Two Korean Content Professors’ English-mediated Instruction: Issues and Use of Feedback

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This study examined the linguistic and methodological issues that arose as two Korean professors taught their subject matter in English to Korean college students and how each professor used the comments and suggestions provided by a teacher trainer. The participants included two Korean female professors who taught their major course in English. The data came from the analysis of the two professors’ video-recorded lessons, the teacher trainer’s notes of follow-up discussions with each professor, and students’ response to the surveys. The results showed that the two Korean EFL professors exhibited more methodological than linguistic issues as they delivered their subject matter in English. Additionally, the way they used the trainer’s comments on their instruction revealed differences. One professor closely followed them, thereby changing her future instruction, whereas the other did not pay close attention to them; consequently, her subsequent lessons showed little transformation from her first lesson. This study suggests that it is important to establish a systematic support system for Korean EFL content professors who deliver their lesson in English.

**Key words:** English-mediated instruction, EFL contexts, Korean EFL content professors, feedback, subject matter

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Content-based instruction (CBI), that is, the teaching of a specific subject matter in a foreign language, has been widely used in English as a second language (ESL) contexts (Brinton, 2003; Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Grabe & Stoller, 1997, 2002; Met, 1999; Snow & Brinton, 1997; Stoller, 2004). In a CBI curriculum, the primary emphasis is on the
content learning over language learning (Met, 1998, 1999); language serves as the medium for negotiating meaning, organizing information, and acquiring content knowledge (Stoller, 2004). A number of ESL studies investigating the effects of CBI have identified the positive results of CBI (Kasper, 1995, 1997; Wesche & Skehan, 2002); the approach has the potential of increasing not only students’ language skills and motivation as well as empowering students because it allows students to actually do something important to their lives (Brown, 2007). However, in English as a foreign language (EFL) settings, particularly in East Asian EFL contexts, despite the growing interest in this approach (Thooptong, 2005), empirical research on CBI is limited (Butler, 2005). Particularly, there is some empirical evidence about how EFL content teachers working at elementary and secondary levels conduct their lessons in English (Butler, 2005; Huang, 2011; Liaw, 2007); ironically, little research has been published about how EFL tenured content professors deliver subject matter in English and how they develop instructional techniques and strategies. Given that many EFL content professors involve themselves educating pre-and in-service teachers, we need to do much research on EFL content professors’ teaching practices.

With the rise of English as a global language, several major universities in Korea have recently adopted content-centered curriculum as an instructional tool and mandated almost all Korean content professors, whose native language is not English, to conduct their subject matter entirely in English (e.g., at least one course per year). This has created a great deal of anxiety and frustration for many Korean EFL content professors who may be experts in their fields but who may not feel comfortable delivering subject matter only in English. This project is in response to a growing need at Korean universities in which non-English major professors are being required to teach their courses in English. To help these professors deliver their lesson more comfortably, the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) of a major university in Korea has created training sessions, which include a series of classroom observations or video-recordings of the lessons and follow-up discussions.

Analyzing data from two content professors’ video-recoding lessons, the teacher trainer’s discussions with each professor during the individual conference, and the students’ response to the surveys, we examined the following two research questions:

1. What pedagogical issues arise as two Korean content professors conduct their subject matter in English to Korean EFL students in Korea?
2. How do they use the comments and suggestions provided by a native English-speaking teacher trainer?

As Gaffiedl-Vile (1996) noted, the results from the study could inform the pedagogy of the emerging English-mediated subject courses in Korea and other EFL settings and create
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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Content-Based Instruction in ESL Contexts

In ESL settings, although there remain some discussions about the integration of content and language, including unrealistic expectations (Stoller, 2004) and the potential for cognitive imbalance (Dickey, 2004), the CBI curricula have been noted to be useful for learners to prepare for their full-time study through their second or non-dominant language (Wesche & Skehan, 2002). In fact, many empirical studies have reported the effectiveness of CBI in ESL classrooms; it has increased students’ self-confidence, interest, and motivation, as well as their second language (L2) proficiency and content knowledge, thereby allowing them to merge into mainstream academia more easily (Kasper, 1995, 1997; Kasper & NetLibrary, 2000; Pica, 2002). For example, in her study, Kasper (1997) examined how CBI might affect 152 ESL students’ English language proficiency and academic skills that they need in the mainstream academia. She found that CBI helped ESL students increase their English ability and academic skills, participate fully in complex academic courses, and facilitate their subsequent performance in the college academic mainstream and earn a college degree.

2.2. Content-Based Instruction in EFL Contexts

Unlike the positive results of CBI in ESL contexts, very little research has been conducted on the effects of CBI in EFL contexts. Also, a few reviews and empirical studies on CBI have showed conflicting results: the success of CBI (Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Huang, 2011; Liaw, 2007; Tsai & Shang, 2010) and care needs to be taken into implementation of CBI (Butler, 2005; Miyazato, 2001; Takagi & Tanabe, 2007; Warrington, 2010). After having reviewed many published articles and observed various CBI elementary and secondary classes in different EFL contexts (i.e., China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan), Butler (2005) identified that several factors, such as “program setting and curriculum, characteristics of teachers, characteristics of learners, and resource availability” (p. 227) could influence the effective implementation of CBI in East Asian EFL classes. The three factors are considered important regarding our study: content-driven instruction, characteristics of EFL teachers, and characteristics of EFL learners.

Firstly, in many East Asian CBI classes, content professors tend to provide content-driven instruction and feedback in the target language, which could be difficult for EFL
students even in their native language (Short, 2002). As a result, Short further noted that many content professors’ attention, discourse, and evaluation center more on content than language. Sometimes, in order to facilitate content learning, non-native English-speaking instructors appeared to overuse PowerPoint slides (PPTs) and handouts as reference tools for their lectures (Flowerdew, 1993).

Secondly, previous research on CBI has identified that teacher qualities, including English proficiency, content knowledge, instructional strategies and techniques, and attitude toward students’ achievement, can play a decisive role in the effectiveness of CBI programs (Butler, 2005; Butler & Stevens, 2001; Creese, 2005; Kaufman, 2004; Short, 1991, 1999; Stewart, Perry, & Romania, 2005; Stryker & Leaver, 1997; Warrington, 2010). Several CBI studies have found that many EFL content professors may be knowledgeable in their field but may lack teaching methods (Creese, 2005; Kaufman, 2004). Therefore, they may not employ active learning approaches such as student-centered approaches, cooperative teaching techniques, or content-based teaching strategies (Crandall, 2000; Crandall & Tucker, 1989; Rosenkjar, Crandall, & Kaufman, 2002). Rather than chunking lessons in comprehensible units, modifying them based on students’ cognitive and linguistic level, and providing meaningful, authentic, and coherent information through group dynamics, visual aids, conceptual maps and analogies, they tend to employ a monologue or lecture format as the principal teaching method (Flowerdew, 1993, 2001).

Thirdly, many Asian EFL students may lack the necessary prior schemata and language skills to access specific content areas (Miyazato, 2001; Takagi & Tanabe, 2007; Twyman, Ketterlin-Geller, McCoy, & Tindall, 2003). When the instruction and materials given in the CBI classes do not match students’ language proficiency, cognitive level, and learning styles, they may feel overwhelmed by the linguistically, cognitively, and emotionally laden information in the high-stakes subject (Stryker & Leaver, 1997). When they are not ready for “the linguistic and conceptual challenge of tackling the unfamiliar content of the topics presented to them” (Stryker & Leaver, 1997, p. 141), students often become “confused, anxious, de-motivated, and unambitious about learning English as a foreign language” (p. 141). Some scholars like Sternfeld (1997) suggested that in content-driven CBI classes, rather than giving lessons entirely in the target language, instructors need to provide students with key terms and concepts in their native language, which could reduce EFL students’ anxiety and frustration and facilitate content learning. In a similar vein, Adamson (1990) also noted that the methodological hybrid of traditional teacher-oriented teaching and student-centered interaction could help EFL students comprehend the course, lower their anxiety, and increase their motivation.

In the following section, we present several studies about the role of feedback in English-mediated instruction because feedback can promote content learning, teachers’ instruction, and narrow the gap in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Swain, 2001).
2.3. The Role of Feedback in English-Mediated Teacher Education

To explain how children can master certain skills and knowledge through meaningful interactions with others (e.g., caretakers, parents, or peers), from a socioconstructivist’s perspective, Lev Vygotsky (1978) proposed the concept of the ZPD. According to him, children can perform certain tasks in guidance or collaboration with more capable persons through social interaction. In his original view, the role of a more skillful person’s guidance or collaboration can play a critical role in expanding a less skillful learner’s skills and knowledge. However, recently, many scholars who have adopted his perspective of learning have emphasized the role of a learner’s reciprocal contribution to the process of knowledge construction (Belcher, 1994; Kim & Schallert, 2011; Lee & Schallert, 2008). In their study, Kim and Schallert (2011) illustrated the process by which caring relationships between students and their teacher educator developed in the pre-service teacher training reading program, which used online communication as one class activity. Analyzing the development of caring relationships between three students and their teacher, the authors demonstrated that caring relationships could not be developed as a one-way characteristic of what teachers do and are; rather, they are dependent upon how students reciprocally and positively respond to the teacher’s feedback on their postings. The authors concluded that caring relationships between teacher and students developed differently, each influenced by multiple factors, such as initial expectations of the class, on-going interactions in class, perceptions of each other, and interpretations of each other’s words. For learning to take place, scaffolding through oral or written language plays a critical role (Bruner, 1986; Wells, 1999; Wertsch, 1991).

While Vygotsky used the ZPD to explain how children become independent learners with others’ assistance, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) stated that this framework can be expanded to examining other domains of competence and skills. To meet the mutual needs of student learning and teacher growth, Kaufman and Brooks (1996) claimed that teacher training programs must adopt “constructivist approaches to engage teacher candidates in interdisciplinary exploration, collaborative endeavors, fieldwork opportunities for experiential learning, self observation, evaluation, and reflection” (p. 240). Employing the concept of the ZPD, Tinsley and Lebak (2009) examined how three science teachers changed their pedagogical practices by self-reflecting upon their teaching practice, evaluating peers’ lessons, and providing comments on them through weekly meetings. In the action research project, the three teachers video-recorded their own teaching, wrote in a reflective journal, and engaged in weekly peer group collaborative sessions. They consulted with other sources (e.g., existing literature) to identify goals, to develop action plans, and to analyze the results of their actions. Through this process, the three teachers changed their instruction from a teacher-centered textbook driven approach to a student-
centered inquiry based approach. The authors concluded that when adults shared their feedback, analysis, and evaluation of one another's work through self-reflection, constructive evaluation, and peer collaboration, they could extend their potential for critical reflection and teaching practice.

This study shows how the ZPD can be expanded through reciprocal contributions and interactions among the participants when they are engaged in a common teaching activity. Although the three teachers work in different school contexts (e.g., elementary school and high school), they use their native language, English, as the medium of instruction, teach the same subject, science, and have similar status as certified teachers; therefore, they might feel comfortable exchanging their thoughts and opinions on one another’s lessons and reflecting their comments and suggestions in their subsequent teaching. In our study, the teacher trainer and the two professors speak different native languages, English and Korean, teach different subjects, English language and pedagogy and content courses, and have different status, non-tenured and tenured professors. All of these factors might have influenced not only their perceptions of each other and their interactions during the individual conference but also the professors’ use of comments and suggestions provided by the teacher trainer in the subsequent lesson.

In EFL East Asian countries, research on teacher education has predominantly focused on primary and secondary teachers’ teaching practice, not on tenured content professors’. For example, in English education, there are numerous studies on teaching English in English (TEE) in primary and secondary English classrooms in Korea (Kim, S.-A., 2002; Kim, S.-Y., 2002). However, research is lacking on higher education, particularly in a content-based course (Kim, 2005). Consequently, very little is known about the issues that might arise as Korean EFL content professors teach their content course primarily in English and the feedback exchanges between teacher trainer and EFL content professors. In addition, a few studies have investigated students’ anxiety and motivation in a pre-service teacher training methodology class in Korea (Hwang, 2002) or the effects of peer collaboration on students’ understanding in a pre-service English teachers’ education course (Kim, 2005). However, rather than analyzing students’ actual teaching, these studies used questionnaires or pre-and post-test tools to examine their perceptions or understanding of the course. For example, using a questionnaire, Hwang (2002) examined the change of anxiety and motivation of Korean pre-service English teachers in a teaching methodology class. The author administered two surveys: one at the beginning of the term and the other at the end. The results indicated that the students’ anxiety decreased from the beginning to the end of the term, but their motivation showed little change.
3. METHODS

3.1. Settings and Participants

This pilot program was undertaken during the spring semester of 2010 at a major university in Korea. The TLC of a major university in Korea had previously provided several workshops on how to deliver subject matters in English (e.g., fostering interaction in class, incorporating cooperative learning, using visual aids, etc.). However, a few professors, who had previously participated in these workshops, suggested that the TLC hold more advanced workshops or training sessions which would include a series of classroom observations and follow-up discussion sessions so that they could teach their content courses more efficiently in English. The TLC then contacted the second author who had been employed as a teacher trainer for several years in this university and who had previously given some of those English-mediated workshops. The TLC facilitated the process of starting the project by advertising and selecting professors to volunteer in the semester long program.

The project started with the trainer presenting an introductory workshop in which the participants shared their experiences, concerns, and goals for better meeting professors’ needs in their respective English-mediated courses. By the end of the workshop, everyone agreed upon a schedule in which each participant’s course would be observed or videotaped, then afterwards meet the trainer individually for feedback and goal setting. Ideally, the whole process would continue two or three times in the semester. However, due to scheduling conflicts between the trainer and trainees, the TLC had to video-record all of the professor’s lessons instead of the trainer visiting the actual classroom. The analysis of the two professors’ video-recorded instruction is the subject of this study.

Three professors—Dr. Park, Dr. Shin, and Dr. Hong (all pseudonyms)—participated in this project at the beginning of the semester. However, Dr. Hong, one male professor of science, had to drop out of this project due to his busy schedule after the first round of video-taping. Thus, two female professors Dr. Park and Dr. Shin remained until the end of the project. Dr. Park was a respected professor of mathematics education in her late 40s. After having completed her doctoral degree from a US graduate school, she had been teaching for approximately fifteen years at the college level and had been widely published in her field. This was the first time she tried to teach her mathematics course completely in English. She participated in this project because she wanted to create a learner-centered and interactive classroom atmosphere. Based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking (ACTFL, 1999), we analyzed the two video-recorded lessons as well as the conversation that she had with the trainer during the conference and concluded that her oral proficiency fell into “advanced mid.” Dr. Park showed a great degree of enthusiasm for the
Dr. Shin is a female professor in her mid-40s who has been teaching economics courses for five years at this university after her study in a US graduate school. Like Dr. Park, this was her first experience teaching her course entirely in English. During the orientation, she said that although she did not feel confident teaching her course in English, she would do it because she would like to create a more interactive classroom atmosphere. Based on the same ACTFL guideline, we examined her use of English in class and her conversation with the trainer and evaluated her English as “advanced high,” particularly her range and use of content specific terms. She also exhibited a lot of interest in the project.

The two professors’ courses consisted of students majoring in math education and economics. The math education and economics classes had 27 sophomores and 7 juniors. The student surveys showed that over 95% of the students in both classes had not experienced living or studying in English-speaking countries. However, they ranked their English ability as high intermediate or low or mid advanced, and this was the third or fourth English-only class in college for most students.

3.2. Data Sources and Procedures

The data for this project came from various sources. First, each professor’s entire class was video-recorded twice for approximately 65 minutes, each of which was delivered later to the teacher trainer via the university mailing system with the survey results. The trainer watched the recordings repeatedly and noted key parts of the lesson segmented into four- to five-minute clips. The following is excerpted from one example of the transcribed key notes:

* Review from last class: define “determinate” [minutes 0-4:25]
  • nice start with a review from last class
  • question to students about how to define “determinate”; no response from students; used humor to encourage them
  • as you’re reviewing from last class, nice overview of main points on screen
  • asked students if recalled “properties”: no response; later called on individual student (who held up her paper to show the answer without explaining)—you gave answer

1 Before the class began, one video camera was installed by a technician from the TLC at the back of the classroom to capture the professor’s lesson. Although the camera was not able to record some of the students’ engagement in the lesson accurately, particularly in Dr. Park’s class due to the big class size, it captured the professors’ entire instruction very clearly because it followed the professors’ lesson.
• suggestion: you may want to preface your question by saying (with humor) “Without looking at your notes, does anyone remember…”
• “If you interchange (swap) the determinants, does the determinate change?” asked students: no response; you provided answer

Soon after having watched the video-recorded lessons and read notes several times, the trainer met professors individually in their own office and had discussions about their lesson for approximately 90 minutes. The meeting began by asking the professor to reflect and express their thoughts on the lesson because reflection on one’s teaching is an effective form of self-directed professional development (Minott, 2010). During the meeting, most of the time was spent on the trainer sharing the linguistic and methodological issues that he had identified and taken notes of while watching the video tape, giving comments and suggestions on the professor’s instruction, and clarifying and answering any questions. Good and Brophy (1987) note that teachers who attempt to improve their teaching must be able to decide what they want to do and how to determine if their plans are working. After the extensive feedback and discussion session, each professor was asked to identify two or three goal-setting foci for the following session. This routine continued for one more session: identifying issues while watching the video-recorded lessons, meeting professors individually, and providing feedback and setting goals for the next session.

To gain some insight into the students’ educational background and their understanding about their professor’s lecture, student surveys were conducted twice for about ten minutes, immediately after each video-recording. The TLC facilitated the process: advertising, selecting professors to volunteer, contacting the teacher trainer, and administering the surveys. In the introductory workshop, the participants shared their experiences, concerns, and goals with the trainer who had been working as a secondary school English teacher trainer for several years. Everyone agreed upon a schedule in which each participant’s course would be observed or video-recorded and then the trainer would meet each professor individually for feedback and goal setting. However, due to scheduling conflicts between the trainer and the participants, the TLC had to video-record all of the professor’s lessons instead of the trainer observing the actual classroom. The analysis of the two professors’ video-recorded instruction and their use of feedback by the teacher trainer is the subject of this study. The procedure of the project is presented in Table 1.
TABLE 1
Outline of the Data Collection Procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st workshop</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td>March 24, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st video taping of Dr. Park</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
<td>April 6, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st video taping of Dr. Shin</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
<td>April 27, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student survey</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>April 6/April 27, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st consultation with Dr. Park</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td>April 12, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st consultation with Dr. Shin</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td>May 3, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd video taping of Dr. Park</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
<td>May 18, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd video taping of Dr. Shin</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student survey</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>May 18/June 1, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd consultation with Dr. Park</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td>May 25, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd consultation with Dr. Shin</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
<td>June 7, 2010</td>
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<td>Final written report</td>
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<td>June 30, 2010</td>
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3.3. Data Analysis

For analysis of data, we employed an inductive approach. By watching the video recordings, reading the teacher trainer’s notes before, during, and after the individual conferences, and examining student surveys, we tried to understand how each lesson went, what linguistic and methodological issues arose, and what comments suggested by the trainer each professor incorporated in their subsequent instruction. Through this process, we were able to identify several categories and themes that emerged from the data. At the final stage of our analysis, we cross-examined how each professor followed the teacher trainer’s comments and suggestions in their future lessons.

The credibility of this study was established by collecting data from multi-faceted sources through various methods, which allowed for triangulation of the data across cases (Stake, 1995). Also, as one, a native speaker of English, and the other, a Korean speaking teacher of English, we were able to provide both inside and outside perspectives in interpreting the data. In addition, our experiences as teacher trainers at the same program for a number of semesters allowed for a deepened understanding of the phenomena. Furthermore, throughout the study, we had regular discussions to interpret the data more accurately and analytically. Lastly, to interpret the data flexibly, we often visited the existing literature.
4. RESULTS

In the following section, we present the two professors’ linguistic and methodological issues in the first and second lessons and their use of feedback suggested by the teacher trainer because the students’ response to the two surveys do not show any significant results. The summary of the two professors’ first lesson is presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TABLE 2</th>
<th>Summary of the Two Professors’ First Instruction</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linguistic issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Park</td>
<td>Overuse of content lexicon and terms</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Occasional use of Korean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Shin</td>
<td>Overuse of content lexicon and terms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Korean</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overuse of filler words, “Right”</td>
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<td>Incorrect accent on words</td>
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4.1. The Two Professors’ Linguistic Issues

It is important to note that as we analyzed the two professors’ linguistic issues, we focused on the pragmatic aspects of English, that is, how they clearly delivered their lessons by using classroom English and content specific terms. We did not look at their pronunciation or syntactic problems because both of them had a high level of English proficiency.

Although both professors used a great number of content specific terms in their lecture, Dr. Park used fewer terminologies than Dr. Shin, which could be a characteristic of the two classes; math may require less complex terms than economics in explaining the key ideas and concepts. Although Dr. Shin occasionally accented words incorrectly (e.g., accenting the first syllable on the word agree instead of the second one), her lecture seemed quite natural with long narratives and anecdotes. However, the more the video-recording was analyzed, the more it became evident that the students were exposed to a large range of
content specific lexicon and terminology. For example, Dr. Shin used content obligatory and content compatible\(^2\) words on an average of 12.4 and 9.25 words per minute, respectively. Also, while Dr. Park occasionally used Korean as she interacted with her students in small groups, Dr. Shin conducted her lesson completely in English. Another potentially distracting phenomenon occurring in Dr. Shin’s lesson was her overuse of the filler word “right,” which she used a total of 49 times in the first lesson. Since “right” was frequently added to the end of statements, it was not always clear if it was just a statement with the filler word “right,” or if it was actually a question for students to answer. In conclusion, although Dr. Shin spoke English more fluently than Dr. Park, the former showed more linguistic issues than the latter.

4.2. The Two Professors’ Methodological Issues

As seen in Table 2 above, both professors adopted lecturing with content-heavy PPT slides as their major instructional format; for instance, Dr. Park spent 50 minutes out of the 65 minutes of her lesson lecturing at an average of 59.85 words per slide, and Dr. Shin also employed a long, uninterrupted lecture on three key points with 28 slides at an average of 52.1 words per slide. At one point, as she was explaining the issue of allocating information, she lectured 26 minutes without any comprehension checks. Particularly, Dr. Shin’s voice was rather flat; she did not modify her voice to provide more comprehensible signals to the non-native speaker listeners, and therefore diminished the ability of the non-native speakers to decipher the huge influx of content. The following is an excerpt from Dr. Shin’s lecture (words in bold are stressed by Dr. Shin):

*The worker must know his productivity so he can make a right decision to go to school or not. If he believes that he’s an abled person, and he can, if he signal his higher ability, to work, to the firms, he will go to school. And at the same time, the firm shouldn’t know the worker productivity, right? So since the firm cannot tell which workers are productive and which workers are not they have to resort to schooling or the type of school they had to identify the workers’ productivity.*

As seen in the above example, Dr. Shin stressed the words *abled* and *resort*, while content words such as *productivity* and *signal* or signal words such as *so,* *if,* *and,* *so,* *not,* or were not emphasized. In addition, both professors did not incorporate classroom English

\(^2\) Content obligatory words are content specific lexicon and terminology that are essential for understanding the content of the lesson and content compatible words here are used to mean terminology that may facilitate the delivery of the instruction but not necessary for its comprehension (Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1989).
(e.g., "Now, we're going to start the next section on...") as they stated the lesson procedures and purposes to facilitate the students' comprehension of the content-rich lesson. Finally, the professors incontrovertibly wanted to engage the students with their questions; they frequently asked questions to the students; Dr. Park questioned a total of 17 times in her lesson, 14 times within the first 30 minutes. However, only occasionally was there a student response; 11 times she received no responses whatsoever. In turn, she tried a range of strategies such as telling a joke, calling on individuals, restating a question, providing additional information, pausing, as well as answering her own questions. There was little participation and interaction in her first lesson. Dr. Shin asked a total of 16 questions in her first lesson, and similar to Dr. Park's class, students did not respond actively; she answered her own questions 9 times. Unlike Dr. Park, who gave more wait time, about three seconds, Dr. Shin did not give the students any wait time, mostly zero or less than two seconds. Consequently, like Dr. Park's class, there was very little student engagement and interaction in the first lesson; there was approximately 8 total minutes of engagement and interaction for the entire lesson.

4.3. Dr. Park's First Consultation

Dr. Park appeared quite receptive to the feedback provided by the trainer and eager to apply her goals to her subsequent lesson. During the consultation, when asked to reflect on her lesson, she stated that she felt it did not go well. She believed that she needed to encourage her students more to find mathematical solutions, but as a non-native speaker of English, she felt that she could not articulate her lessons clearly in English and felt the constraints of covering all the content in the given time. In addition, she said that she noticed that although her students became more used to her English-mediated lesson over time, at the beginning of the semester, some of her students were not very comfortable with a content-based math class, showing a high level of anxiety.

Based on the transcribed key notes of the first video-recorded lesson and Dr. Park's reflection, the trainer suggested slight modifications of the content-rich and lecture-based instruction to comprehensible and learner-centered units. For example, to conduct subject matter in English to non-native English-speaking students, it was suggested to Dr. Park that she include a list of high frequency content-related words specific to each lecture. Also, rather than spending most of her time on lecturing, the instructor was recommended to incorporate routines and tasks that require individual, partner, and small group work; for example, using a sign-up sheet, she could ask small groups of students to present a five minute review of the previous lesson at the beginning of each class. In this way, the professor can alleviate the burden of teacher-directed questioning and create student engagement, participation, and interaction. The specific suggestions provided by the
teacher trainer are summarized in Table 3.

Nearing the completion of the first feedback session, Dr. Park was asked to reflect on the 90-minute discussion and choose a few specific goals which she would feel comfortable trying and willing to apply for the next round of observations. The following three topics emerged from the discussion: first, she was quite enthusiastic about the word bank idea, a collection of content specific vocabulary that she could provide to her students in advance of the lesson. Second, she said that she would reduce the content on each slide and emphasize more the key points. Third, by incorporating more student-centered routines and tasks (e.g., reviewing the previous lesson or assigning a problem solving task in small group), she agreed to redirect the ownership of the learning process back to the students.

**TABLE 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Trainer’s Suggestions on Dr. Park’s First Instruction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of 1st Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistic issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overuse of content vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lengthy lecturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content-heavy PPT slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of classroom English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems of asking questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little interaction/participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4. Dr. Shin’s First Consultation

The consultation proceeded in a similar manner with the second participating professor, Dr. Shin: reflecting on her lesson, suggesting possible alternatives, and choosing and setting goals for the next lesson. Dr. Shin started her reflection stating, “I’ve never thought about this very seriously before...thinking about how I can be a better teacher...This is a turning point in my career.” When questioned about how she felt about delivering her major course in English, she reported that she did not feel confident in teaching her economics course in English and that her students might lose their interest in the lesson due to her inability to use humor in English. She also added that she would like her students to be actively engaged in her lesson.

Similar to Dr. Park, after her reflection, the trainer provided specific recommendations for the professor’s lesson: reducing and simplifying the amount of content specific terminology, creating a word bank, reducing the use of the word “right,” chunking her lecture into comprehensible units, reducing the number of words on the PPT slides, controlling the voice quality, using classroom English clearly, asking questions,
incorporating routines and tasks, and giving time for students to respond to questions. The suggestions by the trainer are summarized in Table 4.

Before completing the conference, Dr. Shin was also asked to choose a few specific goals for the second round of observations. Her stated personal goals included reducing the use of the filler word, “right,” simplifying the content on the PPT slides, changing her voice quality, and getting more students’ responses and engagement.

**TABLE 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of 1st Instruction</th>
<th>Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much terminology</td>
<td>Reduce content terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-use of filler word “right”</td>
<td>Create a word bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect accent on words</td>
<td>Stop using the tag question “right”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lengthy lecturing</td>
<td>Break up lecture into chunks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content-heavy PPT slides</td>
<td>Put key points on PPT slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monotonous voice</td>
<td>Use voice as a tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of classroom English</td>
<td>Use classroom English clearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems of asking questions</td>
<td>Use various question techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little participation/interaction</td>
<td>Create routines and tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No wait time</td>
<td>Give wait time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5. Dr. Park’s Second Instruction

Although the two professors were given similar suggestions by the same teacher trainer, analysis of the second video tapes showed remarkable differences: Dr. Park made noticeable progress from the first lesson, whereas Dr. Shin did not make such progress. The following is a summary of how the two professors transformed their lessons based on the teacher trainer’s comments and suggestions.

Rather than starting with a lengthy lecture, Dr. Park started her class by asking several questions about content terminology, which she had given to her students in the previous class. After the terminology activity, she then quickly turned the class over to three groups of students who presented a review of the last lesson’s content. Each student took turns explaining the formulas and concepts that they had learned in both English and Korean. After the students’ review, she began instructing the day’s new content by using classroom English (e.g., “Thanks for your review. Today we are mainly going to focus...”). Although her classroom English was not always very clear, it was evident that she was trying to make her lesson more comprehensible and engaging: creating uncluttered PPT slides with
key points of the lesson and fewer words per slide, stating clear goals for the day’s lesson, incorporating two small group activities, and assigning a new list of vocabulary for the next class. As noted earlier, one of the major obstacles for Dr. Park in the first lesson was the questioning of students. In the second lesson, rather than asking many questions to her students and answering them on her own, she gave a worksheet with several content questions to each group and asked her students to solve one of them and present their answer to the class. In this way, she created a context in which the students were engaged, and Dr. Park reduced her lecturing. While the students were solving problems with their group members, she then visited each group and facilitated the group work by answering students’ questions. As a result of her efforts to apply the trainer’s feedback, the students’ engagement in the class activities went up from 15 minutes in the first lesson to 42 minutes in the second. See Table 5 for a comparison of the two lessons and the effect of the instructional modifications.

**TABLE 5**

Summary of Dr. Park’s First and Second Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Lesson</th>
<th>2nd Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturing</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of words per PPT slides</td>
<td>59.85 words</td>
<td>25 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No responses to instructor’s questions</td>
<td>11 times</td>
<td>0 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student participation and interaction</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>42 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ Participation only in English</td>
<td>2.59 minutes</td>
<td>9.24 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6. Dr. Shin’s Second Instruction

Unlike Dr. Park, Dr. Shin did not change her lesson substantially. Although she reduced the number of content obligatory/compatible words and improved upon incorrect accentuation of words, relatively little was changed. Like her first lesson, Dr. Shin started with lengthy lecturing on “Worker’s Productivity” with seven key points. Although there was one dialogue read by two students about two minutes, she used 37 PPT slides to cover the first three key points of the lesson. Then, she spent subsequent time reading the content on the PPT with a monotonous tone; there was almost no pair/group work or student participation. A few times, she summarized her own lecture and questioned students (e.g., “Do you have any questions so far?”), which generated no student response. In addition to the use of “right” as a tag question (e.g., “Okay, right?” or “Asymmetrical information, right?”), she also put “what” at the end of the statements habitually during her second lesson (e.g., “In the previous lesson, we assumed what?” or “The previous cost what?”); as
a result, it might have been possible that the students were not aware that she was asking an actual question, not a rhetorical one. A summary of Dr. Shin’s first and second video-recorded lessons is presented in Table 6.

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Lesson</th>
<th>2nd Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturing</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
<td>56 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of words per PPT slides</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No responses to instructor’s questions</td>
<td>9 times</td>
<td>22 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student participation</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
<td>2.39 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overuse of tag question ‘right’</td>
<td>49 times</td>
<td>86 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overuse of tag question ‘what’</td>
<td>3 times</td>
<td>17 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of content obligatory/compatible words</td>
<td>104/99</td>
<td>64/46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7. Two Professors’ Second Consultation

Like the first consultation, Dr. Park was asked to reflect on her second lesson before the trainer shared his findings and suggestions. She believed that she established a more comfortable relationship with her students. Compared to her other math classes, which were taught in Korean, she felt that the students were more at ease in the math class conducted in English. She thought that her students joked more in “American style” and even sent her text messages in English asking questions. She said, “I was pleased by my students’ engagement and participation.” Furthermore, she stated that she felt it was getting more natural to use English in class. She was now using English throughout the entire class period.

At the end of the second conference, the trainer had his final suggestions to continue the positive momentum of the professor’s CBI development: using a word bank, creating routines and tasks, giving clearer instruction of each task, having an approximate time limit for the presentation time, and preparing a sign-up sheet with the presentation date. Also, to further improve the students’ participation in class activities and discussions, it was suggested that she have a checklist for participation to ensure that each member actually collaborates and engages in the learning process.

Similarly, Dr. Shin was asked to reflect on her lesson. She started her reflection saying, “I realized in the middle of my lecture that I wasn’t applying anything we had talked about during our conference.” Dr. Shin’s performance was further clarified by her statement: “I wish I had more time to practice...and apply the suggestions from our feedback sessions.”
While discussing the results of the second observation with Dr. Shin, she revealed that she did not realize or consider the effects of too much talking or giving students too much input. When the excessive amount of content on her PPT slides was noted, she explained that the slides allowed her to be more comfortable teaching the content in English and to have as a reference during the lecture. When asked about the prolific use of “right” and “what,” she said she was not aware of her habitual use of those expressions.

After Dr. Shin’s reflection, the trainer provided similar comments and suggestions that he had given to her first lesson: break the lecture into chunks, decrease the content on PPT slides, provide variation in voice tone, allow wait time instead of answering her own questions, and reduce her habitual use of tag questions, such as “right” and “what.” In particular, the trainer emphasized creating student-centered routines and tasks so that the students could engage more in individual, pair, or small group work more. If the students engaged in the activity, she would be able to focus more on facilitating and checking the learning process rather than extensive amount of lecturing.

5. DISCUSSION

This study explored the linguistic and methodological issues that arose as the Korean content professors conducted their content courses in English to Korean EFL students and the instructional changes that they had made based on the teacher trainer’s comments and suggestions over the course of the semester. The study showed that instructing subject matter in English to Korean EFL students in Korea proved to be a challenge for both professors. However, their challenges were related more to their lack of methodological and instructional knowledge (Butler, 2005; Rosenkjar, Crandall, & Kaufman, 2002) than to their lack of English proficiency (Kaufman, 2004; Short, 2002). Also, as the teacher trainer provided comments and suggestions to each professor’s instruction, Dr. Park followed them closely and changed her lesson dramatically, even though her English ability was deemed lower Dr. Shin’s. On the other hand, Dr. Shin, the stronger English speaker, did not incorporate the trainer’s feedback in the subsequent lesson and as a result did not significantly improve her content-based lesson.

In the following section, with our teaching implications, we first discuss the methodological issues that arose as the two Korean content professors delivered their subject matter in English to Korean EFL college students. Then, we provide our interpretations of why one professor might not have followed the comments provided by the teacher trainer more closely than the other.
5.1. Methodological Issues

As many researchers have noted (Crandall, 2000; Crandall & Tucker, 1989; Rosenkjar, Crandall, & Kaufman, 2002), like many EFL content professors, the two professors approached their teaching from a content mind-set rather than considering the impact of language on their instruction. In the ESL setting, student goals are to merge into mainstream classes as quickly as possible; therefore, it is not surprising for teachers to heavily emphasize content over language (Met, 1999; Short, 2002). However, even though the mastery of content is the students’ ultimate goal, English is neither their native nor primary language in Korea. In an attempt to cover a curriculum that would be equivalent to the one they would teach in their native language, both professors started their lesson with lengthy lecturing with PPT slides and using a large repertoire of content-specific terms. If the goals of the courses are to educate and train the university students in their major, who are still in the process of developing their English proficiency (Butler, 2005; Warrington, 2010), the EFL content professors should consider the effects of English as the mode of delivery on their students’ understanding and provide more comprehensible input and instruction to their students (Stryker & Leaver, 1997).

To tackle a plethora of potential obstacles of a content-based lesson, scaffolding should begin even before the start of the first class. A syllabus should clearly state the purposes of the CBI course and professors’ individual philosophy and expectations. Also, even prior to the semester, providing a list of content-specific terms with the syllabus would help students prepare for their course more successfully. Flowerdew (1993) emphasized that lengthy lectures need to be broken up into more comprehensible chunks. Rather than just delivering information in a uni-directional manner, content professors have to create routines and tasks in which students, in pairs or small groups, can engage and interact with others (Brown, 2007). By creating such routines and tasks, professors can reduce the amount of explanation time. Furthermore, before performing each task, it is important to state the direction of the lesson, explicitly using clear and common classroom language, and emphasizing key points through stress and intonation (e.g., “Ok, now, let’s read the dialogue to find out...”). This clear instruction can provide a road map for students to take notes and understand the lecture more comfortably. Moreover, reducing reliance on PPT slides may increase comprehension of the lecture by reducing the amount of input and encouraging more student interaction and participation. As Flowerdew (1993) noted, PPT slides are a double-edged sword: while instructors can use them to visualize the content and engage the students, they can end up reading information and decrease engagement with the audience, as in Dr. Shin’s case.
5.2. Role of Feedback in the Development of Instruction

As many researchers emphasized (Belcher, 1994; Kim & Schallert, 2011; Lee & Schallert, 2008; Vygotsky, 1978), teaching and learning are reciprocal, joint processes in which both the teacher and the student have to respond to each other’s work with attention. Knowledge in this view is not simply transmitted from teacher to learner; rather, it is socially constructed among individuals as they actively engaged in the activity (Vygotsky, 1978). As Kim and Schallert (2011) further noted, although teachers spend a great deal of time in giving comments on students’ work, a teacher’s response to students’ writing seems only beneficial in the development of students’ understanding of the content if there is a reciprocal, trusting relationship in which the student receives and applies the comments to their own learning schemata. Although both professors started with a high degree of interest and enthusiasm in this project, only Dr. Park accepted and applied the teacher trainer’s comments and suggestions, thereby making noticeable progress in her subsequent instruction, whereas Dr. Shin did not apply them to her following instruction. As a result, she did not make any progress in her content-based instruction.

In comparing the cases of Drs. Park and Shin, one might conclude that Dr. Shin simply did not apply the trainer’s feedback for lack of time or belief it would not help her instruction. However, as Lee and Schallert (2008) noted, for effective feedback practice, EFL teacher trainers might need to develop a reciprocal, trusting relationship with their trainees in order to effectuate methodological feedback. Even if tenured Korean content professors instruct their courses in English and seek mentoring support, they may hesitate using the comments and suggestions provided by non-tenured language instructors due to lack of trust in the feedback. Therefore, for effective feedback practice, as Kaufman and Brooks (1996) argued, Korean EFL content professor training programs need to adopt “constructivist approaches” in which they can engage in “interdisciplinary exploration, collaborative endeavors, fieldwork opportunities for experiential learning, self observation, evaluation, and reflection” (p. 240).

In Tinsley and Lebak’s (2009) study, three science teachers who speak the same language, teach the same subjects, and have the same status were able to exchange their thoughts and opinions on one another’s lesson comfortably and reflect on their comments and suggestions in their subsequent teaching. Through such collaboration, they were able to develop their teaching skills more critically and productively. Likewise, in addition to collaboration with various types of native English-speaking trainers (e.g., content and/or language instructors), we argue that Korean EFL content teacher training programs need to create a more constructivist approach. This entails that Korean EFL content professors should consult with other Korean EFL content professors. Together, they can observe other content professors’ classes, reflect on their teaching practices, and exchange their opinions.
and ideas comfortably without language and status constraints.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the challenges two Korean content professors face as they deliver their subject matter in English and how they use the comments and suggestions provided by a native English-speaking teacher trainer. Our intention is not to find any faults in Korean EFL content professors’ teaching practices; rather, we hope that this study would allow not only content professors but also many Korean EFL professionals to provide an opportunity for self-reflection and evaluation of their own teaching practice, particularly as they instruct subject matter in a target language.

Although analyzing the data from the video-recorded lessons rather than observing the actual classrooms can be a limitation of this study, it explores a relatively new issue in English education in Korea. Also, this study demonstrates an alternative to conducting research on EFL content professors’ classroom practice. Instead of using experimental design, such as surveys or pre and post test tools, as seen in Hwang (2002) and Kim (2002, 2005), we base the analysis of our study on the data from two EFL content professors’ actual teaching.

While Korean universities have started to offer content professors various types of workshops on conducting their major courses in English to Korean students, these workshops are not particularly geared toward tenured content professors. In other words, these workshops need to incorporate opportunities for tenured professors to discuss their teaching practice through self-reflection and peer collaboration in a sociconstructivist approach. It is important that universities establish a systematic support mechanism for content professors, who are not trained language teachers, to develop learner centered and comprehensible instruction in the target language. The content driven teaching paradigm needs to be reframed to include more linguistically and methodologically comprehensible instruction with collaboration between Korean EFL content professors, native English-speaking language teachers, and native Korean-speaking language teachers.

For future research, a longitudinal study of Korean EFL content professors’ actual classroom observations would be beneficial rather than analyzing video-recorded lessons. It would also be noteworthy to study the comments and suggestions provided by various types of teacher trainers such as native and non-native English-speaking and tenured and non tenured professors and how that feedback is accepted and applied by different teacher educators.
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Two Korean Content Professors' English-mediated Instruction: Issues and Use of Feedback

Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.


Given Lee, · Kevin M. Traynor


APPENDIX
Student Response to the Lecture

Date: ____________________________
Class: __________________________

1. What’s your major (department)? ____________________________

2. How would you evaluate your English? Circle one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low, mid, high</td>
<td>Low, mid, high</td>
<td>Low, mid, high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Have you ever studied or lived in an English-speaking country? If yes, where and how long?

4. Is this your first lesson learned only in English in college? If not, write the numbers.

5. Do you feel the professor is well prepared to give the lecture in English?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. How much of the lecture in English do you think you understand?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. If you have difficulty understanding the lecture, what are the reasons?

8. Any suggestions you have to improve the professor’s lecture in English?
Two Korean Content Professors’ English-mediated Instruction: Issues and Use of Feedback

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