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A Narrative Inquiry into Three Korean Teachers' Experiences of Teaching Returnee Children

by

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my daughters,

Jiwon (Kim),

who tried to do her best with responsibility as a first-born during our lives

in foreign countries

and supported me with mindful respect and belief in my work,

Gawon (Debbie),

who never made me worry about her

and cheered me with generous understanding about me.

Abstract

The recent rapid increase in the number of Korean children who return to Korea after time spent abroad studying English raises concerns about their follow-up education and their readjustment into the Korean education system. The number of returnee children also raises concerns about how Korean teachers teach these children.

This study was grounded in my realization that my experiential knowledge of learning English influenced my teaching of returnee children. Through this study, I came to understand the ways teachers' personal practical knowledge of English is shaped through many different experiences in many different contexts in which they are, and were, situated. Teachers' personal practical knowledge is expressed in their classroom practices. Knowledge and context are linked by the narrative concept of stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

The research was a narrative inquiry into three Korean teachers' personal practical knowledge as it was expressed in their teaching practices, as it shaped their stories to live by and as it was shifted on their professional knowledge landscapes when they taught returnee children.

As a result of the study, four key considerations emerged. One, each teacher's personal practical knowledge as expressed in teaching returnee children was shaped by his experiences of learning English. Two, shifting teachers' 'stories to live by' depended on their professional knowledge landscapes. Three, teachers held different understandings about curriculum making. Four, teachers held different views about returnees' readjustment into the Korean schools.

Drawing upon a concept of ‘curriculum of lives’ (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992), the key considerations from the study give important implications about in-service teacher education in terms of curriculum making for returnee children. The study suggests the importance of providing in-service teachers with an opportunity to think about a narrative perspective about curriculum making in order to suggest new possibilities for teachers, returnee children, and their parents.

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CHAPTER ONE
Narrative Beginnings

My Journey of Learning English

Beginning of the Struggle

In the spring of 1974, I entered a public junior high school in Seoul, Korea. It was a large girls' junior high school with 14 classes in each grade and almost 60 students in each class. Nevertheless, it was smaller than my elementary school which had 19 classes in each grade and almost 80 students in each classroom. Many female students from many different elementary schools were gathered at this junior high school.

The Ministry of Education had instituted a lottery system for entrance into junior high schools. We did not have choice in selecting the junior high school to which we wanted to go. The computer assigned us to a school situated in the school district in which we lived. I could see the mingled feelings of joy and sorrow among the 6th grade students on the day the announcements were made about our junior high school placements because most students had their own personal preference about the junior high school they wished to attend.

I was very sad that I was assigned to a different school from my close friends. However, other than that, the school to which I was assigned was a good one for me. It had a good reputation as a girls' junior high school in my town. Even though the school buildings were nearly 10 years old, they were kept in good repair and cleanliness was important. It was located near my house and I could walk to school. I had wanted to go to school on the bus in order to chat with

friends on the way. It looked “cool” at that time. But that kind of luck didn’t come to me - my house was very near my school.

There were so many things new to me when I began the junior high school. Firstly, many students commuted by bus instead of on foot. That was different from my elementary school experience. The junior high school district was much larger than an elementary school district and many students’ homes were far from the school. On the first day of junior high school, I wore a school uniform. The uniform was a dark navy blue suit with white collar. No variations were allowed. All students had the same hair style - cropped hair with a thin black pin on it. We all sat in the classroom looking exactly the same in our uniforms.

During the 1970’s Korea was developing economically and changing from its traditional cultural ways to ways more influenced by American cultural ideas. Frugality was a very big value and a life habit for every Korean. Mothers asked tailors to make their children’s uniform big so that it could be worn for the full three years of junior high school. There were always fights between moms and daughters in the tailors’ shops. Moms argued, “Make it big.” Their daughters countered with, “Make it fit.” Always the moms won. Anybody could differentiate who was a seventh or a 9th grade girl depending on how well their uniforms fit.

The majority of my classmates were totally new faces to me. Even though we were wearing the same uniform, their faces were not those I knew. They were not my friends’ faces. While I was acquainted with two or three girls from my elementary school, we were not close friends. I recall sitting in a chair feeling

awkward towards the other girls. In junior high, we had different teachers for each subject matter area and every period a different teacher came into our classroom.

For me, the subject of English was special. It gave me a fresh, new feeling because I had not experienced learning English before. I was aware that English was a major subject, one that would have a huge influence on my future academic achievement. To learn English meant that I was now a junior high school girl. English was a symbol that I was entering a higher educational institute, a junior high school. That made me feel, 'I'm not a kid any more.' It was a signal of being an adolescent. Being an adolescent seemed like being an adult to me.

Reading comics was one of my habits. My two older sisters and my younger brother also enjoyed reading children's magazines and comic books which often contained serialized stories. I read them even though I thought that reading comic books was childish and 'it was only for little kids.' I felt it had a negative influence on teenagers' academic studies. Almost all parents had the same view about comic books and many tried to ban comic books in their own households.

I will never forget the embarrassment I felt when I dropped a comic in a rental shop located in my neighborhood. After entering the shop, I realized I was a junior high school girl now, not an elementary school student any more. This realization made me embarrassed and I blushed and sweat ran all over my body. I could not move. I just stood still, and then I ran away from the shop. I was ashamed of visiting a comic book shop as a junior high school girl.

My 7th grade English teacher was a gentle person who had a soft voice. He began class by singing an English song. He seemed to enjoy singing the song by himself and I liked to listen to his singing. He taught us many English songs. I remember the gospel songs especially. They stand out in my memory. Sometimes he made us sing in a chorus. I also enjoyed that. It was his strategy, as I reflect now, of trying to connect our interests with our experience of learning English in the junior high school. His strategy was not successful with me because, even though English was a symbol of growing up, I did not have much interest in learning English. I remember practicing writing the alphabet-capital letters, lower case letters, and cursive handwriting - on the four lined notebook. He gave it as homework and it was boring. He checked each student's homework during the class and he gave feedback marks such as 'Good, Very Good, and Excellent'. I remember that I was excited when I received an 'Excellent' mark. However, writing the shapes of the alphabet was simple and boring.

My major contact with English, excluding the English textbook, was Hollywood movies. I really liked to see American movies. There were both Korean and American Hollywood movies run in cinemas. I preferred American movies to Korean ones. They were much more interesting and funny. I liked to see the movies with the sound of English even though the captions were in Korean. Whenever midterm or final exams finished before noon, I went down town to see a movie with my friends. We began with a favorite teenage snack, for example, Ddockbockki (떡볶이 in Korean)[1], and then enjoyed a movie. It was a

[1] It is the most popular snack for younger generation in Korea.

celebration of freedom from the pressure of exams to me. Among the movies I saw in those days were my most favorite ones, "Gone with the Wind" (Fleming, 1939) and "Sound of Music" (Wise, 1965). I saw them many times. I also liked American serial dramas such as "The Six Million Dollar Man" (ABC Network, 1974-1978), "The Bionic Woman – 'Sommers' in Korean title" (ABC & NBC Networks, 1976-1978) and "Wonder Woman" (ABC & CBS Networks, 1975-1979). These were run on TV on Saturday afternoons at two p.m. I used to rush home from school to see those programs. They were dubbed into Korean. Through movies and television shows, I was exposed to American culture.

My English teacher in my second year of junior high school was famous for his teaching results, that is, his students achieved a high class average. My school was so big that there were two or three English teachers at each grade level. There seemed to be a competition among English teachers around the class average on the exams. The classes that he taught usually had high average scores. This was interpreted by the students as his having an outstanding academic background because he graduated from a top university in Korea. In his class, I remember the English greetings at the beginning and end of class with the class president's commands, "Attention!" and "Bow!" I remember every week's word tests, memorizing entire passages of units, and orally repeating after him.

I knew English was one of the major subjects in which I had to do my best for my academic achievement. I eagerly followed the teacher's teaching because I was an exemplary student in following school rules, obeying directions, and doing assignments. My English grades were so excellent that I didn't realize my limited

ability in English. I thought because I had high grades, I was good at English. If I had received low marks in English at that time, perhaps I would have studied English in a different way.

The end of my senior year of junior high school was actually the beginning of my battle to enter university. I felt a vague uneasiness. Nobody knew my real English ability except me, because my grades had been good. Nobody knew.

Middle of the Struggle

In March, 1977, I entered a private girls' senior high school located on the outer edge of Seoul. It took almost two hours by bus to get to the school from my house. Just beyond the school were fields and orchards. The principal of the school was famous. She was a niece of Korea's first lady, the president's wife. My school was on a hill and, in winters, I walked very cautiously up the slippery, steep road to the school gate. Despite the long distance from my home, I applied to this school because of my 9th grade homeroom teacher's strong recommendation. His recommendation was the result of a huge recruitment effort from the senior high school. In fact, almost all high-ranking students who were within the top 10 in each classroom applied to, and were accepted into, this senior high school.

My first classroom in senior high school was very cold during the winter because its windows faced north and it had a concrete floor. We called it a refrigerator. I could not see a ray of sunshine inside the classroom all day. I used

to go out for a sunbath and to chat with my close friend at lunch times. I felt the cold very intensely. One day, my classmates compared how many layers of clothes they wore. With five layers of clothes as upper garments, I wore the most.

Many smart students gathered in my senior high school particularly in my grade level. Many students had experiences of being a class president in their junior high school days. I, too, had been a class president from elementary to junior high school. Now I was not automatically storied as a good student. Furthermore, the students who moved up from the junior high school attached to the senior high school seemed to have the advantage of being known in the school. The teachers, all new to me, were already acquainted with those students. They did not know me at all. In this school I did not have my teachers from my junior high school; they had always smiled at me and given me compliments. The atmosphere of the classroom was both very academic and very competitive. I remember, on the first day of the school, the dedication of my classmates. They were ready to study hard. I could see it in their eyes.

In my first year of senior high school, the vague uneasiness about my real ability in English that I felt at the end of the 9th grade appeared clearly in the form of my English marks. My homeroom teacher in the 10th grade was in charge of teaching English. He read the textbook in English and translated sentence by sentence. He followed the order of the textbook. He did not check on how much we understood. He just kept going. I sat frustrated and embarrassed at not understanding. I followed along in my textbook as he read but I could not understand his translation at all. The text was long with a tiny font and few

illustrations. This text was totally different from the junior high school English textbook. I could not just memorize the whole text as I did in junior high school.

I was seriously deficient in structural and grammatical knowledge of English. These skills should have been established during my junior high school days. Structural and grammatical knowledge was a foundation for written English and was the focus in Korea at that time. In order to develop my skills, I started to study a famous English grammar book, used by almost every senior high school student in Korea. Many students studied the grammar book with a tutor, but I studied it on my own. It was very difficult for me and, despite my studying hard, my English grades fell lower and lower. I felt more and more despair.

To have a high mark in English was the way to be accepted into a top Korean university. Most of my classmates with high marks were taking private lessons in English. I could see that, because of good private lessons, several students in the 12th grade showed great improvement in their grades. I also wanted to take private lessons in English. However, I knew that, at that time, my parents could not afford it. I could not ask my parents to support my English study with a private tutor. I told myself, “I can do it by myself. I have the capability to handle this by myself”. On the one hand, I felt some injustice about not having private lessons, thinking ‘If I were in the same condition as my peers, I could do better than them’. On the other hand, I resented my parents’ economic incapability. I now understand the meaning of my mother’s sighs and misty red eyes which she tried to hide from me when I was depressed with my marks in English.

The second year of senior high school was the worst time of my life. My grades in English were even worse. There was no one to help me in my study of English. In addition, I was disappointed in the quality of teachers. Some teachers could not answer students' questions during the class. In Grade 11, my 10th grade Physics teacher came to the class to teach Earth Science, which was different from his major. He was a shy and quiet teacher. His face went red when he couldn't provide a correct reply to a student's question at the beginning of the school year. After that happened, no students asked him questions. He just read from the text book and we slept during the class to compensate for the lack of sleep from studying the night before. I self-studied Earth Science at home with reference books and also slept during that class. There was no discipline or warnings about our behavior from the teacher. I feel sorry now when I think how distressed he was because he had to handle two subjects at the same time. In the case of Biology, I mastered it on the bus. It was a long way to go home on the bus. I sat on the back seat of the bus reading a Biology reference book, sometimes taking a nap.

I used to say, "This school has only one good thing, the uniforms!" We had spectacular summer and winter uniforms compared to those of other senior high schools. We wore a blue-jean jumper dress with a white blouse in the summer season and a navy blue corduroy jacket with a grey pleated skirt or pants in the winter season and also had specially designed leather shoes. It was well known to people as an attractive uniform. That was the only thing with which I was satisfied.

In the first semester of Grade 11, I was depressed. I felt helpless about my English. I stopped studying. My average grade suddenly went down. One day, my homeroom teacher told me that he had decided to visit my home. On that day, I had to accompany him to my house after school. I felt it took much longer to get home with him beside me. We had never had a close conversation before. Feeling awkward next to him, I wanted to run away. I knew why he wanted to visit my parents. The cause was my sudden falling grades! I wondered how my parents would react to my homeroom teacher's unexpected visit.

My mother seemed to shrink in front of my homeroom teacher. She showed too much politeness to him. I did not know what conversation they had because I was in my room during their meeting. That night, my mother came to my room, and said she was so sorry that she was unable to support my study with a private tutor. This made me feel deeply sad and, in some part, even more angry at myself.

After the visit, there was no comment from my homeroom teacher. It was strange to me. What on earth was the object of his meeting with my parents? I was glad that he did not comment because I did not want to even mention the visit again.

Entering a good university meant getting on the ladder to success. My father wanted me to be a teacher. He believed that teaching was the best job for women because: it was stable as a lifelong job; was not too hard for women; and was respectable in terms of social status. Furthermore, the registration fee of teachers' college (a two year course at that time) was very cheap compared to

other university fees. For me, I wanted to be in a more professional job than a teacher. I always wrote ‘a professor’ in the blank for my future dream. Unfortunately, the universities I wanted to attend required separate entrance exams in Korean Language Arts, Math, and English in addition to the total score of the national standardized tests in the 12th grade. Teachers’ college wanted only the total score of the standardized tests.

As time passed in my senior high school days, I was nervous about the lack of time to improve my English. I knew my English was getting further and further behind. Finally, I gave up studying English in preparation for university entrance exams and studied only for the standardized tests.

In the next section, where I tell of finding my way to learning and understanding English, I also tell about my acceptance at a teachers’ college rather than at a “good” university.

Finding a Way to English

My first impression of the teachers’ college to which I applied made my dissatisfaction with that college even more serious. The college complex, newly built and moved just one year ago from the east of Seoul, stood on the middle of a vast empty field. Except for several small stores in front of the main gate, there were empty fields around the college buildings. The college buildings were not tall, only three or four story buildings. The teachers’ college looked like a senior high school - not a university. This made me feel more marginalized, as I thought I should have been in a top university like my close friends from senior high

school. I hated the black brick college buildings. In fact, I hated my failure in studying English.

The day of the notices of successful admission to the college in 1980 was a very cold January day. Schools were having a winter break and it was several weeks before our senior high school graduation. I left on a long distance bus to go to my aunt's house located far from Seoul, a southern part of Korea, in the early morning. There was no worry about being a successful applicant because I had a high enough score to enter the college. However, I was glad my parents could not see my sad face when they heard the news of my acceptance. The acceptance news was, to me, like a pronouncement that I, in effect, had failed in English. I left Seoul to escape from the moment I would receive the news. My father confirmed my name on the list of successful students that day and phoned me to celebrate my success and to express his happiness and his pride in me. But I cannot forget the feeling that I felt on that day, a kind of bitterness.

Consequently, I entered a teachers' college in Seoul fulfilling my parents' wish. It was a very competitive and well qualified higher education institution and, for my parents, I did a good thing. For me, knowing that I applied to this college because of my deficiency in written English made me feel like a loser.

It was a cruel spring in 1980. Inwardly, I was struggling with the dissatisfaction about university and outwardly, the country was in turmoil. Almost all universities resisted the force of a military coup to turn over the current government. There were a lot of demonstrations and armed suppressions. Clashes with tear bombs from the military and gasoline petrol from the students was a

common scene around universities and main streets in central Seoul. It was like a duty of university students, the intelligent youth, to resist the force of the military coup. I did not do anything. I was an outsider. In my college, no students were active in participating in demonstrations against the military coup. This might be because we did not have 3rd and 4th year seniors to lead younger students. The coup, in effect, succeeded. All universities were closed for a time. Many students who lived outside Seoul went to their hometowns during the school closure. I also stayed at home. My parents were relieved that I did not take part in the demonstrations.

The students who were very smart and diligent in their senior high schools gathered in my teachers' college from all around the country. I thought of the students as living two different kinds of stories. In one story, students saw themselves as too smart to belong to this college. Their story was that they came to this college only because they could not afford to go to a top university. The students who told this kind of story only took academic courses and never participated in extra school activities. They behaved as outsiders at the college. They were dissatisfied with the school itself and felt like losers because of their economic difficulties. In the other story, students saw themselves as successful in entering this school as people around them expected. The students saw themselves as the pride of their communities and as a symbol of what a small community could do. The students telling this story were from other small communities in rural areas in Korea. They were excellent students in their communities and their wish to go to the university would be in accord with the wishes of their parents.

They actively participated in school activities including taking courses to enjoy their college life as freshmen. For me, I had a slightly different story from both of these stories. I was overwhelmed by the thought that I could have gone to a top university had I been good at English at the first year of college. However, I lived closer to the former story than the latter.

Even though I was dissatisfied, I never showed it to my parents. I tried to leave them with the satisfaction that I was in college. I understood their sadness that they were not able to provide me with a private English tutor in senior high school. I probably seemed to adapt well to college in my parents' eyes. I went regularly and never skipped classes. I met nice friends in college. This consoled my heart as time passed.

Generally when students entered university, they had more freedom in their hair styles, their clothing, their make-up, and in having boyfriends. I did not have much interest in doing those things. This might be from the self-regulation that was accepted by teachers. I knew, as a student who would be a teacher, that I would also have to accept this self-regulation. Most students, including me, in my college were very conservative in their outfits. I also hated this.

The amount of time given to studying English in the college was very small. The textbook was a collection of English short stories and essays. The professor had us read aloud and translate paragraph by paragraph. He then asked us comprehension questions to find out if we understood the meaning. Many students dozed in the class. The English class was almost the same as the ones in

senior high school. The only plus side was that there was not the burden of doing well on future entrance exams.

Soon after I entered the teachers' college, I began to study English again with a grammar book for low level learners in order to prepare for a transfer admission test for other universities. I did not tell my parents. This time, I did well in English. It was not difficult to solve the written test items in the 12th grade standardized English tests. It was the moment of recovering an "I can do it" mentality. I wondered why I gave up studying English in senior high school. However, at the end of the two year course at teachers' college, there was no availability at other universities for transferring students because of the new graduation quota system in universities. I was most disappointed about this new and unexpected situation. Not being able to attend university seemed like a curse in the story of my life.

In 1982, I began teaching in an elementary school. It was a large urban school which had two vice principals, located on the outskirts of Seoul. I was in charge of the 18th class of the 6th grade right from the beginning. It was unusual for a beginning teacher to have such a responsibility but I followed what the more experienced teacher next door was doing and asked her a lot about school events.

In the summer following that year, I heard that one teacher's sister, an elementary teacher, was preparing for the standardized tests in order to enter a university again. This news made me realize that I had wasted a year doing nothing. I began to prepare to take the standardized tests in order to try to get into a good university. My parents opposed me doing that. They had a different dream

for me. They wanted me to continue in my teaching job, find a nice husband, get married, and live peacefully. My parents thought that my willingness to study more would be an exhausting struggle for me. I persuaded them by saying that it was what I definitely wanted to do. I promised I would do everything well.

When I visited my senior high school to fill out the application form for the national standardized tests, my 12th grade homeroom teacher told me, "Why don't you get married in the near future and keep your good job as a teacher instead of going to the university once more?" He was half kidding, but also half serious. On one hand, he admired my spirit of taking on the challenge. On the other hand, he had the same view as my parents' perspective about my future.

I had to take the physical fitness tests again with current 12th grade students. With only three months of study, I received almost the same total score as the first time - a very high score. My English score was almost 100%. However, I had to give up studying Math this time due to the lack of time to study. Except for the reversal of English and Math scores, the rest of the subject scores were almost the same as the first time. I studied at night, at home, listening to programs on the educational radio station. It was effective in preparing me for the exams in nine subjects.

This time, all universities wanted only the national standardized tests score. It had changed in the two years since I entered college. With a high score on the national standardized tests, I chose the closest university to my school according to my colleague teacher's advice. I finally became a university student in 1983. I entered the department of English Language and Literature. This compensated for

my years of struggle with learning English. It was a time to prove my ability in English.

During the day, I taught my students at school. At night, I went to the university. I was very tired but I was so happy with the thought that I was doing something for my future. The full scholarships that I received every semester because of my high GPA encouraged me to study harder. I could finish university in three and a half years instead of four years. My parents, who had not wanted me to go to university, came to be really proud of me. They bragged about their daughter's brightness to their friends. I was a source of pride and joy for them.

One day, in the first class of the English Conversation course, the English-speaking instructor called me saying, "Representative, come to the front". I could not understand what he said the first time. He had to repeat it several times. This experience made me feel very shameful. I thought I had become very good in English. But I was limited to the written form. I was not able to understand what a native speaker said; I was not able to say what I wanted to say in English. In fact, I was still not good enough in spoken English. This experience made me think of the purpose of learning English. 'Why do I want to learn English?' When I was a junior high school girl, English was only one of the major subjects to me. In the senior high school, the written form of English became a very important requirement for entering a good university. Now, at university, I opened my eyes to see the importance of English as a means of communication. Proficiency in spoken English was the most powerful ability to be a successful person in the community where he or she belonged or wanted to belong. There was a long road

in front of me in terms of oral English. Around that time, I needed to fill out in my teachers' personnel record form noting the level of proficiency (high, intermediate, low) in oral English. I marked mine 'intermediate'.

After graduation from university, I registered in the English conversation program from a famous language institute in Yeonsei University in Korea. My class consisted of 9 or 10 people, including a medical doctor, a lawyer, a stock dealer, a teacher, and several university students majoring in English Language. Many people from various professions came to learn oral English. I personally envied young students who had, early on, realized the importance of oral English.

The decision to attend an English Language Institute came from the realization that I lacked proficiency in oral English. Furthermore, people around me expected that I could speak English as well as an English major. But I could not. This made me fearful that my real ability in oral English would be revealed. I felt like an imposter. My history of learning English began, in effect, from the day I registered in the English Language Institute.

Reflection on My Journey of Learning English

My lack of English proficiency was a real hindrance for me to go to the top universities in Korea after senior high school. I gave up studying English at the beginning of the 12th grade. This meant that I had made up my mind to go to the National Teachers' College in Seoul. In other words, I had decided to live the story of the good daughter who followed her parents' wish for their daughter to be a teacher. However, this was a superficial reason. Before then, I had conflicting

stories in my mind: going to a top university to have a more professional career or being a teacher, although I never said to my parents, "I don't want to be a teacher."

One way to think about how I was choosing to live my life is to think about my identity narratively, that is, as 'stories to live by,' "the stories of who I am and who I am becoming" (Clandinin *et al.*, 2006, p. 8). In this narrative view, stories to live by are "multiple, fluid, and shifting, continuously composed and recomposed in the moment-to-moment" (p. 9). This concept allows me to "understand how knowledge, context, and identity are linked and can be understood narratively" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 4).

Although I did not want to be a teacher, I kept this hidden in case I failed to improve my English ability. This occurred to me from the realization, firstly, that my parents really wanted me to be a teacher, which was a good job for women in Korean society. It guaranteed a proper economic status, a proper respect from other people, and a stable social position. Secondly, I could see what they saw about teaching. My surroundings and situation made my choice to be a teacher seem natural. Miller (1998) argues that "constructions of our 'selves' are mediated by social and cultural forces and contexts, as well as by the unconscious" (p. 151). I entered a university again to major in English, and then enrolled in an English conversation institute. The stories I chose to live were written into me as a story of wanting to be the one on the top. The social and cultural narratives which placed great value on English in Korea influenced my stories to live by.

Bateson (1989) describes how lives are composed as "an improvisatory art" (p. 3), and about the ways we "combine familiar and unfamiliar components in response to new situations, following an underlying grammar and an evolving aesthetic" (p. 3). It started from a disgruntled reflection on my own life as a sort of "desperate improvisation" in which I was constantly trying to "make something coherent from conflicting elements to fit rapidly changing settings" (p. 3). I composed my life around choosing a university by combining a familiar component of my parents' wish and an unfamiliar one of my surrender to the situation, that is, failure to improve my English. The social convention about being happy as a woman in Korea and the invisible pressure from my older sisters were part of the familiar component. But the world around me did not run smoothly for me. It showed me unfavorable pictures simultaneously, and I had to respond to them by choosing a national teachers' college with a disgruntled mind. It, in effect, might be the best that I was able to do at that moment.

In the moment of choosing a life of a teacher, I had conflicting stories to live by as a good daughter or as an ambitious person. However, I began to improvise as I found a way to bring these conflicting stories together by opening myself to the possibilities of being a university student again after entering a teachers' college.

My English deficiency, in effect, led me to enter a teachers' college and allowed me to appear like I was composing my stories to live by as a good daughter. The reality was that I lost the fight with myself to enhance my English ability. Now I wonder if my parents had not wished for me to be a teacher, how

would my efforts to learn English have unfolded. I realize the importance of conscious or unconscious influences on my life by the people with whom I lived in relation. Greene (1995) helps my understanding about this as she explores "the shapes of childhood recalled":

> I cannot exclude the contexts of my gender, sibling and maternal relationships, political and professional phenomena, and even aging and decline from "my self." I am not so "individual" that I can claim to be free from the shaping influence of contexts. Nor can I forget that, conscious as I have tried to be, I have lived inside a whole variety of ideologies and discursive practices, in spite of trying-through resistance and critique-to liberate myself. (p. 74)

I seemed to have been seen as a very strong person. However, whenever I faced the moment to map the route of my life, I sensed both resistance and struggle. Now, I recognize I could not ignore the contexts in which I was positioned as a daughter, as a woman, as a third girl among my siblings, as a mother, as a wife, and as a teacher. The influence of contexts was inevitable in my life and I have constantly been negotiating those influences. Ironically, it has a binary trait presenting a resistance first, and then a comfort. For example, as I had to choose a teachers' college, I resisted the situation first with a disgruntled mind, but then soon felt comfortable because I thought I fit with what others saw in my life context.

My struggle with my feelings of inferiority with English had, consequently, drawn me toward an interest in, and passion for, learning English. Learning English became the focus in my life. In retrospect, I wonder why I put so much effort into learning English. I wonder what meaning English held for me. It seemed all possible paths I mapped out in my life were connected with English. This is described as 'narrative coherence' by Carr (1986):

> My life is composed of all the experiences I have and the actions, small-scale and large, short-term and long, in which I engage. But like each of them singly, it is itself something temporal which unfolds in time and whose phases I survey prospectively and retrospectively from within an ever-changing present. As such it seems to call for the same sort of description we have so far used, in connection with events, experiences, and actions, and to invite us to look in it for similar principles of unity, coherence, and structure. (p. 75)

Carr helps me understand my life in terms of 'narrative coherence' as I pursued learning English, by saying, "the narrative coherence of a life-story is a struggle nonetheless, and a responsibility which no one else can finally lift entirely from the shoulders of the one who lives that life. It is a struggle with two aspects …. one to live out or live up to a plan or narrative, large or small, particular or general; the other to construct or choose that narrative" (p. 96).

I composed a life story around a plotline of being 'the best one.' English ability was an important component on the way to living out the story I composed.

I struggled to overcome difficulties in obtaining good English ability in senior high school. I seemed to abandon living up to the planned narrative by spending six months in my first year of teaching without doing anything toward improving my English. However, I decided, at last, to enter a university again to major in English. It was a way of building narrative coherence in my life story. English was a means to be the top in any society I belonged to. Good marks in English were an important means to be a top ranking student in my junior high school. A high grade of English was a significant means by which I could enter a top university from my senior high. Attaining English proficiency was a means to be accepted as a capable person in my communities. I did not care nor even wonder about 'why' and 'the meaning of learning English' at all. 'To be the top' might have been the plotline which directed me during my whole life.

From elementary to junior high school, I had been always the top student in school. Consequently, those experiences shaped my story to be lived out as a top student. I should be the best one. It looked like a predetermined destiny in my life to me. Entering a senior high school, however, I began to live a different story because of my low marks in English. It was very hard for me to accept the discord between what I had imagined before and what I really was in my senior high school in terms of 'being the top.' I needed to construct a new, improvisatory story to live out as an English learner. Learning English came to have huge meaning and value in my life. I tried to achieve narrative coherence in my life story by putting much emphasis on learning English in order to be the top person.

Carr (1986), in this sense, accords with my understanding of the stories of my life as he stated:

> the category of meaning is central for the understanding of the course of life because it encompasses and orders the things we value and the purposes we pursue. Meaning in this sense is precisely the *Zusammenhang* or coherence sought by all understanding. (p. 77)

Thinking narratively helped me understand who I was, who I am, and who I am becoming as I sought meaning in those stories. The story of living as a person who was not good at English in senior high school, the story of entering a teachers' college, the story of majoring in English in another university, and the story of registering in an English conversation institute after graduating from the second university were stories I understood, ordered, and valued coherently according to how they related to English learning in my life.

My experiences in learning English were my "lived curriculum" (Aoki, 1993) which is something experienced in situations. Situations about learning and speaking English were made up of me and my surrounding environment. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1988), "the past shapes the future through the medium of a situation, and the future shapes the past through the stories we tell to account for and explain our situation" (p. 9) in our lived curriculum. My lived curriculum, my curriculum of life, shaped my stories to live by as a person living in Korean society.

My story of learning English originated in my English deficiency and, as a result, I followed the plotline of learning English and consequently came to the United States, and then to Canada. In 2004, I was selected by the Ministry of Education in Korea to study in a developed English speaking country. It was a great opportunity for me to study and speak English in an English speaking country. There were many criteria used to select teachers and it was very competitive due to the very good conditions to be provided. I was selected, I believe, because of my long-term passion for learning English. After finishing my master's degree in the United States, I decided to continue my doctoral studies in Canada. I am still living the plotline of learning English in Canada.

Coming to the Research Puzzle[2]

In Canada, living up to my story of being the one at the top through the strength of my English ability didn't work anymore. It was a quite different situation for me in the Canadian academic field compared to Korean school circumstances. I became again an English learner struggling with my conversation ability surrounded by native English speakers.

As I began to study in my doctoral program, I also had to transform concepts related to curriculum, concepts embedded in theoretical ideas about 'personal practical knowledge[3].' In Korea, I lived a concept of curriculum as a

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[2] Research puzzle is a term used to convey the constructed and multiple aspects of a narrative inquiry.

[3] Connelly and Clandinin (1988) designed a term 'personal practical knowledge' "to capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons" (p. 25). It means "a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions for the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation" (p. 25) for teachers. This is that "body of

course of study or the content of knowledge to be taught. I thought that a good teacher was a person who could apply the curriculum as "a documented plan" (The Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development in Korea, 1997) in his or her practice. The definition of curriculum stated in *The Commentary of Elementary School Curriculum I* (1997) as "a basic blueprint of Education to select, organize and manage learning experiences for learners" explains in some part how I possessed the above concept of curriculum. But here in Canada, I learned about curriculum as a course of life, teachers as curriculum planners and makers, teachers as knowing people with personal practical knowledge, professional knowledge landscape, the metaphor of a conduit between theory and practice, and so on (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1999; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, 1995, 1996; Clandinin et al., 2006).

It was a new world I had to explore as a teacher. Exploring these new concepts began to raise questions for me about my identity as a teacher. In the Korean school where I worked, I lived in two quite different places, in-classroom and out-of-classroom places in school landscapes. A school landscape, called a "professional knowledge landscape" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), is composed of two places, in-classroom and out-of-classroom places. The metaphor of a professional knowledge landscape allows us to see a context "as composed of relationships among people, places, and things … as both an intellectual and a moral landscape" (p. 5). For example, in teaching English, my personal practical knowledge shaped by my journey of learning English was expressed in how I

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convictions and meanings, conscious or unconscious, that have arisen from experience (intimate, social, and traditional) and that are expressed in a teacher's practices" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, p. 7).

taught English in the in-classroom place. It was possible because there were walls hiding the in-classroom place from the outside, and it was also acceptable under the frenzy of English education in the school landscape. In the out-of-classroom place, however, I composed a story I lived as a knowing person about a mandated Elementary English Curriculum and as an implementer of it.

Helping to further understand the complexities of the professional knowledge landscape are the secret, sacred, and cover stories teachers live and tell. Conceptualizing a professional knowledge landscape provides a way to contextualize teachers' personal practical knowledge. The discussion of secret, sacred, and cover stories provided a map useful for studying the dynamics of the relations between teachers' personal practical knowledge and the professional knowledge landscape on which teachers live (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). Secret and cover stories are closely aligned with particular, contextual locations on the school landscape. About in-classroom places and secret stories, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) write:

> The privacy of the classroom plays an important epistemological function. It is a safe place, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice. These lived stories are essentially secret ones. (p. 13)

Teachers live and tell cover stories when they feel their personal practical knowledge is in conflict with school stories and the story of school (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) also describe out-of classroom

places, as shaped by dominant stories of school and prescriptive policies, places where teachers are expected to live out plotlines as certain expert characters in the story of school. In these places, shared with other teachers and administrators, teachers may tell cover stories as a way to fit into the story of school. Clandinin and Connelly (1996) argue that a deeply embedded story shaping the professional knowledge landscape is the "theory driven practice" (p. 25) story. It has the quality of a sacred story (Crites, 1971) because the story that theory drives practice is largely unquestioned.

Thinking about the connections between teacher knowledge and school contexts is a way of understanding people as living in school landscapes and landscapes living in people. As teachers shape landscapes with their knowledge, they are also shaped by the contexts in which they are situated.

Until I started my doctoral program in Canada, I believed that to implement the mandated national curriculum meant that I was a good teacher. It was particularly in teaching English that I wanted to be a good teacher because I put so much value on learning English. The story I lived as a teacher who taught English to elementary students, beginning learners of English, was shaped by my experiences of struggling to learn English. My struggle with English learning was my problem, rather than a problem for my parents nor my English teachers in school. It made me feel lonesome during the journey of learning English and it was hard for me to control the situation. Studying English as a written form, rather than as oral communication, often led me to feel helpless because it was very difficult to study written English by myself. Studying only the written form

had not stimulated my interest in studying English, thus leading me to quit studying English in my 11th grade. I wanted to remove this difficulty from my students' journeys of learning English in their beginning stages. When, in 1997, the first time I looked at the Korean Elementary English Curriculum guide for teachers, written by outside curriculum developers for learners invisible to them, it looked very helpful to implement my intentions in teaching English. It looked like 'English for fun and interest.' I found a kind of match between the curriculum guide and my teaching intentions. I read the teacher's guide again and again to keep it in my mind. And then I did my best to follow directions from it, such as establishing an English environment in my classroom, making English lesson plans according to the guidelines, which specified my favorite second language teaching methodology which was Krashen and Terell (1983)'s Natural Approach. During this period, I strongly believed that a good implementer of a given curriculum as a course of study was a good teacher.

I had not recognized myself as a holder of personal practical knowledge. I had seen myself as an implementer of the government curriculum guidelines. While I had selected the teaching methodology, the Natural Approach, I had not understood how my own struggle was part of my personal practical knowledge. Now, from my doctoral perspective, how I lived and told stories of my teaching life in Korea took on many different shades of meaning.

As I began my narrative inquiry, I came to see how profoundly my struggle with learning English shaped my personal practical knowledge as a teacher. And I came to see how my personal practical knowledge shaped by my

struggle to learn English had shaped how I taught children in my classroom in Korea.

Each year since 1997, there were one or two students who had quite different experiences of learning English, especially the students who returned from an English speaking country to learn in my classroom. The contents of the mandated English curriculum didn't fit for them. I had to live out a different story as a teacher for, and with, them. I focused on helping them to maintain their English ability because I valued English proficiency so highly. On the one hand, I wanted to be a facilitator to motivate learning English for the other students; on the other hand, I wanted to assist the Korean returnees to maintain their English ability.

Now I see many Korean children who came to study English for a limited period in Canada and returned to Korea. I realize their process of learning English is quite different from mine. As their experiences of learning English are quite different from mine, I wonder if my experiences of teaching them when they return are the same as other Korean teachers who also work with Korean returnee children. I wonder how other teachers' personal practical knowledge is shaped by their stories of learning English, and how their personal practical knowledge makes a difference in shaping the stories they live by as teachers who teach these children.

CHAPTER TWO

My Experience of Teaching a Returnee Student

My Experience of Teaching Yu-mi

One day in April 1999, at the beginning of the school year, a small cute girl, nine-year-old Yu-mi, was assigned to my year three classroom. She was standing at the front door of the classroom holding her mother's hand with some nervousness and some shyness on her face. It was her first day of Korean school. In a brief conversation with her mother, I learned her family had lived in the United States for five years because of her father's company assignment.

My school at that time was located in a middle sized new city established not long ago by a government city plan in a northern part of Gyeonggi Province and surrounded by apartment residencies. The children were from relatively middle class socioeconomic status households. Each classroom had one or two students who returned from staying in an English speaking country.

It was the third year since English education had officially started as a regular subject in the elementary schools from the Grade 3 level. I had been teaching year three students for three years and was in charge of extra school work related to English education. All schools in my school district were trying to do the best to implement the teaching direction of the seventh Elementary English Curriculum[4], in other words, to do the most effective English teaching for the

[4] The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development in Korea, *The Commentary of Elementary School Curriculum V* (1997): Stimulating learning motivation through English chants and songs, Considering students' learning levels, Activity-based instruction through game and play, Providing opportunities to feel interest and achievement for English, Developing communicative ability through various learning strategies, and so on.

students. For example, some activities were making up an English Corner in each classroom, teaching and learning English like a play, building up an English Zone in the school, and conducting English speaking contests.

As a teacher who majored in English Language and Literature, I was interested in teaching and learning English. My classroom was decorated with English words and beautiful picture cards. I made an English picture book library, and an English listening corner in my classroom for the purpose of English input in children's everyday lives. These activities were designed from my fascination with Krashen & Terrell (1983)'s Natural Approach in learning English. Each morning, before the first period, students listened to the audio tapes of English picture books using headsets. The children who listened to the tapes in the morning or during recess could get small fancy stickers to match the number of tapes they listened to. They could paste these stickers in, or on, their collecting book. I gave a prize to the student who listened to the most tapes each month. Yu-mi's mother was surprised at my classroom's decoration, which was almost finished around the middle of March with help from parents. On the first day of Yu-mi's transition to my class from an American school, her mom said, "Wow, it's more wonderful than an American classroom!"

As I expected, Yu-mi's oral English ability was very good. Her pronunciation was perfect and her listening skills were prominent, as evidenced by how she enjoyed seeing English cartoons on AFKN[5] TV. She could understand all those cartoons. On the one hand, I, as an eager learner of English, admired her

[5] An acronym of American Forces Korean Network. It has broadcasted on UHF channel #34 since 1996, VHF channel # 2 before, in Korea. AFKN channel was a favorite to the people who wanted to learn English in the 1980s and 1990s.

English proficiency. On the other hand, I was concerned that she might lose that proficiency in Korea. In the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, I knew she would be too young to keep her English proficiency in Korea unless she made a particular effort. I tried to give her opportunities to use English at school as much as possible. I made her write diaries in English instead of Korean, and gave her feedback about them in English. I asked her to do a sample pronunciation during English class for her classmates. I persuaded her to participate in an English speaking contest in the school and had her practice her speech everyday after school in front of me, sometimes in front of all students in the classroom.

I felt she was reluctant to do all of these activities. She did not look happy while doing them. Whenever I suggested something that I wanted her to do, she said, "Well…. I'll do it. But I'm not good at doing it." She never wanted to show off her English ability to her classmates. She, however, actively and very merrily participated in group or whole class activities such as singing English songs and chanting English rhymes with motions. She seemed to want to be seen as a regular student in terms of English ability. For me, even though I did not contribute to her current English ability, I wanted her to be my pride as a teacher who had much concern in teaching English in the school context of focusing on English education through making her keep her good English.

I look back at how I was then. I probably could have helped her more to readjust into Korean school life along with assisting her desire to keep her English ability.

Reflection on My Experience of Teaching a Returnee Student

I became a teacher as my parents wished. While I was in a teaching job, my journey to English continued. The introduction of English Education in elementary schools in 1997 shaped the 'professional knowledge landscape' on which I worked in profound ways. It also shaped the landscape in particular ways for me. As the school landscape was focused on implementing an emphasis on English education in the era of globalization, I came to be recognized as an expert of English language teaching by school community members because of my history of learning English. It was a big transition to me from an eager learner to an expert. There existed a distinct relativity about my English ability, which would be possible in a society using English as a foreign language. I lived a story as an English teaching expert in my school landscape. I now understand my "action, by placing it in the context of a larger story" (Carr, 1986, p. 91) of school.

In the out-of-classroom places in the school landscape, I lived a story as a person who had a thorough knowledge about the Elementary English Curriculum and as a person who delivered a teacher guide for teaching English from the National Elementary School Curriculum as an instructor in teacher education programs. In the in-classroom place in the landscape, I lived a story as a teacher who overemphasized learning English to students.

In this situation, I looked at only Yu-mi's lived story as a fluent English speaker, and did not see her as a returnee student in a new Korean classroom. I did not consider her desire to adjust into the Korean school through being looked at as an ordinary student. About that time, a malicious practice alienating fellow

classmates (*wang-tta*, in Korean terms) was a big problem in all levels of schools. A child who was so prominent, or seemed to be so worthless, could be a target for *wang-tta* from regular students. Since this experience of *wang-tta* leaves a big hurt on a child's heart and mind, parents, teachers, and students themselves, all were sensitive about the *wang-tta* issues.

I conjecture that the parents of a child returning from an English speaking country may have worried that their child could be a *wang-tta* from his or her classmates due to his or her distinguished English ability. The parents could have asked their child not to show off their English and to be modest. I don't know what Yu-mi's parents said to her but Yu-mi was reluctant to stand in front with her prominent English. She seemed well adapted to a new school with her new classmates. I now interpret her reluctance as her desire to adjust to Korean schooling through being seen by her classmates as ordinary in terms of her English ability.

For me, at that time, I felt sorry because she was not more positive, not more active in cooperating with my passion for keeping her English fluent. I did not look into the meaning of English to her, and her feelings as a returnee student under the name of helping her to maintain her good English. I could have had a "dialogue" (Noddings, 1992) with her about her stories to live by in the Korean school landscape. Noddings (1992) stated:

> Dialogue is open-ended; that is, … neither party knows at the outset what the outcome or decision will be. As parents and teachers, we cannot enter into dialogue with children when we know that our decision is already

> made. It is maddening to young people to engage in "dialogue" with a sweetly reasonable adult who cannot be persuaded and who, in the end, will say, "Here's how it's going to be. I tried to reason with you"… . Dialogue is a common search for understanding, empathy, or appreciation. ….but it is always a genuine quest for something undetermined at the beginning… . (p. 22)

I really wonder if I could have had a dialogue with her. I faced her with an already predetermined plotline for her to live a story of a student who displayed excellent ability in English to others and as an exemplary student of mine. I wonder what would have happened if I had had a dialogue with her instead of forcing her to participate in the English speaking contest in school. If I had been more attentive to her, if I had been thinking about her experiences, perhaps I would have attended more closely to the stories she was telling instead of attending to my own stories to live by, my desires to show what a good teacher of English I was by using her as a model and getting her to compete in English. I wanted her to make me more shiny in my story of 'being the top.'

I wonder how each teacher's stories of learning English, speaking English, teaching English, make a difference in shaping the stories to live by of himself/herself when they teach students who come back to Korea from staying in an English speaking country.

Wondering About Other Studies

When I went to the research literature to see if other researchers had studied this topic, I first looked for studies in Korea. The only study I found on returnee children was done by Jin-sook Choi (2007). However, it was a focus group interview for the parents of returnee children. This study aimed at identifying whether or not early English learning in foreign countries caused problems. The focus group interview was conducted with six parents who sent their children to English speaking countries to improve their children's English skills. The focus group interview was used to obtain insights about the issues through qualitative research. The overall results revealed that early English learning in English speaking countries could bring about some negative effects on learning: children's linguistic identity would be weakened; and there might be barriers to their academic progress. Choi's work indicated that early English learning in English speaking countries is inefficient in terms of the improvement of children`s English, thus parents should consider many aspects when they plan to send their children abroad to learn English. Choi suggested that learning English in those countries should be done at a college level.

Another study I found was on second language (L2) retention and attrition of Korean/English bilingual children (Lee, 2000). This study examined the maintenance and decline of L2 knowledge over time among eight Korean/English bilingual children, aged 9 to 12. The purpose of the study was to examine the validity of the regression hypothesis, which holds that "first learned is last forgotten." Data indicated that the best predictor of L2 retention and attrition is

the subjects' L2 attainment in pre-disuse stage, which is consistent with the regression hypothesis.

The other studies I found in Korea were mainly related to 'the phenomena of early studying abroad in Korea' (Kim, 2005; Cho et al., 2005; Lee et al., 2007). Kim (2005) examined 'Korean people's attitude to early studying abroad.' Cho et al. (2005) studied 'youth's decision making process about early studying abroad in Korea and their adjustment to the country they went to.' Lee et al. (2007) analyzed 'types of early studying abroad.' There were no studies on teachers' experiences of teaching returnee children in Korea.

When I looked at the literature on children from other countries who returned to their home country after living several years abroad, I found that there were relatively many studies on returnee children's experiences and on parents' and families' experiences in Japan. However, they were also about returnees' adaptation to their home country (Tamura, 1993; Moriyoshi, 2001; Kanno, 2003). Tamura (1993) examined 're-adjustment of Japanese returnee children from an overseas sojourn.' A questionnaire survey was administered to Japanese children aged between 6 and 18 who had returned from an overseas sojourn for the duration of no less than one year (n=1941) and matched control groups from the same schools who had no overseas experiences (n=1354). In this study, returnee children showed more dissatisfaction with their lives in Japan, but there was no indication that returnee children had more adjustment difficulties than their counterparts. The longer the children had lived overseas, the more they had complaints about life in Japan and difficulty with friends, and less negative

attitudes towards overseas life. Children who had multiple overseas experiences had more problems such as anxiety, depression and mental complaints. Children's developmental stages and the amount of exposure to the foreign culture are therefore important determinants of their readjustment. The study argued that the expectations of parents, the home culture of the returnee children, gender, and emphasis on academic achievement must also be taken into account. Positive effects of the transcultural relocation were discussed as well as the adjustment.

Moriyoshi (2001) explored 'the adjustment process of Japanese returnee children' in his Ph.D. dissertation. His study sought to understand how adjustment is described by different groups of people, and what factors affect the process of adjustment of Japanese returnee children. In order to understand the long-term process of adjustment, interviews, questionnaires, and case studies were conducted. Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data indicated that the receiving group (such as Japanese teachers and other Japanese students) tended to describe adjustment as either a linear-process or a multidirectional-process. Returnees, on the other hand, indicated that they go through one of four patterns of adjustment: (1) no major conflict; (2) early (pop-up) conflict; (3) initial conflicts-later settlement; and (4) initial settlement-later conflicts.

Kanno (2003) studied 'negotiating bilingual and bicultural identities.' This longitudinal study explored the development of bilingual and bicultural identities of four teenage Japanese returnees. Specifically, Kanno was interested in how young bilingual learners' sense of who they are and their relationship to their two languages and two (or more) cultures changed as they moved from

adolescence to young adulthood. Using narrative inquiry and communities of practice as theoretical frameworks, Kanno reconstructed and analyzed the identity narratives of four teenage Japanese students who spent several years in North America and then returned to Japan. These students were the sons and daughters of Japanese businessmen who were transferred abroad. Spending their adolescent years in North America (mainly Canada) and returning to Japan as they moved into young adulthood, the students gradually became more sophisticated in negotiating their bilingual and bicultural identities with their surroundings. As adolescents, they initially tended to lean toward one language and culture over the other, as if believing that if one is Canadian, one cannot be Japanese, and vice versa. But through a period of difficult re-adjustment back into Japan, the students, as young adults, gradually awakened to the possibility that one can be bilingual and bicultural. They came to appreciate their hybrid identities, learning to belong to Japanese culture without having to sacrifice their differences. This study documented their processes of growth.

The other studies related to 'Japanese returnees' were mostly about their loss and maintenance of English in their homeland (Tomiyama, 1999; Kamada, 2000; Hansen, Tsukayama, & Ottley, 2000; Mielke, 2005). Tomiyama (1999) examined 'the first stage of second language attrition: a case study of a Japanese returnee. Kamada (2000)'s research was about 'bilingual children in Japanese families: acquisition and maintenance of English'; Hansen, Tsukayama, & Ottley (2000) reported on a cross-sectional study of hesitation phenomena and laughter in the L2 Japanese of adult learners and attriters. Mielke (2005) reported on

interviews with Japanese returnee children examining their needs for maintaining L2 (English) in their home country.

However, in all of these studies, there was no literature on teachers' experiences of teaching returnee children. I realized that this was an area that was not yet studied and one that seemed particularly important.

Considering the huge number of Korean children who return to Korea after finishing their studies in an English speaking country, it is important to think about how teachers teach them when they return. I introduce the status quo of the population of Korean "early studying abroad" children in the following section.

The Context of Learning to Teach Korean Children Returnees from Abroad

Every year many Korean students come to Canada or the United States for the purpose of learning English, supported by their parents. The highest number of students studying English in the U.S. (ICE, 2006) and Canada (Citizenship and Immigration Canada [CIC], 2005) is from Korea. The number has increased steadily in recent years (Korea Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development [KMEHRD], 2006). According to the statistics from the Korean Embassy in Canada (2006), the population of Korean students from Elementary to High Schools in Canada is 13,449 and 45.4% of them (6,100) consist of students of under junior high school age. The fever of studying in English speaking countries among young students is very hot in Korea. Almost 50% (46.8% in 2006) of early studying abroad students were elementary children. According to Lee et al. (2007), the reasons for this were: first, elementary period is critical for

learning a second language; second, there is relatively less burden for elementary children in catching up with Korean academic curriculum when they return. Even though it is illegal to go to a foreign country to study as an elementary or junior high school student (Kim, 2005), the number of those students is continuously increasing every year. It is surprising when comparing the record of 1998 about the number of K-12 students who went abroad to study English to the record in 2006: 1,562 (1998) to 29,511 (2006) (The Ministry of Education in Korea, 2007). There is almost a 20 times increase over eight years. Furthermore, the number of elementary students who go abroad to study increased 65 times (212 in 1998: 13,814 in 2006) in those eight years. As these records indicate, the number of Korean elementary students who go to study abroad is rapidly increasing. A huge number of elementary children return to Korea after their temporary stays in an English speaking country: 10,536 (Elementary) among total of 18,362 (K-12) (Korea Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development [KMEHRD], 2006).

Why do such a large number of Korean children go abroad to study English? According to Kim (2001) and Kim (2005), the first reason for the early studying abroad boom was for learning English. Other reasons were discontentment with Korean schooling, rigorous competition for college admission, excessive costs for private tutoring, and the enhancement of international competitive power.

Traditionally, education (usually reflected in degrees from the high ranking colleges) has been considered the number one way to success in Korean

society. Rigorous competition for college admissions has led to intensified studying and tutoring among students even during the elementary school years. The societal need for English proficiency in a rapidly changing and globalized world has also pushed students and their families to put more time and effort into learning English, adding more stress to an already heated competition for better education. Since English competency is considered an essential component for success in a global society, many children choose to study abroad in the pre-college years as well as go to college in other countries, which in most cases are in English speaking developed countries.

Young children studying abroad is becoming a big issue in Korean society. The rapid increase in the number of those children in recent years is making people concerned about their follow-up education and their readjustment into the Korean education system when they get back home. This situation becomes a pressing problem to Korean teachers who have to teach returnee children. They are struggling with the problem of figuring out how to teach and what to do with those children.

I puzzle again about how teachers' personal practical knowledge shapes their practices with these children and how teachers' stories of learning English shape how they work with these children.

Reconsidering the Research Puzzles

I decided to explore how a teacher's personal practical knowledge

(Clandinin, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) about learning English was formed through many different experiences in many different contexts in which he or she was situated and how it was expressed in his or her classroom practices. I believed, therefore, teacher's personal practical knowledge would be an influence on the teaching of returnee children. Teachers' personal practical knowledge is embodied in each teacher as a person and is enacted in each person's classroom practices and in his or her life (Clandinin *et al*, 1993). My personal practical knowledge developed through my journey of learning English, was expressed in how I worked with Yu-mi in the classroom as I negotiated my practices with, and in, my professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

My research puzzles, emerging from my stories, are:

1. about three teachers' experiences of making curriculum with returnee children.
2. about the ways three teachers' personal practical knowledge formed by their experiences of learning English shapes their stories to live by as they make curriculum with returnee children.
3. about the personal, social, and cultural narratives that shape three teachers' stories to live by in their work with returnee children.
4. about the shifts in three teachers' stories to live by as they work with returnee children in their professional knowledge landscapes.

CHAPTER THREE
Bringing Theoretical Concepts to the Korean Landscape

Re-conceptualizing Curriculum as Including Lived Curriculum

Coming to understand the concept of curriculum in more complex ways was the most prominent change in my stories to live by as a teacher during my doctoral studies. In the stories I lived as a teacher for 20 years, I was concerned about how to efficiently deliver academic knowledge to children in Korea. I believed that a good knowledge distributer equals a good teacher. The concept of the curriculum I followed was of a 'course of study' or the 'contents of study.' The curriculum was given from the government and I thought it was inviolable like a law to be followed by teachers. I realize now that I had understood curriculum as the 'curriculum-as-plan' (Aoki, 1993). According to Aoki (1993),

> The curriculum-as-plan is the work of curriculum planners, often selected teachers from the field, under the direction of some official often designated as the curriculum director or curriculum supervisor. As a work of people, inevitable, it is imbued with the planners' orientations to the world, which inevitable include their own interests and assumptions about ways of knowing and about how teachers and students are to be understood. (p. 258)

There was no teacher autonomy or consideration of the individuality of children in my curricular thought. Respect for children's experiences was not considered part of curriculum. I thought whether a teacher respected children's

experience depended only on each teacher's morality or emotion. Curriculum was only the planned and mandated curriculum, not the lived curriculum in classrooms.

A view of curriculum as delivering subject matter content seemed closely related to the positivistic paradigm which occupied educational research in Korea. Students were considered as 'collective' learners, not as unique individuals, and they were viewed as objects about whom researchers and policy makers could predict behavioral changes with some degrees of certainty. As a result, content-oriented mandated curriculum resulted in, I believe, an atmosphere of severe competition between students in classrooms in the current Korea.

Ideas of curriculum as lived experience have their roots in Dewey's view of experience (Dewey, 1938). Dewey (1938) stated two criteria of experience: *continuity* and *interaction*. They are not separate from each other.

Dewey describes *continuity* as "the idea that experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences. Wherever one positions oneself in that continuum-the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future-each point has a past experiential base and leads to an experiential future" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). As Clandinin and Connelly outline Dewey's criteria of experience, continuity, they draw attention to temporality. Human experience has a temporal continuum, which means it is 'enlarged by the new experiences, continuously configuring meanings' (Polkinghorne, 1988).

"Every present experience both takes up something from past experiences which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of future

experiences which come after" (Dewey, 1938, p. 35). As I understand this, I think about a person who has learned a kind of knowledge or skill in one situation. What he/she has learned becomes a way of understanding and dealing with situations which follow. The process goes on. Past experiences shape present experiences and present experiences influence future experiences.

In my study, I inquired into three teachers' experiences of teaching returnee children. Their experiences were influenced by their past experiences of learning English and affected their future experiences of teaching English.

Interaction, Dewey's second criterion of experience, draws attention to the interplay of external (objective) conditions and internal conditions in an experience (Dewey, 1938, p. 42). In these interactions, a s*ituation* is created. Individuals live in a series of situations. An experience is always a transaction between an individual's internal conditions and what constitutes his/her environment, his/her external conditions.

Pinar (1978) wrote of reconceptualizing curriculum by emphasizing individual's educational experience. He follows Dewey's (1938) ideas about education and experience as intertwined. He argued for understanding the uniqueness of each person's experience (1974). In his view, focusing on individual's educational experience became a new starting point for curriculum inquiry (1975). Pinar also suggested the following way of 'understanding curriculum' (Pinar et al., 1995).

> … we can try to generalize on the basis of the stories we tell and the ones we hear others tell, taking them as evidence of a sort, and attempt to

> formulate in general terms the broad outlines of past, present and future, the nature of our experience, and specially our educational experience, that is the way we can understand our present in the way that allows us to move on, more learned, more evolved than before. (1975, p. 15)

Each individual's life is composed of his or her lived experiences. Through studying a person's experience, we can understand him or her. An 'individual's life' is the starting point of curriculum.

Schwab (1962) and later Connelly and Clandinin (1988) wrote of the curriculum commonplaces as a way of understanding curriculum. The commonplaces (teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu) are "a set of factors or determinants that occur in statements about the aims, content, and methods of the curriculum. Taken as a whole they serve to bound the set of statements identified as being curricular" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 84). Using the commonplaces, the curricular starting point in my study is the teacher. I am interested in understanding teachers' 'curriculum making'[6] experiences in classrooms. In my work I want to understand teachers through understanding their curriculum making. Working with the curriculum commonplaces, I see that teachers are always in a nested set of milieux (contexts) with particular subject matter and with particular learners. Attending to teachers' experiences is part of understanding curriculum as lived experience.

[6] In my study, I draw upon the notion of 'curriculum making' that Clandinin and Connelly (1992) developed as a way to understand teachers as curriculum makers by drawing in teachers' stories and stories of teachers in curricular situations with a concept of curriculum of lives.

Aoki (1993) defined the "lived curriculum" as a curriculum which "is not the curriculum as laid out in a plan, but a plan more or less lived out" (p. 257). He explained that it is "a multiplicity of lived curricula" (p. 258) that people experience. …each living out a story of what it is to live a life as a person. The lived curriculum is highlighted in a classroom situation by respecting students as beings who are unique human beings. Aoki argued that students' "uniqueness disappears into the shadow when students are spoken of in the prosaically abstract language of the external curriculum planners who are, in a sense, condemned to plan for faceless people, students shorn of their uniqueness" (1993, p. 258).

Portelli and Vibert (2001) also wrote of the 'lived curriculum' as a 'curriculum of life':

> The curriculum of life is grounded in the immediate daily worlds of students as well as in the larger social and political contexts of their lives. As such, students' worlds and lives are not addressed as factors that need to be excused, pitied, mediated, or fixed in order to get on with the curriculum, but as the vital ground of or for learning. This is an approach to curriculum that presupposes genuine respect for children's minds and experience. (p. 78-79)

They also argued for the importance of relationship with the world in the curriculum of life:

> The curriculum of life is rooted in the school and community world to which the students belong, addressing questions of who we are and how

> we live well together; it extends into the larger world of possibilities beyond school and community bounds; and it addresses directly questions about the larger social and political contexts in which these worlds are embedded. (p. 78)

Aoki also argued,

> I find it important to center curriculum thought on a broader frame, that of "man/world relationships," for it permits probing of the deeper meaning of what it is for persons (teachers and students) to be human, to become more human, and to act humanly in educational situations. (1978/1980, p. 95)

Therefore, the 'curriculum as lived experience' comes from respect for individuals as human. Many curriculum scholars write about curriculum in this way (Aoki, 1984; Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1988, 1992, 1995, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1990, 1999, 2006; Dewey, 1916, 1938; Noddings, 1984, 1986, 1992; Eisner, 2002; Greene, 1971, 1993; Pinar, 1974, 1975, 1978, 2005). They share an interest in the humane arrangements in curriculum making. Wondering through these readings, I came to shift from knowing curriculum only as 'curriculum-as-plan' by head to feeling 'curriculum as lived experience' by heart. Thinking about curriculum as lived experience made me wonder about how my students in Korea experienced their lived curriculum related to English with me.

Teachers' Personal Practical Knowledge in Curriculum Making

As long as we see curriculum as a course of study or content of study, teachers will continue to see themselves as implementers of planned and mandated curriculum. Within this view teachers are not seen as knowledgeable and knowing people. Since I began to understand curriculum as lived experience, I began to see my personal practical knowledge must have affected my students' lived curriculum in the classroom. I now understand that my personal practical knowledge, shaped by my lived experiences related to learning English, was expressed in my teaching practice. In this sense, I now see teachers as knowledgeable and knowing people with experiential knowledge, shaped by their lived experiences over time, which affects their teaching and their curriculum making in the classroom.

Teacher's personal practical knowledge "is not something objective and independent of the teacher to be learned and transmitted but, rather, is the sum total of the teacher's experiences" (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997, p. 666).

Teacher's personal practical knowledge as "embodied, relational, temporally composed, and lived out in particular times and places" (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 5) is a narrative construction composed in each teacher's life and made visible in their practices. Connelly and Clandinin (1988) developed a language to speak of personal practical knowledge as a "language of images, practical principles, personal philosophies, metaphors, narrative unities, rhythms, and cycles" (p.5).

In my study I was interested in what my participant teachers know through their experiences of learning English and how their knowing is expressed in teaching returnee children. Teachers' personal practical knowledge affects every aspect of the teaching act. "It affects teachers' relationships with students; teachers' interpretations of subject matter and its importance in students' lives; teachers' treatment of ideas whether as fixed textbook givens or as matters of inquiry and reflection; teachers' curriculum planning and evaluation of student progress; and so on" (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997, p. 666). That means teachers' personal practical knowledge is central to classroom curriculum making.

In Korea, I heard the terms: 'an individualized curriculum,' 'a teacher-level curriculum,' and 'consumer-centered curriculum' since commencement of the 7th Curriculum. Although I knew all these terms were designed to emphasize 'students' individuality' in curriculum making, I had no idea they should be approached with a concept of curriculum as students' lived experiences. I interpreted them as 'teachers should reorganize the contents of study depending on individual student's academic knowledge level. I could not make any relation with my personal practical knowledge to curriculum making for my students. Perhaps most Korean teachers still have the idea about curriculum making as I held. They see themselves as deliverers of someone else's curriculum plan. They do not see themselves as actively making curriculum with children in the classroom. As I began to see myself as a curriculum maker, I began to see myself as a knowledgeable and knowing person who possesses personal practical knowledge, which affects curriculum making.

Teachers' Professional Knowledge Landscape

I realized I lived out 'stories' in school landscapes. I lived out many different stories. I lived out stories of a teacher who put much value on English teaching in the in-classroom places. Those would be my "secret stories" (Soltis, 1995). In out-of classroom places, I lived out stories as a teacher who was an expert and implementer of the National English Curriculum. I recognized I lived out "cover stories" in the out-of classroom places. As I lived these different stories in the school landscape, I felt tension between children, parents, other teachers, and myself. Two narrative ways Clandinin and Connelly (1995) understood how these tensions appeared in the landscape were described as "competing stories" and "conflicting stories" (p. 125).

> Competing stories are understood as teachers' stories that live in dynamic but positive tension with the plotlines of the dominant stories of school. These stories live alongside one another in ways that allow for change and possibility in both teachers' stories and stories of school. ···· Conflicting stories are understood as teachers' stories that collide with the dominant stories of school. Conflicting stories are often short-lived as teachers are unable to sustain them in the face of the dominant stories of school. (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 8)

I recognized I lived competing stories as a teacher who had a specialty of teaching English that ran the classroom with excessive activities related to

English learning, living alongside with the plotline of the dominant school stories about English education.

This landscape in which I lived out different stories as a teacher was conceptualized as "professional knowledge landscape" by Clandinin and Connelly (1995, 1996, 2006) as I previously described in Chapter 1. Clandinin and Connelly (1995) wrote:

> A landscape metaphor allows us to talk about space, place, and time. Furthermore, it has a sense of expansiveness and the possibility of being filled with diverse people, things, and events in different relationships. Understanding professional knowledge as comprising a landscape calls for a notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things. Because we see the professional knowledge landscape as composed of relationships among people, places, and things ···· (p. 4-5)

I composed a variety of stories in relation to students, parents, other teachers, and administrators in the professional knowledge landscape. I now see I lived on a narratively constructed landscapes. It is a place of story which "is composed of two fundamentally different places, the in-classroom place and the out-of-classroom place" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 2). Clandinin and Connelly (1996) described the out-of-classroom place as:

> A place filled with knowledge funneled into the school system for the purpose of altering teachers' and children's classroom lives. ··· It is a place

> filled with other people's versions of what is right for children. Researchers, policy makers, senior administrators and others, using various implementation strategies, push research findings, policy statements, plans, improvement schemes and so on down what we call the conduit into this out-of-classroom place on the professional knowledge landscape. (p. 25)

With respect to the in-classroom place they wrote:

> Classrooms are, for the most part, safe places, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice. These lived stories are essentially secret ones. Furthermore, when these secret lived stories are told, they are, for the most part, told to other teachers in other secret places. When teachers move out of their classrooms onto the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, they often live and tell cover stories, stories in which they portray themselves as experts, certain characters whose teacher stories fit within the acceptable range of the story of school being lived in the school. (p. 25)

The composition of stories I lived and told in school contexts, I recognize now, fit with this view of professional knowledge landscape as narratively constructed. The 'stories' I lived out were expressions of my personal practical knowledge, which was shaped by my lived experiences in personal, historical, cultural, and social situations. In this sense, what I taught to my students was not

only academic knowledge, but also my personal practical knowledge. The most crucial influence on student learning is teacher's personal practical knowledge. Teachers compose stories to live out affected by their personal practical knowledge shaped by professional knowledge landscapes. Through reflecting on their stories, they begin to ask questions about their identities: "Who am I in my story of teaching?, Who am I in my place in the school?, and Who am I in my students' stories?" (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 8). They seem to ask how their context and knowledge are intimately woven into their stories of who they are and who they are becoming.

Teachers' Stories to Live by

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) developed a narrative concept of "stories to live by" (p. 4) "to conceptually bring together personal practical knowledge, professional knowledge landscape, and teacher identity" (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 8). Stories to live by is a term to help us to understand "how knowledge, context, and identity are linked and can be understood narratively" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 4). It refers to 'identity' which is "given meaning by the narrative understandings of knowledge and context" (p. 4).

According to Clandinin et al. (2006):

> Teacher identity is understood as a unique embodiment of each teacher's stories to live by, stories shaped by knowledge composed on landscapes past and present in which a teacher lives and works. Stories to live by are multiple, fluid, and shifting, continuously composed and recomposed in

> the moment-to-moment living alongside children, families, administrators, and others, both on and off the school landscape. ···· Stories to live by are threaded by plotlines shaped by teachers' personal practical knowledge and the landscapes on which they live. Teachers' stories to live by offer possibilities for change through retelling and reliving stories. This retelling and reliving is a restorying that changes their stories to live by. (p. 9)

Teachers' stories to live by, the expression of their personal practical knowledge, are the stories teachers live and tell of who they are and what they know. For instance, my experience of learning English through much struggle shaped how I valued English. This feeling about the importance of English shaped how I lived my stories as an eager learner of English. Later, when I was located in a professional knowledge landscape which focused on implementing a policy about English education, I was treated as a teacher who had a specialty in teaching English. It was a moment in which my personal practical knowledge and stories to live by regarding the importance of English was integrated with social values about it. My personal practical knowledge related to English, consequently, shaped the importance I placed on English learning and teaching. I lived stories as an expert who had complete knowledge about the English curriculum and who taught English very well. I also lived stories in the classroom as a teacher who had concerns about children's English learning. My personal practical knowledge of English drove me to identify my view of English with my students.' This story was lived out when I taught a returnee child, Yu-mi. My personal practical

knowledge was expressed in my teaching practice, that is, in process of classroom curriculum making.

When I return to my teaching job in the future, I am sure, I will not live the same stories as I lived in the past as a teacher. Many educational concepts I had were changed through learning in Canada. New experiences have continued to shape my personal practical knowledge, which has been continuously changing and shifting. Accordingly, my stories to live by as a teacher shaped by my personal practical knowledge will be restoried as I live out these retold stories on future professional knowledge landscapes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology and Process of the Study

Methodology of the Study

What Is Narrative Inquiry?

A person's life is composed of his or her lived experiences. In order to understand a person, we have to study his or her experiences. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note the importance of experience as an object of study in educational research:

> The social sciences are concerned with humans and their relations with themselves and their environment. As such, the social sciences are founded on the study of experience. Experience is therefore the starting point and the key term for all social science inquiry (p. xxiii).

Clandinin and Connelly (2006) conceptualize experience as a storied phenomenon:

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are as they interpret past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is

> first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomenon under study. (p. 477)

Other philosophers such as Crites (2004) also argue that experience has a narrative quality:

> I propose here to illustrate the point in relation to storytelling, which I take to be one of the most important cultural expressions. I want to argue that the formal quality of experience through time is inherently narrative. (p. 291)

MacIntyre (1981) expresses 'narrative' as a way of understanding our lives: "we all live out narratives in our lives and … we understand our own lives in terms of the narrative that we live out…" (p.212). For MacIntyre, narratives are inextricable from experience. Kerby (1991) argues, "… narratives and narration give meaning to what we usually call the self" (p.1) and "…the meaning of a life can be adequately grasped only in a narrative or storylike framework" (p. 33).

Narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story. Drawing on Dewey's view of the nature of experience, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest a working concept for narrative inquiry:

> Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of

> places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social. … narrative inquiry is stories lived and told. (p. 20)

As I decided to attend to the lived experiences of my participant teachers, my thinking was guided by "three commonplaces of narrative inquiry – temporality (continuity), sociality (interaction), and place (situation) – which specify dimensions of an inquiry space" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479). Building on a Deweyan theory of experience in thinking about narrative inquiry, narrative inquiry terms are "*personal* and *social* (interaction); *past, present*, and *future* (continuity); combined with the notion of *place* (situation). This set of terms creates a metaphorical *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*, with temporality along one dimension, the personal and the social along a second dimension, and place along a third" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

Clandinin and Connelly (1994) suggest four narrative inquiry directions: *inward* and *outward*, *backward* and *forward*. By *inward*, they mean toward the internal conditions, such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions. By *outward*, they mean toward the existential conditions, that is, the environment. By *backward* and *forward*, they refer to temporality – past, present, and future. Thus, positioned within this three-dimensional space in narrative inquiry and asking questions pointing these four directions, I filed composed texts and wrote research texts that addressed both personal and social issues by looking

inward and outward, and addressed temporal issues by looking not only to the present event but to its past and to its future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Clandinin *et al*. (2007) emphasize the importance of 'temporality (continuity)' in a narrative inquiry by explaining that "events and people always have a past, present, and a future. In narrative inquiry, it is important to always try to understand people, places, and events as in process, as always in transition" (p. 23). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) also refer to temporality by looking *backward* and *forward* directions in an inquiry space.

'Sociality (interaction),' a second commonplace of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) refers to both personal conditions and social conditions, as well as to the relationships between participants and researcher.

'Place,' a third commonplace of narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), refers to "the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequence of places where the inquiry and events take place" (p. 480). "All events take place some place" (p. 481). "A narrative inquirer needs to think through the impact of each place on the experience" (Clandinin et al., 2007, p. 23).

Narrative inquiry is grounded in a Dewyan view of experience, a view that "acknowledges the embodiment of the person in the world and that focuses on not only the individual's experience but also on the social, cultural, and institutional narratives in which the individuals' experiences are constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2006, p. 42-43). My storied experiences through my journey of learning English show this view of experience. For example, my story of entering a teachers' college was not only composed by my

personal conditions: my feelings about struggling in English, hopes to go to the top university, desires to be a good daughter, but also shaped by social conditions: my parents' expectations, the cultural concept about living as a woman in Korea, and the social status of a teaching job. My experience of reflecting upon my experiences taught me as a researcher to be wide awake to 'sociality, temporality, and place' in my participants' experiences. The three-dimensional metaphorical inquiry space and the four directions enabled me to conceptualize a space in which individually and relationally my lived experiences and wonders lived alongside my interpretations of my participant teachers' lived experiences along with their collaborative help.

Why Narrative Inquiry?

In my narrative beginnings, I told stories of learning and teaching English in a belief that humans live storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Through the process of telling my stories, I came to understand my experiences narratively, and to make meaning of my experiences. In this sense, I realized the significance of telling stories of lived experiences in my research.

Bruner supports the need for narrative inquiry in educational research, stating "Telling stories is an astonishing thing. We are a species whose main purpose is to tell each other about the expected and the surprises that upset the expected, and we do that through the stories we tell" (Bruner, cited in Charon, 2002, p. 8). Lieblich et al. (1998) also points toward the need for narrative inquiry as a methodological response to the positivistic paradigms.

The stories composed in my narrative beginnings helped inform my understanding of who I was in the past, who I am in the present, and who I am becoming in the future. My experiences have *continuity* (Dewey, 1938). My past experience of going to a teachers' college was shaped by the influence of both the personal and the social *interaction* in *situations*. It was continuously reformed following experiences connected with it such as going to a university, being a teacher, teaching English to elementary children, and studying abroad for master's and doctoral degrees. As I inquired into my experience narratively, I used a similar way to understand the participating teachers' lived experiences. I engaged in narrative inquiry with the participant teachers to understand how their personal practical knowledge was narratively composed, embodied in them, and expressed in their teaching practices. Following from this view of research, narrative inquiry is the best way to study experience.

Process of the Study

Entering the Field: Coming to Know Participants

The number of Korean returnee children is rapidly increasing in Korea. Almost all current Korean elementary teachers have had or are currently having an experience of teaching them. I already had several experiences of teaching returnee children as their homeroom teacher for several years beginning in 1998. Moreover, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development states that teachers should provide an individualized curriculum which is proper to each student who is an educational consumer: "… change from textbook-oriented,

provider-centered education to curriculum-oriented, educational consumer-centered education" (The Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development, 1999, p. 130). In this situation, teaching returnee children, who are more fluent in English than other children and have to readjust into the Korean school system, has created pressure for Korean teachers. An individual curriculum plan for returnee children might need to be quite different than plans for other children. In fact, when I was in Korea, I heard concerns about returnee children's readjustment into a Korean school from their parents and about teaching them from my colleague teachers. It was also my concern at that time. Now, as I reflect back, I interpreted and understood my experience of teaching them through understanding how my personal practical knowledge, formed by my experience of learning English, was connected with my teaching. I see now how telling my stories is a way to understand who I was, who I am, and who I am becoming as I taught returnee children.

Other elementary teachers in Korea facing similar problems and pressure of teaching returnee children English and other subjects had different experiences than me. Their experiences of learning English has been different from my own. Their personal practical knowledge shaped by influences from personal, social, cultural and institutional narratives was also different. As a result of my reflection upon my experiences, I came to be curious about how Korean elementary teachers experienced learning English and how their personal practical knowledge formed by their experiences of learning English influenced their teaching of returnee children.

In my study, I sought to inquire into individual teachers' experiences told by their stories. I came alongside three Korean teachers who teach Korean children who have returned from English speaking countries. I came alongside these teachers in a way that allowed me to understand their experiences narratively.

Research Participants

The study participants were three Korean elementary school teachers who were teaching returnee children in Grades 5 and 6 in schools where English is taught as a regular subject. I looked for homeroom teachers who had returnee children in their classrooms because I wanted to inquire into their experiences of teaching returnee children. I did not select participants who necessarily taught English to them. Two participants taught 5th and 6th grade each as homeroom teachers, and worked at schools located in a northern part of Gyeonggi province in Korea, that is, in the same school district in which I worked several years ago. The other participant was a 6th grade homeroom teacher working at a school in a different school district.

Since the Korean school year begins on March 2, the contact with my participants occurred at the beginning of March, 2008 after they were assigned the students with whom they would live in the classroom for that school year. I first contacted a teacher friend, Young-hee[7], who was still working in my former school district. However, she was not available to be a participant because she

[7] All teachers' and children's names used in the study are pseudonyms, but names of places are real.

was only teaching English during the March, 2008 – February, 2009 school year. She was not a homeroom teacher. I contacted others I knew to ask them to be participants but they too were not homeroom teachers, or did not have returnee children in their classrooms. Young-hee, the teacher I contacted first, introduced me to two teachers, Ji-sung and Min, who were working in her school district. She knew them through English-related teacher education programs. Young-hee sent me their email addresses and cell phone numbers by email, and let me know they were interested in being participants in my research. I made phone calls to them first, and they agreed to participate in the research. I located a third participant, Sung-ho, when I went to Korea on April 2, 2008. A vice-principal, a former supervisor in a local Office of Education in Goyang who I knew, connected me with Sung-ho's name after I arrived in Korea. According to her, Sung-ho showed much interest in being a participant in my research. He was teaching Grade 6 as a homeroom teacher and there were four returnee children in his classroom. My research participants were all male teachers.

Connelly and Clandinin (2006) specified another dimension of sociality as that the relationship between participant and inquirer is very important in narrative inquiry. They argue, "Inquirers are always in an inquiry relationship with participants' lives. We cannot subtract ourselves from relationship" (p. 480). Attending to the sociality dimension, during the period leading up to the day when I started composing field texts, I made an effort to negotiate and build close relationships with my two participants, Ji-sung and Min, through emails and phone conversations from Canada.

I thought my participants might have not had much knowledge and understanding about narrative inquiry as a research methodology, so I sent a copy of my research proposal to each participant at the beginning stage of the research. I hoped that this action would enlarge their basic understanding about narrative inquiry. In addition, I hoped my personal narratives in my research proposal would provide participants with an opportunity to understand me, thus helping to negotiate and build a close relationship between us. However, I recognized, when I met each participant face-to-face for the first time, that no one had read my complete proposal. They were very busy in their school lives especially in March and April, the beginning of the school year.

Narrative inquiry as a research methodology was new to the participants. They were accustomed to positivistic methods in educational research. At the first research conversation with each of them, I shared the narratives of my experiences and the research puzzles, and explained narrative inquiry as a research methodology. They expressed joy in their own storytelling and the realization of the need for narrative inquiry as a research methodology by the end of our field text (data) collection.

While my participants varied in terms of age and years of teaching experience, they all had experience of teaching Korean returnee children.

How Did I My Study

My research aimed to inquire into the experiences of three Korean

elementary school teachers who teach children who return from English speaking countries.

I wanted to hear the participant teachers' stories in order to gain an understanding of their storied experiences in teaching returnee children. I did not seek knowledge that can be generalized to all teachers, but wanted to understand their unique experiences as individual persons.

Inquiring into my own experiences first allowed me to better understand how I was a part of my study. I knew that while my focus would shift to the participant teachers' experiences once I began to have conversations with them, my unfolding understandings were also connected to my experiences.

Kinds of field texts

I came to understand myself through telling my experiences attending to temporality, sociality and place(s) in my stories. I tried to hear my participants' stories to understand them individually. The kinds of field texts were as follows.

Firstly, I had individual conversations with each participant. I believed that "the informal nature of the conversational space will encourage the participants to reflect upon their previous experiences and to share these more comfortably as opposed to the formality of an interview conversation bounded by specific questions" (Mitton, 2006). The interview conversations were held in each participant teacher's classroom once a week over 17 weeks. All of the conversations were audio-recorded and transcribed and were used as field texts. The conversations were spoken in Korean. I transcribed them first in Korean and

then translated them to English. The copies of the transcripts in Korean were shared with the participants and negotiated for clarity and meaning.

Secondly, I wrote field notes as field texts. I wrote field notes when I visited my participants' schools and classrooms in order to look and sense their teaching practice environment and their professional knowledge landscapes. The field notes were also written about conversations about artifacts and informal talk with them. In other words, the field notes were the accounts of every time I was in the field and with the participants. My field notes were combined with my personal journals written of my field experiences in a reflective manner.

Thirdly, I wrote personal research journals because "journals are a powerful way for individuals to give accounts of their experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I reflected upon all field notes in my journals so that I could be aware of how I perceived the unfolding nature of the inquiry as well as my own understanding of the participants. I also invited my participants to write personal journals, explaining that "journals are a way of finding out where you really are. They will make you feel that the fabric of your life has a meaning" (Sarton, 1982, p. 25). However, I received a personal journal only once from two participants of three, Ji-sung and Sung-ho, through e-mail.

Fourthly, I asked my participants to share artifacts that triggered memories of important events, times, feelings, and people related to their experiences of learning English and of teaching returnee children. Their artifacts and stories about the artifacts also became part of the field texts. Photographs that triggered their memories or feelings of learning English and teaching returnee children,

some official documents related to teaching returnee children in school landscapes, some teaching materials, some books and notebooks, and sample works of returnee children were also artifacts that were part of the field texts.

From field texts to research texts

Drawing on reading and rereading the field texts, I composed a narrative account of each participant's experience, attending to their experience of learning English and teaching returnee children. I analyzed, interpreted and understood narratively their stories of experience by listening to their voices and attending to their words. Once a week, I met regularly my supervisor, Dr. D. Jean Clandinin. She encouraged me to think about the participants' stories "narratively."

I used a *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space* when composing three narrative accounts: *temporality, sociality*, and *place*. I tried to understand how the participant teachers learned English in the past and how their experiences of learning English were expressed in teaching returnee children at present; how their past experiences were shaping their present teacher stories. I tried to see how their interactions with both internal and external conditions influenced how they were composing their stories to live by as teachers who teach returnee children. I paid attention to their shifting teacher stories, which were dependent on different places such as in-classroom, out-of-classroom places, out of school places, and different schools. This strategy helped me to think about the participant teachers' stories narratively.

When I had a draft of each narrative account, I shared it with each participant. Two participants totally agreed with the narrative accounts about

them and thanked me for handling their stories with such respect. One of them expressed his feeling of being touched because he had never seen so much writing about himself. He also asked me to make some corrections about several factual records. The third participant agreed with almost all of the narrative account. However, he wanted me to revise my interpretation about his narratives related to his professional knowledge landscape and his journey of learning English. I revised the parts in his narrative account as he wanted. Then, I sent the revised narrative accounts to each of them again. I received very satisfied replies about the narrative accounts from them.

This process seemed to guide my participants to understand their experience narratively and to realize how they held and expressed their personal practical knowledge formed by their own experiences in their practices.

Composing research texts was a hard task for me as a researcher to carry out. It required making connections among stories that the participants told in terms of the 'narrative coherence' in their stories and within the three dimensional narrative inquiry space by thinking narratively in an on-going manner. I explored my participants' lived stories, which provided a broader space to understand each of them as a teacher who teaches returnee children, as a way to travel to their worlds, drawing on Lugones' (1987) view of 'world travelling':

> …. we learn to love each other by learning to travel to each other's "worlds." (p. 4) …. The reason why I think that travelling to someone's "world" is a way of identifying with them is because by travelling to their

> "world" we can understand *what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes* (italics in the original). (p. 17)

I sought to identify their stories to live by, so that I respected and loved them through composing their narrative accounts. I believe narrative inquiry opened the path to reach mutual respect and love between me as researcher and the participants through sharing our lives as stories and providing deeper understanding about the participants as personal and social selves.

Bateson (2000) states that "wisdom is born of the overlapping of lives, the resonance between stories" (p. 243). Taking this perspective, I attempted to compose 'key considerations' as 'wisdom' which could be suggested to readers. To do this, I, as researcher, studied the narrative accounts to pull forward what I saw as key considerations. As I did this I could respond to my research puzzles.

Ethical considerations

The study began with the relationships between me, a narrative researcher, and my participants. A close relationship between us was a basic assumption during the process of the study. I could have a time to build a close relationship with two participants because of relatively early contact with them from Canada, but not for the third participant. I was able to contact him after arriving in Korea. I tried to have extra time for informal and personal conversations with him in order to establish a close relationship before starting conversations for my research.

I believe relationship lies at the heart of an 'ethic of caring' (Noddings, 1987). Noddings states that "collaborative inquiry into issues of mutual interest,

conducted in an atmosphere of trust and respect, would be more meaningful research for teaching" (1987, p. 394). I made an effort to keep a caring relationship with my participants, being attentive to 'fidelity' (Schulz, 1996), trust, commitment, respect, patience, and 'dialogue' (Noddings, 1992). I knew that, positioned as a researcher, it was not my place to judge my participants' understanding but rather to engage as a narrative inquirer to understand the meaning participants have composed.

My research participants were asked to sign an agreement indicating their willingness to participate in this study. They were informed about the nature of the inquiry, and of their right to withdraw from the research at any point during the research process. Anonymity was promised if they wanted but they were also offered the opportunity to author their own parts in the study using their own names.

It was explained to each participant that the right to anonymity is paramount, and that information which, anyone felt, could hinder anonymity would not be publicized.

Even though they all wanted to use pseudonyms in the research texts, I was open to the possibility that participants might shift and change about whether they wanted to be named. The risks and benefits of using their own names were discussed with them to make sure that they were fully aware of what that means within the research.

The participants were given an opportunity to read the final draft of their narrative account. In the sharing, they clarified and negotiated the meaning of

their stories which supported “the intention of a collaborative interpretation of their stories” (Raymond, 2000, p. 46).

This research adhered to the ethical guidelines of the University of Alberta and was approved by the Research Ethics Review Committee.

In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, I share the narrative accounts of the three participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

Narrative Account 1: Min's Stories to Live By

Min's Journey of Learning English

Min had to cancel our first appointment because of an unexpected teacher assembly. I had been looking forward to meeting him. I had no information about his appearance, although I had spoken to him once on the phone from Canada and we had shared several email correspondences. According to the teacher who connected him with me, he was a young, smart, relatively inexperienced teacher. She said that he had returnee children in his homeroom in this school year and he was positive about participating in my research. I contacted him by phone after getting back to Korea and we made an appointment for the first interview.

Next time, I was waiting for him at 6:00 p.m. in the lobby of the building. Through the glass outside wall, I saw a tall man wearing a neat hat standing next to the entrance of the building, holding his bike. I did not expect this to be Min, since his appearance did not fit with my stereotype of a male teacher. We moved to a coffee shop for our interview conversation.

Min was raised in Kwangju, a big city in Southwestern Korea. His childhood was relatively affluent and he graduated from the Elementary School attached to Kwangju National University of Education. He began to learn English from a university student in group sessions to prepare for junior high school. He took English and Math tutoring with several friends before starting the 7th grade, which was when English instruction officially began in Korean schools at the time. The tutoring was arranged by the mothers of Min and his friends, who wanted

their children to do well in major subjects, Math and English, in secondary school. Min liked the tutoring because he also wanted to achieve good grades and he was curious about learning a new subject, English.

> *I had first learned English with an English grammar book for beginners. It was boring to learn English by grammar. However, I was good at memorizing new English words, and it was fun. After entering junior high school, I found that learning 7th grade English in advance through private tutoring was helpful for me to build confidence in junior high school English. I did very well in English in junior high.* (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

From his first experience of learning English, Min learned that it was very hard to stimulate his beginner learner's interest through grammatical explanations. In junior high school, he memorized all the textbooks following the English teacher's directions. It was not difficult for him. However, senior high school English caused him despair because it required much more grammatical knowledge.

In his 11th grade, Min met his homeroom teacher, who taught English and who was also Min's homeroom teacher in Grade 12. Meeting this teacher meant a great deal in Min's life.

> *He was wonderful. His teaching was very different from other English teachers. We had been accustomed to Grammar-Translation methods in previous English classes. He led the class with a different style of teaching containing a lot of conversation. He was really great in teaching English.*

> *Moreover, he tried to understand us teen-aged boys. One rainy day, he led us to the playground and played a soccer game with us during the English class period. It was one of my memories of him that makes me smile. Everyone in our classroom liked him and trusted him. Of course, I did. The classmates responded positively to his English class because they trusted him. Thanks to respect and trust for him, I was able to make an effort in studying English. He gave us 10 new English words every day to memorize. Because I liked to memorize English words, as you know, it was easy and fun for me. As a result, it directly helped improve my reading skill and my confidence in English. My English marks during senior high school were almost always 100%. I deeply realized how huge a good teacher's influence on students is through my relationship with my homeroom teacher in these years.* (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

Senior high school English usually focused on getting high marks on the national standardized tests[8], which were a major requirement when Grade 12 students applied for a university in Korea. English test items were almost always composed of reading comprehension questions. English teachers in high schools usually taught English by translating reading texts along with grammatical explanations. Min could not explain reading passages with appropriate grammatical reasons in Grade 10, so he felt he was not good at English. He became tired of the Grammar-Translation teaching method. However, his Grade

[8] At the end of grade twelve, students take the national standardized tests for entering a university or a college. It is called 'The Test for Study Ability in Universities', in Korean terms, '*Suhak Neungryuck Sihum*'.

11 English teacher, Min's homeroom teacher, used teaching methods that gave Min insight into spoken English as a communication tool. Min's positive emotions about the teacher drove him to put much effort into studying English and increased his ability a great deal. He was ready to go to one of Korea's top universities.

Min continued to relate his memories with his Grade 11 homeroom teacher:

> *In my senior high school, zero period[9] from 7:40 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. was run with extra English and Math classes. The English classes were divided into three groups by students' English ranks: highs, mediums, and lows. My homeroom teacher taught the class of highs. I was so delighted about that. I could study English more earnestly.*
>
> *I have a memory related to him, which made me feel very proud of myself: It was at the night self-study hour[10] after school. My teacher was supervising our study. He was passing beside me and pointed at my English practice book put on my desk with other books, which was like a trophy to me because I chose it by myself and then I solved all test items in the book from beginning to end. He said, "I studied this book before. It was good". His comments made me feel proud of myself by the fact that I*

[9] It was a period before the first period of regular classes, which was specially run to provide high school students with extra classes in the main subjects (Korean Language Arts, English or Math), or run as a time for self- study of students in Min's high school days in Korea .

[10] It was a mandatory study hour requiring all students to stay at school for their self-study until the designated time. The time duration depends on schools, but they usually lasted till 10 p.m. after regular classes ended.

studied the same book that my teacher did once. (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

There were many kinds of English practice books to prepare students for the national standardized tests. They were almost totally composed of test items along with some grammatical points. Senior high school students used to purchase several practice books for English in addition to the English textbook. Min chose one without any recommendation and believed that he had chosen well when he heard his teacher's comments about it. This experience strengthened Min's connection to the teacher. He talked about the English practice book (Artifact, April 28, 2008) as an artifact that triggered his memory related to his English learning. It was a symbol of his pride in his journey of learning English.

He overcame the difficulty he had experienced in English in his first year of senior high school when he met the 11th grade homeroom teacher. Fortunately, he said, the national standardized test of English was changed to include a Listening Comprehension test composed of 10 items, which was good news for him. Other students who had received little oral instruction in English found this very difficult. On the contrary, he was good at listening because he had been enjoying listening to English pop-songs from the beginning of his 10th grade year. It began when he received a cassette tape recorder, a 'Walkman,' from his elder sister. Not many high school students at the time possessed a walkman and Min thought, retrospectively, that it improved his oral English skills. In addition, his English word power, the result of liking memorizing new English words, improved his understanding immensely.

Min wanted to be a medical doctor. It was also his father's dream. However, 1997 was the year of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) Relief Loan to Korea. His father's business had a downturn and studying at a medical school was very expensive. His family could not support his medical study. He applied to a local medical school in a national university, where the tuition was cheaper than private universities, but was not accepted. The following year, his family's economic status was even worse. He had to decide on a school that he could afford. He decided to go to an elementary school teachers' university. The decision was difficult because he did not want to be an elementary school teacher at first. Although it has since changed, the occupation of elementary school teacher ranked low for men at that time. Even his 12th grade homeroom teacher asked him why he wanted to teach elementary rather than secondary school[11]. Min felt "shame" about being an elementary school teacher. However, he could not see any way to avoid entering an elementary teachers' university. Only the tuition at that university looked affordable to him. Job prospects for teaching, including teaching at the elementary level, were improving. Ironically, Min's ranking of preferred majors (Medicine, Secondary Education, Elementary Education) correlated with the expense of majoring in each one. I wondered how much social perception about occupations was able to influence each person's choice of a career and how much money related to social perceptions about occupations.

[11] In Korea, universities for elementary teachers exist separately under the name of 'National University of Education'. To be a secondary teacher, student has to enter the educational department in a university.

Consequently, reflecting on his 11th grade homeroom teacher influenced his decision to be a teacher. Even though his economic situation drove him to apply for an elementary teachers' university, Min made a firm decision to be a wonderful elementary teacher like his homeroom teacher in his 11th grade year. He was a model for Min.

In 1998, on his second try for his college entrance, Min entered the National University of Education in Kwangju. He chose computer studies as his specific major. During his four years there, Min did nothing in particular for his English learning except taking required English conversation courses in his first two years. He seemed to live with no relation to English learning and teaching during his university years.

After his graduation from the university, Min served as an officer in the Military Service for two years and four months. He then took a teachers' exam in Gyeonggi Province. In July of 2004, he began teaching in a school located in Ilsan New City in Goyang, which was well known for having many returnee children.

In the summer of 2005, participation in an English conversation class for teachers in his school not only revived his interest in English learning, but also helped him find his talent in English.

> *A group of teachers gathered after school to have a class for improving their English speaking skill. We had a one-hour class twice a week. A Canadian instructor came to teach this class. Studying English again made me feel fresh. Speaking with a native speaker of English was especially exciting. I found that I spoke English better than other*

colleagues. Even though that's because I was younger than the others, it was an encouraging element in my English learning. The thing was I became a friend of the instructor. He had been staying in Korea alone for three months at that time. He was trying to find a new job in Korea. He was a married man who had a little baby. His wife was a Korean-Canadian woman. We spent a lot of time together. Now he is living in Calgary, Canada with his wife and daughter, working at Air Canada. He used to still come to Korea two or three times a year. Whenever he came to Korea, he stayed at my place with me. Just about two weeks ago, he stayed at my studio for a week. We went to a musical performance and bars. I enjoyed time with him. I am going to go to Canada during this summer break. He will arrange my entire trip. He will come to Korea and take me back to Canada. He can purchase air tickets with incredible prices as a member of Air Canada. That made it possible for me to plan a summer trip to Canada.

Thanks to him, I came to have much interest in learning English. I want to get to know many people around the world. I believe that English capability will make it possible. The relation with my Canadian friend led me have a hope for living in a foreign country if possible. (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

Since living in his school landscape, Min's perception about English might have changed. English was not only a subject he liked to study. 'A fever for learning English' had spread all over the society. All people in Korea seemed to

want to learn English. Almost all students in Min's school were going to private institutions for learning English after school. Teachers were feeling invisible pressure to develop English fluency, especially teachers in Min's school, where there were many students who could speak English very well. Min's colleagues voluntarily arranged an English conversation class to improve their oral English. They invited an English speaking instructor from Canada for this class and paid for it. Min found out he was the best in the class. His friendship with the Canadian instructor helped Min to improve his English very much. Min came to realize it was exciting to communicate with a person in a different language. He began to dream of getting to know diverse people around the world through using English.

> *I was stimulated to improve my English by the existence of returnee children in my classroom and the social atmosphere of 'A fever for learning English.' I thought if I was equipped with English proficiency, I could find many opportunities to do something as a teacher and as a member of our society. It looked possible for me since I took a teachers' English conversation class in my school. I made up my mind to develop English proficiency as my specialty.* (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

English became a means to develop his life as a teacher. Since his resolution about English learning, he attended an English Institute in the winter of 2006. He spent much time with his Canadian friend. There were no problems in conversations with him. However, it was difficult to speak about specific topics that were not well known to him. He had trouble recognizing his English

weaknesses and how to improve them. He said, "I don't know the answer to it yet." He tried to listen repeatedly to American dramas with English and Korean captions, for example, *Heroes, Prison Break, Lost*, and so on, as his Canadian friend suggested. He started to study English grammar again because it had always been his weak point.

His concern about learning English extended to finding an effective methodology to teach English. He registered in a Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program in 2007 at his own expense. It was a six-month certificate course and required attendance three times a week from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. He described his learning from this program as follows:

> *I was able to learn about teaching English to children systematically from this program. The most impressive thing for me was recognizing that we could deeply understand educational theories when based on teaching practice. I could understand educational theories in the TESOL program, which I had not understood when I was a student of the University of Education. It was a big finding for me. I realized how important it is to have practical teaching experience in order to understand theories.* (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

Min was satisfied with the TESOL program he attended in terms of its applicability to his English teaching practice. He learned educational theories in the University of Education but without experiential knowledge, he could not understand them. Attending the TESOL program made him feel confident not only in learning English but also in teaching English.

Min read landscapes surrounding him. All of a sudden, he realized he was good at English. English opened up a world of possibilities: English was valuable in his teaching job; he could speak with people around the world; he could move around the world or live in a foreign country. It was a path forward for him. Min started to make a huge commitment to learning English. Min had to give up applying for a medical school due to the financial barrier but I wondered, at this moment, if he still felt that elementary teaching was at the bottom.

Min's interest in learning and teaching English raised a hope in his mind that he could live and teach English in a foreign country. He applied for the teacher dispatch program in the Korean school in Hochiminh, Vietnam, in 2007. This school was putting English immersion into practice using a team teaching approach, pairing a native speaker of English with a Korean teacher. They were looking for an English-fluent Korean teacher with some years of teaching experience. The Korean teacher had to deal with the school management as well.

Min failed in the selection. There were many elementary teachers who wanted to do something with their English ability. In the eyes of the interviewers, Min's teaching career looked too short. One interviewer mentioned, "You are too young. You don't have any scores from teacher training programs or research achievements in your teaching record." Min realized if he wanted to do something as a teacher, he needed many high training scores. He decided to participate in the teacher professional development programs as a way to live out his plan to travel and live abroad.

Min's participation in the first teacher training course he applied for since his failure in the dispatch program was "English Teacher Development for Globalization" provided by the Northern Branch of the Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education:

> *It was great. I learned a lot. This program presented me with an opportunity to set up a concrete meaning about learning English. Beforehand, I had been worrying about losing our language sovereignty because of too much concern about learning English. One of the lecturers, who was an Australian, originally from India, addressed the teachers in this way, "We cannot deny English has become a global language. Learn English. Then, use English to inform the world about Korea. If we do this, English can be a good instrument to raise the status of Korea in the world. The world is multicultural. There exist many kinds of English. Don't feel shame about using Korean-English (Konglish). If Konglish created its own meaning, it was not wrong English, but another kind of English. Learning English does absolutely not mean losing Korean language sovereignty. Make it instrumental for teaching Korea to the world." His address was so impressive and touched my heart.* (Individual conversation, April 15, 2008)

The 'Globalization' program objected to planting 'a globalized mind' related to English teaching for elementary English teachers. It was a nine night/ten day program from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. every day. About 40 teachers from the Northern part of Gyeonggi Province participated in this program. In the

overheated context of learning English in Korea, some people were concerned about being colonized by English. At this point, the globalization teacher-training program provided Min with 'conscientization' (Freire, 1970) about learning and teaching English. Min looked to meet the goal of the program by getting a grade of 100%.

Min's concept of English, established by the teacher training for Globalization, drew my attention to his talk on April 28, 2008:

> *I've heard news from the radio this morning that the English exam will disappear from the National Standardized Test for college entrance. It will be applied to the present Grade 8 students. They will receive a pass/fail grade for English during their school years. Along with this news, I told my students, "Don't put too much effort into studying English. English is not all. I suggest that you study English as an instrument for communication and as a means for living your life in the future. I think English has to be learned only by people who really need it for their living." For me, English is a favorite activity. I really want to learn. It is meaningful to learn English for me because I wish to get to know diverse persons from many countries. Using English was very helpful in meeting diverse persons on 'Facebook.'*[12] *I want diverse experiences in my life, and I believe that teachers' diverse experiences work positively in their teaching practice. Teachers can only understand children as much as they know and feel through various experiences.* (Individual conversation, April 28, 2008)

[12] This is a kind of web blog usually used in the Western world as 'Cyworld' is in Korea.

Too much concern about learning English around Min made him to be blind to right reasoning about learning English. However, the address from the 'Globalization' teacher training program helped him establish his own purpose for learning English and his perspectives about the meaning of English. Now, he came to speak about 'purposeful English learning' to his students as his purpose for learning English was to experience diversity in his life. The news from the radio was good for Min to talk to students about the need to be conscious first of why they want to learn English. Min did not talk about the way he studied English in the past: memorizing words. Instead, he emphasized English as a tool for communication and as a means for a living, that is, the meaning of English he now possessed.

Min's volunteer job confirmed his tendency to pursue diversity in his experience. He had been working as a guide at the royal palace, Gyeongbokgung, on weekends for three years. He found this volunteer job through his friend who majored in Social Studies. After the selection, he passed a three-month training course and a six-month internship. He began this job for the purpose of being able to tell traditional things more deeply and broadly to his students. Now, he was doing this job with the belief that he could convey Korean traditions only when he knew them exactly. English would be a medium. His view that learning English caused a sense of sovereignty and independence, not of colonization was strengthened.

As I noted earlier, Carr (1986) wrote that individuals continue to strive for "unity, coherence, and structure" (p. 75) in their lives.

> The narrative coherence of a life-story is a struggle nonetheless, and a responsibility which no one else can finally lift entirely from the shoulders of the one who lives that life. It is a struggle with two aspects …. one to live out or live up to a plan or narrative, large or small, particular or general; the other to construct or choose that narrative. (p. 96)

Min struggled not to become an elementary school teacher at first. However, since he decided to live a story of an elementary school teacher, he continuously pursued being a good teacher who has something special. He wanted to be seen as a teacher who teaches well and is making an effort for his goals to his students. Doing his volunteer job and an effort of learning English are expressions for his choice of a story of becoming a teacher. Min's intention to continue to learn English seemed to be seen as his ongoing pursuit for 'narrative coherence' (Carr, 1986) in his life stories as a teacher.

Min's Experience of Teaching Returnee Children: Living out His 'Stories to Live By' in the In-Classroom Place

Min started his teaching career in his current school in 2004. There were only apartment residences around the school. The socioeconomic status of the households in his school district was relatively high. Min's school was one of four that were provided with 10 million won (approximately $ 10,000 CAD) for running 'Returnee Children-*Ban*[13] (귀국학생반)' from the Goyang District

[13] *Ban* means 'class' in Korean.

Office of Education. Min had two or three returnee children in his homeroom class every year during his five years at the school. Currently, he had three returnee children in his classroom of 36 and two students had already gone abroad, to Australia and Hochiminh in Vietnam, to study. The other classes were also in a similar situation. It was common to hear from students, "Teacher, I'm going to go for now." in this school.

Min experienced teaching returnee children for the first time in 2004. He took over one of the 6th grade classes for the second semester when he was assigned to the school. There were two returnee boys, Jun-young and Ji-oh, in the classroom. Jun-young had returned from Spain after living there five years, attending the international school in Spain. Ji-oh had returned from the United States after two years. Min could not even recognize that Jun-young had lived in Spain for a long time because Jun-young was so quiet in the classroom. Min was unaware, until Jun-young's mother told him, that it was because of Jun-young's lack of proficiency in the Korean language. Min found that children in higher grades are more likely to hide their weak points which might make them feel ashamed. In the case of Jun-young, he tried not to speak in Korean. Min understood that Jun-young's personality (he was very introverted) was also in accord with his behavior. Jun-young could not achieve well in other subjects due to his Korean language deficiency. Min thought that the most important thing for Jun-young was to improve his Korean language ability.

> *I thought what I could do for him as a teacher was to help him enhance his Korean language skills. However, I could not instruct him in particular*

> *during the Korean Language class because his low proficiency of Korean would make him be noticed. I could not do that after class, either. He had to go to a private institute (학원). He had no time for studying at school after class. More than anything else, I did not know where I had to begin with him. I had no idea about how to teach the Korean language systematically with returnees. This is still my problem as a teacher who is teaching returnee children.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

Min considered a teacher's role as helping a student to supplement his or her deficiencies in academic areas. He was teaching Grade 6 at that time as a beginner teacher. He did not know about teaching basic Korean language skills. It was not about teaching only literacy. He felt sorry about that to Jun-young. In addition, Jun-young did not have extra time to stay at school for his supplementary study of the Korean language. Jun-young had to go to a private institute for further study after school as other students did. This situation seemed to relieve Min's sorrow about the returnee boy, Jun-young.

Min attended "The elementary teacher training program for teachers who teach returnee children" in 2004, where Min expected to learn how to teach returnee children like Jun-young who had lost the Korean language. However, the instructors introduced only several model cases of living with a returnee child in a homeroom. It was not helpful for Min. Min wanted an organized, specific teaching guide for how to teach returnee children, especially for teaching the Korean language: how to assess their Korean language ability and how to teach them based on the assessment.

Min mentioned several times the need for a teaching guide for the Korean language for returnee children who are not fluent in Korean. He thought Korean language proficiency was important, especially for returnee children in the upper elementary grades, to help them readjust to a Korean school. He stated:

> *Once a returnee child is not fluent in Korean, even though he or she has very good English competence, peers, particularly in the upper elementary grades, do not tend to accept him or her in their groups. This seems to make it easier that returnee to be an 'wang-tta (왕따)' in the school. What is worse is if he or she does not have a well-rounded personality. For Grade 1 or 2 returnees, it does not seem to be a serious problem. They are easily mingled with and accepted by their peers even though they cannot speak Korean at all, and young children can catch up in Korean quickly.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

I see Korean 6th grade students' views about the value of proficiency in their mother tongue in the above transcript. To date, although too much emphasis on learning English in Korea resulted in the phrase, 'A fever for learning English,' children in Grade 5 or 6 seem to put more value on Korean language proficiency than English. Min also came to believe that the most important factor in a returnee's re-adjustment is his or her fluency in Korean, especially in the higher grades. Min was currently experiencing this with Jae-min, whose story will be told later in this section.

According to Min, Jun-young did not suffer from *'wang-tta'* issues even though his English was stronger than his Korean. Min concluded that Jun-young

did not want to be noticed for either his English or Korean. He was very quiet and had a well-rounded personality. Other students accepted and understood Jun-young as himself, a returnee student who had a long stay in a foreign country, so that he could not speak Korean well.

Unlike Jun-young, Ji-oh, who had lived for two years in America, had no problem in speaking Korean. He was only weak at Korean spelling. He lived well in his 6th grade Korean classroom. His fluency in Korean allowed him to adapt to the Korean school without any problems in addition to his affable personality. This was proof, in Min's view, that Korean language fluency is a very important factor when returnee children in Grade 5 and 6 readjust to the Korean school.

A returnee girl, Hee-joo, whom Min taught in 2005, was very excellent in English and the other subjects, too. His memory of her was different from the other returnee children he taught.

> *She returned from Australia with her whole family, father, mother, and her elder sister. Her English was particularly very good. In addition to this, she ranked first in academic achievement in her grade. Her father was a university professor. Her mother was a translator of the 'Harry Potter' series. Her sister was also a top student in her high school. Her family members were all excellent in terms of not only academic ability but also English. Sometimes I found myself intimidated by her excellent English ability as a teacher, especially when she smiled derisively at my English use. She was much too confident and arrogant. I agree that she deserved*

> *to be arrogant because she was excellent in many things. This stimulated me to study English hard. On the other hand, I wanted to let her know that intellectual ability was not all as a human being.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

Min might struggle with his attitude as a teacher to the student who was excellent in English in addition to academic achievement so that she seemed to look down on her teacher. This situation must have been difficult for him to overcome. Even though we all agree that teachers cannot be better in all areas than their students, this would be a challenge for Min to recover his pride as a teacher. I wondered how Hee-joo's family background Min mentioned in our conversation affected his living with her in the classroom.

There was another returnee boy, Su-min, in his 2005 classroom. He was also very good at English. However, he was not as good in other subjects as Hee-joo. This caused Su-min to feel jealousy toward Hee-joo.

> *Su-min seemed to want to be noticed with his English among other regular students because he experienced living in an English speaking country. However, he couldn't be. The returnee girl, Hee-joo, who had also lived in an English speaking country, was more outstanding than him not only in English but also in other subject areas. He tried to interrupt her and opposed her opinion whenever he got an opportunity. Finally, Hee-joo zipped her mouth and tried not to say anything. She looked as if she was living alone in the classroom. Since I recognized it, I told the class, "We need to learn to admit other people's excellence. Admitting others'*

> *excellence is not my failure. If somebody is better than me in some area, there absolutely exists some other area in which I am better than him or her." After speaking to the class, Su-min's critical behavior to Hee-joo seemed to be mitigated and Hee-joo also seemed to return to her normal behaviors.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

The biggest concern of returnee children was readjusting well with regular Korean classmates. I could see a different side of a returnee's problems in adapting to a Korean school through the above story. Hee-joo had difficulty in fitting into her school life because of Su-min's interruptions caused by his jealousy rather than that of regular classmates. It was Min, their homeroom teacher, who arbitrated the conflict by lecturing that everyone has something he or she does better than others, so we respect each other. The message Min tried to deliver would be aimed not only at Su-min but also at Hee-joo.

In 2008, Min was in charge of a Grade 5 class as a homeroom teacher. He was teaching all subjects, including English. The Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education had given his school the task of running a pilot study around English classes by level. Three Grade 5 classes were divided into high, medium, and low groups, depending on individual students' English ability. Min was teaching a high-level class.

Min had three returnee children, Jae-min, Mi-na, and Ho-chul, in his class this year. He told me about them:

> *Jae-min came back to Korea when he was in Grade 3 after more than five years living in the US. His father is in a high position in the government.*

His stay in the US was for his father's work. He speaks English very well and is excellent in other subject areas. He speaks a lot, particularly in English classes. He is still inarticulate in speaking Korean. Sometimes he used to be violent to classmates when he felt his limitation in expressing himself in Korean. It is rare to see him playing with other classmates. He seems to live alone in the classroom. He does not care about others, and other students don't care about Jae-min, either. He has some deficiency in controlling his emotion. I know he is taking medicine for this every morning before going to school. His emotion fluctuates when he does not take medicine. However, he easily accepts what I'm saying when I talk to him. He likes to hold my hands when we have a conversation. He is a child-like, pure boy. I see he is getting better in living here.

Min mentioned Jae-min's father's position in the government several times. It seemed to be impressive for him in terms of "high" position. Min experienced before that he was intimidated at the returnee girl's excellent English. At that time, the girl's family background also seemed to intimidate Min. This time, I wondered how much Jae-min's father's status affected Min's understanding of Jae-min. Min never met Jae-min's mother. There was only one e-mail correspondence. Min said that Jae-min's mother also seemed to not use Korean well. Considering her age, it was strange to Min. Min wondered if Jae-min's deficiency in speaking Korean came from his home environment. Considering everything, Jae-min's academic achievement was amazing to Min.

Jae-min was brilliant. However, Jae-min's lack of Korean fluency was blocking his acceptance by Korean classmates.

> *Mi-na came back to Korea last year after staying in the US for one and a half years. She had no problem with the Korean language. She was not so fluent in English. However, she seemed to have many cultural experiences in America, for instance, Halloween, so that she was missing American life very much. She has a very good personality. It's very hard to see when she is angry. She has good relationships with her classmates. Her mother is very cooperative in school events. She works for the 'Room for English Experience'[14] as a volunteer teacher in the school. She is very concerned about her daughter's education.*

Mi-na reminded me of Su-jin in Ji-sung (the third participant)'s class. She had a good personality so that she got along with her classmates. Although living in the US for a year and a half could not guarantee fluency in English, she became easily excited when talking about American cultural events. She might have felt it was fun living in the US. She seemed to want to go back there.

Mi-na was not good at Math. However, it did not seem to be such a big problem to Min. Min provided the students with advanced Math problems that they had to solve during lunch time. One day, Min received a letter from Mi-na's father. It said, "Extra Math problems which the students should solve during lunch time are difficult for Mi-na. Mi-na is struggling with solving them every

[14] This room was made for the children to practice real English. There are several sections, such as an airport check-in desk, hospital, market, etc. Children can use English in order to complete their task with assistance from volunteer English teachers.

lunch time." Min changed it into a voluntary task because he understood Mi-na's difficulty.

> *Ho-chul returned to Korea last year, at the end of 4th grade. He lived in Thailand and the Philippines for two years, attending international schools. He has a desire to be outstanding among other students. He is very proud of his experience of living in foreign countries. His pride seems to lead him to behave conspicuously. His attention-seeking behavior, for example, interrupting directly without manners, gives me the impression that he does not have a well-rounded personality. This often caused quarrels with his classmates. He has very low marks in Math like many returnee children.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

For Min, living with Ho-chul in the classroom along with Min's experience of teaching Hee-joo, the returnee girl from Australia, in 2005 seemed to give him a biased impression about returnee children in terms of their attitude to others and their personalities.

> *Ho-chul behaves conspicuously. I mean "negatively." He usually says things directly, critically and thoughtlessly to others, even to me, to his teacher. One morning when I came into the classroom, he said, "You are late." This is one example. His posture is also very far from being polite. His thoughtless comments often raise quarrels with other students. Frankly speaking, it is very hard for me to like him, because I am also a human being.*

> *He seems to believe, "I'm special because I have an experience of studying abroad. I must be more outstanding than others." However, the reality is that his English is not so good, and he is very poor at Math. This situation could cause dissatisfaction inside of him so that he behaves conspicuously. Ho-chul is afraid of revealing his weak points or difficulties, as almost all upper elementary grades students are. He never showed his difficulty in solving Math problems during Math class, but the test results were seriously bad. This kind of propensity, I think, blocks my concern for him as a teacher.* (Individual conversation, May 7, 2008)

Ho-chul seemed to struggle with his returnee identity. His attention-seeking behaviors originated by his struggle seemed to hinder developing a good relationship with his teacher, Min. Min was not fond of Ho-chul because of his impoliteness. On the other hand, Min told himself, 'I have to treat all students with equal fondness.' I wonder if he surrendered to his 'person-ness' or his 'teacher-ness.' Every teacher at some point may have this kind of dilemma in the classroom. Min displayed several reasons for his lack of fondness of Ho-chul: attention-seeking behaviors; lack of manners; impoliteness. This might be an attempt to rationalize his attitude about Ho-chul. Min's attitude toward Ho-chul was finally expressed as a general impression about returnee children's 'arrogance.'

Min continued his generalized impression about returnee children:

> *Returnee children are generally impertinent. I've heard this many times from colleagues in this school. I don't know where their trait of*

> *impertinency comes from. It could be from their own personality or from their pride in studying abroad. I think the latter would be more general. They could have lost the time to learn about the values that are especially respected in Korea while they were living abroad. I see returnee children are more likely to be 'wang-tta' easily than regular Korean students. However, the regular students are not inclined to drive returnee children into 'wang-tta' because fluent English is also valued by Korean students who are living in the present Korean society, which is in 'A fever for learning English.' In spite of this situation, if some returnee students are suffering from 'wang-tta' issues, it could be from their behavioral characteristics, not from their excellent English.* (Individual conversation, May 21, 2008)

Min saw a returnee's problem in fitting into a Korean classroom, if there is a problem, as a personal problem arising from a returnee's experience of living abroad. Min mentioned that returnee children are mostly 'arrogant'. That's because, he thought, they did not have opportunities to be educated in traditional Korean values such as politeness, respecting elders, not interrupting etc. while living in a foreign country. Min's increasingly negative perspective toward children's studying English abroad is revealed in the following story along with the above:

> *Jae-min has much confidence in English and tries to show off his ability in English class. He particularly speaks a lot during English class. On the other hand, Mi-na and Ho-chul do not have such a good English ability. It*

> *is understandable when considering their short period of staying abroad. Furthermore, they are struggling with Math. Returnee children usually have difficulty in catching up with the Math curriculum when they return to Korea. That would be natural because the level of the Math curriculum in English speaking countries is usually lower than the Korean curriculum. Today, I organized an 'English Team' in my classroom as English helpers to other classmates. Surprisingly, no returnee students were involved in the team. There are many students who can speak English better than the returnee children. They have been learning English only in Korea. Isn't it amazing?* (Individual conversation, May 28, 2008)

Min's experience with several "arrogant" returnee children caused him to generalize the negative points of some returnees, impertinency, being weak at Math, and not speaking good English, to all returnees. Min was likely to ask me about the necessity of children's going abroad to learn English. He seemed to say, "If they only aim for learning English by going abroad, they don't need to spend so much money to go abroad for now."

Min expressed his difficulty in teaching the returnee children in the classroom:

> *I have never had a time to personally converse with them. I have never met their parents before. Especially children in higher grades are not inclined to show their inner minds to their parents and their teachers even though they have some trouble or difficulty in their school life. The returned children are the same. It makes it difficult for me to know and*

> *understand them. Their parents think they may not have any problems in the school if they don't say anything at home. Consequently, I let them solve their problems by themselves.*
>
> *One more difficulty in teaching them for me is that I don't have any experience of living in a foreign country. When a student meets a problem, a teacher tries to help the student using his personal knowledge from the past experiences. Since I did not experience life in a foreign country like them, I seem to be very weak in understanding their academic or behavioral problems.* (Individual conversation, May 21, 2008)

Min was feeling sorry he could not have time to listen to the returnee children and to their parents. It made him feel uncomfortable because, he thought, he was not doing well as a teacher. It meant that he was not living out his stories to live by as a homeroom teacher; thus, he lacked understanding about the returnee children. Min expressed the reasons why it happened. First were Grade 5 children's tendencies to reveal their personal stories to their friends but not to their parents or their teachers. They have many secrets which they seldom speak about to adults. Second was the lack of collaboration between their parents and Min. It would be difficult for Min to ask the parents to visit the school as long as he did not see any serious problem. Lastly, Min mentioned his lack of experience of living in a foreign country. If Min had studied abroad before, his experience of it would be definitely helpful when working with them. Sharing experience enhances understanding each other. In spite of this situation, I wondered what the

homeroom teacher could do for the returnee children. I wondered how much Min tried to spend time with individual returnee students to listen to their stories.

What I heard about Min's returnee students at the final meeting was that Ho-chul was going to move to Thailand again with his whole family the following September.

Living in the Out-of-Classroom Places: Min's Stories

I met Min at his classroom for the second and following conversations at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays when all grades had only four class periods. The coffee shop, in which we had the first conversation, was too noisy for a conversation. It was very hard for me to hear the recording of the conversation. Meeting at his classroom at 3:00 p.m. was convenient and comfortable for both of us. It was during Min's working hours, so he did not have to spend extra time for the conversations. His school was near my home and would give me opportunities to visit his school and classroom.

His school was surrounded by apartment residences. When I entered the school's main gate, it was impressive to see the playground recently replaced with green grass for the school soccer team, which was an unfamiliar scene in Korean schools. I took a short cut, using the west-end stairs rather than the central stairs, to reach Min's classroom on the fifth floor. There were no particular signs or displays for English education in the school, except for simple English expressions between stairs. I was surprised by this when I considered this school's reputation related to English education.

As I mentioned in the previous section, Min's school was running 'Returnee Children-Ban (귀국학생반)' after class, which was composed of 23 returnees from English speaking countries and seven from China who had returned within the past two years. The school was also running English *Teucksunghwa-Ban* (특성화반) like other schools for children with good English ability. Almost all students in this class were returnee children.

> *The teachers' emotions about running these classes were quite negative. No teacher applied to teach 'Returnee Children-Ban (귀국학생반)', because the teacher had to make a new Korean language curriculum and had to have sufficient oral English skill to teach them as well. Some teachers criticized offering these classes to returnees in light of 'inequality'. According to them, too large portion of the money was assigned for returnee children: "So to speak, returnees could afford to study abroad and they wanted to do so. In spite of that, providing much support to help maintaining their English ability is unfair to other regular students. It's like promoting studying English abroad as a public educational institution." Although I don't know where we have to put a criterion of equality, I agree to some extent with this opinion.* (Individual conversation, May 21, 2008)

It is common to say in Korea if we are equipped with English fluency, it is easier to get a high-status, well-paying job, and thus to live affluently. This perception could explain why the number of children studying English abroad at an early age rapidly increased in Korea. Because going abroad for studying

English presupposed affluence, some teachers in Min's school might look at returnee children as already social beneficiaries. They applied their critical social standpoint, a kind of logic of the haves and the have-nots, to returnee children. Min was forced to give up going to a medical school due to his financial difficulty, which may have caused him to agree with colleagues' perspectives about running 'Returnee Children-*Ban* (귀국학생반)' and 'English *Teucksunghwa-Ban* (특성화반).'

Min's school was always busy with school events related to English education such as open-classes[15] of 'Returnee Children-*Ban* (귀국학생반),' 'Room for English Experience,' and 'English classes by level' to teachers and supervisors in the school district and school board. One day (June 18, 2008) when I visited Min's school for conversation with him, the school was crowded with many visitors who came to see the 'Room for English Experience' of the school. The presentations for the visitors were in the progress in the room. Min was busy preparing Power Point materials for other teachers' presentations, so he did not have time for conversation that day.

Many parents, almost all mothers, of returnee children were working in the 'Room for English Experience' as volunteer teachers. According to Min, parents of returnees were usually more cooperative than regular students' parents and actively participated in the school events. Min thought the returnee children's parents were more concerned about their children's education because the most

[15] An open class is one class period in a subject that is open to other teachers, parents, or supervisors.

important thing for them was their children's smooth readjustment into the Korean school.

Min's specific major was computer studies in the University of Education. Many colleagues asked him about their own computer problems after class and Min used to spend time after class helping them. His official extra work in the out-of-classroom was to take charge of one of the youth clubs in the school: the Scouts (Boy Scouts and Girl Guides).

> *Besides teaching my students in my classroom, I'm in charge of Boy & Girl Scouts in this school. The club activities are not very active. Usually teachers who want extra points for the promotion volunteer for this job. However, there were no teachers who wanted the Scout job in this school, so I took over the job. I don't have much interest in doing this job.*
>
> (Individual conversation, May 28, 2008)

At the beginning of the school year, each teacher is assigned a grade to teach and extracurricular work as well. The decision is made by administrators of a school depending on teachers' preferences. However, some grades and extracurricular activities are assigned regardless of a teacher's desire. This sometimes raises teachers' complaints and results in conflict between those teachers and administrators.

The Scout work was usually handled by a teacher who wanted to earn extra points toward his/her future promotion. In this case, the teacher would actively work to expand the club and become very active in the school landscape. In Min's school, no teacher wanted the Scout work. Although Min did not apply

for the work, he could not help accepting the assignment because of the convention in elementary school landscapes for novice teachers to take over hard work that experienced teachers did not want to do. I wondered about the relation between teachers' investment in their personal goals and their interest in doing a teaching job when living out their stories to live by as a teacher.

When I visited Min's school on June 11, 2008, the school environment looked a little bit different.

> *Min was very busy preparing for an open-class of 'English class by level' the following week for members of the Provincial Office of Education. The whole school seemed to be busy. Min has come in and out of the classroom several times since my arrival. I felt sorry for asking him to take time for an interview. The stairways to the fifth floor were decorated with new students' artwork, and the English expressions between stairs had been replaced with new ones. Min's classroom had changed, too. The front and back boards were filled with the students' work with titles displayed in English and Korean. The title on the front board was 'Embrace Your Dream' in English. The Korean tradition of welcoming visitors was being applied to the whole school.* (Field notes, June 11, 2008)

As I stated previously, the Provincial Office of Education had assigned Min's school the task of applying the amended English curriculum this year. The new curriculum trial in Min's school was operating English classes by students' levels. They had to open the English classes to outsiders several times during this

school year. The following week would be the first open classes after three months operation. The supervisors of the educational office and professors who were involved in writing the amended curriculum would be observing the English classes. The school was trying to make a good impression on them by making the school attractive.

Min's view of the open-class was negative:

> *There was no textbook for the amended English curriculum, and no guiding principle for teachers, either. I asked a professor about this, but I was not able to understand what she said. In my opinion, there was no particular difference between the current curriculum and the amended. I think it is meaningless to open our classes to them in this situation. It's ridiculous!*
>
> *The principal of this school is eager to decorate the school environment for next week's visitors. It is the teachers who have to redo the whole school environment. The principal wanted this, but he doesn't want to spend money for decorating the school. I've heard that recently many schools, especially in Seoul, entrust the work to a professional company. I don't know when the change will come in this school.* (Individual conversation, June 11, 2008)

Min was busy preparing for the open-class. He had to make a lesson plan, and had to redo his classroom environment. He had to do tasks allotted to him for general preparation for 'D-day' in the school. However, he was not pleased to be doing this. He could not see the point of the amendment to the English curriculum

given to him by the upper administrators, which he then had to carry out. There might not have been time for agreement about this school project between the assigner and the assigned (teachers), which would explain why Min was struggling with his lack of understanding about the amended English curriculum.

All teachers in Min's school were busy preparing for the school open classes. The biggest burden was changing wall decorations in the main lobby, the hallways, and the stairways of the school. It was time consuming. Min thought that it was not teachers' work. It could be done by a professional company if the principal decided to spend money for that. In fact, the precedent that teachers did this work themselves was changing in a lot of elementary schools. Min was complaining about his school situation.

> *I want to be a teacher who has something particular. I want to have a specialty to distinguish me from other teachers. I want to show myself to my students as a person who makes an effort, accepts a challenge, and improves to reach my goal. The specialty that I aimed at is English. Although I am busy enough with my schoolwork, I don't have any extra work related to English education in this school. I want to do it, so that I can pile up some accomplishments in English education. Therefore, I am doing English-related work outside of school with teachers from other schools. One teacher I met at the Globalization program asked me to help her with English work by moving into her school the following September.*

I have already applied for an irregular teacher transfer[16]. (Individual conversation, June 11, 2008)

Min wanted diverse experience in his life. English was an important means to reach his goal. He saw the possibility of English as his specialty in the teachers' English conversation class. He began to dream of living in a foreign country using English. Although he applied for the teacher dispatch program to the Korean school in Hochiminh to fulfill his dream, his failure to be accepted helped him realize that he needed more achievement in English education in elementary school landscapes. However, in his current school, he was not able to be involved in English-related work in the out-of-classroom place. There were already teachers who were doing English-related work. Min turned his eyes to possibilities outside of the school. The teachers whom Min came to know through several English teacher-training programs suggested to him that he collaborate on writing a Math textbook in English for elementary children. Min also began to participate in communities of elementary teachers for English education. Min believed that these activities would advance his career as an elementary school teacher fluent in English. Now, Min was planning to transfer to a school that would provide opportunities for extra English work. He was on the way to fulfilling his dream of learning and teaching English in a foreign country.

[16] In Korea, teachers usually move to another school on March 1st, which is the beginning day of a school year. Min transferred to a school to which he wanted to move on September 1st, 2008.

CHAPTER SIX

Narrative Account 2: Sung-ho's Stories to Live By

Sung-ho's Journey of Learning English

I came to know Sung-ho through the vice-principal of his current school. According to the vice-principal, Sung-ho volunteered to be a participant of my research before I asked him. He seemed to be curious about me, as I was studying in an English-speaking country. He knew I was an elementary school teacher with sponsorship from the Ministry of Education. He was also interested in participating in the dispatch program,[17] for which I was selected in 2003. Perhaps he wanted to learn from me how to be selected for the program.

I contacted him and we made an appointment for our first conversation. His school was located in Yongin in Gyeonggi Province, over two hours from Ilsan, depending on traffic conditions. We were supposed to meet in between the two places for the first time. However, I changed the place to Sung-ho's classroom since I realized a coffee shop was not appropriate for research conversation during my first meeting with Min.

Sung-ho was a male teacher who was in his middle forties. He was affable and motivated to participate in the research. First of all, he was very interested in learning and teaching English. He liked English itself very much. I could see his passion for English from the displays in his classroom on my first visit with him.

[17] Teacher dispatch program for getting a Master's degree in a developed country, sponsored by the Provincial Office of Education and the Ministry of Education in Korea.

In 1963, Sung-ho was born in Yeoju in Gyeonggi Province as the youngest of seven children. His father was a middle-class farmer so that he did not suffer from serious poverty as a child. After graduating from junior high school, he went to a senior high school in Sungnam, which was a bigger city than Yeoju. His first experience of learning English was in Grade 7.

> *I liked English from the first time. I received very high marks in English in junior high. Particularly, I enjoyed watching "The Six Million Dollar Man" (ABC Network, 1974-1978) on TV once a week. The man in the drama was so nice and the humanity of the drama was touching. I became interested in foreign culture and foreign people. I began to dream of going abroad.* (Individual conversation, April 25, 2008)

Sung-ho's interest in English culture was incited by watching American serial dramas, which seemed to plant in him a fantasy about American culture. He really wanted to communicate with those American-like things. English was a medium for that. For Sung-ho, English was not only one subject; it was a communication tool. He said, "That's why it was very interesting for me to learn English."

After graduating from senior high school, Sung-ho did not hesitate to talk to foreigners when he met them in the street. He really wanted to speak in English with native speakers of English, so he made an effort to do so. The following is one anecdote:

> *It was just after my graduation from the senior high school. There was a Team Spirit Operation of the US army in Korea around my home town.*

> *One day, they set up a military camp on the field in my village. It was very near my house. They stayed there one night. I wanted to speak with American soldiers in English. I decided to try to talk to them. I accompanied a younger fellow, a boy in Grade 6 from my neighborhood. When we approached them the first time, they misrecognized us as thieves. I explained who we were with my limited English. It was marvelous that they understood what I said at that time. They then treated us to coffee and C-rations.*[18] *I remember I could not help using only simple English words. However, the boy I brought there began to admire me in light of using English. It's funny!* (Individual conversation, April 25, 2008)

In the 1980s, I sometimes heard the news of Team Spirit Joint Operations of the US and Korean Armies. Some schools in rural areas were providing English conversation classes for teachers or students of the school with US soldiers as voluntary instructors. Sung-ho's idea to contact American soldiers may have come from this environment. He was eager to see what would happen when he used English with Americans. He wanted to confirm whether his English would allow him to communicate with native speakers of English. Even though he recognized that he was not good at English, his limited English worked as a means for communication with American soldiers, which pleased him.

On the other hand, Sung-ho's yearning to use English was a good influence on the boy who accompanied Sung-ho when he conversed with the American soldiers in English. The boy became very interested in learning English

[18] Combat rations of the US Army.

after observing this scene. The boy studied English very hard and became the top ranking student in his junior and senior high schools.

Thanks to his desire to communicate with, and interest in, native speakers of English, Sung-ho established friendships with them. When he was a university student, he met an Australian Catholic priest at a Catholic church. The priest introduced his friends to Sung-ho. He could use oral English a lot. He took TOEFL and *Vocabulary 22,000* lessons from a Canadian whom the priest introduced to him. Sung-ho mentioned, "I did not study hard about TOEFL and vocabulary. I was just satisfied with the time to speak with the Canadian at that time."

One prominent experience Sung-ho had with a native speaker of English was when he lived with an American ballet director, Richard, for one year just after his graduation from the University of Education.

> *It was in 1988. I had graduated from the University of Education, and I was assigned to an elementary school in Dongducheon. I had to live alone, away from my home, in Yeoju. I met an American ballet director, Richard, in a hotel lobby. He was staying in Seoul, Korea with his wife for his business. He was in his early sixties. I talked to him first. We became close. Afterwards, Richard invited me to his place many times. We spent a lot of time together. I could help him living in Korea by, for example, arranging a Korean housekeeper for him. He was very nice and considerate to people. He was similar to the man in "The Six Million Dollar Man." I learned how to behave like a man from him. I think I experienced*

> *American culture through spending time with him*. (Individual conversation, April 25, 2008)

Sung-ho's friendship with Richard reinforced his positive image of American culture, including the language, English, shaped by the experience of watching the American serial drama in his junior high school days. The American lifestyle and habits, along with Richard's manner to persons, impressed him. His friendship with Richard strengthened Sung-ho's desire to learn English.

Sung-ho's adoration of American culture was connected with his study of American poetry and literature. He started studying them to prepare for graduate school entrance exams in 1995. It was not simply studying for exams to Sung-ho. He came to enjoy reading them. He said, "I was happy with two thick volumes 'American and English Literature' by Norton." He liked everything related to English.

Sung-ho really liked to converse with English speakers. I could see his eagerness to speak English through his story of going to three countries in South-East Asia as a program of professional development for teachers in 1996.

> *I applied for the month-long English training program*[19] *for elementary teachers in English-speaking countries in 1996. I was not selected. After that, in the same year, the Provincial Office of Education gave me another opportunity to visit South-East Asian countries for school teachers to*

[19] The Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education in Korea has been running this program every summer and winter break since 1995 for the purpose of improving elementary teachers' English ability. Since receiving an IMF (International Monetary Fund) Relief Loan at the end of 1997 in Korea, this program was suspended for several years. It resumed in 2000 with a small number of participants.

> *study for seven nights and eight days. The members of the tour were all experienced elementary teachers. We visited three countries: Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore. One evening in Malaysia, I came out of the hotel we were staying in. I hung around near the hotel. There were so many covered vending carts in a row with bright lights that were crowded with a lot of youngsters. I found a person who was in police uniform, passing by me. I talked to him in English. I realized he was able to speak English. We moved to a covered vending cart and talked about life, education, and our families for about two hours with three bottles of beer. In Singapore, when we visited an elementary school, I played the role of translator between our Korean members and the school guide.* (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

Sung-ho seemed to have a particular talent for becoming close with English-speaking strangers. Even though we know the best way to improve English speaking skills is to speak as much as possible with native English speakers, it is very difficult for English learners to speak with them first. It does depend on an individual's personality, I think, because it requires a kind of courage. Sung-ho's bravery in terms of speaking English was seen not only in Malaysia, but also in the hotel lobby where he met the ballet director, and in the field where Sung-ho tried to speak with the American soldiers. I wondered how much this propensity in Sung-ho influenced his learning English, and how much his personality affected it.

In the summer of 1997, over 300 elementary teachers, the largest number since the program began, were sent to Canada and the US for one month for English training. The Provincial Office of Education covered all expenses. The selected teachers chose their preferred country. The 200 teachers who chose the US were then arbitrarily assigned to universities in America. I remember that I also went to a southern Florida university in 1997.

Sung-ho's affable personality also created a close relationship with a professor at the University of Toronto in Canada.

> *In 1997, I applied again for the English training program for elementary teachers in English speaking countries. This time, I was selected. I chose Canada as a training country because I had a Canadian friend here in Korea and I had a favorable impression of Canada. The number of teachers who were going to Canada was 100. We were divided into 5 groups, 20 for each group, and we studied at the North York Educational Office in Ontario, Canada. I was a group leader of my class. I met a professor, David, at the University of Toronto. He was a friend of one staff member of the program. I became close to him. I met him about four times during the month I was in Canada. I was usually hungry in Canada because food was poor in my home stay household. David invited me to a dinner at his house. He made dishes himself for me. His house was so beautiful. During weekends, while other members went on package trips near Toronto, I used to accompany David to his friends' gatherings. He was very nice and considerate. Afterwards, he came to Korea two times*

> *with his own business. He visited my home and I guided him in sightseeing of Korea. After coming back to Korea from Canada, I suffered from my desire to study abroad. But I couldn't, due to my difficult conditions. I still have a dream of going abroad no matter what circumstances.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho had an affable personality, which allowed him to become close with David, whom he met in Canada for the first time. I wondered what happened to shape the close relationship between Sung-ho and David, two different language users. Could it be English or personality? Although I did not know how fluent in English Sung-ho was, English could be an important factor because who a person is, for the most part, is inclined to be expressed by language.

Sung-ho's experience of being a group leader in teacher-abroad programs and of having close relationships with English native speakers must have given him confidence in English and increased his desire to learn English as well. He wanted to go to an English speaking country to study since his experience in the English training program in Canada. However, he was not able to carry out his hope of studying abroad. He already had his own family, a wife and two sons, to support at that time, so his economic circumstances were not good for studying abroad. Furthermore, the country was economically depressed at the time of the IMF Relief Loan and, in fact, many students studying in the US were coming back to Korea because of the tremendous increase in the U.S. dollar exchange rate. Many parents of students studying in the US had to give up supporting their

children in the US at this time. At that point, Sung-ho also had to suppress his desire to study abroad.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Office of Education jointly announced running the teacher dispatch program for studying abroad. Teachers competed for places in the program because the conditions offered by this program were exceptionally good. The criteria for selection included not only English competence but also many other requirements. Sung-ho was very interested in applying for this program. However, he did not try to challenge the selection, because, he said, "I was not confident of passing through the exams."

Sung-ho had dreamed of being an elementary school teacher since he was in elementary school himself, because of the influence of his 2nd grade homeroom teacher:

> *My homeroom teacher in my second year of elementary school was very pretty and warm. She came from Seoul and she was in her twenties at that time. She always smiled at us. She loved all children equally. Even though we country kids were not always clean, she did not seem to care about it. She really liked her students and treated us very warmly. I remember we were happy with her. Since having her as my homeroom teacher, I came to have a dream of being an elementary school teacher. I wanted to be a teacher like her.* (Individual conversation, April 25, 2008)

A kind, pretty, young woman teacher - it was even better if she was from a big city such as Seoul - was a kind of fantasy to children of a small rural elementary school. Sung-ho seemed to experience this fantasy in his real life. He

observed and experienced a good teacher and how one teacher made all students in her classroom happy. He shaped an ideal teacher's features in his mind through living with his 2nd grade homeroom teacher. He wanted to be an elementary school teacher who was able to make his students happy in the school.

Although he wanted to go to the University of Education to be an elementary school teacher, he had to give up this dream. His older brother and his 12th grade homeroom teacher opposed Sung-ho entering the University of Education because, at that time, the social status of male elementary teachers was very low. Another factor Sung-ho had to consider was his parents' financial situation. They had been farmers for their whole lives and were not affluent enough to afford private university tuition for their youngest child. Sung-ho had to choose among national universities with cheaper tuition fees than private universities (almost 40%). Sung-ho's grades were good enough to enter general national universities unless he intended to go to the first ranking national university, Seoul National University.

Sung-ho entered the University of Seoul in 1982. He decided to major in Municipal Administration but could not abandon his dream of being an elementary school teacher. In his second year of university, he dropped out of the university without telling anybody in his family. He took the national standardized tests again, and entered the Gyeongin National University of Education in 1984.

In 1988, after graduating from the University of Education, he was assigned to an elementary school in Dongducheon, the northern part of Gyeonggi

Province, where he worked for two years. He then moved to Sungnam district and worked there from 1990 to 1996. He voluntarily ran an afterschool English class for the students in and above 4th grade in a school in Sungnam in 1992-93. He expressed his passion for English by teaching English to his homeroom students when they had extra time during class hours. His great concern about learning English was naturally connected with his interest in teaching English. He really liked teaching English to his students.

One day in 2001 when Sung-ho was working at a school in Yeoju, a third year university student, Hee-won, came to see him. Sung-ho had taught Hee-won in 1992 when Hee-won was in Grade 6. After graduating from elementary school, Hee-won went to Australia to study. He finished his junior and senior high school diploma there. The IMF crunch made him quit his study abroad in 1998. At that point, he was already a first year student at the University of Washington in the US. His father was in a high position in the Korean government, and it was seen as a kind of betrayal by government servants if they kept their children studying abroad. It was a political environment at that time. Hee-won came back to Korea and entered Korea University successfully. Hee-won told Sung-ho, "I think my experience of studying abroad at a young age is valuable. When looking at my university classmates here, they seemed to be worn out by their study in the high school. Although I'm sure I did study hard and deeply in Australia, I don't feel exhausted. I think Korean public education has a serious problem. Why don't you

let your son go abroad to study, if possible?" Hee-won's comments impressed Sung-ho.

> *I agreed with Hee-won's point about the problem of the public educational system. Although I am a public school teacher, I don't want my children to study in the Korean educational environment. Our education is too superficial and assigns students too many things to do. I made up my mind to send my son to an English speaking country to study if I could support him since the meeting with Hee-won.* (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

Sung-ho did not want his son, Tae-min, to be educated in the Korean school system. Since making a fortune by investing in real estate in 2003, he could send Tae-min to Australia in 2004 when Tae-min was in the 4th grade. Tae-min stayed in Australia for one and a half years. He returned to Grade 6 in a Korean school. After finishing Grade 6, Tae-min went to the US. Now, he is in 7th grade in an American middle school.

Sung-ho did not want Tae-min to return to Korea in the future. He wanted Tae-min to settle forever in America. His wish was connected with his future dream.

> *I don't know what my future looks like. I could be a principal by getting a promotion. Or, I could be a teacher who is teaching only English in the future. If possible, I want to go to undeveloped countries as an educational missionary during school break when I get older. I'm thinking of many different things I can do in the future. Economic affluence gives me some*

> *freedom to think like this. One clear thing is that I want to have opportunities to use real English in my life. If my son lives in America in the future, I could live there in my old age.* (Individual conversation, April 25, 2008)

Sung-ho had many thoughts about his future. On the one hand, he was considering being an administrator in a school, which required much effort for a long time. Also, there was a societal perception that if he was a competent teacher, he had to be an administrator when he was a certain age. On the other hand, he was thinking about doing what he really liked to do: he liked living with children in a classroom and teaching English in an elementary school regardless of the social perception. Besides this, Sung-ho was open to considering many different paths. He thought that he did not have to cling to his teaching job because he did not rely on his salary. I wondered how much Sung-ho experienced his teaching job as a dream and how much as a means to earn a living. I remember his dream was to be an elementary school teacher who could make his students happy with him in the classroom.

With Sung-ho's earnest dream of living in America using English, he wanted his son, Tae-min, to get a job and to live in America in the future.

Sung-ho's Experience of Teaching Returnee Children: Living out His 'Stories to Live By' in the In-Classroom Place

Sung-ho's current school was located in a small town in Yongin, Gyeonggi Province. The school was surrounded by a hillock at the back, and by a

field in the front. It was very small and pretty as if it came out of a picture book. From the school gate to the entrance of the school building, I could see many beautiful signboards decorated with English along with Korean. On the way to the building, there was a small water mill. The sound and splash from the mill welcomed me with freshness in the late spring.

The building was a two-story building. It looked special to me, as I was accustomed to seeing different kinds of schools in cities. City schools were usually four or five stories high. Sung-ho's school had only eight classes in total from Grade 1 to Grade 6. He was in charge of one of the two Grade 6 classes. His classroom was on the second floor, next to the principal's office and the administration office. It was a unique scene compared to other schools, where offices are generally located on the first floor.

This was Sung-ho's first year in this school. He moved from a school in Yeoju at the beginning of the 2008 school year. This school was different from other small, rural elementary schools in terms of the SES (Social and Economic Status) of the students' households. About 50% of registered students were from families that moved into this small town in Yongin for a better life in a rural district. They lived in beautiful new houses. Thus, I could see a high portion of returnee children in this school. In Sung-ho's class, 4 of the 21 were returnee children who had lived abroad more than one year.

Sung-ho's first experience of teaching returnee students was at a school in Bundang New City, Sungnam, in 1995 when he had been teaching for seven years.

> *When I moved to a school in Bundang, I took over one Grade 6 class. It was November, so I taught them only for two months. They graduated in February the following year. Eun-mi was a returnee student who was very quiet and who could speak almost no Korean. It was the first time I had a returnee child in my classroom. I was very curious about her. She was fluent in English, but not in Korean. I was troubled about how to help her by using English. I tried to make connections between her and classmates for her, so that she could improve her Korean language skills.* (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

Bundang was well-known as a high-status, affluent region in Korea. There would be many more returnee children in Bundang than in other cities. It was a new city established at the beginning of the 1990s by a government city plan like Ilsan New City. Almost all the residents lived in apartments.

Sung-ho must have been interested in Eun-mi's English ability as a person who had a passion for English. He, on the one hand, probably tried to speak with Eun-mi in English to help her understand the classroom situation. On the other hand, he might have wanted to have the joy of speaking English himself with a fluent English user in a real-life situation. Sung-ho also seemed to think it was important for Eun-mi to improve her Korean speaking ability in order to live in Korea. He felt that Eun-mi should spend more time with her classmates to improve her Korean ability and to develop friendships with her classmates. I wonder which language Sung-ho, as a homeroom teacher, valued more for Eun-mi, Korean or English.

The following year, in 1996, Sung-ho taught another returnee student, Yeon-soo, in his Grade 6 classroom.

> *Yeon-soo was a returnee student who had lived in Italy for seven years. However, I did not even know she was a returnee at first. She had no problem in Korean. Several years had passed since she had come back to Korea. She had adapted well and achieved good grades. Her mother, an executive in the parents' association, told me that she had lived in Italy for seven years and she had gone to an international school there. Although Yeon-soo must have been fluent in English with her background experience in Italy, I could not tell how fluent she was in English. It was not a comfortable environment for me to use English in the classroom, because first, English was not officially taught in elementary schools yet. Second, the school in Bundang was unique in terms of high status of parents and students. I was very cautious in using English with the students. I did not ever try to run an English conversation class after school in this school, because most students attended private institutes after school and many students and parents were fluent in English.* (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

I could see how differently Sung-ho was living out his stories to live by as a teacher depending on the school context. Sung-ho lived out very actively as a teacher who was very concerned about teaching English in both in and out-of-classroom places in the previous rural school, where he voluntarily managed English conversation classes after school from 1992 to 1993. He never tried to do

that in Bundang. He became passive about teaching English. He worried about revealing his imperfect English to the students and the parents. If he was quiet in English, he was safe. This situation reminded me how my attitude changed about speaking English from Korea to Canada. My experience was similar to Sung-ho's. I was very active in speaking and teaching English in Korea. However, I became a very passive English speaker in Canada. Before speaking English, I worried if I would appear stupid to native English speakers in Canada due to my imperfect English. Many times, I chose to stay quiet instead of speaking. Sung-ho suppressed his curiosity about Yeon-soo's fluency in English by not speaking with her in English. It was a safe way for Sung-ho not to be diminished in the eyes of his students.

Sung-ho's current classroom was on the second floor next to the administration office. The furniture in the classroom was high quality and well polished. The backboard and side walls were filled with children's English work titled 'World Culture,' 'Reading Score,' and 'Project Learning' in English. The classroom environment revealed Sung-ho's passion for English education.

As noted earlier, Sung-ho had four returnee children in his class: Sue-yeon, Hae-kyeong, Hyun-woo, and Ji-won.

> *I'm so pleased to have returnee children in my classroom. Each returnee shows a different degree of adaptation into the Korean school depending on when he or she returned. I, as their homeroom teacher, want to do something special for them. I can understand them better than other*

> *teachers, because I have much knowledge about living in a foreign country. Actually, my son, who is studying in the US right now, was a returnee child in Grade 5 in Korea in 2006. I am using the returnee children as assistant teachers or group activity leaders in the English class. I have planned 'English project learning' as a year-round project. I can also make good use of their English ability in this project.* (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

Sung-ho was teaching all subjects including English this year. There was a teacher who taught specific subjects that other homeroom teachers did not want to teach. Usually the teachers asked him to teach English. However, Sung-ho wanted to teach English himself to his homeroom students and the other Grade 6 teacher did also, so each taught English to his own students.

Sung-ho liked to have many children in his class who were fluent in English, because he valued English ability and was very concerned about English learning and teaching. He believed that he could help returnee children to readjust better than other teachers, because he had much background knowledge which would help him to understand returnee children.

He applied to participate in a class demonstration competition in the current year. The subject he chose was English. He also submitted a proposal the previous March to KFTA (Korean Federation of Teachers' Association) for an action research project about running an 'English Project Learning' class. The research paper about this proposal should be coming out in November 2008, near the end of the school year. Sung-ho was enthusiastic about teaching English and

was expecting the returnee children to play a great role in implementing his plans for English teaching in the classroom.

Sung-ho told me stories of each returnee student living in his current classroom.

> *Sue-yeon is the best student in my classroom. She is cheerful and has very good manners, so all teachers in the school like her. She was born in America because of her father's study and came to Korea when she was five years old. She went back to America at seven in the middle of Grade 1, and came back to Korea at eight, at the end of Grade 2 in her previous school. Even though three years had passed, such a long time, since she had returned to Korea, her English is still very good. Our school has been holding many school events particularly related to English. Sue-yeon is doing a great job in those school events. I've heard her parents are trying to help her to maintain her English ability by speaking only English at home with all family members sometimes. Her father is a professor at Korea University. Sue-yeon is not going to any private institute at all for now. However, her academic achievement is excellent. She actively participates in class activities and usually acts as a group leader. She is also very good natured. Sue-yeon kindly helped her classmate study when she was struggling with some difficulty in understanding. Sue-yeon is very nice. Every classmate likes her.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho knew many things about Sue-yeon, probably because he tried to have time for individual conversations with his students during lunch times. He

mentioned, "I'm trying to spend much time talking to my students individually. It is relatively easy in this school because of the small number of students in my class."

Sue-yeon was a returnee student who had adapted well. When she came back in the 2nd grade, she was not able to speak Korean well. However, she had no problem fitting into the Korean classroom. Many of her classmates had been in her first year classroom in Korea. Her family moved to this area when she was in the 4th grade. Before then, in Seoul, she went to a private English institute. However, it was difficult to find an appropriate private institute for her in the rural area, so she was studying by herself at home without any assistance and was doing well.

Sue-yeon was a perfect student in Sung-ho's eyes. Not only was she academically excellent, but she also had a very nice personality. Furthermore, she could speak English fluently, which made Sung-ho see her as a returnee student. For Sung-ho, 'returnee' had a positive connotation in light of English ability. Sung-ho sometimes asked her to assist in the English class and sometimes gave her opportunities to present in English to the class. These activities worked positively to develop her confidence in English.

At the last interview with Sung-ho (July 11, 2008), I heard that Sue-yeon went to the US again with her father to study abroad on July 9, 2008.

Hae-kyeong had experience of studying in the US for one and a half years. Her father is in a high position with Samsung Electronics. She returned to

Korea last year, at the end of Grade 5. She is a child who has a strong desire for prominent accomplishment. She is generally doing very well. Only her marks in Math are not satisfying her. I found out she was very excellent in her academic study before going to America. Her current Math grade seems to hurt her pride about her previous status in the Korean school. I decided to keep an eye on her and encourage her, so I told her, "Hae-kyeong, don't be hasty. You are doing very well in Math right now in spite of having two years' gap. You will catch up soon." And I also said the same thing to all students during the Math class to encourage her.

She has a desire to be outstanding in every field. A reading contest was held last week. There were four categories in the contest: writing an impression of a book, drawing about reading, and two other categories. Hae-kyeong got second prize in the drawing about reading category. She was not satisfied with the result. She appealed to my judgment about her work. I explained my view and tried to make her understand my decision for a long time after class. That evening, while I was having a meal with colleagues, Hae-kyeong's mother called me and told me Hae-kyeong had been crying due to the contest results since coming home. I had to talk again with Hae-kyeong for a long time on the phone. She really wanted to get first prize.

Another episode showed Hae-kyeong's challenging mind. Every morning, one class presents an English performance, such as a chorus in English,

> *an English drama, or an English chant at the auditorium for 20 minutes in turn. My class is going to do an English skit that I wrote myself. When she was not assigned to a main role, I saw her face showed disappointment, so I asked her to edit the script, saying, "it is a very important role that only you can do." Actually, she is the best in English ability in my class. She edited the script and revised her part, adding more lines. It seemed to cheer her up as I expected.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho believed that he was able to understand Hae-kyeong. Hae-kyeong did not like to admit the gap between her academic achievement before she went abroad and what it is now. She is dissatisfied with her present situation. She wanted to be the best. Sung-ho never criticized her. He tried to resolve her struggle by saying, "It will not take long for you to catch up with Math. Don't be hasty. You are doing very well now." It was possible because Sung-ho's son, Tae-min, had the same experience when he returned to Korea in Grade 5. Tae-min went to Australia at the beginning of 4th grade and came back to Korea in the middle of 5th grade. Sung-ho said that Tae-min also had a little difficulty in catching up with the Korean Year 5 curriculum when he returned. However, he recovered in Grade 6.

> *Hyun-woo had only one year experience of staying in the US when he was very little. He returned to Korea in Grade 1. However, he is the best at English among the male students. He is also a group activity leader in the English class. He is very good at making things with his hands. He is the*

> *best at making a glider in our class. He has much curiosity and is always pushing beyond obstacles. He actively participates in the class activities. Sometimes, he asks questions irrelevant to the situation during the class, so classmates called him 'the thoughtless one.' I could brand him as a student who interrupts the classes, but I don't. I interpret him positively as a curious boy. Hyun-woo and his mother believe that his grades are improving in Grade 6. Am I encouraging children very well? Ha ha ha…*
> (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

For Sung-ho, it was amazing how Hyun-woo has maintained his good English skills since returning to Korea. Young returnees like Hyun-woo are likely to lose English fluency by living in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) situation. However, Hyun-woo maintained his English and took a role as English group leader. Although Sung-ho was annoyed when Hyun-woo said ridiculous things, he tried to look for positive points and tried to encourage them. Sung-ho was living out his stories to live by as a teacher who wanted his students to be happy in the classroom, and he was proud of himself in that respect. Sung-ho believed that he was dealing with his students very well.

> *Ji-won stayed in Canada for one year to study English. Her father is a medical doctor. She returned to Korea last year in Grade 5 like Hae-kyeong. She is also very good at English and is a group leader in the English class. She has a generous, broad mind. I have never seen her angry at her classmates. She behaves like an older sister to them. She is*

> *very independent and autonomous. Sometimes I see Ji-won care for a classmate who needs some help. She does not say a lot. According to her mother, Ji-won is reticent even at home. I found her talent as a leader. I'm trying to train her as a leader.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho's positive view about returnee children probably leads him to adopt a positive teacher role for them. He tries to see positive points in them, to encourage them to improve those points. Sung-ho recognized Ji-won's disposition as a leader. He tried to assign many jobs to her in the classroom in order to train her as a future leader. I wondered where his positive attitude toward returnee children came from first, whether it first came from his concern about English, or from his previous experience with returnee children.

I confirmed that the four returnee children in Sung-ho's class were assuming many leadership roles in class activities through pictures, class displays of their work and Sung-ho's stories. They were working as group leaders in the English class. They were the main characters in the class English skit. According to Sung-ho, the returnee children all had good marks in other subject areas because they were from economically affluent households.

When I asked if there was any jealousy from the other students about the returnees' lives as chosen people in this classroom, Sung-ho answered:

> *The characteristic of this school is no jealousy and no bullying between children. Generally speaking, children in the school are uniformly good at academic achievement and economically affluent. For my class, half of the students were from the new nature town ('Junwon Maeul' in Korean) and*

> *half were original residents of the area. The original residents also became rich because the price of the land they possessed went up. Only two students are from a foster home. Their parents left them with a Buddhist monk. I've heard the fathers visit them once in a while. They have very low intelligence. Because all students except two achieve excellent marks, they are not jealous of each other. Thirteen among 21 achieved above 90% this month.*
>
> *My students are wonderful. I have never met children like them in my teaching experience. There is no 'wang-tta' in my classroom. They truly care about and help each other. They never try to keep at a distance or to bully a student who is different from them in marks or household environment. My students are very nice and such lovely children.*
>
> (Individual conversation, May 9, 2008)

Sung-ho must have met great children this year. However, I imagine if a teacher tries to find an individual student's specialty and to encourage it, trust established between the teacher and the students will create a positive, cooperative atmosphere in the classroom. I believe that Sung-ho's stories lived out as a teacher helped his students to become great.

When I visited Sung-ho's school for a third conversation with him, Sung-ho looked tired. I bumped into him in front of a school storehouse in the back yard. He was pulling out easels for display. They would be used to display results of a school event. He expressed that he was not in good physical condition.

> *This school holds too many school events. I feel like I have done as much work in three months as I would have done in another school in two years. I feel physical limitation. So tired!! I cannot find any extra time for my students. Only teaching regular lesson periods. No time to talk with them. I just made them hurry because I feel unstable due to piled-up schoolwork. I could not even apply the lesson plan I developed for my action research until now. Not only am I so busy with school work, but my students are also busy participating in various school events. Everybody is busy. They are not happy about that, either. I came to be skeptical about 'true-education'. I think it is not. I have not enough time to take care of my students. I'm not doing well in my classroom.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho was passing through the process of adapting to a new school. A particularly small school meant a huge workload for each teacher. However, it was more than he expected. The schoolwork in the out-of-classroom place was threatening how he wanted to live as a good teacher in the classroom. Sung-ho was struggling with the stories he has to live out as a good teacher on his professional knowledge landscape.

Living in the Out-of-Classroom Places: Sung-ho's Stories of School

Sung-ho's current school was a very small country school with only eight classes. Eleven teachers worked in this school, including two administrators (one principal and one vice-principal) and one specialist teacher. As I described in the

previous section, the students of the school came from households of relatively high economic status, even though the school was located in a rural area. That explained why there were quite a number of returnee children in Sung-ho's class.

The school environment, both outside and inside, was well arranged and very pretty. Even though the school building itself was very old, the inside fixtures were attractive and of very good quality, something I rarely saw in other regular schools. There were many sign boards written in English. I conjectured that this school was enthusiastic about English education on my first visit.

I already knew that both administrators of the school had previous experience as supervisors for the Provincial Office of Education. They were known in the field as able supervisors. Perhaps that would be the reason for their assignment to this school. The principal came to the school two years ago, and the vice-principal came this year, in 2008, from the Provincial Office of Education.

It was difficult for teachers to move into this school. The teachers who worked here could get double points every year for their future promotion. It was a kind of incentive for working in a rural area in a school that was implementing a pilot study. Therefore, teachers who had some achievements were usually able to apply for this school. I heard that all teachers of the school, including Sung-ho, had some specialty in their career.

Before moving to the current school in 2008, Sung-ho had worked hard in a previous school as a head teacher. He chose the current school, focusing only on living out his stories with his students in the classroom. He really liked his students in his homeroom class. He was very happy with them. They were ideal

students with whom to live out his stories in the classroom. However, Sung-ho was experiencing a very hard time on the school landscape because of the tremendous amount of school work.

> *I'm so busy at my school work not for my students in the classroom. I was physically and mentally exhausted. I already knew that teachers in a small school have to handle an unusual amount of extra schoolwork before coming to this school. It was common knowledge because, in general, the same amount of work needs to be done regardless of the number of teachers. However, this school is beyond my expectation ··· Besides regular school work, there are so many things to do for many kinds of school events. I've heard this school was a quiet and peaceful country school even two years ago. Since the current principal was posted to this school it changed a lot internally and externally. He is ambitious in school management. He asks all teachers to participate in many research competitions. For example, all but one teacher applied for the Class Demonstration Contest in 2008 in our school. The workload that each teacher has to deal with for school events is huge. An event itself is not all. There is always following up the event, that is, exhibition of the event results: a photo exhibition or a student work exhibition. I have to take pictures at every event. It is not only the teachers who are busy, but also the students. I've heard some parents suggest that the school reduce school events.*

> *Anyway, I did not imagine this kind of situation when I moved to this school. I just wanted to focus on my students in the classroom in my new school. However, I cannot focus on my students because of the schoolwork surrounding me. I'm so tired. I'm worrying about my health. I had myocardial infarction one and a half years ago, and had a surgery for that. Although I am almost recovered now, I know that I have to be careful about working too hard. I'm feeling that stress from the school work is driving me into an unhealthy condition. But I cannot say anything to the administrators. Nobody in the school complains. All teachers follow the principal obediently. I'm a first-year teacher here. I don't want to be seen as an incompetent teacher. Sometimes I don't want to come to school.*
>
> (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho expected his current school would be a quiet small country school. He wanted to spend his time caring for his students in the classroom. He mentioned, "If I just wanted to get a promotion as time passes, I should have stayed in the previous school district. It was an easier way. But I wanted more time with my students in a small school." However, the reality was very different. Usually a principal with a reputation as an able person is inclined to be strong-willed about internal or external school improvement. It could be directed at both students and teachers in his/her school. Sung-ho's principal planned many events for students, which would give them opportunities to experience many things. He also led the teachers to participate in many competitions for their professional development. I assume this would be his story to live out as an able administrator.

Perhaps these stories he lived could be the evidence that he was a strong administrator. The principal might also need to show his ability in school management to people who are higher in the educational hierarchy. The fact that almost all teachers in Sung-ho's school were participating in the Class Demonstration Contest was unique considering there were usually only one or two participating teachers even in a big school.

Sung-ho was a well-known teacher who had a specialty in teaching English in his previous school district. He wanted to keep his reputation in the new school. He already applied for two teaching competitions this year. All other colleagues seemed to him to be doing their work very well with positive minds. He also tried to handle all the work assigned to him. He could not stay behind as a first year teacher. However, he was feeling his physical limitations. He needed to negotiate between his mental and physical health. He was struggling with his negative attitude about the school.

On the third meeting (May 23, 2008), Sung-ho showed me many pictures of children. They were about school events and class activities. He shared his negative impression about school events while showing the photos.

> *We teachers are in a flurry to take pictures at every school event. We have to leave pictures for follow-up display. The students seem to become tired of that. Some students frowned at the camera. I don't know what this is for. It looks like showing off. For teachers, it is too time consuming. For students, it makes them tired. I don't like this school system. This is why I don't like the public education system in Korea. Although this school goes*

> *actively ahead with English learning educational policy, there is no substance. In addition, there is not any policy or consideration about returnee children.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

The hard school work on the out-of-classroom places seemed to shape a negative image about the school for Sung-ho. He could not stand the situation in which he was not able to care for the students due to his extra school work. He felt that it was not a real agenda for students. This school situation reinforced his belief that the Korean school system makes children tired. Sung-ho sent his son to America according to this belief. He felt he could not do anything to make a change in his negative school circumstances.

Sung-ho believed that he had, relatively, much knowledge about North American schools. This knowledge came from his direct visiting of schools, his association with international school teachers in Korea, and information heard from his son in America. Sung-ho thought that this knowledge was making him feel more negative about the Korean school environment:

> *I once lived in an apartment building along with many other teachers of an international school. I got to be close with them. One teacher said to me, "I don't understand why Korean teachers dine together during weekdays. How can they handle the next day's classes after that?" According to him, his routine after dinner was two hours preparing for tomorrow's class and grading students' work. He focused on only teaching students. I really envied his school environment at that time. The North American schools I visited also looked so different from our Korean*

> *schools in terms of teaching environment. My current school environment does not leave me time to take care of my students. If I did not have any knowledge or any experience about North American schools, it would be easier for me to adapt to my current school situation.* (Individual conversation, May 23, 2008)

Sung-ho was finding it hard to adjust himself to the new school environment. The school situation ultimately did not look good for the students and Sung-ho was exhausted. Along with a fantasy about American people and life, he seemed to have a fantasy about North American schools. His conscious comparison of Korean schools with American schools, perhaps, made his current school situation unbearable.

Sung-ho was seriously considering setting up a goal for promotion in his middle forties. However, there was a conflict inside of him:

> *I think there would be no problem for me to be promoted in the near future if I make a slight effort to get extra points by doing action research with my students. My families, especially my sons, also want me to get a promotion to be an administrator. However, I would not be happy in an administrator position. I like to live with my students, teaching them. I really like to teach English to students.*
>
> *Ironically, I think I lost my first intention as a teacher since I began action research to earn promotional points. Before then, I did many things for my students because I was innocent as a teacher, for example, taking them to my elementary school I graduated from, going to a cemetery at night with*

> *them, cooking dducbockki (떡볶이) for them, etc . But after that, all activities with them I planned turned into things to be purposeful for my research. I just began to pursue the results. If I decide to pursue a promotion for now, it means, I'm going to have to focus on my research, not on my students themselves.*
>
> *Anyway, I'm considering two options. One is living as a regular teacher, teaching only English to the end. That is what I really want to do. The other is living as an administrator, providing a good influence and a desirable school environment. Ah, there is another option. Since I had earned money by investing in real estate three years ago, I began to think that being a principal would not be the biggest goal in my life. And I am not confident in my health. So, I'm thinking about a third option: teaching only English until 55, and then going abroad for voluntary work. But I don't know what I will decide. I don't know.* (Individual conversation, June 13, 2008)

Sung-ho was conflicted among three possibilities for his future. There were four factors that would be going to influence his decision: expectation for his promotion by people surrounding him; his desire to teach English; his affluent economic condition; and bad physical condition. It might be difficult for Sung-ho to ignore people's expectation. He already had two research proposals for this school year. Probably he planned to work toward a promotion. However, the inward and outward situations were contradictory to Sung-ho. It was hard to find time for the research in the classroom owing to a lot of extra schoolwork.

Accordingly, he was feeling bad physically. He was confused about how to live out his stories as an able teacher.

In addition, Sung-ho believed that doing research with students in the classroom means losing a kind of teacher's rightness for students. According to him, a teacher becomes more interested in research results than students. This belief causes him discomfort when doing the research. I believe that the purpose of classroom research is to improve teaching practice. I wondered if Sung-ho thought about his authentic object in doing his research. I wondered why Sung-ho's stories to live out in the classroom should be different when he was doing his research with the students and when he was not.

At the last conversation with Sung-ho (July 11, 2008), he said that he was now becoming very comfortable. He decided to put his desire for the promotion out of his mind for now. The most important thing for him was to have concern for his health. He decided to stop doing research work and talked to the vice-principal about his physical condition. He made up his mind not to care about the administrators' judgment anymore. He began to leave the school at the exact closing time, even though the other teachers were working on. He was practicing making his mind empty. He had been doing this for a week. He said that he was feeling good but confessed that his mind was not completely clear yet. He had a lingering attachment to his research achievement. He was trying to meditate a lot to let his mind empty.

Sung-ho's impressions of the principal and vice-principal had changed into positive ones. He realized that they did not try to satisfy only their own

desires in school administration. They were good at administration, while Sung-ho felt himself to be very weak in this area. He began to think this could be a good opportunity for him to learn about administration from them. He was adapting to his new school.

Two months later, I heard that the principal of Sung-ho's school moved to another position with a promotion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Narrative Account 3: Ji-sung's Stories to Live By

Becoming an Elementary School Teacher: Living out a Dream[20]

When I first contacted Ji-sung in Korea to schedule our meetings, he worried that his participation in the research would be hindered if he could not find time for conversations due to his busy school life. He was a first year teacher in his current school having moved in March, 2008. He is both a head teacher of three classes of the 6th grade and deals with all matters related to science education. However, he promised to do his best to help with the research – at this point, he might not have had an idea about being a participant rather than a subject in experimental research- and I promised to consider his schedule as much as possible. After the first conversation, he said it was a good opportunity to reflect on himself as a human being and a teacher and to understand who he is. His comment pleased me because it was identical with what I hoped the participant teachers would get from my research. Han (2006) noted this as a part of teacher education, stating "a researcher must be able to inspect a teacher's state of awareness through listening to teacher stories (Teacher Inquiry), and the process of the study should be the process that helps teacher him/herself to reflect on his/her self-awareness (Teacher Education)" (p. 79).

I met him at his classroom after the students had gone home but during his work hours. His school was small but very modernized, well-built, and pretty,

[20] This section has a different structure from the first two narrative accounts because it is very important to understand and to see how Ji-sung's teacher knowledge was shaped and how his 'stories to live by' were told.

surrounded by apartment buildings. It had only been open for one year and was a 'lease school.' Usually school buildings are constructed by the Board of Education of the school district. Perhaps it was such a good-looking school because it was a lease school. Several kids were on the playground playing with a soccer ball. Chinese and English expressions were displayed on the front of each stair as I walked up to his classroom.

Ji-sung was a 38-year-old teacher with 15 years teaching experience. My first impression was that he was a genuine teacher who radiated warmth. His classroom was very clean and organized.

> *It was unique to see a clothes drying rack in a classroom. There were several dust cloths hanging to dry on it. Ji-sung told me he bought it himself. Many flower pots were arranged along the outside windows in a pattern. The back wall displayed children's works. The 6th graders' English was taught by co-teachers: a Korean English teacher and a native speaker of English. That's why I couldn't see any postings in his classroom related to English learning.* (Field note, April 11, 2008)

He was born in Pohang, a city in south-eastern Korea, and grew up and went to school in Masan. Masan is near Pohang and is a larger city than Pohang. There was a Naval Base there. His father had served as a naval officer.

His first experience of English was from his father's English use at home. His father sometimes used English expressions as he had attended English

training courses sponsored by the U.S. Army in Korea. I saw his pride in his father when he used the word ‘selected’:

> *When I was so young, maybe a grade 1 boy, I saw my father sometimes spoke English at home, some words or some expressions. There was a training program for Korean Navy Officers provided by the U.S. Army in Korea. My father was* ***selected****. Since participating in that program, he used to try to speak in English at home. I had never seen him speaking English before. Furthermore, he became more of family man, trying to live a Westernized life style at home. It looked as an effect of his contact with American people.* (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008)

Another childhood memory about English was from his older sister and brother’s simplified English novels with red covers, a big tree on it, on his home book shelf. They were very thin and small. I remember trying to read those books in order to study English during my teenage period. They were made for English learners, trying to improve their reading skills and vocabulary, so were leveled for vocabulary. Original versions of English novels and fairy tales were revised and simplified with easy words. It was a current trend to have junior and senior high school students read such books. Although Ji-sung was not yet able to read those books, his memory of the English books was strongly connected with an image of his older sister and brother.

> *My brother and sister were ‘the elite’. They were very good at studying. Always top ranked at their schools. Almost all my memories about them*

are of them sitting at the desk. Especially when they were reading the English books, it looked very awesome to me, a little boy. So respectable! (Conversation about artifact 1, April 26, 2008)

Reading an English book was a symbol of 'the elite' to him.

His learning of English began in junior high school as he easily learned the English alphabet. Even though it was limited to only written English, he practiced it orally in his imagination. It was fun. He liked all subjects and his marks were generally high. English was a little higher than other subjects. He had no difficulty earning good marks.

He went to a senior high school located in the inner city of Masan. It was a proof of his success because there was strong competition to enter an inner city high school. His senior high school days were happy as he had many good friends. He spent much time with his friends talking about many things in life and studying English and Math together. He was able to stay away from home with his friends because he was the youngest child. His older brother and sister had less freedom to stay away. He felt he grew up with more love from his parents than his siblings had. However, his parents' expectation was different. His siblings were doing very well in their studies. He, as a lastborn, was doing well too, although he did not have such excellent marks as his brother and sister. His parents were very satisfied with their children. They did not have a problem that Ji-sung was often staying away from home. He enjoyed time with his friends without the stress of studying at his desk at home. Senior high school days were the happiest time in his life.

His dream, since Grade 9, was to become an elementary school teacher in a small countryside school. He fulfilled his only dream in his twenties. He did not know he had to enter a university of education when he decided to become a teacher. It was very different from my experience and from the dreams of many teachers' college students. In Chapter 1, I described that I did not want to go to a teacher's college, but had to because of my inability to pass the English portion of the university entrance exams. Others went to a teachers' college due to financial difficulties or other reasons, even though they had good grades to enter the top universities. Many teachers actually did not want to be elementary school teachers when they decided what school to go to. But Ji-sung did. It was his long-cherished dream. He liked children. He wanted to live with them, teaching and learning through them. His dream continues. As he and his wife, also an elementary school teacher, look into the future, they have the following plan:

> *My wife agreed with my plan after our retirement. We will run a small snack bar for children in front of an elementary school. It will be open during the school year and afterschool. I want to listen to their stories at school. If they get a good mark on a test, I will give them more Ddockbockki (떡볶이 in Korean)*[21]*. I want to live like this. I want to stay near children's lives even after my retirement from an elementary school. That's my old age dream.* (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008)

In 1988, in his Grade 12 year, when he told his parents he planned to go to a teachers' university, his parents were sorry. Teaching elementary school was not

[21] It is the most popular snack for younger generation in Korea.

such a respected occupation for men at that time in light of social position and salary. However, his mind was firm about becoming an elementary school teacher. In addition, his Grade 12 homeroom teacher assisted him by telling his parents that Ji-sung had an aptitude for elementary teaching. Without much resistance from his parents, he entered a national university of education. His brother and sister had already succeeded in entering a prominent university and major. Perhaps his parents no longer had a reason to oppose their lastborn's dream of being an elementary school teacher.

The English curriculum in the University of Education did not positively affect his improvement of English. He thought he even forgot the English he had learned at high school. In his 3rd year of university, he went to an English institute to prepare for a Vision Trip to the Philippines sponsored by his church. He needed oral English skills.

Other trip members were university students. During the trip, he heard much praise about his English from the members. Even though he was able to use only basic words and phrases, others admired him. However, he realized six years of Korean official English education (three years in junior high, three years in senior high) was not enough to speak English successfully in real conversation situations.

When he came back from the trip, he tried to listen to sermons from an American missionary at his church, and he visited several churches to run English worships. However, learning English was not such a big deal to him in light of his philosophy as an elementary school teacher. He believed that an elementary

school teacher should be an able person in many fields, without a particular specialty.

> *My perspective about what an elementary school teacher should be like is a little different from other teachers. I think it is more important to be knowledgeable in many quarters than to have excellent ability in only one area as an elementary school teacher because we teach all subjects. I have been trying to have interests in many fields, for example, Arts, English, Math, Science, Physical education, etc. and to enlarge my knowledge and skills related to them. I've never indulged in only one subject area as an elementary school teacher.* (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008)

He was so proud of himself about that.

In the following story he shares his beliefs about this as an elementary school teacher: In our fourth conversation, I asked him to bring some artifacts to show the whole scope of who he is as a teacher. He showed me several sets of "magic instruments" (Artifact 2, June 3, 2008) such as rope, coins, wooden sticks, and chemical powder which turned into a solid state when combined with water. He performed several magic tricks using the artifacts. He showed me how he used the rope magic in his Moral Education, English and Math classes. As he spoke, he performed the trick.

> *For a Moral Education class, I used to tell a life story performing this magic trick: "There is a road (showing a rope) from here to there in life. These ends could sometimes be crossed over each other, sometimes tied to*

> *each other, sometimes cut. It is not easy to untie the knot. However, we can do it with love, with sacrifice, with forgiveness, and with some valuable things like this (showing the re-connected rope).” When children had trouble with a friend, this magic could be a good lesson for them. For English class, I used this magic trick for input for listening or guessing activities. Be sure not to use magic tricks often. If you do, children’s curiosity and attention will abruptly decrease. I use magic tricks only once or twice a year.* (Individual conversation, April 26, 2008)

He learned how to perform those tricks from a missionary boat, ‘The Dulos,’ harbored in Busan when he was a university student. He practiced a lot as he wanted to use the magic tricks in his future teaching practice. The effects were tremendous in his classroom. After confirming the effects of using magic tricks, he has participated in an Elementary School Teachers’ Magic Club as a member.

Before coming to the present school district, Goyang in Gyeonggi Province, he worked at schools in Paju for seven years. Paju, located near the Military Demarcation Line, is a particular school district where teachers get extra points for promotion. It was known as the school district in which teachers who wanted a promotion must work. As a result, competition to be assigned to that school district is high. Usually very strong teachers gather in that district. Ji-sung did not intend to earn extra points by entering Paju school district the first time.

> *When I decided to go to Paju, it was a result of negotiation with my wife for my family life. I did not even think about the extra points for promotion*

> *at that point. However, I found a streak of the same tendency as other teachers in Paju since I had been living with them. I came to have contradictory ideas about living a story of a teacher in Paju. On the one hand, I repeated to myself 'Extra Points?, It doesn't matter to me.' On the other hand, I pushed myself to live like other teachers. I could not avoid the effects of my surroundings.* (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008)

He realized that he is a social being who cannot help being affected by his circumstances. His stories to live by were shifting on his professional knowledge landscape as Miller (1998) argues that "constructions of our 'selves' are mediated by social and cultural forces and contexts, as well as by the unconscious" (p. 151).

In Paju, he was involved in many English-related works, for example, the teachers' English club, the Support Team for Elementary English Teachers in Gyeonggi Province, teaching only English for many years at his school, and presenting English open classes to other teachers in his school district. All these happened since he had taken an intensive English teacher training course for one month at the Foreign Language Education Centre for Teachers in Pyeongtaeck in 1998. He remembers the experience at the centre as first, doing his best to learn English and learning how to teach English to foreign language learners, and second, meeting many good teachers. He showed me an old, thick notebook (Artifact 3, April 26, 2008), a third artifact about his memories related to his English learning. There were many attachments, writings and memos inside. It was produced while he was taking the training course. I imagined his effort and

passion for learning and teaching English at that time through this notebook. It still makes him feel fresh, and helps him realize how much effort he made. He feels proud of himself whenever he sees that notebook. He talked about meeting many good teachers:

> *That I could do many English-related works at Paju was not because of my good ability of English but because of my friend, Hee-joon, whom I met at the English training program. He led me to do many works related to English education in Gyeonggi Province. One more thing is that I could be a math instructor in a Math Camp during another vacation through the relation with another teacher I met at the program. The experience of being an instructor of Math made me have an interest in Math more and resulted in me having broad Math teaching methods. I'm still using math problems that were studied at that camp in my Math classes….. I like to meet new people. We can help each other. Newly constructed relations with people seemed to give me many opportunities to expand my knowledge in various fields as an elementary teacher.* (Individual conversation, April 26, 2008)

This story drew my attention to a picture (Artifact 4, June 3, 2008) he showed me. It was taken with his friend in the summer of his 4th year of university (1992) at the summit of Jiri Mountain. This trip was planned for tasting life and thinking about life. On the trip, they met many people who had their own storied lives: lives in difficulty, lives in loss, lives in conflict, lives in satisfaction, lives in

accomplishment, and so on. They helped those in need and were helped by others during the trip. He remembered a truck driver in the following story:

> *It was at dusk. We needed to move to the next town. We hitchhiked on a truck. The truck driver said little. He seemed to figure us out as penniless travelers. He just drove his truck without talking. It was getting darker and darker. We didn't know where we were and where we were going. We began to be scared of this strange driver. However, the destination of our driving was his house. He treated us to dinner and gave us some money for transportation.*
>
> *This experience gave me the realization that almost all people in our society are more good than bad even though they said the social atmosphere is getting worse and worse. So, I came to believe that my life deserves to be lived out in this society.* (Conversation about Artifact 4, June 3, 2008)

This trip shaped Ji-sung's positive view of life as he said, "*there are a lot of people who are willing to help me in the world. I am not afraid of meeting new persons any more. We can make the world in relations to help each other*" (Conversation about Artifact 4, June 3, 2008). These realizations about the world affected his stories to live by. His stories to live by emerged from his life experiences and are expressed in his teaching and learning practices.

At his present school, he is in charge of all matters related to Science Education. He is excited and happy to learn a new field, Science Education. He

doesn't struggle to accomplish something bigger. He has already fulfilled his long-cherished dream.

Ji-sung's Experience of Teaching Returnee Children: Living out His 'Stories to Live By' in the In-Classroom Place

Over almost 15 years of teaching, he had not had a returnee student in his homeroom. His earlier schools were located in rural areas where residents did not have high socioeconomic status. It was unusual to see returnee children there.

Ji-sung moved to his current school in March of this year, even though he had not yet earned the extra points he could have earned by staying in his previous school district. The decision to move was made for the convenience of the whole family. Every morning he gave a ride to his wife and daughter, who had entered a kindergarten. He wanted to stay close to his wife's school and his daughter's kindergarten during the day.

He was put in charge of a 6th grade class as he expected. Usually a new teacher takes a 5th or 6th grade class in the Korean elementary school landscape, because they are difficult grades to teach in terms of teaching time and working with older students. He liked teaching the 6th grade students as their homeroom teacher. He could not teach the 6th grade in Paju because he had to teach only English to several grades. He taught English because of his stronger English ability. In his current school, he taught all subjects except English. He liked his work and his position in this new school.

There were 33 students in his classroom. Two were returnees. Su-jin lived in England for one and a half years with her mother, on a leave of absence as a government employee. Su-jin and her mother returned to Korea in the middle of Su-jin's 5th grade year. The second student, Min-soo, came back to Korea at the end of his 5th grade year after two years in the U.S. with his mother, who was working on her Master's degree. This was the first time Ji-sung had returnee children in his classroom. He was positive when he found out.

> *I can say my feelings were good. I have been seeing children who were generally incompetent in 'English', who pointed 'English' as a burden to be always seen with some improvement. But they were different. They looked confident in 'English'. I could see in Su-jin's journal writing, "···· although I am not good at many things, I can help my classmates especially in 'English' ···· ." I was glad to have these children who had confidence in 'English' in my classroom. It was a* ***fresh*** *feeling that I could teach children who had special experience in terms of learning English.* (Individual conversation, May 6, 2008)

Ji-sung talked with their mothers individually at the open house, on the second Wednesday of March at 2:00 p.m.[22] Only mothers came, as during the daytime, fathers work. Even though mothers also work, fathers are rarely present at open houses. After the general assembly, Ji-sung introduced himself, spoke of

[22] Most elementary schools in Korea have only morning classes on Wednesdays. Afterschool events are usually held on Wednesdays.

how he planned to teach, and how he planned to run his class. After that meeting, five or six mothers wanted an individual talk about their child. Mothers took turns.

Ji-sung wanted to know what the returnee children's parents expected him to do for their child. Their biggest concern in their child's learning life was maintaining, not diminishing, their current English ability. They did not ask him to do anything about this. No returnee's parent expects the school to help maintain their children's English. They accept schools' and homeroom teachers' limitations in terms of providing good English instruction. Instead, they look for a good private tutor or an English institute of good reputation. Ji-sung agreed with the parents' perspectives concerning returnees' English learning at school.

> *I think their thought was right. In fact, I don't have time and English capability to take care of their English. So, I introduced them to an English institute that my daughter has been attending. Their only concern was how to keep their child's English ability.* (Individual conversation, May 6, 2008)

Parents' and teachers' vision for their returnee children was inclined to focus only on their English, not on integrating curriculum with their lives. This was also the way I looked at Yu-mi in my classroom in 1999.

After talking with Ji-sung, I wrote in my journal:

> *I'm exploring a curriculum of lives. I look at teachers as curriculum makers with this view of curriculum. To date, too much of the curriculum for too many children is in relation to English in Korea. In this situation, what could be a desirable role for teachers as curriculum planners and*

curriculum makers in the Korean context? (My personal journal, May 6, 2008)

As I noted earlier, Ji-sung was not teaching English. English was taught by two teachers, a Korean teacher and a native speaker of English, at Ji-sung's school. The Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education provides the native speakers of English. They are called 'native teachers.' When we talked about Su-jin and Min-soo, he spoke first about their English.

I don't know how much fluency in English they have because I don't teach the subject of English to my students. Actually I was not able to have an opportunity for observing their English use. I don't think they would have native-like fluency in English considering the length of staying abroad. It would not be enough time to acquire English. That's also why they don't have particular deficiencies in other academic subjects. (Individual conversation, May 6, 2008)

My research topic may have caused Ji-sung to reflect on his attitude to the returnees. First, he mentioned he did not pay much attention to Su-jin and Min-soo as it was hectic at the beginning of the school year, March and April. Second, he said, they seemed not to have problems in their school lives. I wondered if he wanted to pay more attention to them now because he was participating in my research. I was cautious not to give him the impression that I wanted him to be more concerned about the returnee children. Even though Ji-sung expressed interest in the study, he said he treated returnee children as he treated other

children. For sure, although he did not put aside particular time for the returnee children, he said, "I'm trying to understand their present situation through their past experience of staying in an English speaking country." He knew a person's past experience shaped one's present.

After the fourth meeting on May 20, he sent his personal journal by e-mail:

> *I am wondering if I am doing a good job for your research.*
>
> *Every day is hectic and I seem to be running all day. Even though it is not difficult for me to adapt to a new school, my mind may still be feeling busy because the school environment is not as familiar as my previous one. Furthermore, first experience of teaching 6th grade children as their homeroom teacher made me nervous at first. The matters related to science education added more workload. It looked totally new to me in spite of my 15 years teaching experiences. However, my students are so great that I'm satisfied with them, and science related tasks are getting done interestingly.*
>
> *I realized that I had a lack of concern and consideration about returnee children through the meetings with you. I am looking at them with new eyes. They are so nice and good.*
>
> *Min-soo is logical. He tries to protect himself with verbal logic against his friends' attack. He is a naughty boy. However, he is very up-front to his friends and makes an effort to have positive relationships with his friends. Sometimes he speaks baldly and plainly to his friends. But the friends*

seem to accept Min-soo's mind so that there is not much trouble among them.

Su-jin is like an angel to have a pure white mind. She is trying to understand the teacher and never refuses her friends' requests for help. Her writing in Korean seems to need improvement compared with her classmates, but it is not such a big problem. I'm sure it will be better soon as time passes in Korea. She has good relationships with her friends. Her mind is so soft and tender that she easily shows tears to her friend's ill-natured kidding even though she is so tall.

According to their answers to my question about any difficulty in readjusting into Korean school, they don't feel any difficulty in living in my classroom. I'm asking myself if I have a lack of concern toward Su-jin and Min-soo, but I'm not sure.

Currently I'm feeling it is not easy to prepare for open-class.[23] *I did it many times without much difficulty before… I'm worrying about the open-class for parents next Thursday.* (Personal journal 1 from Ji-sung, May 26, 2008)

I began to understand how Ji-sung thought about each returnee. Even though he described Min-soo first, I focused first on what he said about Su-jin. She thought she was not good at Korean Language Arts and Social Studies because of her stay in England for one and a half years. However, Ji-sung was not worried about her. She was so confident in English. Ji-sung saw that many

[23] An open class is one class period in a subject that is open to other teachers or to parents. Usually, homeroom teachers perform their class for parents at the beginning of the school year in Korea.

students gathered around her when they needed a peer check on their morning English workbook, 'Step & Jump.' Su-jin was involved in a school English Broadcasting Team. She and her classmates saw English as her specialty. No one was jealous of her.

Ji-sung saw Min-soo as very smart. There was no deficiency in any subject even after his two years absence from Korea. He was reading a lot of books. He asked very high-level questions in Social Studies classes. Given Min-soo's achievement, Ji-sung wondered if Min-soo had been studying the Korean academic curriculum in America before coming back to Korea. Min-soo spoke up whenever he felt he was misunderstood or treated unfairly. He tried to explain himself. This sometimes caused trouble with his friends, but the trouble did not last long. He wanted to be noticed with his creative ideas and funny talk. His tendency, on the one hand, led Ji-sung to notice his brightness; on the other hand, it sometimes became an interruption to the flow of a class.

> *It happened in Korean History class. We were recording our class with a video camera to show other teachers in the school. This class was planned to include student discussion. I divided them into two groups which had to adhere strictly to the group's own point of view about one historical event. Each group should insist on their stand point logically and rebut the opposite. However, Min-soo started to suggest extraordinary ideas which were absolutely not involved in any group's stance. The students laughed. Min-soo got elated by that. Consequently, I could not close that class successfully.* (Individual conversation, June 3, 2008)

Ji-sung attributed Min-soo's desire to be noticed to his personality. He looked at Min-soo as an individual, not as an excellent student who had a specialty in English. This was Ji-sung's way to read Min-soo's stories to live by. Min-soo's experience of studying abroad was not much involved in Ji-sung's understanding of who Min-soo is. However, I wondered if Min-soo's conspicuous behaviors came from his learning in the American classroom and were the expression of his struggle to fit in with his Korean classmates as a returnee child.

He told me another story about Min-soo:

It was a lunch time.[24] *I usually have lunch last, after all students receive their meals from the student serving the food. Especially in March, I needed to know students' likes and dislikes in food and who has an allergy to what food in order to see that my students had the best diet.*

One day, the students were getting some rice and several side dishes from the distributors in a line at the front of the classroom as usual. Suddenly, one boy put his tray on my desk, and then went to the end of the line again. It was Min-soo. I said, "Thank you." It happened on three consecutive days. After that, one of the servers began to serve me lunch before the students. I think my behavior as a teacher could have looked strange to my students. It could have made them uncomfortable. They might have seen for five years in the school that a teacher usually had the meal first. Some students might want to do that, but not if other students were looking at them. They would be afraid of other classmates' judgments. But Min-soo

[24] In Korea, all elementary schools provide paid meals for students at lunch time. Some schools use their own cafeteria for lunch time, some others use students' classrooms. It depends on each school's facilities.

did. He took an action depending on his feeling of 'unrighteousness' regardless of other people's thoughts. Yeah…he was brave. And that's Min-soo. (Individual conversation, June 3, 2008)

Ji-sung did not try to understand Min-soo particularly with a perspective related to his early studying of English abroad.

This lunchtime scene reminded me of my past experiences as a homeroom teacher. Providing a lunch meal to students in all elementary schools in Korea began in 1998. It was good news to mothers who had to prepare lunch boxes for their children every morning. The school lunch menu was managed by each school's nutritionist. However, the decision to provide lunch meant homeroom teachers had one more duty as they had to supervise children's lunch hour. Some teachers made class regulations that children had to eat all the food they received in order to ensure children's health. This was greatly welcomed by most parents. Strict application of this regulation sometimes caused parents to protest because their children must have said at home that lunch time was drudgery for them.

As seen in the above story of Min-soo, it was also controversial whether the homeroom teacher should be served first, or whether students should be served first. Many teachers believed that respect for elders should be taught even at lunch time by making children serve lunch to teachers first. Ji-sung did not want to be served lunch first. It was more important to watch his students' eating habits. His actions made me think he saw himself as 'the one-caring as teacher' (Noddings, 1984). He behaved ethically as one-caring because he met his students

in genuine encounters of caring and being cared for. That was his commitment as a teacher, and it was his choice.

It was impressive to hear Ji-sung's view about the fever for learning English in Korea including going abroad to study English:

> *Personally I agree on learning English. I think positively about going abroad to study English if it is available. However, the aim of learning English, I hope, should be about getting big ambitions and a broad view of the world in addition to the realization that we are living in a too-small world in Korea. It will be good for Korean people to live in other countries around the world through studying English abroad. In Korea, too many people live in a too-small country. This causes severe competition for entering universities and the fever for learning English as well. Why should learning English in Korea or abroad, costing so much money, time, and effort, be only for the purpose of entering a good university? I don't like it. I hope English will, in the future, be learned as an instrument or mediating tool to experience a 'Variety of Lives'. I hope Korean people will study English abroad with this kind of purpose. And I hope many Korean people live all over the world so that they can feel 'English is not all' and realize the 'power of diverse languages' as well. The results of various experiences living in other countries will absolutely return to Korea no matter what form or route they take.* (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008)

To Ji-sung, English was not just a means of entering a top university or of achieving a higher position in Korean society. English is another language to mediate relationships between people in the world. English is an important means for experiencing, understanding, learning, and living the world to Ji-sung. I reflected on his story of going to an English Institute for the first time in his third year of university to prepare for the 'Vision Trip to the Philippines' as a confirmation of this.

Ji-sung mentioned that he felt good about understanding himself by telling his stories, and sharing his thoughts and his beliefs. He said, however, that he usually tried not to speak too much with his colleagues since he found that too much talk could easily drive him to tell more than he wanted to the other person. He also sometimes found himself talking more to justify what he said. Sometimes he talked about the same event differently. "*Even though it was not a lie, it could be 'distortion of emotion', 'distortion of memory', or 'exaggeration of memory.' It's not a truth*." (Individual conversation, April 11, 2008). He was worrying about the truth of memory. He worried if he was speaking untruths in the research conversations because he was speaking more than he usually did.

Ji-sung was right. Telling a story is not the same every time. Stories are different over time and different depending on the audience. The childhood story he told me would, perhaps, be different than one he told to a friend when he was a college student. Stories are different depending on contexts, purpose and time. Ji-sung's story of his school told in the research conversations may be different from one he told his wife at home in terms of focus or the level of details.

Zinsser (1987) wrote, "I was also struck by the fact that memory, one of the most powerful of writers' tools, is one of the most unreliable: the boy's [my] remembered truth was often different from his [my] parents' remembered truth. My mother, after reading my chapter, cried because my memory of my boyhood was less golden than *her* memory of my boyhood." (p. 12). For Zinsser, "memory can only be quarried by an act of imagination" (p. 25). The 'truth of memory' that Ji-sung mentioned could be a 'relative notion of truth.' Truth of memory "is not objective, fixed, and unchanging; it is relative, interpretative, and relational" (Lyle, 2000, p. 53). Ji-sung's stories are relative to contexts, to time, to purpose and to audience. As I thought about Ji-sung's wonder, I was reminded of Ricoeur (1984) who wrote, "It is in telling our own stories that we give ourselves an identity. We recognize ourselves in the stories that we tell about ourselves. It makes very little difference whether these stories are true or false, fiction as well as verifiable history provides us with an identity" (p. 214).

On June 3 at 6:00 p.m., I arrived for our fifth conversation at Ji-sung's classroom. Several appointments had been postponed due to his busy school work. He was always busy. On two occasions when I visited, I saw children engaged in tasks. Once I saw children making a glider. Another time I saw children drawing a science character. Ji-sung was not there. Today was different. There were no children and Ji-sung was there alone waiting for me. He looked depressed.

> *Next week, I'm going to do an open-class of Social Studies for parents. I have done it a lot of times only in the subject of English for two and a half*

> *years. There is no problem with Social Studies. It is challenging. I like it. However, the thing is that I realized I'm not doing well in my classroom because of the work in Science Education. May was the month of Science. There were many out-of-school competitions related to Science. They were not finished yet. I had too much work to do as a chief teacher of Science. I made representative students of this school prepare for the competitions after school and even on Sundays in my classroom. The results were very good. But I could not concentrate on teaching my homeroom students. I feel guilty. While I was bent on the Science work, my classroom seemed to go in a wrong way. As a signal of this, I ruined a Social Studies class today, which was being recorded by a video camera for my colleagues. So, I let the students who are participating in a science competition go home today. I think my children in my classroom should be first. I cleaned up my desk sitting here. Then I was thinking how I can reorganize our life in the classroom*. (Individual conversation, June 3, 2008)

Ji-sung was living out his stories to live by not only as a homeroom teacher, but also as a chief teacher of Science on his 'professional knowledge landscape' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). As a first year teacher, he wanted to construct a positive image of himself as a head teacher. He did this by putting much effort into working with students who were the school representatives in Science competitions. Excellent achievement in the competitions was a way teachers showed their strengths in the out-of classroom places. Good management in the in-classroom place did not highlight their abilities as good teachers. The in-

classroom place was not visible to others. Ji-sung wanted to live up to his stories as a "good" teacher in both places on the landscape. However, there were limits in terms of his energy and his time for living out his stories very well in both places. This created conflict for Ji-sung. He had to make a decision about how he wanted to live his life as a teacher.

Living in the Out-of-Classroom Places: Ji-sung's Stories

When I came into Ji-sung's classroom at 4:00 p.m. on June 24, I could not see him there.

> *It has been three weeks since I visited Ji-sung's classroom. There was a boy when I arrived. Ji-sung left the classroom one hour ago, according to the boy. Ji-sung may be somewhere in the school. The boy looked to be doing extra study.*
>
> *I'm writing this field note sitting at some child's desk. I seem not to be an alien at all as I have been a part of this school for a long time. Distant noise from the playground made me feel relaxed and peaceful. It was my daily life! He is coming.* (Field note, June 24, 2008)

Ji-sung rushed into the classroom apologizing for being late. He was at the 6th grade teachers' office with two other teachers to review final test items. He also made an excuse for not sending me his journal writing. He was involved in many things out of school in addition to in-school work: writing a Grade 1 Math textbook in English, serving on the English Teaching Support Team in the

Gyeonggi Provincial Office of Education, working for his church, and so on. He said he had slept only two or three hours a day for the last week.

At school, he made much effort for his Science job for almost two months. The results of his effort were shown in the prizes won by the students he taught at many competitions. The principal was very satisfied with his job. However, he felt tension with other teachers.

> *I think I am in a difficult position in the school due to the principal. Last Monday, we had an assembly as usual. There was a conferment ceremony for the winners of out-of-school Science competitions. The principal was so pleased with the results and congratulated the winners extravagantly on their job. And then, without any pre-notice to me, he announced that he would grant the students a book voucher as a prize. I was embarrassed because I did not plan any budget for that, and it was unfair to other winners of different competitions. Although the results of previous sports competitions were good, the principal did not compliment very much for that. Furthermore, upcoming Arts competitions would be a big burden to the teacher who is in charge of it in this situation of the principal's emphasis on Science competitions' results. Since that Monday, the vice principal tended not to congratulate winning news from another Science competition. This situation places me in a difficult position in the school. I feel sorry when I imagine other teachers' thoughts, even though I did not do wrong. I know that the Science competition results were not only from*

> *my effort. It was possible because of all teachers' cooperation. That is why I feel sorry for them.* (Individual conversation, June 3, 2008)

The principal singled out the science winners by granting them a prize which gave Ji-sung's area undue attention. I wondered if the principal's intention was to stimulate other teachers to make more strenuous efforts. However, Ji-sung felt discomfort in the situation that his area got more attention than the other subject areas. Ji-sung knew that an administrator's exceptional concern for a particular teacher always created awkward tension between teachers. The other teachers would be pushed to accomplish great results in out-of-school competitions because of the way results in Ji-sung's area were treated by the principal.

Ji-sung considered himself an expert male-teacher with 15 years' teaching experience and a positive attitude about school work (Individual conversation, June 24, 2008). He was trying to do his best in the school landscape. However, Ji-sung was worrying if the principal's noticeable compliment on his job would hurt his relationships with other teachers in the school.

The above story led Ji-sung to tell his view about 'desirable administrators in a school':

> *I hope a principal makes teachers happy. If a teacher is happy, then children are happy. Here, 'being happy' means that a principal provides teachers with motivation in their teaching and encourages them with warm words. As a result, the school community runs democratically. However, I have never seen mutual communication between a principal*

> *and teachers in my teaching history. Only one way, from up to down. My school is also in the same situation. The principal asks teachers to make prominent achievement in their work. Teachers feel much pressure. But I could not see any quarrel between the principal and teachers. That's because, I think, the principal was too strong for teachers to resist him. Our vice-principal is a very good person. He tries to perform his arbitrating role between two sides. He had tried to deliver teachers' opinion to the principal many times before. However, he never persuaded the principal. This school looks very quiet and peaceful superficially. But there are many teachers who are planning to move to another school to escape from the atmosphere of this school.* (Individual conversation, June 3, 2008)

Ji-sung thought there was a big difference between what he thought the school was when he looked at it from the outside and when he was inside of the school. This school was not a community run by collaboration and negotiation among the community members. When I thought about the 'conduit metaphor' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992), I could see how it might be applied in this school situation. The teachers might be considered workers, machines and implementers for carrying out the curriculum that the principal sent down through the 'conduit.' I had also experienced the same atmosphere in other schools in my teaching career. Current principals had passed through the same situation in the past when they were regular teachers. They might have been educated in what a principal should be like through their past school life experiences. It seemed to shape their

personal practical knowledge as a principal. There is an evaluation system only for teachers by a principal. There is not an evaluation system for a principal by teachers at all. This evaluation system would be an element in forming the school atmosphere like Ji-sung's.

According to Ji-sung, the vice-principal was trying to do his role as a vice-principal well. He was always ready to listen to teachers' voices. Even though he could not be effective in delivering the teachers' voice to the principal, his open attitude made the teachers easily approach him and tell him their thoughts and opinions.

I see how important the school administrator's part is in the professional knowledge landscape. I see how much school administrators' stories affect teachers' lives and their stories to live by in the professional knowledge landscape through this story.

Another story Ji-sung told helped me understand about his students' behavior as part of the general atmosphere formed by principal and teacher relations at this school.

> *I usually pursue student-centered teaching in my classroom. However, I did not respect them much this year. I had a burden in teaching 6th grade from the beginning. I was so busy with the Science job as well. I laughed a lot in front of children before and I asked them to laugh a lot by saying, "Your laughing becomes vitamins to me". I could not do that here. I was too busy making my students be quiet. This school emphasizes discipline. Most students are quiet and do not run in the hall ways. It was strange for*

> *me the first time. They always look calm. I don't like it. There is a lack of vividness in the students. For instance, even though I am trying to take into account the break time and lunch time for my students, they ask me every day, "Is this a free time? Can we go out for playing?" I said, "You don't need to ask me about this," but they don't stop asking. I interpret this as meaning that they have been controlled for this stuff. They are comfortable once they get permission.* (Individual conversation, June 24, 2008)

Ji-sung was trying to be respectful of his students. He wanted to give them more freedom and to generate laughs and jokes so that they could be vivid and lively. It was his philosophy as an elementary homeroom teacher. However, his busy job in the out-of-classroom places hindered him from living up to his stories in his classroom. He found he was not able to concentrate on his own classroom. In addition, the school atmosphere in which his students have lived was not in accord with Ji-sung's philosophy about classroom management. The school policy for students' management stressed discipline and order. The children seemed to be accustomed to this school atmosphere. Ji-sung was struggling with how to compose the children's lives in the school. I wondered how Ji-sung could negotiate these two sides of philosophies, between the school and himself.

At our last meeting, Ji-sung said that Su-jin was considering studying abroad again. I was surprised at the news because Su-jin looked well-readjusted

into the Korean school and she was really liking the 6th grade school life. Ji-sung did not know the exact background about this decision. He had not talked with her parents. Perhaps her parents were not convinced that Su-jin would maintain her English in the Korean context and that she would get high marks on other subjects in Korea.

As I described in the previous section, the largest concern of the parents of two returnees in Ji-sung's class was maintaining their child's English ability. Although the parents did not expect anything to be done in the classroom, they wanted their child to attend 'English *Teucksunghwa-Ban* (Special English class for the students who have good English ability),' which was open after school. This program was offered free to students with competence in English in order to help improve their English. Most students were returnee children. The native teacher taught them. Su-jin was in this afterschool class last year. However, she could not join this year because of the competition to enter this class. The school made a regulation that students who attended this class previously could not attend in consecutive years. Her mother complained about that at the beginning of this school year.

English *Teucksunghwa-Ban* (특성화반) runs in every school in Goyang school district as one of the policies to encourage English education. Along with it, *Teuckki·Jucksung-Ban* (특기·적성반) was also open to all students who wanted to take it. It was a paid afterschool class taught by an instructor from outside of the

school. The aim of this class was to provide regular students with English instruction for a low fee. To my question about school policy or school circumstances for returnee children, Ji-sung replied as follows:

> *Frankly speaking, I don't know very much about that. I am a first-year teacher in this school and in this school district. I don't handle English-related things in my school. In spite of this circumstance, I cannot feel any particular concern in helping returnee children in this school. There is English Teucksunghwa-Ban (특성화반) for the students who can speak English very well. However, it is open to a very limited number of students. In retrospect, there was an afterschool class for children in Paju who returned after living in foreign countries for over five years. It was called 'Returnee Children-Ban (귀국학생반)'. Due to the small number of them in Paju, one class was provided to returnee children from several schools. In this class, the main content was not English but the Korean Language and the Korean culture. I've heard that some schools run their own 'Returnee Children-Ban (귀국학생반)' in Goyang school district. However, not in my school. Because we don't have many children who lived in a foreign country for many years, we have not opened this kind of class. This class is not for children who returned after one or two years' living abroad. The children who transferred to Korean schools in their 5th or 6th grade year after one or two years' absence seemed not to have much problem in readjusting to Korean schools because they are all fluent in Korean. Personally, I think we have to provide 'Returnee Children-*

> *Ban*[25] *(귀국학생반)' for Grade 1 returnees. Even though they had lived for a short time, they might easily lose the Korean language. A deficiency in speaking Korean can isolate them from their classmates. It could be a big problem for them*. (Individual conversation, July 7, 2008)

Earlier Ji-sung spoke positively about children's studying English abroad. He saw it gave them a broad perspective in learning English. He said Su-jin and Min-soo seemed not to have any problems in readjusting to a Korean school. I recognize that both his statements came from his belief in the value of English ability but only when learners possess competence in their first language, Korean. For returnee children, fitting in with their classmates in a Korean classroom was of greater importance so that they can feel safe and secure in, and can feel they belong to, their Korean classroom. That is because they are going to live their lives in Korea. Ji-sung thought the most efficient way for doing this was having Korean fluency. If returnee children had Korean language competence, they could fit more smoothly into a Korean classroom. I wondered if Ji-sung believed that spending money on keeping Korean ability was more important than spending money on maintaining English ability for returnee children.

Ji-sung seemed able to see deeply and broadly into things related to education for children. He always expressed his opinions with a sense of balance. He always saw matters positively. However, he pointed things out clearly when he thought they needed reform or improvement. His balanced attitude seemed to

[25] *Ban* means 'class' in Korean.

work in the professional knowledge landscape, on the in-classroom place and out-of-classroom place, and in his relationships with students and teachers.

During our last meeting, Ji-sung told me his impression about our research methodology:

> *This was the first time to experience this kind of research methodology based on storytelling. It was very impressive to me. I think that telling story happens only when the counterparts trust one another. An atmosphere to tell stories and a close relationship should be established first. However, in schools, it is very hard to see children who are telling their own stories to teachers. Conversely, it could be said that teachers are not ready to listen to children's stories. I wish school atmosphere, as children tell their stories and teachers hear children's stories, could be established in our schools as we did in this research.* (Individual conversation, July 7, 2008)

Ji-sung wanted to listen to his students' stories and have conversations with them. He seemed to believe that would be a way of being respectful to his students. Students in higher grades tend to keep their own secrets and scarcely tell their personal stories to teachers. Furthermore, it is very hard for both teachers and students to find time for individual conversations after class. Teachers are usually busy with out-of-classroom work. Students are generally busy with academic institutes. Ji-sung thought that the first thing to do was to establish close relationships with students. It could be possible through conversations with the

students along with open-minded attitude of teachers. He wanted to live out his stories as a teacher with his students in his professional knowledge landscape.

CHAPTER EIGHT
Reconsidering In-Service Teacher Education for Teachers Who Teach Returnee Children

Key Considerations from the Study

Introduction

How teachers teach returnee children is becoming a big problem in Korea because of the rapidly increasing numbers. My research interest emerged from realizing my experience of learning English influenced my teaching of returnee children. I decided I need to look at how teachers learned English in order to understand how they teach returnee children. My research puzzles were framed around: teachers' experiences of making curriculum with returnee children; the ways teachers' personal practical knowledge formed by their experiences of learning English shapes their stories to live by as they make curriculum with returnee children; the personal, social, and cultural narratives that shape teachers' stories to live by in their work with returnee children; and the shifts in teachers' stories to live by as they work with returnee children in their professional knowledge landscapes.

The study's purpose was to understand three Korean teachers' experiences of teaching returnee children. What does it mean by 'understanding'? Understanding means, in my research, recognizing how differently the participant teachers compose their stories to live by when living with returnee children. Drawing upon the notion of 'thinking narratively' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) allowed me to reach the goal of 'understanding.'

Dewey (1923) defined individuality with "the distinctive difference, something that marks off one person from another," additionally, with "something unique or irreplaceable in value, a unique difference of value" (p. 170). He argued:

> …. Individuality is a certain way of doing things, thinking things, and feeling things, which runs through everything and gives it its peculiar color, something which irradiates unconsciously whatever the person has to deal with. (p. 171)

Drawing upon Dewey's notion of 'individuality,' I focused on the individuality of each teacher's personal practical knowledge and the individuality of each teacher's stories to live by as they lived alongside returnee children. I did not try to find commonality or generalizations across the participant teachers' narratives.

Through my research conversations with participants, I saw that each teacher's personal practical knowledge about English made a difference in their teaching of returnee children. Although their personal practical knowledge about English was shaped by their experiences of learning English, the expression of each teacher's knowledge in his teaching practice with returnee children was influenced by the contexts in which he was situated. Furthermore, each teacher's personal practical knowledge about English was not enacted in the same way in different times, places, and situations. It was expressed differently depending on the uniqueness of each returnee child they taught or the school context in which they were situated.

As I turn back to my research puzzles, I understand more about the participant teachers' stories to live by as they taught returnee children:

1. Firstly, the participant teachers' experiences of learning English shaped their personal practical knowledge as expressed in teaching returnee children.
2. Secondly, their stories to live by with returnee children shifted depending on the professional knowledge landscape in which they were situated.
3. Thirdly, each teacher understood curriculum making with the mandated curriculum. The presence of returnee children interrupted the living out of their stories of delivering mandated curriculum in the classroom.
4. Fourthly, teachers make curriculum differently for returnee children depending upon how each teacher sees what is most important. Some teachers have more concerns about *Wang-tta* ('Bullying' in English) issues in the classroom. They believe that returnees' readjustment into Korean classroom depends on returnees holding onto their Korean language ability.

I describe each key consideration in following sections. After I show something about key considerations, I turn to the ways key considerations help me reconsider In-Service Teacher Education for teachers who teach returnee children in Korea.

Key Consideration # 1: Each teacher's personal practical knowledge as expressed in teaching returnee children was shaped by his experiences of learning English.

My struggle of learning English during my teenage school days and within the Korean socio-cultural narratives about English, as living in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, shaped my personal practical knowledge about English. Under the situation that English became an international language, English was viewed as an important means to efficiently step forward to reach goals of my life. As Miller (1998) argued, construction of myself related to English learning was mediated by Korean social and cultural forces and contexts. Accordingly too much value and desire of English became part of my personal practical knowledge as a learner and as a teacher.

When I lived with Yu-mi, a returnee child, in the in-classroom places in 1999, I expressed my personal practical knowledge in shaping Yu-mi's curriculum of life. This was an expression of my values, desires, and beliefs about English. Even though Yu-mi showed some reluctance in living out the stories I composed for her, I ignored tensions between us as expressed by her reluctance. I had a strong belief that I was doing right to her as a teacher. This story of living with Yu-mi reveals how the value of English was dominant in my personal practical knowledge as a teacher at that time. I thought that Yu-mi would have the same desire and value of English as I did. Therefore, I did not try negotiation to resolve the tensions arising between Yu-mi and me because of what I saw was best for her in living in the Korean school landscape.

Ji-sung lived different stories of English from mine in his classroom with returnee children. This came from his different personal practical knowledge about English. In his secondary school days, English was a subject which composed his happy school life with his friends. There was no burden, pressure, or desire to instrumentalize English for pursuing life goals. Ji-sung looked at English as a practical communication tool to enlarge his experiences with diverse people and to broaden his view of life.

It was Ji-sung's first year of university when he registered in an English conversation class to prepare for 'The Vision Trip to the Philippines.' He described his hope about learning English for Korean people as, "*I hope English will, in the future, be learned as an instrument or mediating tool to experience a 'Variety of Lives"*" (April 11, 2008). His perspective about English was connected with Lugones' (1987) notion of "world travelling."

Ji-sung's personal practical knowledge was expressed when he lived with returnee children. Returnees' English ability was not his focus when he thought about their stories to live by in the school landscape. For example, Ji-sung understood Min-soo's conspicuous behaviors as coming from his personality, not coming from his experience of studying English abroad.

Ji-sung came to know that the most concern of returnee children's parents was maintaining their children's English ability in Korea. However, Ji-sung did not believe English should be a major focus in classroom curriculum making for them. He lived his stories to live by as a "good" teacher trying to make a

‘curriculum of lives’ (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) for returnee children as an expression of his personal practical knowledge about English.

To Min, English was a very important subject that enabled students to enter a university after high school. Although he was excellent in English, he lost the importance of English in his life after entering a University of Education. The value of English was revived from his experience of a teachers’ English conversation class when he was teaching. He decided to develop his English ability for his teaching career. His friendship with a Canadian instructor helped his learning of English.

While on the one hand, he focused on improving his English ability, on the other hand, he worried about the undue fever for learning English. He had an opportunity to establish his own meaning of teaching and learning English through the teacher training program for ‘globalization.’

Min lived a story of a teacher who had a specialty in English in the out-of-classroom places and outside of the school, but not in the in-classroom places with returnee children. Even though English was seen as important for his career, he did not focus on the value of English for returnees in the classroom. He believed the biggest teacher role is helping students to learn academic knowledge. He thought there was no room for him to teach returnees English because they were better in speaking English than he was. Their English level was already better than the mandated English curriculum outcomes for Grade 5.

Sung-ho’s journey of learning English was always coming along with his interest in English. His passion for talking to native speakers of English

contributed to his close relationships with Richard (the ballet director) and David (a professor at the University of Toronto). His friendship with them and watching American serial dramas shaped positive images about American culture and people. These experiences encouraged his interest in learning English and in teaching English. He became prominent in teaching English in his school district. He always planned action research related to English learning for his students. Accordingly English was positioned as a huge value in his stories to live by as a teacher.

Sung-ho looked at returnee children as English experts and focused on their English ability. English was very important as he taught returnee children. He polished returnee children's English ability. His personal practical knowledge about English influenced his thinking about returnee children. He positively accepted overall aspects of each returnee child's stories as they lived in the school context.

I saw the participant teachers' experiences of learning English shaped their personal practical knowledge expressed in their teaching practices with returnee children. The value of English in each teacher's life influenced the composing of his stories to live by with returnee children.

Key Consideration # 2: Shifting teachers' 'stories to live by' depended on their professional knowledge landscapes.

English was an inevitable element when the teachers composed their stories to live by with returnee children. I saw this as they mentioned 'English'

first when telling the stories of returnee children they had lived with or were living with currently.

Sung-ho voluntarily ran an afterschool English conversation class for regular students in a small rural elementary school in 1992 to 1993. However, Sung-ho lived different stories in a school in Bundang to which he transferred from the previous rural school. This school was located in a school district which was well-known as an economically affluent city area in Korea. Sung-ho could not reveal his concern about English to students and their parents who generally had a high level of English ability. This school context threatened Sung-ho's telling of English-related stories as a teacher in the school landscape. Even though Sung-ho had returnee children in his homeroom every school year while working in Bundang, he did not show his interest in teaching English to them as he planned curriculum for returnee children. In the current school, he was living out his stories as a teacher who was trying to help returnee children maintain, develop, and improve their English language ability. These stories came from Sung-ho's great concern about teaching and learning English.

Since Min decided to improve his English ability for his elementary teaching career from his experience of teachers' English conversation class, he also expanded his experience to teacher training for teaching English. Through this effort, he was able to live as an expert teacher in teaching English outside of the school, establishing relationships with well-known English teachers in the school district. In his school, however, he lived as one of the young teachers especially in the out-of –classroom places. He was not in charge of any English-

related school work because there were already experienced teachers dealing with work related to English in this particular school situation with many returnee children. Moreover, his experiences of living with returnee children such as Hee-joo in the classroom interrupted his desire of living as an expert English teacher. His bitter experience of living with Hee-joo, a returnee girl who had excellent ability in English, in 2005, made him intimidated about teaching English to returnees. Along with this, his experience with Ho-chul shaped his generally negative impression about returnee children because he found them impertinent due to their experiences abroad. Min's lived experience with returnee children, as a result, influenced the ways he composed his stories to live by as a homeroom teacher living without focusing on returnees' English-related stories in the classroom. He began to compose his stories as a teacher who tries to help returnees' deficiency in the Korean language skills or Math knowledge.

Tensions and struggles appeared when I looked at how Min's stories to live by with returnee children shifted depending on the context in which he was positioned even though he did not mention about those things. In further study, it would be interesting to hear about teachers' tensions or struggles arising from their experiences of teaching returnee children.

Ji-sung lived a story of an expert teacher in English in Paju. He taught only English for three years and demonstrated his English class many times to teachers in the school district. However, the new school landscape made him compose shifted teacher stories. He neither taught English nor took care of English-related school work. He lived a story of a first-year teacher making an

effort to adapt to a new school. He concentrated on carrying out his extra school work, sometimes generating "bumping places"[26] (Clandinin et al., 2006) inside him caused by his negligence in caring for his homeroom. This situation allowed him to look at returnee children with his broad perspective about English. English was not a focal point as he composed his stories to live by with them. Had Ji-sung taught English and still handled English-related work in the new school, I believe, he would have lived different stories.

My participant teachers' stories allowed me to understand how their personal practical knowledge can be drawn forward differently depending on their professional knowledge landscapes in which they were situated. Their stories showed teachers' stories to live by pass through a fluid and "improvisational" (Bateson, 1994) process across contexts. Bateson (1994) characterized "improvisation" in composing a life as follows:

> In a rapidly changing and interdependent world, single models are less likely to be viable and plans more likely to go awry. … Adaptation comes out of encounters with novelty that may seem chaotic. In trying to adapt, we may need to deviate from cherished values, behaving in ways we have barely glimpsed, seizing on fragmentary clues. (p. 8)

Moving into new school contexts led Sung-ho and Ji-sung to compose improvisational stories to live with returnee children. Differences between inside

[26] Clandinin et al. (2006) identified "bumps" as marked by tensions. The term of "bumping places" is the concept of stories "bumping" against each other. Ji-sung's two stories – a story of living in the out-of-classroom places and a story of living in the in-classroom place – bumped against each other in his mind.

and outside school contexts also influenced how Min lived with returnee children. Their stories to live by were shifted by changing contexts.

I am reminded of the notion of "bumping places" (Clandinin et al., 2006) as a way to think about contextual tensions my participants experienced. Their stories of 'who I was' in the past bumped against their stories of 'who I am' in the present and 'who I am becoming' in the future in the contexts in which they were located. Tensions created in the bumping places were resolved by composing shifted stories through "repeatedly reconsidering new experiences in relation to old ones to reach new layers of understanding" (Desrochers, 2006, p. 317). Clandinin and Connelly (1992) referred to 'reaching new layers of understanding for new experiences' as 'narrative unities' which emerge from our past experiences and which act as a continuum to give our lives meaning in the present and shape our actions in the future. Carr (1986) referred to this as 'achieving narrative coherence.' According to Carr (1986), as we move through life, we constantly search for what makes sense in an effort to achieve narrative coherence. That the participant teachers composed shifted stories to live by depending on their professional knowledge landscapes was the expression of their actions to reach narrative unities, narrative coherence in their lives.

Key Consideration # 3: Teachers held different understandings about curriculum making.

When I talked about 'curriculum' with my colleague teachers in Korea, it

was always described as a given-mandated curriculum arranged by disciplinary knowledge. Teachers believed their first duty was transmitting that knowledge to students. This view governed teachers' actions and thoughts, shaped their personal practical knowledge, and shaped their stories to live by in the professional knowledge landscape. It was the concept of curriculum as the contents of study that was pervasive in educational practice.

I saw this concept of curriculum also, for the most part, positioned across my participant teachers' lives. Min felt guilty when he could not provide returnee children who were not fluent in Korean with appropriate instruction of Korean Language Arts. He expected to learn a teaching guide for the Korean language from the teacher education program for teachers who have returnee children in their classrooms. When he looked at returnee children, he paid attention to their academic proficiency in subject matters. He concentrated on Ho-chul's deficiency in Math, and Hee-joo and Jae-min's excellence in all subject areas. These examples allowed me to understand how Min understood curriculum for returnees.

For Ji-sung and Sung-ho also, when they struggled with much school work, their most pressing concern was that they could not ensure time for teaching the contents of mandated curriculum. This was the pervasive reality in Korean teachers' lives according to the concept of curriculum they have.

I started to see that returnee children were causing me to wonder about the mandated curriculum because it was not a good fit to them. Returnee children are usually very good at English, but not good at Korean Language Arts and Math. These general traits of returnees caused struggles when the participant teachers

lived with them in the classroom and tried to understand how the mandated curriculum fit for them. The teachers could not carry out what they were supposed to do with the mandated curriculum for returnee children. Min had struggles in teaching: English to Hee-joo, Jae-min, and other returnees; Math to Ho-chul; Korean Language Arts to Jun-young and Jae-min. Sung-ho and Ji-sung also experienced struggles when teaching the Korean language to Eun-mi and Su-jin. The presence of returnee children interrupted the participant teachers' easy stories of delivering mandated curriculum to children in the classrooms.

Key Consideration # 4: Teachers held different views about returnees' readjustment into the Korean schools.

Participating teachers' main concern about returnee children is their smooth re-adjustment to the Korean school environment. Returnees' relationships with classmates are especially highlighted. How to help their readjustment was, I found from the study, dependent on individual teachers' personal practical knowledge about English and about curriculum making for children.

I wanted to help Yu-mi's adaptation to the Korean classroom through composing her stories focused on maintaining her English ability, although I realized recently her reluctance in living out the curriculum I made for her came from her worry about becoming a *wang-tta*. Min struggled with his inability to provide returnees with proper Korean language instruction to help their readjustment. Ji-sung tried to live out his stories with returnee children along with his concept of English. He treated returnees the same as regular children with his

broad view about English learning. He concluded the returnee children did not have any problems in re-adjustment into the Korean classroom because they kept their Korean fluency.

In light of returnees' fitting into their classmates, participant teachers particularly worried them about becoming '*wang-tta* ('bullying' in English)' victims in the classroom. '*Wang-tta*' in schools has been one of the critical issues in Korea because it has caused Korean people to mistrust the public education system (Kim, 2004) and it has also left tremendous hurt on victims' minds.

Bullying is defined by Farrington (1993) as "bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person" (p. 127). In colloquial speech, bullying often describes a form of harassment perpetrated by an abuser who possesses more physical and/or social power and dominance than the victim. For Olweus (1984), bullying is when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons. He defined negative action as when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person, through physical contact, through words or in other ways.

I can depict the victim of bullying as the weak one from the above definitions. Research (Park, 2001; Lim, 2002; Shim, 2003; Kim, 2004; Kim, 2004; Park, 2004; Heo, 2006; Yoon, 2007) about *wang-tta* issues in Korea also adopted the similar definitions as the above. They also associated victims' personal and psychological traits mainly with negative points such as being physically small, low intelligence, being quiet, and lack of self-esteem and

confidence, etc. However, I want to approach *wang-tta* issues concerning returnee children differently. First of all, returnee children do not look weak to other students. Rather they are seen as 'the have.' One internet news survey supports this idea by reporting, "Nearly 50% of Korean parents want their children to go to early study abroad" (Naver Internet News, Oct. 17, 2008). No matter what reasons Korean parents have for wanting their children to study abroad, Korean people's views of returnee children contain an element of envy. At this point, I understand returnee children could be positioned with easy conditions to fall into *wang-tta* from majority of regular students in the classroom. This was examined by Koo (1997) as psychological and social reasons of *wang-tta*: pursuing superiority in distorted ways, lack of acceptability for others due to tendency of self-centralization, and absence of moral education. Park et al. (1998) also helped my understanding about *wang-tta* issues related to returnee children by indicating structural reasons of *wang-tta* in Korea: excessive competition among students, bureaucratic school system, violation of students' human rights, and teachers' unequal behaviors to students. Yu (2007) stated *wang-tta* phenomena in the Korean schools emerged from Korean collectivism which has little tendency of accepting others and which is not willing to agree that other people are different from us. These social, psychological, and structural reasons can explain why returnee children in Korea can be easily located in *wang-tta* position in the classroom.

However, almost all returnee children in my participant teachers' classrooms did not suffer from *wang-tta* problems. The teachers explained that is

because the returnees were fluent in Korean. Korean language ability seemed to be a prerequisite for a returnee child's re-adjustment into the Korean classroom. The teachers believed that once a returnee child has Korean language fluency, he/she would not have much difficulty in readjusting to the Korean classroom. Jae-min in Min's class was seen as "like living alone in the classroom" because of his Korean language deficiency although a returnee child's well-rounded personality, in some cases, could cover his/her weakness in speaking Korean. When Sung-ho had a returnee child, Eun-mi, who could speak almost no Korean in 1995, he also tried to help by improving her Korean language instead of focusing on her English fluency.

As a result, the participant teachers lived out their stories to help returnee children to readjust into the Korean classrooms. In almost all situations returnees fulfilled prerequisites for readjustment: Min focused on returnees' deficient academic areas caused by their absence from the Korean schools; Sung-ho focused on developing returnees' English ability; Ji-sung treated returnees the same as regular students focusing on their not-problematic school lives.

A Reflective Summary

As my stories of teaching Yu-mi, a returnee child, were composed by my view about English shaped through my experiences of learning English, I saw each teacher's personal practical knowledge was shaped by his experiences of learning English and was expressed in teaching returnee children.

Even though each participant teacher's stories with returnee children were composed by his personal practical knowledge related to English, his 'stories to live by' were shifted depending on the professional knowledge landscape. That is to say, different experiences on different school landscapes or different returnee children influenced the composing of his 'stories to live by' as a teacher.

I found the dominant concept of curriculum, that is, mandated curriculum arranged around disciplinary knowledge, held by the participant teachers, influenced the living and telling of their stories with returnee children. Their most pressing concern as homeroom teachers was delivering the knowledge of the mandated curriculum to students. However, returnee children did not fit into the mandated curriculum at the appropriate grade. Almost all returnee children that the participant teachers worked with, were very good at English and considerably weaker at Korean Language Arts and Math. This situation created struggles in how to teach returnee children.

Lastly, participant teachers believed that the most important condition for returnees' smooth readjustment into the Korean classrooms is holding onto their Korean language ability, especially in the high grades (Grade 5 & 6). They concluded returnee children would not have problems in fitting in with their Korean classmates if they were good at speaking Korean despite the possibility of falling into *wang-tta* status.

Transition Story of My Study

The key considerations from my study give important implications about in-service teacher education in terms of curriculum making for returnee children. Although my participant teachers were living out their teacher stories with returnee children, composed from their personal practical knowledge, the expression of their stories was shaped by the curriculum concept they held. I wonder if each homeroom teacher held a different concept of curriculum, which considered returnees' lives, would his understanding about each returnee child be more extended in width and depth.

Parents who bring their children back to Korea from staying abroad have concern about their children's smooth readjustment into Korean schools. Their concern was closely connected with their expectation of a "good" homeroom teacher, who can understand returnee children, for their own child. When considering they have no right to choose a homeroom teacher for their returned child, their concerns about who is going to be their child's homeroom teacher would be huge.

When I look back on my experience of in-service teacher education programs such as 'Teacher Education about Amended National Curriculum,' 'Teacher Training Program for Teaching English,' and 'Teacher Education for Improvement of Instruction in the Classroom' as a teacher and a teacher educator, they all focused on technical things about disciplinary areas. I concluded the result of this circumstance in teacher education formed my participants' and my previous concept about curriculum making.

I started to wonder at the end of my study if providing in-service teachers with an opportunity to think about a narrative perspective about curriculum making through teacher education programs could suggest new possibilities for teachers, returnee children, and their parents.

I believe it is important to reconsider in-service teacher education as a way to extend teachers' understanding about curriculum for teachers who teach returnee children in Korea.

Towards Re-conceptualizing a Narrative Curriculum for In-Service Teacher Education for Teachers Who Teach Returnee Children

I have continuously recognized how my participants' narratives of experience were expressed in their teaching practice with returnee children during the process of the study. Their teacher knowledge, shaped by their lived experience, contained many possibilities in living and telling their stories with returnees in curricular situations.

However, the stories they lived out as teachers were shaped by the concept of curriculum they held. As I wrote in the key consideration #3, the concept of curriculum how it was generally understood by most teachers and me was the mandated-given curriculum in Korea. This was related to their perception of who they are and what it means to practice as teachers.

Traditionally, teachers have been thought of people who teach academic knowledge to students in Korea. This academic knowledge was something to be taught and was arranged by grade levels and became to be called as "curriculum."

This historical background of formation of curriculum concept and education from pre/in-service teacher education programs, which mainly focused on disciplinary knowledge, shaped the dominant concept of curriculum as the mandated curriculum most teachers held. Within this socially embedded concept of curriculum, teachers are perceived as a conduit or a transmitter of unchangeable knowledge, and their teaching practice is considered as the action for delivering the knowledge.

All of these understandings about curriculum impacted how teachers understand their work with returnee children and tacitly governed the participant teachers' living and telling their teacher stories with returnee children.

This is the situation out of my study and what I know now. I want to argue that what we need to do is taking this knowing by re-conceptualizing curriculum in teacher education and making a difference in teachers' lives with returnee children.

I believe that addressing teachers' 'stories to live by' with returnees in the classroom requires reconsidering how we understand curriculum and what it means for in-service teacher education.

Understanding Teacher Education Narratively

My study was not about teacher education. I examined how the participant teachers' experiences of learning English shaped their personal practical knowledge, how their personal practical knowledge was expressed in teaching returnee children, and how their living of teacher stories were shifted

depending on their professional knowledge landscapes. However, my finding that their stories lived out with returnee children were confined by the dominant concept of curriculum-as-plan (Aoki, 1993) they held, made me realize that their experiences of in-service teacher education result in teachers' thinking about themselves as deliverers of the mandated curriculum. How teachers think about 'who they are,' whether deliverers of the mandated curriculum or a central force in curriculum making, will make a huge difference when they live out their stories with returnee children. As I re-imagine how teachers think about who they are as curriculum makers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992), I want teachers to have opportunities to think about themselves not as deliverers of the mandated curriculum, but as makers of a curriculum of lives with children. This means they will be attentive to the lives of all children including returnees. At this point, I searched the literature from others who discuss Teacher Education to support my argument.

Connelly and Clandinin (1994) criticized historical, current teacher education tradition for forming the view about teachers 'as in a conduit, their purposes flowing down to them from others.' They believed that 'teachers are the single most important force in school improvement' and viewed teachers as 'creative, independent agents of their own, as people who are composing lives that make a difference and that those differences are important in children's learning' (p. 147).

They suggested four assumptions about teacher education: first, teacher education is lifelong; second, to think about teacher education is to think about a

life line, a life history; third, teaching is an educative relationship among people; and fourth, teacher education is a continuum. These assumptions imply the importance of narrative perspectives in teacher education and ongoing teacher education containing not only pre-service teacher education but also in-service one.

Connelly and Clandinin (1994) looked at life as a story we live. Because they assumed that to think about teacher education is to think about a life history, their consideration about teacher education came from a narrative perspective that 'education is more a process of rethinking and rebuilding the past (p. 149),' drawing upon Dewey's (1938) notion of 'education as the reconstruction of experience.' For ongoing teacher education, teachers are viewed as knowing people who are curriculum makers. Teacher knowledge shaped by his lived experience is not static and fixed, but relational, multiple, and fluid. Teacher education from a narrative perspective occurs through telling and retelling teachers' stories of experiences over a life time.

The authors (1994) showed their educational beliefs related to a narrative perspective in education: education equals growth equals inquiry; people make meaning of their lives through telling stories; and if a teacher understands the story of her/his own education, she/he will better understand her students' education.

In conclusion, Connelly and Clandinin (1994) talked about teacher education emphasizing narrative perspectives in it:

> Teacher education is a process of learning to tell and retell educational stories of teachers and students. …teacher education is a sustained conversation in which we need many responses to our stories in order to be able to tell and retell them with added possibility. Conversations with theory, research, social conditions, different cultural groups, other teachers, students, teacher educators, and children allow for a response-filled environment and encourage more mindful retellings. (p. 150)

Connelly and Clandinin (1994) provided me with theoretical and practical reasons why telling and retelling teachers' and children's stories are important in teacher education. I came to believe teachers' realization that storytelling of teachers' and children's lived experiences will open possibilities of more understanding about children's curricular lives through teacher education, and will lead teachers themselves to learn how to understand 'curriculum' for returnee children with broader perspective.

Britzman (2003) also criticized 'content-valued' curriculum in teacher education, which resulted in seeing teachers themselves 'as custodians of culture and as transmitters of cultural knowledge' (p. 54). Within this perspective of curriculum, 'the work of the teacher is viewed as technical rather than intellectual.' There is no space for teacher and learner's voices and no intention to live and tell their stories of experience. Britzman (2003) wrote:

> While the teachers in teacher education program were told that teachers make decisions, typically they had no decisions of their own to make.

> Their participation was reduced to spectators who received the presentations of others. How to teach obscured the more messy questions of what to teach and why particular methods are suitable. Consequently, the discursive practices made available prevented these teachers from theorizing about the potential relationships among pedagogy, content, and social interactions. 'Preservice teachers were, for the most part, educated in how to follow orders - i.e., to take a prescribed curriculum and deliver it with a variety of techniques. (Ginsburg, 1986, p. 298)' (p. 63)

This is a reality where the teachers posit themselves in a curricular milieu. I see this when Min expected a "recipe" for how to teach the Korean language skills to returnee children in a teacher education program for teachers who teach returnee children. I see this in my response to my supervisor, Dr. Jean Clandinin's question of "what do you want to study in the doctoral program?" as "I want to learn about brand-new teaching methodologies for teacher education programs in Korea" at the first meeting with her in 2006. This was the way teachers were educated in teacher education in Korea.

Britzman (2003) viewed teachers as sources of knowledge, who have 'their own deep convictions, investments, and desires' through 'their own subjective experience' (p. 61) and emphasized a 'dialogic view' in curriculum by saying, 'the curriculum and its presentation should be considered in dialogic relationship to the lives of students and teachers' (p. 62).

I have seen my participant teachers be most concerned about carrying out the mandated curriculum in their teaching practice. Their personal practical knowledge could not be enacted vigorously with returnee children under this dominant concept of curriculum. It was not their priority to establish narrative relationships with returnee children to make curriculum with and for them.

> Finally, Britzman (2003) suggested the potential of teacher education:
>
> Teacher education has the potential to arrange the programs in ways that can make a difference in the quality of the everyday lives of students and teachers by constructing and studying teachers' narrative accounts and the narrative accounts of others. (p. 238-239)

I connect Britzman's argument with the implication from my study for reconsidering teacher education with a narrative perspective about curriculum. Perhaps in-service teacher education programs might suggest possibilities of making a difference in the quality of lives of teachers and children by letting teachers know the importance of life narratives in curriculum making.

Many other scholars supported a need for narrative perspectives in curriculum of teacher education. Pushor (2009) examined a narrative perspective with parents in teacher education programs. She looked at 'dominant plotlines' of teachers in teacher education as taken-for-granted stories of teachers who hold power, authority, and the right to decision making. She argued, 'when we interrupt dominant plotlines in teacher education programs by living up to the person (teacher) to person (parent) through listening to stories of each other,

teachers can take up a new identity as professionals – one of being in relationship, of working together, of learning from one another, and of reciprocal benefit' (p.22).

Pushor (2009) allowed me think about spaces for parents' stories in curriculum making. When considering parents were particularly much involved in returnees' lives in a foreign country, we need to listen to parents' stories of their child. Although Min never intended to exclude parents' stories about Jae-min when working with him, the lack of a dialogic relationship with Jae-min's parents consequently interrupted Min's integral understanding about Jae-min. I experienced rigorous spaces for parents' engagement in curriculum making as taken-for-granted stories of teachers in Korea. This environment for parents' narratives should be reconsidered in teacher education for the curriculum of lives.

Keyes (2009) explored two pre-service teachers' stories as a way to open spaces and opportunities for 'narrative authority' (Olson, 1995) in her teacher education program. Keyes believed that living a story of inviting pre-service teachers' narratives of experience into the teacher education program is a way to help them understand themselves as curriculum makers. She insisted, 'we all need to help one another by sharing, retelling and reliving the resulting narratives of our curriculum of lives' in teacher education.

I know 'teacher education' is usually said as education for pre-service teachers. I also assume my argument of the need for narrative perspectives in curriculum making in teacher education has a potential for pre-service teacher education. However, I see understanding curriculum narratively is particularly

important and urgent in work with in-service teachers, who are teaching returnee children right now.

Cui (2006) described his struggle with alienation from narrative perspectives in university curriculum of English in China:

> Our personal practical experiences need to be legitimated as valuable resources for teachers' professional knowledge. For policy makers to understand teachers and students, for English reforms to succeed, teacher stories, student stories, school stories, stories about teachers, stories about students, and stories about schools need to be told and heard. (p. 194)

Cui argued the need for recognizing teachers as knowing people who have personal practical knowledge and the importance of teachers', students', and schools' stories to be told and heard in the curricular milieu in China. I sensed the Korean educational field is also in a similar situation from my study. I want the educational environment to be established in ways to respect stories of teachers and children through teacher education for narrative perspectives in curriculum making.

Desrochers (2006) made a suggestion to reconsider teacher education for diversity by arguing that we need to shape narrative spaces in teacher education curriculum toward a reconceptualized curriculum as lived experience.

I imagine the days of teacher life when I return to Korea as a teacher and a teacher educator. If I leave narrative spaces for students, teachers, parents, and

schools, how wonderful it would be. My educational life, I am sure, will be retold and relived by the narrative concept of curriculum I hold now.

One consequence of reviewing the above literature led me to confirm the importance and urgency of the need for narrative perspectives in teacher education. This will help teachers to think about themselves as makers of curriculum. I found that teachers educated by current teacher education programs were stuck with a limited concept of curriculum-as-plan (Aoki, 1993) and tried to follow the 'dominant plotlines' (Pushor, 2009) for teachers. It is time to rethink in-service teacher education around a more narrative concept of curriculum making for teachers who teach returnee children.

Closing Thought: Who We Were and Who We Are Becoming

I still remember my confusion about the meaning of curriculum in the course of 'Curriculum Foundation and Inquiry' in 2006 instructed by Dr. D. Jean Clandinin. We were talking about the curriculum commonplaces (Schwab, 1960) constituted with four factors: teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu, and I heard for the first time the concept of curriculum as a 'curriculum of lives' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). When we discussed the 'teacher' element with teacher's stories and stories of teachers as knowing people in curriculum making, I asked, "Where is 'subject matter' in it?" Now I know where my question came from. Until then, the meaning of 'curriculum' was only linked to the school course of study with disciplinary subject matter (Cremin, 1971), the mandated national curriculum to me.

Now as I look back on my story I realize my participant teachers held the same concept of curriculum. The mandated curriculum of 'curriculum-as-plan' (Aoki, 1993) they had to deliver was the only concept of curriculum that they knew. This is not their choice, but the result from their experiences of living in school landscapes for a long time. In this situation, teaching becomes equal to implementing prescribed curriculum; the most important role of teachers is delivering the content of the mandated curriculum. Grumet (1989) wrote:

> [the notion of the mandated curriculum] assumes that the teachers' job is to deliver the goods without messing them up. When the teacher is seen as the conservator, custodian, or dispenser of knowledge, pedagogy melts into passivity. (p. 16)

With this concept of curriculum, teachers cannot think about teacher autonomy as 'knowing individuals' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) to make curriculum with, and for, individual children. Teachers tend to look at children with collective and unitary perspectives. Within this concept of curriculum, there is no place for living and telling teachers' and children's stories.

It reminded me of Maxine Greene's notion of seeing people's lives big and seeing people's lives small. Greene (1995) stated:

> To see things or people small, one chooses to see from a detached point of view, to watch behaviors from the perspective of a system, to be concerned with trends and tendencies rather than the intentionality and concreteness of everyday life. To see things or people big, one must resist

> viewing other human beings as mere objects or chess pieces and view them in their integrity and particularity instead. One must see from the point of view of the participant in the midst of what is happening if one is to be privy to the plans people make, the initiatives they take, the uncertainties they face. …. When applied to schooling, the vision that sees things big brings us in close contact with details and particularities that cannot be reduced to statistics or even to the measurable. (p. 10)

The concept of the mandated curriculum the participant teachers held made them see returnee children "small." In the school system which focused on carrying out the prescribed curriculum, Ho-chul was seen as one of students who have deficiency in Math to Min, Su-jin was a girl who needs improvement in Korean writing to Ji-sung. Returnees were treated as regular students under the name of 'equality.' The participant teachers did not have time and a narrative concept of curriculum to listen to returnees' stories related to who they were as returnee children.

They had to struggle with how to teach returnee children because returnees did not fit into the mandated curriculum from the perspective of a school system. In my argument, I want teachers who teach returnee children to understand returnees "big." In order to see them big, that is, to be attentive to each returnee's particularity and uniqueness, teachers need to work with new concept of curriculum: curriculum of lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). The curriculum

teachers make with returnee children needs to be made as unique and specific as is each individual returnee.

However, in the context of indicating curriculum as only the contents of study, the meaning of a 'curriculum of lives' is easily hidden. Even teachers, who want to live a 'curriculum of lives,' cannot recognize the importance of their intention in students' curricular lives. Their intention is considered as added value to the main value of teaching a "curriculum." This educational situation in Korea, interpreted by me, led me understand why Ji-sung was depressed when he could not manage rightly the time periods for teaching subject matters. Students' 'uniqueness disappeared into the shadow' (Aoki, 1993, p. 258) of the mandated curriculum.

I believe every teacher wants to become a "good" teacher. Although the meaning of 'a good teacher' depends on each individual teacher's point of view, I can find the meaning from my participant teachers' stories. Min decided to be a teacher with a hope of becoming a good teacher like his high school English teacher. Sung-ho wanted to become a teacher who makes his students happy in the classroom, and he actually moved to the current school with this hope. Ji-sung wanted to see his students laugh a lot in their school lives. Through Ji-sung and Sung-ho's stories they told, I realize they pursued living a teacher story of a curriculum of lives. In their stories, there were spaces for considering students' lived experiences and for combining students' stories with their personal practical knowledge.

I saw how each participant teacher's personal practical knowledge was enacted in his teaching practice with returnee children. However, I found there was lack of recognition of teachers themselves as knowing people. I wondered if the teachers understood themselves as having teacher knowledge, it could have helped them approach 'narrative curriculum making' for returnee children rather than sticking to the mandated curriculum.

I think a concept of a curriculum of lives and a concept of teachers' personal practical knowledge could be reconsidered in in-service teacher education programs for teaching returnee children. A re-conceptualized curriculum from the mandated curriculum to a curriculum of lives would need to recognize the narrative qualities of teacher knowledge and be rooted in a belief that teachers' lives are central to the curriculum of in-service teacher education. It would also require that we consider the lived experience returnee children bring to the classroom. They too have narratives of experience that become visible through the stories they live and tell.

I hope a re-conceptualized curriculum through in-service teacher education will open teachers' eyes to see the uniqueness, the particularity of individual returnees and will open teachers' ears to listen to returnees' storied experiences, thus leading them to understand returnees and seeing returnees "big."

I hope the concept of a 'curriculum of lives' will be proliferated in the professional knowledge landscape and will be enacted in teaching practice milieux. Thus, I hope Korean teachers will think of curriculum as what Clandinin and Connelly (1992) stated:

> Teachers and students live out a curriculum; teachers do not transmit, implement, or teach a curriculum and objectives; nor are they and their students carried forward in their work and studies by a curriculum of textbooks and content, instructional methodologies, and intentions. An account of teachers' and students' lives over time is the curriculum, although intentionality, objectives, and curriculum materials do play a part in it. (p. 365)

For going further, I hope that educational reform will happen through re-conceptualizing curriculum from a 'curriculum-as-plan' to a'curriculum-as-lived experience' in Korea.

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