Teachers’ Views of L1 Use in English Speaking Classes: A Case Study of University Teachers in Korea

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Abstract

This study investigates the views of university English teachers in Korea teaching English speaking classes to develop a greater understanding of how L1 is used and for what reasons and purposes in the classroom. The primary means of data collection included a survey with multiple choice questions and open-ended questions, as well as semi-structured interviews. Thirteen teachers, five native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and eight Korean English teachers (KETs) responded to the survey, among whom four teachers participated in the interviews. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics or qualitative methods, depending on their types. Findings revealed that teachers attempted to use English as the primary medium of instruction, adhering to class identity and their teaching beliefs. However, the majority also found themselves allowing for the use of Korean to some extent for reasons such as the students’ low English proficiency, course goals, the tense environment, common L1 among students, and the students’ demand, although some differences were observed in the way that Korean was used between NESTs and KETs. Teachers also showed more leniency towards the students’ Korean use as opposed to their own use of it and employed Korean for different purposes in each case. Discrepancies were found between NESTs and KETs in their purposes. For instance, NESTs focused their use of Korean on social purposes while KETs focused on managerial purposes. NESTs permitted students to use Korean for various purposes, whereas KETs focused mainly on affective and social purposes. However, both groups seldom considered the students’ use of Korean for linguistic purposes. Further discussions on implications for teachers, education administrators, and researchers are provided.

Key Words: English Speaking Class: First Language (L1) Inclusion, Teachers’ Views, Native English-speaking Teacher (NEST) and Korean English Teacher (KET)
1. Introduction

The world of academia has adopted English as its primary language, which has been reflected in the growing trend for higher learning institutions to implement English as a medium of instruction (EMI) for a broad range of subjects (Macaro et al., 2018). There is little dispute that English has steeled its position as an international language used around the globe (Pennycook, 2017), even within countries where it is neither the native nor official language. While English language education will likely remain an integral part of public-school curriculum and institutions of higher education across the globe, debate over what approaches should be taken to effectively teach English as a foreign language (EFL) has persisted, particularly regarding the use of the learners first language (L1) (Shin et al., 2020).

EFL teaching methodologies have swung like a pendulum stretching vastly from one end to the other on how to approach the use of L1. Initially, on one end of the pendulum, a common L1 shared between teachers and students was used extensively as seen in the grammar-translation method. In such cases where all parties share a common L1, it appears natural that it be used to improve and confirm the student’s understanding of the target language. In following years, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction where immersion in the target language, and outright erasure of the students’ and potentially teacher’s shared L1, has been advocated more extensively. This approach is heavily inspired by the direct method which urges against the use of L1 as it interferes with language learning (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

English teaching in the Republic of Korea, henceforth Korea, has echoed the global trend of shifting from heavily utilizing L1 to attempting to greatly minimize its use. From the end of the Korean War through the 90’s, English language teaching saw significant use of the teacher’s and students’ commonly shared L1. While other approaches certainly existed and were used, the grammar-translation method, considered an accepted method at the time (Ahn, 2008), was an obvious choice for teachers and students who shared a common L1. It was not until the government’s implementation of a policy referred to as ‘Teaching English through English’ (TETE) in 2001 (Kang, 2008; Kim, 2011; Moon & Maeng, 2017) that teachers in the public sector were required to use English as the primary medium of instruction in EFL classes (Liu et al., 2004). The English-only approach was also adopted in institutions of higher education in Korea, where many universities now require English language courses to be taught in English. In addition, such universities have begun to offer programs in various fields of study that are taught using an English medium of instruction (EMI), following a steadily growing international trend of accepting English as the language of academia (Cho, 2012; Macaro et al., 2018). The origins of these approaches are indicative of English’s dominance as the primary medium of instruction across multiple areas of EFL education and create a looming pressure to use English near exclusively.

While the use of English as a primary medium of instruction has been promoted strongly in EFL contexts worldwide, including Korea, L1 has continued to be used to varying degrees by both teachers and students in EFL classrooms (Jee, 2012; Kim, 2011; Liu et al., 2004). Some researchers (Cho, 2012; Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Kaymakamoglu & Yıltanlılar, 2019; Shabir, 2017; Yuvayapan, 2019; Zainil and Arsyad, 2021) also found that teachers believe L1 has a role to play in the EFL classroom. Teachers who have chosen to utilize L1 are influenced by various factors, such as attempting to achieve the goals of the course, one’s own proficiency in the target language, students’ proficiency in the target language, and other pressures (Shin et al., 2020). When used, L1 has proven beneficial in areas related to managerial, academic, affective, social, and linguistic purposes for both teachers and students (Cho et al., 2023; Franzese & Cho, 2022; Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Kaymakamoglu & Yıltanlılar, 2019; Shabir, 2017).

Although the previous studies offer valuable insights into the use of L1 in EFL contexts, they predominantly
focus on teaching environments where teachers and students share fluency in a common first language (e.g., Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Kaymakamoglu & Yıltınlılar, 2019; Zainil & Arsyad, 2021). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that EFL teaching contexts also exist where teachers and students do not share the same L1. This diversity poses limitations on the applicability of previous research findings and underscores the need for further studies in diverse contexts. Moreover, few studies have made a clear distinction between teachers’ and students’ L1 use. As observed in Shabir’s (2017) study, discernable differences may exist between teachers’ and students’ L1 usage regarding the extent of and reasons for L1 utilization. Lastly, as Shin et al. (2020) noted, the majority of L1 research has focused on the views of students. However, teachers in many cases are experts in their field and capable of providing valuable insights based on their experiences. As Everton et al. (2000) assert, the concerns and perspectives of practicing teachers should be given greater weight in educational research.

In an attempt to fill this research gap, this study aims to investigate the use of L1 in the Korean EFL context, particularly within English classes at a Korean university. In Korean university EFL teaching environments, there is a diverse mix of local non-native English speaking Korean English teachers (KETs) and foreign native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), each with varying cultural backgrounds and proficiency levels in their students’ L1. This context presents a unique opportunity to examine how teachers’ perspectives on L1 usage may differ based on whether they share a common L1 proficiency level with their students or not. Furthermore, unlike most of the previous research, this study aims to distinguish between the use of L1 by teachers and students. In doing so, this research seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of L1 usage in the field of EFL education, while also acknowledging the nuanced nature of L1 usage in EFL contexts.

The present research aims to explore EFL teachers’ perspectives on their own use of students’ L1, as well as their perceptions of their students’ L1 usage in English speaking classes at a Korean university. It also seeks to understand the extent to which teachers choose to utilize L1, along with the reasons and purposes behind their language choices.

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. How and to what extent do EFL teachers (including NESTs and KETs) permit the use of L1, Korean, by themselves and their students in English speaking classes (if they do)?
2. What are the perspectives of EFL teachers regarding the reasons and purposes behind their own and their students’ use of L1, Korean, in English speaking classes?
3. Are there any discernible differences between NESTs and KETs in their views on the use of L1 by themselves and students?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Controversies over L1 in EFL Education

Developing an English-rich environment by providing students with abundant opportunities to be exposed to and to use the language is one of the primary motives for teaching English in English. Influence of the direct method (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011), which advocates for complete immersion in the target language, has helped popularize the monolingual or English-only approach. This idea is further supported by Krashen’s (1981, 1982) input hypothesis and communicative language teaching approaches where it is believed that students must be provided with maximum exposure of comprehensible input in the target language. Such theories and approaches have become the basis of modern EFL teaching. Phillipson (1992, p. 185) states that the principal tenets of English language teaching have become the basis for English hegemony across the globe, the first of which is that “English is best taught monolingually.” Based on these
Theories, any allowance of L1 will reduce input and output in the target language, which is believed to cause detrimental effects on learners’ ability to successfully acquire the target language (Turnbull, 2001). The basis for these theories is the impetus for initiating policies like teaching English through English (TETE) and EMI approaches in EFL contexts.

The monolingual approach in EFL education has, in many cases, led to a common preference or desire for native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) to remain monolingual (Phillipson, 2016). It is often considered that NESTs possess oral skills and knowledge of Anglophone culture (Macaro & Lee, 2013) that non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) may not always have, leading them to assume the role model position as fluent English L1 speakers. Thus, a prevailing belief exists that the language comes more naturally to native speakers (Karakas et al., 2016). In EFL teaching, NESTs have benefited from a privilege that stems from their native English ability, and in some cases, their nationality and ethnicity, affirming them preferred treatment (Fithriani, 2018; Gray, 2017; Ruecker & Ives, 2015).

While it is reasonable to assert that students must receive significant exposure of the target language for successful acquisition, there are also critics of the complete elimination of L1 in EFL classrooms. For example, Auerbach (1993) emphasizes the fact that L1 is an inseparable part of a learners’ identity and must be acknowledged. Cook (2003) further supports this idea by stating that L1 is invariably used as part of the thought process in second language learning. Thus, even if verbal use of L1 is strictly prohibited, its existence and use will persist in the minds of L2 learners. Denying learners access to their L1 may have detrimental effects as Phillipson (2016) argues that a monolingual approach is invalid cognitively, linguistically, and pedagogically. Practices such as translanguaging, the ability to switch between L1 and L2 to improve communication, allow teachers and students to utilize L1 fluidly to improve understanding in L2 learning (Canagarajah, 2011). It is believed that translanguaging pedagogy will continue to play an important role in classrooms where bilingual educators and students exist (Garcia & Lin, 2017). Stephens (2006) points out that the question should not be whether L1 is used, rather how L1 is used that should be given greater consideration.

2.2. Views of English Teachers on the Use of L1 in EFL Contexts

Teachers' reasons for using a commonly shared L1 among their students in EFL contexts vary and are dependent on several factors, such as course goals, administrative directives, student levels, etc. (Shin et al., 2020). For example, a study conducted by Liu et al. (2004) found that high school EFL teachers utilized English approximately 32% of the time despite being expected to use it more frequently. As a result, the majority of these English classes were conducted in Korean, the shared L1 between the teacher and students. In a similar study by Jee (2012), Korean high school EFL teachers believed that English-only classes were not suitable because the students, and, in some cases, the teachers lacked the proficiency required to meet the goals of the class. In both studies, teachers cited curriculum goals as a primary reason for why L1 was necessary. Teachers stated that conveying the large amount of content required for students to take the college entrance exam, known as Sunyeung, could not be accomplished if only conducted in an English-only class. In contexts where the class goal focused more on testing preparation rather than on English as a communicative language, teachers tended to choose L1 over English.

Other studies (Cho, 2012; Kim, 2011) highlight the challenges that teachers face in being able to effectively help students achieve the goals of the course when conducting English medium instruction (EMI) classes. Kim’s (2011) research revealed that many teachers believed that students often had difficulty fully understanding the class’s content or how to properly complete homework assignments when receiving instruction only in English.
One teacher stated that high-performing students who succeed in their major classes conducted in Korean may suffer in an EMI class if their English proficiency is low, and thus the EMI class was viewed as an unnecessary punishment. Therefore, the challenge of successful EMI courses relies heavily on students' English proficiency and teachers' ability to convey the content in a level of English that can be understood clearly and thoroughly. Cho's (2012) research, which collected data from 41 college professors teaching in EMI programs in Korea, found that, if given the chance, more than half (53.6%) would stop teaching classes in English if they were no longer required by the school's policy. Teachers cited difficulties in explaining complex content in English to their students and that using their L1, Korean, would provide a substantial advantage in being able to articulate the content clearly and improve student comprehension. Ultimately, many teachers viewed the ability to use L1 to some degree when needed as being beneficial for EMI-based courses. Although many EMI classes are not specifically described as English language classes, the fact that they are conducted in English in an EFL environment blurs the lines of distinction.

It is important to point out that the use of L1 is not equal across all levels, nor do teachers believe it should be used indiscriminately. The majority of teachers (64%) in Inal and Turhanlı’s (2019) research believed that L1 should be used particularly with students who had a lower level of English and that the amount of L1 should decrease as proficiency increases. This belief is in line with the students’ views about L1 use as well (Lee & Lo, 2017; Cho et al., 2023; Schenck, 2018; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2018). Kaymakamoglu and Yiltanililar’s (2019) research also found that teachers believed that L1 posed several drawbacks if its use was not carefully monitored. Therefore, while L1 was viewed as having potential benefits, it was dependent on factors such as the students’ level, what purposes it was used for, and to what extent it was being used.

Although there are many teachers who see value in L1 when used appropriately, there remains a negative stigma attached to L1 use, which for some teachers pressures them to limit their use of L1. Yuvayapan’s (2019) research on the perceptions and practices of Turkish EFL teachers reveals that many teachers hold a positive view of using L1, but they opted against using it due to pressure and expectations from their institutions, colleagues, and the parents of their students. One teacher expressed that although they held positive views of using L1, they felt “a kind of monolingual pressure” from colleagues to use English. This resulted in the teacher attempting to hide their use of L1 from their colleagues despite using it in practice. Interestingly, despite attempting to hide their L1 use, they held a strong suspicion that others used L1 as well but were equally afraid to admit it.

Inal and Turhanlı’s (2019) research found that university EFL teachers in Turkey also held somewhat conflicting views of L1 use. Initial survey data revealed that teachers held slightly negative views of L1 with the majority of teachers answering that L1 should only rarely (38.9%) or sometimes (50%) be used. Despite slightly negative views of using L1, these teachers cited L1 as being helpful in domains related to linguistic aspects such as explaining new vocabulary and grammar, as well as academic aspects like clarifying difficult concepts relating to class content, and managerial aspects, such as solving disciplinary problems. Teachers in this study also admitted that an English-only environment could cause undesirable results, such as causing undue pressure or stress to students and the inability to develop sincere relationships with the students. In this regard, some teachers viewed L1 to be beneficial for affective purposes. Research by Kaymakamoglu and Yiltanililar (2019) echoed similar findings where EFL university teachers viewed L1 to be beneficial in areas such as linguistic, such as explaining grammatical rules, managerial, such as giving clear instructions, managing time, and following administrative requirements, and affective and social aspects, such as decreasing students’ anxiety and creating a more positive learning atmosphere.

While many teachers believe L1 holds the potential
to improve their teaching methods, underlying pressures to limit L1 use may also play a role in whether teachers accurately report the amount of L1 they use in their classes. Zainil and Arsyad (2021) investigated the code-switching practices of EFL teachers at a junior high school in Indonesia. Although the majority of the teachers made an attempt to conduct their classes mostly in English, they frequently code-switched between English and a shared first language between the teacher and students. Reasons teachers cited for using L1 were divided into two areas, pedagogical functions, which included explaining lesson content, giving instructions, etc., and affective functions, such as to accommodate limited English, helping to build a stronger rapport with the students, etc. Interestingly, after reviewing video recordings of these teachers’ classes and conducting an analysis of their language choices, it was found that their use of L1 was significantly higher than the teachers themselves expected. This research highlights the fact that many teachers’ use of L1 can occur subconsciously as bilingual speakers have the ability to transition effortlessly between languages without having to explicitly consider how or why it is being done. This is supported by Canagarajah (2011), who claims that translanguaging occurs naturally in foreign language classes.

Shabir’s (2017) research sought to understand EFL student-teachers’ beliefs about L1. Student teachers involved in this study hailed from various countries and teaching contexts providing a unique perspective outside of the typical context of local teachers who all share a common L1 with their students. Overall, these teachers were in favor of using English as the primary medium and limiting L1 as much as possible. However, these teachers did not believe that L1 should be completely prohibited as it was believed to be helpful in certain instances. While teachers believed their personal use of L1 should be minimized, they appeared divided about their students’ use of L1 with a little over half (56.57%) being accepting of their students’ use of L1 and the remaining 43.43% expressing disappointment when students used L1. Under certain circumstances, these teachers viewed L1 as beneficial for areas related to affective and social aspects, such as reducing anxiety, promoting a student-centered classroom, and recognizing sociocultural qualities of the students’ backgrounds, which may explain a slightly higher acceptance of students using L1.

The research discussed in the literature review indicates that many teachers believe L1 does have a role to play in the EFL classroom, offering valuable insights that the reasons for its use and the extent of its usage vary significantly depending on the context. This context includes factors, such as specific goals of the classes, students’ level of English proficiency, and external expectations. However, despite the importance of considering context in understanding L1 usage, some studies (e.g., Cho, 2012; Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Kaymakamoglu & Yıltınlılar, 2019; Kim, 2011) excluded specific details regarding the type of classes being taught. In addition, most studies did not differentiate between teachers’ and students’ L1 usage, despite discernable differences between them (e.g., Shabir, 2017). These inadequate explanations of the research context and unclear specifications regarding whose L1 usage was referred to could lead to incorrect interpretations of research findings.

Furthermore, the majority of existing research on L1 focuses on local EFL teachers who share a common L1 with their students, despite there being a significant number of foreign NESTs teachers who hold a unique perspective of L1’s use. An assumption remains that NESTs often take a monolingual approach (Phillipson 1992; Stephens, 2006); however, their views and use of L1 is worth further investigation. Extensive research has been conducted on the dichotomy between NESTs and NNESTs beginning with Medgyes (1992) that has focused on the advantages and disadvantages of these two teacher types. This present research does not seek to advocate in favor of one group over another; however, because both native and non-native English teachers exist in the Korean EFL context, it is important to acknowledge these differences when investigating L1’s use.
3. Methods

3.1. Research Context and Participants

All English speaking classes that were taught by the teachers who took part in this study were one of two required three-credit General Education English courses offered at a mid-sized four-year university in Korea. This specific course focused on English speaking, with an emphasis on educating students with knowledge of and building experience on how to develop, prepare, and deliver their own presentations in English. The program director and those responsible for designing the curriculum for this course instructed teachers to use English as the primary medium of instruction across all levels, including beginner, intermediate, and advanced level classes; however, no official school policy was enacted. Most students who were taking the classes were Korean university students who shared the same first language, Korean, and were grouped into beginner, intermediate, and advanced level classes based on their English proficiency. The threshold scores of intermediate and advanced levels are 400 and 700 respectively on a mock TOEIC test. The teaching staff was composed of both native English speakers and native Koreans. The curriculum for this course has remained a mainstay of the university’s General Education English department for approximately six years, establishing it as a reliable course for use in this study.

The participants of this study consisted of teachers working within the university’s General Education English department currently teaching the presentation-based English speaking course described above. In total, 13 teachers volunteered to take part in this study. Demographic information and details regarding each teacher can be seen in Table 1. Eight participants (61.5%) identified as female and five (38.5%) as male. Participants held citizenship in various countries, with eight (61.5%) being from Korea, two (15.4%) from the United States, two (15.4%) from the United Kingdom, and one (7.7%) from Canada. Eight teachers (61.5%) reported Korean as being their first language and five teachers (38.5%) reported English to be their first language.

In total there were eight KETs and five NESTs surveyed in this study. Teachers’ proficiency in their second language was determined through a demographic question that asked them to self-report their language level. This question utilized a modified Common European Framework

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### Table 1

Demographic Information of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Country of Citizenship</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
<th>Level of Korean as L2*</th>
<th>Level of English as L2*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>LB</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3**</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4**</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>LB</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T7**</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12**</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language level based on a modified CEFR scale: A1=low-beginner (LB), A2=beginner (B), B1=intermediate (I), B2=high intermediate (HI), and C1=advanced (A). ** T3, T4, T7, and T12 are interview participants.
for Languages (CEFR) scale with five levels (i.e., low-beginner, beginner, intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced, which were equivalent to A1, A2, B1, B2, and C1 levels of the CEFR scale respectively.) Three KETs (37.5%) reported having an “advanced” English proficiency, and the remaining five KETs (62.5%) reported having a “high-intermediate” English level. NESTs self-reported as having a lower proficiency in their second language, Korean, with two teachers (40%) selecting “low-beginner,” two (40%) selecting “beginner,” and only one teacher (20%) selecting “intermediate.”

The participants of this study also hold a wealth of experience in English teaching. Ten teachers (77%) reported having 10 or more years of English teaching experience and the remaining five (23%) with 4-9 years of teaching experience. Eight of the participants (61.5%) stated they had 10 or more years of experience teaching English at the university level; and for the remaining teachers, two (15.4%) had 7-9 years of experience, two (15.4%) with 4-6, and one (7.7%) with less than a year of experience teaching at a university. Nine teachers (69%) hold doctoral degrees in areas of study such as English language education, applied linguistics, and educational technology, and four teachers (31%) hold master’s degrees in areas of study including TESOL, diplomacy and politics, and landscape architecture.

3.2. Data Collection

Data for this research was collected in the fall semester of 2023. Teachers of the university’s General Education English department who were teaching the presentation-based speaking course were asked to participate voluntarily after the midterm exam period. Primary data was collected through a survey created through Google Forms, which was then shared with teachers via email. The survey consisted of 16 items in total, with the first eight questions designed to collect demographic information followed by eight main questions that sought to answer this paper’s research questions. The eight main questions, consisting of a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions, were divided into two sections as shown in the Appendix. Survey participants were informed that answers for open-ended questions could be written in either English or Korean to allow them to convey their ideas clearly and comfortably. The first section focused on understanding teachers’ practices of using students’ L1, Korean, in their current English speaking classes and their view on it. The second section focused on their views of students’ use of Korean.

To help form a clearer understanding of how L1 was used, if it was, teachers were asked to identify their purposes for L1 use in the five primary domains: managerial, academic, affective, social, and linguistic. The first four domains are based on previous research that classified L1 use (Cho et al., 2023; Franzese & Cho, 2022). For this study, a linguistic category was added to address the differences between using L1 to explain academic content specific to the course (i.e., planning process, presentation techniques) and aspects that focused primarily on English language learning (i.e., explaining parts of speech, vocabulary, grammar).

In addition to data collected from the survey, semi-structured interviews were planned to confirm and further expand on answers collected in the survey. At the end of the survey, participants were given the option to take part in a follow-up interview. After preliminary analysis of the survey data, willing participants were contacted to conduct follow up interviews at a time and place of their convenience. In total, four teachers were interviewed with three choosing to meet in-person and one via online video call. Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 were NESTs, and Teacher 7 and Teacher 12 were KETs. Each interview was conducted separately in private, and participants were given the option to conduct the interview in a language that was most comfortable for them. Interviews ranged between 30 to 90 minutes depending on interviewees’ availability. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for data analysis.
3.3. Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey was analyzed differently depending on the types of questions. For closed-ended, multiple choice questions, raw counts were recorded for each answer option, along with their respective percentages. Some multiple choice questions were semi-open-ended, as they included an “other” option, allowing respondents to provide and add their own other options not listed in the survey. The “other” option was also tallied independently or by being included among the already-given options.

For open-ended survey questions, inductive coding was employed, directly based on respondents’ responses. As the questions sought reasons for, or instances where, restrictions and permissions regarding the use of L1 were applied, the responses were initially categorized into these two groups. Subsequently, common patterns across all respondents’ data within each category were tallied. Regarding interview data, on the other hand, they were deductively analyzed. The interviews were semi-structured, with a focus on listening to examples of the themes identified in the survey, eliciting detailed explanations for unclear survey responses, and/or verifying participants’ answers. Consequently, the interview data were sorted according to the themes established by the survey.

Lastly, since the research also aims to examine similarities and differences not only between teachers’ use and students’ use of the Korean language but also between NESTs and KETs, visualizing the complex data from the survey and interviews using matrices also helps summarize and present the data more comprehensively, facilitating the observation and comparison of intersecting cases cross-sectionally. In the form of a table, for example, the rows were organized by the agents of using L1, namely teachers and students, while the columns were arranged according to NESTs and KETs. This arrangement facilitates the comparison of data within and across cases.

4. Results

4.1. Teachers’ Use of Students’ L1, Korean, in Speaking Classes

The first part of the survey consists of questions about teachers’ use of students’ L1, Korean, in class and their views on it. The first question focuses on the extent of teachers’ use of Korean, in their classrooms. In general, teachers reported that they occasionally spoke Korean, as shown in Table 2. Specifically, native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) seldom made use of Korean in the classroom as they tended to “never” or only “rarely” and “occasionally” use it if they did. Korean English teachers (KETs) relatively demonstrated a higher frequency of using Korean in the classroom with four KETs selecting “occasionally,” two “sometimes,” and two “frequently.” In both groups, there was no teacher who reported using Korean as a primary mode of instruction on a “usual” basis.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Nev</th>
<th>Rar</th>
<th>Occ</th>
<th>Som</th>
<th>Fre</th>
<th>Usa</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent do you use your students’ shared L1, Korean, in the classroom? (never 0%, rarely &lt;10%, occasionally 30%, sometimes 50%, frequently 70%, usually &gt;90%)</td>
<td>NEST</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KET</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Nev=never, rar=rarely, occ=occasionally, som=sometimes, fre=frequently, and usa=usually.
reported that they limited their use of Korean because they believed that making greater use of English would maintain an English immersion environment. Teacher 4 and Teacher 5 commented that Korean students studying in Korea may only have limited opportunities to enroll in classes taught by native English speakers. Thus, it is important for these teachers to create an “immersive environment” of English through their primary use of English, which hopefully and eventually leads to students’ improvement of English listening skills. Teacher 7 also agreed that her use of English could provide a greater amount of “authentic input” which would help students develop their English skills.

Another reason cited for limiting teachers’ use of Korean was related to the notion of class identity. Although a few teachers (one NEST and one KET) mentioned this, based on teachers’ responses to Question 1 regarding how much they used Korean in their classes, there is a reasonable inference that teachers understood English to be the primary medium of instruction in classes and consciously limited the use of Korean. For instance, Teacher 2 stated in the survey, “[I limit my use of Korean because] it’s an English class.” Teacher 12 also added that the class is “a presentation class based on English speaking,” and as a Korean herself, she wanted to act as a “role model” by using only English. She clarified the meaning of “role model” during the interview as follows:

Yes, I want to be the role model and if I speak, start speaking in Korean, students speak in Korean back to me. So I don’t want to, you know, kind of make that atmosphere. I want to have the atmosphere of speaking in English only. (In-person interview, November 29, 2023)

For Teacher 12, creating a natural atmosphere of using English was her responsibility as an English teacher because that was what speaking classes were supposed to be like. As a KET, her use of Korean could unconsciously prompt students to use Korean, so she made an effort to speak English before her Korean students.

Teacher 7 also expressed support for the idea the class identity mattered. During the interview, she characterized her current classes as output-oriented English classes:

I think teachers who focus on linguistic knowledge would use more Korean, and that will help students achieve their own learning goals. But I think that this course goal itself is focusing on output and their own production. So I’m not sure if L1 is the best or L1 is a better option for instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>NEST (n)</th>
<th>KET (n)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Immersive English environment| 2        | 1       | - Depending on the level, the almost exclusive use of English is an excellent opportunity for students to improve their listening skills from a native English speaking teacher. (T4)  
- For many of my students, as freshmen, I am the first and likely only class taught in English. For any of them to seek further education abroad, or to acclimate to an immersive environment, developing their listening ability and having an experience whereby they can hear a single speaker helps them realize the growth of their listening. (T5)  
- I use English for instruction because I believe that English as a medium of instruction can provide authentic input and help students develop register and language. (T7) |
| Class identity               | 1        | 1       | - It’s an English class. (T2)                                             
- Since it is a presentation class based on English speaking, I try to limit the use of Korean to act as a role model to the students. (T12) |
| Low Korean proficiency       | 2        | 0       | - I don’t know enough to use Korean in a useful way in class. (T1)        
- My limited use of Korean in the classroom starts with my inability to speak the learners’ L1. (T4) |

Reasons Teachers Limited Their Own Use of Students’ L1, Korean, in Speaking Classes
in class... The way I view language is that it’s for communication. So it is useless if it’s not used...

Students need to know how to use the language, not really just accumulating linguistic knowledge.

(In-person interview, December 28, 2023)

According to Teacher 7, Korean college students have already accumulated enough linguistic knowledge but do not know how to apply it communicatively. Because the classes she was teaching had goals focused on the “output,” it was natural to promote the use and practice of English.

Lastly, two teachers, both of whom are NESTs, cited their low level of Korean proficiency as the reason for not using Korean. Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 had over 10 years of teaching experience in Korea at the university level. However, as Teacher 1 commented, “I don’t know enough to use Korean in a useful way in class,” they considered that their Korean proficiency was not high enough to be effectively utilized in a classroom setting.

The majority of teachers (12 out of 13) indicated that they used Korean to some extent in their classes, and Table 4 details the reasons why teachers employed Korean. The most frequently mentioned reason was related to students’ English proficiency levels. In other words, they began using Korean when they noticed students had difficulty understanding in English and especially when they needed to clarify their English explanations of the content they taught. Teachers typically handled two types of content provided in the textbook: knowledge-based (e.g., presentation structure and presentation delivery techniques) and language-based content (e.g., English vocabulary and phrases or expressions used to start or conclude a presentation). To enhance students’ understanding of the content, both NESTs and KETs used Korean, but in somewhat different ways. The NEST group tended to provide brief translations of English words into Korean, either in written form or verbally. On the other hand, the KET group tended to verbally repeat the content in Korean that was initially explained in English.

Table 4
Reasons Teachers Used Students’ L1, Korean, in Speaking Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>NEST (n)</th>
<th>KET (n)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clarification of content | 3        | 5       | - Occasionally I used Korean to clarify vocab/grammar points when I was able to. (T3)  
- I utilize Korean vocabulary on English words that represent key concepts that might not be entirely clear. I elicit from English vocabulary the accompanying Korean meaning. (T5)  
- I also need to ensure that my students followed what I taught, so I give a summary (or repeat the same content) in Korean occasionally. (T7)  
- I also provide explanations in Korean for difficult words, terms, and textbook content. There are times when students don’t understand as well when I explain in English. (T8)  
- I can clearly make my students understand how to make a formal presentation when I explain the materials in Korean. (T9) |
| Clarification of instruction | 1        | 7       | - I write assignment/test guides in English. I read them line by line and elaborate in class, in English. Then I give them a summary in Korean verbally. (T7)  
- Most parts will be primarily conducted in English. However, important matters such as midterms, assignments, etc., which students should not miss, are conveyed once in English and once in Korean, or only in Korean. (T8)  
- When giving important announcements such as instructions related to their exams and presentations, I explain things in English first and translate into Korean. (T12) |
| “Break the ice”   | 3        | 0       | - More often than not, I find it helps to break the ice and connect with the students. My perception is that showing some cultural understanding helps students feel more comfortable in the classroom. (T3)  
- I only know certain words or phrases, which I will sometimes use to add humor or use it as a starting point. Also, I have recently tried to make more pop culture references (e.g., song names or lyrics) to add a little humor to the class. It is amazing to see when the reference clicks for some of the learners. (T4) |
Additionally, many teachers (one NEST and seven KETs) mentioned that they leveraged Korean when clarifying their English directions or announcements about class activities, assignments, midterms, finals, and evaluation rubrics, which, according to Teacher 8, were “important matters” for students. This attempt was dominantly made by KETs. After delivering “important” announcements or instructions in English, they verbally reiterated them in Korean.

The last reason for employing Korean was to create a more accommodating and comfortable classroom atmosphere for students, and this attempt was made exclusively by NESTs. When teachers sensed awkwardness or inactivity, especially in the beginning weeks of the course, NESTs found that incorporating Korean words and phrases into their conversations with students lightened the atmosphere, prompting a more relaxed environment and improved connection with students. Furthermore, referencing familiar Korean added humor to the classroom, contributing to the smooth flow of their teaching. Regarding the relation of teachers’ use of Korean to “humor” creation, Teacher 4 explained as follows:

When a foreigner speaks Korean, there’s a little bit of a reverse culture shock where the person (student) hears and they’re like, “Oh, are you speaking Korean?” So one of the things I like to do is kind of use it as like comedic relief early in the semester. (Video call interview, December 1, 2023)

As a NEST, Teacher 4’s use of Korean was an unexpected surprise to the students, and he sensed that it elicited laughter, contributing to the creation of an accommodating and comfortable class atmosphere.

Questions 3 and 4 were designed to form a deeper understanding of teachers’ language choices by identifying potential factors (e.g., student demand, teaching philosophy, colleagues, school policy, and other) influencing their decision. Question 3 specifically addresses teachers’ use of English, and Table 5 presents the results. The most commonly chosen pressure factor was teaching philosophy, followed by school policy and fellow colleagues. Interestingly, no specifically prominent factor was indicated within the NEST group as influencing their choice of using English as a medium of instruction in English speaking classes; only one NEST selected a single factor, teaching philosophy. On the other hand, various pressure factors were selected within the KET group, with teaching philosophy and school policy being the most commonly chosen. One notable commonality between these two groups was that none of the teachers considered students as a factor influencing their decision to continue using English.

Question 4 inquires about pressure that influenced teachers’ use of Korean in class. As shown in Table 5, both NESTs and KETs identified students as the most common factor, with three NESTs and five KETs selecting it. This tendency contrasts with a situation in which the “student” factor was not considered importantly when using English as the medium of instruction. Regarding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pressure Factors</th>
<th>Using English</th>
<th></th>
<th>Using Korean</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEST</td>
<td>KET</td>
<td>NEST</td>
<td>KET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>3 (60%)</td>
<td>5 (62.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching philosophy</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellow colleagues</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School policy</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The percentages for NESTs are based on a total of five teachers, and the percentages for KETs are based on a total of eight teachers.
how students influence teachers’ decision on using Korean, Teacher 7 explained as follows:

The main reason for introducing Korean after a few weeks is because of the mid-semester review. I always get that. Well, they read my name on the course syllabus and then they expect that I will teach in Korean. That’s why they’re in there, and then they get very surprised that I use English in class... And then they say, “한국말로 주시면 좋겠야. [I wish you would say in Korean.]” That’s very frequent. So for that I, well, I also get the student review this semester and that also goes to my instructor evaluation, right? So, I have to consider that comment seriously, right? So that’s why I have to just include Korean. (In-person interview, December 28, 2023)

As a KET, Teacher 7 expressed that she directly or indirectly encountered students’ requests for her to use the Korean language during class time. Students who were enrolled in her class already expected that they would learn English from a Korean teacher upon checking her name in the syllabus. Many of them chose her class over those of native English-speaking teachers because of the common denominator between her and them: Korean nationality and the Korean language. After realizing that she primarily used English in class, her students expressed their wishes or requests for her to use Korean in course evaluations. Since the results of course evaluations would affect teacher evaluations, Teacher 7 mentioned that she could not help but consider using Korean when needed.

To form a more comprehensive understanding of teachers’ use of Korean, a multiple choice question (Question 5) was developed. Teachers were prompted to select their purposes for employing Korean from five categories including managerial, academic, linguistic, affective, and social, previously identified in the literature. As illustrated in Table 6, various purposes were selected across all five categories. Overall, the teachers indicated that they used Korean for managerial purposes most frequently, followed closely by academic, linguistic, and affective purposes, with social purposes being the least frequently chosen. In comparing NESTs and KETs, the findings reveal a tendency among KETs to more actively utilize Korean across these five areas than NESTs, especially for managerial, academic, and affective purposes. Furthermore, it was found that the primary use of Korean continued to be distinctively for managerial purposes within the KET group, whereas it leaned towards linguistic and social purposes in the NEST group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>NEST</th>
<th>KET</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial (e.g., explaining instructions and improving class flow)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (87.5%)</td>
<td>8 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic (e.g., explaining lesson-related content and providing feedback)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>5 (38.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic (e.g., explaining grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, etc.)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>3 (37.5%)</td>
<td>5 (38.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective (e.g., easing student anxiety and increasing student comfort)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>5 (38.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (e.g., promoting interaction between a teacher and students)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>3 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The percentages for NESTs are based on a total of five teachers, and the percentages for KETs are based on a total of eight teachers.
in the degree of how much Korean was permissible. Notably, teachers were more permissive regarding their students’ use of Korean compared to their own usage. For instance, as shown in Table 2 regarding teachers’ use of Korean, one NEST reported “never” using it, three “rarely,” and one “occasionally.” However, NESTs tended to choose more permissive options concerning students’ use of Korean (none “never,” two “rarely,” one “occasionally,” and two “sometimes”). A tendency to allow students greater leeway to use Korean in English speaking classes was more apparent among KETs. Eight KETs chose to use Korean themselves to varying degrees, ranging from “rarely” to “frequently” (see Table 2), while accepting their students’ use of Korean from “occasionally” to “usually” (see Table 7).

Question 7 inquires about reasons why teachers allowed or restricted their students from using Korean during class. First of all, six teachers (three NESTs and three KETs) indicated that they restricted students’ use of Korean during conversations intended for English speaking practices. Teacher 5 stated, “[Students’ use of Korean] depends on the nature of communication,” and Teacher 12 explained it by citing the dual nature of the classes:

The class is focused on improving presentation skills, which is different from a conversation class. Thus, if students feel comfortable using Korean to brainstorm and develop ideas with their friends, I don’t push them to use English. However, when the class is engaged in speaking activities, I keep telling them to use English. (Survey Data)

According to Teacher 12, the classes typically involved two types of activities. The first type focused on learning presentation-related knowledge and applying it to actual presentations, and the second type included speaking practices where students engaged in guided speaking activities related to a given presentation topic and/or practiced English words and phrases associated with presentations. In the latter case, the emphasis of student communication was on English learning and improving speaking skills; thus, teachers actively promoted the use of English and discouraged, or even prohibited, the use of Korean among students.

In contrast to the restriction, reasons regarding permissions for students’ use of Korean are summarized in Table 8. To begin with, six teachers from both the NEST and KET groups found it impossible to control their students’ use of Korean in the first place. For instance, Teacher 3 attempted to establish an “English-only” classroom early in his teaching career, but he reported that he has abandoned the practice due to negative side effects, such as a low student participation rate in class activities. Teachers 7 and 10 shared similar experiences, noting that in learning environments where adult English learners, with low English proficiency, share the same first language, it becomes impractical to enforce exclusive English usage. Consequently, even when it contradicts their original intention, they find themselves allowing their students to use Korean. Teachers 3 and 12 also supported this inevitable situation through the interview:

Yeah, I’m aware that perhaps [the student’s] Korean usage in my classes is a bit more than

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Nev</th>
<th>Rar</th>
<th>Occ</th>
<th>Som</th>
<th>Fre</th>
<th>Usa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent do you allow students to use Korean in the classroom? (never 0%, rarely &lt;10%, occasionally 30%, sometimes 50%, frequently 70%, usually &gt;90%)</td>
<td>NEST</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>1 (20%)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KET</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Nev=never, rar=rarely, occ=occasionally, som=sometimes, fre=frequently, and usa=usually.
what it should be, but that's just the nature of the beast. I would say I don't really have much control over that. I mean, obviously I would hope it's an English based class, but I'm not going to be a dictator; sit there and say, “you have to speak English all the time.” (Teacher 3, in-person interview, December 27, 2023)

I want them (students) to use less [Korean], but it just happens and I don't want to force them to use English only. So that's (using Korean is) something that inevitably happens. (Teacher 12, in-person interview, December 29, 2023)

Besides the unavoidable instances of students’ use of Korean, there were other reasons why teachers chose to permit their students to use Korean in classes. The most mentioned circumstance was when teachers needed to clarify instructions for class activities. Six teachers (all five NESTs and one KET) noted that if students had difficulty understanding task instructions in English, they would sometimes allow them to seek clarification from their group members in Korean and/or ask a student who understood the instruction to explain it in Korean for the whole class. As Teacher 5 remarked that “there are plenty of cases when Korean is effective or efficient to make sure everyone understands before beginning an activity,” teachers leveraged the fact that all students in the classroom shared the same L1 when clarification of the instruction was needed, and this practice of guiding students to help each other in Korean was more often conducted within the NEST group than the KET group.

The next situation where teachers permitted students’ Korean usage was during discussions among classmates while carrying out group or pair-based tasks and projects. A core aspect of the presentation-based speaking classes...
taught by the teachers surveyed in this study involved learning and applying the steps of preparing a presentation in English (e.g., generating a topic, brainstorming ideas, organizing and structuring the presentation, and making note cards) and then practicing these skills during class. Students were often asked to work in groups especially when brainstorming and developing a topic for a presentation. According to Teacher 13, for example, she allowed her students to brainstorm ideas in Korean when she observed that they lacked English proficiency to express their ideas effectively. Notably, the case of permitting students’ Korean usage during group activities was reported exclusively by four KETs.

Additionally, though not mentioned by many teachers, situations involving students’ social interaction and emotional tension were also cited where the use of Korean was allowed. As noted by Teachers 2 and 8, for instance, students often engaged in small conversations before, after, or even during group activities for social interaction, and they made an effort not to restrict their students from using Korean. When Teachers 4 and 11 observed that their students felt anxious about using only English, they permitted them to use Korean to alleviate their stress. Teacher 4, in particular a NEST with limited Korean proficiency, found difficulty in understanding students’ questions in Korean, so he encouraged students to use Korean through translation applications in order to reduce their “frustration.”

Question 8 focuses on identifying teachers’ purposes for being permissive of their students’ use of Korean in speaking classes. As shown in Table 9, teachers permitted students’ Korean usage for various purposes, prioritizing affective purposes, followed by social, managerial, and academic purposes with marginal differences between them. This trend of endorsing students’ Korean usage for these four purposes was explained in both NEST and KET groups, but NESTs appeared to be more active in promoting it than KETs, with 80 percent of NESTs selecting each of the individual four purposes. In terms of language learning aspects, however, teachers in both groups tended not to actively accept students’ use of Korean.

The comparison between the patterns of purposes for teachers’ own use of Korean and teachers’ purposes for allowance of their students’ use of Korean was made in Table 10. One of the prominent differences between these two cases was that both NESTs and KETs endorsed students’ use of Korean more than their own use of Korean across all purpose domains, especially in the following four: social, affective, managerial, and academic. Secondly, among those purposes, the overall increase in the social and affective purpose areas stood out the most. Additionally, the promotion of students’ Korean usage compared to teachers’ use of Korean was more dramatic among NESTs. For example, the teachers’ use of Korean for affective, managerial, and academic purposes was chosen by one NEST for each, but the students’ use of Korean was chosen by four NESTs for each domain. Lastly, for managerial purposes, KETs were less inclined to endorse students’ use of Korean compared to their own use of it, representing the only decrease observed between these two cases.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>NEST</th>
<th>KET</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective (e.g., easing student anxiety and increasing student comfort)</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>6 (75%)</td>
<td>10 (76.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (e.g., promoting interaction between a teacher and students)</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>5 (62.5%)</td>
<td>9 (69.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial (e.g., explaining instructions and improving class flow)</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>8 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic (e.g., explaining lesson-related content and providing feedback)</td>
<td>4 (80%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>8 (61.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic (e.g., explaining grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, etc.)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>3 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The percentages for NESTs are based on a total of five teachers, and the percentages for KETs are based on a total of eight teachers.
5. Conclusion and Implications

The present study examined the teachers’ and students’ use of Korean, students’ L1, from the perspectives of EFL teachers instructing presentation-based English speaking classes at a university in Korea. The findings, based on the survey and interview data, indicate that teachers predominantly used English as the medium of instruction. However, they also acknowledged employing Korean to some extent in their classrooms. Variations were also observed between NESTs and KETs and among instances of teachers’ and students’ use of Korean. Both groups of teachers permitted students to use Korean more frequently than they themselves used it, but notably, KETs demonstrated a more lenient approach in both cases than NESTs.

Regarding the reasons for teachers’ restrictions on using Korean, teachers from both NEST and KET groups mentioned the importance of creating an English immersive environment and maintaining the class identity of English speaking classes. In addition, they believed that practicing English is crucial for improving English speaking skills; hence, teachers restricted students from using Korean, especially during English speaking practices. These reasons mentioned imply that course goals play an important role in teachers’ decisions. When asked about any pressure they faced to restrain the use of Korean and promote English, teachers identified two factors: teaching philosophy and school policy. The former was addressed by both groups, and the latter was pointed out exclusively by KETs.

Next, the reasons for teachers using Korean were derived from students’ low English proficiency and tense class atmosphere. Teachers from both groups commonly mentioned that it occurred when they needed to clarify lesson-related content specific to the course, especially presentation-related knowledge. However, each teacher group employed different approaches; NESTs were more likely to provide translations of short words and phrases in writing while KETs repeated their whole explanation in Korean after their initial explanation in English. There were also unique cases among each of these groups for using Korean. For example, only the NEST group reported using Korean to “break the ice” while clarification of homework or exam instructions was predominantly reported among KETs. When asked about pressure for their use of Korean, many teachers addressed “students” as the main factor. However, few stated they used Korean based on their teaching philosophy.

In terms of the students’ use of Korean, both groups acknowledged that it was often not a situation they could fully control due to the unique learning environment where all students share the same L1 and in some cases, students’ English proficiency is low for an English-immersion class. Thus, teachers made an effort to leverage this environment. For example, all five NESTs allowed their students to use Korean amongst each other to help clarify instructions provided in English by the teacher for a given activity.
Teachers also permitted their students to use Korean during group discussions on presentation-related knowledge, but this tendency was only reported by KETs.

Lastly, the purposes for teachers’ and students’ use of Korean were also inquired, and differences were identified between NESTs and KETs. In terms of teachers’ use of Korean, NESTs focused on social purposes, while KETs focused mainly on managerial and academic purposes. Regarding the students’ use of Korean, NESTs permitted it for various purposes except linguistic, and KETs limited it to affective and social purposes. Within the KET groups, teachers’ Korean usage focused on managerial and academic purposes whereas students’ Korean usage focused on affective and social domains.

The findings of this study make an important contribution to the existing body of research on L1 use in EFL education by investigating a unique teaching environment. In this setting, a mix of KETs and NESTs, one group of whom has a high level of knowledge of their students’ L1, and the other group with only a limited knowledge, respectively teaches the same English speaking classes. The observed discrepancy between NESTs and KETs suggests that teachers’ proficiency of students’ L1 may influence the ways in which teachers and students use L1. In addition, this study also examines the reasons and purposes for teachers’ use of L1 and students’ use of L1 separately. As different reasons and purposes for L1 use have been identified depending on whether it is teachers or students employing it, this study shows that treating teachers’ use and students’ use of L1 as one entity could potentially lead to misinterpretation of the results of L1 studies.

This study also provides important implications for those in charge of designing university EFL class curriculum and English teachers. The results of the study show that although NESTs and KETs attempted to uphold English as the primary medium of instruction in their speaking classes, they faced realistic difficulties caused by students’ low English proficiency. As one of the ways to handle the difficulties, they chose to employ L1 and used it with discretion in order to achieve the best teaching practices possible. Therefore, pressures to remove or restrict L1 under an English-only policy may result in taking away teachers’ resources that they can make the best use of. As Everton et al. (2000) indicate, teachers’ experience in the classroom has proven to be a valuable source of input that can help shape policy. Primary stakeholders in charge of designing and implementing the EFL curriculum should give greater consideration to the views of English teachers in the field when deciding on English educational policies.

In addition, when policies like English-only or EMI take precedence, the medium of instruction and communication in class is often decided without adequate consideration of class goals and practical situations of the class; instead, the class is geared in a manner that restricts the use of L1. As the research participants of this study experienced during their teaching career already, there are instances where English classes do not function properly when solely aligned with using only English as the medium of instruction. It seems reasonable to prioritize the goals of the class with making decisions on the medium of communication and to consider factors like teachers’ use, students’ use, type of activity, and type of class when English is chosen to be the primary medium of instruction, ensuring the best results. The main focus should not be shifted solely to employing only English.

Next, there should be a greater effort to foster a more positive perspective on teachers’ use of L1 in EFL classes, questioning whether such usage has been overly stigmatized, particularly in the case of KETs. Despite being professionally trained, KETs may find themselves in situations where their practices are molded by student pressure that conflicts with their own teaching philosophies. In this study, KETs have cited “student pressure” as being a significant factor influencing their choice to incorporate more L1 into their classes in spite of being proficient speakers and making earnest attempts to use English as the primary medium of instruction. In such cases, KETs may feel compelled to deviate from curriculum-mandated
policies or their own teaching philosophy to appease students’ expectations and demands. As a result, KETs may feel torn about how to best achieve the goals of the course while still satisfying the needs of students and administrators. Such conflicts may cause teachers to attempt to hide their use of L1 from colleagues or administrators, fearing it may raise doubts about their effectiveness as EFL teachers (Yuvayapan, 2019). Adjusting the medium of instruction and switching languages from English to Korean or vice versa to address students’ needs and demands should not be seen as indicative of questioning their legitimacy.

In line with fostering more affirmative perspectives on the use of L1 in EFL classes, teachers also need to make an effort to ground their choices more in research- and theory-based approaches. In the study, teachers identified teaching philosophies based on language theories and their experiences as a significant factor when considering the use of English. However, few teachers did so when it came to using Korean; instead, they addressed the “student” factor the most. In order to make the use of L1 more persuasive, teachers’ efforts appear to be crucial in basing their arguments on theories and research rather than being passively driven to use students’ L1 solely by external factors such as student demand.

The focus of this study remains only a single case within the broader Korean EFL context. To develop a greater understanding of teachers’ views of L1 use, teachers from other universities and learning institutions should also be investigated. Given the relatively small sample of NESTs, further research may seek to shed more light on this teacher group with attention to NESTs’ proficiency of Korean and its effect on how it is used and to what extent. Future research may benefit from clearly delineating between the teachers’ use of L1 and the students’ use of L1 as the reasons for its use and to what extent it is used may differ greatly. Including specific descriptions of the teaching context and class goals will also help develop a clearer understanding of the role of L1 in EFL teaching as each factor may play a significant role in the outcomes of how teachers view L1 use. The present study focused on teachers’ views in a General Education English course focused on teaching how to prepare and deliver presentations in English with an emphasis on speaking; however, a class on writing for example, or content-based classes focusing on a different area of study may yield different results.

References


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Appendix

The primary survey questions:

Section I
1. To what extent do you use your students' shared L1, Korean, in the classroom?
2. Based on your answer above, please explain what reasons lead you to either limit your use of Korean or make more liberal use of Korean in the classroom.
3. Do you feel any pressure from the following to use only or mostly English in the classroom? (Multiple options may be selected.)
4. Do you feel any pressure from the following to use Korean in the classroom? (Multiple options may be selected.)
5. For what purposes do you use Korean in the classroom? (Multiple options may be selected.) Please elaborate on your answer above by describing a specific example of how you use Korean in the classroom.

Section II
6. To what extent do you allow students to use Korean in the classroom?
7. Based on your answers above, please explain what reasons lead you to either limit your students' use of Korean or allow them more liberal use of Korean in the classroom.
8. For what purposes do you allow students to use Korean in the classroom? (Multiple options may be selected.)
영어 말하기 수업에서 모국어 사용에 대한 교사들의 인식
- 한국 대학 교수자 사례 연구

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1단국대학교, 강의전담조교수
2단국대학교, 교육부교수

초록
본 연구는 영어 교수자들이 학생들의 모국어(L1)를 영어 발표 수업에서 어떻게 활용하고 있으며 그 이유와 목적이 무엇인지 교수자의 시각에서 알아보고자 하였다. 이를 위해 국내 한 대학에서 영어 말하기 수업을 진행하고 있는 교수자들을 대상으로 설문조사와 인터뷰를 진행하였다. 선다형과 개방형 문항으로 구성된 설문조사에 원어민 교수자 5명과 내국인 교수자 8명을 포함한 총 13명이 응답하였고, 이들 중 4명이 인터뷰에 참여하였다. 선다형 문항 답변은 기술적 통계를 적용하여 분석하였으며, 개방형 문항 및 인터뷰 답변은 질적데이터 분석 기법을 이용하였다. 연구의 주요 결과로는 첫째, 본 연구에 참여한 교수자들은 영어 말하기 수업의 정체성과 교수 신념에 입각하여 영어 수업을 영어매개강의로 진행하였다. 그러나 수업 목표, 교실 환경, 학생들의 영어 능력, 공동 언어, 요구 등의 다양한 이유로 한국어 사용을 일부 허용하였다. 교수자들은 자신의 한국어 사용보다는 학생들의 한국어 사용에 더 적극적인 모습을 보였으며, 본인의 한국어 사용과 학생의 한국어 사용을 각각 다른 목적으로 이용하였다. 또한 원어민 교수자와 내국인 교수자 간에 한국어 사용에 있어 차이를 보였는데, 한 예로 원어민 교수자는 주로 사회적(social) 목적으로 내국인 교수자는 주로 관리적인(managerial) 목적으로 한국어를 활용하였다. 또한 원어민 교수자는 다양한 목적을 위해 학생들의 한국어 사용을 허용하였으나 한국인 교수자는 주로 정서적(affective) 및 사회적(social) 목적에 제한을 두었다. 공통적으로는 두 그룹 모두 학생들의 한국어 사용을 영어 학습 목적으로 사용하고는 않았다. 이러한 결과를 바탕으로 영어 교육 관련 교수자, 정책 담당자 및 연구자들을 위한 함의가 논의되었다.

주체어: 영어 말하기 수업, 모국어 사용, 교사 인식, 원어민과 한국인 영어 교사