This study investigates interdiscourse communication between a native speaking English teacher and Korean elementary students in an EFL classroom. It has been argued that intercultural communication should be the new orientation of English education in Korea, but there has not been much research on investigating the use of intercultural communication in real classrooms. When we do research on culture or intercultural study, it is inappropriate to begin with the notion that individuals are first of all representatives of national cultures or even various subcultures. Rather, it is more appropriate to begin with the individual and describe the many discourses s/he brings to any encounter and also to consider the power relationships and social distance between the participants and the degree of cultural awareness and self identity of the interlocutors in any communication encounter. Therefore, this study focuses on the single site of the EFL classroom in order to look at the interdiscourse communication between a native speaking English teacher and Korean elementary students in an English classroom. Critical classroom discourse is used to analyze the interdiscourse communication in this context.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of technology and science is in some respect making the world become smaller, and consequently there are more chances for everybody to communicate with people who come from different cultural backgrounds. In our present-day world intercultural exchanges are becoming more and more common. In the past 20 years the
discipline of ‘Intercultural Communication’ (IC) has made great progress in helping us to understand the nature of such intercultural exchanges. This gives those who utilize IC research and training methods even greater potential to help people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate with each other. But the field of IC is currently undergoing some significant changes in its perspective. Until recently many IC researchers had focused on the dichotomous boundary between cultures, particularly because of the saliency of national characteristics. This kind of essentialization of culture ends up making unidimensional stereotypical cultural categories. Therefore, Kramsch (1993) suggests that IC should position interlocutors at the intersection of multiple social roles and individual choices. Therefore, as will be discussed below, it is better that IC be seen as interdiscourse communication.

Currently, in Korea IC has been receiving more attention from researchers in English education. There is a movement to change the goal of English education from increasing students’ communicative competence to increasing their intercultural communicative competence (Kim, 2003; Kim, 2006; Park, 2004; Yoon, 2007). Most of this research has been carried out among secondary level and college or university students. However, there has not been much IC research with elementary school students especially related to English education in Korea. This is because there is a presupposition that measurement of intercultural communicative competence is appropriate only for students with an advanced proficiency in English so that such measurement is postponed until the time it is thought that the EFL learner is ready to integrate intercultural knowledge with an advanced level of English proficiency.

Therefore, the research described in this paper which focuses on a single site in an interdiscourse communication encounter (Scollon & Scollon, 2001) – classroom communication between a native speaking English teacher and Korean elementary students in an EFL English classroom – explores how the interdiscourse communication occurs and what interdiscourse communication practices and strategies are involved.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The value of IC research and training methods can be very valuable to English teachers, such as those teaching English as a foreign language in countries such as Korea. There are various interculturalists who follow competing approaches to views of culture and IC. These approaches roughly fall into two categories: mainstream IC and new perspective IC. Mainstream interculturalists have a general tendency to view cultures as monolithic wholes and to focus on individuals only as representatives of national cultures or even supranational cultures (especially Asian vs. Western). For example, the work of Brake
and Walker (1995) and Buckley (2000) focuses on cultural competence in the field of global business and teaching ESL. Such work is instructive for people who conduct business internationally, and for anyone who interacts with people from other countries and other cultures.

However, new perspective interculturalists have pointed out two problems in mainstream IC. First, mainstream IC tends to create stereotypes and false or fixed assumptions because the emphasis in their work is on large differences between people as representatives of the United States, Japan, the Middle East, and other national or supranational cultures rather than increasing the cultural awareness of others. The second problem with mainstream IC is that mainstream interculturalists do not distinguish between cross-cultural and intercultural communication, so they end up failing to distinguish between a comparison of abstract communication systems and of communication between people from two cultures. The concept of ‘culture’ is problematic as Kramsch (1993) has pointed out because culture has been defined as the national cultural knowledge of certain language users who are native speakers. In the foreign language classroom the native speaker is supposed to provide the norm against which the non-native speaker’s performance is measured. Native speakership thus brings to its speakers a certain authority associated with authenticity and legitimacy of language use.

Recently, new perspective interculturalists have tried to shift perspectives on the concepts of culture, intercultural awareness, and the native speaker. Kramsch (1998), Holliday (1994), Pierce (1995), Velasco-Martin (2004) and other new perspective interculturalists have started questioning the norm of the native speaker in a time of large-scale migrations, cross-national and cross-cultural encounters, and increasing linguistic and pragmatic differences among speakers of the same language. Scollon and Scollon (2001) have argued further for an emphasis on interdiscourse communication rather than intercultural communication because people constantly access various discourses such as their professional or occupational group, people of similar educational backgrounds, and other social groups when they communicate with others. It is necessary that we study people as multicultural and multidiscourse individuals rather than as representatives of cultural groups. For we are all accessing various discourses when we communicate with people from our own communities as well as with people from other countries. Kramsch (1998) further discusses the issue of ‘native speaker’. She argues that in the increasingly gray zones of multilingual, multicultural societies, the dichotomy between native versus non-native speaker has outlived its usefulness. Both native speakers and non-native speakers potentially belong to several speech communities of which they are the more or less recognized and more or less unrecognized members.

Therefore, depending on the influence of the interlocutor’s various discourse community affiliations the meaning a person makes about the same phenomena can be
different. Gee (1999) points out that meaning is always wedded to “local, ‘on-site’ social, and cultural practice” (p. 63). In other words,

“meaning is not general and abstract, not something that resides in dictionaries, not even in general symbolic representation inside people’s heads. Rather, it is situated in specific social and cultural practices, and is continually transformed in those practices” (p. 63).

Meaning is a matter of situated meaning, customized in, to, and for a context (Gee, 1999) and positioned in relation to social institutions and power relations (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000). This situated and local nature of meaning is largely invisible to ordinary people as they communicate in their everyday lives, but participation in these communicative situations presupposes how and when to speak and how to do so with respect, seriousness, humor, politeness, intimacy, and so forth (Milroy, 1980).

Not only context but also the interlocutor’s self identity becomes an important element when we focus on interdiscourse communication which takes as its starting point the individual. For this study ‘identity’ is defined as how people know or name themselves and also how people think they are seen by others. Identity is seen not as a fixed and unified entity that exists permanently as ‘an individual self’, but as a combination of categories which are constantly fluid and changing constantly in their relations with other people. Ivanic (1998) defines identity as “a complex of interweaving positions” (p. 10) and Bruner (1986) uses the term ‘transactional self’ to emphasize the importance of the influence of other people in an individual’s identity construction. It is also important to recognize that identity is unstable, and sometimes fragmented and conflicting. Goffman (1969) in discussing ‘presentation of self’ theorizes that people have desires ‘to be’ and ‘to be seen’ in various social contexts. Velasco-Martin (2004) suggests that the goal of foreign language study is to develop an intercultural personality or identity and to become ‘intercultural speakers’ who can play the role of cultural intermediates between two or more cultures. As we can see in the current study, the students in this study even though they are still only in elementary school are starting to have more complex identities as intercultural speakers as they learn a second language and come into contact with other cultures and discourses.

Also important is how we come to understand the meaning of new words and sentences in new contexts. The situated and local nature of meaning is usually not apparent to us as we speak our first language among people with similar discourses to our own, but it becomes more noticeable when we study another language and interact with people outside our usual discourse communities (Gee, 1999). And we use various strategies and also develop some new ones to make meaning when we go outside of these old and
familiar discourse communities. Likewise, children like those observed in the current study who are struggling to learn English from their foreign teachers use various strategies to make meaning of the new words and sentences of English they hear their teachers use. In order to understand the situated meaning of a certain context students use different negotiation styles and strategies. This suggests that it might be time to expand the scope of study about strategies and study skills to include those involved in developing intercultural and interdiscourse communication competence.

The most current work among new perspective interculturalists includes research (Buttjes & Byram, 1991; Byram & Zarate, 1997) and classroom projects (Velasco-Martín, 2004) whose aim is to devise a pedagogy oriented toward the intercultural speaker instead of a pedagogy oriented toward the native speaker. Such work has the specific goal of developing the language learner's intercultural or transnational communicative competence to increase the quantity and quality of contacts between learners across national borders and through student’s exchanges. This helps learners to analyze, reflect upon and interpret foreign cultural phenomena when using the language in contact with foreign nationals since it is not the meeting of cultures but the meeting of individuals in third cultures where boundaries are states of mind and individuals are positioned at the intersection of multiple social roles and individual choices (Kramsch, 1993).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

To carry out this intensive case study, the researcher found a single site in an interdiscourse communication encounter useful, as Scollon and Scollon (2001) suggest. The research site is a classroom where we can observe interdiscourse communication among the native speaking English teacher and the Korean elementary school students.

For this study, a native speaking English teacher teaches an intercultural communicative competence based program which was adapted from Kim (2006) in an English course as an extra curriculum for 3rd to 6th grade students at an elementary school in Kyengki province. This class meets four days a week for two hours each day during the four weeks of the summer vacation. There are 18 students who are from different grade levels but have similar English proficiency levels. The native speaking English teacher is from Canada. He began teaching English in this school one year prior to the time the research was conducted. So the students have already had experience studying with this teacher. Also, although his proficiency in Korean is very low, he knows some Korean words and something about Korean cultural customs because he had been living in Korea for three years at the time the research was conducted.
Classroom observation and interviews with participants were utilized as the research methods. This is naturalistic classroom observation which can be used to study real factors rather than hypothesis in the classroom discourse. The researcher tried to collect data from the etic and emic perspectives (Bailey & Nunan, 1996) utilizing interviews before and after a lesson. The interview data which is like an informal conversation (attitude toward the class, relationships between students and the teacher, and some personal information) can be used to support the observed data.

The data for this study were collected in the following steps. Before the lesson, the researcher explained the purpose of this study and the program that focused on increasing interdiscourse communication skills to the teacher and gave the teacher time to incorporate the program into the course. The researcher familiarized herself with the teacher and the students making small talk and having an informal interview. For the classroom observation, the class was video taped by an assistant and the researcher took notes during the observation. The video taping was focused on interaction between teacher and students and students interactions in classroom activities. The process of data collection and analysis was recursive. The video tape of the first class was transcribed, and the data was categorized and codified by the researcher. The rest of the tape was codified in the same way as above and analyzed by the researcher. The data from the observations and interviews were analyzed enhanced by the discourse analysis methods which have been developed by Gee (2001), Scollon and Scollon (2001) and critical classroom discourse analysis (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Pennycook, 1999; Canagarajah, 1993). After the analysis of the current study by the researcher was completed, in order to increase validity of its accuracy, two co-interpreters, one an elementary school Korean teacher and the other a native speaking English teacher, were asked to read a report of this analysis to offer their opinion on its validity.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1. Interdiscourse Communication as Situated Practice

The data analysis shows that the interdiscourse communication between the native speaking English teacher and the Korean elementary students in the classroom can be defined as situated social interactive practice created locally and negotiated among the group of interactants in the sociocultural context rather than “the meeting of two cultures or two languages across the political boundaries of nation-states” (Kramsch, 1998, p. 81). Situated practice is concerned with various elements such as power relations, social distance, the degree of cultural awareness and self identity assertion.
The concept of situated practice is related to the ideas of Gee (1999) discussed above that all meaning is situated and localized and is positioned in relation to social institutions and power relations (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000). Specific examples of such interdiscourse communication in situated practice are discussed in the following parts of this paper.

1) Power Relations

The following examples show situated practice created by the interlocutors’ power relations in an EFL elementary school classroom. Kumaravadivelu (1999) defines setting as the place where interdiscourse activities and interactions are embedded in or bounded by a sociohistorically and socioculturally conventionalized context. The situated interdiscourse communication setting already provides a different power structure to the interlocutors because the classroom is a minisociety with its own rules and regulations, routines, and rituals. Looking at the setting in detail shows that these Korean elementary students have already had at least a half a year of experience to interact with the native speaking English teacher and get used to his teaching style.

Generally, the teacher has more power than students in a normal class in the Korean sociocultural context. However, in this EFL English the native speaking English teacher’s degree of power to control the class and students is different from that of a Korean English teacher. For one thing his power is less than that of a Korean English teacher so that the communication pattern between this teacher and his students is different from the general one between Korean English teachers and students. The following example illustrates this.

T: What are healthy Korean foods?
S1: Pipimpap (the name of a Korean rice dish)!
S2: Socu (the name of a Korean wine)
S2: Posinthang (the name of a soup made from dog meat)
S3: Makkelli (the name of a Korean rice wine)

When they study about ‘Healthy Food’ in the third week of the course, the teacher tries to compare healthy food from Korea and the United States. But the answers of students 2 and 3 do not match the generally expected answer in this context.

Although S2 knows that it is not appropriate to describe ‘Posinthang’ as a healthy food to a foreigner because it has been criticized by foreigners, he yells out the word in the classroom to get attention from the class. He assumes the native speaking English teacher has (-) power because he doesn’t understand the Korean language and culture very well. It may be interpreted just as an idiosyncratic situation because the boy is famous as a
belligerent boy in the class. But it might result from the routines of the classroom where foreign teachers don’t have power and they usually don’t care about the students’ behavior because they have no way or right to punish the children for bad behavior as a native speaking English teacher. This kind of response might occur not just for native speaking English teachers but also for lenient Korean English teachers who also are not so strict about students’ behavior. It means that students might have similar power relationships with a Korean teacher as they have with a native speaking English teacher. As we discussed earlier, the current example of situated social interactive practice does not occur just because of one factor such as the teacher’s being a native speaking English teacher but results from the complex relationships of the interactants. The reaction of the boy in this study is just for this particular teacher who has (-) power rather than all native speaking English teachers in general.

The oppositional behavioral tendencies of the children observed in the data above are a sign of their resistance to the power of their non-Korean English teacher. Although many Korean students are aware of the importance of learning English they resist the uneasiness and potential alienation which results from the introduction of English and its foreign discourses and cultural values, the communicative style of teaching, and the teacher himself. Like the data of Canagarajah (1993) about oppositional tendencies of students in Sri Lankan classrooms, for the young Korean students in this study the classroom becomes what (Kumaravadivelu, 1999) calls in his discussion of Canagarajah’s data “a site of struggle between competing discourses, a cultural arena where ideological, discursive, and social forces collide in an ever-unfolding drama of dominance and resistance” (p. 475).

2) Social Distance

The following excerpts from the data show situated practice created by interlocutors’ different belief systems which have been cultivated in their own social institutional contexts. Gibbon (1984) describes this kind of distance as ‘social distance’ which suggests a possible existence of incongruence or incompatibility in the ways of thinking between two different cultural groups. This gap or social distance between the native speaking English teachers and the majority of Koreans is even bigger for those who live in rural areas of Korea where unlike people in Seoul, the people do not have much chance to meet many foreigners who speak English.

Gibbon’s notion of social distance (SD) is different from the way Scollon and Scollon (2001) use ‘distance’ (D) in that for Scollon and Scollon any two people have some measure of distance between them. However, social distance (SD) refers to communication between people from different social or cultural groups such as the Korean children and American children in this data. For them there is social distance (+SD)
because of their differing social backgrounds, and there may be distance (+D or -D) depending on their length of acquaintance, friendliness, and other factors. On the other hand, for Korean students and Korean English teachers all of whom were born and grew up in Seoul, there would be (-SD), but there may or may not be distance (+D) or (-D). In the following, a communication problem arises due to social distance.

T: In Korea, it is opposite way. You guys write Y, M, D. However, the American style is 9/26/73. It is my birthday.
S1: Wa! Nulkessney. (Wow, he is an old man.) You are very old. 33?
T: You need to work on your math!
S2: 32.
T: Yes, 32. It is not September yet. So, I’m 32.

The above excerpt is from the very first class of the course when students are learning how to introduce themselves (birthday, hobby, family members, etc.) to foreigners so that they can make a self introduction book. It shows that there is some miscommunication in telling the different ways of writing dates in Korea and in the United States. The teacher tries to explain the different systems for writing dates but a student makes a joke of it. Also, the student might not know that asking someone’s age is rude in the United States because of their lack of cultural awareness due to social distance.

However, in this case, it is possible to explain this miscommunication using Scollon and Scollon’s (2001) definition of ‘distance (+D, -D)’ which, as is mentioned above, refers to the closeness of a relationship; for example, two close friends would be classified as (-) D. Although a usual relationship between a teacher and a student is defined as (+) D because of the teachers’ authority, in this case, student 1 feels (-) D with the teacher. He knows that it is not appropriate to say that someone is old in front of another person, but there are two reasons that the student explicitly mentions the teacher’s age in the classroom. First, the student assumes that the foreign teacher has limited Korean proficiency and second, the student knows that the teacher for the extra curricular English course does not have enough power to control his behavior. The combination of these factors makes the student feel there is not much distance from the teacher because the students feel freer with the native speaking English teacher as if they are interacting with a friend rather than a teacher who has some authority.

This kind of distance is created not only by differing power relationships but also by the classroom seating or different types of classroom activities which the Korean students are not accustomed to. Kramsch (1993) discusses the purpose of specific seating and grouping arrangements of the students in EFL class and how they are differently perceived by different participants in interactions and activities depending on the locally created
situation. For example, in the classroom observed in this research the native speaking English teacher uses oral activities such as communicative language games in the English classroom where students sit around a table in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. For this reason, the students do not feel so much distance from the native speaking English teacher.

3) Self Identity

The following excerpts from the data illustrate how situated practice is influenced by the interactants’ identities. The interactants in this study can be divided into two large groups: native speaking English teachers and elementary Korean students. These groups of interactants are characterized by the type of interactive resources they have at their command and the ethnic and social identities they constructed in the macrosociohistorical context and in the process of interaction. As has been discussed above, identity is considered a combination of categories which are constantly fluid and changing constantly in their relations with other people. Also, identity is unstable, and sometimes fragmented and conflicting.

For example, in the example from the data above the boy displays a ‘naughty student’ identity when he mentions the word ‘Posinthang’ in class in front of his American teacher, in fact challenging the authority of this teacher. But during the interview with the Korean researcher the boy doesn’t enact his ‘naughty boy identity’ as he does in class; rather, he acts respectful and serious. In these two cases, this student’s performances reveals how his identity changes depending on who he is talking to and how he wants to be seen, and how he wants to present himself. He is, as Goffman (1969) points out in discussing ‘presentation of self’, concerned with how to present himself in these two social contexts. How this boy wants to be seen in a classroom led by a foreign teacher is quite different from how he wants to be seen by the Korean researcher because of differing distance and power relations.

Of course, not all the children adapt such an identity of resistance. Some students accept the teacher’s traditionally authoritative discourses and voices passively. Still other students take a middle path. Rather than accepting the authoritative discourses of the students totally, they reappropriate them and claim them as their own (Bakhtin, 1981; Lin & Luk, 2005). In these cases, the identity they develop may not be seen as their own selves, but nevertheless, this can be seen as a step in their identity development.

There are various reasons for resistance which are related to identity. The following example illustrates another reason for resistance: when the authority of the teacher seems to represent an attack on aspects of their social identity. When they are talking about Korean culture in the classroom, the students assume that the teacher has very shallow information about Korean culture. The students think that they might know more about it
than the teacher. So they resist the teacher’s answer or show strong doubt about his answers. This can be seen as an example of resistance of the institutional self. The student refuses to accept the decision that the teacher makes based on his authority as a teacher.

T: Is Capchay (the name of a Korean noodle dish) healthy food?
S: Yes!
T: Well…, no.
S: Yes. … No healthy food? (Why isn’t it healthy food?)
T: No. Because of oil.
S: Mmm. (With confusing face and doesn’t accept his idea.)

This kind of exchange doesn’t occur often because it is generally believed that a teacher has more knowledge about everything, so students should accept most of the teacher’s ideas. However, in this case the students have more knowledge about their own culture especially about the food that they eat often. There is resistance among students when the teacher decides that ‘Capchay is not healthy because it has a lot of oil’. The conversation finishes without further argumentation, but there is a refusal to accept the teacher’s authority. They just can’t express their ideas because of their limited English proficiency so they avoid insisting on their idea. In this case, the American teachers’ criticism is a kind of attack on the students’ identity as Koreans. No doubt, they have grown up with the idea that food like the Korean noodle dish is very healthy; their parents must have told them such a thing often. When their foreign teacher criticizes such traditional Korean food, they are kind of shocked, and so they resist. But this type of resistance is different from that of the belligerent student mentioned above.

The following is another similar example of the importance of self identity in how the students interact in the classrooms observed in this research. When the teacher asks for students to write about unhealthy foods in Korea and the United States the students comment right away that there are no unhealthy foods in Korea. Again this shows that the students have a very strong pride in Korean food and how questioning this fact is an affront to their self identity.

T: Now, we will talk about unhealthy foods.
Write these sections – unhealthy Koran foods and unhealthy American foods.
S: There is no unhealthy food in Korea.
T: Yes, there are some.
S: No!

In this case, the result of the classroom interaction might provide some influence in deciding the students’ new identity. The students first believe that there is no unhealthy
Korean food but the strong teacher’s comment about unhealthy American food and unhealthy Korean food persuades the students to reconstruct their knowledge structure and their world views. In this case the students become motivated to stick up for Korean food in order to maintain the integrity of their identities as Koreans, and this increases their motivation to speak with their teacher. Norton (2000) and Toohey (2000) both concludes that the identity of L2 learners is related to their investment in their learning of the target language and how motivated they are to participate in the learning activities.

2. Classroom Negotiations

The data of this research of interdiscourse communication as situated social practice among the native speaking English teacher and the elementary school students in the EFL classroom shows three different kinds of classroom negotiation styles. On the surface, there seems to be not much negotiation because most of the time it appears as if the teacher explains and students are silent during the lessons. Most of the interactions in this study are based on short questions and answers. This is due to the students’ low level of English proficiency, so the teacher mostly asks questions to lead the students’ understanding of the content of the lesson and to elicit a response among the students. However, looking at the data using critical classroom discourse analysis reveals different kinds of negotiation based on the teacher’s questioning skill and other characteristics of the activities.

Meaning negotiation is not an individual activity but rather is a sharing of specific sociocultures. Individuals and environments mutually constitute one another and a person is not considered to be separable from the environments and interactions in which language development occurs. According to Bakhtin (1996), most language use is sociohistorically conventionalized and culture specific; people do not create linguistic utterances for most situations by themselves. Moreover, the ability of interactants to make meaning depends on their sharing of these sociocultural conventionalized interactive resources. Ochs (1996) developed the term ‘linguistic index’ to refer to the linguistic forms and structures such interrogative forms, sentential voice, emphatic stress, etc. that become conventionally associated situations so that when the linguistic form is used, the interactants recognize the situation.

In the data of this research the interactants are able to make meaning because they share certain knowledge of conventionalized interactive resources of the interdiscourse. In this section, such data will be discussed. It will be shown how practical reasoning and interpretive procedures are organized and to what extent the negotiation patterns reflect the linguistic and cultural limits and potentials of the sense-making resources of the teacher and students.
1) Triangle Style Negotiation

Negotiation is a joint endeavor. The students’ limited English proficiency prevents them from expressing in fully well-formed English utterances what they want to say. They try their best to employ both linguistic resources and paralinguistic resources. ASLHA (2004) reports how local teachers of English often have to act as ‘linguistic brokers’ who are knowledgeable about another culture and language so they can annotate L2 texts or verbal input with an L1 translation. However, when the teachers themselves do not speak the L1, just like the native speaking English teacher in the present study, the job of a linguistic broker is very often taken over by some classmates.

If a teacher asks a question to all of the students, the students will not understand and will ask a classmate next to them what the teacher has asked. The peer, if he/she knows, will answer the question so that they can all answer the teachers’ questions. Here is an example.

T: Why is Kimchi (Korean pickled cabbage) healthy?
S2: Mwelaku? (What?)
S1: Kimchika way kenkanghanyaku? (The teacher asks “Why is Korean pickled cabbage healthy?”)
S2: Kimchi is healthy because it has a lot of nutrients and vitamin. (Reading from the textbook)

In this example, a classmate translates the teacher’s question into Korean. This makes some students who haven’t understood so far able to understand the meaning of the question. The role of S1 in the above excerpt is like that of an interpreter. S1 clarifies the problem. She translates the question to S2 so that he can read the answer in his textbook. In this case, S1 can be defined as a self initiated linguistic broker. In the following example, we see another example.

T; Last year, Chinese Kimchi was not so good. What happen to the Chinese Kimchi?
S1: Kisayngchung (A parasite)
Ss: Kisayngchung (Competitionally shout the answer)
T: In English. What was bad about Chinese Kimchi?
S2: Insect
T: Yes, insect’s egg.
S3: Seykyun (Very small voice saying ‘bacteria’)
T: Yes, Chinese Kimchi has some insect’s eggs.
In the above excerpt, S1’s answer in Korean prompts the other students to answer in Korean and English with such a response as ‘insect’s eggs’. In this case, the teacher understands the Korean. Here the teacher’s knowledge of Korean, and more importantly, his positive attitude toward the Korean clues offered by the students, plays a key role in achieving common understanding in this interaction.

2) Negotiation for Problem Solving

The following example from the data shows a real problem solving negotiation which is also a joint endeavor. The teacher and the students ask and answer questions to solve problems. It is a different kind of negotiation in that the teacher already knows the answer and asks questions.

S: Teacher, Uycengbu (the place where the school is located) spelling?
T: Uijengbu. (He wrote the spelling of the word on the board. He didn’t use Yale Romanization.)
S: Teacher, uycengbu - ku? (The student asks whether it is uycengbu ‘city’ or ‘ku’, which means district and usually comes after city in an address.)
T: Wait! What ku are we? After –si (City) there should be ku. In which ku are you?
Ss: No, ku.
T: Uycengbusi and no ku? In which ku are we? (To the Korean researcher)
Researcher (Korean): Yekiuy kuka mweci? Uycengbusi ku taumun ettenkuci? (Well, where are we? Usually ku follows si- Uycengbusi. What is the name of the ku here?)
Ss: Ku epsyeo. uycengbusi sinkok 1 tong. (There is no ku but just Sinkok 1 tong.)
KT: Really? No ku! (To the native speaking English teacher)
T: Really?
T: (To students) Ok. No ku. Just write uycengbusi and sinkoktong. No ku.

In this excerpt, sensitive cultural awareness on the part of the non-Korean interlocutors is required to talk about the address. The teacher brings up the subject of the different systems of writing addresses in Korea and in the United States. Although Koreans write the big area such as city (si) first and follow with the smaller areas such as district names ‘ku’ and ‘tong’, people in the United States write addresses in the opposite way beginning with the person’s name, then street name, city name, state name, and finally zip code.

However, in this situation, the school is located in a smaller city than Seoul so that there is no division of ‘ku’. This is an example of sensitive cultural awareness which even the Korean researcher doesn’t have the specific knowledge for and tries to apply the general
Korean address system in this situation. The native speaking English teacher understands it in the same way as the Korean researcher so that he asks the Korean researcher who is observing the class. Here the source of the potential miscommunication does not seem to be totally linguistically related.

Another example of meaning negotiation among the teacher and the students is the following. In this case, the students first decide their team name to be ‘Blue Sky’ and then try to think of a symbol for the team. When one member suggests that the symbol eum/yang is not quite appropriate for their team name, they try to change the team name slightly.

S1: Teacher? (A student starts drawing ‘eum/yang picture’ with his finger in the air.)
T: Oh. That’s ‘Eum and Yang’. It is like in the Korean flag. Right?
S1: Blue sky symbol?
T: Well, this symbols ‘good and evil’.
S1: Anicana! (It is not the meaning we are looking for!)
S2: Kulem, ‘Red and Blue’ lo pakkumyen cekel sangcing ulo hal su isscana. (If then, let’s change to ‘red and blue team’ if we do so, we can use it as our team symbol.)
S2: Teacher, Eum/Yang spelling?

This is an example of creativity that results while the teacher and students are having a conversation. The students use their cognitive skills to adjust the situation to solve the problem. Such creativity doesn’t come from the use of closed questions such as pseudo questions. The use of close questions doesn’t lead to such creativity and extended response as situations requiring real problem solving negotiations do.

3) Negotiation by Pseudo(quasi)-Questions

The following negotiation pattern contains pseudo questions which are very common in classroom conversations. In pseudo question and answer conversations there is only one correct answer. This is different from the kind of negotiation which appears in the above problem solving negotiation.

Nunan and Lamb (1996, p. 84) describe some questions which can be called ‘pseudo-questions’; they seem to be open questions (“those that encourage extended student responses”), but in fact they are closed; they are “framed with only one acceptable answer in mind” (Ellis 1994, p. 695). Such pseudo-questions are constructed to make it look like the teacher will accept more than one response, but in fact he/she has clearly made up his/her mind that this is not so (Hussain, 2003).

When the teacher provides the answer for the question he poses to the class, he
inadvertently denies his students the opportunity to answer the question and share their ideas with the class. In this way good questions may malfunction and become pseudo questions (Harrop & Swinson, 2003). The example below shows a very simple negotiation between the teacher and the students which is led by pseudo-questions. The teacher has provided a handout for students to check some healthy food and junk food while they are looking at the pictures in the handout. One student asks the teacher individually whether onion rings are healthy food or not.

S: Teacher, Onion ring?
T: Ok. Everybody, is an onion ring healthy?
Ss: No.
T: No, it has a lot of fat.

The teacher knows the answer but in order to practice it with all of students in the class he throws the question to the floor anticipating that the students will answer it. That is why the answer is very short and the conversation negotiation turn is very short too. Posing questions in this way may turn students into passive learners, because in reality, there is very minimum interaction here: students are mere spectators and the teacher dominates classroom interaction (Brown, 2001; Ranjit, 2004).

2. Interdiscourse Communication Strategies

In order to make meaning during interaction participants use interdiscourse communication strategies, which entail the use of various interactive or communicative resources (Heap, 1976). Participants from various nationalities and language backgrounds with various personal backgrounds make use of their own linguistic, cultural, and institutional resources. Linguistic resources such as phonology, syntax, and lexis, paralinguistic resources such as gestures, facial expressions, and volume and tone of voice, and cultural resources such as when to use common greetings or how addresses are written on an envelop are readily seen as useful only for speakers of those languages or members of certain cultural backgrounds. Institutional resources would at first seem to be common to all teachers and students in this study, but this is not necessarily true since like linguistic and cultural resources, these resources are often constructed through contact with other members of a particular institutional community, so institutional resources also become conventionalized. That is, members of various institutions develop and make use of their own institutional resources, so even teachers and students in the institutional context do not necessarily share the same institutional resources. As a teacher or a student in a school one naturally is conscious of the various power, status, responsibility, and obligations
associated with one’s role in the institution, and one becomes knowledgeable of the institutional practices and develops certain strategies to deal with these practices. For examples, students in the Korean classes observed in this study learn that they can ask their peers for help when they don’t understand a monolingual foreign teacher. On the other hand, students may not understand institutional practices used by teachers who use communicative approach techniques, and may interpret these as just playing games.

Students develop strategies for making meaning while communicating. In doing so they activate the various interactive resources mentioned above. In this section, strategies used by the teacher and students observed in this research will be described. What interactive resources are activated in the process of interdiscourse communication and to what extent the strategies work in this interdiscourse communication will be discussed.

Strategies are not aligned neatly with the above three resources; for example, code-switching obviously involves linguistic resources, but it is also cultural since speakers code-switch for various socio-cultural reasons. For example, people sometimes code-switch to try to feel closer to their interlocutors. Also, it is institutional since in some schools the use of two languages is encouraged, whereas in other classrooms and schools it is discouraged or even forbidden.

1) Linguistic Strategies

In this study, the most important linguistic resources for the students and the teachers are the Korean and English languages. Even though the native speaking English teacher has only a limited knowledge of Korean and uses only a few words of Korean here and there, this use of Korean seems to play an important role in his interactions with them. After he uses some words of Korean, some students use Korean to answer his questions probably thinking he can understand.

(1) Code Switching

Code switching involves a switch between two or more languages. In this research data it usually occurs when the students do not know some words or phrase in English; the learners use words or phrase in Korean without translating.

T: Who can guess how much I weigh?
S1: 57 kg.
S2: 60 Kg.
T: Yes, I weigh 57kg.
S1: Teacher, me kg machwesseyo. (Teacher, I got the right answer for Kg.)
In this case, the students use Korean sentence structure. In order for the sentence to look or sound like English the student just substitutes the subject and object parts in English even though it is not the right form (he used ‘me’ instead of ‘I’). Also, he uses the Korean verb. In the following, the teacher use code switching strategies.

T: In Canada, every school has a school counselor. ‘Counselor’ ka mweya? (What is a counselor?)
S: ‘Khaussseylle’ ka mweya? (What is counselor?)
T: Similhakca (psychologist).

It is not usual in Korea. Our school doesn’t have a counselor. Right?

This native speaking English teacher knows some Korean but his Korean level is not that high. He decides to use a Korean word for ‘counselor’ instead of paraphrasing the word to explain the concept of counselor. This teacher sometimes uses Korean intentionally to shorten the psychological distance between him and his students, in addition to enhancing communication. He hopes to establish a sense of solidarity with the students. However, he takes care not to allow students to take advantage of his knowledge of Korean to avoid using English. That is, he only displays a minimum knowledge of Korean so that students basically still need to use English to make sense to him.

(2) Reduction of Grammar

The students are aware that the order of English is different from Korean. When the students ask some questions about the meaning of words and spelling of words, then they use the ‘what-question’ style but not a full sentence. They just use the word ‘what’ making it a question and then right after the word ‘what’, they put the target word that they don’t know. This is an example of reduction of grammar.

S: Teacher, what eggplant? (What is the meaning of an eggplant?)
T: Kaci (An eggplant)

Usually, the teacher understands the grammatically incorrect sentences and answers the question in English or Korean because he has more than one year experience teaching Korean children in Korea.

2) Sociolinguistic Strategies

In the data of this study, besides relying heavily on the above two linguistic strategies which involve the use of their linguistic resources, the students also make use of
sociolinguistic strategies which involve the use of their cultural, institutional as well as linguistic resources. They use strategies like the following which they also use when speaking Korean.

(1) Seeking Clarification

In this classroom activity, the teacher says the Korean word ‘Bulkoki’ using the intonation of American-English instead of saying ‘Korean marinated beef’. Although he displays his cultural sensitivity, some of the students are confused by the teacher’s pronunciation, confusing ‘Bul’ (fire) with ‘Mul’ (water).

T: Ok. Choose whether it is healthy or unhealthy. Write it on your small board. Ready? Ok. Pulkoki (Korean marinated beef)

S: Sea, Mulkoki? (Fish?)

T: Pulkoki

S: It is ‘fire’, Pulkoki?

T: yes, fire, Pulkoki.

In this case, the teacher and the students use their bilingual resource of Korean semantic knowledge to negotiate the meaning. There is no context to guess the words because it is a game of choosing whether the food which the teacher talks about is healthy or not. Therefore, one of the students asks the teacher directly to pronounce clearly the first syllable of the word. This strategy involves a combination of the use of linguistic, cultural (the teacher’s cultural sensitivity in code switching), and institutional (both the teacher and students’ knowledge that use of Korean is acceptable in this school) resources.

(2) Inference

In another activity, the teacher asks the students to mark the degree of stress that they have in their handout for their project 2: ‘Healthy Food’. In this project they discuss how to deal with stress in order to keep their bodies and minds healthy. In the handout, there are 5 options from 0-5. Putting 0 is a better score because a lower degree of stress is better. However, some of the students don’t understand the system because in the Korean institutional context, 0 is usually the lowest and a higher number is usually better. During the activity, S1 marks the opposite of what she intends but she wonders somewhat and reads the direction once more and guesses that she might be doing it wrong. So then she asks her classmate whether her second hypothesis is correct or not. However, the person next to her is also doing it wrong and realizes this after S1’s question and finally they both
correct their answers. They finally catch on to doing it the right way using the strategy of inference, as we see in the following:

S1: *Ani, ‘0’ yi cohunkeya?* (Well, Is zero a better score?)
S2: Really? *Kulem ta kochveyakeyssney!* (I should change the whole thing!)

There are differences between the students’ and the teacher’s institutional resources about scoring scales. In Korea, a three category scaling with options of high, middle, and low is popular. In this example, the students use the sociolinguistic strategy of inference which they have developed while speaking Korean.

(3) Using a Dictionary

In this activity, the students have to fill out a chart related to ‘what gives you stress?’ A student tries to ask the teacher directly about the words ‘result to’, but the teacher doesn’t know the Korean word so he shows a confused facial expression and says the answer with a rising intonation on the word ‘exam?’ rather than the correct answer. Another student who is watching the situation and also wants to have information suggests that they look up the word in a dictionary instead of asking the teacher who doesn’t seem to know this Korean word.

S1: What is *‘Sihem kyelkwa’?* (What is the word for a result of an exam?)
T: Exam?
S1: *Sihem kyelkwa?* (A result of an exam?)
S2: *Sacen chachmunkesi te ppalla!* (Finding the word using a dictionary is faster. So let’s look it up the dictionary) R-E-S-U-L-T
S1: (Dictating) Exam R-E-S-U-L-T.

Although the teacher tells the student the answer, the student can’t understand because the teacher uses a rising intonation showing doubt because he isn’t sure that is the correct translation of the Korean word of ‘Sihem kyelkwa’. The students assume that the teacher doesn’t know the Korean word because of his doubtful voice and rising intonation. So they decide to look in a dictionary. Using this strategy involves the linguistic resource of skill in using a dictionary and also the institutional resource of knowing that using a bilingual dictionary is permitted in this school.

(4) Getting Help from One’s Peers

In the example below the students don’t have a clear idea of some concept the teacher
has tried to explain, so they ask some questions to their friends in order to keep working on the activity. It is different from interpretation. The students understand what the teacher says literally but are confused about a cognitive concept. The teacher gives some examples of stews among Korean food. But he changes the word ‘stew’ to ‘soup’. In the teacher’s mind the two things are in the same category but the student is confused by the two terminologies. The student is obsessed with understanding the difference between stew and soup in order to find the answer to complete the handout.

S1: How about soup?
T: *Kimchi ccikey* (Korean pickled cabbage stew), *toyncang ccikey* (Bean paste stew) are good. So, soup is basically good and healthy.
S2: *Ccikayunu? Ccikaylang soupilang mweka thullye?* (What about stew?, What is the difference between stew and soup?)
S1: *Ttokkathtako hacanha.* (He says they are the same).
S2: *Kulay? (Really?) Ccikay is healthy food.*

In the above example, two students understand what the teacher has said but one S2 is focused only on the word level. The other S1 has the same cognitive processing as the teacher classifying ‘stew’ and ‘soup’ as one category. S1 recognizes the two words are in the same category because the teacher uses the word ‘so’. In this case, S2 gets some help from her peer to clear up a conceptual problem rather than a language problem.

(5) Using Body Language and Drawing Pictures

If a word is too difficult for one’s interlocutor, then trying to mime and to use some gestures is a useful strategy. The following excerpts show that the teacher and the students make use of body languages and drawings.

T: Ok. Line up. You have to decide whether these pictures are healthy or unhealthy. (Indicate your answer by tapping the appropriate picture and saying ‘healthy’ or ‘unhealthy’.) And if you are wrong (as indicated by crossing you arms like the x word, I say Dang (just gesturing like you are tapping a bell with your hand). Then you have to start all over. *Tasi sicak* (saying ‘start all over’ again in Korean).

Drawing is another strategy observed in this study. In the following example, a student has drawn a Korean flag.
S: Teacher? (A student draws ‘eum/yang picture’ with his finger in the air.)
T: Oh. That’s Eum and Yang. It is like in the Korean flag. Right? (He starts drawing the picture and writing the words ‘Eum’ and ‘Yang’ on the board.)

The teacher uses his professional knowledge of teaching which is associated with his institutional identity. It encourages him to employ a range of strategies such as using gestures, miming, and body language, and drawing some drawings.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigates classroom communication between a native speaking English teacher and Korean elementary school students in an English classroom in Kyengki Province. This communication is treated as situated social practice which is created locally and negotiated among the interactants; it is found to be different from general communication patterns between native speakers and non-native speakers.

It is also found that various factors such as power relations, social distance, the degree of cultural awareness and self identity assertion affect meaning negotiation in the site of interdiscourse situation chosen. But these factors are interrelated; that is, in various contexts one factor or another may be more influential. This research also displays how the teacher and students negotiated meaning; that is, three distinctive negotiation styles are found: triangle style negotiation; negotiation for problem solving style; and negotiation by pseudo (quasi) questions. The interactants are able to negotiate because they share certain knowledge of conventionalized interactive resources of the interdiscourse. They make use of these negotiation styles in sharing this knowledge. Finally, it is found that the interactants develop various communication strategies which enable them to make meaning while communicating. Using these strategies they are able to activate various linguistic, cultural, and institutional resources.

This study points out two significant implications. First, for researchers in the field of IC, this study gives evidence that it is inappropriate to begin with the notion that individuals are first of all representatives of national cultures or even various subcultures. Rather, it is more appropriate to begin with the individual and describe the many discourses s/he brings to any communication situation. The data of this study suggests that intercultural communication researchers need to examine the discourses important to the interactants in interdiscourse encounters. The complex relationships of the interactants and also the dynamics of their exchanges need to be studied if researchers are to accurately describe these intercultural and interdiscourse communication encounters. Also, this research seems to provide more evidence that mainstream IC researchers need to take a
more critical perspective on their work.

The second implication is important for EFL and other second or foreign language teachers. As Kramsch (1998b, p. 27) points out, a competent language user must learn how to adapt the sociocultural rules learned for communicating in one group for use in other social contexts; this adaptability means being able to select which forms of accuracy and appropriateness are relevant in another context. This kind of ability qualifies a person to be considered an ‘intercultural speaker’. Kramsch maintains that in the modern world it is more important for a language learner to be an intercultural speaker than to emulate a native speaker because much communication these days inside and outside of classrooms position students, teachers, and other language users at the intersection of multiple social roles and individual choices. In order to become such an ‘intercultural speaker’ one needs repeated involvement in a variety of relevant discourses and with ‘situated communicative resources’. Therefore, the second implication of this research is that language learning involves not only learning linguistic forms but learning how to adapt them in various sociocultural contexts and multiple discourses.

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