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A Case Study of English Teacher Development through Online Supervision

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Little has been known about the process of the language teacher professional development. The present study aims to investigate an assumption that anybody who has subject matter knowledge will be a good language teacher. A teacher with rich linguistic knowledge started to question the effectiveness of his online class. The teacher, in collaboration with a teacher trainer, became involved in the critical examination of his online class, seeking for more effective ways of teaching. The trainer provided the teacher with clinical supervision, which is characterized as developmental, collaborative, non-judgemental, interactive, and teacher-centered. The data collected at the multi-facets of the online teaching shows how the process of the teacher's decision-making became principled on the basis of recent developments in English language teaching, and how the teacher has gained pedagogical knowledge through reflection upon his teaching. The feedback from the students reveals that such teacher professional development is beneficial to student learning. These findings suggest that language teacher's professional development can take place when they are engaged in reflective teaching and classroom investigation. It is also suggested that the process of teacher development can be enhanced through collaborative supervision with trust, openness and congeniality between parties involved.

[professional development/teacher supervision/reflective teaching]

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I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of English language teacher education has shifted from a knowledge and skill-driven, competency-based, trainer-centered, prescriptive and judgemental model to a developmental, collaborative and reflective model (Richards & Nunan, 1990; Wallace, 1991). The traditional approach to language teacher education has been challenged in the sense that it failed to provide teachers with an opportunity to reflect on their actions and to acquire professionalism. In the alternative approach, language teachers become involved in critical thinking about how they teach so that they can use these insights to teach more effectively. In this developmental view on teacher learning, language teachers take on much of the responsibility for their own learning to teach. The alternative approach stresses individual teachers' professional development through critical reflection and direct actions as shown in Schön's (1983) reflection-in-action.

In recent years the paradigm shift has brought about a variety of developments in the field of English language teacher education. At its center is a great deal of emphasis on professional development of in-service language teachers. Teacher development has been identified as one broad goal within the scope of language teacher education. Efforts have been made to conceptualize the term and to provide strategies for teacher development (Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 2001; Chang, Kim & Jung, 2011; Choi & Park, 2006; Kim, 2005; Kim, 2009; Park, 2002; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Tsui, 2003). The emphasis on in-service teacher development requires language teachers to assume an active role in their own learning process. In other words, language teachers are not considered passive recipients of prescriptions, but active participants in bringing about change in their teaching. The context where the teacher works is considered important in understanding his or her teaching. Although active roles language teachers play in professional development is emphasized at the individual level, this does not necessarily mean that teachers work in a no-man island of their own classroom. It has been observed that collaboration with others enhances individual teachers' learning. As Richards and Farrell (2005) stress, collaboration is viewed as a value that can guide the process of teacher development in the sense that one takes the position of the other through reciprocity, mutuality, and give and take.

Research on online language education has had a relatively late start, but there is a body of practice in language education using Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Little, however, has been done in the field of language teacher education with focus on online language teaching and learning. The present study is an attempt to deepen our understanding of teacher development in online language education through a case study of a teacher who got a doctoral degree in linguistics in the United States and teaches English at a university in Korea. After reviewing the relevant literature as theoretical

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background to the present study, the research questions will be addressed with the description of methods employed in data collection and analysis. The professional development of the teacher will be discussed with the findings of the study. Implications of the study will also be provided for the field of language teacher education.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Language Teacher Development

According to Lange's (1990) definition, teacher development refers to a process of continual, intellectual, experiential, and attitudinal growth of teachers. The concept of teacher development is distinguished from training, which is a goal emphasized in a traditional approach to teacher education. As Richards (1997) observes, teacher development goes beyond training, which typically involves understanding basic concepts and principles, and demonstrating them in the classroom. Richards and Farrell (2005) further explore the concept of teacher development by saying it serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers.

Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (2001) give reasons why teachers pursue professional development. According to their accounts, there can be seven reasons for teachers to participate in opportunities for professional development: to acquire new knowledge and skills, to keep up with change, to lead to an increase in prestige, to empowering by increasing knowledge, to combat negativity in the teaching contexts, to overcome a sense of isolation, and to expand conceptual understanding of teaching. It is observed that reasons for professional development can differ depending on individual needs. The reasons are not necessarily exclusive and mutually exist. A teacher participates in opportunities with one reason, and other reasons can come later.

Opportunities for teacher development vary from formal and externally organized to more informal, smaller in scope, and more private ones (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001). Attending a course or working toward higher certificates belongs to the formal category, while keeping a teaching journal or studying a language belongs to the latter one. Studies in expertise in general education and other professions suggest that teacher knowledge can be characterized as 'reflection-in-action'. An insight from the concept is that expertise in one area can be gained through critical reflection upon practice (Schön, 1983). Drawing on the insight, Tsui (2003) claims that teacher knowledge and teachers' specific contexts of work are dialectically related, and are constantly being construed and reconstrued as teachers engage in reflecting and reframing. She points out the distinctive nature of teacher

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knowledge by saying that the development of teacher knowledge is closely bounded up with the specific contexts. Emphasis on 'knowing-in-action' suggests that the professional development of language teachers can be pursued through exploring and reflecting upon teaching. There has been a substantial piece of work on the ways of exploring English language classroom. Richard and Lockhart (1994) present approaches to exploring language classroom processes. Nunan and Lamb (1996) provide some strategies of managing the teacher learning process and becoming the self-directed language teacher.

2. Observation and Supervision

There are a number of procedures to be used to help teachers investigate classroom teaching. Among them are keeping journals, portfolios, surveys and questionnaires, observation, mentoring, and action research. As Richards and Lockhart (1994) point, each procedure has advantages and limitations, and some are more useful for exploring certain aspects of teaching than others.

Observation has played an important role in language teacher education. From a recent view of in-service teacher education, observation is a learning tool to gather information and develop a deeper understanding of teaching, rather than a way of assessing teaching. It is often pointed out that when observation is associated with assessment, teachers are reluctant to take part in activities related to observation (Maingay, 1988; Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Two kinds of observation can be referred to: self-observation and peer observation. Regardless of a form of observation, it is argued that observation for professional development should be done in a way teachers become aware of the reasons for teaching in a particular way and think about what they should do (Maingay, 1988; Richards, 1997; Wajnryb, 1992).

In the field of language teacher education, Gebhard (1984) defines supervision as an on-going process of teacher education in which the supervisor observes what goes on the teacher's classroom with an eye toward the goal of improved instruction. Bailey (2006) makes a distinction between supervisor and teacher developer by pointing out the hierarchical nature of supervision, and less rewarding and rather unpleasant responsibilities such as providing negative feedback. Considering her distinction, it seems that the narrow definition of supervision is widely accepted in the field of language teacher education. That is, as Bailey (2006) indicates, supervision in the narrow terms is just concerned with the creative and positive aspects of helping language teachers achieve their full potential.

It has been observed that supervisory methods range from a very prescriptive approach at one end to a very flexible approach at the other. A wide variety of terms used to describe approaches, shows that patterns and styles of supervision can be categorized by infinite divisions (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). In the traditional supervisory mode, the prescriptive

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nature of supervision is prevailing. A supervisor, as Wallace (1991) puts, is described as an authority figure with expert status and he knows what ought to be done in a given situation. The supervisor tells the teacher what he did wrong and what he can do to put it right. The hierarchical relationship between the supervisor and the teacher is likely to predominate. This approach is alternatively called prescriptive, directive, non-collaborative, or judgemental supervision. Doubt has been raised on how effective the prescriptive supervision is in term of encouraging teachers' critical self-evaluation for long-term professional development. More recently, non-directive, developmental, collaborative, or non-judgemental supervision is gaining ground in the field of language teacher education. As an alternative approach, it is believed that trust, openness, willingness to listen, non-judgemental manner and support are key conditions if the teacher's self-development is to take place. The cooperation between the supervisor and the teacher is stressed to encourage teachers to be engaged in self-evaluation. As Nettle (1988) points out, this approach shares the same sprit as reflective teaching, that is, the teacher learns about teaching through being engaged in critical inquiry into his own teaching.

3. Teacher Development in Collaboration

The underlying assumption of teacher development is that teachers' professional growth can be achieved through their active involvement in critical reflection upon teaching. It has been emphasized that professional development is primarily concerned with individual teachers' beliefs and attitudes, and it is in teachers' own hands. However, As Edge (1992), and Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (2001) point out, this emphasis on self does not mean that teachers work in isolation. Edge (1992) considers it as a paradox, because self-development cannot be achieved in isolation. His argument is that while teacher development still remains in individual teachers' own hands, they need other people in order to understand their teaching better and objectively. Within the cooperative development framework, other teachers, researchers, administrators, and learners work together to move in the same direction, towards better understanding about teaching and learning. Edge (1992) argues that through collaboration and sharing, teachers have a chance to escape from relating individual experience to simple and egocentric subjectivity. They need to communicate, and exchange experience and information among all concerned. In this sense, self-development and cooperative development go hand in hand.

Strong claims have been made about action research as a process for enhancing reflective practice and professional growth and development (Burns, 1999; Jung & Chang, 2006; Nunan, 1992; Wallace, 1998). As Burns (1999) points out, because of its practical nature and focus on immediate concerns, action research holds particular appeal for classroom teachers and a promising direction for the building of theories related to

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teaching and learning. While there has been a tendency that teachers investigate teaching and learning in the isolation of their own classrooms, in relation to its original goals of bringing about change in social situations, Burns (1999) highlights the collaborative perspective of action research:

> Collaborative action research processes strengthen the opportunities for the results of research on practice to be fed back into educational systems in a more substantial and critical way. They have the advantage of encouraging teachers to share common problems and to work cooperatively as a research community to examine their existing assumptions, values and beliefs within the sociopolitical cultures of the institutions in which they work. (p. 13)

Burn's emphasis on collaborative action research takes a broader perspective than the concept language teachers generally hold about action research. It is worthwhile to bear in mind and put into practice if language teachers aim to strengthen the position of their own voices. As suggested in the literature of action research (Burns, 1999; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988), collaborative action research is more empowering than action research conducted individually as it offers a strong framework for whole-school change.

III. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

1. Context

1) Participants

The teacher took the doctoral degree in applied linguistics in the United State. When he started teaching at the university, he had subject knowledge of linguistics as well as applied linguistics but no teaching experience at all and no form of pre-service pedagogical training. When he started his teaching career, he believed that an academic degree would be an indication of teaching competence and he would gain it through experience.

Now he has had more than 9 years of teaching experience. The dilemma he faces as a teacher is the gap between his subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (i.e. teaching competence or knowing how) in teaching English. He has attributed this gap to the fact that he had no initial language teacher training. He came to realize that a doctoral degree is no indication of teaching competence, and years of teaching experience does not necessarily guarantee expertise in teaching.

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The supervisor in this study has worked with English teachers from different contexts. She has been involved in observing teachers, giving them feedback, and writing evaluations, which she thought teaching development, not supervisory work. This was why she hesitated when she was asked to supervise the participant teacher's teaching. She thought she was not qualified to do supervision because she had no formal preparation for carrying out responsibilities a supervisor takes. She was also concerned with the hierarchical context of supervision. When the teacher openly discussed the dilemma he has faced and described what he wanted through supervision, she realized that the role the teacher asked her to play in doing supervision was a teacher developer, who observes the teacher's classroom with the goal of improving his online language instruction. She was confident in helping teachers reflect upon their teaching, deepening their understanding of teaching.

2) Course

The teacher has run the online course at H University since 2000, though its title has slightly changed. Currently it has the title *English in the News Media.* As the online course is among liberal arts, it is open to any undergraduate student who registers at the university. According to the information on the students who take the course, every year about 70 students register for the course; they consist of English majors and non-English majors; and their English proficiency level ranges from beginners to high-intermediate.

The course states as its goals: to improve students' ability to communicate in English, to raise their language awareness, and to enhance their global awareness. The course covers topics including international political issues, war, health, science and technology, education and so on. The criterion for the selection of the topic is its being the newest or latest, and timely. A variety of learning tasks is to help students achieve the stated goals. As part of the course work, students are required to participate in the online discussion on the materials provided each week with the students in Japan. The students use the Internet to have access to electronic texts, bibliographical information, images, and online resources for news and other media coverage. They also use their e-mails and bulletin board system (BBS) for group writing projects and assignments. For this purpose, all the students are required to learn to use asynchronous computer mediated communication (CMC) skills.

2. Design of the Longitudinal Study

1) Questions Addressed by the Study

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The specified questions addressed by the present study are:

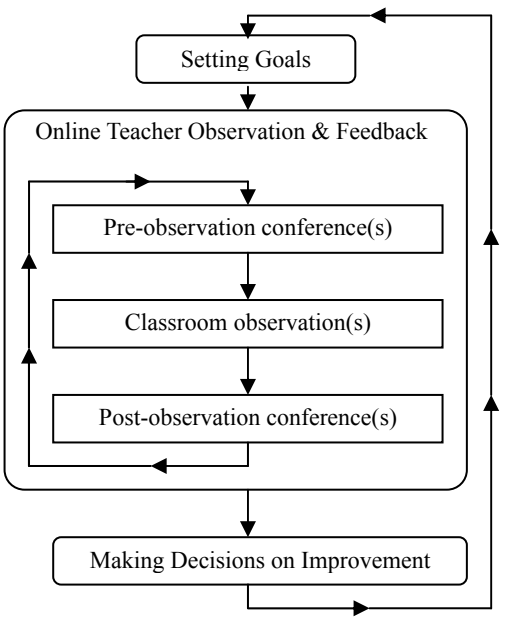
- How has the teacher's teaching changed as a result of collaborative supervision over the period of time?
- How have the supervisor and her supervision in collaboration affected the teacher's attitude and awareness of being competent in teaching?
- How did the integration of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, if any, take place?
- How did the teacher and the supervisor collaborate in improving teaching?
- What benefits, if any, did the students have as a result of changes in teaching?

2) Process of Collaborative Supervision

The present study adopts the process of collaborative supervision proposed by Jeon, Chang and Park (2004). Figure 1 shows how the process works.

FIGURE 1

Process of Collaborative Supervision



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As shown in Figure 1, there are three major stages in the cycle of the collaborative supervision: setting goals, observing and providing feedback, and making decisions. At the phase of setting goals and orientation, the teacher identifies and specifies targets for professional growth. The centerpiece of the process is the second phase that consists of three sub-stages: pre-observation conference(s), classroom observation(s), and post-observation conference(s). Observation is used as a learning tool, and supervision is presented here as an interactive process involving the teacher and the supervisor. These two individuals are engaged in a process, the purpose of which is to generate some form of change in the teacher or in his teaching. There is unlikely to be a dominant-submissive relationship between the two.

The supervisory mode used in this study is based on Cogan's (1973) clinical supervision which focuses on the improvement of the teacher's classroom instruction. The principal data of clinical supervision includes records of classroom events, that is, what the teacher and his students do in the online classroom. Clinical supervision rests on the belief that instruction can only be improved by direct feedback to the teacher on aspects of his teaching. In the clinical supervision, the relationship between the teacher and the supervisor is characterized as a helping relationship. In such a relationship, trust, openness, willingness to listen, and support are key conditions. The rationale for the relationship derives from the belief that the teacher's self-development is more likely to flourish within the cooperation between the supervisor and the teacher. As the teacher is encouraged to take part in self-evaluation, he or she becomes more autonomous and self-confident. The supervisor needs to play the role of someone who plans and conducts evaluation so as to help the teacher use the feedback from the evaluation in taking reflective actions as improving teaching.

3) Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was done over 2 years from 2005 to 2006. The data was gathered from different sources such as online classroom observation notes, teacher diary, questionnaire, results of locally developed tests, and informal interview. The present study did not limit itself to one methodological approach. Rather it adopted a methodological strategy called 'a marriage of approaches' that Allwright and Bailey (1991) propose. The gathered data from various sources was believed to provide multiple perspectives on the context under investigation. The underlying premise for the data collection is that one can gain a richer and more objective picture about the given context than when one relies on one single data collection method (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Nunan, 1992).

The gathered data was triangulated to improve the validity and reliability of the research. Adopting Patton's (1980) 'a paradigm of choices', different methods were applied to the

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data analysis according to the nature of the gathered data. The questionnaire responses were statistically analyzed according to their frequency. The qualitative data was categorized according to its frequency and saliency in addressing the questions addressed by the present study.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the findings of the study and discusses them with reference to the relevant literature. The data analysis reveals there are two areas closely related to the main research questions raised: teacher learning and benefits to students.

1. Teacher Learning

1) Rationales for Making Instructional Decisions

The teacher reviewed his past online classes sometime during the first year of the supervision. He described them as 'bits and pieces' irrelevant to the goals he set for the course. The journal entries say:

> The goals of the course are one thing, and the activities presented at the classes are the other. It is difficult to see the link between the two aspects. ('05, 1st semester)

He further noted that he relied on his hunches in making decisions on instruction rather than referring to principles on language learning and teaching. Sometimes it worked, at other times it did not. Before the supervision, he hardly asked himself why he did something in the class. In the communication with the supervisor, he said that he gathered most recent news materials and then developed web-based teaching materials with them. Pedagogy for him is just providing his students with the materials.

It was observed that the process of his making instructional decisions gradually changed. Through the observation conferences (see Figure 1), the teacher were asked questions about why's beyond a concern with what's. The teacher with the help of the supervisor sought to inquire into theoretical principles for practice. The teacher compared the difference between his past teaching and the new way of teaching. He wrote in his diary:

> My past teaching was separated from the principles behind it. Actually I was not aware there were the principles. The conference sessions we had each week put

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> focus on closely examining what I took for granted and became routinized. ('06, 1st semester)

The changes the teacher experienced is in parallel to Maingay's (1988) concept of the transition from ritual teaching to principled teaching through observation for development. He depicted principled teaching as teaching behavior that is informed by the reasons for doing something that the teacher is aware of. The data reveals that the collaborative supervision played a key role in raising the teacher's awareness between practice and theoretical premises. As Ramani (1987) stresses, this is crucial in teacher learning.

2) New Perspectives on Teaching

The analysis of the communication with the supervisor shows that the teacher used to believe that teaching is to transmit the subject knowledge the teacher has, and the effectiveness of the knowledge transmitting depends on students. At the beginning stage of the study, the teacher put a lot of emphasis on responsibility students should take for their learning. He said:

> If little learning or no learning takes place, it's our students' responsibility, not the teacher's. We teachers do our duty by providing them with what we know about the subject. .... ('05, before the 1st semester)

The teacher also expressed his own view of the qualification for a language teacher: To be a language teacher, he or she must understand languages and cultures of L1 and L2. Interestingly, his view did not include teaching experience or teacher training. He showed his negative attitude toward a language teacher who does not have proper linguistic knowledge of English. The supervisor reflected:

> ... I had a long talk about the question, 'Who is a better qualified language teacher, one with linguistic knowledge about English but with no teacher certificate or teaching experience, or one in the other way round?' I argued the problem of separating knowledge and practice. His position was that the one without linguistic knowledge about English is not qualified to teach. He said the linguistic knowledge should be a starting point. ('05, the 1st semester)

As the teacher got more involved in exploring his own online teaching, his perception about teaching has changed. He came to realize that a teacher needs to have knowledge about the context where teaching takes place, as well as subject knowledge. At first, when

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he was advised to examine aspects such as learner needs, learning styles, background knowledge, he seemed to be annoyed. Gradually he came to understand the important role the understanding of those aspects played in his teaching. He often put his new perspective in his diary:

> ... I think I have oversimplified teaching. Linguistic knowledge is not a sufficient, but a necessary condition. What I lack was the contextual knowledge, which plays an important role in effective teaching. My views on students' roles in learning have changed. I have usually seen their learning from my own viewpoint rooted in my experience as a language learner. Everything looks straightforward, but now things seem to be complicated. So many factors seem to interact, influencing my teaching, of course learning as well. ('06, the 1st semester)

The belief the teacher held about teaching is closely related to the applied science model of language teacher education. As Wallace (1991) notes, the underlying assumption of this model is that scientific knowledge leads to the most effective professional education. It also holds the position that problems in the profession can be solved by applying knowledge gained from research. Language teacher educators (Richards, 1997; Wallace, 1991) point out that the problem lies in the position that problem-solving draws on the scientific knowledge, not on the daily practice.

The change is interpreted as a result of applying the reflective model of language teacher education to the teacher's daily teaching. The reflective model is different from the applied science model in that research is defined as reflective inquiry into daily practice. The definition of research is in parallel to Schön's (1983) knowing-in-action. The goal of reflective teaching is to enable teachers to develop awareness of their own teaching. As Chang (1999) maintains, the enhancement of awareness is crucial to the continuous monitoring of changes in teaching and attitudes.

3) Teacher Empowerment

Stated earlier, the goal of collaborative and clinical supervision was to help the teacher explore his teaching and improve its effectiveness. The supervisor observed that the teacher became empowered by gaining pedagogical knowledge and skills through investigating his online language classroom. She recalled the conversation with the teacher:

> ... I remember... He said ... the most rewarding experience is to see my teaching have a positive effect on the students' English learning. Equally important is the fact I am

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> satisfied with my job as a teacher in the online class. These gave me a certain amount of freedom... I felt I did properly what I should do as a teacher. (‘06, 1st semester)

The teacher’s experience of empowerment was also promoted by having the teacher set his own objectives based on the program activities he worked on. The teacher reviewed his own achievements, and provided feedback on outcomes during the supervisory sessions. This is the principle Murdock (2000) proposes, that is, to empower teachers through program evaluation activity. According to his suggestion, effective teaching reviews give teachers active roles in developing the ways of evaluating their work.

According to Dickinson (1987), self-direction and autonomy describe the situation in which one is responsible for all the decisions concerned with his or her learning. In other words, self-directed and autonomous teachers take responsibility for making their own instructional decisions. The supervisor’s observation reveals that the teacher gradually became competent and assumed more and more responsibility for decisions he made and actions he took.

Nunan and Lamb (1994) see the close relationship between a teacher’s reflection on his or her own teaching and autonomy. Central to a teacher’s autonomy is the creation of opportunities for the teacher to reflect on his or her own teaching. Likewise, supervision should be channeled towards devising further alternative strategies, instead of towards simply talking about how much teachers did in the way they had been told. Thus they become more capable of self-evaluation; the supervisor’s role becomes secondary. This does not mean that the expertise of the supervisor is devalued. Rather it is emphasized that the person who has the greatest influence over teacher development is neither mentor, principal at the school, nor administrator, inspector, but teachers themselves.

It was found that the teacher gained expertise over 2 years while he became in control of his learning process. This was observed by the supervisor. She wrote:

> ... I believe that we have had some achievements. Among them are understanding about teaching, systematic lesson planning, and playing an active role in making decisions. ... One thing I have noticed is that his self-monitoring skill has become stronger than when he started. He has become more aware of mistakes he made, areas he lacked understanding about, and problems he faced. ... (‘06, the 2nd semester)

The teacher, at the beginning stage, heavily relied on the supervisor in finding out areas to be improved about his teaching. After one semester, he started to identify problem areas by

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himself. For example, he saw most of the instructions he gave were unclear to the students. The teacher became more demanding about his linguistic knowledge than before. He described how his attitude toward subject matter knowledge has changed over the period of time. The change the teacher had shares a common thing with characteristics of experts Tsui (2003) list. That is, experts are more aware of their mistakes, their failures to comprehend, and the difficulties that they will have in solving a problem, than novices are.

4) From Only Source of Expertise to Colleague

The analysis of the data shows that the supervisor's role changed over the period of time. It was observed that there were times when the supervisor needed to use directive control behaviors, in Bailey's (2006) terms. This was prevailing when the teacher was functioning at very low development level. Glickman, Stephen, and Jovita (1998, quoted in Bailey, 2006) note that direct control behaviors are used on the assumption that supervisors have greater knowledge and expertise about the issue at hand. The supervisor described a specific situation where it was appropriate to use such behaviors, and she felt uncomfortable. She wrote:

> ... He(The teacher) doesn't seem to have awareness to act on the issue (cooperation through group writing) that I think to be of important to the students' learning. ...('05, the 1st semester)

> I found myself imposing strategies to the teacher with authority. This is far from the goal of collaborative supervision we set from the beginning. This is not the way we should go. ('05, the 1st semester)

Bailey (2006) similarly notes that supervisors face a challenging question surrounding power and authority when they work with less effective teachers. She emphasizes that employing such behaviors to achieve a particular goal is not the same as assuming the role of a supervisor, who exclusively use prescriptive approach to supervision. In the hierarchical relationship, as Freeman (1982, 1989) notes, the supervisor is viewed as the expert, who gives prescriptive advice. The relationship between the teacher and the supervisor can be described as giver-and-taker.

In the present study, the supervisor found that as the teacher had more autonomy in making decisions, the relationship was gradually colored as collaborative. The supervisor depicted the change with a figure in her research notes ('06, 2nd semester):

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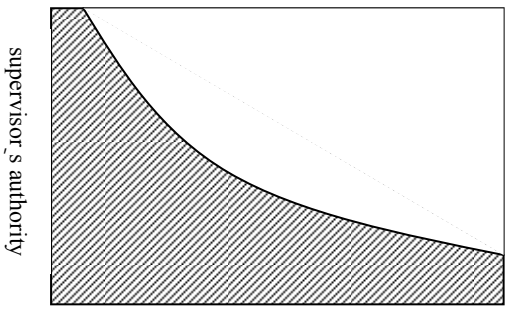
FIGURE 2

Change of Roles of the Supervisor and the Teacher



As the above figure shows, the change of the relationship is closely related to the themes of autonomy and authority. The teacher's autonomy in making decisions and taking actions is inversely proportional to the supervisor's authority.

5) Openness

The supervisor saw open-mindedness one of the key components to the professional life of the reflective teacher. She stressed:

> ... I really appreciate his open-mindedness, commitment, and wholeheartedness he has shown. I knew that if he doesn't possess the key traits to reflective teaching, our job hasn't come out as a success. ('06, the 2nd semester)

> ... The teacher is now very willing to share his weaknesses with me. I remember that he was very defensive about them at the early stage of our work. As he became confident in his teaching, he became more open. This has a positive effect on further development, I think. ('06, the first semester)

Zeichner and Liston (1996, quoted in Bailey, 2006) argue that openness and wholeheartedness mean that teachers regularly examine their own beliefs and actions, and maintain the attitude that they can always learn something. They suggest that supervisors should understand these key features, and value and support them in order to promote teacher autonomy through reflection and self-evaluation.

In this study the supervisor particularly put emphasis on the importance of openness in online class observation and supervision. The supervisor was given *ID* and *password* to

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gain access to the online classes under investigation. She saw that online class is more easily routinized, as there is no way to get access to class without being given *ID* and *password*. She remarked:

> ... the quality of online education depends on the teacher's attitude towards learning through observation. Otherwise, there is no way to gaining access to the class and finding out what's going on... ('05, the 1st semester)

The supervisor saw one strong advantage of online observation and supervision. She mentioned:

> ... It's handy. Anytime I want to observe the class, All I have to do is to type 'ID and password.' Time and space-related advantages of online education can be applied to teacher observation.

2. Benefits to Students

During the process of supervision, data on the students' views about their teacher and his teaching was collected. It is of value that the teacher takes account of their views, since they are one of the main beneficiaries of teacher development. The analysis of the gathered data about the students' views shows that efforts the teacher has made for professional development benefited the students in terms of motivation, improvement in English, and engagement in learning as distance learner.

1) Motivation

Student questionnaires were administered at the end of each 15-week semester. The analysis of the students' responses to the questions shows that the level of the students' satisfaction with the course was very high. It was very frequently pointed out that they appreciated the commitment the teacher made to help them study English better. The students also pointed out that they were motivated thanks to the teacher's commitment.

The data from self-observation the teacher made supports the finding. The teacher observed that the students took part in online class activities more actively after he introduced 'pre-listening task', which was devised to kindle the students' interest and activate their schema on the topic at hand. The teacher spent a lot of time providing feedback to every student's task, encouraging self-correct mistakes he or she made.

The university administered teacher evaluation after each semester in order to provide teachers with feedback on the course they run. The mean score (4.52 out of 5.00) of the

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students' satisfaction with the present course was between very satisfactory and satisfactory. The increasing number of the students who registered for the course also supports the finding.

2) Improvement in English

Not only in the students' motivation, but teacher development had a positive effect on improving the students' English. The analysis of the results of formal assessments, that is mid- and final-tests shows that the students have done better as the supervision process went on. In the self-assessment, a majority of the students said that their English has been improved in at least one area of four skills.

According to the statistical analysis of the test results, the students' knowledge on English has been improved after one semester of the teachers' efforts to raise their awareness by engaging the students in using English in various contexts. To illustrate the strategy the teacher and the supervisor employed to raise the teachers' language awareness, the teacher created a new corner titled 'Writing Tips', where he highlighted one or two key language feature(s) every week. Then the students did the pre-listening task, which was specially devised to require the student to use the tips the teacher dealt with in the class. The students got feedback from the teacher with focus on these features. The comparison of the pre-test and the post-test on the linguistic features shows that there was statistically significant difference after the teacher introduced the new strategy(See Jung & Chang, 2009 for the data).

3) Managing Learning as Distance Learner

It was found that the action-oriented classroom investigation, where the teacher identifies problem areas and devise solutions, has brought changes in the students' learning strategies as distance learner. The teacher's experience in distance education said that many distance students held a fallacy that distance learning in relation to two dimensions of time and place permitted them more laziness and less commitment than the traditional face-to-face education. The teacher regularly put intentional stress on the need for making the most use of the trait of distance education: Learning may take place according to individual student's schedule and at different time. The students were given a self-assessment checklist of their own learning styles and strategies. The list included questions how soon the student attended the class after the lesson was uploaded, how often he or she listened to the lecture on line, and how often he or she failed to meet deadlines for submitting the assignments.

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The teacher provided his distance learners with an opportunity that can be accessed at any time, making use of e-mail. This asynchronous communication through e-mail, as one type of CMC provided the distance learners an opportunity to interact with the teacher and other learners in the same online class, or in a different country, Japan. By being engaged in CMC, the students came to experience learning strategies required to distance learners. As White (2003) notes, the advantage of asynchronous interaction is that learners can participate and respond at their convenience; there is time for thought and reflection between responses, and it is possible to revisit discussions at a later date.

Using the formative assessment instead of heavily relying on summative assessment, the teacher monitored the students' participation and tasks, and identified what weaknesses and strengths individual students had. On the basis of the information gathered through the formative assessment, the teacher devised different strategies to encourage the students to do better what they can do, and further challenge what is a bit beyond their ability. This is similar to what Smith (2005) argues about the objectives of carrying out assessment in the language classroom. To achieve the student-centered goal, the teacher in this study made individual contacts with some difficult students and encouraged them to take active part in the online class activities instead of letting them drop out the course in the middle of the semester.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study aims to investigate how a university English teacher's professional development has been pursued with online teacher supervision. Through the findings of the present study it can be concluded that language teacher's pedagogical knowledge can be developed through the teacher's active involvement in reflection and self-evaluation. Figure 3 illustrates the conclusion in a diagram.

It is suggested that linguistic knowledge does not necessarily lead the teacher to an effective teacher in the classroom, where a number of factors interact with influence on the process of decision-making. It is shown that the teacher develops through critical reflection, which links the teacher's linguistic knowledge and his understanding of the context. This process can be summarized as Wallace's (1991) experiential learning. It can be said that teacher development benefits not only the teacher himself through exploring his own teaching, but also his students particularly in areas the teacher carried out action-oriented investigation to improve effectiveness.

Some implications can be drawn for English language teacher education. Firstly, teacher development through reflective teaching needs to be emphasized in pre-service language teacher training. Shown in the present research, there exists the gap between linguistic

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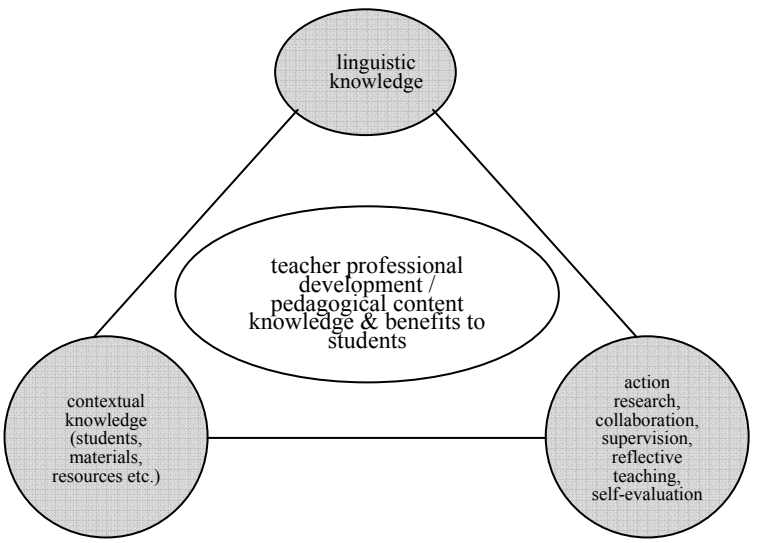
knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. In some contexts, it is still true that would-be teachers spend most of academic years in acquiring linguistic knowledge in the curriculum for training language teachers. To bridge the gap, more emphasis should be given to teaching practice and reflection.

FIGURE 3

Relationship of Main Categories of Teacher Development



Secondly, effective change in teaching can be brought about when the teacher himself takes an initiative, not imposed to change his teaching. Although the supervisor plays an important role in the teacher's improving his or her teaching, at the heart of effective teacher development is the teacher's ownership of change. This should be taken into account in institutions where staff development is an issue at hand. For staff development to take place effectively, each staff member's voice needs to be heard and encouraged to play an active role in self-evaluation.

We can draw implications concerning the preparation of teacher supervisors. As the process and results of the present study shows, the role of a supervisor is challenging partly because it is hard to help a teacher with different experience, knowledge and background change their attitude, awareness and actions. It is also expected that the supervisor provides a good model of teaching. This means that the supervisor needs to be an expert in teaching. There are other qualities required to be a supervisor, for example, open-mindedness, trust, collaboration and willingness. We need to reexamine the common fallacy that any

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language teacher with a lot of experience, teacher trainer, or professor in teacher training institutions has expertise in supervising teachers.

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Examples in: English
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Applicable Levels: tertiary/in-service

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