some students teased when a student attempted words with *f*, *l*, *q*, *r*, *v*, *w*, and *z* sounds. Even when they could make the right sound, they intentionally pronounced them in a Korean accent in order not to make an arrogant impression to other friends. In the case of Soyoung, peer pressure did not matter. She tried to make the right sound and asked for feedback. Even though she was somewhat unfamiliar with the life style presented in English books, she was eager to read and comprehend them. She was well motivated, passionate, and smart. As a teacher, it was always nice to meet a student with low affective filter because such student can figure out the strength and weakness of oneself quickly by challenging continually. Also, this helps teacher to find out the

student's ZPD fast and right.

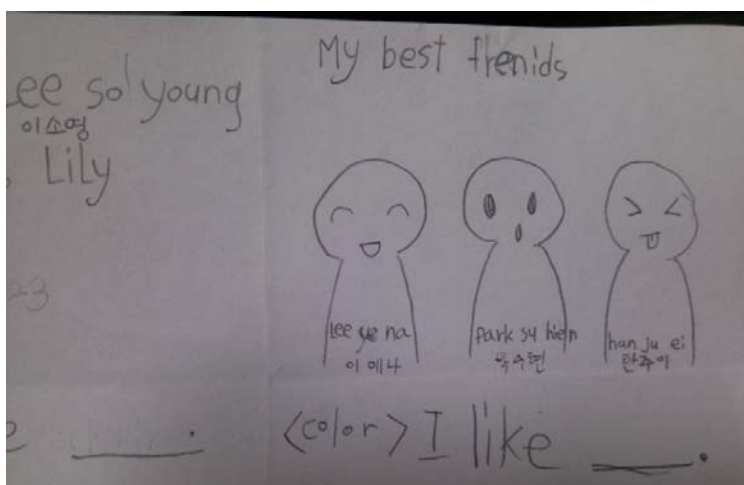


Figure 6. Soyoung's introduction paper. She wrote her friend's Korean name in English correctly. This demonstrated that Soyoung was well aware of the sounds *a*, *e*, *i*, and *u* in combination with a consonant.

She was fluent in reading books in Korean according to her classroom teacher and her excellent school records so far, but she was barely beginning to early intermediate literacy level in English books. Her reading strategies built through her first language such as understanding cause and effect, prediction, use of illustrations, etc. could not be better for her grade level, but the only problem was her emerging level of vocabulary. With her emerging knowledge in vocabulary, her reading strategies were to be hardly used to its full potential.

According to the conversation I had with her, she learned English at school in regular English class, at a hagwon two days a week, took worksheet service once a week, and came to the storytelling class. She wanted to juggle all these to improve her competency in English and had a very high expectation for the storytelling class. Her English teacher commented, "in terms of achievement and learning ability, she could not be any better for her grade level. She is very motivated and tries to do as much as she

can.” I hoped her potential in English literacy would blossom during the storytelling class. Taking advantage of her strength in affective aspects, I was going to challenge her as much as I could within her ZPD.

Sohl. He was another confident 4th grader different from other students who pronounced English in a Korean accent for fear of peer pressure. He tried to speak and read English as it was supposed to sound just like Soyoung did. He was active and responsive during the storytelling class and did not care much about making mistakes, something his English teacher pointed out. He had considerable knowledge in phonics for his grade level. Sohl was able to use phonics knowledge in writing words that he did not know how to spell. For example, on the introduction paper, he wrote his favorite food was *meet* instead of *meat*, his favorite season was *winnter* instead of *winter*, and his dream was to become a *docter* instead of *doctor*. These examples demonstrated that he knew how *ee* and *er* are supposed to be pronounced usually. He did not hesitate to ask questions or speak his mind. His expressive personality helped me figure out how well he understood the context in the books and provided appropriate feedback with hopes to extend his ZPD. He had never been to hagwon to learn English as he was from a low-income family getting government support according to his classroom teacher. According to the national curriculum, his English proficiency was way better than the other 4th graders. Considering 70% of students in DS Elementary School get English education of any kind out of public school such as hagwons, tutoring, or worksheets, it was quite impressive that his achievement in English solely depended on English class at school and self-directed learning, which, I believe, was a strong proof that the support of affective aspects facilitates student’s self-directed learning which is likely to lead to the

development of intellectual aspect. In other words, the work of affective aspects should be prerequisite of intellectual aspects for a student to achieve improvement in learning a foreign language.

Hangyul. Hangyul was a 4th grade student who liked to study English but did not want to join the storytelling class voluntarily at first. Her father was a teacher at DS Elementary School and a good friend of mine. As he knew that I studied in the U.S. and would manage this class for the purpose of research, he pushed his daughter to join in the class to take advantage of this unusual opportunity. According to her father, Hangyul liked to enjoy cultural factors related to English such as Disney movies but hated to stay at school after regular classes to learn English. She started to learn English using worksheets before she went to elementary school and went to a hagwon two days a week. At the hagwon she memorized vocabulary and learned grammar. Her father proudly mentioned that the price of tuition for the hagwon had paid off because she had been getting high marks on her exams and maintained interest in English through her achievement. He said Hangyul established a solid foundation for English education through early and constant English education in and out of school.

She came to the classroom with a grumpy look on her face and complained about the introduction activities, which made me quite embarrassed. She behaved like a little child and demanded snacks. I was offended with her immature demeanor, but tried not to lose my composure and sympathized with her. I might have acted similarly had I been pushed to do something that I did not fully understand or even want to do. Hangyul's emotions were a direct reflection of many elementary students in Korea who could not find motive or purpose in learning English. Seen from a more positive perspective, she

expressed her feelings and tried to survive the class by asking for what she wanted such as snacks and revealing what made her uncomfortable. I worried if she would keep on making trouble and whether or not she would establish harmonious relationships with other students and me. To my amazement, she demonstrated great concentration during the introduction activity. She worked very hard and produced very creative drawings in describing who she was. She drew pictures differently from other students; she included goldfish as one of her family members and closed her nose looking at eggs in her picture. Compared to other students' pictures that simply conveyed facts, her pictures implied her emotions and thoughts. Her classroom teacher evaluated that she was great at focusing on her schoolwork and passionate about doing what she loved to do. I was assured that once I found the key that would open her mind to English storybooks she would fall in love with them. Most importantly, I had to build a good relationship with her first to open her mind to the storytelling class and teach her as I planned.

Eunjin. She was a very silent student. She did not even make eye-contact with me in the first class so I was concerned if she totally felt insecure in learning English or if she simply did not understand what I was saying as I spoke in English. It was even hard to become close to her as she was not very friendly and hated a noisy atmosphere when the storytelling class was busy with activities. In the beginning of the class, she argued with Hangyul several times who made silly jokes and loud noise. I thought one of them would drop the class at some point, but they ended up becoming good friends with each other.

It was not easy to identify how she was because when she expressed her thoughts, she always spoke and wrote using very few words both in Korean and in

English. She was reserved and rarely brainstormed ideas. She spoke only when it was necessary or required, but otherwise she stayed quiet. I wondered what made this quiet girl come to the class voluntarily.

According to her classroom teacher, she enjoyed reading books quietly and she read many books. She totally appreciated the joy of reading and that led her to join in the storytelling class. Her primary concern in the storytelling class was in books not in English. She was critical about the choice of storybooks. Even though she understood that the storybooks we had to read in the beginning of the storytelling class were toddler's books due to the level of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge at this point, she wanted to read books with more stories and more complex plots. When every student was enjoying rhymes in the book and reading them pleasantly, she was the only one who got bored with the monotonous repetition. She had a clear motive; she wanted to read and understand English books. She wanted to challenge herself by reading English books and making progress quickly, and with the opening of English library later on, she was able to enjoy any book of her choice freely, challenged herself, and developed her English proficiency. She demonstrated that strong first language literacy foundation could work as a motive to foreign language literacy when given a chance. I was careful not to impede her emerging joy of being literate in English by identifying her ZPD inappropriately. Also, I came to think that activity-based, so called 'fun' English education in regular English class could have been hard for such student like Eunjin as she needs time for herself.

Seungjae. He was one of 3rd grade students. When he first came in the class, he barely knew the alphabet or even simple expressions in the oral language of English. He

did not have English literacy experience at all because English literacy education started in the 4th grade and 3rd graders were supposed to learn the alphabet during the second semester at school. Different from many students who learned English through private education, he learned English only at school. However his English proficiency was never worse than any other 3rd grader. Seungjae said that he joined in the class because he hoped to be a high achiever in English and also liked to read books, but the biggest reason was out of curiosity. There were many kinds of afterschool programs that taught English, but a storytelling class could not be found in DS Elementary School. His classroom teacher said Seungjae was a good student who showed great achievement overall and followed classroom routines very well. He was especially good at Korean literacy and developed well-grounded reading strategies. In addition, he wrote in his journal sincerely every day. His English literacy was developing slowly, but he seemed to have the potential to become better at English literacy.

Chaeun. She was a 3rd grade student who had great interest in English. Even though 3rd graders had no opportunities to learn English literacy at school, she already had literacy learning experience through hagwons and worksheets. She did not have complete knowledge in phonics but was confident in her ability and knew she would improve as time went on. Her classroom teacher described her as enjoying reading and writing in Korean and that she had a positive attitude. She was self-directed in learning and knew how to study. She was motivated to master whatever the teacher explained and had a strong desire to complete class objectives. She did not hesitate to raise her hand to share her thoughts or ask questions. She worked hard during classroom activities and showed excellent competency in most subjects. She exhibited this behavior in storytelling

class as well. She showed great interest in English storybooks and did not mind writing words over and over to practice and memorize them. She was seated in the front seat of the classroom which most of students usually avoided. She knew many words for her grade level thanks to the education at the hagwon and through worksheets. It looked like she was full of energy and passion, which seemed the driving force of her hardworking practice in the English storytelling class.

Other students. Other than these 6 focal students, there were 8 more students that participated in the storytelling class as was mentioned before. They kept on coming in and out at their convenience, so it was inappropriate to analyze them all in detail. I did not include them as focal students but some of their responses and opinions are included in the study.

I felt a great responsibility being the first to leave an impression on them in regards to English storybooks. Even though the storytelling class was one of many English classes, most students expected that this would not be as boring or stressful as the others. I spoke slowly and clearly in English and assured them that I would do my best to accommodate their requests and suggestions pertaining to the class management.

After the first class, two students dropped the class officially. Both of them joined the class due to persistent persuasion by their main classroom teacher, but the effect of persuasion did not last long. One of the students was a 4th grade boy, Youjung. His classroom teacher thought it would be nice for him to join the storytelling class in order to strengthen his foundation in English and keep him occupied after school instead of idling around the playground. Even though he was a 4th grader, his English literacy was around the 3rd grade level. He sometimes confused lowercase letters in alphabet such

as *b* and *d* and his scores on the exams were lower than the average in not only English but also other subjects including Korean literacy according to his main classroom teacher. He really needed special attention and help establishing a better foundation academically even though which was not the purpose of the storytelling class. Both of his parents worked and he was left alone at home after school. His parents registered him in a hagwon and several afterschool programs, but he was a child who was not easily controlled. He often spent time in the playground playing soccer and hanging out with other students who were in similar situations. His classroom teacher said she placed him whichever afterschool program she thought might be of interest to him. She used the free passes for low-income families but he never attended any of the classes consistently. When he did not show up after the first class, I tried to talk with him to find out what the problem was but he would avoid me. He ran away whenever he spotted me in the hallways. To my frustration, I was unable to talk with him and as was expected, he never showed up again. It was important for him to gain knowledge in English to catch up with the curriculum, however English education should not be his priority. He needed the attention of his parents before anything else and motivation in learning.

Daehan did not come after the first class, either. He said the class overlapped with his soccer training and so he no longer wanted to attend. If this were a regularly scheduled class, I would have had more opportunity to provide students with the experience of reading English storybooks. Students disliked difficult work in afterschool classes especially when the class did not reflect on their school record. I became worried that more students would drop the class if they were faced with too much difficulty. I could not manage the class without challenging them because improvement would only

be possible if students confronted challenges in their ZPD. Until the students were internally motivated, I had to consider an inducement plan such as snacks and prizes. Fortunately those extra expenses would be covered by the school budget.

About Myself as a Teacher and English Language Learner

The purpose of this study is to reflect on myself as a teacher of English in a Korean context. Shulman (1985) suggests that the base for teaching is complex, encompassing knowledge of content, pedagogy, curriculum, learners and their characteristics, educational contexts, purposes, values, and philosophical and historical backgrounds. Because teaching is not simply conveying information to students but rather a reciprocal transforming process, my prior experience has influenced my teaching practice; therefore, it is important to describe myself as an English learner and a teacher.

Teachers have their own characteristics and specialties whether realized or not. As soon as I became a teacher in Seoul in 1999, I became too busy for self reflection. I thought I was good at literacy and English, but in reality, I was overwhelmed with carrying out the responsibilities that came along with being an official teacher. As a new teacher, I was required to teach every subject including Korean language and literacy, mathematics, English, science, social science, music, fine arts, and physical education. In addition, I had to develop skills managing classroom behavior, counseling, and becoming flexible and open enough to handle various unforeseen and unpredictable situations. Even though I learned a great deal in teacher's college, adjusting to real situations was very different. I could not use the excuse of being a new teacher because I was the only teacher my students would have that year. With such overwhelming workloads, three years in elementary school passed like three days. Just as I passed the new teacher stage, I

boarded a plane to the U.S. with my husband in the summer of 2001.

I felt like I was in a movie. Everyday presented so many unexpected and unfamiliar situations and events. I often had to deal with very complicated issues that sometimes could have potentially lead my family into trouble if handled inappropriately. I had to be very alert. After determining who spoke better English, I was designated as the problem solver, having to deal with any issues that arose. I exhausted all my knowledge, energy, and life experience to live comfortably and with general ease in the U.S. I was able to reflect on myself and develop my confidence and belief that I could take full advantage of, and benefit from this rare opportunity.

While teaching I was too busy to focus on myself, but as a student I have always had confidence in literacy and English. I have always been confident reading and writing in my native language Korean, all throughout my education. Since I began learning English in middle school, English has been a source of my pride. I was encouraged by my ability to understand a language other than Korean. I memorized my English textbooks from cover to cover to get perfect scores on exams throughout my three years in middle school. Many teachers believed that memorization after understanding sentence structure was the best and quickest way to learn English. They saw English as a set of skills needed to be acquired and they tried to reach the destination of perfect English. Cognitive understanding of English was mostly encouraged; therefore, students, who rapidly understood the mechanisms of English, grammatical knowledge, and were good at memorizing it, were regarded as good students, and such students could acquire good scores on tests. Teaching in the class was geared toward to the promotion of better understanding of grammatical elements of English and their realization in English texts.

Therefore, reading English texts was about analyzing the grammatical elements in the text to collect information for the purpose of answering questions in the exams. Students had to study an English grammar book like a bible over and over, memorize thousands of words repeatedly, and check their progress through workbooks. This cognitive perspective in English education resulted in numerous high scorers in English who could not appropriately use English in their lives.

I did not know any other alternatives to learn English. At that time, students were commonly disciplined by being struck with a rod. Because English required a lot of memorization, many students feared English classes. I diligently memorized all the text not even missing an article so as to avoid being beaten. Even though middle school was difficult, I endured by studying hard. I cannot deny that my English competency has developed through the assiduous study and memorization of many basic sentences. Many students who lacked motivation had a difficult time in English class and eventually gave up on English all together. Some students developed resistant attitudes toward strict teachers who forced memorization and used the rod often in attempts to influence students. For them English class must have been full of suffering.

Rote-memorization of a textbook was no longer necessary in high school. It was impossible to get a high score in English by simply memorizing the textbook because the questions in the exams were not limited to the textbook of the school that I was attending. National level exams were taken every two months to prepare for the college entrance exam. Teachers emphasized the understanding of grammar and vocabulary to be able to read and comprehend the text. Many high school students studied grammar books like a minister would the bible, using a word study book as a way to expand vocabulary quickly

and memorizing the 22,000 words that were required of high school students. As for me, my strategy towards studying was different from other students. I thought my grammar was good enough even though I did not master any English grammar books. The middle school level of English sentences covered most of the grammatical themes such as infinitive, gerund, participle, relative, and subjunctive. I understood how these grammatical elements were used in sentences and memorized all of them until I could recite them naturally in middle school. In addition, memorizing thousands of words was too difficult because the words in the book were not related to each other. I concentrated on reading, expanded my vocabulary by checking the definition of words I did not know, and referenced a grammar book when I could not understand different sentence structures. I studied all the reading comprehension workbooks available in the market during that time. At first, it took time to analyze sentence structures, comprehend the content of the text, and memorize new words, but as time went on, the time it took for me to comprehend decreased. To train my fluency, I timed myself to see how long it took to read and answer questions. It was easier to see the progress using this approach, and I kept on challenging myself to speed up. I realized study could be fun as long as I could see my progress.

In 1992, while I was a 2nd grader in high school, the Ministry of Education in Korea changed the style of college entrance exam. It was called the *College Scholastic Ability Test*. Before adopting this test, the college entrance exam required rote memorization skills in most subjects in order to gauge performance. The new test style set high value on reading comprehension and fluency, so questions requiring simply the recall of memorized facts were considerably reduced. Instead how and why questions

after reading long text took great part. My test scores in Korean language and English suddenly improved because I was studying a way that was fitting for the new college entrance exam. In English, when most students were studying grammar, I concentrated on reading comprehension of diverse texts. From a cognitive perspective to learning English, I was like a model student, and I always got the best English score in my school. However, getting good scores in exams was not the only source of interest in learning English. In fact, the real motivating factor did not reside in school.

Reading English text provided me with practical opportunities to study because I could understand labels, descriptions, computer messages, and magazines in English. Sometimes I had to memorize words and phrases, but I was well aware that it was worthwhile and useful. Even if I do not really struggle to memorize words or phrases, they became easily part of my English bank. Cognitive knowledge in words and phrases was context-dependent knowledge which made me engage in a literacy practice (Perry, 2009). Gradually, while I could not even notice, I was able to solve any high school level English reading comprehension questions. I learned grammar in English class, but I did not invest too much energy into becoming an expert. Grammar was a useful tool to help me make sense of English text, but I did not study grammar to solve grammatical questions on exams. The revised college entrance exam was in my favor because the ratio of grammatical questions decreased and consisted of mostly reading comprehension questions. I did not have to do any special effort to prepare for the college entrance exam in English because it was how I had been studying despite the test. In contrast, many high school students were at a disadvantage because the competency required for reading comprehension cannot be developed in a short period of time.

Even though I got a good score on the revised college entrance exam, I still doubted my English competency before coming to the U.S. because I did not learn it in real life context. I learned English by only using workbooks and solving reading comprehension questions. Practical use of English was limited to the prints around the environment. Different from many Korean students in the U.S., I had not practiced speaking English with native speakers before coming to the U.S. To my surprise, within a few months of arriving in the U.S., I dealt with a lot of work such as reading important documents, getting a social security number, deciding where to live, and reading the newspaper to keep current. I even had a dispute with the telephone company and debated my way to a one hundred dollar refund based on a mistake they made. It was amazing that I could function well in U.S. society. Even though I was not immediately proficient upon arriving, I soon adapted to the practical use of English language and came to maneuver through American life without much difficulty. Someone even jokingly remarked that an American ghost had possessed me. It was ridiculous and hilarious, but the joke seemed to reflect that learning English was regarded as something like a myth. What really happens cognitively and culturally around the environment by the time one deals matters in English would be probably difficult to examine closely and tends to be simply ignored.

Based on my English learning history by the time I came to the U.S., I reflected on how I was able to engage in literacy practices in the U.S. from the sociocultural perspective by Perry (2012). First, I could read and comprehend English texts accumulated through education at school. According to Perry (2012), this can be explained as lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge which includes vocabulary,

syntax, and encoding/decoding. This knowledge facilitated my ability to read any English texts without hesitation. Second, I came to catch up easily what people were trying to say while I was getting used to the life in the U.S. Perry (2012) explained this as cultural knowledge which includes beliefs, values, and expectations. In fact, this was the hardest part for me to get over and took most of the time while I stayed in U.S. for 8 years, and I still often miss the meaning between the lines. Third, I was good with texts in Korean, which made me not scared of complicated genre of texts in the context of U.S., either. Perry (2012) referred to this as written genre knowledge which includes text features, purposes, uses, and organizations. Based on all the knowledge base, most importantly, I had a successful and positive experience with English, which fortified my level of confidence in any situation. One thing I think would have been good was to have someone assist me as a literacy broker (Perry, 2007), which would have made the learning of English literacy much easier. I used to have sources to depend on only in terms of lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge such as a school teacher or English workbooks, but I did not have chances to experience English as a social practice.

I had always thought that I was done with school after expending all my energy to enter university and pass the teacher's exam. I eventually changed my mind and decided that studying at a university in the U.S. was in fact possible! I took the English test at UNM and received a passing score. I realized that what I had studied throughout my previous education was not a waste of time and decided to take full advantage of my English competency to enrich my life as a person as well as a teacher.

Even though I fully appreciate the significance of literacy education in English where English is spoken as a foreign language, I cannot teach my students the way that I

was taught while in middle and high school. Teachers can no longer use corporal punishment at schools in Korea, and students are not as submissive as I was about 25 years ago. Most importantly, I do not think it is appropriate to the reality in Korea where English became part of life now, different from decades ago when English was simply one of the subjects taught at school. This is why English education should not be based on cognitive perspectives of literacy development. What would be needed for people in Korea is ‘literacy practices knowledge’ which resides in the intersection of pragmatic, register, and semantic knowledge in English as is illustrated in the *Figure 3*. For many people in Korean society, English has to be a life partner regardless of their preference. As an elementary school teacher who introduces English to students for the first time in public schools, I would like to give students a positive experience and help building good relationship with English. Considering elementary students’ intellectual and affective level of development and using resources conveniently used and easily accessible at school and home, I began to think that reading English storybooks would be a good way to learn English in Korean context. English does not exist in isolation in an abstract way. English in a storybook can be a versatile key that shows how English could be realized in a real life context different from the English in textbooks or workbooks, helps students engaged with practice in English under EFL environment, and brings the cultural experience conveniently with little cost.

Life in the U.S. came to an end when my husband got a job in Korea in 2010. As soon as I came back to Korea, I was required to get back to work as I had maintained my teacher’s status in Korea while I was staying in the U.S. The Ministry of Education, a branch of the government in Korea, hires teachers. It is possible to take a leave of

absence and still maintain teacher's status when there is authorized reason indicated in the regulations. In my case, it was my spouse staying in the U.S. Later, this exception was no longer valid. Because my husband's job was 3 hours away from Seoul, I applied for a teacher exchange program and was approved. For the first time in life, I lived and taught outside of Seoul. Teachers in Korea do not have the liberty to choose where they would like work. They are assigned by the Ministry of Education to work at a school within 30 minutes from their current address. DS Elementary School was designated as the school where I was to resume my duties in March 2011.

Researcher's Positionality

As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, my position in this study is a researcher as well as a teacher. I participated in every educational activity, searched for meaning and problems, reflected them back on the educational activities and tried to make changes in order to improve instruction. In addition to this series of the reflective process as a teacher, I conducted qualitative investigations throughout this process to have an in-depth understanding about the research questions as well.

I was a classroom teacher of a 2nd grade and opened a storytelling class as an afterschool program as well. I recruited 3rd and 4th grade students and managed the class for one year. From September in 2012 until July 2013 when I collected the raw data for this study, I was more like an insider because I was directly involved in teaching my own afterschool program. As soon as I stopped working at the school since September 2014 to write up the findings of the study, my role became close to a researcher who kept distance from school life. I became an outsider spontaneously. Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) explain critical distance as "the seed of the critical perspective that allows insiders

to consider the possible as well as the actual in their social world” (p. 590).

Time Line for the Storytelling Class

The storytelling class was managed for one school year with the exception of summer and winter breaks, beginning September 2012 and ending July 2013. The class convened every Wednesday and Friday, for 40 minutes the same as the regular classes from 2:40 p.m. to 3:20 p.m. during the semester. At first, it took three or four classes to finish one book and the class was taught as a teacher initiated class instruction, but as time went on, students became opinionated about the class and could read one book per one to two classes. Finally students read any book of their choice independently with my support with the opening of an English library. As a teacher and a researcher, I managed the class as well as collected data simultaneously. The following table shows what books were chosen, what activities were done during the class and what kind of data was collected in relation to the lessons in the process.

Table 2

Yearly Schedule of the Storytelling Class

Date	Book Title	Activities	Data Collection
Sep. 5 th , 2012		Introducing the class and the study	Student’s introduction paper
		Explaining the study and distributing consent assent forms	Consent assent form Questionnaire
		Introducing myself activity	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Sep. 7 th , 2012	<i>Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?</i>	Reading aloud	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Sep. 12 th , 2012		Singing along	Interview with classroom teacher and English teacher
Sep. 14 th , 2012		Worksheets Making a book	Exit card
Sep. 19 th , 2012	<i>The Wheels on the Bus</i>	Reading aloud	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Sep. 21 st , 2012		Singing along	

		Making a book	Student's work
Sep. 28 th , 2012	<i>The Gruffalo</i>	Reading aloud	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Oct. 17 th , 2012		Worksheets	Student's practice notes
Oct. 19 th , 2012		Making a book	Feedback from colleagues
Oct. 24 th , 2012		Role play Individual study	Student's worksheets (storyboard)
Oct. 26 th , 2012	<i>The Gruffalo's Child</i>	Reading aloud Quiz Individual study	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Nov. 2 nd , 2012	<i>My Mom</i>	Reading aloud	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Nov. 7 th , 2012		Making a book	Student's work
Nov. 9 th , 2012		Individual study	Student's practice note
Nov. 14 th , 2012	<i>My Neighborhood</i>	Reading aloud	Observation
Nov. 16 th , 2012		Visiting English Village Making a book	Student's work Fieldnotes
Nov. 21 st , 2012	<i>Go Away Big Green Monster</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Nov. 28 th , 2012	<i>Willy the Dreamer</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Nov. 30 th , 2012	<i>Five Little Monkeys</i>	Reading aloud	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Dec. 5 th , 2012	<i>Jumping on the Bed</i>	Singing along Role play	
Dec. 7 th , 2012	<i>Hooray for Fish</i>	Reading aloud Making an imaginary fish	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation) Student's work
Dec. 12 th , 2012	<i>Very Hungry Caterpillar</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Storyboard	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Dec. 14 th , 2012	<i>Bear at Work</i>	Reading aloud Quiz	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
~ Feb. 2013	Winter Break		
~March 2013	No Afterschool Programs School-wide		
Apr. 3 rd , 2013	<i>All About Myself</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation) Student's work
Apr. 12 th , 2013	<i>My Family</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation) Student's work
Apr. 17 th , 2013	<i>Reconciliation of Lion and Wild Boar</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)

Apr. 19 th , 2013	<i>The Story of the Little Mole</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Apr. 24 th , 2013	<i>I am the Music Man</i>	Reading aloud Singing along Individual study	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
Apr. 26 th , 2013	<i>Walking through the Jungle</i>	Reading aloud Individual study Bingo game	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation)
May 3 rd , 2013 through July 17 th , 2013	Independent Reading	Writing Reflection Paper	Fieldnotes (observation, journal, conversation) Student's reflection paper Questionnaire
July 19 th , 2013	End of Storytelling Class Party, Summer Break		

Data Collection

Different qualitative data was collected in this study, and all data was collected within the naturalistic setting of an actual classroom where I taught my students. During the duration of the teaching program, I documented the journey of my students and elicited what they did and how they changed through the process. The triangulation of data was done via a variety of sources: participant observation, questionnaire, interview, conversation, student's writing work, exit card, school documents, fieldnotes, and a reflective journal. Once the data was collected and themes emerged, I began to write my findings with in depth descriptions.

Observations. Observations were done during storytelling class throughout the year. I observed classroom environment, individual behavior, attitude, reaction, and even the students' facial expressions to find out any clues that demonstrated how students thought and felt. I documented these observations in fieldnotes. While I was teaching, I observed students carefully and wrote brief memos in the field note. I set aside 10 to 20 minutes right after every lesson and described the memos in the field note in detail not to lose the impressions and memory. As I could not either afford to write things in detail

during the lesson or have anyone to help with the observations every lesson, this was the way that I could accommodate to my situation. I did not keep track of the 6 focal students from the beginning because I did not designate them as focal students originally. They were emerging as focal members of the storytelling class as the class was going on. I conducted a teaching presentation once to show my teaching practice and get feedback from my colleagues who were interested in teaching English. I tried to reflect the results of my observation on the storytelling class to satisfy my students better and to improve my teaching practice. Even though observation was mostly focused on storytelling class, I tried to stay sensitive before or after the storytelling class because meaningful behavior cannot be observed only in a specific, controlled environment. Through this careful observation I realized how students found meaning and made connections to what they already knew. I believe this is the beauty of teacher research.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire has various positive functions in conducting research. Questionnaire is an efficient way to find out people's opinions because it can provide large amounts of data very quickly. Questionnaires can also allow those who are shy and easily embarrassed a more comfortable and discrete way to reveal thoughts and opinions. Questionnaire allows students time to think through the question before responding so that it becomes possible to get more refined, as opposed to instant or thoughtless responses. Students have a chance to see themselves while answering, so it can be self-reflective. They are totally alone while answering the questions, so they are not affected by peer pressure. Some students are more sincere when they write rather than speak, so the questionnaire is more suitable for them. In addition to all these reasons for using a questionnaire, I can process the data more quickly and efficiently. I composed my

questionnaire with mostly open-ended questions to cover as many opinions and ideas as possible. However, after the Beginning of the Storytelling Class Questionnaire, I realized that my students were not mature enough to express their opinions in writing descriptively. All the answers in the open-ended questions were too simple to elicit any significant themes. I gained little ideas from the questionnaire, so I thought to instead have conversation with the students whenever I had the chance. This turned out to be more effective in gaining the necessary data from the students.

Interview. The individual interviews with the students are a great way to supplement whatever is overlooked in the observation and questionnaire data. The interview makes it possible to achieve in-depth understanding about a problem. I was going to interview every student in my class individually or as a focus group based on the information I acquired through the questionnaire, but neither the questionnaire nor the interview worked out well enough for the study. Because their answers were too simple, I could not elicit a significant theme out of the data. I had to change my strategy for data collection. I tried to have in-depth conversations whenever I noticed meaningful situations through observation that helped me gain the necessary data for the study. I asked questions in relation to the day's lesson, things that I was wondering about in relation to the observations, or even what I would like to know about the student related to English education such as "How did you feel when you make a presentation of your book?", "I saw you were laughing a lot today! Did you have fun? How did you like it?", or "What is hard about learning English?" I tried to have as many conversations as possible, but could not hold them more than 5 minutes in the classroom. Interviews with student's main teachers were very effective in understanding the students from various

perspectives: home environment, achievement in subjects especially in native language, attitude in the classroom, personality, etc. An interview with English teacher was conducted as well to identify student's achievement in a regular English class.

Exit card. To gain feedback from students about my teaching practice, I asked students to write an exit card when a lesson was finished. I collected exit cards only when I did a whole class instruction, once per book, so I got 5 exit cards in total. It took just couple of minutes to write it. It was totally up to students what they wrote on the exit cards. I asked them to write what they liked, disliked, complaints, or expectations from the lessons. Students wrote their opinions freely. I tried to reflect what they wrote when designing my next book lessons to better meet their expectations for the class.

Student's writing works. As the storytelling class was designed to improve English literacy using English storybooks, students were engaged with various reading and writing activities. Students worked on worksheets, made their own storybooks, practiced writing in their notebooks, or wrote reflection papers depending on the activities done in the class throughout the year up to their capacity. I collected them to find out clues about how they created meaning out of a storybook and how they developed literacy competency in the process.

Fieldnotes and reflective journal. I wrote fieldnotes to keep track of my impressions, ideas, and reflections throughout the day, to document my observations, and to check on my assumptions and beliefs about storytelling in relation to the education of English literacy. Because I realized the interview and questionnaire were not very useful in collecting data from my 3rd and 4th grade students, I increased the frequency of my conversations with students to supplement information needed, and recorded them in

detail in the fieldnotes. Before, during, and after class, I initiated conversation with any student who showed impressive behavior intending to collect the data necessary for my study. Rapport was a significant factor in having a sincere conversation. I tried to build a good relationship with students throughout the year and eventually we became very close to each other. I expected that as the data accumulated, my understanding of the participants would evolve. I tried to have conversations with not only students but also with anyone who was related to the management of the storytelling class such as the principal of the school, the afterschool program coordinator, and sometimes the students' main teacher in order to gain more information that I did not acquire from just the interview. I wrote a reflective journal for a few times only when I wanted to keep my emotions and feelings of the day to look back freely on things that captured my attention.

Document review. The document review was done to triangulate other kinds of data in the data collection process. Official evaluation records at school were valuable in understanding students' achievement in native language and English. I was able to review them while I interviewed classroom teachers to understand the participants of my study in the beginning of the storytelling class. The Korean national curriculum encourages evaluating the learning process as well as test scores. Teachers should describe how they perform in each subject. This descriptive record together with the test scores enhanced understanding the students in-depth, and helped me to design the lessons.

Trustworthiness

Riessman (1993) explains "trustworthiness moves the process into the social world based on understanding that individuals construct very different narratives about the same event" (p. 64). The existence of competency in English is not easy to measure

on a concrete scale. As many other qualitative research studies, I depended on observation, interview, questionnaire, exit card, conversation, student's work, document review, fieldnotes and journaling. This triangulation helps enhance credibility in my study. As for transferability, I believe my study can be utilized in a similar context, but at the same time, it holds its own originality and cannot be applied or duplicated in other situations. My study can give ideas or suggestions but cannot be totally transferable in a different classroom setting. In other words, my study is not absolutely stable and replicable. This originality attributes to my interpretive positionality and investigator-responder interaction. I do not pursue reliability in my study. I believe there is no absolute truth on this matter. The way *I* believe is worthwhile in itself. This does not mean that the way I see the phenomenon is the truth. What I can do as a researcher is give enough justification and explanation with dependable means which will increase the credibility of my study.

Data Analysis

This section is to describe how I moved from the volumes of data that I had collected for a year to the finding and discussion to give readers a way of understanding how I lived in the elementary school classrooms. Data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data by giving meaning to it. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), "in the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself" (p. 500). Through data analysis I tried to search for possible patterns and themes that emerged from the data to better understand the situation. Wolcott (1994) mentions the researcher tries to make sense of the data as presented instead of just providing it through a descriptive presentation.

Stake (1995) mentions that there is no specific moment when data analysis should begin. Analysis should not be seen as separate from ongoing efforts to make sense of things. “How is this part related to that part? Analysis goes on and on” (p. 71).

Merriam (1998) notes that qualitative research is not a linear, step-by-step process and that data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity. Because my study is qualitative practitioner research, I collected data while I managed the storytelling class, analyzed it, and applied its implications back to the storytelling class to see if any change occurred.

Merriam (1998) explains that a qualitative design is emergent, recursive, and dynamic. Even though I had brief descriptions in mind about who might be interviewed and when at the beginning of my study, what elements might be observed in the classroom, what document might have significant value, what kind of questions might be asked, and what kind of students might draw special attention, it kept on being refined and verified once the data collection process had started. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggest that “in the light of what you find when you periodically review your fieldnotes, plan to pursue specific leads in your next data collection session” (p. 157). “The idea is to stimulate critical thinking” (p. 158). “After you have been in the field for a while, going through the substantive literature in the area you are studying will enhance analysis” (p. 161).

In the beginning of the storytelling class, I interviewed the main classroom teachers and the English teachers and provided them with questionnaires to fill out. The interviews and the questionnaire were for the purpose of understanding my participants better rather than finding answers to my research questions. Based on the information

regarding my participants' cognitive and affective development that I gained through the interview and the questionnaire such as the level of achievement in English, first language literacy, attitude in learning, motivation and confidence, and English learning experience, I designed a lesson that would not be threatening but that could lead to learning and development. Considering the mission of the practitioner research which is pursuit of the improvement of my teaching practice, I reflected on my teaching of the lesson and analyzed data that I acquired through the lesson. I compared the fieldnotes, observations, exit cards, and conversations that I collected from my participants, and then carefully observed the themes emerging out of the raw data that answered my research questions. Based on the insight gained from my observations, I planned the next lesson and tried to implement what I learned. At the same time, I reviewed literature and made teaching presentations to gain insight and ideas that I had not thought of to make my class better.

A plan for data management is necessary in order to keep track of my thoughts, musings, speculations, and hunches as I engage in analysis (Merriam, 1998). Coding is essential in conceptualizing the data, raising questions, providing provisional answers about the relationships among and within the data, and discovering the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). I paid attention to what themes emerged out of the raw data and created categories based on LeCompte's (2000) guide which suggests the process of putting all the data together and sort them out, finding items, creating categories with the items, creating patterns, and then assembling the structure.

In the process of data collection, it is important to identify the meaningful pieces. As I stayed with my students for the whole time while they were in the storytelling class,

I kept on sensitizing myself in order to draw the essence of the problem, because as Merriam (1998) said, the data is not ‘out there’ awaiting collection, but rather, data collection is about asking, watching, and reviewing. While managing the storytelling class throughout the year, I was able to collect a lot of data related to the research. Selecting appropriate data mattered more than just collecting data alone. Dey (1993) notes that “Collecting data always involves selecting data, and the techniques of data collection...will affect what finally constitutes *data* for the purposes of research” (p. 15). Wolcott (1990) also writes,

the critical task in qualitative research is not to accumulate all the data you can, but to “can” (i.e., get rid of) most of the data you accumulate. This requires constant winnowing. The trick is to discover essences and then to reveal those essences with sufficient context, yet not become mired trying to include everything that might possibly be described. Audiotapes, videotapes, and now computer capabilities entreat us to do just the opposite; they have gargantuan appetites and stomachs. Because we can accommodate ever-increasing quantities of data – mountains of it – we have to be careful not to get buried by avalanches of our own making (p. 44).

When I first began the writing process, I read over all the data that I collected. The data was organized in order of time because the linear flow of the data is significant in my study. The process that the storytelling class went through as is would be of value because the linear flow demonstrates what the storytelling class has gone through and how it has been evolving, which would give ideas and insight for any elementary school teacher, especially to those working in Korean elementary school contexts who would be

interested in the issue. In the process of writing the linear flow of the storytelling class based on the data collected through the process, I highlighted the emerging themes. During this process, I was careful to let the data speak for itself and added my insight as an experienced teacher in elementary school. In discussion, I interwove the theoretical literature with the stories of my participants “to create a seamless link between the theory and practice embodied in the inquiry” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 41).

Presenting Data in Translation

Since the data collection was done in Korea with Korean participants, the findings of this study were translated from Korean. There is huge difference between Korean and English, but I tried to preserve the meaning as much as possible. When there were some words hard to translate in English, I had to edit them inevitably.

Limitation

As this study was done in a certain classroom, problems such as over-lengthiness, oversimplification, being limited by the sensitivity of the investigator, ethics, reliability, validity, and generalizability can arise. This study was done in a small city in Korea where SES is quite low, so it may not be applicable to other areas where SES and learning atmospheres are different. However, I provided an in-depth description of the findings so that it can be replicable in similar contexts.

I was the classroom teacher as well as the researcher. I was an insider during this study. My lens was definitely reflected towards my investigation, which might have prohibited or distorted potential findings. I made the best use of my position as an insider by establishing a good rapport with the participants and by being more sensitive to their development, which might have enabled finding unexpected information that could not

have been gathered otherwise. I collected valuable information taking advantage of the position as a regular elementary school teacher who works full time for a regular class as well as the afterschool program and would like to contribute to elementary teacher education in Korea.

Conclusion

When we study second language literacy, practitioner research is useful because it enables other practitioners to understand the context where language is used, the process of the development, and lived experiences of individual students. As long as researchers are well aware of its strengths and limitations, the usefulness of a practitioner research study should increase even more.

Chapter 4. Findings

Introduction

Because this is practitioner research designed to help me reflect on and improve my performance as a teacher, the flow of this study is primarily focused on how my teaching and my students' learning has evolved. Specifically, I have been using storybooks to improve the English literacy of my students in the storytelling class, and the format of the class has been transformed as my students and I went through changes that I have described in this chapter.

Griffin (1986) asserted that knowledge for teaching is mutable, and that theories, research, and practical wisdom play significant roles together in shaping school programs. This was the case with my storytelling class, which has been evolving roughly through three stages over the period of one year, beginning from September 2012 to July 2013. Both the teacher and students initiated changes in the class. In the beginning of the storytelling class, I tried to implement storytelling methods introduced by Ellis and Brewster (2002) and Wright (2012), which are usually initiated by the teacher and follow a structure of pre-reading, while-reading, and after-reading activities. As the storytelling class continued, the teacher-initiated formal structure broke down and the students started to discover and express their interests and indicate their preference in English storybooks as they usually did with Korean books. At the same time, they were more motivated to write in English. As the storytelling class came to an end, time was spent more on independent reading and writing, and I became more of a facilitator and supporter for individual students than in previous classes. I considered and tried to meet the needs of each student. Through this process, students were engaged in the English storybooks

instead of superficially analyzing and interpreting them. They eventually came to appreciate the joy of reading books in English.

Birth of Storytelling Class

I taught 6th graders in the first year at DS Elementary School in 2011. It was a harsh experience. Different from the school where I previously worked in Seoul, not a day passed without a problem at this school. Students were involved with behavioral problems, family violence, street fights, computer game addiction, and even theft. The standardized test score was much lower than the national average. The principal and teachers attributed this to the low SES. Even with this tough environment, most parents had high expectations for their children's education, especially in English according to the principal.

My first year at DS Elementary School finished and all my 6th grade students graduated with no problem. The harsh experience at DS Elementary School opened my eyes to the reality of those marginalized in Korean society. It was an intense, but valuable experience and it helped me to grow as a teacher as well as a person. Before the new school year began in 2012, the principal of the school called me to his office. He proceeded to explain his philosophy about the significance of English education in elementary school and asked me to help him set up a new English class in addition to the regular class that was based on the national curriculum. He expressed his desire to try any alternative English education methods to better promote English proficiency to the students at this school. He was aware that I had studied in the U.S., and wanted to make use of my expertise at this school where students' achievement level was very low compared to the national average and where the students' parents could not afford quality

English education for their children. The principal assumed that having a year of experience at this school and as a mother of two children living nearby, I would have a deeper understanding about the status quo of the school's population more than any other new teacher. I was slightly burdened by his proposal as composing a new class meant a lot of extra work and huge accompanying responsibilities involving the school budget. I was already busy with my own class and as a mother of two.

I asked the principal for some time to think his proposal through and determine whether or not it was possible. There were two main issues that concerned me. First, many students at DS Elementary School were not very proficient in Korean literacy, not to mention English literacy, which did not mean that students could not simply read and write letters in Korean, but their comprehension was quite shallow, which prohibited the development of useful strategies in reading and writing. I was amazed that two of my 6th grade students in 2011 were at beginning reading level in the native language and their writing was hardly comprehensible. I had never seen such cases when I taught in Seoul over the course of three years. These cases did not happen in only my class, but in most of the 6th grade classes at DS Elementary School. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, Literature Review, education in the elementary level, and native language literacy makes overarching influences on a students' achievement at school in terms of the knowledge they gain through their first language and the language learning skills they acquire through achieving first language literacy (Capellini, 2005). Under this circumstance every student at this school was required to learn the oral and literacy language of English regardless of their level of native language literacy. 6th graders were tested using a single standard all around Korea. These students at risk became frustrated by the time they had

to struggle both with Korean and English, and finally, they ended up with giving up on English, which meant they had to suffer throughout the span of their education definitely limiting the choices available to them in life. The two students in my class who had problems in the literacy competency of the native language were the same; they didn't mind English at all even when they got 20 or 30 points out of 100 in English tests. Their parents were too busy to take care of their children's education. I was stunned to see this reality existed in Korea where education always took high priority.

In Korea, English is spoken as a foreign language, which means students have to learn English literacy without oral language fluency. It is natural to learn literacy top to bottom through life experiences before gaining the knowledge of sounds, letters, and symbols. It is difficult for elementary students to learn foreign language literacy especially when their first language literacy has not developed enough. The beginning level of native language fluency does not contribute to reinforcing foreign language literacy. Whenever I met students who had a hard time with Korean literacy, I felt somewhat guilty that I still had to teach them English as was planned by the national curriculum. One of my 6th grade students gave up on English and told me that English looked like a meandering worm. For such students, Korean literacy education should have prioritized as this school had many such students.

Another reason that I hesitated to accept the principal's proposal was because I felt pressured to demonstrate the class as an example. I was given the right to use the school budget for supplies and materials used in the class. The principal also promised to compensate me for the time. In addition, teachers at the school had high expectations based on my experience and expertise consummated through my time in the U.S. The

English class was to be beneficial for the students, but also something that the teachers at the school could model and practice. Eight passionate teachers organized a study group to teach English better and I became a member when I started work at DS Elementary School in 2011. We shared ideas and experiences, and I mainly provided theories and articles to read. I began to feel the pressure of having to apply all that I had shared in our group meetings.

In spite of all these stressful factors, I accepted the principal's proposal and started an English class as part of the afterschool program at this school. Had I not accepted the principal's proposal, his plan was to set up an audio-lingual English education system that could be conducted without a teacher. The principal firmly believed that he had to do something to provide students more opportunities to learn English and was tired of looking for a teacher who would be willing to try English teaching methods of any kind. I was surprised when I saw an example of the English education system that the principal was going to implement. It was an old-fashioned, phonics-focused program that any current ESL program would not use. In alphabetical order, it showed the various mouth positions used to make a particular sound. It demonstrated many word examples unfamiliar to students. The program's advertisement was even hilarious: "Students can speak English comfortably once they complete the program from A to Z!"

Following the current trend of English education emphasizing communicative competency, parents of students in Korea are at times separated between countries. Being a teacher outside of Seoul for the first time, I was exposed to how drastically English education methodologies differed between regions. As a teacher, I felt the responsibility of having to contribute to areas of educational inequality.

Being that the principal did not designate a specific style, I was given full autonomy as to how to run the class. Explaining how significant it was to make English connected to students' everyday lives, I affirmed the significance of storybooks in learning a new language and culture and proposed opening an English storytelling class. Fortunately, there were about two hundred English storybooks at this school and about twenty titles of thirty copies allowing each student in the class to have the opportunity to read one book individually.

I made two things clear about the storytelling class to the principal. First, I could not manage a class to prove anything specific. I might end up demonstrating nothing obvious such as raising scores on standardized tests or winning English speech competitions. I believed English education in Korean elementary schools should make students feel the need to learn and bring about their intrinsic motives, which come as a result of engagement and enjoyment. To draw on their intrinsic motives, I should not be rushed. The class needed to be a place where students could realize the joy of reading English books as well as where they felt comfortable when facing challenges. A place where students could be exposed to various literacy experiences should not be involved with any kind of standardized testing or hasty evaluations. Second, I would not teach students whose native language literacy was not well established. In the beginning of each semester, every student in DS Elementary School took a preliminary test. The results of the test served as a way for classroom teachers to identify any student who needs more of the basic knowledge to learn the grade's curriculum. It is important in Korean society to be rooted in the basics of Korean literacy and mathematics, so the preliminary test was based only on these subjects as was indicated by the regional

education office. If any student scored less than 60 points out of 100, they received special support to bring them up to speed in accordance with their specific level's curriculum. I stressed the fact that I could not accept these students to the English storytelling class. With the necessity of stronger foundation in Korean language literacy not to mention oral fluency in English, it would be too tough and undesirable to promote English language literacy, especially where English was spoken as a foreign language. I was going to find a group of students to whom I could be the most effective.

Recruiting

The process of recruiting was very difficult. Usually, recruiting students for afterschool programs is done only through flyers because they are not part of the national curriculum. However, as I opened the class in the middle of the school year (September 2012), I had to ask other teachers for help recruiting enough students for the class. At first, I introduced the storytelling class at the weekly teacher meeting held every Monday. I met each 3rd and 4th grade head teacher and asked them to set up a time for me to visit each class after lunch. Usually afterschool programs started to recruit in the middle of March at the beginning of the school year, but with the matter of IRB, the storytelling class was going to open in September, as soon as the second semester started. In March, students received flyers advertising the afterschool programs and decided which program to participate in that year. Because the storytelling class was beginning in the middle of the school year, the best way to advertise the class would be by contacting students in person as well as giving out flyers. As soon as the head teachers set up time for each class, I started to visit every 3rd and 4th grade class.

Visiting. There were 6 classes in each grade level, so I needed to visit 12 classes

in total. It did not take much time to advertise the storytelling class, but in some classes, it took about 20 minutes to answer all the questions that students asked. In most classes students welcomed a storytelling class. Following is a description of one of the most impressive classes with excited responses while I advertised the class. The responses were not audiotaped but written in my fieldnotes on Aug. 22nd, 2012 right after the visit.

Table 3

Classroom Visit for Advertisement of the Storytelling Class

TEACHER (T)	STUDENT (S)
T: Hello, everyone. Has anyone seen me or heard of me?	S1: Yes, I saw you at the cafeteria. S2: My brother used to be in your class. He said you could speak English like an American. S3: I saw you here and there. You are tall, haha.
T: Yes, I have been a teacher at DS Elementary School since last year. As you've heard, I used to be a 6 th grade teacher last year and this year I'm a 2 nd grade teacher. And as ** says, I used to live in the U.S. However, as some of you thought, I'm not an American nor was I born in the U.S. Oh, no! I'm a Korean but just studied in the U.S. for 8 years. That's a long time isn't it?	S: Wow. Isn't it hard to speak in English? How come you came to my school? Show us how you speak in English.
T: I'm here today to let you know about the class that I'm going to start during the afterschool program. What kind of class would it be? Yes, it is an English class.	S: Ah...., (jokingly) why are you giving us pain?
T: Oh, I can see some of disappointed eyes. I'm sorry. But, this class will not let you down. I'm sure! What do you think a fun English class is like?	S1: I like an English class with a lot of games. S2: I don't care as long as you provide snacks. S3: You can never make us happy if you teach English.
T: All right. All right. I can see how much you are expecting a fun English class with snacks. Right? I'm	S1: Yes, we are doing it once a week.

not sure about the snacks because you can't only come to the class for snacks, right? What I can promise you is that this English class will definitely be different. Have you ever experienced English storytelling?

T: Yes, you all have experience in storytelling. In my class, you will read many English storybooks! You can participate in many activities that you wouldn't otherwise in regular English classes. You will not learn grammar and don't have to memorize vocabulary in a boring manner, but by the time you finish the storytelling class, you will be a different person from now. Imagine yourself reading English fluently. Isn't it great? In fact the reason that I'm starting this class is because I have to write a book, a big book in English in order to graduate from a university in the U.S. with a doctoral degree. I need some students to be characters in the story. If you participate in the storytelling class, you are going to be a character in the big English book, called a dissertation. Cool, isn't it? You don't have to worry about how good you are in English now. You are learning English to get better, not to be disappointed. Because there is a limit of only twenty students, I will be able to give each of you personal attention. The class is totally free. You don't even have to provide the necessary materials. The class will be held twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and will last for one year. If you are interested, you can come to see me in my classroom. Registration is open until the end of next week, but if 20 students have signed up before then, I can't accept any more students. Do you have any questions?

T: Thank you for asking a lot of questions. First, you are not going to be automatically in my book. For you to be in the book, I need your parents' and your 'ok' signature. If you don't want to be in it, just don't give me a signature. Even if you don't want to be in the book, there is no problem in joining the class. Even if you do want to be in the book, I will change your name so that people do not to recognize who you are. So, don't worry about the book now. Once you join in the

S2: We did it last year, too.

S1: Wow, are we going to be in your book? You mean, in English? Then, people might recognize me if I go to America? Cool!

S2: What kind of English storybooks are we going to read?

S3: Are you going to invite an American teacher?

S4: Can I ask my mom first?

S5: Is there snacks?

S1: I have to ask my mom, right now!

S2: I can't wait to be in the storytelling class.

S3: I can't believe that I will be in a book written in English.

S: Bye! Thank you stopping by.

class, I will explain the procedures again in more detail. We're going to read many kinds of English books as long as you can have fun reading them. If you have any book of interest, just let me know so that we can enjoy them together. There won't be an American teacher, but I'm going to speak in English, so speak back to me in English like we are in America. I'm not sure about having snacks during every class meeting, but I will provide snacks from time to time. I'm not here to ask you to decide to participate right away. You have to ask your parents about it first. If you think of any more questions, feel free to come to my classroom and ask me. No more questions? Okay. Thank you for listening. See you later!

Before registration started, I was worried about if it is too popular to handle many students applying, but to my disappointment, it never happened. Students showed great interest when I was advertising as shown in the example above, but interest did not really lead to registration. Out of 354 3rd and 4th graders in total, only 10 students came to register voluntarily. Ten did not matter for conducting the study, but the problem was with the schools administrative policy. In order to conduct an afterschool program, it was required to have at least 15 students in the class. Thanks to the 3rd and 4th grade teachers, I was able to recruit more students and ended up with a total of 16 students. I was not sure how long these 'involuntary' students could stay in the class, but at this point it did not matter as long as the class was not cancelled.

Reasons for low registration. I was wondering why the registration was this low in spite of many intrigued and enthusiastic students. They liked the idea of learning English through storybooks, asked questions, and showed great interest in the class. Having casual conversations at many places with 3rd and 4th grade teachers, the principal, the afterschool coordinator, and teachers with more than 3 years of experience at this

school, the reasons for low registration were summarized as follows.

First, it was because of the time of the year. When I started the class, it was already the 2nd semester. Different from the U.S., the beginning of the school year in Korea starts in March. The 1st semester begins in March and ends in July. The 2nd semester begins in September and ends in February. When I began recruiting, it was the beginning of the 2nd semester, so it was already the middle of the school year. Students' yearly schedules were usually set up in the 1st semester, and it was not easily changed. In the case that a mother stayed at home, a student's schedule could be quite flexible, but many parents at DS Elementary School had low SES and about one third of them received government support for having low income according to the principal (from fieldnotes in Sept. 3rd, 2012). Both of the students' parents had to work very hard to make ends meet.

Second, parents at this school tended to prefer hagwons over afterschool programs despite the quality of education or tuition. A hagwon is a private, after-school tutoring academy offering classes in every subject. According to Ripley (2013), "nowhere have tutoring services achieved the market penetration and sophistication of hagwons in South Korea, where private tutors now outnumber school teachers." ("The \$4 Million Teacher," para. 5). She also described, "it has helped South Korea become an academic superpower. Under this system, students essentially go to school twice; once during the day and then again at night at the tutoring academies. It is a relentless grind" ("The \$4 Million Teacher," para. 6). Hagwons are usually open from Monday through Saturday throughout the year to satisfy parents' demand of offering various classes in one space, but afterschool programs were held once or twice a week at the school and easily

cancelled depending on school events or holidays including summer and winter breaks. Therefore, hagwons provided a better place for parents at this school to take care of children as well as to educate them in stable and controlled environment throughout the year. According to the afterschool program coordinator, the afterschool programs free tickets for the low income students were not completely utilized each month, and most of the afterschool programs carried on with only a small number of students as time went on even if it started out with many students in the beginning. This issue was not very common in urban middle-class areas where most classes in the afterschool programs were always competitive, because it was believed that afterschool programs were high quality and cost very little. It was easily assumed that families from mostly low-income communities needed financial assistance, so tuition exemption was regarded as the best way to support them. However, it seemed that the community surrounding DS Elementary School needed a more stable educational environment to replace the absence of mothers at home rather than quality affordable education. DS Elementary School needed to consider the characteristics of its surrounding communities in order to best fulfill its role as a location of community service.

Third, 3rd and 4th grade experienced teachers at this school pointed out was that storytelling class was not reflected in student's school records and as a result would not be so intriguing to parents. Even though parents at DS Elementary School had low SES, they were very concerned about their children's school record. For them, a good education meant getting good scores. Test results were the method by which the quality of a school program was judged. Parents strived to improve the level of education for their children and they regarded good test results as a gauge of quality education. For the

students' parents, an English storytelling class might be a nice class but not a necessary class. Students were focused on obtaining a good school record, and storytelling would not be reflected on the school record nor would it be regarded as important.

Fourth, the principal, the afterschool coordinator, and teachers commonly assumed that, because this was the very first storytelling class in the afterschool program, students and their parents did not have enough information about the class. They also assumed that parents might have not paid close attention to the differences that various English classes made based on their prior experience with parents at this school. Because I could not personally contact all of the parents, I was unable to advertise the program in much detail.

Fifth, my competence in English was not very useful in recruiting according to what students were saying. It seemed to work as a reason to avoid the class. Students described that a competent and active teacher meant a strict teacher with high expectations. In the students' minds, if they were not totally engaged in the class, the teachers' enthusiasm might be regarded as potentially demanding. For intrinsically motivated students, my competence in English would definitely be an intriguing factor, but many students were difficult to motivate intrinsically especially in English. The students did not want to be burdened with extra work and stress especially if the material being presented was not directly related to the national curriculum and standardized exam. Why would they bother doing something that might potentially require a lot of work if they did not have to?

Sixth, some teachers scoffed that parents would not even know if this class existed. An afterschool program flyer was sent out at the beginning of the semester, but

teachers said parents at this school did not usually read the flyers carefully and many students did not really have conversations with their parents often. Parents were busy with their work while children stayed at hagwons or at home alone. Many parents simply believed that they fulfilled their obligations concerning their children's education as long as they sent their children to school and hagwons.

Teachers said that the storytelling being provided for free was not a big advantage because many students were exempt from tuition for many other afterschool programs already according to their income level. In addition, they did not take free classes seriously, so free tuition did not affect their decision.

Hearing what the principal, teachers, and students said, I came to be relieved and felt even lucky that I had 10 students come in on their own and 6 more in addition to those. I began to wonder why they decided to join the class, so I asked them when they came to hand in their registration slips. It was quite common that most of the students in the class had mothers who did not work and were quite flexible in picking them up when the afterschool program finished. The students also liked English and reading books. The 10 voluntary students were high achievers in their classrooms and very fluent at reading and writing in their native language, Korean. It would have been desirable if I could have helped students who were struggling to learn English despite their doing well in their native language studies and could not afford to participate in multi-cultural experiences because of low family income. Many students in the storytelling class were from low-income families but not from the lowest. It was however impossible to recruit such students, as an afterschool teacher could not take care of students until their parents come home in the evening. Hagwons were an inevitable choice for students in this area meeting

the needs of both afterschool care and education. Currently, the Ministry of Education strengthened the afterschool care service at public elementary school and budgeted money to raise the quality of service, but parents still depend on hagwons in spite of the cost, which is not supported by the government because hagwons meet their various needs specifically with greater care.

The Beginning of the Storytelling Class

Consent and assent process. As described previously, one of the most difficult aspects in coordinating the storytelling class was recruiting the appropriate number of students and minimizing the turnover amount at the beginning to prevent the class from being cancelled. I also tried every means possible to draw on the student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to prevent cancellation. In addition, one of the major reasons I agreed to coordinate this class was to use the experience for my study. I explained my study to students in detail at the beginning of the first class and handed out the consent assent form. To minimize any possibility of coercion or reluctant participation, I had several conversations with the students who were potential participants prior to the beginning of class. I told them their performance in the class would not affect their grades or school record in any way. I also made it clear that they could discontinue participation at any time without penalty. I also informed them that they could still come to the class even if they did not want to participate in the study. I documented what I explained orally in the consent assent form (ref. *Appendix B, C*) for them to think it through again with their parents, and I gave them 7 days to decide. Among the 16 students that attended, 14 students signed the consent assent form with their parents and two dropped out of the class.

Introduction activity. I strived to figure out the characteristics of each student as an English language learner as soon as the class began in order to best meet their expectations for the class. I used several motivating factors such as tokens, snacks, and prizes. In the very first class, there were 16 students in the classroom. They stayed calm and well behaved as they would in any first class meeting. In order to break the ice and build a rapport, I started the class by doing an activity to introduce themselves. While I managed the class, I spoke in English as much as possible, but not always. Ellis and Brewster (2002) state that the more a teacher uses English, the more students become familiar with the language; it should be considered that the mother tongue can be used as a tool to help students learn a foreign language. If the teacher insists on using English only, students end up losing a useful learning strategy. By speaking mostly in English, I intended to provide an English-rich environment in an EFL situation where school would be the only place for the students to communicate in English. I kept in mind some occasions when a teacher might decide to use the mother tongue suggested by Ellis and Brewster (2002):

- Setting the scene, contextualizing a story and relating it to the child's own personal experience by drawing upon their prior knowledge of a subject and of the language.
- Predicting what comes next in a story.
- Providing a gloss of the main storyline. This is important with more difficult stories. Eliciting vocabulary or phrases.
- Explaining vocabulary, a grammatical rule or cultural information.
- Reminding pupils of what has happened so far in the story.

- Explaining how to do an activity such as pair work or a game.
- Discussing learning strategies (p. 14).

I tried to make the introduction activity simple, flexible, and enjoyable so that students would not be overwhelmed in the first class. The introduction activity I chose was frequently used in regular classes. I asked students to fold a piece of paper into 8 columns and describe who they were in each column either by writing or by drawing a picture. They were asked to choose either English or Korean whichever they felt more comfortable using with. I gave them 15 minutes to work on the paper.

Most of the students seemed to understand the directions in English. They nodded and made confident faces while I spoke to them. Some of them even started the activity before I finished explaining. A couple of boys in the class did not make eye contact with me and asked other students what they were supposed to do. I approached them and explained again nicely in detail using examples of other students from a regular class. Showing the other students' work as examples was the final strategy that I used because once I showed them the examples, students did not have to listen to my English carefully any longer. I tried to speak Korean sparingly because I did not want to give them the impression that they did not have to try to understand English.

Even though the teacher's speaking English could be challenging to some students, I kept on speaking mainly in English to reinforce the focus of communicating in English during the storytelling class and made myself the model as an English speaker. I expected that if I kept on speaking mostly in English, students would be influenced and respond back to me in English, enhancing their chances of experiencing communicative English. If I spoke both in English and Korean, students would choose to listen mostly to

Korean because they felt comfortable and were more familiar with Korean. It seemed as though some of the boys were intimidated by my English communication and were discouraged and intimidated by the thought of responding to an English-speaking person. I gave them individual assistance actively to minimize their frustration and encouraged the potential that they might have not had otherwise realized.

Not every student seemed to be embarrassed or intimidated by an English-speaking teacher. In fact, many students enjoyed this unusual situation. They listened to me very carefully as I explained the activity and worked hard to complete the task. Soyoung was one of those confident and hard-working students. She filled out every column with pictures using an English sentence beginning with 'I like ____.' She was the only one who did not use a single word in Korean on the paper. Even though she did not use diverse English sentences, she filled out every column of the paper with different subjects. Her spelling was not bad considering what 4th graders were expected to know but what was impressive was that she was pretty good with phonemic awareness. Without my assistance, she was able to write her friends' names in English. According to *Figure 6* from her introduction paper, she was well aware of the use of consonant and singular vowels in making sounds. Her phonemic awareness gave me a hint that she would have seen many English words and has broad English vocabulary otherwise it would have been hard to understand the sound system quite well. According to her classroom teacher, she was a high achiever in most subjects, especially in literacy, which also gave me clues that she would be good in terms of reading strategies. I thought that I'd better observe her carefully and figure out specifically where she would need my help mostly.

Sohl was the fastest and used the most words among all the students in the

storytelling class. He did not draw pictures or write detailed explanations, but he completed the activity the fastest using many words in each column. Right after my explanation about the introduction activity, he completed the paper within five minutes, filling out not only the front 8 columns of a paper but also 4 more on the other side of the paper. He used 12 different words in total. Even he misspelled a few words. It was quite impressive that he wrote them without hesitation or fear of making mistakes. I could see how confident student he was with his challenging attitude in using diverse English words that he did not even know clearly. I thought Sohl's best quality as an English language learner would have to be strongly related to his affective aspects; confidence, self-motivated, expressive, not being scared of mistakes. I thought as long as I scaffold his English knowledge within his ZPD, Sohl's achievement would be even faster than other students with his strength in affective aspects. I would have to build good relationship with him as soon as possible. With the exception of Soyoung and Sohl, all other students wrote in the Korean language even the words that they should have been able to write in English according to the national curriculum.

After 10 minutes of writing the introduction paper, I gave them a chance to speak about themselves in English using what they had put down on the paper. I expected them to try to speak English voluntarily because even 3rd graders had learned English in their regular class already, but, to my disappointment, no one raised his/her hand to speak. I encouraged them by saying that they did not have to speak in English only and that they could mix Korean and English at their convenience, but still there were no volunteers. As an experienced elementary school teacher, this situation was not unexpected. Even though students would not mind making mistakes in communicating with the teacher,

they would be certainly reserved in front of their peers, especially when they first meet. Finally, I asked everybody to take turns speaking. They shared their name, class, and whatever they wanted to share about themselves. No one spoke a word in English. Breaking the ice was the most imperative to make my teaching efficient within ZPD.

When the students were done with speaking about themselves, I started to explain what this class was about and more about myself despite the fact that students were already well aware of the class because I previously visited their English classes to advertise the storytelling class. Looking at the strained countenance of 16 students, I emphasized there would be no specific format for the class. There would be no exam and I would provide them with as much support as they needed. I assured them that they did not need to feel overwhelmed and that they could come with ease and enjoy English books.

Beginning of the Storytelling Class Questionnaire. At the end of the class, I gave them a 'Beginning of the Storytelling Questionnaire' asking about their English learning experience and their expectations for the storytelling class. Their answers in the questionnaire were very simple to analyze. They all had storytelling experience with their classroom teacher, but they did not remember the experience concretely. Fortunately, 15 out of 16 had positive storytelling experiences. Among the 15, 1 liked storytelling (teacher), 7 liked activities during the storytelling time, 6 liked the contents of stories, and 1 liked the atmosphere of book reading environment. The one student who did not like the storytelling pointed out that the reason he did not like the story telling time was because the atmosphere made him a little uncomfortable. Impressively, everyone wrote that they hoped to improve their English, but none of them wrote any reasons why they

wanted to be better in English. Why would they want to be better in English for no specific reason? A couple of students desired better school records by raising their English scores; however, school records could not be a direct reason to be better in English. To my disappointment, half of students mentioned ‘snack’ or ‘party’ as their major expectation for the class. I expected answers like, ‘I would like to understand Disney animation in English,’ or ‘I want to make a friend from other countries,’ but none of their answers reflected a practical use of English. I realized it would be significant for students to have the purpose of this class in mind first for them to gain intrinsic motivation in learning English which would facilitate their progress in English when taught within their ZPD. Learning English should replace the joy of eating snacks or having a party by encouraging students to enjoy learning English and appreciate the value and pleasure of learning another language. Reflecting on how they responded in the questionnaire, I thought it would be best to collect data by way of frequent conversations with the students, careful observation, and reflection during the class while considering the descriptive writing capacity of my 3rd and 4th graders. Also, I thought I could identify students better in terms of their intellectual and affective aspect when I have frequent conversation with them, which would make the scaffolding more effective. I gave my students questionnaire at the end of the storytelling class to collect their responses and experience for a year of storytelling class experience

Stage 1: Teacher-Initiated Whole Class Instruction

Many storytelling instructional books demonstrated classroom application, but I found that the books were written presupposing students could already speak English or that English was spoken as a second language. Using English storybooks as a foreign

language situation where spoken English is not the main means of communication, there were serious challenges in the application of methods suggested in the instructional books. I had to construct a methodology of my own, considering various factors influencing language education at school and my students' level of development. Usually a storytelling lesson started with talking about the book or sharing stories related to the book as a warm up, but I just could not devote much time doing that especially since I spoke in English mostly. Students were reluctant to have conversations about the book as a warm up activity because they were not confident enough. In addition both the students and I were not native speakers. I was not as confident speaking only English continuously like a native speaker, and students were not willing to concentrate on listening to English especially when they did not understand the context, also when they felt lost. Students were placed under great stress being put into a mostly English communication situation especially being expected to respond in English at some point. I had to make them feel secure in order to maximize their participation. I composed a lesson template that flowed like a regular English class and which was similar to what Ellis and Brewster (2002) and Wright (2012) suggested. It included a warm up, main activities, and a wrap up. I made minor adjustments to accommodate the students' fear of the unexpected.

Accommodating exemplary lesson plans in storytelling handbooks or variety of English teaching websites and my experience in elementary school in Korea assisted me in temporarily establishing principles for the storytelling class. First, I planned three lessons for one storybook. As mentioned above, the afterschool program was held twice a week and those times were not absolute depending on school calendar situation or my duties as a classroom teacher. If I did more than three lessons per book, students would

have thought that they were not progressing and would have become bored. It was also difficult to satisfy the preference and level of every student in the class, so I thought it would be productive to change books often considering the various needs and individual ZPD. Second, I put a great deal of emphasis on literacy centered activities rather than oral communicative activities. Concentrating too much time on oral language development in English as a foreign language situation could be volatile. Students might enjoy the lesson while they were in the classroom, but they would not be able to review the lesson once the class was over. Except for the very passionate, most students would not listen to the CDs or audio files at home, nor would they have the chance to converse with native speakers in their community easily. There were evidently many convenient backup literacy lessons such as notes or books as long as the content of the lesson was in the student's ZPD. I wanted students to be reassured that they could learn to read English storybooks fluently as long as they abided by the lessons in the storytelling class and reviewed the books at home. Third, I set aside time to give feedback to students and continuously monitored their progression. I believed this approach would benefit the English storytelling class because individual assistance was rarely provided in a regular English class of 25 to 30 students. I expected that the individualized assistance and attention would contribute to enhancing the ZPD.

The storytelling class was supposed to be held twice a week totaling up to 8 lessons a month. Usually, teachers in the afterschool programs were not official teachers hired by the Ministry of Education. They only taught the time allotted to them and did not have any administration or management responsibilities. However, I was a 2nd grade main teacher of the school, so I often had to carry out unexpected classroom teacher duties

such as unannounced meetings or sudden visits from parents. Sometimes I had to leave school earlier to take care of various school business, which would at times result in class cancellations. Considering one book took three lessons, I could only cover two books a month. Each lesson was designed to cover the span of 40 minutes as was generally done in public elementary school according to the suggestions in the national curriculum.

The lessons for each book followed a format of three steps with minor variations depending on the situation. First, the lesson was planned as a whole group teaching-learning so that every student would be involved in the same activity. The mission of the first class was to get students to know what the book was about by looking at it carefully and listening to the story, possibly connecting the book to their prior experiences. One of the advantages of a whole class lesson was that students who did not know as much could participate in activities with less fear, which was significant in learning English as it inhibits the affective filter in learning a foreign language according to Krashen (1988). Student could take their time to fully understand the subject material using the clues provided during the instruction or by consulting with their peers. This alleviated their fear of being revealed as the only person who did not understand the material. Korean students are scared of losing face, so allowing them enough time to understand often makes them feel secure. In addition, Korean students are accustomed to first hearing the teacher's instruction. In this approach, they would be alleviated from having to adjust to a new learning style.

Second, the lesson started with listening to the book. The students then picked the activities according to their preference and competency such as worksheets, making a book, role-playing, or any other activity I prepared for the class. Each student could study

individually or as a group if they wanted. I gave students individual assistance and instant feedback to help scaffold as far as they could understand considering their ZPD. The last lesson was about making a presentation of their work and reviewing of the books. Through these lessons, no student would be left behind without fully understanding the content. The plan for three step lessons was not completely my own. I referenced strategies from the 7th national curriculum for English, the 3rd and 4th grade English textbooks, the 7th national curriculum for English teacher's guidebook, resource books such as *Tell it again!* by Ellis and Brewster (2002) or *Storytelling with children* by Wright (2012), and I drew information from all of these sources to develop the storytelling class.

Korea is a country where English is spoken as a foreign language, so it was a challenge to balance between language and literacy. The national curriculum was designed to start oral language education ahead of literacy education as was usually done in countries where English was spoken as the native language but most students in DS Elementary School were not fluent in the oral language of English before learning to read and write in English. The national curriculum intended to relieve students from the pressure of learning the written language of English in the beginning of English education, however according to the English teacher, the reality at DS Elementary School was that students experienced difficulty in learning the oral language of English before learning to read and write because it was difficult for them to study at home by themselves and prepare for the exam. For students in DS Elementary School, the written language of English was easier to access and study than the oral language of English. In addition, the English teacher was concerned that some of the higher achieving students were bored with the English class at school that dealt primarily with very basic oral

language of English such as *hi* or *thank you* compared to what they learned through hagwons, worksheets, and tutoring. It seems like the national curriculum can hardly meet the individual need of student's oral language of English development. Under Korean circumstances, it takes great effort to consider oral language development in English with limited resources around, which leads to the problem of inequity of education because people go abroad for English education if they could afford it. At this school none of 3rd and 4th grader has been to any foreign country for the purpose of vacation not to mention for the purpose of education. The most convenient and economical way of learning English for students here was to use books because any student can find a book to study within his/her ZPD.

It was the beginning of 2nd semester in 2012, and according to the national curriculum, 3rd graders would not have known any written language of English including the alphabet. The reality however was totally the opposite. An English teacher at DS Elementary School mentioned, with the exception of a few, most 3rd graders knew the alphabet and could read and write simple English words composed of less than two syllables before the start of literacy education during the second semester. Most students at DS Elementary School were exposed to English education prior to 3rd grade through English education programs on TV and the internet and also through worksheets, hagwons, and private tutoring. As a result, they already established emerging or beginner level literacy. Considering that DS Elementary School is one of the marginalized schools, it was obvious how valued early English education was in Korean society. Thanks to their literacy knowledge in English, I did not have to teach the very basics. The students were all 3rd or 4th graders and had a considerable level of native language knowledge and

literacy competency. These factors made it easier to introduce to them a wider variety of English storybooks.

Book 1. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* was an easy and well-known storybook to Korean children. I did not want my students to have bitter experience from the first class so I chose a familiar book that students could enjoy and read easily with little literacy knowledge. As I did not identify individual students clearly, I was going to figure out their ZPD by seeing how they would do in the lessons and the exit card. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* was composed of simple rhymes and the melody was repetitive so that young students could easily learn and recite it. Students looked confident. Most students knew English words regarding color and animals even though they did not learn them formally through English education at school. Students mentioned that words about color and animals in English could be seen everywhere on the street, TV, internet, books, etc. The words were so common that some students shouted that they felt those words were part of the Korean language. One of the advantages in using well-known books was that resources or teaching-learning ideas could be easily found on websites or in guidebooks. I would not have to devote much time developing lessons based on these well-known titles. I could use them for the class often. Worksheets were a convenient way for students to solve problems and for me as the teacher to recognize students' degree of understanding by observing how they dealt with the problems. To recognize students' level of understanding was a significant milestone of figuring out their ZPD. As a classroom teacher, I could not afford to invest a great deal of time to prepare a single lesson for the afterschool program, so these resources were very useful and helpful to recognizing

individual student's ZPD.

I could not ignore that the book was geared towards toddlers. I had been in a dilemma regarding the book choice at the beginning of the storytelling class; I assumed that if I chose a book appropriate for the students' affective development, they would not be able to read and comprehend the book due to their emerging level of English literacy competence. If I chose a toddler's book appropriate for the students' literacy capacity, they would easily become bored and lose interest in the book. I had no choice but to pick books appropriate to students' English literacy capacity. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to manage the class. Even though affective factors could help enhance the ZPD, affective factors alone would not contribute to development. In fact, I could not find any good alternatives considering the students' affective level because even the English texts for the college entrance exam were at the elementary level in native speaking countries.

The dilemma was easily resolved contrary to my concerns. After careful observation during the first few lessons, I realized that students had lower expectations from English storybooks than they had for Korean books. It did not matter if the book was for toddlers, just as long as it included points to enjoy and was not overwhelmingly difficult. They took for granted their ability to read easy picture books, and were proud that they could read books in Korean and in English. The kind of English book they read was not their concern in the beginning. The feeling of accomplishment and success offset all the negative aspects of English books such as being a little immature for their level or being repetitive. Reading an English book was something unlikely to be achieved in any of the other English classes.

The first lesson. For the first lesson based on the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?*, I motivated students by asking about the names of colors or animals that they knew in English. I gave students a good chance to share what they already knew. The students could not have been more confident. They screamed out all the colors and animals they knew. Even though I could not check to see if students could read and write all the words they were screaming, I realized that the students had created a good opportunity to be exposed to English even in an EFL environment. I wrote down all the words that the students called out to answer and soon filled up the blackboard with all their answers. I then opened the book that we were going to study. I began to read the book aloud to students and observed their reactions. As students knew many words about colors and animals already, I was worried if students would ignore the book because it was too easy or childish. They surprisingly looked more relieved and glad rather than disappointed. According to my fieldnotes on Sept. 7th, 2012, none of them were distracted while I modeled the reading and they listened to me carefully looking at the book and turning the pages at the right moment. Some of them even moved their lips as if they were already able to read it. At first, I read the book through entirely in English. I then read it with explanations in Korean where needed. Next, I read and asked students to repeat after me phrase by phrase. I then played the audio recording and let the students repeat after the narrator, but the students were more focused when repeating after me even though it was a native speaking narrator who read the book. After listening and repeating a few more times, the students and I took turns reading the book aloud page by page. I divided the students into two groups and let them read aloud, taking turns with the people in their group. Finally, I put students in pairs and let them practice reading the

book together. Through this process, all of the students succeeded in reading the book completely in the first lesson. Thanks to the rhymes, this repetitive reading turned into an enjoyable activity. At the end of the lesson, we watched a YouTube clip demonstrating singing and dancing and we followed it together. After class I heard students humming the song as they left the classroom. It was amazing to me that the 3rd and 4th grade students could enjoy such a simple book. I thought the first lesson was successful in terms that it encouraged students to read a book in English, however I was wondering how knowledgeable they became through the lesson of this class because it seemed like they were simply reviewing what they knew already using this book, especially the 4th graders. I reflected it would have been desirable if students learned and were encouraged at the same time within their ZPD to achieve the most development.

The second lesson. The second lesson for *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* took place five days later on Sept. 12th, 2012. I stacked the books on the front desk intending that students would read them spontaneously while waiting for other students to arrive. A group of 3rd grade students arrived first and did not notice or pay attention to the stack of the books. They were preoccupied chatting with each other. As an elementary school teacher, I have always believed that the primary work for a classroom teacher is not to dictate what students should do but rather to create a learning environment by establishing classroom routines and developing study habits. To tacitly pressure students into reading if they arrived before the start of class, I mentioned to them how well I thought they did in the first lesson and suggested that they read to me. They were reluctant at first and slowly read the first few pages struggling slightly with words like *purple* and *goldfish*. They had a difficult time reading sentences on the last two pages

because the sentences were not as repetitive as the rest of the book. They eventually got faster and fluent through repetition. More students arrived before the class began and they saw that students in the classroom were already concentrating on reading and spontaneously came up to the front of the classroom and took a book to read as I intended. Some were chatting but it was close to whispering. No one could dare to speak or laugh out loud. Some even took turns reading with partners just as they did in the previous lesson. Even though the lesson had not started, I helped students to read and gave them feedback whilst I tried to figure out each student's level of achievement of the book. When all the students arrived, I began the lesson for the day. I first reviewed the last lesson by reading aloud. All students then read aloud. I noticed they were more confident and none of students were covering their mouths with their hands or looking around to see what others were doing. They tried to catch up with the reading pace. Among the students, Seungyoung(3rd grade) and Seoyoung (4th grade) performed exceptionally. According to their English teacher, they were rarely outspoken in their regular English. The reading went very well and ended earlier than I planned. Everyone successfully read the book. After reading and singing, I handed out worksheets. For this lesson I prepared 5 worksheets all with different levels of difficulty. I wanted to see how well students understood the book. All of the students finished all of the worksheets within 10 minutes! To see how my students were doing, I thought that even though this book contributed to the lower affective filter of my students, I should have chosen a more challenging book to facilitate development and extend the students' ZPD. This easy book was useful in encouraging students' participation, and made them proactive in the class.

Linguistic knowledge in English was not a decisive factor in enjoying English

storybooks for students in the class. In terms of literacy education, there is no sentence introduced in 3rd grade textbooks, only the alphabet and words with less than two syllables. Sentences composed of less than 5 words such as ‘*We have fish*’ or ‘*I want some juice*’ are introduced in 4th grade textbook. Even though this storybook had a lot of words and complicated sentences compared to their textbooks, the students did not regard it as being difficult because they had previous knowledge about colors and animals in English and were already familiar with some of the content. I decided not to make the national curriculum an absolute standard in lesson planning but rather to closely observe how students were doing in the class in order to identify their potential ZPD. I planned to do book-making activity for the next lesson initially, but I had to start earlier this time. I did the storytelling class in my own classroom so the required lesson materials were readily available. I was able to make quick transitions using the available resources when things went differently from the initial plan. Students made their own book using concepts and ideas from *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* They recycled the repetitive parts in the book and made some changes to the colors and kinds of animals. The class time finished before they finished their work. I told them that they could finish in the next class and dismissed them.

The third lesson. The third lesson for *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* was held in two days. I was concerned that some students would not show up because of the assignment and lapse of time. Fortunately, only two students missed the class, so 12 students attended in total. One of them stopped by my classroom before the storytelling class to explain why he was not able to come and the other student did not come because she caught a cold. I was impressed that students missed because of

legitimate reasons and took the reasons into serious consideration. However, none of the students completed the assignment, so I allowed them 20 minutes to complete their book and another 20 minutes to present their books.

Book making is common in regular elementary schools Korea because it significantly improves literacy and creativity. Johnson (1999) asserts that when students write text in order to make a book, they tend to be organized and write much more compared to when they do not make books. Above all, they feel a sense of accomplishment making their own book. Making a book is an effective strategy for reinforcing the affective aspect as well as improving writing competency. Holdaway (1986) argues that making books presents opportunities to internalize the target language by facilitating expressions based on understanding. In addition, making books promotes oral language and literacy development synthetically in the process of sharing their book with peers. As a result, students are motivated to read again. After observing how students were doing in making book of their own, I came to confirm that making book was a good strategy to juggle different ZPD of individual in a whole class instruction which uses one book for every student. Even though students were learning the same book, the book they made on their own came out differently depending on their English knowledge and experience related to the subject, which gave me hints how should design the following lesson to better meet student's needs.

Students changed the kind of animals and their colors from *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* and made sentences in their book using the same sentence structure in *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* Some of the animals they included in their books were dogs, cats, elephants, and zebras. These animals were

already familiar to them. As they colored their illustrations with crayons and wrote sentences on each page like an actual book, students were able to easily understand their peers' work simply by looking at their illustrations. Students' responses were aggressive. They giggled when Soyoung showed a pink elephant, laughed at the striped dog that Hangyul drew, and even suggested making the yellow cat that Chaeun draw into gold. They kept on asking questions in Korean such as "what is 'glittering' in English?", "what is striped in English?", or "what is the color orange in English?" Sometimes their peers were able to answer before I did. The book making process was not silent. It was instead a very active, conversation filled event. I only intervened when I was needed. Contrary to the very first class when they introduced themselves, everyone was willing to raise their hands and share their work with the class. They even competed to be the first one to show off their work. I allowed every student the chance to present his/her book and displayed it in the back of the classroom after the presentations were complete. The students read their books written in English and when others had questions, they answered and explained in Korean. The students' books were easy to understand with the help of illustrations, so students only asked a couple of questions.

Exit card. Before leaving I asked students to write an exit card to get information about their impressions and thoughts. I received 12 responses in total and they were written in Korean expressing their thoughts clearly. Soyoung wrote "I read many English books before but this class was special. I cannot believe I learned an English storybook thoroughly in three lessons which were not even boring. I hope the rest of the class would be like this, hopefully with more active games. I have done something. I felt like I could enjoy English storybooks just as I do Korean storybooks." (영어 책을 많이 읽어봤지만,

스토리텔링교실은 특별함. 3시간 수업이 지루하지 않긴 처음. 앞으로도 게임도 하면서 이렇게 재밌었음 좋겠어요. 한글책처럼 영어책도 재밌게 읽고싶어요.) I asked her to explain her prior experience with storytelling. She said it was very straightforward and consisted of reading and doing worksheets in a single lesson. It seemed as though she was not too enthusiastic about her prior storytelling experience. Sohl wrote “I feel great after being able to read and understand an English storybook. I’m glad that I got feedback from you when I was reading the book. This was the first time someone listened to me and encouraged while I tried to read an English book. Thank you, Mrs. Lee!” (영어책을 읽을줄 알아서 정말 좋아요. 선생님이 제가 잘 하는지 봐주셔서 좋아요. 영어책 읽는거 누가 봐주긴 첨이라..고맙습니다!) I regret that I did not investigate further what specific feedback was useful and how it worked for him to be better in English, however I came to be assured that he certainly needed emotional support and nice warm body to be with him while he was in the middle of learning and he appreciated my attention to him. Chaeun wrote, “I feel bad for missing the second lesson. I am never going to miss the class again, for sure! I want to be better in English.” (두번째 수업 빠진거 완전 후회..담부터 다신 안빠질 거예요. 영어 잘하고 싶당.) Seungyoun (3rd grader) realized that she was much better in English than she thought she was. She wrote, “I am amazed that I can read an English storybook. I am looking forward to the next book to read!” (영어책을 읽을 수 있다니 완전 놀람. 다음책은 뭘 읽을지 기대됨) Seungjae wrote, “It was a good idea that I turned the yellow cat into a gold cat. All other animals are funny. I think I am pretty good at English. I am anxious for the next class.” (노랑 고양이를 금색으로 바꾸길 잘한 것 같아요. 다른 동물들도 모두

웃겼어요. 내가 영어를 그래도 꽤 잘하는 것 같아요. 다음시간이 기다려져요.) It was nice that Seungyoun and Seungjae came to see themselves positively through the storytelling experience. I was glad that Hangyul was not grumpy any longer. She wrote, “Making the book was fun. I love it. Can you give us more sour jellies next time, hopefully with some chips? Hehehe!”(책만들기 재밌어요. 지렁이제리랑 과자 더 주세요 ㅋㅋ) Out of the 12 papers that I collected, one student had complaints. Eunjin said, “I do not like to read the book over and over again. Two times is good enough for me. I want to read a little more difficult book, if you are going to help me. By the way, why don’t we have snack party regularly in this class? Thank you for the snacks today, but can you bring orange juice instead of apple juice next time?” (계속 읽기 힘들어요. 2번만 읽었으면 좋겠어요. 쌤이 가르쳐주면서 더 어려운책 읽고 싶어요. 근데, 스토리텔링교실에서 매달마다 파티하면 안돼요? 오늘 과자 맛있었어요. 근데, 전 사과주스보다는 오렌지주스가 좋은데...) I felt sorry that I could not scaffold Eunjin appropriately as it turned out she didn’t feel challenged through the lessons. Also, I thought that even though Eunjin was the only one mentioned complaints, other 4th graders could possibly in the same shoe with Eunjin as their English proficiency was no worse than Eunjin, but they might have not expressed their feeling with the pressure that they could not write negative opinion about the teacher. As a teacher conducting whole class instruction and managing a diverse level of students, meeting individual needs for instruction to occur in the ZPD was always a difficult task. From the first book lessons, I was already struggling to juggle many different ZPDs. The funny thing about Eunjin was that she wrote about having snacks and a party just as Hangyul did. Eunjin usually did

not joke with me. It seemed that she felt closer and more relaxed around me than she did initially. For 3rd grader Seungyoun, this book was just appropriate; she was slightly challenged in the beginning but completed the book after receiving assistance from her peers and the teacher during lessons. She eventually felt confident reading English books after all the lessons and was motivated to read next books. Her classroom teacher was concerned about her lack of confidence in learning during the interview, but she was completely outspoken while learning this book. She sat next to Soyoung and they did activities together as a pair. It was nice to see a student progressing through my teaching practice.

Overall, even though *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* was joyful and easy enough to encourage confidence in most students. On a surface level, it looked like the lessons went smooth and students followed my lead well, but I could not help but admit that this book might have been an ineffective choice for high achieving students who look for challenges in their ZPD. Students who participated in the storytelling class voluntarily had special and unique expectations for the class that I could not ignore. Although the storytelling class was small, the students had high expectations.

Book 2. *The Wheels on the Bus.* As a teacher and a researcher, I kept on trying to improve my teaching practice and search for answers for my research questions. The lessons of *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* gave me a lesson that I need to choose a book with more difficult vocabulary but do not have to frustrate the motivated students from the easy book. Even though *The Wheels on the Bus* looks as easy as *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* the vocabulary in this book is much more difficult because Korean students do not have chances to see the words in this book around their

environment in their life. This book is short and the sentence structure is simple. Most importantly, it is fun to read. I thought this book can better cover diverse needs of students. Even though I was an elementary school teacher, I was somewhat reluctant to use music and dance as part of the activities. Not because they were too difficult or useless, but because I felt embarrassed and uncomfortable singing and dancing in front of students. Even so, I could not deny that music and dance are significant in teaching English, especially in dealing with rhymes. *The Wheels on the Bus* was a good choice to use music in reading storybooks. I could not deprive students of the chance to enjoy the beauty of rhyme just because I did not like to sing. Fortunately, the song was simple and the dance video could be found easily on the internet. The song based on the book was quite famous among children in the U.S. but not a lot of students in Korea knew it. Children in this particular area where English learning environment was not as rich as it was in Seoul were especially unaware of the song. With the development of technology at schools in Korea, it was possible to take advantage of all the resources on internet and display them directly to the big screen TV in every classroom, so I mustered up the courage to read, sing and dance using this book.

The first lesson. In the first lesson of *The Wheels on the Bus*, I allowed students to explore the book for five minutes for them to have self-reflective experience in learning English. I was wondering if five minutes exploring the book really worked for motivation and comprehension, so I observed students carefully and described their behavior in my fieldnotes on Sep 19th, 2012:

Seungyoun giggled and said, “Wow, teacher! Each page has the same word over and over. It looks like I know many of them already. Amazing!” I(샘,

페이지마다 똑 같은 단어가 또나오고, 또나오고..보니까 다 아는 단어예요.
 와!) It seemed like Seungyoun recognized the repetition having read the
 repetitive *Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?*, which was full of
 repetition. Hangyul was making up a story looking at the pictures and looking for
 funny points saying “Look at this bold clown. The birds must have come out of
 his hat. It might be because it is slippery, ha ha!” (대머리 광대봐라! 새가
 분명히 대머리 아저씨 머리에서 나왔을걸? 머리가 미끄럽거든. 킁킁!)
 Soyoung and Sohl were reading aloud the book smoothly without stopping, but I
 was not sure yet if they understood the book right. Seungjae was looking at the
 book for a while and shouted with emotion, “Wow! I do not know less than 5
 words in the book!” (와, 모르는 단어가 5개도 안돼요!) Eunjin was quietly and
 slowly turning pages. Even though the classroom was noisy and did not look
 under control, individual students were all doing something meaningful to
 interpret the book on their own before my intervention.

In the previous book *Brown Bear, brown Bear, What do you See?*, I started a
 lesson by reading aloud, but for this book I let them listen to the music first and showed
 them how to dance through a video clip in YouTube. Even though I had not explained
 each sentence in Korean, they seemed to understand that the book went together with the
 motions in dance. I sang the song phrase by phrase and let students repeat after me. I then
 explained it in Korean. To help them sing better, it was necessary to read it correctly. I
 read it aloud and let students follow after me again, phrase by phrase. We then took turns
 reading. I asked students to practice reading as a pair. During reading practice I walked
 around the classroom and gave feedback to individual students. All students including the

3rd graders learned the book quickly. Because the book was composed of simple repetitive phrases, I was worried that the 4th graders would be discouraged by the monotonous repetition and lack of a plot. We read aloud together and sang the song again and finished the first lesson.

The second lesson. In the second lesson, I asked the students to do a book making activity in order to challenge them after an easy first lesson. As most students liked drawing and coloring I gave them two options. One was to make a coloring book looking at ‘Wheels on the Bus.’ They could either copy sentences in the book or write sentences in Korean. This activity was for those who understood the book but were not yet advanced enough to create a similar book independently. The other activity was to create an original version of *The Wheels on the Bus*. In order to make a similar book with different words, students were to use words they already knew and place them in their story appropriately.

Considering that the students learned the alphabet in the 2nd semester of 3rd grade, this literacy centered book making activity would be quite difficult and not parallel to the sequence of the national curriculum of English. However, I carefully followed individual’s ZPD rather than the flow of the national curriculum to facilitate development efficiently. I thought the book making activity was efficient for several reasons. First, the students were already familiar with book making activities especially in Korean literacy classes. It would be easier for students to do activities similar to what they were already accustomed to, thus helping to alleviate the apprehension and anxiety related to learning English. Second, many students in the storytelling class were high achievers and aggressive learners. Their English literacy competency was diverse because of

differences in grade level and English learning experiences outside of school. Book making was not a monotonous activity, so high achievers were motivated as long as assistance was available. Book making was kind of an open-ended activity that did not set any specific standards or guidelines for students to reach. They could make a book that reflected their literacy capacity. Third, many elementary students had a higher level of vocabulary than the national curriculum stated because of the various avenues available that exposed them to English such as TV, street signs, brand names, computer games, and movies. In addition, many students started English education in kindergarten informally. According to the Korea Institute of Child Care and Education (2011), the average age to start learning English is 3.7 and 92.7% of children start to learning English when they are three to five years old. Considering this English fever in Korea, it would not be overwhelming to try more literacy-centered activities in the afterschool programs where students voluntarily gather to study English more in depth. Even though 3rd graders were supposed to start learning literacy beginning in the 2nd semester, none of the 3rd graders in the storytelling class came without any literacy knowledge at all. They also knew the alphabet and were eager to read more words to interpret the world around them as Korean students had more chances to see than hear English in their environment.

I did not anticipate students creating a few extra pages of their own when I asked them to add pages in *The Wheels on the Bus*. Copying sentences in English or writing them in Korean was good enough. They practiced English writing without forceful memorization and they were humming the melody of the song that accompanied the book. Among the students, Sohl was using his English knowledge to add some of his own creative pages. Figure 7 is an illustration of pages from his book. Simply using 4th grade

level words, he successfully made new *The Wheels on the Bus* pages. At the end of the lesson, I showed everybody Sohl's work. He was very proud of his accomplishment. Even though he created pages using easy words that any student in the storytelling class would know, how he managed the words appropriate at the context was worthy of praise. To impress students in the storytelling class who could not muster up their courage to make use of their English knowledge actively, I spoke highly of Sohl's work and encouraged students not to be worried about making mistakes or inappropriate expressions.

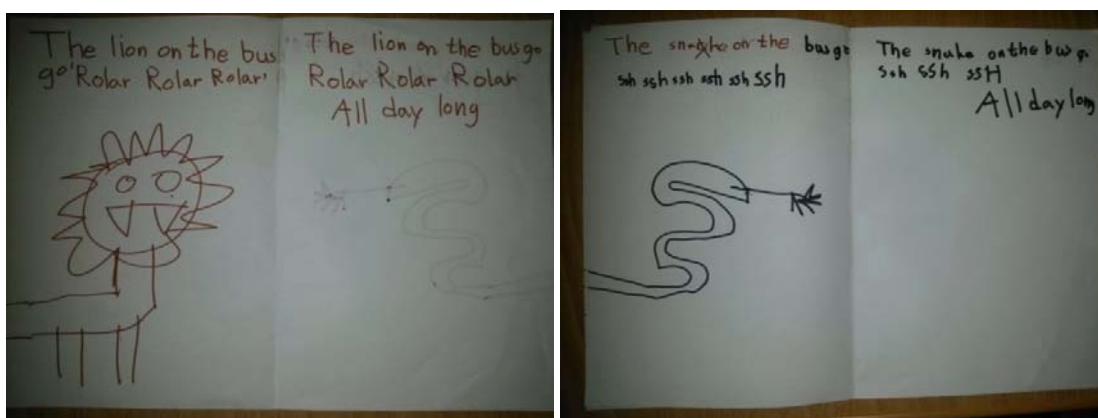


Figure 7. Pages in *Wheels on the bus* created by Sohl. Even though he misspelled a word (*roar* into *rolar*), he followed the style and repetitive phrase of the original book and utilized knowledge of his English effectively to make a book of his own.

Two lessons were good enough for *The Wheels on the Bus*. 3rd graders enjoyed this book very much, but I was worried if 4th graders could be bored even though they did not behave or spoke so. It was not easy to juggle between 3rd and 4th graders and finding out appropriate difficulty level was one of my primary concerns from the beginning. However, seeing how much Sohl was challenged while making pages for *The Wheels on the Bus* with his English knowledge, I started to think that the best way in a whole class instruction would be to allow students to take initiative learning within their ZPD and

take full advantage of the instruction provided as a whole class and the assistance that they need individually. It is difficult for teachers by themselves to accommodate diverse ZPDs in a public school class in a Korean environment. Individual students need to take the lead and the teacher should be available to assist the student. For this to be possible, students should be intrinsically motivated, have confidence, feel free to make mistakes, and be well aware of themselves. Here, I came to be assured again; the driving force to make progress in learning English lies in one's affective aspect. When affective factors are fulfilled, intellectual scaffolding within a student's ZPD can occur smoothly.

Singing *The Wheels on the Bus* song together, I finished the lesson of the book. In the next book, I wanted to see how affective factors could take the students where they might not have thought they could be by choosing a somewhat more challenging book.

Book 3. *The Gruffalo*. *The Gruffalo* was a more traditional storybook.

Considering the grammatical factors and vocabulary suggested by the national curriculum, this book was slightly difficult for many of the 3rd and 4th graders. The storyline was not complicated to understand or repetitive and the message was clear. It was humorous and the characters were appealing. *The Gruffalo* presented opportunities to take advantage of reading strategies that students acquired through reading books in their native language. Even though the story was long and had many characters and scenarios, there were repetitive sentences and phrases the students would be able to recognize. The story development attracted even the 3rd graders who would more than likely short of the vocabulary to understand the book completely. The vocabulary was also challenging for the 4th graders despite their being high-achievers in English. I purposely planned to put them in this situation intending that students would come to realize that it was not

impossible to enjoy a book that contained vocabulary they could not understand as long as they focused on and identified the words they knew among the words they did not. Also, I wanted to encourage them to confront the unknown with confidence. I wanted to see how affective factors such as encouragement, confidence, emotional support, as well as cognitive factors such as linguistic knowledge would work in expanding students' ZPD in learning English.

A Korean proverb says 'once started, it is half way done'. From my experience, this statement was very accurate in relation to Korean students reading English storybooks, especially when they were already fluent readers of Korean books. Students initially would not even pick up an English book, but once they started to read it, they usually did better than expected. In 2011, I read English storybooks to 6th graders in my class 2 hours a week throughout a year. At first, students were reluctant to read English books especially when they felt lost with so many unknown words. Eventually, I noticed that they began to read English books more frequently as they gained experience and became more comfortable. Their vocabulary did not improve very much within a year, but the students, especially those who enjoyed Korean books, developed strategies to deal with English texts. Reading was not about synthesizing individual words and analyzing them, but combining experience, knowledge, literacy strategies, and vocabulary. Vocabulary was significant, but not decisive. Observing the growth of 6th grade students in my class, I began to wonder if it would be applicable to students who had a much less developed vocabulary as well as students in lower grade levels. In order to promote development in the storytelling class, I had to provide these motivated students a chance to advance in a sheltered environment. As Eunjin mentioned, the class should not be

boring.

The first lesson. In order to make the lessons of *The Gruffalo* into a success for every student, I set up a more detailed lesson plan. I set the objective of the first lesson as ‘students can identify the books storyline or theme.’ The teaching flowed like following procedures;

1. Students watched a video clip about the Gruffalo and then take five minutes to explore the book and try to find clues.
2. I read the book aloud and students talked about their experiences and related opinions about the book.
3. I read the book aloud and explained each sentence in Korean.
4. I asked students to repeat after me.
5. I taught phonics for five minutes highlighting key words from the book; the pronunciation of *ou* in words like *house, mouse, ground, and out*. I next talked about and the pronunciation *oo* in *took, look, gook, wood, food, toowhoo, and soon*.
6. Students repeated after me again.
7. I gave the students seven minutes to study vocabulary by themselves and walked around the classroom providing assistance.
8. I wrapped up and announced plans for the next class.

I handed out *The Gruffalo* storybook to every student. None of the students were familiar with the book. I started the class by showing a five minute video clip of the book to motivate them. After watching, I allowed them about three minutes to guess what the story would be about by looking at the illustrations and words they knew in the book.

Students were overwhelmed at the amount of pages and length of text in the book. They started to complain before they even started reading. In spite of this fuss, some students started to read the book and were competing to see if they could understand the story the fastest. Soyoung and Sohl read the book aloud. I assumed that they were using phonetic knowledge as well as their vocabulary because I knew that there were some words that they would not know such as *stroll*, *through*, and *underground*. Hangyul was counting the number of words that she knew and complained that it was too much work. To prevent any frustration from unknown words, I asked students to focus on guessing by looking at the pictures and trying to make a story using the words that they already knew because it would be almost impossible to find a book composed of only the words that elementary students in Korean environment would know. I expected them to enjoy the English book as if they were reading a Korean book and not to analyze words and sentences as they usually did when reading any difficult text either in English or Korean. Coady (1979) pointed out that if second language learners read laboriously word-by-word and checked unfamiliar words as they encountered them, it would slow down the speed of reading. By reading slowly, exposure to English text is limited, the degree of comprehension decreases, and reading for pleasure becomes difficult. After guessing for couple of minutes, I asked students what they thought the story was about. Even though none of the students raised their hands to answer, I noticed that some students were answering quietly to themselves. Sohl muttered something, but hesitated to share what he thought. I noticed that they had some ideas but were concerned about losing face if they were incorrect. Even though I told them it did not matter whether their answer was correct or not, they were still hesitant. I did not nominate anybody to speak, only because I was being

sensitive to their feeling ashamed of answering incorrectly. Students were more sensitive about getting the correct answer in English class compared to other classes.

At first, I read the book so students could listen. Then, I read the book again and explained the meaning of every sentence in Korean, and the students nodded their heads acknowledging that they understood. I let them repeat every sentence after me. I told students to follow me as far as they could and not to worry if they could not. Students loudly repeated after competing with each other, but most 3rd graders like Seungyeon, Insung, Iechan, Chaeun were only moving their mouths and self-consciously checking out how the other students were doing. Even though they obviously had a hard time, none of the students spent class time distracted. They all stayed very focused throughout. The students were doing their best and I was impressed by their attitude.

Elementary students were supposed to learn 480 to 520 words from 3rd to 6th grade according to the national curriculum. This meant that the 3rd and 4th grade students in my class would have known no more than 300 words. Considering that the average child in the U.S. understands 10,000 words by the time they go to school (Gray, 2006), even books for toddlers would be overwhelming to elementary students in Korea.

40 minutes was too short to read and understand the entire book but complete understanding was not the initial purpose of reading this book. If the students understood the general idea of the book, it was successful enough. At the end of the first lesson for this book, I gave the students about 7 minutes to study by themselves. Students studied vocabulary that they thought they needed to remember or practiced reading. I helped students one by one to facilitate their development. *Figure 8* shows how the students studied vocabulary and how I checked their work. The students picked the words of their

choice out of the book and wrote them in their English notebook to practice. Writing the Korean equivalent below the English was up to students depending on their learning style. By doing this, I intended for students to broaden their vocabulary and more importantly, learn how to study English for themselves using resources available around them when they could not afford tutoring or hagwons.

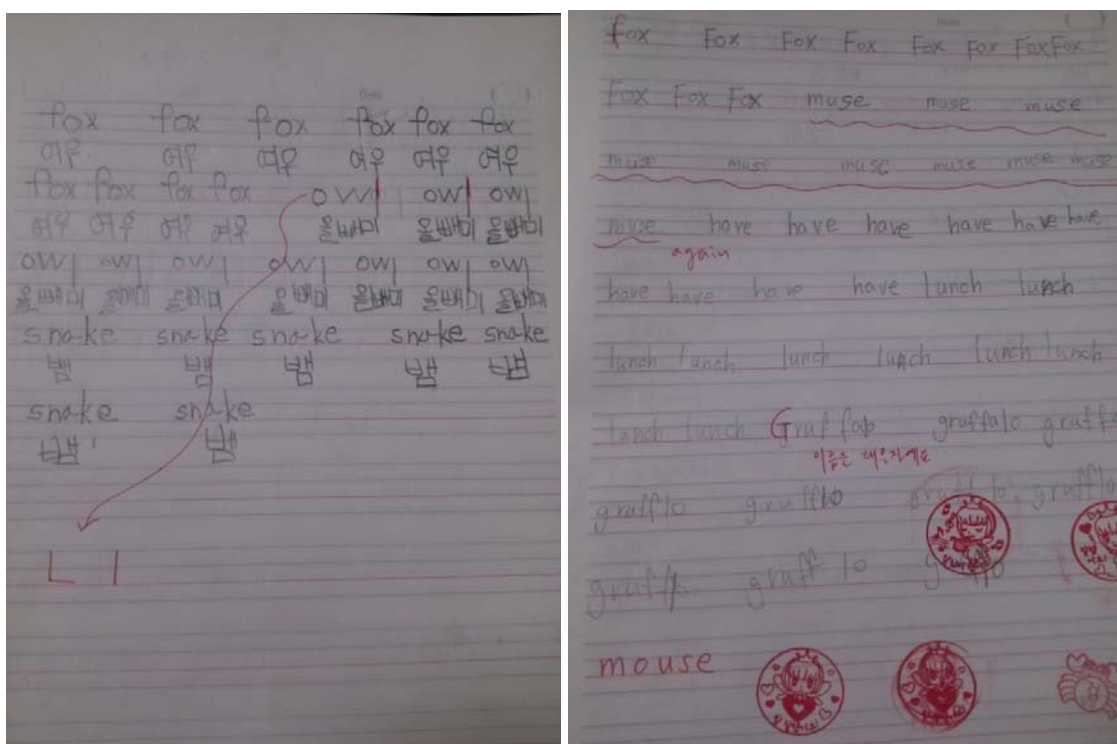


Figure 8. Vocabulary practice by students. Students picked up words they thought worthwhile to memorize and significant in understanding the book. I checked misspelled words and mistakes and gave feedback for them to improve.

While I walked around the classroom, I tried to see whether this book would be way out the ZPD for some students. Fortunately, none of students idled away but they worked on their part to understand the book. Most students practiced writing vocabulary in the book. 3rd grader Seungyoun and 4th grader Seohyun practiced some of the main character's quotes, and Sohl, Soyoung, Hangyul, and Eunjin tried to read and comprehend the sentences in the book in more detail. Students continuously asked me

how to pronounce words and the meaning of words and sentences. They were also assisting each other. Students acquired a better sense of purpose and direction and ended up using the study time efficiently.

At the end of the first lesson, I asked students for feedback about their experience. They became enthusiastic to *The Gruffalo* and repeated after me when I read. Their complaints gradually disappeared. I gained confidence that students liked the book in the end. No one was distracted while I was reading, which would have not been possible if students were not engaged. By the end of the class, students no longer looked confused and appeared to be quite relieved. Sohl jokingly said, “This book is kind of cheating. It is long, but many sentences appear over and over again.” Students agreed with what he was saying by nodding their heads and saying “yes.” I was glad to see how students responded to what Sohl said; none booed on Sohl’s comment, which was amazing because I was worried this comment can be seen as snobbish by the peers. Observing how students were spending their individual study time by practicing words or reading aloud, I figured out that my students were willing to take initiative to understand this book better on their part. I was impressed to see how they were growing as an English language learner. Students checked out *The Gruffalo* to practice reading at home.

After class finished, I regretted having the students share their opinions about the book only in front of the entire class. If I had let them discuss it in small groups, they might have been more relaxed in sharing their ideas and handled mistakes with less embarrassment. I thought I had better work harder to search for ways to enhance students’ affective aspects for them to counter balance the cognitive challenge they faced reading this book.

The second and the third lesson. Before the second lesson started, I was guessing nervously how many students would come to class. There were 8 students in the first lesson. I was worried they might have been discouraged by the first lesson. Because the book was challenging compared to the standard set in the national curriculum, I expected many students would be stressed or overwhelmed. I waited for students to come and was going to visit the absent students after the class individually in order to critically assess my teaching and to ask what made him/her skip the class.

To my surprise, none of the students skipped the second lesson! In addition, one more student joined and the number totaled nine. The new student's name was Chaehyun. She was a 4th grader. Chaehyun said she heard about the storytelling class from Soyoung and other participating 4th graders. She asked, "What is so special about this class? What Soyoung says about the class interests me. She always talks about the storytelling class." She seemed to be full of curiosity. I was impressed that students talked about storytelling class around the school, which to me, indicated how students had grown fond of the class. Also, it was a good idea that I put individual student's ZPD as priority in choosing a book rather than the national curriculum and tried to expand ZPD by choosing a more challenging book. By reinforcing affective aspects, students with less ability could be engaged in the reading within their available capacity.

After class, I had a conversation with Chaehyun to talk about the storytelling class and the study that I was doing. She was glad that she could be a participant. I handed her a consent assent form, and she brought it back to me in the next class with her and her parent's signature.

As soon as she came to the class, I set a time and date to interview her classroom

teacher. According to her classroom teacher, Chaehyun was a hard-working student and was very interested in reading and writing in Korean. She always got good scores on English tests, but the classroom teacher was not sure about her potential in English because Chaehyun had never been involved with challenging activities in English in her class. What stood out to Chaehyun's teacher was that she copied sentences from an English bible into a notebook to strengthen her faith as a Christian and to receive a present at her church despite being unable to understand what the sentences meant. She was a high achiever in most subjects according to her test scores and class activities. She was eager to go to a hagwon to learn English, but she could not afford it. Her family received government support, so the only way she could learn English formally was at school. Copying English sentences from the bible into a notebook was the only thing she could do without anyone's help. She strongly desired to read English books and eventually the bible. It was impressive to me that a 4th grader could endure the difficult and boring verses in the bible in order to reach the goal of learning to speak English. From that observation I learned that I should not under-evaluate my students' will power. Strong motivation will overcome what can appear to be impossible.

I started the second lesson by reading *The Gruffalo* aloud. Soyoung and Sohl were reading most of the sentences correctly with me and others were reading the repetitive and easier parts such as "Oh help! Oh no! It's a Gruffalo!" It was a big improvement compared to the first lesson because they were initially overwhelmed and complained about the length of the book before even knowing the story. From the first lesson, Sohl figured out that even though the book had many pages, the actual amount to study was not as much as he imagined in fact because of the repetition. It gave him a

valuable lesson that ‘you can’t judge a book by its cover.’ In addition, Hangyul, who complained very much in the beginning, overcame her fear of the many unknown words in the book when she realized that she was not the only one. She saw how her peers were stunned by the book and struggled at first. She giggled and said, “What is difference between Soyoung and me? I thought she would be better.” (소영이나 나나... 소영이는 엄청 잘하는줄 알았는데..) They felt like they were in the same shoes. When they built good rapport, each other can be a reciprocal support. Their confident reading did not necessarily mean that they fully understood the book. They depended on phonetic knowledge, remembered some words from the first lesson, and gained confidence after realizing that long books were not always difficult.

In the first lesson of *The Gruffalo* while I gave individual assistance, I realized that Soyoung and Sohl had a considerable level of phonetic knowledge. They knew how all the consonants and vowels were supposed to be pronounced even though they were unaware of some of the exceptions. With a little assistance they learned how to read the book through entirely. I wondered how Sohl achieved and caught on so well only through public school English education without the support of hagwon experience or worksheet service. I had a brief conversation with him after the class. Sohl said that he ‘just knew’ how to make sounds. Even though the only English education he had received was through curricular English education at school, he enjoyed English very much. He said, “I like to look for words that I know when I am outside of school. I try to guess the meaning of words that I do not know. I try to read any English sign I see. Some signs do not make sense. You know, Orange Factory? I thought that shop sold oranges or fruit, but they sell clothes. It is strange. I keep thinking about a better name for the shop.” (밖에서 다닐 때

내가 아는 단어를 찾는거 재밌어요. 모르는 단어는 무슨뜻일까 생각해봐요. 영어 간판도 읽어보긴하는데요, 어떤 간판은 이해가 안가요. 샘, 오렌지팩토리 아시죠? 그 가게는 오렌지나 과일 파는줄 알았는데, 옷파는 데레요. 헐. 그 가게 이름으로 뭐가 더 좋을지 계속 생각중이에요.) I realized Sohl was intrinsically motivated to learn English, and he needed more resources around to satisfy his desire. He was critically observing English resource around him and kept on leading himself to the development of English knowledge under the environment that he could afford. He was self-driven to expand his ZPD, so he needed someone to scaffold him desperately. I thought of the comment he made saying he was glad I listened to his English carefully and that I was the only one who gave him English feedback. As a teacher, it was a very rewarding experience and motivated me to be better prepared for the class.

I asked Soyoung how she was able to read sentences. She said she went to an English hagwon from the 2nd grade where she did not take any phonics programs specifically, but learned phonetic knowledge from the hagwon teachers when memorizing vocabulary. She said she was required to memorize words in order to take an achievement test. According to her, it was very difficult to memorize all the words. Just as I endured memorizing the words and sentences in the textbook when I was in middle school to avoid corporal punishment, Soyoung endured the laborous process of memorizing English words to build a foundation for the English knowledge she would have to study in middle and high school later on. I thought to present Soyoung a more positive experience so that she could enjoy the process of learning English rather than regarding English as a subject to just get through. This would lead her to reach her full potential and expand her ZPD even more. All the other students except Soyoung and Sohl

were at least aware of consonant sounds but were confused with vowel sounds.

In the English textbooks for 3rd and 4th graders, phonics was taught in every chapter, so students were able to take advantage of those chances during elementary school education. I thought to set aside 5 minutes of my lesson to practice phonics not because phonics was key to understanding the book's content, but because it was a convenient way for students to learn how to decode English words and potentially be motivated to read even more by eliminating one of fussy factors in learning English. In an EFL environment where oral language fluency is difficult to achieve, phonetic knowledge can buffer the feeling of unfamiliarity of new words before coming into contact with written English. For native speakers who already know the proper pronunciation, phonetic knowledge would just be another way to reinforce and bring to the forefront detailed instructions to ease the flow of reading. For EFL students, phonetic knowledge served as an usher into the world of new language. Without it, understanding words without pronouncing them appropriately would make the learning process even more difficult. Foreign language learning happens in an artificial environment, so it is a delicate task to motivate and maintain student's desire to learn such a vast amount of information. Through short lessons on phonics in each class, I wanted to challenge students to notice the English text around their environment and motivate them to engage unfamiliar words. With practice, I hoped that in time they would not hesitate to attempt new words, and that they would outgrow their inhibitions.

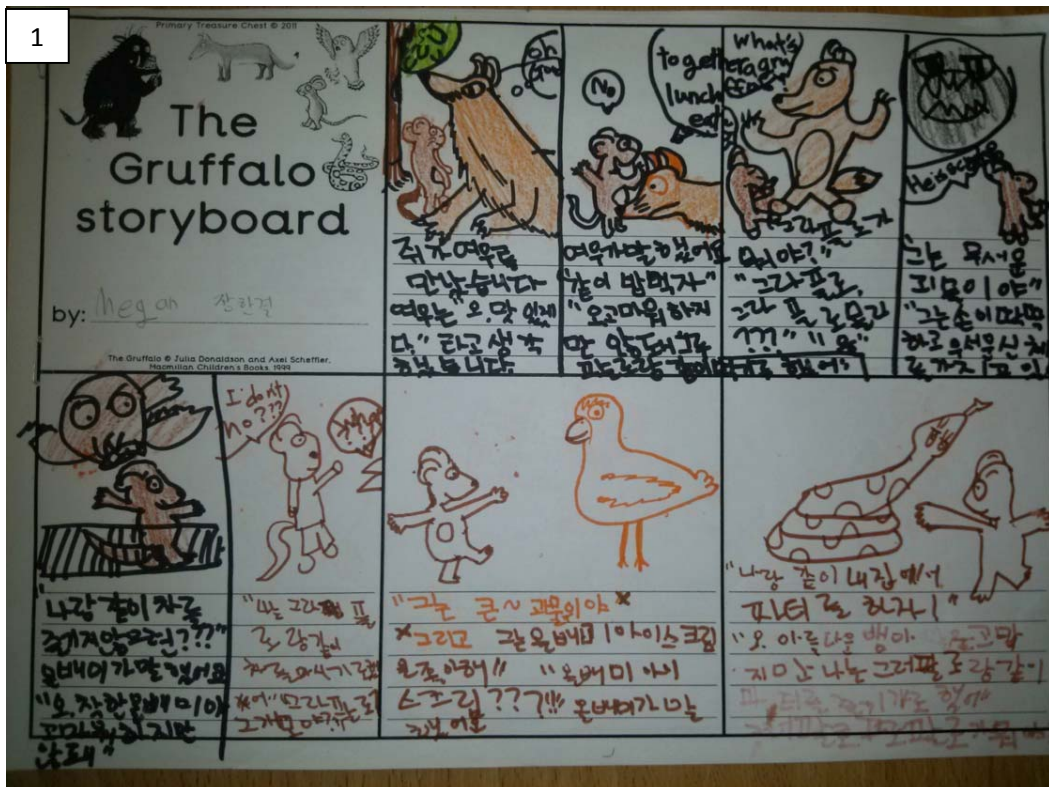
Seungyoun was the student I was most concerned about during the *The Gruffalo* lesson. She was usually reluctant to participate in activities during the storytelling class. When I handed out *The Gruffalo* in the first lesson, she was the most resistant of all the

students. When I taught some of the phonetic knowledge such as *oo* makes ‘ㅜ’ sound in Korean and *g* makes ‘ㄱ’ sound in Korean, she was eventually very attentive and practiced hard. I read the book much slower than the reader on the CD recording watching students’ response and pronouncing words very clearly with facial expressions and gestures. I read some challenging words such as *roasted*, *poisonous*, and *underground* over and over with students for practice. In the second lesson of *The Gruffalo*, Seungyoun showed great progress; she repeated after me more frequently than she did during the first lesson even though she mostly repeated after the easy, repetitive parts. She was willing to follow along and read aloud. She did not look overwhelmed like before but instead appeared passionate and aggressive. Her worksheet reflected that she understood the flow of the story well enough. I was not sure if she understood the story completely, but that was not my main concern. As long as she was involved in the lesson and displayed a positive attitude and enthusiasm, it was success.

Most students enjoyed the story and read the repetitive parts with me without my asking them to. Their voices got louder as they neared the end. The volume of their voices seemed to be proportional to their level of confidence. I was glad they enjoyed it.

After reading, I presented 6 different worksheets and asked them to do any worksheet of their choice. The students in my class had various levels of English proficiency, so I considered their competency and preference. With my other duties and obligations as a regular teacher, it would have been overwhelming if I had to make all the worksheets myself. Fortunately, I was able to find many worksheets about *The Gruffalo* on the book’s official website and through Google. I might not have chosen to read *The Gruffalo* if there were not already many resources available to support the lesson.

I did not intend for students to do all the worksheets I presented because of the time limit and the workload involved with learning so much new information, but the students were competing with each other to complete them all. I tried to help but they did not really need my assistance. They were helping each other and enjoyed cutting, coloring, drawing, and writing activities on their own. The most amazing part was that every student in my class was even willing to do a storyboard worksheet. I scheduled to do the presentation and role-play during the third lesson of the book, but it was not possible. The students were quickly completing all the worksheets, so I gladly gave them enough time to do so. Students rarely attempted all the optional work during class time, but it was obvious that students in the storytelling class were purposive and self-directed, which contributed to the class' success.



2

Primary Treasure Chest © 2011

The Gruffalo storyboard

by: 고승재 Ko Seung Je

The Gruffalo © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Hamilton Children's Books 1999

<p>1편 ~</p> <p>생쥐가 길을 가다가 풀밭에 만나서 놀랐어요. 올빼미의 귀가 연필 귀새 생쥐가 겁이 많았을 거 같아요.</p>	<p>생쥐가 꼬리를 내어 올빼미와 물리 인다래요. 또 그 꼬리를 무서운 발을 머리카락 대리를 가지고 있어요.</p>	<p>2편 ~</p> <p>생쥐가 올빼미가 어디있길 내고야 먼저 눈속으로 더욱 깊게 갔어요</p>
<p>올빼미 무서워서 도망. 날아요. 생쥐는 위기를 잘 대처했어요 생쥐가 안도의 한숨을 쉬고 있어요. 다음편 계속~</p>	<p>생쥐가 올빼미 만나서 놀랐어요 그 꼬리는 누구발까 다음편의 계속~</p>	<p>다들 물어봐</p>

3

Primary Treasure Chest © 2011

The Gruffalo storyboard

by: 김지은

The Gruffalo © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Hamilton Children's Books 1999

<p>여우가 씹을 지스러운 생쥐를 먹을려고 생쥐를 부르고 있 다. 생쥐가 Gruffalo를 얘기서 만난다고 하였다.</p>	<p>올빼미가 씹을 지스러운 생쥐를 먹을려고 생쥐를 부르고 있다. 생쥐가 Gruffalo를 얘기서 만난다고 하였다.</p>	<p>3편 ~</p> <p>BYE (안녕) 끝</p>
<p>정말 큰 생쥐가 생각했던 Gruffalo가 정말로 화 태났다.</p>	<p>Gruffalo가 생쥐와 친 구르 하자고 해서 생쥐가 부사였지만 같이 친구가 되면 습니다.</p>	

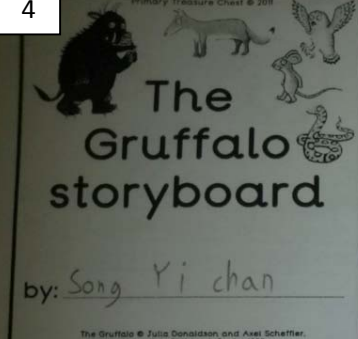
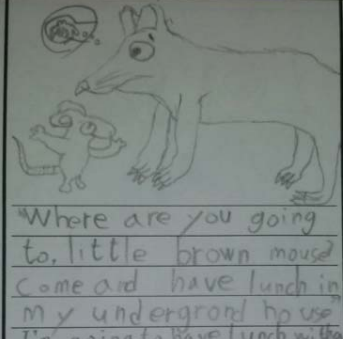
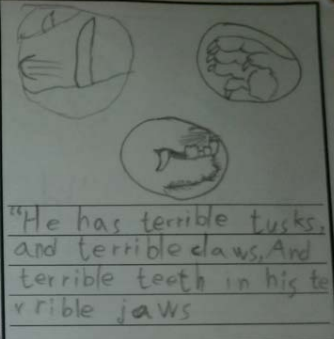

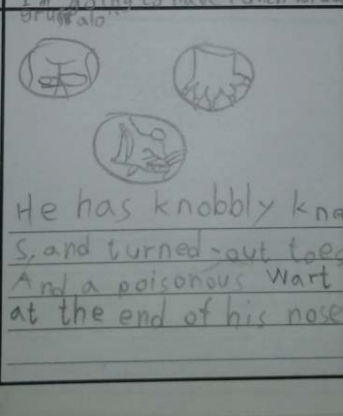
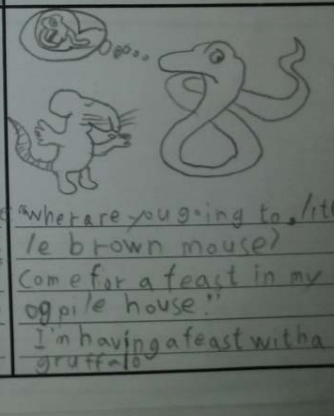
4

Primary Treasure Chest © 2011

The Gruffalo storyboard

by: Song Yi chan

The Gruffalo © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Macmillan Children's Books, 1999

	 <p>"Where are you going to, little brown mouse? Come and have lunch in my underground house. I'm going to have lunch with a gruffalo."</p>	 <p>"He has terrible tusks, and terrible claws, and terrible teeth in his terrible jaws."</p>
 <p>"Where are you going to, little brown mouse? Come and have tea in my tree-top house. I'm going to have t..."</p>	 <p>He has knobbly knees, and turned-out toes, and a poisonous wart at the end of his nose."</p>	 <p>"Where are you going to, little brown mouse? Come for a feast in my oggipile house. I'm having a feast with a gruffalo."</p>

5

Primary Treasure Chest © 2011

The Gruffalo storyboard

(English and Korean)

by: Lasso young

The Gruffalo © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, Macmillan Children's Books, 1999


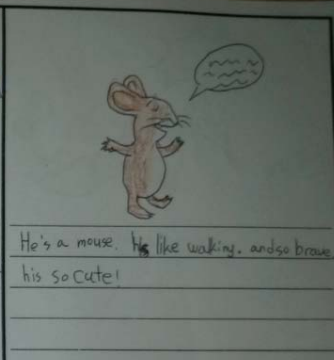
	 <p>He's a gruffalo, he have orange eyes, and his tongue is black, he has prickles all over his black, he is scary.</p>	 <p>He's a mouse. He like walking, and so brave his so cute!</p>
 <p>He's snake he have long body, he like mouse cook.</p>	 <p>He's Owl, he like rosted mouse.</p>	 <p>He's fox he have ~ Amazing is mp.</p>



Figure 6. The Gruffalo storyboard by students.

Figure 6 illustrates how students completed their storyboard up to their English competency. Storyboard 1, 2, and 3 were written in Korean. Students understood *The Gruffalo* and summarized the main concepts in the Korean language. Storyboards 4, 5, and 6 were written in English, but their literacy in English was greatly different. Storyboard 4 was written in English, but the sentences were copied from the book so it could hardly be said that he actually wrote this storyboard independently. The illustrations and writings matched correctly, so he could read and understand very well. Soyoung wrote the sentences in Storyboard 5. Different from Storyboard 4, she made all the sentences on the storyboard independently. She understood the book and summarized it in her own words. Sohl, who did Storyboard 6, not only understood the content of the book but also created his version of the story and wrote sentences in his own words on

the storyboard. When students were doing the storyboard, I did not give specific direction but saw how each student got through and gave help when they wanted. The students did the storyboard at the same time, after reading the same book but the outcome depended entirely on their English competency. I think as long as students are self-reflective, enjoy what they do in the class, and take initiative in their own learning, a wide range of individual differences can be addressed in a regular English class much larger than the storytelling class. Even though my students were doing the same worksheets, the results of their progress were different. During the process no one was left behind. Each student worked at his/her own pace within his/her ZPD which did not impede the regular class management.

While enjoying refreshments, students completed the worksheets. They asked each other questions and also received my assistance. They worked diligently to refine the storyboard worksheet. Presenting the storyboard was not really necessary because the students had already seen each other's work during the process of peer support. Students checked out *The Gruffalo* to practice reading at home. I finished the lesson announcing we were going to do The Gruffalo role playing activity during the next class meeting.

The fourth lesson. The fourth lesson of the book started with reading aloud as usual. I started with the students repeating after me, but it gradually changed into reading aloud together. They were distinctly more fluent than previous lessons. Before the role playing activity, the students and I practiced the role playing by reading the book. First, I read the narration part, the boys read Gruffalo, and the girls read the parts of the animals. Next, I read the narration, the girls Gruffalo, and the boys the animals. Then, I nominated a group of students for the narration part, another group for Gruffalo, and the third group

for the animals, and I let them read again. With the exception of Seungyeon and Eunjin, everyone stood up and read aloud with confidence and emotion. After 10 minutes of reading, I started the role playing activity. Even though I used the word *role play*, it was more likely a short sitcom where Gruffalo and animals had a conversation for a couple of minutes. It was a chance for students to talk about what they read in the book. The students thought they had to memorize sentences in the book in order to do the role playing and were a little overwhelmed. I explained that it was not like a real drama in which all the 'lines' had to be correct. I later thought that it would have been better to role play with masks and props but taking one more lesson to gather and make the materials seemed time-consuming. Also, the flow of lessons based on the book might have become pointless. I made three groups and allowed them 7 minutes to practice. In composing the group, I tried to distribute students according to their English competency, grade level, and personality. Even though it was a very simple role-playing activity and there were grammatical mistakes, I thought the activity was efficient because every student had the opportunity to speak English and understood the context in which the conversation could happen in reality. It would have been hard to bring up students to speak out the language, but with the storybook which provides rich context for students to understand better how language can be realized under certain situation, they were able to transfer their literacy knowledge into oral language easily with assurance. It demonstrated that literacy education and oral language education can be connected with each other. Literacy knowledge does not simply have to support oral communication as is set in the national curriculum but in fact stimulated and prompted to oral language development. It seems like that literacy and oracy is a reciprocal with each other, therefore which to be taught

first should not be set as an ever lasting principle but should be decided flexibly based on the characteristics of students and the learning environment.

Student felt a sense of achievement from the process of preparing and presenting role play, which made them feel confident when they spoke the language in front of others. Following is one of the role-plays done by a group of students. In writing it looks very simple, but students were laughing loudly to see their peers' acting:

Mouse: Hi, snake.

Snake: Let's go to my house.

Mouse: I go to see Gruffalo.

Snake: What is it?

Mouse: It is a monster. It likes snake ice cream.

Snake: Oh my god! Goodbye!

Feedback from colleagues. I invited my colleagues who are interested in teaching English to the storytelling class when I taught *The Gruffalo* lesson, and asked them to give me feedback in attempts to develop my storytelling class efficiently. None of them had anything negative to say but they did point out one thing. They noticed some 3rd graders did not look confident while reading the book aloud in the beginning of the class because the book looked very advanced for them. Their responses would have been more critical if they saw all the four lessons and how students were evolving throughout. In my fieldnotes on Oct. 19th, 2012, I summarized our mostly positive discussion based on the lesson about the book, *The Gruffalo*:

1. Using YouTube was a good resource to provide students with background knowledge when teaching something unfamiliar.

2. It was nice for students to explore the book before the teacher read it.
3. The procedure of reading aloud, reading with Korean explanations, and reading after the teacher was gradual.
4. Phonics instruction was done in relation to the book learned.
5. Individual study time was good as the teacher could give individual support and the student could strengthen what was learned during the lesson.
6. It was amazing that students were engaged in the storytelling class and were well aware of the lesson procedures that corresponded with the teacher's intentions.
7. It was amazing that students were willing to read this long book without speaking competition or exam involved.
8. The teacher read the book with enthusiastic intonation and gestures, allowing even the observing teachers to understand the book.
9. The lesson was well prepared.
10. The teacher had command of classroom English and mixed English and Korean appropriately.

Exit card. In the exit card, students described freely how they felt during the *The Gruffalo* lessons. The exit card was not for the purpose of improving their English literacy, but for me to obtain feedback from the lessons I implemented. It was written in Korean only for my students to express their opinions and thoughts fluently. Soyoung commented, "It's amazing that I enjoyed this long English book. Out of all the activities, I liked making the storyboard the most because I was able to draw, make a story, and

study English. I'm glad I used all my talents for the activities.” (내가 이렇게 긴 영어책을 읽다니 놀라워요. 활동했던것중에 스토리보드가 제일 재밌었어요. 그림도 그리고 이야기도 만들고 영어도 배우니까요. 완전 제 능력 발휘했거든요.)

As a teacher, it was very rewarding when I noticed how a student discovered the joy of learning. I felt like Soyoung's potential was ready to blossom as she figured out how enjoyable learning English could be. Hangyul's response was similar to Soyoung's. "I'm glad that I made another Gruffalo series on the storyboard worksheet. Aren't I good at English? Haha! I enjoyed eating snacks while looking at others' work and making comics (this is her expression of working on the storyboard). Please, make rest of the class like this!" (내가 그루팔로 시리즈를 만들다니 넘 좋아요. 저 영어 완전 잘하죠? ㅋㅋ 다른애들거 보면서 만화도 만들고 과자도 먹고 넘 좋아요. 다른 수업시간도 이렇게 해요!) I thought Hangyul's fondness for snacks was not simply about eating but at a deeper level, more about learning English in a relaxed environment. I was glad that she described storyboards as 'comics.' Considering how popular comics are among students, Hangyul must have not been overwhelmed or stressed while working on the storyboard. Sohl enjoyed role-playing the most. "It was the first time I had conversation speaking only in English this long in front of others. I was bored with the worksheets as they were too easy but I enjoyed helping others. I feel like going to the U.S. and making American friends. I want to see how good my English is." (태어나서 처음으로 다른사람앞에서 영어로만 대화해봤어요. 시험지는 완전 쉬웠는데 애들 도와주는건 재밌었어요. 미국가서 미국친구좀 사귀어봤으면 좋겠어요. 내 영어실력이 어느정도인지 보고싶어요.) Sohl's comment implies that students in an EFL environment could be

likely to regard speaking as a more difficult task than literacy competency. Even though Sohl was good enough to help his peers with worksheets, he was proud not because he helped his peers but because he could recite a few simple English phrases in front of others after all the reading and writing activities. This backs up the argument that oral language does not have to be a starting point for learning English in an EFL environment. Different from Sohl, a 3rd grader Chaeun liked the worksheets. “I was worried that I would be the only one left behind but the worksheets were not hard. The 4th graders are very friendly. I am glad that I have Soyoung *on-ni*¹ in the class. She always helps me a lot. I can get as much help as possible in this class from you and many on-nis so I do not have to worry. Honestly, I peeked at Soyoung *on-ni*’s worksheet when I did not understand how to do it and she was nice. I am happy that I have many nice *on-nis* in this class.” (저 혼자만 시험지 못 풀까봐 완전 걱정했는데, 4학년 언니들이 넘 잘해줘요. 소영언니랑 같이 있어서 좋아요. 소영언니가 많이 도와주거든요. 언니들도 잘 도와주고 쌤도 잘 도와줘서 이젠 별 걱정이 안돼요. 솔직히, 어떻게 하는지 모를때는 소영이 언니꺼 베낄때도 있었었는데, 언니가 그래도 괜찮데요. 스토리텔링반에 좋은언니들이 많아서 너무 좋아요.) Chaeun’s comment reveals how much the rapport was built between students in the storytelling class. Because of her close relationship with on-nis in the class, she felt safe and secure, which was her motivation to overcome difficulties and complete all the tasks required in the storytelling class. Seungjae was proud of himself. “I liked doing many kinds different activities about the book. I am proud of myself for reading such a difficult book from cover to cover. I

¹ on-ni means older sister basically, but it can be used by a female in referring to any older and friendly female even if she is not a family member.

will work hard to read faster than the 4th graders, so please teach us more phonics!”

(책으로 여러 활동을 하는게 재밌어요. 내가 책을 침부터 끝까지 읽다니 넘 자랑스러워요. 4학년보다 더 잘할수 있도록 노력할 테니까 파닉스좀 더 가르쳐주세요!) Even though Seungjae did well when reading *Brown Brown Bear What Do You See?* or *The Wheels on the Bus*, he did not regard reading those books as success. He felt himself a success when he overcame difficulties with the help of peers and the teacher within his ZPD when reading *The Gruffalo*. I realized through Seungjae’s comment that development through scaffolding in the ZPD is beneficial not only in terms of cognitive development but also affective development as well. Chaehyun wrote an exit card for the first time. “I should have joined in the class from the beginning. This is the best English class ever. Honestly! Please study a funny book again. I am excited!”

(스토리텔링반에 침부터 들어올걸 후회돼요. 완전 최고의 영어교실이에요! 재밌는책 또 읽어주세요. 짱이에요!) Eunjin’s response was simple as usual. “I enjoyed the book even though *The Gruffalo* itself was somewhat childish.” (그루팔로가 좀 유치하긴하지만 책은 재미있어요.) Seungyeon noted “I don’t know how to write many words in the book, but I understand the book. *The Gruffalo* is funny.” (책에 있는 단어중에 쓸줄 모르는 단어가 많긴한데, 책 내용은 알겠어요. 그루팔로 재밌어요.)

Even though it took more time to study *The Gruffalo* than other books, the students felt more accomplished than when they read easy books and were full of pride. Thinking over what to read next, I decided to do another book from the Gruffalo series again to take advantage of students’ confidence, enthusiasm, and familiarity with the Gruffalo. I expected that positive image about the Gruffalo series would reinforce interest

in English books. The next book chosen was *The Gruffalo's Child*.

Book 4. *The Gruffalo's Child*. At first I observed how students reacted when I gave them this book individually. I was not going to follow the routine of reading-activity-presentation for this book so I did not even set up a detailed lesson plan. Instead, I was going to give students enough time to explore the book and respond on their own.

A student shouted in amazement that Gruffalo existed as a series! All 9 students sitting in the classroom tried to read it spontaneously out of curiosity, which did not usually happen. I did not rush to read the book aloud and asked the students how they thought the book was. Several students said it looked doable and most others nodded making eye contact with me. I wondered what made them think it was doable. Sohl explained that all the characters in the Gruffalo's series were the same, so he felt like he could read it. I allowed them about 10 minutes to explore the book before I read it to them.

Students shared their thoughts about a possible plot with each other. They were allowed to use a dictionary in the classroom if needed. After 10 minutes of exploring, I read to them without Korean explanation and asked some questions:

1. Is Gruffalo's child a boy or a girl?
2. What season was it?
3. What animals did the Gruffalo's child meet?
4. Who was in the logpile house?
5. Who was in the treetop house?
6. Who was in the underground house?
7. Was the Big Bad Mouse really bad and scary?

I made closed ended questions to help students answer easily in English. I was concerned that if I asked open-ended questions, they would be overwhelmed trying to explain detailed information in English even though they understood the content. The students answered all the questions immediately except for question 1. Question 7 was the only open-ended question, but students answered, “no, he is smart” with ease. Question 1 was not really necessary information in understanding the book, but it was for students to see the book in more depth and try to find clues. The atmosphere was very energetic and passionate, so every student was eager to hit the right answer.

I read the book to them in English and explained it in Korean, and let them repeat short phrases after me, then longer phrases. I gave them 10 minutes to read and study words while I provided personal assistance to each student. Student’s questions were mostly about the parts where they missed the Korean explanation. I observed that the students were able to understand this book more than they did *The Gruffalo*. Chaeun and Soyoung took out English notebooks and practiced writing spontaneously. The students wondered if they needed to practice writing like Chaeun and Soyoung, and I told them it was up to them. Chaeun, Soyoung, and Chaehyun practiced writing while the other students practiced only reading aloud. I was impressed to see students working diligently to study English depending on their learning style even without any forceful situation such as quiz or a competing event. Their purpose was purely to understand the book better and the intrinsically motivated students reached at this destination naturally without my active intervention. With this book, I did not do any of after reading activities such as worksheets, role playing, or book making because I did not want the lesson to become redundant. It took only one lesson to study *The Gruffalo’s Child* and students

checked out the book to read more at home.

Book 5. *My Mom*. Successful lessons with the Gruffalo series reinforced my confidence in promoting development within students' ZPD with appropriate support and encouragement. It seemed that students were satisfied more when they completed challenging books as opposed to easier ones according to their exit card comments and my observations; none of the students wrote negative comments on the exit card when we studied *The Gruffalo*, but some complained when we studied *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* I tried to find books the students could relate to and that were as challenging as *The Gruffalo* series. I thought *My Mom* was a good choice because it contained a few sentences per page with repetitive phrases and mom would be a good subject to read.

The first lesson. I thought students would react positively to this book because the story was something they all could relate to and the vocabulary was not too complicated. I omitted the free time I would have otherwise allowed them to explore the book on their own. I read the book right away after giving the students a brief introduction. After reading, I asked students how the 'mom' was described in the book. They seemed to only enjoy the 'supermom' part and could relate to the part of the book about cooking but other than those, they did not have much else to say. Sohl and Soyoung did not even raise their hands to share their thoughts. Soyoung and Sohl only murmured to themselves. Chaeun, Seungyeon, and Seungjae did not even make eye contact with me. After class, I regretted not making several small groups for them to share their opinions. I was too occupied with teaching and overlooked that potentially important step. I should not have rushed through the lesson regardless of my students' performance. As a teacher I

always thought that challenges could bring about improvement when it ended successfully, otherwise students might not meet challenges in attempts to avoid possible frustration. The teacher needs to create a safe environment to reduce the chances of failure. I felt sorry for the students I overlooked. They were in the middle of challenging themselves by learning a storybook which is more difficult than their regular English textbook.

For students to understand this book, they needed to understand the contextual meaning of the word *as* in the story. The word *as* was what discouraged Soyoung and Sohl from participating in the discussion about the book in the beginning of the lesson. After class we had a brief conversation, and I asked Soyoung and Sohl what made them stay silent. Soyoung said, “I did not know how to deal with the awkward word (*as*). I was worried I might say nonsense in front of the other students.” (그 이상한 단어를 어떻게 해야할지 모르겠더라고요. 애들앞에서 이상한 소리할까봐 좀 그랬어요.) Sohl agreed and added, “I feel like I have seen the word a lot somewhere, but I am not sure what it means. I know you do not care if we make mistakes, but it is still embarrassing.” (어디서 많이 본 단어같긴한데 무슨뜻인지 확실히 모르겠어서요. 쌤은 모른다고 뭐라하지않지만, 그래도 창피해요.)

The students’ concern did make sense. The word *as* was difficult for students to understand based on the word level according to the guidelines provided by the national curriculum for English. The use of *as* in this book was taught in middle school. I needed to explain the use of *as* before explaining the book in Korean. I explained the use of *as adjective as noun* using common example sentences they would understand. I made sentences together with the students, and soon the sentences we made filled the

blackboard (e.g. My sister is as strong as a soccer player, My dad is as tall as a giraffe, etc.). Because of the level of vocabulary and unfamiliarity with use of these phrases, students experienced difficulty. I encouraged them to code switch to Korean words when they could not think of words in English. Students participated more when describing their classmates and celebrities. They made sentences like, ‘She is as talkative as 한결 (Hangyul),’ or ‘They are as popular as 틴탑 (Teentop, a famous pop group in Korea).’ We read the sentences on the blackboard together a couple of times. After the practice, I read the book again and asked students what each sentence meant. Students called out the meaning of all the sentences except for *brilliant juggler*, *great painter*, *magic gardener*, *good fairy*, and *as comfy as armchair* due to their vocabulary level. Once I provided the meanings of these words, they easily understood the sentences. At the end of the class, I allowed them individual time to study and asked them to construct sentences using the *as adjective as noun* phrase. I walked around the classroom and checked that every student in the class successfully made sentences like those in figure 10, and practiced words in the book. Through this step-by-step approach in teaching English expressions, I was assured that the material does not always have to be easy. By breaking it down into smaller units appropriate to their level, students could feel comfortable even when learning difficult material. In order to determine the appropriate amount to present, the teacher needs to have an in-depth understanding about students. Not only based on test scores, but through built-up relationships enabling the teacher to become more sensitive to students, how well they understood, and how to accommodate them appropriately. The relationship that I built with my students allowed me to design the lessons and cope with the unexpected appropriately. This was essential for the efficient development of my

students in their ZPDs.

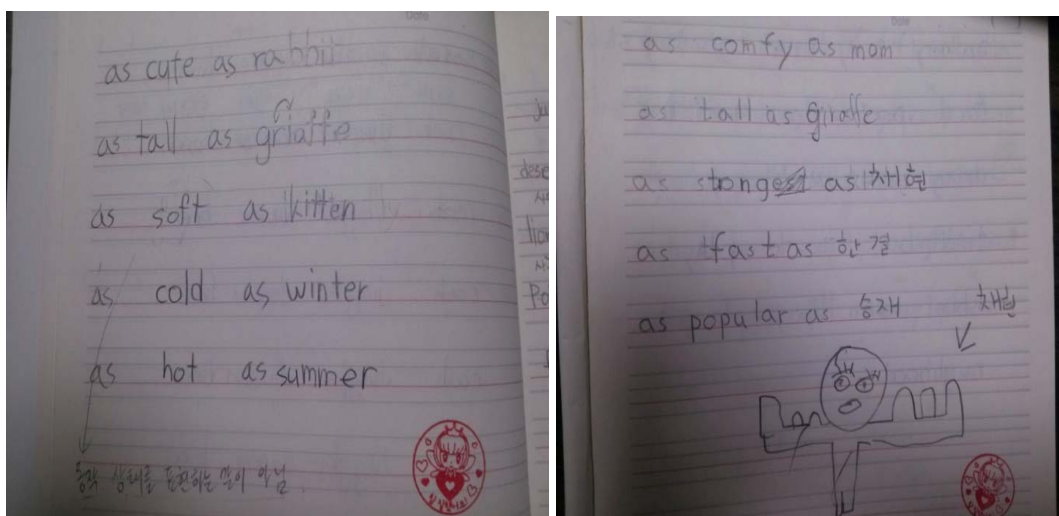


Figure 10. Practicing *as adjective as noun* phrases. On the left, the student wrote *run* instead of *soft* in the first place. In order to explain the concept of adjective, I said in Korean that there should be words that come before the name-word (noun) using Korean language examples, and the students understood the point and changed the word into *soft*. On the right side, the student was engaged with the writing practice using Korean words and successfully understood the *as adjective as noun* phrase. In the third line, the student wrote *strongest* initially but I gave feedback to erase *est* out of the word.

The second and the third lesson. The second lesson started with reading aloud. I watched carefully how students read the book, and all of them including the 3rd graders read fluently and confidently. I thought it would be possible to allow the students to do book making activity since they already knew how to apply *as adjective as noun* phrases from the previous lesson. I gave it a try. The book making lesson occupied two class periods and the students worked very hard to construct their books. In the third lesson, students finished making their books, presented their work in front of the class, and we read the *My Mom* book aloud together. I later introduced *My Dad* and students checked it out to read at home. It flowed similarly to *My Mom* using *as adjective as noun* phrase repetitively but with different words. The way they worked according to their level of proficiency was impressive and inspiring. I began to see the fruits of my labor.

Sohl helped other students during the book making project as illustrated in Figure 11. One 3rd grader, Insung, enjoyed listening to *My Mom* when I read, but was overwhelmed during the book making activity because he found it difficult to use expressions from the book appropriately and the level of vocabulary was not good enough to express his thoughts in English. Sohl voluntarily paired with him and they made a book together. A 3rd grader and Sohl worked together to brainstorm funny stories and situations in their families while sharing English knowledge. Sohl was great in linguistic knowledge and literacy competence, but was not good at visualizing images. He showed great competence in adapting English sentences in the storybook to his own book. With his lived experience, confidence in English, and linguistic knowledge, he had no problem making up a story, but he did not like to draw. They were incorporated in making a story and shared their roles to create a book. Sohl made English sentences and the 3rd grader drew illustrations. They interdependent on each other through collaborative and caring support, and made a book successfully. They promoted each other's development in English through dynamic interplay cognitively and affectively.





Figure 11. Sohl's pair-work book. He took advantage of phrases in *My Mom* and words that he already knew to compose a book.

Hangyul made a book about her sister after reading *My Mom* as illustrated in Figure 12. She made good use of *as adjective as a noun* phrases in describing her sister. She appropriated her level of English vocabulary to convey her ideas and provided detailed illustrations to support them. Her book fascinated everyone in the class. She was proud that she could make people laugh with her English knowledge, which she doubted before. It seemed she felt rewarded with the learning process in the storytelling class and was satisfied. I noticed the pleased expression on her face while she was showing her book to others. In fact, it was not the first time that her talent in drawing and her sense of humor stood out. I believe that frequent use of her talents helped her to enjoy English

storybooks and the storytelling class. She maintained a good relationship with her peers and me and developed an emotional bond to the storytelling class making her one of the loyal students in the storytelling class. After class was finished I asked her how she felt about her work. I wrote what she whispered to me in my fieldnotes on Nov. 9th, 2012.

I never imagined that I would enjoy the storytelling class and making my own book this much. I was surprised to see how the other students responded to my book and realized that I wasn't so bad at English after all! I became a popular! My English book made people laugh. Unbelievable! Please tell my daddy that I did very well Mrs. Lee!

(스토리텔링 교실을 이렇게 재밌게 다니면서 내 책도 만드리라고는 상상도 못했어요. 애들이 내 책보고 놀라는거보고 내 영어실력이 괜찮구나 싶었어요. 완전 떴잖아요! 애들이 내 책보고 막 웃고...안믿어져요! 아빠한테 저 얼마나 잘했는지 쌤이 꼭 얘기해줘요!)







Figure 12. My Sister by Hangyul. Her book demonstrated a sterling sense of humor. After her presentation of the book, students in the class wondered about who her sister was in reality.

Reflections on teacher initiated whole class instruction. Teacher initiated whole class instruction followed a routine of before, while, and after reading activities; exploring as before-reading activity, reading, singing, and dancing as while-reading activities, and worksheets, book making, and role playing as after-reading activities. These activities were implemented in regular English classes as well according to the national curriculum for English. In the teacher's guide for the English textbook, the kind of activities appropriate for each chapter is suggested in detail. As a result, teachers did not have to do much planning creating original activities. They mostly followed the guide and made adjustments as they saw fit. Because I was accustomed to following the manual, planning all the details for the storybook class lessons was a little overwhelming considering the planning I still had to do for my regular 2nd grade class. To minimize the workload, I created and followed a routine. I chose activities that did not require complicated preparation. I also looked for material that was efficient in facilitating literacy development. I did not utilize many game varieties or require very involved role-playing. I instead used worksheets and book making activities. As I gained experience

using English storybooks to teach, I found that the amount of time needed to prepare decreased.

Students had been in the storytelling class with me since the first week in September 2012, a total of three months. They had already studied five books. They knew that when they got a new book to study they were supposed to explore and guess before anything else. I had two reasons in mind for this. First, I wanted the students to figure out how to read words in the book by themselves through the words they defined and guess what the theme in the book would be about without needing assistance from the teacher. I allowed them about five minutes to explore the book and asked them what they thought the book would be about before I read aloud and explained it in Korean. I wanted the students to be aware and give themselves personal feedback, acknowledging the parts they understood and pronounced correctly or incorrectly while I read the book. Through this self-reflective process, I intended to my students to be self-driven, which would lead to facilitate their learning. Second, I wanted to give enough time to my students. As an elementary school teacher who understands the national curriculum well, I was confident that even though English storybooks looked overwhelming, it was not difficult to manage a lesson as long as the students could incorporate their background knowledge and prior experience to understand the English storybook. When I taught *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?*, even though the students did not learn the names of the animals and colors in their regular English classes, they understood the book quite easily using their prior knowledge. Many storytelling lesson plans suggested in the guidebooks emphasized the significance of motivation by sharing experiences and having conversations about topics in the books as a way to connect the material to the students. I added one more

suggestion taking into consideration how English storybooks could potentially overwhelm students in an EFL environment, and also how Korean students are not eager to talk about what they do not completely understand for fear of losing face. When I tried to have conversations about book topics without giving them enough time to explore, only a few confident students participated in the conversation. Most students were reserved and were not even willing to make eye contact with me. In contrast, when I allowed them about 5 minutes to explore the book before reading, they were eager to find anything familiar in the book and competed with each other to share their findings. When I taught *My Mom* by Anthony Brown, I skipped the preliminary time devoted to exploring the book thinking students would have many things to say about their own mom. I asked them in English, “What is this book about?” and students answered in Korean, “It’s about a mother.” I added questions, “How do you feel about your mom?” and students only provided simple answers like, “She is good,” “She cooks well,” and “She is pretty.” I read the book aloud and asked students, “How is the mom in this book?” and “Is there any part that you liked?” I expected students to answer eagerly because words in the book were not difficult like those in *The Gruffalo*, but only Sohl and Soyoung seemed to understand, and still, they only mumbled under their breath. Other than these two, the students stayed silent. Only then did I realize that my pace was too rushed to consider the reserved students.

When I allowed some minutes to explore the book, the students were either looking at the book or sharing their ideas with their peers. It removed their apprehension towards stories in English. Sheltered environments made my Korean students feel familiar and therefore comfortable, so small groups and a reasonable pace were essential

factors in teaching. It seemed that students were reserved or passive partly because they were shy and modest, but the real reason was because they needed to build up their confidence in learning challenging and unfamiliar material.

Stage 2: Gradual Shift to Student-Initiated Reading

The students' involvement went as planned and made management of the class easy. They knew that their role was to learn and so they did not attempt to contest the main class objectives. They did not care about class management and were ready to quit if they were no longer satisfied. It was around this stage that students gradually dropped out of the class or skipped for unknown reasons. The number of students was always unstable and gradually diminishing. Keeping track of students who left was burdensome because I had to attend to my own regular classes once the storybook class was over. The first two students who dropped the class in the beginning had legitimate reasons. One student dropped because the storytelling class interfered with his soccer practices and the other had behavioral issues, which according to his main teacher needed special attention. When I ran into students who often skipped the class and asked why he/she did not come to the class, they mostly answered, "no reason" or "I'm sorry." It was also inconvenient to set aside time to have in-depth conversations with them in the hallways or cafeteria. When I asked their classroom teachers why they did not come to the storytelling class, the classroom teachers also had no answers. The main afterschool program coordinator said it was very common for the students' attendance to drop gradually. I experienced a very embarrassing and discouraging situation that I recorded in my field notes on Dec. 7th, 2012:

I found two students who were originally in my storytelling class in another

English afterschool class taught by a native English speaker. The assistant teacher in the native speaker's afterschool program asked me to assume her duties that day because she had personal matters to attend to. I walked into the classroom and saw the two students who no longer attended my class. It was their choice, and trying to pressure them back to the storytelling class was pointless. I just wanted to know why they did not come to my class to join the native speaker's class in order to generate feedback I could utilize in the future. One of the students said, "It is fun talking with a native speaker. I feel like the English is alive and real." I was relieved that the reason had nothing to do with my teaching abilities. It is sad reality that many students and parents believe native speaking teachers are most qualified to teach English.

This experience demonstrates what Korean students' attitude toward native English teachers is regardless of the teaching practice. As a case with a similar situation, Butler (2007) investigated the effects of Korean elementary school teachers' accents on their students' listening comprehension and the students' attitudes toward teachers with American-accented English (a native speaker model) and Korean-accented English (a non-native speaker model) in order to understand what effect the oral abilities of nonnative-English-speaking teachers have on the performance of such young English learners, and what attitudes such young learners hold toward their teacher's English. This study failed to find any significant differences in students' performance between the American-accented English and Korean-accented English conditions. This study did find significant differences in the students' attitudes toward the teachers with American-accented English and Korean-accented English regarding their proficiency in

pronunciation, confidence in their use of English, focus on fluency versus accuracy, and use of Korean in the classroom.

It was impossible for me to find and visit with all the students who dropped or skipped the class and record their reasons. Of those I was able to talk to, the commonality I observed between all of them was that both of their parents worked and there was no one to keep them accountable for their attendance. The six focal student's parents however, were very involved in, and aware of their children's schedule.

As the class settled down, I relaxed class management and lesson planning efforts and focused more on building rapport with the students. In the beginning of the class, I was too occupied to think about rapport even though I was well aware of how significant it was. Managing the lesson was my first priority. I determined class objectives and planned activities while taking each student's level of development, behavior, and personality into consideration.

Having conversations with students and searching for the best ways to help them, I decided to do one lesson per book and simplify the activities even more. Previously, I designed three to four lessons per book ensuring enough time for students to explore and master one book completely. This approach was fun for my students and on their exit cards, they expressed that the activity was helpful because they felt they would not be left behind due to the amount of time they had to review and study. Despite the overwhelming positive feedback, I still could not ignore the few complaints about reading the same book over and over again even after everyone understood. I also observed that students who missed a lesson were reluctant to participate in the next one because it was difficult for them to catch up with the rest of the class and as a result were

embarrassed. Frequent class cancellations due to school events, teacher business trips, and holidays were another significant reason I decided to make one lesson per book. These issues also affected the other afterschool classes at DS Elementary School. The lessons surrounding the book were interrelated, so class cancellations interrupted the flow of lessons. Because the class was held only twice a week, one cancellation resulted in studying one book per month sometimes (e.g. when we studied *The Gruffalo*, afterschool classes were cancelled for two weeks because of *Chuseok*²). By studying one book per lesson, students could enjoy the class anytime even if they missed a lesson. Students had the opportunity to read a variety of English books.

Regarding simplifying activities, students suggested playing bingo and book making as activities they enjoyed doing anytime. Even though doing only one to two activities seemed quite monotonous, each book presented new words and themes so possible bingo answers were constant and there was an abundance of potential book making ideas. Students were overwhelmed by trying role play because it required cooperation and practice in a limited amount of time. Also, students could not concentrate on other groups' presentations when they were not completely finished preparing their own.

To master a book in a single lesson required a high level of concentration and fast transitions. I continued observing how students were adjusted to reading aloud, repeating after me, asking questions regarding the content of the book, and studying vocabulary individually. I also took into consideration how loud and clear they projected their voices while they were reading as it indicated to me their confidence and level of

² Harvest festival like Thanksgiving day in the U.S.

comprehension. When they read well, they answered questions about the book well. Vocabulary was everybody's concern, so I always set aside 10 minutes for them to study individually and sometimes played bingo using the new vocabulary words from the book at the end of the class. During those 10 minutes, I walked around the classroom to answer any questions, check their understanding, and give feedback. When sentence structures were difficult for them, I took more time reading and explaining the book and skipped the book making or bingo game to make sure they understood. When the sentence structures were easier, I decreased my instruction time and let students create their own book using the new words and phrases they learned and their prior knowledge.

6 focal students were satisfied with the shift to student-initiated shorter lessons. We had conversation and shared opinions if this change was effective for them to be better in reading storybooks, and 6 focal students had positive opinions which I summarized in my fieldnote (Nov. 28th, 2012) as follows:

1. All students liked reading more books than before. Eunjin especially, did not like repetition, and she was glad that she did not have to repeat anymore. Students checked out the storybook after each class so they could practice reading at home. Soyoung said her mom was very thankful that I modified the lessons this way for her to see more books. Hangyul proudly said that her older sister was worse than her when reading the books she rented from me.
2. Individual help was increased. Sohl appreciated receiving more individual help from me. As he did not go to a hagwon or take worksheets, he had no place to ask for help regarding English. Even though he had English teacher at school, he did not feel close enough to her.

3. Students felt less pressure pronouncing words. Hangyul liked that she did not feel embarrassed to roll her tongue to pronounce English words in a small class. She joked that Soyoung sounded like eating more butter than her, so her buttery pronunciation did not matter.

4. 3rd graders liked to be with older classmates in the class. Chaeun said she was proud that she could learn English alongside 4th graders without problems. When her opinion regarding activities was reflected in the lesson procedure, she grew even more proud.

The summary shows that students were more sensitive to issues related to affective factors than cognitive factors when learning English. Soyoung was glad that her mom liked the new style and approach of a storytelling class to learn English. Hangyul was happy that she could beat her sister when reading English storybooks taught at the storytelling class. Sohl felt that he was free to ask me questions whenever necessary thanks to our close relationship, and Hangyul felt less peer pressure when she pronounced English words. Chaeun liked the close relationship she had built with 4th graders who she could depend on. It was amazing to notice how affective factors meant a lot when students were learning English.

Students got used to the flow through the three months of learning in the class. As usual, I brought a book, allowed students 5 to 7 minutes to explore and guess, and then started the class with listening and reading aloud. I set aside 5 minutes for phonics instruction by choosing certain words in the book. I had to increase the time for individual study to give every student an appropriate amount of attention. Students were well aware of what they were expected to do before and during the lesson, and grew

accustomed to taking the book home to read it again. They were not hesitant to ask for individual assistance from me and helped each other spontaneously when I was not available helping other students. They became even more suggestive to the activities during the lessons. When we were reading *My Neighborhood* on Nov. 16th, 2012, Hangyul suggested visiting the English Village. The English Village is a special section of the school designed to replicate places in the United States. Its purpose is for students to practice English while simulating an American or western lifestyle. Hangyul suggested that students follow the rule that only English could be spoken. Students diligently practiced speaking English that day. Even though what they said was not related to the content of the book that day, it was a valuable use of time that contributed to the elevation of students' confidence and motivation in practical use of English. Hangyul was proud that she suggested this great idea and said to her friends, "You know, it was my idea to come to the English Village today."

Sometimes students brought books from outside to ask questions and share it with others, which was the most amazing development to me. Impressed with their change, I described an episode in my journal on Nov. 21st, 2012:

Chaeun brought 'Go Away Big Green Monster' and asked me to read it to her before the class started. She said I was the best English speaker she knew. I thought it was a good chance to let students know it was okay to bring any book of interest, so I could read it to Chaeun as well as the other students. I praised Chaeun for reading an English storybook at home and told her I would read the book during the class with everybody. I brought 10 of the books from the English bookshelf for every student. When the class started, I told everybody that Chaeun

brought 'Go Away Big Green Monster' to share with everybody and how she made a good choice because the book was funny. Chaeun smiled and looked very proud of herself. I was happy imagining her trying to read the book at home, and that she thought about me when reading it and went as far as bringing it to school for me to read. I hoped the other students would follow her example. We had great time reading 'Go Away Big Green Monster'!

Seeing how Chaeun brought a book and shared it with others, Hangyul brought 'Go away Mr. Wolf' saying she could understand the book easily thanks to the book that Chaeun brought. I did not have access to more copies of the book at school and could not afford for everyone to have one, so we sat close to each other to share the book. When I read the book aloud, the students read the repetitive parts with me even before practicing reading with me. This was huge progress compared to the beginning of the storytelling class when the students were hesitant to even speak at all.

It was a positive development to see students becoming more engaged and interested in learning English. I had to be more sophisticated to deal with their demands. As we got closer, students did not hesitate to ask questions about what they did not understand in books or even personal questions about my own children and my life in the U.S.. I stopped preparing worksheets because they were not easily found on the web if the book was not popular and I could not afford to make 5 or 6 different kinds of worksheets to use for a single lesson. Even when book based worksheets were easily found on the web, they were geared towards native speakers and were not appropriate for my 3rd and 4th graders who were literate in their native language and matured cognitively and affectively. Most importantly, as the class size got smaller, I had more time to invest

in students individually. As a result of having more time, I did not have to check each student's level of understanding through worksheets any more.

As the class settled down, 6 students stood out and they were narrowed down into focal students for this study as was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter; Soyoung, Sohl, Hangyul, Eunjin, Chaeun, and Seungjae. With the exception of these 6, the other students came and went at their convenience. I wanted to help these 6 loyal students realize their potential and, at the same time influence the other students to stop skipping the class and feel they could enjoy it anytime they came in without feeling embarrassed or left behind. Whether the students attended or not was not my administrative duty to be concerned about but I still wanted help anyone in the class to improve their English literacy through the storytelling experience. Every afterschool program went through similar patterns as the semester came to an end. Some classes were even discontinued because students no longer attended.

The 6 focal students came to take the lead of the storytelling class toward gradual shift to student-centered learning. They were no longer passive recipients but rather active contributors of opinions, suggestions, and ideas. I described an impressive episode in my journal on Nov. 30th, 2012:

Today we studied 'five little monkeys jumping on the bed' by Anne Kubler. After practicing reading, I showed them a singing and dancing video clip on YouTube as the book was famous for its funny song. I did not really mean to do the dance with everybody, but students insisted that I play it over and over and followed along with the singing and dancing. Students suggested choosing five little monkeys and role play. Sohl, Insung, Seungjae, Seungyoun and Chaehyun were

chosen as the five little monkeys, Soyoung as narrator, Eunjin as the doctor, and Hangyul as the mother. It was not an official role play but students were fully motivated. Being lack of time, I asked students to prepare their performance for the next class, and they worked hard for the presentation even after the class being fully engaged. I was the only audience, so the quality of their performance would not really matter, but students seemed not to mind it. Students were enjoying the process of making their performances, sharing their roles, and practicing hard. I wonder how they will perform next time. To see how they lead the class makes me feel rewarded as a teacher. I cannot believe how much their attitude changed toward the class; they were not passive learners but initiated leaders.

I also think this episode illustrates that when students acknowledged literacy knowledge in English, they felt less pressure in expressing English orally. It appeared that confidence in one aspect of English competency, which in this case was literacy competency, finally lead to the development of four functions of English competency which the 7th national curriculum emphasizes in a recent amended version; the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students would not have initiated role-play without a thorough understanding combined with joyful experience about the book. Literacy knowledge was sure to work as a buffer to oral expression of English which would be less familiar for students in Korea than literacy experience in English.

I wondered what made the 6 focal students come to the class without being absent. They all acknowledged that their parents made sure they attended the class and

were very concerned about their English education. The smaller class size was good for the 6 students because it was more effective at meeting their individual needs. They said they felt really lucky to have me as a teacher for no charge and their parents showed their gratitude by bowing to me in the street and even collectively sent me a gift and thank you card at the end of the year.

After the long winter and spring break, a new semester began in March. Different from the U.S. school system, March is the beginning of school year, so my students were now advanced one grade level. Soyoung, Sohl, Hangyul, and Eunjin became 5th graders and Seungjae and Chaeun became 4th graders. I met all the 6 focal students at the English camp held at school during the winter break and maintained our relationship. Even though English camp was not related to the storytelling class, the 6 focal students participated because I was teaching at the camp. Afterschool programs were supposed to recruit students at the beginning of a new semester, but I decided not to recruit any more students and continue with the students that joined initially.

For the new semester, I concentrated my efforts on promoting individual development and extending ZPD rather than establishing a storytelling class and lesson planning. In the previous semester I could not address the individual needs of each student while trying to manage the class efficiently. After a semester establishing and managing a new class, I grew confident and experienced enough to manage and conduct the class efficiently. I focused on maximizing individual satisfaction, skill development instead of trying to reduce complaints or problems.

Soyoung and Sohl competed against each other to see who could read the fastest when they received a new book to study. In the beginning of the storytelling class, they

primarily asked about the correct way to pronounce certain words or meaning of word unknown. Later, they asked questions about the meaning of phrases or sentences. One of the biggest changes was that they were not complaining when I introduced books with many sentences on one page. One day, I gave students Aesop fables *Reconciliation of Lion and Wild Boar*. It had some long and difficult words but would not be too difficult to understand because the students were already familiar with the Korean version. I recorded my impressions in my fieldnotes on Apr. 17th, 2013:

My students were much different than a semester ago. I was very impressed at the way they now approached new books without reservation on exam. Sohl was proud of himself for reading *Reconciliation of Lion and Wild Boar* without my help even though he did not understand some sections of the book. It looks like my students are no longer beginning readers. They are advancing to early fluent reading level in English books.

I had more conversations with my students as the number of students was decreased. I tried to interview them in the beginning of the storytelling class, but it was hard to maintain the atmosphere and neutrality of a conversation while trying to maintain the integrity of an interview without making the students feel uncomfortable. It was better to draw out their honest responses through casual conversation based on their grade level. I eventually initiated conversation with my students whenever I had questions or noticed unique situations, and recorded their thoughts and responses in my fieldnotes. The purpose of the conversation was not to practice English, so I only spoke in Korean in order to accurately gather information from students.

We read *The Story of the Little Mole*. Soyoung was excited when she realized

that she had already read it in Korean when she was younger. She said she felt like she reunited with an old friend. I thought she would feel English storybooks even more familiar than before through this experience, which would facilitate her challenge to difficult books easier. I wrote her response in my fieldnotes on Apr. 19th, 2013.

Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god, I know this book! Isn't it 'Who pooped in the head? Even the pictures are the same. Wow! I did not know we could read the same book in Korea and in the U.S. If I go to the U.S., I could have something to talk about with my American classmates. It's funny. It's really funny! I have to find out if there are more popular books that are written in both Korean and English!

(웬일, 웬일, 나 이책 알아요! 이거 누가 내머리에 똥쌌어 아니예요? 세상에, 그림도 완전 똑같네! 완전 똑같은책이 미국이랑 한국에 있다니 신기해요. 만약에 미국가서 학교를 다닌다면 애들한테 얘기할 수 있겠어요. 완전 웃겨요! 이렇게 한국판, 미국판 똑같이 나온책이 있나 더 알아봐야지!)

Sohl kept on being busy learning English phonics, but now criticized it. He explained its shortcomings compared to the Korean language. Considering that most students are just busy with learning phonemic knowledge in English, his critical attitude seemed like reflecting how confident and insightful he was in English phonics. I recorded his comment in my fieldnotes on Apr. 26th, 2013.

Mrs. Lee, English is terrible! Who made English this way? In Korean, 'ㅏ' /a/ sounds like 'ㅏ' /a/ without exception, but in English 'I' sounds like /ai/ or /i/ occasionally. What kind of rule would be like this? Oh, I'm lucky that I know enough to understand it now. I pity 3rd graders who have to go through all this.

They are in trouble!

(쌤, 영어 완전 웃겨요. 누가 이렇게 거지같이 만들었어요! 한국말로 ‘아’는 항상 ‘아’인데, 영어에서 i는 왜 ‘아이’라고 했다가 ‘이’라고 했다가 왔다갔다해요! 무슨 이런 규칙이 다 있냐? 그래도 이래저래 다 아니까 다행이네. 3학년은 이거 첨부터 다하려면 불쌍하네요. 개네들 죽었다!)

Sohl's book making skills improved along with his vocabulary. His book making demonstrated that fancy pictures were not really required for book making activities as long as the student had knowledge for the target language, English, that enables descriptions about the main concept. From the process of copying the repetitive sections in the books, he gradually improved his grammatical skill. In a lesson that we read *My Mom*, Sohl took advantage of the phrase *as adjective as noun* learned from the book successfully by putting adjectives and nouns in the correct position as was seen in *Figure 11*. As a similar case, Sohl was aware of the use of the infinitive while writing sentences as he began using the phrase, *I go there to verb* with no problem according to *Figure 13*. In the national curriculum for English, the infinitive is supposed to be taught in middle school. Even though he had not yet learned the infinitive formally, he developed good command of it. Sohl did not like book making at first, but he was not as hesitant as he was initially because he realized beautiful pictures did not really matter as long as he could convey his messages clearly based on the knowledge he acquired through the storytelling class and his background knowledge in English and literacy. Sohl's cumulative book making shows how he has evolved in the storytelling class with the available support around him. With his development as an English language learner as well as his English competency, he approached to the threshold of independent reading.

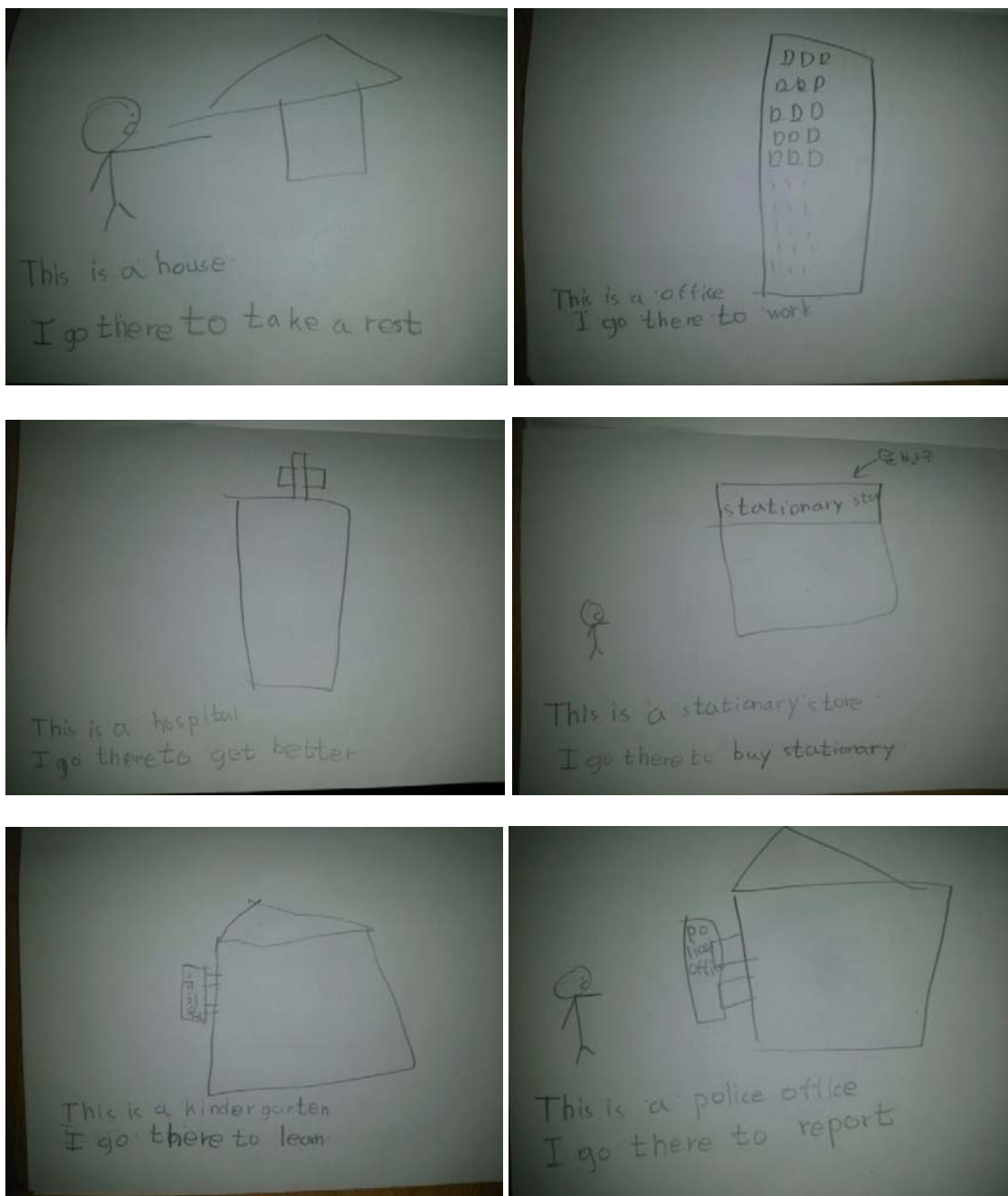


Figure 13. My Neighborhood by Sohl. He demonstrated good command of the infinitive in this book making activity. Also, he took good use of verbs he learned from other English lessons and successfully made a book of his neighborhood.

Cha Eun said that she developed good habits studying English through the storytelling class. Even though she had advanced to the 4th grade and had barely about 200 English words in her vocabulary, she was eager to read English books after realizing

that reading English was not only about being able to understand or define all the words. She enjoyed all the activities in the storytelling class such as bingo game, book making, drawing, role-playing, and singing. She planned to continue reading English books in the future. She was aware that her vocabulary was not yet at the level to interpret all the sentences she read in English, so whenever new words came up that she did not know, she practiced writing them in her English notebook as is illustrated in Figure 14. I never gave her any suggestions in terms of word memorizing strategies, or gave her a specific goal to reach. She made her own standards and practiced writing until she memorized them. She wrote down unfamiliar English words, read them aloud, and then wrote Korean meaning beneath each word to help herself memorize them. Sometimes when she knew the definition of a word without knowing its correct spelling, she omitted writing the Korean meaning and wrote in English only. It was amazing how she managed her own way to develop her English competency and was motivated to be better. Her vocabulary competence was not a significant factor affecting her learning in English. She was self-driven in learning English, which was the driving force of her growth in the storytelling class.

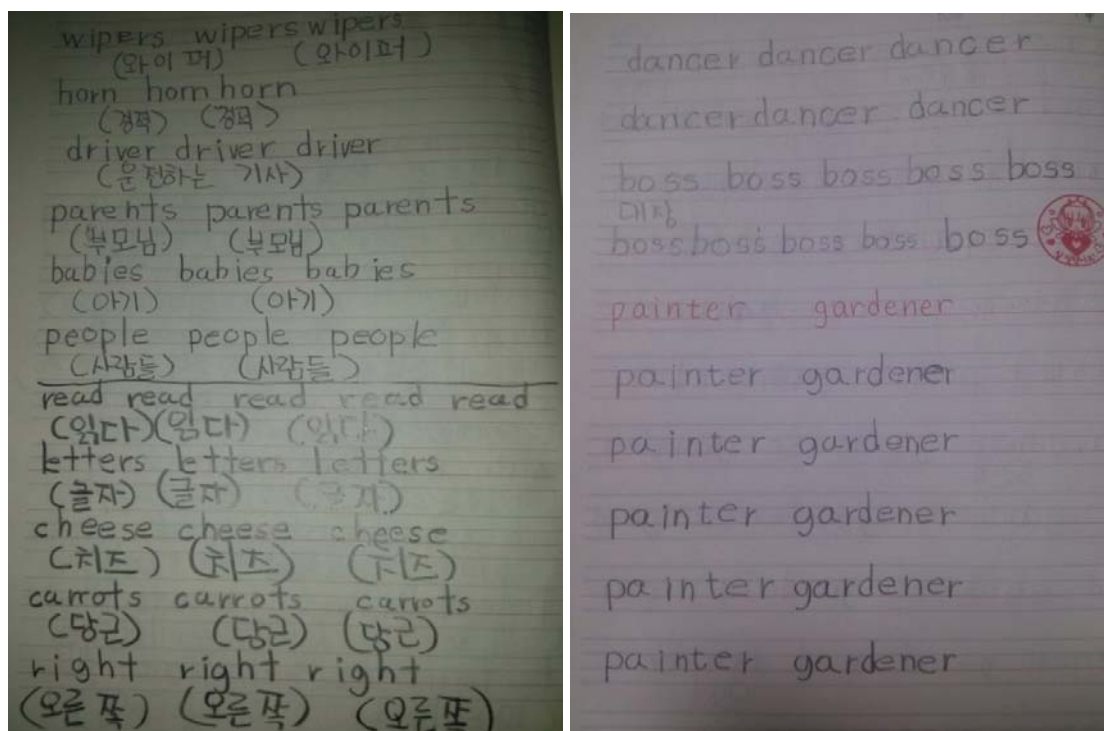
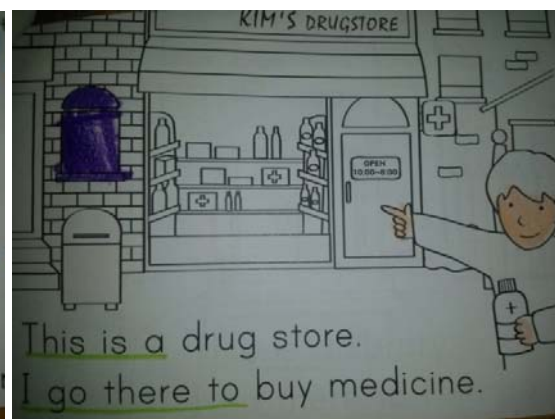
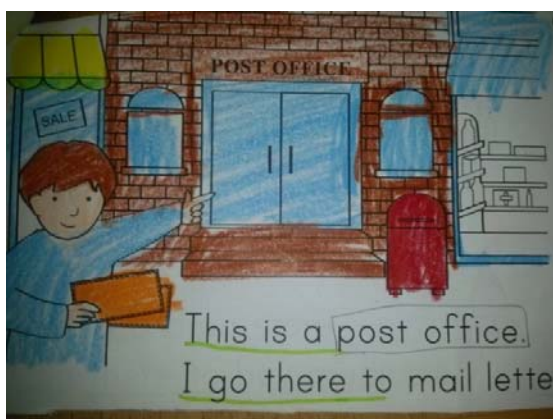


Figure 14. Practicing notes by Chaeun. She wrote the words over and over until she completely memorized them. She did this to almost every book that she read in the storytelling class.

Along with memorizing new words, Chaeun tried to find patterns in the sentences she read. Figure 15 is an on-line book that we read together. I printed out another on-line book for students to color and decorate after reading it and asked them to take it home and read it again. The students enjoyed coloring the pictures. By taking time to color and decorate what they read, I intended for them to grow fond of the book. I hoped that by personalizing their copy of the book they would eventually pay close attention to and remember the key words. I was not sure if it would be productive for each student but they seemed to enjoy it. Chaeun always circled or underlined key words, phrases, and repetitive sections while coloring. She then copied them in her notebook and practiced reading them aloud. When I asked her why she did it that way, she said she wanted to use the repetitive expressions with her mom and teach her younger brother because some of

the situations in the book were likely to happen in her life. Cha Eun's plan to make good use of English expressions learned in the storytelling class helped her find the best way for her to remember the expressions, which, I believe, facilitated her to take initiative in the storytelling class.



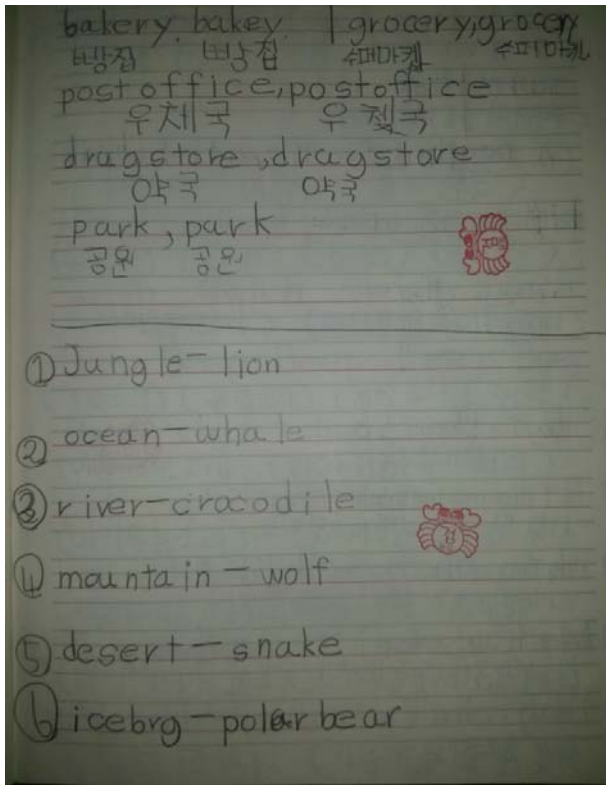


Figure 15. Chaeun’s on-line book underlined and writing practice of the book in her notebook.

Figure 16 is another example of Chaeun’s book. Chaeun highlighted the opposite words in the book. She proudly told me that she memorized opposite words in the book easily while she was reading and coloring the book, so she did not feel the need to practice writing them in her notebook.



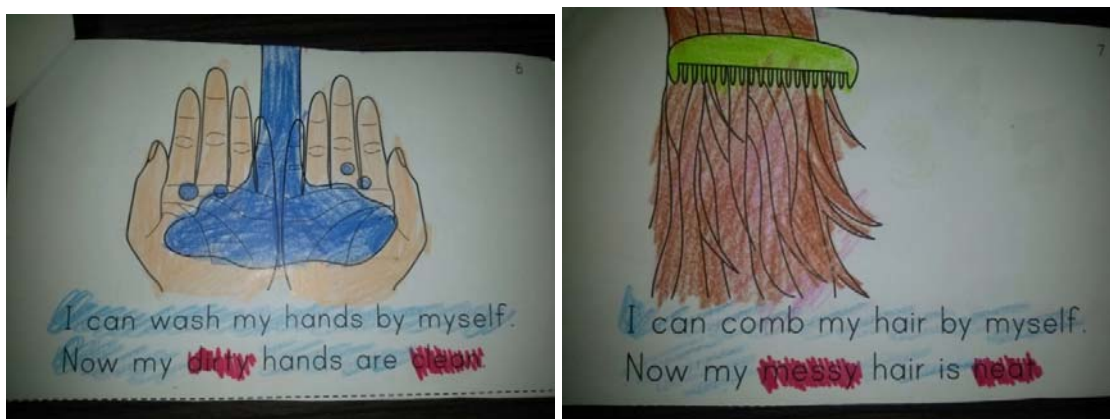


Figure 16. Chaeun's on-line book learning opposite words.

Chaeun also stood in learning English literacy by trying to find a more intimate way to enjoy the book. On Dec. 7th, 2012, we read 'Hooray for Fish' and she suggested an activity to create our own imaginary fish as is shown in Figure 17. Accepting her suggestion, I handed out markers and a piece of large sheet of construction paper. All of the students created their own imaginary fish and gave them unique names like *kite fish* or *ghost fish* using the words they already knew. Chaeun gradually stopped requiring much of my attention. She guided herself to enjoy and study English storybooks independently and utilized the prior assistance she had received from me. According to my field notes on Dec. 1st, 2012, I had a casual conversation with her main classroom teacher in the teacher's lounge. Her classroom teacher said that Chaeun wrote about her storytelling experience in her daily journal; she was satisfied with the storytelling class and felt that she progressed through her self-initiated learning process. She appreciated the access to assistance and feedback from myself and her peers. She was proud of herself being a member of the storytelling class where 4th graders were mostly participating.



Figure 17. Imaginary fish by Chaeun.

Stage 3: Toward Independent Reading

The storytelling class continued to evolve as students' needs and suggestions grew. In the beginning, the process was primarily whole class instruction directed by the teacher. By gradually increasing students' autonomy in the learning process, I eventually modified the typical format of literacy instruction. I continued exploring different ways to better satisfy the 6 passionate students while also accommodating the other students who attended sporadically.

The relationship amongst the focal students got even closer. In the beginning of the storytelling class, I was concerned that Eunjin and Hangyul were against with each other. They were arguing quite often and sometimes their argument got fierce. I thought one of them might not show up in the class at some point. But they seemed to forget about any of those incidents. They were amazingly in good relation, so were other focal

students. According to my fieldnotes on Apr. 26th, 2013, Soyoung came to class earlier and we had a brief conversation about the issue of friend. She confided in me about peer pressure in the beginning:

I am always concerned that if I speak in English in front of others in an American accent, I will be seen as snobbish and classmates may ignore me. I do not even raise my hand when I am confident that I know the answer. This was how I felt in the beginning of the storytelling class. I was worried people might think I was conceited. I still am worried about what my friends might think, so I do not even speak in English in regular English class. What I like about storytelling class is that no one cares how I pronounce here. Everyone tries to improve, so I do not have to feel ashamed. I am glad I have great English study buddies in the storytelling class.

(저는요 항상 애들앞에서 영어발음하면 애들이 잘난척한다고 따돌릴까봐 걱정돼요. 그래서 답을 알아도 손 안들기도 해요. 스토리텔링 교실 침 할때도 이런 기분이었어요. 애들이 잘난척 한다고 생각할까봐 걱정되는 느낌. 지금도 영어수업시간에는 조심해요. 근데, 스토리텔링시간에는요 애들이 어떻게 발음하든 신경안써서 넘 좋아요. 애들도 다 열심히 하니까 발음을 막 굴려도 별로 안 창피해요. 여기서 좋은 친구들 만나서 정말 기뻐요.)

Hangyul said a similar story regarding peer pressure on Apr. 3rd, 2013:

You know, my daddy shows me English DVDs at home so I can improve my English. I love Disney animations. I like any activity related to English. But I

don't tell anyone that I like Disney animation or English activities. You know why? If I say "I like English animation" the students will say, "Hmmm, all right, you are smart." I am afraid that students will hate me for being snobbish. I have to pretend I do not like English. I am glad that nobody in the storytelling class cares if I say anything about English. They are great friends to share my love of English with.

(쌤, 우리아빠가 저 영어배우라고 디비디 집에서 맨날 트는거 아시죠? 제가 디즈니 만화를 좋아하기도 하구요. 저는 영어시간에 활동하는것도 넘 재밌어요. 근데 애들한테는 디즈니 만화를 좋아한다는등 영어활동 재밌다는등 그런말 절대 안해요. 웬줄 아세요? "영어만화 좋아"라고 말하면요 애들이 "흥. 그래 잘났다" 라고 말할까봐요. 그래서 영어를 별로 안 좋아하는척 해요. 근데 스토리텔링반애들은 내가 영어좋아한다고 말해도 그런가보다 해요. 영어얘기 하기 좋은 친구들이예요.)

Considering affective issues such as embarrassment and being afraid to making mistakes in front of others are significant in learning English for Korean students, having great peers who could share concerns of this kind and support with each other could not be any better for their improvement in English. Students were appreciated to have these great friends in the storytelling class.

There was a significant challenge involving the independent reading that needed to be resolved. I could not facilitate the students' access to a variety of English storybook titles. Their options were quite limited. From the beginning of the storytelling class, I wanted to allow the students to pick English storybooks titles they gravitated towards,

and by way of their choices determine their level of proficiency. I thought it would be the best way to promote development within each student's ZPD. As the class was transitioning to a student-centered model, access to more book title options was in fact essential. The teacher in charge of English storybooks however, did not agree with my idea of bringing students to the English storybook shelf located in her classroom. She kept the English storybooks clean, neat, and orderly. The teacher said that the books were expensive and precious. As they were for students to learn as well as for teachers to study and research, they were to be protected from any dirt by being stored well with minimum contact. I could understand her point but still thought they were best utilized by easy and frequent access. The most important step in reading a book is first choosing it! Despite my efforts, it was impossible to persuade her. I was concerned I might leave the impression that I behaved like a selfish person who lived in the U.S. too long. In addition, it was unacceptable to defy someone older and more experienced in Korean society. I could not help but to relinquish the students' access to the English storybooks. I reverted to choosing a book to study before every class.

As the students read more books, their interest in different types of storybooks also grew. I needed easier access to English storybooks in order to provide them with more choices. I eventually decided it was time to seek assistance from the principal. I explained to him how my students had been developing over the last 8 months and how desperately they needed more book titles to choose from. He understood my proposition completely and promised he would intervene.

“Desperate prayers reach heaven” goes an old Korean proverb. It became possible to give the students book options in the storytelling class. The principal decided

to purchase books with an allotted \$6,000 of the school budget. This purchase allowed me to choose various titles. I was able to buy 600 books, but I had no place to put them. I needed a special space to store and use the new English storybooks conveniently without interference.

The school had a special area called an ‘English Village.’ The English Village was a simulated village of locations where students could practice English dialogue in a ‘realistic’ setting. It included a supermarket, hospital, airport, hotel, bank, restaurant, living room, kitchen, post office, and movie theater. It was used very rarely because it was so far away from the regular English classrooms. Only when school district officials came to inspect the school did English teachers use it, pretending it was used often, and that amounted to only once or twice during the school year. Because I was in charge of the English department at DS Elementary School, I decided to remodel the movie theater room in the English Village and changed it into an English library. I bought some tables and bookshelves using the remaining budget. With a multimedia system already existing, the place turned into a decent place to enjoy both English movies and English storybooks.

I could not believe my students’ faces when I opened the room. The students were stunned to see the amount of books, excited, and hovered around the bookshelves. I allowed them to enjoy the moment for a while. It was really touching and one of my most rewarding and memorable moments as a teacher thus far. I wrote the experience in my fieldnotes on that day (May 3, 2013):

Today has been one of the most memorable days in my teaching career. I feel privileged to be a teacher. I am fortunate to have had a chance to study in the U.S. and utilize the information I’ve learned and the skills I’ve developed in an

environment that needs it most. I have always empathized with these students' situation. So intelligent, but lacking the resources they need to succeed. Under the catch phrase of 'communicative competency' in English education, my students and their parents were frustrated due to the substance. In Korean society where equal opportunity in regards to education is considered simply providing basic and fundamental education. The public school English education program was more like a wall rather than a door toward improvement. As a teacher, I felt like a gatekeeper because the methods I was mandated to use limited the students' progress. I was frustrated and at times discouraged. My students had so much potential and I'm glad that I was given the opportunity to work with them and be a beacon of light toward progress. It was my sincere hope they could fully enjoy and benefit from the resources in this new facility.

Sometimes when I had to cancel the class due to work related seminars and meetings, Soyoung, Sohl, Hangyul, Eunjin, Chaeun, and Seungjae insisted on coming to the newly opened English library to read books. It was difficult for me to disappoint them. I did not feel very comfortable leaving the students by themselves unsupervised even though I knew they were trustworthy and responsible enough on their own. I decided to appoint Sohl as the class leader and gave him the key to open the English library while I was away. After reading for an hour, he left the key with the teacher who taught in the classroom next to mine. It was free reading time without me and I could not control what they read during the time that I was away. I checked who actually showed up to read. Thinking back, I feel it would have been better if I required them to keep individual reading logs.

For a few class sessions, rather than following structured routine, I allowed the students to read any of the books they happened to choose for the duration of the class. I was careful not to interrupt them by giving them a list of tasks to complete. I simply observed students, and answered their questions. Observing students carefully, I tried to only step in to help them to facilitate their growth. Often I suggested an appropriate book for the student depending on their vocabulary level, background knowledge, sentence structure, and length of the book. When a student did not concentrate on reading and became distracted, I either recommended another book or suggested that they listen to an audio recording of the story. When any student asked many questions about the definition of certain words, I taught him/her to use a dictionary and we practiced looking up words. According to my field note on May 22nd, 2013, when they were reading many books during free reading time, they needed to look up many words in the dictionary. Sohl suggested playing a game competing to see who could find different words in the dictionary the fastest. We later spent some time playing the game he suggested and had fun. The game also developed their pronunciation and spelling and they eventually found words faster than before. When a student changed books too often, I talked with them about the book and asked him/her to read the book again or to pick another book and focus on it.

Because I did not prepare anything specific for the class, the workload became more involved due to providing individual assistance for each student's specific book. They needed assistance with pronunciation and interpretation of words and sentences. Most importantly, they needed someone to listen to, and interact with them. Using this method, no one was left behind. They progressed at their own pace within their ZPD and

did not feel the pressure of being compared to others, which was really great in terms that it could meet students' needs best.

I was eventually overwhelmed by the limited amount of time I had in each class. It was difficult to attend to all the students' needs. I had to find efficient ways to manage the time that would allow me to attend to the students' needs effectively. After two weeks of free reading I decided to make some revisions to counter the arising problems that I had not imagined I would encounter.

First, the students did not take the book of their choice seriously. In the teacher-initiated lessons when I chose what book to read, they had to read it despite their preference or level. While they were in the classroom, they took their time seriously and followed my lead. When given the liberty to choose, they could avoid anything challenging. The books were divided into 4 levels. The publisher advised level 1 and 2 for 3rd and 4th graders and level 3 and 4 for 5th and 6th graders based on the national curriculums standards. Soyoung, Sohl, Hangyul, and Eunjin were advanced enough to read level 4, but they did not challenge themselves according to the observations I recorded in my fieldnotes in May 8, 2013. Sohl picked up a book about baseball and skimmed through a few pages and closed the book saying, "Wow, it's hard." Hangyul was focusing her attention on the illustrations and seldom read the text. On May 8th, 2013 when she read a book faster than I expected, I asked her what the book was about, and she just smiled, which revealed to me that she did not know. She later confessed that she was only looking at the pictures. When they found difficult words, they did not look them up in the dictionary. When presented with difficult sentences or phrases, they did not even try to discover clues that might lead them to answers. They asked me for assistance or

found another book to read. I did not answer their questions explicitly, but rather attempted to guide them to find the answers independently. Despite my efforts, they still took my availability for granted and consulted with me often. I felt that it was ok for the students to change books when the new book was an appropriate choice for their level, but the students changed books even when their initial choice was well within their capabilities. It would have been better for them to have many choices of books, but once they chose one, they had to devote to it with patience.

Second, students rarely spent enough time with one book. I was in favor of students' reading many kinds of books at an accelerated pace. As Nuttall (1996, p. 127) put it, "speed, enjoyment, and comprehension are closely linked with one another." If students read too slowly attending to individual word levels, their exposure would be limited, their comprehension would be short, and most importantly, they would be overwhelmed and miss out on the pleasure of reading English books. After all, being fluent involves accuracy, speed, and fluidity (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). It is indispensable for English learners to master the knowledge of English and also develop the ability to apply it fluently. (Segalowitz, 2007). Therefore, reading one book thoroughly should also be as worthwhile as reading many books with speed. In the free reading system, students were changing books too fast. They wanted to show off how many books they could read in a limited amount of time rather than attempting to understand one book. Soyoung shouted "Yeah! I read five books today!" on May 8th, 2013 and the other students made similar comments. I needed to reinforce the value of reading one book intensively and equate it to reading a book in a convincing way.

Third, sometimes the students lost focus and regarded reading time like a free

time. They felt unobligated under such a liberal structure. I decided that it was too early to leave them totally self-directed. Meeting individual needs was not always ideal because individual needs do not necessarily equate to improvement. As the teacher, I needed to rely on insight to identify their needs, and provide productive objectives and tasks while guiding them towards success. I found that focusing on meeting their individual needs was counter-productive to this as it might potentially inhibit their autonomous problem solving capacity.

I suggested that they write a reflection paper as they usually did when reading Korean books. I provided an example of the required format. It was composed of columns of book title, date, class, name, summary, what I've learned, and scribbles.

Figure 18 is the example of Seungjae's reflection paper. Even though he did not have an advanced vocabulary compared to the other students, he was good at finding clues and figuring out the theme or general idea of a book. I was impressed with his achievement because when he first came to the storytelling class, he barely knew alphabet and simple communicative expressions. Without any support like hagwon or worksheets, he evolved from emerging reader to early fluent reader in English depending on regular English class and the storytelling class only. However, he had sturdy background in native language literacy, intrinsic motivation, and confidence in learning in general. He enjoyed the investigative process and got faster looking up different words in the dictionary. He examined the illustrations carefully and liked to draw his own. He worked diligently writing the reflection paper and his descriptions about the book contents were accurate. I was impressed with his work and asked him why he worked so hard while I checked his reflection paper. He said he enjoyed writing reflection papers

because he could monitor his progress by comparing them, which I think significant attitude as a learner because it facilitates critical reflection on oneself.

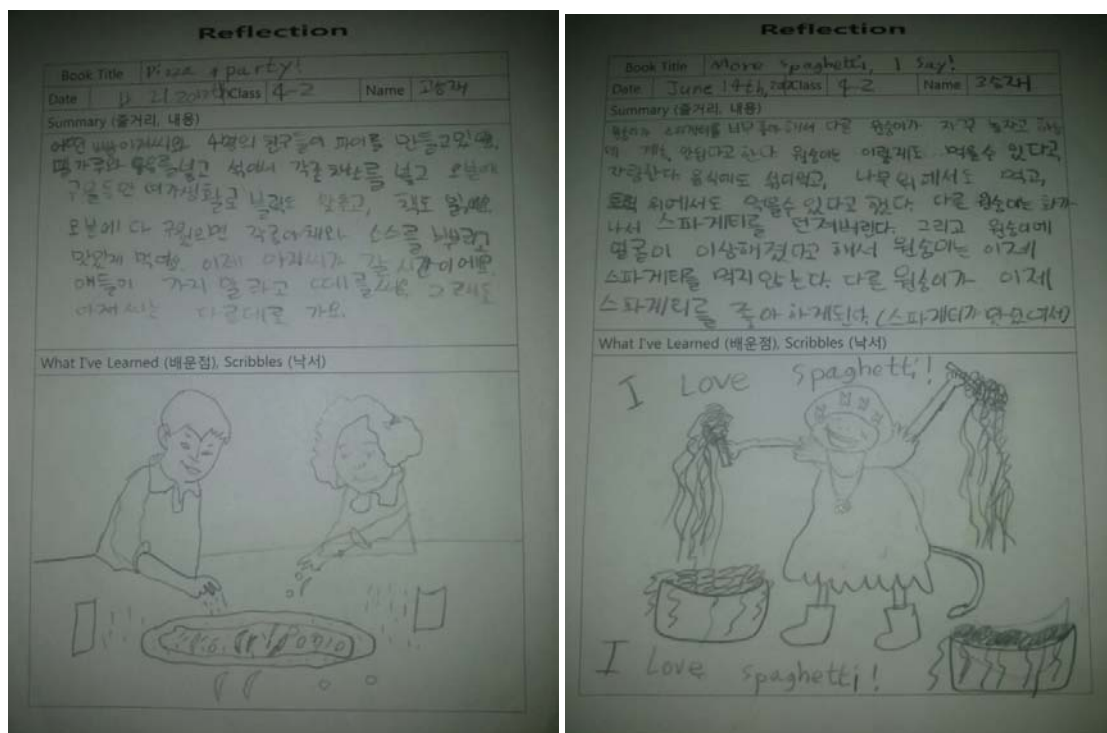


Figure 18. Reflection by Seungjae. His summary of the book was quite accurate and detailed.

Soyoung was good at catching and summarizing the key points in the books fluently. Books for toddlers did not really have anything to summarize because many of them were simply composed of simple rhymes and repetitive phrases. Due to their developmental level in vocabulary, my students had to read toddler's books quite often. Surprisingly, they did enjoy it. Students seemed to have different standards for English books and Korean books. Soyoung often picked up books that she would not enjoy reading if it were in Korean. Instead of reading the book as a toddler would, she found pleasure analyzing it; she focused on key sentences and words in the book, recorded them in her notebook, and drew pictures that signified the key points in the book. According to

Figure 16, Soyoung did not summarize the book, instead she wrote ‘What I’ve learned’ in the summary column and the key sentence, ‘Who stole the _____’ with a blank and the words, cookies, pencil, candy, and book. *Figure 19* illustrates that she was well aware that there should be a noun in the blank to make a grammatically correct and complete sentence. It seemed like Soyoung was building up grammatical knowledge gradually and naturally without forceful training through workbooks, which most middle and high school students are doing to improve their English literacy. This is where the beauty of storybook lies and Soyoung took full advantage it. I was glad she grew fond of storybook and at the same time attain literacy competency in English through storytelling class experience. Soyoung checked out the book to read it to her younger sister. She looked proud of herself being a matured intelligent older sister who could read English storybook to her younger one.

Reflection

Book Title	Who stole the cookies?		
Date	2023. 5. 7	Class	5-2
		Name	이소영
Summary (줄거리, 내용)	What I've Learned		
Who stole the _____? (cookies, pencil, candy, book)			
What I've learned (배운점), Scribbles (낙서)			

Figure 19. Reflection by Soyoung. She pulled out the key sentence and its grammatical point correctly.

As one of the youngest students in the storytelling class, it is no wonder that Chaeun's English knowledge including phonics, vocabulary, and grammar should be lower than those older students. She overcame her difficulties by choosing books that she had previously read in Korean if they happened to be available. According to my fieldnotes on June 14th, 2013, when she read *Rabbit Defeated by Turtle* in Figure 20, she seemed not to be daunted by the mystery words. Even though the word *defeat* is not an easy word for her grade level, she successfully read the book because she was familiar with this book in Korean language already. This book was effective for her to expand her English vocabulary spontaneously by getting her engaged in the text and taking advantage of experience with the story in her native language. I sat next to her and observed her enjoying the illustrations, guessing using all the words and picture clues available, and not recording all the unknown words in her notebook like she usually did when reading English books. I asked her why she did not take notes and she answered that she jotted down words to memorize only she felt it was possible and important, but there were too many to memorize and it looked too difficult. Like Seungjae, she was critical about herself as a learner and was well aware of what she needs and wants. It seemed that she enjoyed reading when she felt comfortable getting support from a teacher, and she finally succeeded in reading the book completely. Having a positive outlook and taking full advantage of the resources available to her were the main driving forces behind her development through one year of storytelling class.

Reflection


Book Title	Rabbit Defeatd by Turtle		
Date	11월 14일 수요일	Class	2-5
Name	강채운		
Summary (줄거리, 내용)			
가장 기억에 남는 장면 거북이가 토끼가 자는 동안 결승전 까지 열심히 걸어서 결승전에 가서 거북이가 토끼 를 이긴 장면, 줄거리에 대한 그림 ↓			
What I've Learned (배운점), Scribbles (낙서)			
 <p>노간쟁 : 이그림처럼 내가 해야 할 일은 게으름 피우지 않고 끝까지 최선을 다하 야겠다</p>			

Figure 20. Reflection by Cha Eun.

I was always wondering what Eunjin liked about the storytelling class because she was not very outspoken during the activities. She did not ask me many questions, and did not even chat much with her peers. What she demonstrated was that not all students express their satisfaction outwardly. She arrived to the class 20 minutes earlier one day so I recorded a brief conversation I had with her in my fieldnotes on July 3rd, 2013:

Today Eunjin came 20 minutes before class. I thought it was a good chance to hear some feedback from her about the storytelling class since she does not talk to me much. I asked her how she was getting along in the class and she just smiled without saying anything. I kept on asking her what she liked most about the storytelling class and if she had any expectations for the class. She smiled

and said, “I like storytelling class because I can stay calm reading many books in the class.” I asked her again why she was never absent to the class with an intention of praising her integrity. She answered in shy face “Well, I don’t know.” As a teacher, it is always nice to see a student who likes my class for whatever reasons.

The national curriculum for English suggests that oral language proficiency at the elementary level be activity centered; singing songs, chanting, and role-playing every chapter. Not only in English, but also other subjects put emphasis on hands-on activity and practical experience. It is believed that students learn better by doing. On the contrary, not every student liked to be active and express himself/herself orally or physically during class, especially higher grade level students. While I was teaching 6th graders in 2011, many of the 5th and 6th grade teachers had difficulty when students’ active participation was required for different lessons. Eunjin was a prime example. She did not like to speak out and read aloud. She did not enjoy role-playing, singing, and group work. She did not like easy and childish books and tried to read books that had a theme or plot rather than repetitive or rhyming based books even though the books she gravitated towards could be somewhat difficult. She was patient for her age, so did not get bored reading one book thoroughly and looking up unknown words in the dictionary. She liked to monitor her improvement, and did not spend much time looking at illustrations or reading books geared towards toddlers. She always chose a book that was reasonably difficult and tried to work through the challenging sections in the book. She did not complete reflection papers in each class even though she always worked diligently. Reading books with many unknown words and using the dictionary to define

those words would take two classes to complete one reflection paper. I was concerned if she would lose her focus by reading at such a slow pace, but she enjoyed it saying “I want to read books without pictures, soon.” She completed *Figure 21* through two days of reading the book. She kept on editing the paper in order to improve the quality of writing even though there was no pending evaluation or score. She simply enjoyed the process of refining to get a better quality paper.

Reflection			
Book Title	cowboy Roy		
Date	Class	Name	정은진
Summary (줄거리, 내용)			
<p>Jesse와 James 자전거를 멋있게 타고 있는 것을 본 Roy는 자기의 자전거를 Meg의 인형을 빼앗고 baby라고 불리는 Jesse와 James를 따라잡으려고 자전거를 탔다. James와 Jesse를 부딪힌 Roy는 인형을 되찾고 Meg에게 돌려 주었다. Roy는 자전거를 몰고 가는 남반쪽 아디가 멋지는 법을 배웠다.</p>			
What I've Learned (배운점), Scribbles (낙서)			
<p>난도 자전거를 멋있게 타도 꼭 한번은 타보길 싶다.</p>			

Figure 21. Reflection by Eunjin.

Hangyul was good at drawing pictures. Her descriptive, creative, and expressive illustrations fascinated other students in the storytelling class. She was proud when her work generated attention from her peers. Initially, she was full of complaints and resented having to join due to her father’s persistent demand, but by the end of the class, she was one of the students who grew to appreciate the class the most. According to my

fieldnotes, she frequently told me “I like you a lot,” “I really love this class,” or “Be my classroom teacher.” After I asked Eunjin what she liked about the class, I was curious to know about what Hangyul thought because her personality was, the extreme opposite of Eunjin’s. I recorded Hangyul’s thoughts in my fieldnotes after a brief casual conversation on June 19th, 2013:

I love to draw pictures and I drew a lot of pictures in this class. I am glad that I can draw and study English at the same time. I felt proud when I made a nice English book with beautiful pictures. My father compliments me a lot! I might have stopped coming to the class if I never got the chance to draw. Haha!

(저는요 그림그리는거 너무 좋아하는데요 스토리텔링반에서는 그림을 많이 그려요. 영어공부하면서 그림도 그리니까 너무 좋아요. 멋진 그림을 그려서 영어 동화책을 완성하면 정말 뿌듯해요. 아빠한테도 칭찬 많이 받았어요. 아마 그림그리는거 없었음, 스토리교실 안왔을지도 몰라요. 하하.)

I observed many times that she read a storybook and drew pictures illustrating what she read. This was not the aim of the class but I considered how rare of an opportunity it was for these Korean students to have access to so many English books. *Figure 22* is a reflection paper where she spent more time drawing pictures than summarizing, but she accurately figured out the contents of the book. Even though paying closer attention to illustrations rather than the sentences in the book seemed time-consuming sometimes, it is undeniable that drawing activities during book making and reflection papers efficiently encouraged her genuine interest in English storybooks.

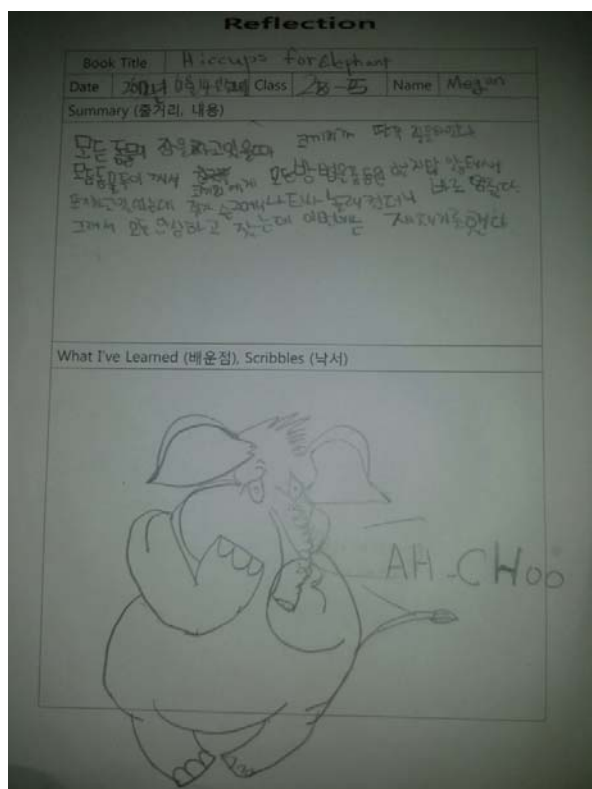


Figure 22. Reflection by Hangyul

Sohl hated drawing pictures and rushed through his work when drawing was assigned. He eagerly read any English books. He seemed to be the one who took full advantage of the new English library. Figure 23 illustrates that He roughly completed working on reflection paper in fast speed. His reflections looked rough often, so sometimes I asked him to do it over because it was hard to recognize his hand writing. After observing him carefully a few times, I realized that he did not like to write reflections because he wanted to read more books during class time. He asked me often “Do I need to fill in the whole section?” or “Oh, I do not want to do it (writing reflection paper) today.” I was concerned that if I made an exception for him, other students would not want to do it either. I told him that his reflection paper did not need to be perfect because the purpose of doing it was for his own personal development and not for anyone

else to critique. I wanted him to become a fluent reader in English eventually because he had so much potential. I assisted his progress by looking up words in the dictionary together or by quizzing him to see how well he understood the book. As his vocabulary increased, he needed less with pronunciation. I often asked him to read aloud so I could listen and give him instant feedback. Throughout the class, he had expanding his ZPD successfully. In terms of cognitive aspect, I supplemented his special needs such as listening to him carefully, giving him instant feedback in English knowledge of any kind, that could not be met by other English teachers. In order to better support him, I closely observed how he pronounced words, and interpreted sentences and phrases. I also paid attention to how he made use of those skills during book making activities, how he performed while role-playing, and how he wrote his reflection papers. Based on his cognitive achievement, I cared about his affective aspect by trying to make him feel the sense of achievement and gain confidence. Most importantly, I encouraged him to be self-driven in learning English because I would not always be available to assist him. I had a conversation with his classroom teacher on July 3rd 2013. She showed me an entry in Sohl's diary. In it he talked about the story telling class after I opened the English library. He described how successful he felt helping his classmates and reading fluently without my assistance. He also mentioned that his English was improving. His classroom teacher said Sohl talked about the storytelling class often in her class and his success seemed to affect his achievement in other subjects.

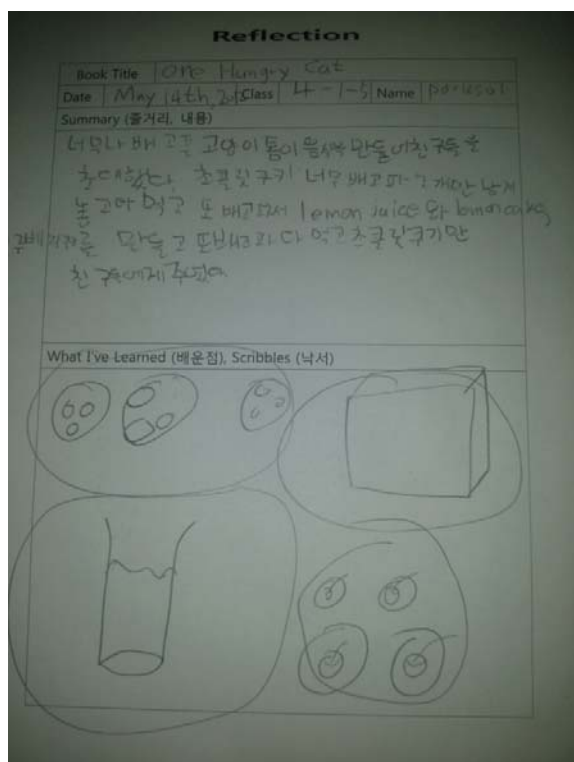


Figure 23. Reflection by Sohl.

Wrapping up the Storytelling Class

The semester was drawing to a close. The students were busy with final exams and anxiously anticipating the coming summer break. Students kept attending on and off, but the 6 focal students stayed consistent until the end. Throughout our year long journey we grew very close but we were soon to part.

I decided to submit a leave of absence at DS Elementary School in order to focus on my dissertation. Even though I could not manage the class anymore, I wanted someone to take over the class so that it would continue. Unfortunately no one volunteered even though there were many young teachers who were good at English. One teacher told me that she was scared of taking the class over because there was no specific curriculum or plan to follow. A legitimate concern that I had one-year prior. As long as

storytelling is not part of the national curriculum, implementing a storytelling program is difficult to achieve. Another teacher mentioned that the class was conducted in my unique style of instruction and so she felt uncomfortable trying to be my substitute. Once I left the school, I was no longer involved or obligated to school affairs, but other teachers were intimidated by the idea of continuing “my project”. I was disappointed by the thought of all resources such as new English library with hundreds of English storybooks, and the ever improving, hard-working students who were too good to lose.

In the last class on July 19th, 2013, I had conversation with the 6 focal students about the year we spent together. I asked students to fill out a questionnaire with open-ended questions such as:

1. Explain how you've improved by participating in the storytelling class.
2. Explain what was most impressive about the storytelling class and why.
3. Explain what you would expect from the storytelling class next time.

I asked the students to be very descriptive in writing their answers in detail. They were allowed to use Korean, for sure. Despite my requests, their answers were very short and simple. Many answers were overlapped with each other. Students even joked in answers especially when referring to their pronunciation (e.g. I feel like have of butter on my tongue, I can make strong *s* sounds and rolling *r* sounds now), which was not because they did not take the questions seriously, but because they felt shy talking about their pronunciation seriously. It is very common that Korean students feel embarrassed and are affected by peer pressure in terms of English pronunciation, and my students were no exception even though those feelings were not as explicit during teaching and learning activities in the storytelling class.

Following are the students' responses in the questionnaire. Sohl wrote:

I improved pronunciation the most, especially the *r* sound. I enjoyed reading many English storybooks that I did not have at home. I hope to have more snacks. The role-playing was dumb but funny. I hope to do more role-playing in English next time.

(발음이 특히 많이 늘었음. 특히 R 발음. 집에 없는 영어책을 많이 읽어서 좋음. 과자가 더 많았으면 좋겠다. 역할놀이는 좀 너무 단순했지만 재밌었음. 다음엔 역할놀이를 더 했으면 좋겠다.)

As seen from the books that he made or reflection papers, he did not like very detailed, descriptive, or time-consuming activities. He did however quickly understand the content of the book, was confident in his performance, and was pleased to help his younger peers. Even though public school English education was the vehicle he could rely on for improvement, his determination and motivation fueled his high achievement for a short period of time. He wanted to learn English quickly, which I thought, could be mistaken as not doing his best if he were not carefully observed. He was hardworking and eager to have people listen to and respond to him. Without any other opportunities to learn English like hagwons or worksheets, he demonstrated how significant intrinsic motivation and self-directed learning could be for progress in learning English.

Soyoung described:

I got worksheets service at home to study English regularly, went to hagwons to study English grammar to prepare for middle school, and did the storytelling class for the last one year. All were good for my English. Speaking of the storytelling class, I can speak English as if I lived in a foreign country because I

learned English expressions in the storybook, not in the textbook. By reading aloud, I became like a native speaker. I can make strong *s* sounds and rolling *r* sounds now. I enjoyed reading English storybooks after you read aloud and working together with friends. It is hard to work this much with friends in the English class. I love English storytelling class. It could not be any better! Are you really leaving the school? I want to study in the storytelling class for long until I graduate.

(지난1년간 집에서 학습지하고, 학원다니면서 중학교 대비해서 영문법 배우고, 스토리텔링 다녔음. 모두 영어에 도움됨. 특히 스토리텔링교실에서는 교과서가 아니라 동화책에서 표현을 배워서 외국에 사는것처럼 영어로 말했음. 큰소리로 읽을땐 내가 꼭 외국사람이 된 느낌이었음. 선생님발음을 잘 따라하고 친구들 하는걸 잘 보면서 연습하니, 이젠 S발음이랑 R발음을 정통으로 잘하는 것 같음. 영어수업시간에는 친구랑 하는 활동이 별로 없는데, 스토리텔링교실에서는 협동수업을 많이 했음. 쌤, 저희학교 떠나세요? 저는 졸업할때까지 스토리텔링교실 하고싶은데...)

Soyoung's answer shows that even though the storytelling class was literacy centered and not geared toward the progress of oral language of English, students appreciated its effectiveness in that it facilitated their progress in oral communication. Using only textbooks in the school curriculum, it was difficult for them to comprehend the relevance of English in their lives. Storybooks provided various indirect experiences in English speaking countries, which gave them a preview as to how English is actually

spoken in context and in realistic situations. Soyoung also mentioned the cooperative relationship with friends, which had been built over the course of a year in the class. Even though the storytelling class was not going to continue, I expected that her love of the class and the strong foundation she developed reading English books would continue.

Hangyul's answers to all the three questions were like a joke:

I feel like I have butter on my tongue when I pronounce English words. My singing and dancing is really good. I want to play more exciting games in the storytelling class. I loved the snacks. Thank you.

(영어발음할때는 혀에 버터마르고 온것같음. 영어노래랑 춤실력이 상당함. 앞으로도 게임을 더 했음 좋겠어요. 과자도 맛있었구요. 고맙습니다.)

Hangyul kept on demanding exciting activities and snacks for the storytelling class, but she attended the storytelling class as one of the loyal students throughout a year even without the incentives she demanded. I believe that what really changes one's attitude to a class more than anything else is that person's mindset. Simply providing what the students suggest might not coincide with the elements affecting their positive improvement. This is where intervention by a teacher is necessary. Teachers need to acknowledge what is not outwardly apparent but necessary towards development in the student's ZPD. According to many cases of observation and conversation, being popular, having a sense of humor, being praised as one who can draw very well, and building confidence from having a good command of English were assumed as Hangyul's driving forces. As a teacher, I am glad that I built strong rapport with her and figured out how she was best engaged while learning English.

Eunjin's answers were very simple as usual:

I enjoyed English storybooks. I want to play games more in the storytelling class.

(스토리텔링교실 재미있음. 게임을 더 하고싶음.)

Seungjae noted:

What I liked the most about the storytelling class was that I could read many kinds of English storybooks and learn more about English without taking tests. I got confident in English and started to understand English books more through one year's practice in the storytelling class. I learned how to use many words and sentences in different situations from the storybooks. I was able to speak English even better after that. English is not study anymore but it is a hobby now. I am glad that I could choose books and summarize them in writing and drawing pictures on my own. I hope to do a full-blown role play, video tape it, and watch it on TV. I want to have more chances to talk with native speakers and use of what I learned in the storytelling class.

(스토리텔링 교실에서는 다양한 종류의 영어책을 읽을 수 있다. 영어를 시험 스트레스 없이 배울 수 있어 좋다. 1년동안 스토리텔링반에서 영어공부를 하다보니 영어를 더 잘 이해하게 되었고 영어에 자신감을 얻었다. 책에 있는 다양한 상황속에서 어떻게 단어와 문장을 사용하는지 알게 되었다. 심지어는 영어를 더 잘 말할수도 있다. 이제 영어는 공부기 아니라 취미가 되었다. 요즘엔 책을 골라서 요약해서 그림그리는 활동까지 하니깐 더 좋다. 이젠, 완전 멋진 롤플레이를 하고 비디오로 찍어서 텔레비로 보고싶다. 원어민하고도 이야기할 기회가 더 많아져서 스토리텔링반에서 배운내용을 써먹고 싶다.)

Seungjae's comment reminded me how rewarding it is to be a teacher. As a student who first came in as an emergent reader, he mentioned that reading English storybooks became his hobby by the end of the class. He also wanted to role-play seriously and reflect on his performances through video recordings. Like Soyoung, he expected to see himself eventually speaking English in real situations and was confident. Without any measurable results obtained from the storytelling class such as test scores, I was not sure how much he improved through a course of a year, however, I believe results did not really matter. I witnessed his positive attitude toward learning English. He became fully engaged, enjoyed learning and reading English storybooks, and developed confidence both in language and literacy of English.

Chaeun wrote:

I am more interested in English. My pronunciation got better by reading aloud with you. I liked to make my own books and share my work with others. I hope to play more games.

(영어에 흥미가 더 생겼다. 샘하고 큰소리로 읽으니 발음도 더 좋아진 것 같다. 책만들기랑 애들이랑 나눠보기도 재밌었다. 게임을 더 많이 했음 좋겠다.)

Most students felt that they improved in English. Many wrote that they wanted to have more fun in the storytelling class. I asked them what they meant by “fun” specifically and Hangyul explained that she played games such as throwing balls and running in other English classes and that it would have been more exciting if she was able to do that in the English storytelling class. I was sorry that I was not able to include more physical games, but the focus of the class was reading. Sometimes games required a lot

of time and usually were not literacy centered. Many afterschool English classes played games or did activities focused on developing the students' ability to speak English spontaneously. DS Elementary School was no exception. All the afterschool programs at DS Elementary School were focused on developing the oral language of English except for the storytelling class. Therefore, I could not help but put English storybook at the center of learning. Reading was the main priority and other activities were used only to support reading comprehension and writing in English. It was difficult to find ways to make the class more physical so most of the focus was placed on literacy-centered activities such as book making or playing games like bingo.

The priority of the storytelling class was to improve literacy proficiency. The students felt their English pronunciation, oral proficiency, and reading proficiency improved as a result of the storytelling class. It turned out that expressions in English storybooks did not stay printed in the books, but came to life by reading them out loud.

Chapter 5. Discussion

Introduction

This study describes how an English storytelling class was organized and managed at a public elementary school located in a small city in Korea. I set up the class to study English storybooks as part of an afterschool program while maintaining and managing it for one year. The class started in September 2012 and ended July 2013. There were many difficulties along the way. The SES was quite low in the surrounding community and the students' learning environment was not as convenient or affluent as those bigger cities like Seoul. Despite the demographics, the students were highly motivated and appreciated the rare opportunity to study English storybooks to aid in improving their English competency. Most importantly, they grew to enjoy reading English storybooks.

In the previous chapter, I described in detail how I managed the storytelling class throughout the year, and how individual student' needs, school circumstances, and the participating students' progress was considered. Observations, fieldnotes, journals, interviews, conversations with students and teachers, and questionnaires were used to document the findings. Based on the results of those findings I am drawing out emerging themes and analyzing them from the sociocultural perspective of learning, language development, and Vygotskian ideas.

Literacy as a Social Practice and the Storytelling Class

English practice is regarded as the symbol of power, privilege, and dominance in Korean society. Based on the model of literacy practice by Purcell-Gates, Perry, and Briseno (2011) as was illustrated in *Figure 2*, participation in the storytelling class

provided observable literacy events in this study. Students had the intention of improving their English competency (communicative intent for reading or writing a text) using English storybooks of various kinds (actual texts). These intentions and texts mediated students' purposes or social goals for engaging in the event, which in the study was participating in the storytelling class. This immediate social goal (participating in the storytelling class) is shaped by larger domains of social activity (higher education, social status), which are shaped by other contextual layers (English as a valued language in Korean society). In other words, even though the immediate social goal of English education is for the purpose of higher education, people in the end also pursue social status through English education.

In this study, under the umbrella of a sociocultural theory of literacy, I narrowed down my focus to the literacy event (storytelling class) and explored how a teacher can help students engaged in literacy practices based on Vygotsky's notion of ZPD in a Korean elementary school context. I implemented ways to make my students "do" with reading and writing promoting cognitive progress as well as providing affective support. I see myself not simply as an instructor for cognitive achievement in English literacy but more of a literacy broker who make literacy practice in English possible as suggested by Perry (2007) and found that my practice was significant in three aspects.

First, Lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge was developed the most through storytelling practice. Lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge is composed of knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, knowledge of decoding or encoding methods. Students learned phonics knowledge to decode and pronounce appropriately through 5 minutes of phonics instruction in the beginning of the whole class instruction. They got

feedback from the teacher during individual study time and from the peers during the lessons. While they were making a book of their own, they had to reflect on their knowledge in vocabulary and syntax. Through the scaffolding by peers and the teacher, they were engaged in reading the storybooks, which led to their cognitive development in English.

Second, I provided written genre knowledge using storybooks. Being situated in English as a foreign language environment, they did not have chances to be involved with various genres in English literacy practice, especially in a regular English class where the textbook is used as the only medium of learning English. Having English storybooks gave them chances to explore a real, written genre, which is not artificially designed for education like textbooks, providing chances for children to enjoy learning English. Through this exploration, students came to regard English in a real and meaningful sense.

Third, cultural knowledge that students gained through storybooks was rich and authentic. The cultural knowledge of English available in Korean context provides a limited and indirect experience. For example, students heard of American people hug when they met as a way of saying hello or Western people using forks and knives when eating. However, storybooks directly demonstrates what a neighborhood where English is spoken looks like, what the bus is like, how English-speaking people enjoy their birthday parties, what they do for Thanksgiving, etc. Being one of the resources that my students could depend on, I talked about my experience in the U.S. in relation to the subject in the storybook and students enjoyed listening to the stories very much, sometimes even more than the storybook.

Storytelling as a unique and valuable experience in a Korean elementary school

context was described above. With appropriate teaching strategies involved, it would meet the trend in English education in Korea which emphasizes communicative competence in practical sense.

Extending Students' ZPD in the Storytelling Class

In the beginning of the storytelling class, it was imperative to identify each student's ZPD in order to plan and design a program that would be intriguing as well as meaningful to my students' development in English and figure out ways to best scaffold them within the program. It needed to be challenging but also possible with additional support. The potential ZPD was assumed according to various points including English knowledge of 3rd and 4th grade students indicated in the national curriculum, questionnaire students filled out, interview with 3rd and 4th grade English teachers about students' participation and achievement in regular English class, and interview with classroom teachers about students' background information regarding learning English such as students' first language literacy, English learning experience, and English education in private institutions. In order to discover how ZPD of individual students was extending, I observed my students carefully not to miss any meaningful moment which demonstrates their progress with the support of their peers and the teacher. I saw my students' behaviors critically during the class and collected their feedback using exit card and having conversations. In addition, I tried to figure out the potential for emotional support engendered through the cooperative learning processes and personal connection. I ensured time to give feedback to individuals in order to scaffold them efficiently both from cognitive and affective aspect. Teacher initiated whole class instruction was the model I chose to follow initially and the initiative of the class transitioned gradually and

naturally toward students, in which process students' ZPD were extended greatly and they became self-directed learner taking the lead of their own development. Scaffolding was done actively using every resource around them including the teacher, peers, and materials available.

Criteria for how to determine where a student is functioning within the ZPD. As the mission of the storytelling class was to promote English literacy of the students with the theoretical background of the ZPD, I designed my class to facilitate scaffolding using various available resources and utilizing English storybooks as the focus for literacy practice in English. I attempted to create an environment where each student could follow their own pace through efficient scaffolding provided by the teacher, the environment, and peers. I also intended to promote the best possible development using resources that students could draw upon. There are undoubtedly limitations that could not satisfy individual needs completely, but I kept in mind that any environment would have pros and cons. As an elementary school teacher conducting research, I demonstrated how I got through the reality of teaching English literacy in Korean elementary school context with the understanding of ZPD in mind.

As mentioned before, I considered various factors in determining students' ZPDs at the beginning of the storytelling class. While I was managing the class, I witnessed many of the 'ah-ha' moments where breakthroughs in learning occurred. These moments could not necessarily be recorded accurately using statistical analysis or test scores. Because the storytelling class was an afterschool program without tests or evaluation, how students functioned within the ZPD was observed and recorded through my lens as a teacher researcher. Potential clues, I thought, demonstrating students' development was

their behavior, comments they made while participating in the activities, conversations regarding how they felt about their progress, observation of how they interacted with peers or by themselves, work products, and their descriptive records such as exit cards and questionnaires.

When students received a new storybook to study, they demonstrated various responses according to their level of confidence. Among all the clues gained as a researcher, the level of confidence was the easiest barometer I used in noticing to determine if a student was functioning within his/her ZPD. Confident students were mostly expressive. They read books with a louder voice. They asked for assistance from the teacher and their peers actively without hesitating or being embarrassed. They did not mind being ignorant about parts of the book and were engaged to read the book to completely understand it. They would not express how easy it was, because, I assumed, of peer pressure that they might be seen as snobbish. This case would be convenient for the teacher because the content should be certainly within the ZPD of students and students' needs became obvious, which means scaffolding can be done in the most efficient and effective way, leading to their development.

Difficulties arose when students would not express what they needed. This was summarized into three cases. First, a student was not expressive when his/her personality was not outgoing. Eunjin was the representative case. She did not actively ask for help in any situation, so I always had to be attentive to her needs to check out her progress. Second, a student was not expressive when the book was more challenging than his/her ability. I noticed unexpressive students the most when I taught *The Gruffalo* and *My Mom*. I needed to serve individual students with care devoting more time and effort and

availing various ways of scaffolding; providing enough time and intensive personal assistance, providing enough chances to seek out their peers, pairing up with a high-achieving peers, suggesting lower objectives (e.g. the teacher could say ‘it’s good enough to understand the repetitive parts’), and giving optional work from lower to upper levels so students could choose freely. Students were frustrated at first but ended up with successful emotions. Affective scaffolding positively combined with cognitive scaffolding facilitated progress. Studying these books successfully contributed to the extension of the ZPD because students became relaxed to see books with longer sentences. Students said it was the most fruitful experience. Third, students were not expressive when the task was out of their ZPD. This did not happen when I was teaching storybooks. But in the beginning of the storytelling class when I asked students to do the introduction activity, Youjung kept silent and did nothing. He dropped the class as was mentioned in the beginning of Chapter 4 Findings. Even though I provided him assistance by allowing him to use Korean, he simply refused it. I assume he was not prepared to take the storytelling class in terms of both the cognitive and affective aspects.

Meeting individual needs and promoting development within a student’s ZPD is always a concern for teachers. Worksheets were a nice supplement I utilized to manage the class while efficiently serving individuals’ cognitive development in English. By observing how students were dealing with various levels of worksheets, I could assume where their lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge (Perry, 2009) in English were in relationship to their ZPDs, which helped determine how I would assist them. For example, when doing worksheets during *The Gruffalo* lesson, Seungyoun (3rd grade) was able to correctly match the pictures with the words. She correctly colored the picture

based on the description in the book. She did take longer to track the route that the Mouse went through, so I read the book with her slowly and we tracked the route together. Chaeun (3rd grade) could do all the worksheets that Seungyoun did and did not spend as long to track the route of the Mouse as Seungyoun. In addition, Chaeun did the storyboard activities but she wrote the stories in Korean. I answered some of her questions regarding the content of the book in Korean. Soyoung (4th grade) completed all of the worksheets completely in a short time and even did the storyboard independently in English. She asked me how to pronounce difficult English words and to explain certain sentences in Korean. She also asked for help and feedback on grammar when she wrote sentences in English. She devoted most of her time working on the worksheets and refining the storyboard and showed great progress in her final product. The students learned the same storybook but the scaffolding provided was different for each one. As such, their levels of achievement were all different.

How students worked on the book making activities also revealed where students were in their English literacy capacity and gave me hints as to how I could scaffold to promote development in their ZPD. Copying the book was encouraged for students who had difficulties in understanding. Students with broader vocabularies and grammatical knowledge were encouraged to compose their own pages as a way to promote their literacy practices knowledge and to extend their ZPD. Scaffolding was involved in the process. While the teacher answered their questions, they observed each other's work, generated ideas, and availed themselves to resources such as dictionaries or sentences in the book. This creative book making process was effective in strengthening the students' affective aspects as well because they felt a sense of accomplishment by creating their

own work. Also, it was a great chance to incorporate pragmatic, register, and semantic knowledge in order to build literacy practice knowledge in English (Perry, 2009). Up to the students' level of understanding the books, the phase of activities related to book making shifted through 4 stages roughly; underlining and making circles, copying the most impressive pages, creating a few pages, composing a whole book. How each student went through the stages demonstrated where his/her level of literacy practices knowledge was and helped me to find the best possible scaffolding for the student.

Affective scaffolding was necessary for each student. Because learning English in an EFL environment is challenging, students always wanted to be acknowledged for their progress and achievement. Even when minimal scaffolding in cognitive aspects was involved, affective scaffolding always accompanied it. As the affective aspect is hard to be acknowledged on a surface level, I was not sure where students were in their affective development. I tried to facilitate an environment where the students felt safe, secure, confident, motivated, rewarded, and successful throughout the storytelling class.

Strengthening affective aspects. The cognitive development was not the only ground of their progress; affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence, feeling safe and secure enough to risk take, peer support, rapport, and relationship built strongly have all been contributing to the extension of ZPD of the students in the storytelling class.

In the beginning of the class, I, the teacher, took initiative because it was necessary for students to recognize the mission of the new storytelling class and identify what they could learn from it. I planned themes, teaching methods, and objectives. I took initiative by designing the overall lesson process and keeping the class on track. The task

was overwhelming because it was the first time that I assumed full responsibility planning storytelling class in the public education system. I also tried to make a clear outline or rubric to ease my insecurities and unfamiliarity with managing it. To overcome this difficulty, I relied on the students' exit card responses described in Chapter 4, storytelling guidebooks, second language literacy books, and articles, and my conversations with colleagues who were very interested in English education.

My role became close to that of a facilitator as the students' initiative grew, which signifies some important points in the leaning of English for the students in the storytelling class. First, students gained confidence that they were good enough to speak out what they would like to do in learning English. Initially, students were reluctant to voice out but they were not scared of being stood out any longer with elevated confidence they gained through the experience in the storytelling class. Without confidence, it would have been hard to take risk to suggest an activity that every student in the class might have been dissatisfied with or complained to do. Through successful English learning experience, students became aware that how certain activity can bring them fun and promote English competency as well. Their active suggestions were in fact the driving force that facilitated the transition from Stage 1: Teacher initiated whole class instruction to Stage 2: Gradual shift to student-initiated reading stage. Second, students became motivated to be better at English, which facilitated them self-directed in learning of English and engaged in literacy practice. In order to be self-directed in learning, the best way would have to be that they need to take the initiative in their own learning. Considering self-directed learning is one of the most emphasized themes in the 7th national curriculum currently in effect in Korea, students' taking initiative in their

learning of English would be expected to shed overarching influence on the educational activities at elementary school overall. However, being self-directed in learning did not always develop into best possible learning practices, because some students were found to pursue more instant pleasure than searching for ways to promote progress which was likely to be difficult or troublesome. When students were given total autonomy in the beginning of reading in English library newly opened, they often avoided challenges or difficulties in reading. I had to create a situation that they could achieve a purpose of reading as well as appreciate the joy of it, so I intervened in the book choice, listened them reading, and answered their questions as a way that guides them to find the answer on their own. Teacher should always be sensitive and attentive to how students are doing to achieve the purposes of learning and intervene appropriately to scaffold in the process. Third, students built ownership of the storytelling class. Storytelling class evolved as not simply a place waiting to be taught what a teacher planned to implement on them, but rather a ground where they could promote their learning of English with diverse supports they could avail conveniently at hand. As was seen in the examples of Stage 2: Gradual shift to student-initiated reading, Chaeun brought a book to resolve her own problems in learning as well as to share it with everybody in the storytelling class. Hangyul brought another book similar for the learning of everybody in the class. They were building a community of their own, enjoyed their time in the storytelling class, and shared learning experience spontaneously for the improvement of all in the storytelling class without any force or persuasion. Their ownership of the class kept on developing and finally at Stage 3: Toward independent reading, they came to the class to read English storybooks even when the class was cancelled for any reasons.

Students' growing initiative is deeply related to the strengthening of their affective aspects in learning English. Regarding affective aspects, Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) mention that emotional rapport and human connection in social interaction is significant in education. I intended to build close relationship with my students from beginning of the class in order to strengthen their affective factors which was easily apt to be ignored or overlooked in regular English class in public school in Korea where a single student has to take care of more or less than 30 students to achieve a purpose indicated in the national curriculum within limited time. Under such situation, affect is likely to work more as a filter as was asserted by Krashen (1987), not as an element which facilitates development, because students are not developing at their own pace spontaneously but under pressure that they have to complete certain level in designated time frame.

Many episodes and examples support the significance of affective aspects in promoting English competency. Chaeun felt safe and secured working together with many nice on-nis in the class. The cognitive scaffolding of on-nis was effective only for the certain knowledge of information that Chaeun acquired, but the emotional scaffolding was effective and valid throughout classes. She could depend on them comfortably when I could not devote her enough time. As on-nis were older and a grade higher than her, she was not threatened or competitive around them. She did not feel inferior or ashamed when she did not understand the book. She felt free to peek out their work or ask for help.

Students were convinced of themselves that they could achieve better through success experience. 3rd grader Seungjae read *The Gruffalo* from cover to cover, which he could never imagine as an emergent reader in English. There were various levels of scaffolding involved to enhance cognitive development in English; the video clip to

enhance his background knowledge, exploring the book by himself looking at illustrations and using his vocabulary knowledge and giving himself feedback while the class was proceeded, teacher's reading aloud and explanation in Korean, and all the personal assistance that he received from the teacher and his peers. All these were related with each other to scaffold his cognitive development and helped extending his ZPD effectively. In his exit card response, what stood out was the feeling of accomplishment of the unbelievable task and strong motivation to work harder. Without emotional support, he might have achieved cognitive development but would have been left with the feeling of inferiority and frustration. When affective scaffolding was involved, cognitive scaffolding performed its part most effectively and knowledge acquired contributed to build a positive self-image.

Students also felt rewarded with their performances in the storytelling class. Even though I gave students presents sometimes as the school allotted some stuffs to afterschool programs for prize, any of the students did not mention how rewarding the present was in their exit card or in the conversation. However, they appreciated emotional experience and mentioned their touching moment often. Hangyul, who joined in the storytelling class involuntarily, became a popular through her talent in drawing and sense of humor when making a book of her own, gained confidence in her command of English, and stayed as one of the loyal students till the end of the storytelling class. Not to mention, she has been extending her ZPD greatly taking good advantage of the scaffolding by her peers and the teacher. She kept on demanding certain snacks or juices which I thought inappropriate demeanor but tried to meet. However, the moment that Hangyul rewarded the most was not when she had her favorite snacks but when she felt

how nice she was in English showing great performance in the class getting over difficulties. All these episodes demonstrate how significant one's affective factors can help extend one's ZPD in learning English.

Collecting data through various channels, students' personal lives and circumstances became more evident. I was informed about who was getting government support, who was having trouble in their class for lying often and how the problem was resolved, who were living in a public rental housing and how much that circumstance embarrassed them, who motivated to become a leader in the class, etc. There were many personal stories that I empathized with and lead me to connect with each student in the class on a deeper level. I especially became very close to the focal students and some of their parents even acknowledged me when our paths crossed in public. I called them when they were sick or absent and they sometimes played with my two younger children during lunchtime. In classroom interactions, joint activities between students and teachers are enhanced when there are reciprocal emotional supports in collaboration (Mahn and John-Steiner, 2002). As we became close, they were not reluctant to express how they wanted to benefit from the class and shared suggestions about what would make the class better to learn. In confidence they viewed themselves as agents and not just participants in the class, which made them, feel empowered. They were motivated to share opinions about the flow of lesson and were passionate about improving the class. Their contributions were actually reflected in the lesson plans and the initiative of the class gradually shifted toward the students. They asked to read more books instead of reading with many activities, so I prepared one lesson per book instead of three or four, which turned out to be very effective at improving reading fluency and class management. Their

request to choose and read English storybooks on their own, their active participation, and their remarkable progress drove me to take courage to found an English library asking help from the principal.

The connection amongst students was also solidified. They were encouraged to interact with and assist each other during the activities. Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) note that second language learners tend to face cognitive and emotional challenges as they learn a new language and culture. My students were high achievers in school according to the school records provided by their classroom teachers. All the focal students were above average in both English and Korean. They were good at dealing with cognitive challenges and sometimes even demanded more challenges. In spite of this, they were reluctant to raise their hands and speak in the beginning of the storytelling class because they were self-conscious of making mistakes and losing face in front of unfamiliar classmates. By end of the class, students voluntarily came to the classroom even when I was not available. They read English storybooks and supported each other. They were not embarrassed to speak in English and make mistakes because they were well aware of that they were not the only one getting through many cooperative activities such as making books and role play in the storytelling class together. They built strong bonds and developed close friendships. Most importantly, even unnoticed, they were scaffolding with each other to extend each other's ZPD.

Co-construction of knowledge in the ZPD was minimized when I was the only one taking initiative in the class because I never knew enough about their individual emotional experience and thoughts related to a book. Consequently, I was led to prioritize students' cognitive aspect of the ZPD. Sentence structure, word level, and sentence length

were my main concerns when choosing a book to study. As an elementary school teacher who understood the national curriculum, I knew very well how students were taught in regular classes and subject matter in textbooks. Finding the perfect book was virtually impossible and I inevitably had to negotiate between the ZPDs for each student.

However, when affective aspects were deeply involved with the lesson, student's ZPD expanded dramatically. In addition, negotiating between ZPDs for each student became easier as affective aspects were assisted in supplementing the missing parts.

Affective aspect extends ZPD even though it is not always obvious within short periods of time. By building rapport between students and teachers, students will be willing to maintain personal connections that strengthen their trust in each other. This whole process takes time and energy. Even though Eunjin stayed quiet during the class, I understood her reservations and realized that she became more comfortable being quiet in the classroom as she realized that I understood her through the relationship we developed over the year. Even though most of English classes in elementary level were noisy as a result of teaching methods to facilitate communication, Eunjin demonstrated that methods do not necessarily have to apply to everyone, and that teachers cannot come to an understanding of this in their teaching environments without careful observation of individual students because emotional aspects of reinforcing learning are complicated and diverse. The ZPD can be extended through cognitive and affective aspects, and the interplay of both simultaneously.

As the storytelling class transitioned toward Stage 3, students' initiative increased which was possible when emotional rapport was based. Students were reluctant to express what they wanted in the beginning, but they actively asked to visit the English

Village when learning *My Neighborhood*, or they wanted to make up imaginary fish when learning *Hooray for Fish* in Stage 2. They were gaining not only lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge but also cultural knowledge in English, which were building basis for their literacy practice knowledge. At Stage 3, students were self-directed in reading English storybooks as they began to know themselves well by actively involving themselves in storytelling class. They did not mind asking questions and getting feedback from me the closer our relationship grew. Students were no longer afraid to make mistakes or insecure about their lack of English knowledge. They were devoted to improve their ability reading English storybooks, which promoted their ZPD the most.

Scaffolding in effect various ways. For learning happens in ZPD, scaffolding is necessary as was mentioned repetitively. In order to facilitate scaffolding in a classroom environment, I implemented various ways to examine which was working effectively to promote understanding. *The Gruffalo* was way harder than the standard suggested in the national curriculum, but with scaffolding involved, students were able to enjoy the book successfully; Watching Youtube video clip together, students gained a sense of what the Gruffalo is. Self-exploration of the book allowed students to have a chance to guess the content of the book using clues such as illustrations and words they already knew, and enabled students feedback themselves while I read aloud and explained it in Korean. By reading aloud, students acknowledged that there were a lot of repetitions in the book. Korean explanation let students have clear understanding about the book. Individual study time was effective for me to give assistance and collect information how well they understood the book. Worksheets were useful for students to review the content of the book and reinforce their level of understanding. I was able to check students' level of

understanding to see how they were working on their worksheets, which helped me design the lessons followed. Through role play based on the script in the book, students learned how the book could be used alive in a conversation and went through communicative experience within their capacity. I extended the lesson by teaching another Gruffalo series and reinforced their knowledge and confidence gained through *The Gruffalo*. Even though it was a whole class instruction, I was scaffolding actively for each student to succeed in reading the book at certain degree for them to develop literacy practices knowledge and tried the lesson not to be deviated from the ZPD of the students in the storytelling class. Some students might have felt it more difficult than others, but still they developed within their ZPD using available scaffoldings.

In the cooperative process of interpreting a storybook, the students needed to interact with each other, which facilitated interpersonal scaffolding. In the beginning of a lesson while the students were exploring the book, they combined their vocabulary knowledge, lived experience, contextual understanding, and illustrations. Similar to putting a puzzle together, they dynamically interplayed their competence by putting together pieces of literacy practices knowledge. The most successful cooperation was when emotional support along with literacy knowledge was involved. When reciprocal cognitive and emotional support through social interdependence was promoted, students achieved most during the activities. Students put their English knowledge together when they were exploring *The Gruffalo*, paired up with a partner who could scaffold with each other like Sohl and a third grader in making a book *My Family*, and made up a simple situation using their English knowledge when demonstrating a role play in front of others without making mistakes. These cooperative experiences contributed to make my

students get even closer with each other.

Storybooks were great because terms were suggested contextually and they could involve aspects of knowledge needed to engage in literacy practices. The students continued making meaning using various factors in the book and connected those factors to lived experiences in order to internalize the content of the storybook and build their literacy knowledge which is composed of pragmatic, semantic, and register knowledge (Perry, 2009). For example, when we studied *My Mom*, the students imagined their mothers to help them understand the book. Even though the sentence structures were advanced, everyone in the storytelling class was able to understand the book and made a book of their own by following the sentence structures and the concepts in the book. The main sentence used in the book was *as adjective as noun* phrase, like *My mom is as comfy as a chair*. Through discussion and making comparisons between the mom in the book and their mothers at home, students accepted this book without any resistance. When making the book, 3rd grader Chaeun used appropriate vocabulary for her grade level and successfully conveyed meaning (e.g. *My mom roars like a lion*). Sohl expanded the subject of the book into the entire family as in figure 8. Hangyul wrote about her sister as in figure 9. It would have been almost impossible to use English storybooks to teach English in Korean elementary schools if seen only from the standard in the national curriculum without considering the work of scaffolding in the learning of English because the linguistic constituents in some of the storybooks were way more advanced than the level in the elementary English textbooks. However, when the concept of ZPD involves the work of scaffolding which views the indicative of children's mental development as 'what children can do with the assistance of others', the English

storybooks could not have been a better choice in facilitating emotional as well as intellectual experiences that when intertwined contribute to understanding the storybook.

Effect of Literacy Education by Using English Storybooks

Reciprocity between oral language and literacy. According to Chaudron (1988), in traditional approaches to learning teaching is regarded as the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the passive learner. The teacher performs as the classroom authority and students do as the teacher says so the teacher's information can be transferred to them. In this context or model, teacher-student interaction is minimal and is dominated by the teacher (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). The role of the learner becomes passive receptacle of information imparted by the teacher. As a result, the learner's active mental participation cannot be fostered and is not challenged by problem solving. The learner relies heavily on explanation or demonstration, which reduces the opportunity to encourage the learner to consider new perspectives. (Rommetveit, 1974). When learning English was simply regarded as solving English questions to prepare for an exam, this perspective was taken for granted and widespread. Students were busy with memorizing as many words and grammatical rules as possible. This was how I learned English literacy. With emphasis on communicative competency for elementary English in the national curriculum and more opportunity to travel between countries, practicality became the primary objective in learning English. At the same time, there was harsh criticism of traditional teaching methods seemingly ineffective in relation to people's inability to speak fluently after years of English education in school.

There is not as much pressure to study and prepare for exams at the elementary level so English is not given much priority or attention. Sometimes it is even avoided or

criticized mistaken as traditional grammar centered English education where the emphasis is placed on memorizing vocabulary, grammatical rules, and mechanical repetition. DS Elementary School was not an exception, which made most afterschool English education programs as conversation based. Among all the afterschool English programs, the 'English Talking' class was the most popular. A native English speaker managed it. This particular native speaker teacher had no prior language teaching experience, only a military background, blond hair, blue eyes, and fluent English. His class was held every day for three hours, the longest among all the afterschool programs but always full of students. There was even a waiting list. This example clearly demonstrates the parents' belief that oral fluency in English was best achieved by speaking and for this reason native English speakers are more efficient as English teachers. Referring to the phenomenon in which the language practices of white monolingual speakers are favored, Garcia (2014) asserts that "by native we usually mean white middle class educated speakers, not recognizing that the nativeness of the language practices of the poor and racially different may differ from those who are more powerful in society.....the English language is used as an instrument of hegemony that centers power in the white prestigious class that governs." (p. 5)

Kozulin (1999) explained Vygotsky's theory about thought and language. Reading and writing is a powerful exercise for reciprocal influence on the oral speech of a literate person. It requires higher development of cognitive functions to keep the context in mind and plan the whole text in absence of immediate stimulation. This in turn, leads to the development of oral speech. Applied in relation to the students in the storytelling class, they were able to interpret the text in the storybooks using prediction, inference, and

illustrations through the development of cognitive functions trained by reading different English storybooks and because they were able to create their own books by planning sentences on their own with their highly developed cognitive function. They eventually gained confidence both in oral and literacy proficiency in English. Despite of the emphasis on oral language fluency in elementary English education, the students in the storytelling class were reluctant to speak English in front of others when introducing themselves in the beginning of the class. With an emphasis on communication in elementary English education in Korea, students were accustomed to using only very simple responses. They were initially overwhelmed and intimidated by planning a whole sentence even with enough vocabulary to make one. They were not provided the chance to build their cognitive functions in English because they did not receive enough English literacy education. In Korean elementary schools, it was assumed that oral language development should precede literacy development when learning a second or foreign language.

Oral language fluency does facilitate literacy competence, but it should not have to be strictly adhered to in Korean environments where English is spoken as a foreign language. Oral proficiency before implementing literacy education of the target language generally makes sense where the target language is spoken as a second language in the community. In English as a second language (ESL) environment, students have many opportunities to listen to and practice English outside the classroom. On the contrary, in an English as a foreign language (EFL) environment, students have rare opportunities to listen to and practice English in a natural and realistic situation. This makes dramatic differences in the education of English literacy. To my disappointment, the unique

situation in Korea does not seem to be taken into account when planning curriculums. Even the national curriculum for English starts from oral language education and puts too much emphasis on it as literacy education takes only 25% of the curriculum. Language learning can be best achieved through mutual communication, but literacy learning is generally monological, meaning immediate stimulation is not usually involved in reading and writing. Psychological development is possible through instruction. Writing is not just about the work of paper-and-pencil recording what is spoken, but ‘a creation of new psychological systems that do not emerge spontaneously but become possible only because of systemic instruction’ (Kozulin, 1999, p. 184). Oral speech occurs spontaneously and unconsciously, but symbolization should be learned again on a conscious and purposeful level in written speech. In this respect, Korea can be a difficult place to learn the oral language of English because spontaneous communication is a rare occurrence. It does not mean however, that is not a good place to learn literacy because learning literacy requires systematic instruction regardless of oral fluency.

In this study, many of my students did not understand the reasons why the national English curriculum was designed the way it was; why they were supposed to learn the English alphabet the second semester in 3rd grade, or why they suffered from not using the alphabet by then until they acquired some oral language in English during the first semester in 3rd grade. Even though English is regarded as a foreign language in Korea, English print is found everywhere. It is found in computer games and comic books, and on food packages, clothing, and signs in the streets. What is the better option for a public school teacher, using only school resources or taking advantage of what surrounds students in their daily lives? English is everywhere in Korea, but it does not

necessarily mean that English can be understood in Korea. This is evidence that communicative processes in Korean EFL environments are needed. It is mainly one-way and students simply exist as passive entities. Some active students might strive to figure out what the words they see mean, but most unmotivated students do not bother to engage their surroundings.

English literacy education at school can work as a catalyzer if it is done appropriately. If students are involved in various literacy activities at school, they can take advantage of the environment around them to learn more English. At DS Elementary School for example, words required for the elementary level are written on every step of the stairs. English teachers can develop lesson plans using the words on the stairs nearby their classroom. Teachers can teach phonics and the aspects of life in the U.S. using the English spelling and the illustrations on the cover of popular snacks. Because students are familiar with the sounds already, it would be easier to understand how specific spelling contributes to making certain sounds. The school can announce lunch menus in both Korean and English for students to expand their English vocabulary in a more natural way. DS Elementary School has the English Village and two native English teachers assisting a regular English teacher. English teachers could take advantage of the native English teachers not only in terms of helping them pronounce English words, but also to engage in dialogue. Currently, native English teachers are nowhere to be seen other than in English classes. They could instead be involved in various educational facets and assist teaching other subjects such as physical education or science depending on their educational background. This could enhance students' capacity on the practical use of English more than simply providing English knowledge. Most of all, DS Elementary

School can take advantage of the hundreds of English storybooks now available. There are many opportunities to take full advantage of the books such as the afterschool program, club activities, in classes with the main classroom teachers, and in regular English classes. They do not have to continue utilizing expensive English native speaking teachers because the resources they need are readily available and inexpensive. Where literacy resources are abundant, it is not reasonable to search for the unattainable. Most importantly, elementary teachers need to understand the significance of literacy education in English.

Hill (2001) questions why modern English language teaching course books and syllabi do not make use of stories. He argues that stories demonstrate a fundamental and enjoyable aspect of the target language, so children are easily exposed to other cultures and introduced to language unintentionally. This needs consideration in a Korean context as well. In an EFL environment, it is difficult to find a more efficient and practical way to introduce both culture and English language at school than by using English storybooks. At DS Elementary School, the \$50,000 city-sponsored English Village was built for English language and a multicultural experience. The reality was that it was rarely used. With only the physical environment, it was up to the English teacher to create interactional experiences for students. The issue, however, was that it was difficult to make up situations that would encourage educational interaction, especially when a single teacher had to control 30 students within a limited timeframe. In addition, it was hard enough following the national curriculum, so the teachers could not afford to extend the curriculum by implementing extra resources or activities. As a result, English teachers avoided the facility and the English Village turned into a ghost town. Physical

environment is an excellent resource to utilize, but situations or contexts that trigger communication are required when learning language. Storybooks bring the 'real' world into the classroom and provide students with excellent examples of authentic language use (Loukia, 2006). Wright (2012) notes that stories help children develop a 'sense' or 'feel' for the target foreign language.

In the storytelling class, the first encounter with English happened through reading the text. Students were guided into expressing the language through speaking or writing by being provided with after-reading activities such as role-playing and book making. Oral language of English development was not the primary purpose of the storytelling class, but it was emerging by reading various storybooks with different situations and contexts. Gibbons (2002) points out that in order to learn appropriate language for different purposes, children need to hear correct language patterns or structures modeled in context. One of the main principles of sociocultural theory is that cognitive development facilitating learning originates in a social context; therefore, when language is used as a psychological tool to solve problems, interaction can be effective (Anton, 1999). Even though, oral language development was not the main agenda of the storytelling class, interaction in English came along because English was used as a psychological tool rather than something to interpret, analyze, and memorize. There are 8 kinds of English textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education in Korea, but none of them currently make use of English storybooks as an interwoven component to the textbook. A story-based syllabus can supplement the existing framework efficiently. All the positive aspects of storybooks should be taken into account especially when communicative competency is the cause of learning English in school and society.

Implementing literacy knowledge with ease. In the beginning of the storytelling class, students' literacy knowledge was slightly better than the standard in the national curriculum. Soyoung, Hangyul, and Chaeul were learning English through hagwon and worksheets, so it was expected that they were better in vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Sohl was amazing considering that the only education he got was at school, but he had great phonics knowledge and was quite rich in phonics for his grade level. Eunjin and Seungjae were a good reader in the native language but were no better in English than the standard in the national curriculum. By the end of the storytelling class, their literacy competency were all early fluent level in terms of reading strategies and language functions according to the checklist suggested by Cappellini (2005). Without any forceful memorization or test which creates competitive atmosphere, this achievement was above of my expectation.

The beauty of storybook lies in that it leads students to challenge in more indirect ways inwardly taking advantage of the mask of 'fun' in stories. Considering the characteristics of elementary students, having fun in learning is significant in education. Some students could pursue the pleasure of learning as is, but which is quite unusual according to my experience as an elementary school teacher.

As was mentioned in Chapter 2 Literacy Review, Vygotsky asserts that in teaching literacy there are three important points to keep in mind. First, reading and writing should be something needed by children, not simply as a motor skill. Second, writing should be meaningful, necessary, and relevant for life. Third, writing should be taught naturally in the course of children's play so writing can be "cultivated" rather than "imposed." In teaching of foreign literacy, these are hard to be fulfilled naturally in the

environment because it is hard to find any necessity of reading and writing in a foreign language in life. However, students in the storytelling class who took the initiative of lessons found the ‘need’ of reading and writing in English using available resources around them and English storybook was one of the greatest sources.

In the storytelling class, I implemented 5 minutes of phonics instruction using the words in the book in order to motivate students by helping them be able to decode words easily and lessen the pressure of facing many unfamiliar words in the book. Phonics instruction is necessary in an EFL environment where students do not know all the language before learning literacy because knowing the sound of a word should be the initial step to learn it. Phonics instruction using storybook of the day was a nice strategy in that students were able to make good use of the phonics knowledge in reading the book directly. Among all the students, Sohl acquired considerable phonics knowledge by the time the storytelling class ended. He was able to pronounce most of the words in the book except for unusual cases. The way Sohl figured out phonics knowledge in English was spontaneous and self-directed. He learned phonics knowledge in the regular English class at first and strengthened his knowledge using signs in the streets and the lessons in the storytelling class. The phonics lesson in the regular English class was very basic and not challenging at all. It was mostly about the sound of consonants, which Sohl acquired even without instruction. However, Sohl knew sounds of vowels pretty much when he first came in the storytelling class. When I asked him how, he said he acquired them naturally in the process of learning English and looking at signs in the street. Phonics instruction in the storytelling class worked to scaffold his knowledge in phonics. Exposed to many new words suddenly, Sohl was given good chances to try and reflect on his knowledge in

phonics and I was there to feedback Sohl to scaffold him appropriately and provided him with abundant reading resources in Stage 3: Toward independent reading. Sohl enjoyed his progress in phonics knowledge and compared Korean and English in terms of sound system. Storybooks worked as source of entertainment as well as great knowledge base for his achievement.

Chaeun was a hardworking student. When she learned new words, she practiced them in her notebook to facilitate memorization. When we studied using on-line book print, she underlined, circled, and colored it for her end to understand the book better. For a smart and hardworking student like Chaeun, storybook works a great knowledge base. Every book should be different, so there is much to study every class. For Chaeun, regular English class could not resolve her thirst in English appropriately because public school education is not specifically designed for the small number of smart student. A passionate teacher may be able to meet the need of individual student, but in general, many students in Korea do not rely on English class at school to resolve their specific needs but rather go to hagwon which could be quite expensive for those live around where DS Elementary School is located. Chaeun went hagwon and took worksheet service. She availed storytelling class for its full potential to increase her literacy knowledge in English. She not only memorized new words in a book, but also tried to find words to remember by picking up a book that she knew in Korean version and guessing the mystery words in the book efficiently. The way she circled or underlined in the book demonstrate that she was increasing her knowledge base in English grammar even though I did not teach grammar intentionally in the storytelling class. Using storybook, implementing literacy knowledge was just natural and amusing. 3rd grader

Chaeun simply enjoyed learning in the storytelling class but she was accumulating English knowledge through a year of journey.

Different from Chaeun, Hangyul was not in fact a hardworking student. She did not like that she has to study English even after the regular class finished. However, by the end of the storytelling class, she found herself fully engaged in the storytelling class not to mention developed in English literacy. Book making activity in the storytelling class gave her a chance to be a popular. Book making activity is not an easy activity, so it is rarely done in a regular English class but used often in Korean language class. In the beginning, I did not expect students to be able to create the book this beautifully. Just copying several pages of the storybook was good enough. As was mentioned in Chapter 2 Literature Review, Vygotsky (1978) argues that imitation should not be under-evaluated simply as mechanical process because a person can imitate only that which is within their developmental level. Based on this notion, I did not demand students to create a book of their own in the beginning. Adding a few new pages or just copying some of the pages in the book was good enough. However, even without any persuasion or forceful demand, students wanted to demonstrate their thinking in creative ways. In order to create a book of their own, students needed my help a lot, in which process, I was able to identify where students were at and scaffold their English knowledge with ease.

Eunjin came to the storytelling class more for the love of storybook than for learning English. She did not like the childish and repetitive part of storybook, so when the English library opened, she took full advantage of the space. Different from other students who tried to avoid difficult books, Eunjin tried to read even difficult books spontaneously. She did not mind reading the same book for over two classes until she

fully understood it. In the example of her reflection paper in *Figure 21*, she kept on making corrections until she was satisfied with its content. She did not like active and participatory class but like to read books and reflect on them by herself. For her, storytelling class was special as it did not involve diverse physical activities like other English classes which emphasize oral communication. Her reading habit in the first language set foundation on her fond of English storybook, which naturally evolved into English literacy development.

As was seen in the examples above, storybook is a very versatile resource in learning English literacy. It is hard to meet diverse need of students in the English class in the elementary school in Korea. Especially in English, difference between individuals is wider than other subjects because the age exposed to English education is getting younger and younger nowadays and methods of English education becomes diverse. The beauty of storybook lies in its convenience to use; story is fun in nature and storybooks are always near at hand. In elementary school in Korea, teachers are up to too many expectations and duties, therefore simply being useful cannot intrigue teachers use certain method in education. With storybook, teacher does not have to worry about getting involved with a lot of work extra. Managing a class solely with a storybook could be overwhelming without any guidelines or set-up programs, but using storybooks in a regular English class is a different matter. With a textbook at the center, teacher can provide storybooks appropriate as additional material and help students scaffold at their own pace. Storybook will be sure to satisfy both the teacher and the students and work as a decent alternative in EFL context.

How to Use Storybooks in Korean Context

During the year, the students showed great improvement in overall English proficiency. Even though there was no formal assessment of the class, it was obvious that individual students improved both cognitive and affective aspects based on all the data collected. I continued collecting their literacy work, observed their classroom activities, wrote in journals and fieldnotes to record significant moments, interviewed their classroom teachers, and had conversation with students whenever I had questions. Based on the standard suggested by Cappellini (2005), Chaeun and Seungjae started at the emergent reader stage, Hangyul and Eunjin were in between the emergent and the early reader stage, and Soyoung and Sohl were in the early reader stage. By the time the storytelling class finished, Chaeun and Seungjae were in the early reader stage and all the rest were at the early fluent reader stage. Students were not familiar friends with each other in the beginning, but they built close relationships by the end of the class.

Garcia (2014) advocates flexible use of linguistic resources in order to make sense of the world and does not see native-like English as a destination to reach. Through translanguaging, speakers could select language features from a repertoire and soft assemble their language practices appropriate to their communicative situations, which will enable students to grow as global citizens. The students had enough potential to move on to the fluent reader stage in English based on their strong primary language literacy. If they are involved in various literacy practices in English in everyday lives, and with active literacy brokering provided, they would be able to gain literacy practices knowledge

As an elementary school teacher, the most significant thing to consider was how

I would teach reading English storybooks again in an afterschool program setting, or in conjunction with regular English classes, and base my procedures on the way I conducted and managed the storytelling class. The storytelling class evolved into independent reading time in the end. Even though this study is limited by data being collected in a small city mainly with 6 focal students, the implications from the experience of managing an afterschool program and the developmental process of those students should be worthwhile. Here, I have summarized the strategies that were effective at facilitating achievement and leading students to become independent readers in a Korean EFL environment based on all the data collected.

Considering characteristics of foreign language learners. Students were given enough time to integrate their prior knowledge in English when learning a new storybook. Cummins (2001) emphasizes that background knowledge and personal connections to the world or to another text are critical strategies to improve reading comprehension and the development in language. As a way to make personal connections more enthusiastic, I allowed students time to explore the book for 5 minutes to make them actively involved in the literacy practice. In the beginning, I started a lesson by initiating conversation about the subject of a book as was suggested in many storytelling guidebooks. However, many Korean students are fearful of losing face and do not like to engage in conversation or speak when they do not completely know or have clear ideas about the subject. Conversation alone was not an effective way to motivate students because it was de-motivating and overwhelming except for a few high achievers. Most storybooks were above the reading level that students were accustomed to in terms of cognitive perspective considering the standard in the national curriculum. Most students

were even more reserved than in regular classes initially, but once they were allowed enough time to explore alone before reading aloud and having conversation, their participation increased because they had enough time to prepare to speak. Silence does not always mean ignorance, especially in English class. In addition, lexico-syntactic and graphophonic knowledge alone does not constitute literacy practices knowledge. With more time to process their prior knowledge and build the courage to speak, they could be much better. As described above, the cognitive aspect is not all about student's ZPD. With emotional support and valuing prior-knowledge in English, students can be less reluctant in dealing with challenges and unfamiliarity. Considering all the focal students in the study were high achievers in native literacy as well as in English with strong intrinsic motivation, they had enough potential to overcome challenges and communicate fluently through translanguaging. Vocabulary and grammatical knowledge are not critical factors in understanding storybooks as long as students can extract clues to help them understand. For example, In reference to Soyoung's remarks in chapter 4, there are many English storybooks written in the Korean language as well. Most importantly, all the students in the storytelling class were the fluent readers of their native language. By allowing students enough time and use linguistic resources flexibly, they could potentially develop a foundation for active social interaction that would lead to an improved level of English.

Using teaching strategies used by regular classes. I implemented teaching strategies utilized by Korean language classes or other classes in elementary schools. With the lesson procedures and activities similar to those of other classes, preparation and application was not very overwhelming.

Many English lesson designs in Korean elementary school are activity based as suggested in Elementary School English Teacher's Guide published in Ministry of Education (2009) In addition, many storytelling guidebooks introduce a variety of fun activities and ideas. However, if I had tried to implement all the activities suggested, I would have been consumed by the extra workload of figuring out how to explain and modify them to accommodate to the students' needs. As the agenda of the storytelling class was not developing effective storytelling teaching strategies, I did not obsess myself with all the unfamiliar strategies suggested. The burden of preparing is why many teachers ignore trying new strategies or activities and I was no exception. When I designed the class, I made sure that the lesson style did not deviate much from those in other classes in Korean elementary schools. I only made slight variations and reflected students' suggestions. The textbooks at DS Elementary School were designed to complete a chapter within 4 lessons. Usually, listening and speaking practice was done during the first lesson, reading practice in the second, activities in the third, and review and writing practices in the fourth. As students are used to this flow, I designed my storytelling lessons to be 3 or 4 class periods, increased the reading time, and decreased the listening and speaking time. It would have been ideal if I had connected storybooks to the syllabi of the regular English classes, but with students from different grades and classes, it was an overwhelming task at the stage. However, I do think the best way to take advantage of English storybooks would be to use them in regular English class as a way to expand the concepts learned in the textbook's chapters and reinforce literacy competency.

I did not use many different activities in the class. Instead, I repeatedly used book making, role-playing, and playing bingo because they were versatile and used in other

classes often. In regular English class, all the resources necessary for activities were provided with the textbook and teaching-aid websites were conveniently available free of charge. The teacher can manage the lesson by using the resources according to the directions in the teacher's guide or by following directions and suggestions found on various websites. I had to identify students' ZPD more precisely than in regular classes, find a storybook to study appropriate for the student's level, and then plan lessons and activities. According to my conversations with the teachers, this overwhelming process is why teachers ignore using extra resources and stick to using the textbook in regular classes. Some students complained that they did not play as many games in the storytelling class compared to other English classes in the afterschool program. I empathized with those students but explained that playing games was not the focus for this class.

Making students reflective on themselves. I allowed students to assess themselves qualitatively on a regular basis. Because the storytelling class was an afterschool program, it was required, but unnecessary to assess students quantitatively. I did not want to have to prove or report students' progress numerically, but I needed to figure out their progress to help them achieve literacy practices knowledge. From the beginning, exit cards were used often, but the information collected from the exit cards was very superficial and did not really reflect where students were in their literacy practices accurately. The students were just too young to describe themselves by writing in detail. As the number of students in the class decreased, I did not really have to collect exit cards. I observed the students closely and often had conversations with them to facilitate self-reflection and gather qualitative information.

It was amazing that the students were aware of themselves. Sohl identified the difference between vowel pronunciation in English and tried to understand and apply the new information while he read. Soyoung said she needed to know more verbs to understand storybooks better and improve her English literacy, so she took time to memorize verbs at home everyday. Hangyul noticed that her artistic talent influenced her reading of English storybooks. She realized that she was more interested in storybooks with intriguing illustrations to help improve her English literacy. Eunjin was usually quiet during class and quite mature for her age. She was eager to read English books without childish illustrations, so mostly concentrated on text. She worked hard to understand text correctly and used a dictionary often to build her foundation of grammatical knowledge. Chaeun mentioned she was pleased to acquire more vocabulary by reading more storybooks even though she could not understand everything she read. She said practicing writing was effective for her to memorize words in the book, and underlining was a useful strategy in recognizing the meaning of the sentences. Seungjae confessed he was reading aloud not fully knowing where I was reading, but as he gained more knowledge in phonics and vocabulary, he was eventually able to follow along. He was proud of himself for enduring the challenges he faced without enough knowledge in phonics and vocabulary. He was also motivated to work harder in order to understand storybooks better. This reflective process strengthened the students as English language learners because they had a chance to think of themselves objectively, however their reflections illustrate that they see English as a set of skills to learn rather than literacy practices in which to be engaged, which remains as a problem for me, as a teacher, to resolve eventually.

Implications

The position as a teacher researcher forced me to stay critical in the procedures of managing the storytelling class. As a teacher I put my priorities in extending the ZPD of my students to improve their English literacy. As a researcher, I tried to observe things critically to evolve the storytelling class and be reflective. I do not think that every teacher has to become a researcher, but I believe that every teacher needs to be like a researcher to make progress in his or her teaching practice. I would now like to share the experiences I learned through managing the storytelling class with other elementary school teachers in Korea.

First, and most significant, is that teachers need to understand the ZPD very well and experiment with different ways to scaffold within the ZPD. Understanding one's ZPD and the national curriculum should be a basic step for a teacher in Korea designing an English class, setting an objective of a lesson, and planning ways to scaffold students. The ZPD of an individual student can be identified using various barometers such as behavioral indicators, communication, test scores, and a combination of these. The ZPD does not stay constant but is always changing depending on the students' environment; therefore, teachers should be sensitive and attentive to students.

The best and surest way to scaffold students effectively and efficiently within their ZPD is to develop a close relationship with the students to make affective scaffolding real. Traditionally in Korea, teachers can replace parents and are regarded as a predecessor of life rather than simply a person who teaches a lesson. With an intense competitive climate in education, people viewed the role of a teacher to be more of an instructor armed with a rich knowledge base than an affective influence on their children.

This study demonstrates that even in English education not seeming to be directly involved with human relationship between teacher and students, affective factors were fundamental in achievement. Emotional support relieves students from the pressure generated from learning a new language and culture, and instilling motivation and confidence makes students realize much more than they expected.

A competitive societal atmosphere pushes students and teachers to produce visible results in a short period of time. Important unseen factors are easily ignored or neglected. In fact, it is an undeniable fact that winning over competition at school guarantees a certain degree of stability and success in Korean society. However, elementary students are full of potential and teachers need to encourage and allow them to express their abilities. They should not be judged imprudently according to their cognitive abilities because individual differences in English capacity are not as broad as those of middle and high school students. In addition, cognitive skills are only one part of what it takes to be literate. Individuals must have a great deal of context-dependent knowledge to engage in a literacy practice (Perry, 2012).

Second, in order to promote the best possible development within students' ZPD, a teacher needs to be the agent of teaching-learning activity in the classroom not simply working as a messenger of the national curriculum. In a teaching-learning scenario, the flexibility of a teacher should be significant because the teacher needs to cope with ever changing students' ZPDs that are affected by various factors including the context around the students. Teachers should catch the right moment at the right time to realize the best possible scaffolding, which is not possible if a teacher limits his/her professionalism to simply complying with the provisions in the national curriculum. Even though the 7th

national curriculum enlarged the autonomy of school units and class units more than before, teachers are still obsessed with completing the designated content suggested in the national curriculum to prepare for exams. Educational achievement is difficult to measure with only test scores, but parents of students put a great deal of emphasis on the scores that students acquire. The essence of English literacy education should lie in its literacy practices in students' everyday lives. Teachers should always contemplate how they can assist students to scaffold their knowledge necessary for literacy practices in an EFL context. Following the fast flow in English education sometimes might be misleading; we have to be aware of where this flow goes and should contribute to its taking the right course. English education is especially hectic with an overwhelming amount of information and with variety of choices of teaching-learning methods. The journey of the storytelling class demonstrates that English education does not require special resources such as native speakers or expensive technology; an attentive teacher and motivated students can be the driving forces to help gain English literacy practices knowledge, which will always be the case.

Researcher Reflection

Life happens unexpectedly.

In efforts to promote literacy competency in English, I set up and managed a storytelling class at DS Elementary School in Korea for one year. The class did not always manifest as planned, and I faced unexpected challenges. With every intention of overcoming, I not only led the class to success but also learned valuable lessons. While I managed the class, I could not wait for it to be over. Coincidentally, I am more motivated to do it again and this time I am more confident.

Reading English storybooks was like facing the unexpected to my students as well. Different from regular English classes where English is taught step by step as a set of skills according to the national curriculum, they faced an unexpected avalanche of English in the storytelling class. They suffered but realized how knowledgeable they were, how valuable their experience was, and finally got over difficulties interdependently. Unexpectedly, they wanted to take the class again the following year.

Students were better supported when their affective aspects were taken care of. When cognitive and affective aspects were considered simultaneously, students' ZPD expanded the most. Even though storytelling class was not intended to promote oral language fluency in English, the students gained confidence in the oral language of English through literacy practices. Considering the circumstances of Korean environments was a significant factor leading students to success; allowing independent exploring time before reading aloud, adapting teaching strategies used in Korean elementary school classes, and allowing students to assess themselves qualitatively regularly to let them reflect on themselves and search for strategies to improve spontaneously was also promoted.

After harvesting all the fruit of my labor, I am still hungry for more. I see countless students still under the pressure of learning English, which is not likely to stop as long as the English language exists. As an elementary school teacher and a mother of two children, I hope that the pressure to learn English in Korea will someday decrease at least in elementary school through the endeavor of practitioner researchers in the field.

Limitations and Further Research Suggestions

English education is realized in wide spectrum with various methods, and the

essence of this great difference is in one's SES as mentioned in the introduction. This study was done in a small city where the SES is quite low but expectations for education are high. Low SES implies many factors in education; background knowledge, cultural experience, parents' educational level, and print-rich environments, etc., which could make the case in this study hard to apply to schools in Seoul or where the SES is higher. The specificity of this study could enhance understanding these marginalized populations in Korea, but studies about the other end of the spectrum should also be applied.

Only qualitative analysis was done for this study. I triangulated the data by using observations, interviews, conversations, fieldnotes, questionnaires, exit cards to ensure trustworthiness. It would have been more interesting if I had made another group of students with similar levels of English proficiency to the storytelling class and compared the two groups quantitatively and qualitatively to present the effect of storytelling class in more obvious and clear ways.

In reality, it is not very common for a regular teacher to conduct an afterschool program voluntarily. To accommodate the results from the study in elementary school efficiently, it would be best to study regular English classes rather than afterschool programs because regular classes include all students but participants in afterschool programs are only a few. How storybooks can be used in conjunction with textbooks in regular English classes would be more beneficial for elementary English education.

An old Korean proverb states, "If you can't avoid it, you'd better enjoy it." For Korean students, English is an unavoidable. Teachers should find ways for students to enjoy it. In this study, I used storytelling in my class for students to enjoy learning English. I studied its effectiveness from an insider's point of view, and kept on evolving

the class.

The results of my study will remain archived in this dissertation and in my memory as an experience that will influence my journey as a teacher. It will serve as a constant reminder of my commitment to being a better educator here in Korea.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Application for the Afterschool Programs including Storytelling Class

	◎ 가정 통신문 ◎ (교훈 : 밝고 바르고 힘차게)	2012- 20호 발행처:이리동산초등학교 교무실 :857-2230				
<p>2012년 교육복지 프로그램 안내</p> <p>안녕하세요. 본교에서는 교육복지우선지원사업의 일환으로 다음과 같이 프로그램을 진행하고자 합니다. 내용을 잘 확인하시어 프로그램에 참가를 희망하는 학생은 신청서를 제출해 주시기 바랍니다. 선별방법은 교육복지지원 대상아를 우선순위로 선별합니다.</p>						
영역	대상학년	프로그램명	내용	시간	장소	비고
학습	1-2학년 (20명)	스토리텔링 (English Storytelling)	방과 후 영어동화 수업	매주 수, 금 (1:40~2:20)	2-2 교실	
	3-4학년 (20명)			매주 수, 금 (2:00~2:40)	3-1 교실	
	1-6학년	실력점프	국어, 수학 학력보충지도	매주 2시간 학년 별 공지	각 교실	
	3-6학년 (40명)	중국어로~ 세계로~	중국어수업	매주 월, 목 (초급반 3:00~3:40 중급반 3:50~4:30)	1-6 교실	
문화	1-4학년 (15명)	동아리	수영부	매주 월, 수, 금 (2:00~2:40)	마한수영장	개별 이동
	3-4학년 (25명)		축구부	매주 화 2시간 (3:00~4:20)	운동장	
<p>2012. 09.</p> <p>이리동산초등학교장</p>						

2012년 교육복지 프로그램 신청서

신청 프로그램명	학년 - 반	학생 이름	연락처	학부모확인

Appendix B

Consent Assent Letter

참가동의서

2012년 9월 5일

스토리텔링 교실 학부형님께

안녕하세요. 2012학년도에 새로 스토리텔링반을 맡게된 이효진입니다. 저는 현재 미국의 뉴멕시코 주립대학에서 영어교육 (ESL) 박사과정에 재학중입니다. 박사과정 학업의 일부로서 현재 논문을 작성중이며, 스토리텔링 수업을 받는 학생들을 대상으로 논문을 쓰려고 합니다. 제 논문은 아동들이 스토리텔링을 통하여 어떻게 문자언어를 통한 의사소통능력을 발달시켜가는지에 관한것으로서, 스토리텔링 교육 이론을 한국 아동의 특성에 맞게, 한국적 교육환경에 적용시켜보고자 합니다.

저는 스토리텔링 활동을 통하여 학생들이 어떻게 문자언어를 수용하고 이를 의사소통을 위해 활용해나가는지에 대한 여러 자료를 수집하려합니다. 수집할자료의 내용은 다음과 같으며, 다른 내용이 더 추가될 수 있습니다.

- 스토리텔링에 관련된 설문조사
- 스토리텔링 활동 중 학생의 흥미, 학습태도
- 스토리텔링 활동 및 영어 읽고 쓰기에 관한 학생 면접
- 스토리텔링 활동 포트폴리오

영어 스토리텔링 활동은 정규 교과 학습활동 이외에 주 2회 각 한시간씩 학생의 수준에 맞춰 이루어질 것입니다. 비단 영어책을 읽는데 그치지 않고 책을 중심으로 다양한 영어 교수 학습활동이 즐겁게 이루어질 것이므로 학생들의 영어에 대한 흥미와 자신감을 고취시킬 수 있을 것입니다. 최근의 영어 학습 동향에 따른 다양한 교수학습 방법을 적용시킴으로써 학생들이 최선의 교육환경에서 양질의 교육을 받을 수 있도록 노력할 것이며, 학생의 필요를 정확히 파악하여 요구사항을 유연히 충족시켜주고자 합니다. 이를 통하여 본 스토리텔링반에 참여하는 학생 뿐 아니라 한국의 다른 모든 초등학생에게 적용할 수 있는 방법과 가능성을 찾아보고자합니다.

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스토리텔링반 담당교사
이 효 진 드림

<p>예</p>	<p>저와 저희아이 _____ 는 교사 이효진의 박사학위논문 연구주제인 스토리텔링을 통한 문자언어활용 의사소통능력함양에 관한 연구에 참여하는데 동의합니다. 저희는 이 연구가 아이의 교과성적을 매기는데 있어서 영향을 주지 않을 것이며, 저희아이가 원하지 않을때에는 언제라도 그만둘 수 있음을 알고있습니다.</p>
<p>아니오</p>	<p>저와 저희아이 _____ 는 교사 이효진의 박사학위논문 연구활동에 참가하지 않을것입니다. 아이에 대한 어떤 정보도 연구결과에 포함되어서는 안됩니다. 이는 아이의 교과성적을 매기는데 영향을 주지 않을 것이며, 교육 과정에서 필요로하는 모든 활동에는 참가할 의무가 있음을 알고 있습니다.</p>
<p>학부모 서명</p>	<p>날짜</p>
<p>학생 서명</p>	<p>날짜</p>

Appendix C

Consent Assent Letter (English Translation)

Parent Consent and Student Assent Letter

Sep. 5, 2012

Dear Parents

My name is Hyojin Lee and I am the teacher of storytelling class in the year of 2012. I am currently in a doctoral program at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque in the U.S., where I am studying ESL (English as a Second Language). As part of my graduate program, I will be working on a thesis and I would like for your child to be involved. Throughout the year, I will be conducting some classroom research on how to improve students' communicative competence through literacy development using English story books. I would like to implement theories about storytelling in Korean context.

I will be collecting data on several aspects of student literacy development through storytelling activities. The data will include, but not be limited to:

- Students' performance on English in regular class in relation to storytelling class
- Students' attitude toward English storytelling and their performance during storytelling activities
- Questionnaire about storytelling class
- Interviews about students' experience in storytelling class
- Students' storytelling activities portfolio

English storytelling activities will be done for one hour twice a week after school. Storytelling is not simply to read an English story, but to be actively involved in various English learning activities related to a book, so it will efficiently increase students' motivation and confidence in English. By applying recent English learning theories, students will be able to get high quality English education at friendly environment. Also, I intend to meet individual needs in the storytelling activities, so nobody feels being left behind. I hope the students in my class have great experience in learning English, and also I can find how storytelling can be effectively implemented in other elementary schools in Korea.

The data collection from this research will be used to enhance my capacity as a teacher and to help other elementary teachers for years to come. I will share the results of this study with my colleagues at DS Elementary School and faculties in the University of New Mexico. Although results will be shared, the students' name will be kept confidential. This means your child's identity will not be mentioned in any way when the data is shared. This data will be collected on the whole class. Participation in this study is

voluntary. As a parent or guardian, you can refuse to have your child participate in the data collection with no penalty or loss to the student, but your child will still be required to complete all work required for the class. Your child will still receive the same instruction as the rest of the students. Your child can also discontinue participation in the data collection at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the student is entitled. You will have a copy of the assigned consent form.

I have discussed this research with the students, and I encourage you to talk this over your child, please. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me via phone (010-9023-8197) or via e-mail at lhj6020@yahoo.co.kr. If you have other concerns or complaints, contact the Human Subjects Institutional Board at the University of New Mexico (1/505/277-2257). Thank you for your support and cooperation,

Sincerely,
Hyojin Lee

_____ Yes I/We have discussed Mrs. Lee's research project with _____.
We all agree to participate in this project for the 2012 storytelling class. I/We understand that participation in the research project will not affect our child's grade and that s/he may discontinue to participate at any time without penalty.

_____ No I/We do not wish for _____ to participate in the research project at this time. No information about or work by my child will be included in the research results. This will not affect his/her grade; however, s/he is responsible for participating in all storytelling activities as required in the class.

Parent's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

Appendix D

Bibliography of Children's Storybooks Used by the Teacher

Bill Martin Jr. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?*

Annie Kubler. *The Wheels on the Bus*

Julia Donaldson. *The Gruffalo*

Julia Donaldson. *The Gruffalo's Child*

Anthony Browne. *My Mom*

My Neighborhood. On-line book from

<http://www.kizclub.com/storytime/neighborhood/neighborhood.html>

Ed Emberley. *Go Away Big Green Monster*

Anthony Browne. *Willy the Dreamer*

Eileen Christelow. *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*

Lucy Cousins. *Hooray for Fish*

Eric Carle. *Very Hungry Caterpillar*

Stella Blackstone. *Bear at Work*

All By Myself. On-line book from <http://www.kizclub.com/storytime/myselfstory/myself-1.html>

My Family. On-line book from <http://www.kizclub.com/storytime/myfamily/first.html>

Reconciliation of Lion and Wild Boar. From Aesop's fable.

Werner Holzwarth. *The Story of the Little Mole*.

Debra Potter (Illustrator). *I am the Music Man*

Stella Blackstone. *Walking through the Jungle*

Appendix E

Beginning of the Storytelling Class Questionnaire

스토리텔링교실을 시작하면서...

이름:

1. 스토리텔링 해본 적 있죠? 어땠나요?

- ① 너무 좋았어요.
- ② 좋았어요.
- ③ 안 좋았어요.
- ④ 너무 안 좋았어요.

1-1. (1번에서 ①②를 고른사람만 답하세요)

스토리텔링이 왜 좋았어요?

(답을 여러 개 고를 수 있어요)

- ① 선생님이 잘 가르쳐주셔서 좋았어요
설명:

- ② 스토리텔링 시간에 한 활동이 좋았어요(노래, 게임 등)
설명:

- ③ 이야기(동화)가 재미있었어요.
설명:

- ④ 스토리텔링 시간의 분위기가 좋았어요.
설명:

- ⑤ 그 외 다른 이유:
설명:

1-2. (1번에서 ③④고른 사람만 답하세요)

스토리텔링이 왜 싫었어요?

(답을 여러 개 고를 수 있어요)

- ① 선생님 때문에 싫었어요
설명:

② 스토리텔링 시간에 한 활동이 싫었어요(노래, 게임 등)

설명:

③ 이야기(동화)가 재미없었어요.

설명:

④ 스토리텔링 시간의 분위기가 싫었어요.

설명:

⑤ 그 외 다른 이유:

설명:

2. 스토리텔링교실에 왜 등록했어요? 등록한 동기가 무엇이지요?

3. 어떻게하면 스토리텔링 수업이 여러분에게 더욱 도움이 될 수 있을까요?

4. 선생님이 스토리텔링시간에 했으면 좋겠는 게 있어요? 알려주세요.

5. 스토리텔링수업을 통해서 이루고자하는 목표는 뭐예요?

6. 위에 답한 것 말고 선생님한테 하고싶은 이야기가 있나요? 알려주세요~

Appendix F

Beginning of the Storytelling Class Questionnaire (English Translation)

Beginning of the Storytelling Class Questionnaire

Name:

1. How was your experience about English storytelling?

- ① I liked it very much
- ② I liked it
- ③ I didn't like it
- ④ I didn't like it very much

1-1. (Who answered ①② in No. 1)

What did you like about storytelling?

(You can pick as many answers as you want)

- ① Storyteller (teacher)

Explain:

- ② Activities done in the storytelling time (song, game, etc.)

Explain:

- ③ The content of story

Explain:

- ④ Atmosphere of storytelling

Explain:

- ⑤ Other ()

Explain:

1-2. (Who answered ③④ in No. 1)

What didn't you like about storytelling?

(You can pick as many answers as you want)

- ① Storyteller (teacher)

Explain:

- ② Activities done in the storytelling time (song, game, etc.)

Explain:

③ The content of story

Explain:

④ Atmosphere of storytelling

Explain:

⑤ Other ()

Explain:

2. What have made you to register for the storytelling class? What was your motivation?

3. How would the storytelling class be more helpful? Give me any suggestions

4. Do you have any specific idea for me to implement for the storytelling class?
Please, let me know.

5. What do you expect to achieve finally through the storytelling class?

6. Is there anything you expect from me not mentioned above? Please let me know.

THANK YOU!

*Appendix I***Interview Questions****Interview with classroom teacher**

1. Tell me about ** (student name). How is he/she in the class?
2. Tell me about his/her home environment. Would there be anything might affect his/her education?
3. Tell me about his/her achievement in general. What is he/she good at?
4. Tell me about his/her proficiency in Korean. How is he/she when making presentation or writing a journal?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to say about him/her?

Interview with English Teacher

1. Tell me about ** (student name). How is he/she in the class?
2. Tell me about his/her participation. How active is he/her during English class?
3. Tell me about his/her achievement in English. How is he/she developing?
4. Tell me about his/her strengths or weaknesses.
5. Is there anything else that you would like to say about him/her in terms of English competency?

*Appendix J***Children's Literature Used in Stage 1: Teacher-Initiated Whole Class Instruction****Book 1. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?***

Bill Martin Jr. / Eric Carle

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?
I see a red bird looking at me.

Red Bird, Red Bird, What do you see?
I see a yellow duck looking at me.

Yellow Duck, Yellow Duck, What do you see?
I see a blue horse looking at me.

Blue Horse, Blue Horse, What do you see?
I see a green frog looking at me.

Green Frog, Green Frog, What do you see?
I see a purple cat looking at me.

Purple Cat, Purple Cat, What do you see?
I see a white dog looking at me.

White Dog, White Dog, What do you see?
I see a black sheep looking at me.

Black Sheep, Black Sheep, What do you see?
I see a goldfish looking at me.

Goldfish, Goldfish, What do you see?
I see a teacher looking at me.

Teacher, Teacher, What do you see?
I see children looking at me.

Children, Children, What do you see?

We see a brown bear, a red bird, a yellow duck, a blue horse, a green frog, a purple cat, a white dog, a black sheep, a goldfish, and a teacher looking at us.
That's what we see.

Book 2. *The Wheels on the Bus*

Annie Kubler

The wheels on the bus go Round and Round, Round and Round, Round and Round.
The wheels on the bus go Round and Round, All day long!

The wipers on the bus go Swish Swish Swish, Swish Swish Swish, Swish Swish Swish.
The wipers on the bus go Swish Swish Swish, All day long!

The horn on the bus goes Beep!Beep!Beep! Beep!Beep!Beep! Beep!Beep!Beep!
The horn on the bus goes Beep!Beep!Beep! All day long!

The driver on the bus says, "Tickets Please! Tickets Please! Tickets Please!"
The driver on the bus says, "Tickets Please!" All day long!

The parents on the bus go Chat Chat Chat, Chat Chat Chat, Chat Chat Chat.
The parents on the bus go Chat Chat Chat, All day long!

The babies on the bus go, "Wah Wah Wah, Wah Wah Wah, Wah Wah Wah."
The babies on the bus go, "Wah Wah Wah." All day long!

The people on the bus go, "Ssh Ssh Ssh, Ssh Ssh Ssh, Ssh Ssh Ssh."
The people on the bus go, "Ssh Ssh Ssh." All day long!

The children on the bus say, "Party Time!"...

Book 3. *The Gruffalo*

Julia Donaldson
Illustrated by Axel Scheffler

A mouse took a stroll through the deep dark wood.
A fox saw the mouse and the mouse looked good.
“Where are you going to, little brown mouse?
Come and have lunch in my underground house.”
“It’s terribly kind of you, Fox, but no –
I’m going to have lunch with a gruffalo.”
“A gruffalo? What’s a gruffalo?”
“A gruffalo! Why, didn’t you know?”

“He has terrible tusks, and terrible claws,
And terrible teeth in his terrible jaws.”
“Where are you meeting him?”
“Here, by these rocks,
And his favorite food is roasted fox.”

“Roasted fox! I’m off!” Fox said.
“Goodbye, little mouse,” and away he sped.
“Silly old Fox! Doesn’t he know,
There’s no such thing as a gruffalo?”

On went the mouse through the deep dark wood.
An owl saw the mouse and the mouse looked good.
“Where are you going to, little brown mouse?
Come and have tea in my treetop house.”
“It’s frightfully nice of you, Owl, but no –
I’m going to have tea with a gruffalo.”
“A gruffalo? What’s a gruffalo?”
“A gruffalo! Why, didn’t you know?”

“He has knobbly knees, and turned-out toes,
And a poisonous wart at the end of his nose.”
“Where are you meeting him?”
“Here, by this stream,
And his favorite food is owl ice cream.”
“Owl ice cream?” Toowhit toowhoo!
Goodbye, little mouse,” and away Owl flew.
“Silly old owl! Doesn’t he know,
There’s no such thing as a gruffalo?”

On went the mouse through the deep dark wood.
A snake saw the mouse and the mouse looked good.
“Where are you going to, little brown mouse?”

Come for a feast in my logpile house.”
“It’s wonderfully good of you, Snake, but no –
I’m having a feast with a gruffalo.”
“A gruffalo? What’s a gruffalo?”
“A gruffalo! Why, didn’t you know?”

“His eyes are orange, his tongue is black,
He has purple prickles all over his back.”
“Where are you meeting him?”
“Here, by this lake,
And his favorite food is scrambled snake.”

“Scrambled snake! It’s time I hid!
Goodbye, little mouse,” and away Snake slid.
“Silly old Snake! Doesn’t he know,
There’s no such thing as a gruffal....

....Oh!”
But who is this creature with terrible claws
And terrible teeth in his terrible jaws?
He has knobbly knees and turned-out toes
And a poisonous wart at the end of his nose.
His eyes are orange, his tongue is black,
He has purple prickles all over his back.

“Oh help! Oh no!
It’s a gruffalo!”

“My favorite food!” the Gruffalo said.
“You’ll taste good on a slice of bread!”
“Good?” said the mouse. “Don’t call me good!
I’m the scariest creature in this wood.
Just walk behind me and soon you’ll see,
Everyone is afraid of me.”

“All right,” said the Gruffalo, bursting with laughter.
“You go ahead and I’ll follow after.”
They walked and walked till the Gruffalo said,
“I hear a hiss in the leaves ahead.”

“It’s Snake,” said the mouse. “Why, Snake, hello!”
Snake took one look at the Gruffalo.
“Oh crumbs!” he said, “Goodbye, little mouse.”
And off he slid to his logpile house.

“You see?” said the mouse. “I told you so.”

“Amazing!” said the Gruffalo.
They walked some more till the Gruffalo said,
“I hear a hoot in the trees ahead.”

“It’s Owl,” said the mouse. “Why, Owl, hello!”
Owl took one look at the Gruffalo.
“Oh dear!” he said, “Goodbye, little mouse,”
And off he flew to his treetop house.

“You see?” said the mouse. “I told you so.”
“Astounding!” said the Gruffalo.
They walked some more till the Gruffalo said,
“I can hear feet on the path ahead.”

“It’s Fox,” said the mouse. “Why, Fox, hello!”
Fox took one look at the Gruffalo.
“Oh help!” he said, “Goodbye, little mouse,”
And off he ran to his underground house.

“Well, Gruffalo,” said the mouse. “You see?
Everyone is afraid of me!
But now my tummy’s beginning to rumble.
My favorite food is – gruffalo crumble!”
“Gruffalo crumble!” the Gruffalo said,
And quick as the wind he turned and fled.

All was quiet in the deep dark wood.

The mouse found a nut and the nut was good.

Book 4. *The Gruffalo's Child*

Julia Donaldson
Axel Scheffler

The Gruffalo said that no gruffalo should
Ever set foot in the deep dark wood.

“Why not? Why not?” “Because if you do
The Big Bad Mouse will be after you.

I met him once,” said the Gruffalo.

“I met him a long long time ago.”

“What does he look like? Tell us, Dad.

Is he terribly big and terribly bad?”

“I can’t quite remember,” the Gruffalo said.

Then he thought for a minute and scratched his head.

“The Big Bad Mouse is terribly strong

And his scaly tail is terribly long.

His eyes are like pools of terrible fire

And his terrible whiskers are tougher than wire.”

One snowy night when the Gruffalo snored

The Gruffalo’s Child was feeling bored.

The Gruffalo’s Child was feeling brave

So she tiptoed out of the gruffalo cave.

The snow fell fast and the wind blew wild.

Into the wood went the Gruffalo’s Child.

Aha! Oho! A trail in the snow!

Whose is this trail and where does it go?

A tail poked out of a logpile house.

Could this be the tail of the tail of the Big Bad Mouse?

Out slid the creature. His eyes were small

And he didn’t have whiskers – no, none at all.

“You’re not the Mouse.”

“Not I,” Said the snake.

“He’s down by the lake – eating gruffalo cake.”

The snow fell fast and the wind blew wild.

“I’m not scared,” said the Gruffalo’s Child.

Aha! Oho! Marks in the snow!

Whose are those claw marks? Where do they go?

Two eyes gleamed out of a treetop house.

Could these be the eyes of the Big Bad Mouse?

Down flew the creature. His tail was short
And he didn't have whiskers of any sort.
"You're not the Mouse." "Toowhoo, not I,
But he's somewhere nearby, eating gruffalo pie."

The snow fell fast and the wind blew wild.
"I'm not scared," said the Gruffalo's Child.

Aha! Oho! A track in the snow!
Whose is this track and where does it go?
Whiskers at last! And an underground house!
Could this be the home of the Big Bad Mouse?

Out slunk the creature. His eyes weren't fiery.
His tail wasn't scaly. His whiskers weren't wiry.
"You're not the Mouse." "Oh no, not me.
He's under a tree – drinking gruffalo tea."

"It's all a trick!" said the Gruffalo's Child
As she sat on a stump where the snow lay piled.
"I don't believe in the Big Bad Mouse..."

"But here comes a little one, out of his house!
Not big, not bad, but a mouse at least-
You'll taste good as a midnight feast."

"Wait!" said the mouse. "Before you eat,
There's a friend of mine that you ought to meet.
If you'll let me hop onto a hazel twig
I'll beckon my friend so bad and big."

The Gruffalo's Child unclenched his fist.
"The Big Bad Mouse – so he does exist!"
The mouse hopped into the hazel tree.
He beckoned, then said, "Just wait and see."

Out came the moon. It was bright and round.
A terrible shadow fell onto the ground.

Who is this creature so big, bad and strong?
His tail and his whiskers are terribly long.
His ears are enormous, and over his shoulder
He carries a nut as big as a boulder!

“The Big Bad Mouse!” yelled the Gruffalo’s Child.
The mouse jumped down from the twig and smiled.

Aha! Oho! Prints in the snow.
Whose are those footprints? Where do they go?

The footprints led to the gruffalo cave
Where the Gruffalo’s Child was a bit less brave.
The Gruffalo’s Child was a bit less bored.....

And the Gruffalo snored and snored and snored.

Book 5. My Mom

Anthony Browne

She's nice, my mom

My mom's a fantastic cook,

and a brilliant juggler.

She's a great painter,

and the STRONGEST
woman in the world!

She's really nice, my mom.

My mom's a magic gardener;
she can make ANYTHING grow.

And she's a good fairy;
when I'm sad she can make me happy.

She can sing like an angel,

and roar like a lion.

She's really, REALLY nice, my mom.

My mom's as beautiful as a butterfly,

and as comfy as an armchair.

She's as soft as a kitten,

and as tough as a rhino.

She's really, REALLY, REALLY nice, my mom.

My mom could be a dancer,
or an astronaut.

She could be a film star,

or the big boss. But she's MY mom.

She's a SUPERMOM!

And she makes me laugh. A lot.

I love my mom.
And you know what?

SHE LOVES ME!
(And she always will.)