*영어어문교육 13*권 3 호 2007 년 가을

# Issues of EFL Educational Practice in Korea: A Conceptual Proposal for an Alternative

**Jong-Hee Lee**
(Kangwon National University)

**Lee, Jong-Hee. (2007). Issues of EFL educational practice in Korea: A conceptual proposal for an alternative. *English Language & Literature Teaching, 13*(3), 41-56.**

This paper, drawing on various secondary sources related to bilingualism and bilingual education, proposes a semi-CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) model as an initial option for Korea's ELT instruction at a primary level, with a subsequent application to a secondary level in mind. It is reported that the current pedagogy focused on early English education and communicative language teaching does not meet the needs of students' EFL proficiency. The main reasons for this are considered to lie in the social and educational environment which impedes EFL students' meaningful and authentic communication in target language. Thus, by exploring a conceptual approach to such a problem, this paper suggests a paradigm of integrating content and language for a reasonable solution.

**[bilingualism/bilingual education/CLIL/EFL/ELT]**

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1. Objectives and Current Issues

The primary aim of this paper is to investigate the current methodological issues of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Korean contexts, and to propose an alternative EFL instruction model. A conceptually driven option is initially targeted to a primary school level, and contingent upon the outcomes of such pilot teaching practices, then expected to be applied to a secondary school level thereafter. Up to the end of 1980s, the Korean government maintained its conservative foreign language policy in public EFL education, putting an emphasis on the long-standing monolingualism and national identity. In early 1990s, however, the globalization movements launched by the new

government made it possible to deal with the problems of the nation's traditional EFL education system. Such innovative approaches also brought about public debates on optimal age issues in an effort to reform EFL pedagogy and practices, including the validity of adopting English as another official language in Korea.

As a result of this, in 1995 the Korean government announced that it would provide mandatory EFL education for elementary students when they reach the age of ten, four years earlier than its previous starting age fourteen, the first grade in middle school. Recently, another round of public hearings and debates has already commenced regarding a subsequent option to initiate EFL instruction at an even earlier stage than the age of ten. From this viewpoint, I can think of the possibility that just early EFL education may be a far cry from a reasonable far-sighted solution, nothing but a temporarily repairing attempt to put down the general public's strong desires for the innovation of English Language Teaching (ELT) paradigms in Korea. Thus, in order to meet their fundamental needs, it would be imperative to explore a sustainable path leading to a perceptive infrastructural reform to bridge the gap between current ELT systems and the public’s overall demands.

## 2. Rationale for Inquiry and Frameworks

With this basic conception in mind, I will first review the relevant literature on the definitions and dimensions of bilingualism and major types of bilingual education with an overview of the ELT method focused on the so-called CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning; this term is also referred to as “Content-based Instruction” ). Next, through the analysis of the nation’s present EFL education policy, I will take a close look at its controversial factors in terms of monolingualism and globalization to gain some insights into reasonable approaches to the current issues. In doing this, I will draw on the sociocultural backgrounds and tendencies of Korea in which traditional values and beliefs have been at odds with internationalism in pursuing individual goals with advanced English language proficiency.

On the basis of foregoing considerations, then, I will attempt to inquire into the EFL instruction models suitable to the Korean settings with a strong emphasis on the content-based approach and immersion program. Much attention will be given to pursuing a middle-ground solution to biculturalism and national unity through the pragmatic EFL education policy in line with global standards. Finally, I will offer a set of guidelines for the future ELT program, expected to be recognized as an optimal alternative compatible with the sociocultural and ELT contexts in Korea.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Definitions and Dimensions of Bilingualism

In defining the term ‘bilingualism’, there are largely two different groups of theoreticians. Some researchers prefer to formulate the concept of bilingualism with a single dimension – a degree of language proficiency; the others adopt the notion that bilingualism should be viewed as a multi-dimensional framework – a range of non-linguistic phenomena. As one of the scholars in the former group, Bloomfield (1935, cited in Baker, 2006) recognized bilingualism as ‘the native-like control of two languages’. Weinreich (1953, cited in Edwards, 1994) observed that bilingualism was ‘the alternate use of two languages’. Further, Macnamara (1967, cited in Cummins & Swain, 1986) suggested that a bilingual be anyone who possesses at least one of four language skills (i.e., listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing) even to a marginal degree in a language other than her/his native tongue.

Unlike these maximalist and minimalist criteria viewed at both ends of a competence scale, Hamers and Blanc (1989, p. 8), as theoreticians in the latter group, point out a general set of non-linguistic dimensions of bilingualism such as: (1) relative competence; (2) cognitive organization; (3) age and context of language acquisition; (4) endogeneity and exogeneity; (5) sociocultural status, and (6) cultural identity. Given these broad-ranged divisions, it is not difficult to understand the cogency of Baker’s (2006, p. 16) statement that ‘defining exactly who is or is not bilingual is essentially elusive and ultimately impossible’. Then, he further suggests that some categorizations and approximations should be helpful and necessary to make sense of the fuzzy concept (ibid.). In line with this observation, Edwards (1994, p. 56) presents the modern standpoint that ‘any meaningful discussion must be attempted within a specific context and for specific purposes’.

Given the relativity of bilingual capacities, we can also draw a hypothetical distinction between ‘balanced bilinguals’ having equivalent proficiency in any two languages and ‘dominant bilinguals’ for whom competence in either of the languages is superior to that in the other (Baker, 2006; Edwards, 1994; Hamers & Blanc, 1989). This categorization indicates that a state of equilibrium is a criterion for the mastery of both varieties, suggesting a certain dimension going beyond just a high level of competence in two or more languages. It is also apparent that the measurement of approximately equal competence is not always simple and adequate. Moreover, a broad range of additional factors – ‘attitude, age, sex, intelligence, memory, linguistic distance between the two languages, and contexts of testing’ – make it difficult for measured individuals to neatly fall into the virtual scope of balanced bilingualism (Edwards, 1994, p. 57).

However, irrespective of whether a bilingual can maintain such an equated condition, the consequences of bilingualism that may involve mental representations may be associated with other dimensions. The learner's age, order of acquisition and contexts involved, as Ervin and Sebeok (1965, cited in Cummins & Swain, 1986) stated, can bring about different types of the learner's cognitive organization. More specifically, Ervin and Osgood (1954, cited in Hamers & Blanc, 1989) introduced the notions of 'coordinate and compound bilingualism'; in a coordinate system, one language is learned distinctly later than the other largely in separate contexts, while in a compound system, both languages are acquired during the childhood in a fused context. What we can see here, in effect, is that a person who learned both languages as a child in the same context is more likely to have a single mental representation for the two translation equivalents, whereas a person who learned a second language in a context different from that of her/his mother tongue will probably have dual conceptualization (Baker, 2006; Edwards, 1994).

In the light of this, we may find it useful to look at more recent standpoints on a bilingual's mental representation. According to the arguments concerned, there are 'fractional and holistic views' of bilinguals; the former conceives of the bilingual as two monolinguals in one person, and the latter as a distinctive linguistic profile (Cook, 2002 & Grosjean, 2001, cited in Baker, 2006). A major issue here is the extent to which a bilingual's two languages function independently or interdependently in her/his brain. Current theories and research findings confirm both separate and merged operations of bilingual's cognitive system, and the general agreement is that (1) 'both languages are active when just one of them is being used'; and (2) that 'even if there are shared conceptual representations and both languages are active in bilinguals, functionally the languages are independent' (Baker, 2006, p. 150).

With regard to cognitive functioning, then, we can think of the probability that the patterns of bilingualism may rely on bilingual learners' sociocultural factors. The distinction between 'additive and subtractive bilingualism' concerns itself with the formulation of mental flexibility and linguistic consequences arising from the environmental factors to which the learner is exposed (Baker, 2006; Bialystok, 2001; Edwards, 1994; Hoffmann, 1991). It is generally accepted that the child learner benefits substantially from the favorable speech community in which both native and target languages are concomitantly valued and equally treated, principally leading to additive bilingualism. Such a balanced socio-cultural context enables the learner to work out well-integrated cognitive and metalinguistic development. Subtractive bilingualism, on the contrary, occurs largely where the place of the child's native language is, compared with her/his second language, devalued and mistreated in a given speech community. These circumstances reflect social inequality with respect to the two languages in

conflict, often causing affective pressures and instability to the young learner (ibid.).

Throughout the conceptual survey of bilingualism, we have realized a number of confounding factors in an effort to define the term satisfactorily. We have also seen that a person's competence in two languages needs to be examined both from individual and sociocultural perspectives. As a result, we are safe in positing that a great majority of those who can be referred to as bilinguals, as Edwards (1994, p. 58) put it, fall into the category of *non-fluent* bilingualism. In parallel with this approximation, it would be necessary, then, to take a look at major types of bilingual education in order to understand the interplay between bilingualism and its sociopolitical factors in terms of national language policy.

## 2. Major Types of Bilingual Education: Weak and Strong Forms

In the previous section, as a multitudinous array of bilingualism has been reviewed, so the umbrella term, *bilingual education*, contains various types depending largely on the extent to which it is encouraged in school curricula. Historically, there is the vast number of bilingual schooling patterns, and they have been classified according to their main purposes, interwoven with a nation's language planning directions in terms of political, sociocultural and economic issues. To explore an EFL education model considered optimal to Korea's entire contexts, however, we need to provide a substantive overview by narrowing down such highly precise classifications into two general strands of weak and strong forms, mainly because the nation's ELT practice falls into its weak form.

A distinction is normally made between 'weak and strong types' of bilingual education (Baker, 2006; Feinberg, 2002). The first of these aims to foster the assimilation of language minorities into their mainstream speech community; and the second is targeted towards the achievement of bilingual proficiency. Specifically, as a result of such a weak form, the native language is not intended to be steadily developed, but to be substituted for the majority language. Unlike this, the educational objectives of the strong form usually lie in pursuing balanced bilingualism, biliteracy and cultural pluralism. Here the two basic categorizations have to be complemented by adding a few major sub-varieties.

Under the heading of weak typology, there are approximately three different forms: (1) transitional; (2) mainstream with foreign language teaching; and (3) separatist (ibid.). The first type of bilingual education has the underlying goal of shifting the child learner from minority language to majority, resulting in a kind of subtractive bilingualism. The second type offers lessons in majority language as a medium of instruction to teach a second/foreign language. Finally the third type detaches a language minority from the language majority to protect itself for political, cultural or religious reasons.

And, in general the strong typology incorporates four varied patterns: (1) immersion;

(2) maintenance/heritage language; (3) two way/dual language; and (4) mainstream bilingual (ibid.). The first type of immersion education using a second/foreign language as a medium of instruction aims to pursue additive bilingualism with cultural pluralism and enrichment. With the same purpose to this, the second type fosters bilingual capacities with an emphasis on the child's native language in classroom. The third type with mixed language minority and majority in classroom attempts to maintain native language and to achieve bilingualism. Finally, the fourth type employs two majority languages in the mainstream education, pursuing the enrichment of bilingual competence.

Considering the disadvantages that language minority students encounter in mainstream schools, we need to pay attention to the basic purposes of ESL (English as a Second Language) support systems. Most of ESL sheltered or pull-out programs are conducted with special content and teaching materials to improve English language proficiency (Baker, 2006, Brisk, 2006, Feinberg, 2002). In doing this, the ESL teaching course usually focuses on each of the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – to facilitate the students' well-balanced competence development. In particular, the content-based ESL programs are designed to teach some of their regular subjects with English as a medium of instruction, recognized as an effective way to carry out the dual purposes of content and language studies (ibid.). So, the next section will address a general set of pedagogical features of 'CLIL' which has been widely accepted as effective ESL/EFL teaching method within the framework of ELT approaches.

## 3. Conceptual Guidelines for CLIL Model

Quite understandably, CLIL is, in a literal sense, defined as language teaching to integrate the learning of specific school subjects with the learning of a second or foreign language (Baker, 2006; Christian, Spanos, Crandall, Simich-Dudgeon, & Willets, 1990; Met, 1998; Swain & Johnson, 1997). The underlying notion of this approach is that learning a target language is facilitated by a purposeful integration of language and content on the ground that learning works out most efficiently when the parts of learning is perceived within the context of the whole (Baker, 2006; Met, 1998; Stoller, 2004). This simple mechanism derives from the constructivist theory of learning, and its basic tenet may offer the rationale for how the results of CLIL models bring forth:

> Given that the brain stores information in networks, and the greater the number of connections and the stronger the connections among chunks of information the deeper and more powerful the learning, the more valuable it is to tie language and content together (Baker, 2006, p. 251).

In line with this acquisition principle, Kaufman (2004, p. 304) further elaborates the processes of *assimilation*, *accommodation*, and *equilibrium* as a way of expanding and strengthening cognitive capacity in the following:

> New experiences are *assimilated* and integrated into existing schema or into schema under construction through the process of *accommodation*. The outcome of these processes is *equilibrium* – the achievement of new understandings, coherence, and cognitive stability (Italics original).

So, the overall structure of CLIL focuses on subject matter learning conducted in target language during which meaningful and authentic communication takes place naturally as the language is used as the medium of instruction to convey informational content of interest. In such an integrated mode, the learning of the target language is considered significant as a by-product derived from normal subject studies. It is, however, generally recognized that a CLIL model, in order to be workable, requires at least an intermediate level of target language proficiency so that students can acquire the necessary knowledge of subject matter through the said language (Brown, 2000; Feinberg, 2002). This indicates the notion that content-based language teaching usually encompasses classroom instruction pertaining to academic or occupational purposes which is implemented for an extended period of time.

In addition to such a preconditioned competence, I am also able to recognize that teachers often face some fundamental difficulties designing and managing classroom activities based on curriculum/syllabus to carry out the dual goals of CLIL. Hence, these practical challenges have brought about how to cope with the various issues arising from CLIL paradigms. Essential decision-making in this respect is concerned largely with the identification and arrangement of content materials for language teaching. A common sense tells me that content-based language teaching may fall within either content-driven programs or language-driven courses in accordance with the relative degree of importance between the two objects. In the case of the former, Met (1998, p. 52) points out that the selection of content areas to be taught in target language may be supported by the following considerations:

> (1) [H]ow important is the learning of specific content in relation to the language?; (2) will the course content provide sufficient exposure to the range of language skills students require to meet their communicative needs and purposes?; and (3) do students need the kinds of language proficiencies that this content will provide?

To the contrary, as the latter puts more emphasis on target language learning, curriculum designers may need to take into account:

> (1) [T]he suitability of the content to the desired language outcomes; (2) the accessibility of the content to the students' current language proficiency; and (3) the degree of interest and academic rigor the content provides (Met, 1998, p. 53).

The foregoing rationale and guidelines for CLIL are expected to offer useful insights into exploring a model of EFL education policy and practices optimal to Korea's overall contexts. From this point of view, the next section will address the controversial place of the nation's ELT programs with due weight on current problems in an effort to draw up a cogent proposal for the future EFL pedagogy option.

## III. KOREA'S EFL EDUCATION: POLICY & PROBLEMS

### 1. Analysis of EFL Policy and Practices

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MOE) in Korea has been fully responsible for the nation's education policy, including ELT guidelines for primary and secondary schools. According to the Five-Year Comprehensive EFL Education Promotion Plan announced by the MOE (2005), the Ministry will revise its 7th National Curriculum guidelines carried out from the year 2000 for ELT instruction tailored to students' individual proficiency with an emphasis on their communicative competence. From the year 2006 until 2010, it has been planned that school textbooks, teacher development, classroom instruction and national assessment will be upgraded by establishing a general set of specifications designed by the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) under the ELT policy and guidelines of the MOE.

Through the 6th National Curriculum reform launched in the year 1995, the MOE commenced its mandatory ELT instruction at the age of ten – the third grade in primary schools, and approved the method of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), stepping out of its conventional classroom practices based mainly on grammar and translation with the assistance of audiolingual method. It is, however, the Korean government's current EFL policy to take the adherence to the 'weak form' of bilingual education, in which English is taught for limited bilingual competence in classroom as a foreign language with the medium of the nation's mother tongue to native Korean students. Hence, we may understand that the government places a strong emphasis on

mainstream education with the selected introduction of English and other foreign languages.

In the light of this, Baker's (2006, p. 224) observation makes it possible for me to assume students' general performance gained from ELT practices in Korea:

> Mainstream education (conducted with foreign language teaching) rarely produces functionally bilingual children. A very limited knowledge of a foreign language tends to be the typical outcome for the mass of the language majority (Parenthesized words added).

The following results of the National Assessment of Educational Achievement (NAEA) administered by KICE in October, 2005 are largely in support of the statement noted above. KICE (2005, p. 154) conducted its annual NAEA test on all the core subjects – Korean, English, mathematics, science, and social studies – taught in the nation's public schools, and announced the overall test outcomes of English communicative competence:

> The results were graded on a scale of four levels; Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below-basic. ( . . . ) In case of Grade 6, the percent of students labeled as Advanced was the highest. The highest percent of Grade 9 students was labeled as Proficient. In case of Grade 10, the highest percent of students was labeled as Basic. This could be interpreted that the higher the grade of students gets, the lower the level of achievement in English. It was also found that the trend of the achievement level of all grades was similar to that of 2003, 2004 and 2005.

At the level of secondary EFL education, I may also find it helpful to look at Jeon's (2004) previous statement that English language assessment in the frame of the nation's college entrance examination called Scholastic Ability Test (SAT) did not adequately meet the demands for measuring applicants' abilities for use in real situations. So, he concluded that SAT would need to be complemented by introducing new cloze test formats in order to guide current EFL instruction to focus on enhancing authentic communicative proficiency. In addition, Kim (2006) points out Korean EFL students' considerable lack of communicative abilities, arguing that the first priority in ELT practices should be to help students get familiarized with ways of thinking in the English language, and so their target language should be a natural instrument for thought processes in the course of school education.

These research findings raise the high possibility that current EFL education policy

and practices focused on proficiency level-based ELT system taking the ‘weak form’ of bilingual education might have been on a wrong track. I am, therefore, required to look into the reasons for such a failure, and to find out an alternative to pursue a viable EFL instruction model in Korea. To get a clear picture of this long-standing problem, it may be appropriate to investigate the underlying conceptions of the Korean government’s EFL policy and guidelines in the next section.

## 2. Controversial Place of EFL: Monolingualism & Globalization

This section will examine a range of fundamental issues associated with the controversial place of EFL education in Korea. Historically, the steady growth of ‘ethnocentrism’ among elderly Koreans as self-defensive reactions to mightier neighboring countries has long underpinned the establishment of the nation’s entire infrastructures in political, economic, social and cultural sectors (Nahm, 1988; Wilson & Lee, 1974). This is also known to give rise to the ideological conflicts with the sociocultural pluralism supported by the rising generation. In the similar vein to this, national language planning has been a central bone of contention as a result of the noticeable mismatches between the conservative bureaucrats and the liberal intellectuals in their respective approaches to national language planning.

In general, the former group holds that the nation’s monolingual tradition has to be maintained for national unity with the proper support of a few selected foreign languages including the predominant English as an international language. The latter group argues that the most powerful English language must be treated as equally as mother tongue to facilitate keeping pace with global standards in major public sectors, along with teaching some other foreign languages in school. The key concepts presented by both professional groups depend heavily on the relative degree to which EFL should be accepted in terms of the monolingual norm in Korea. As the two elite groups – policy-makers in the government and experts in civil pressure organizations – share the basic needs for improving current EFL pedagogy, such a discrepancy may also be a matter of formulating the mutual relationship – equal or unequal status – between native language and English language in the nation’s EFL education and practices.

This critical issue is, from sociopolitical perspectives, interrelated with national identity, linguistic nationalism and intercultural education. Language has been recognized as a prime factor to shape individual and group identity (Baker, 2006; Edwards, 1994; Hoffmann, 1991). In the wake of globalization, however, to develop adequate workforce with bilingual and bicultural competence is essential for international communication, and more importantly, is found to be cost-effective (Feinberg, 2002; Freeman, 1998). Given the fact that Korea is a monolingual and

ethnically homogeneous society, I may find it possible to enhance 'intercultural competence' being able to mediate between two cultures rather than 'bicultural capacity' being able to live with a sense of belonging to two cultures (Baker, 2006; Byram, 1998). In the light of this, it can be useful to illustrate Byram's (1998, p. 101) observations:

> In many such multi-language situations, governments attempt to impose just one language and, more or less explicitly, suppress others. ( . . . ) In more recent times, governments try to impose an alien language on their own people in order to improve their economic outlook in the post-industrial world-village, as is the case in Singapore. This may however create a threat to loyalty to the state. ( . . . ) For example, there are people in Taiwan who are against the introduction of English as a foreign language in the early years of schooling when 'national identity' is not yet fully formed (Emphasis original).

What is important here may be, as the Korean government bureaucrats hold, that the nation's EFL pedagogy should be offered within the extent to which it does not become detrimental to the maintenance of national identity and solidarity. For this reason, it is the government's foreign language policy to sustain the weak form of EFL programs which was defined earlier. As noted in the introductory section, such a typological pedagogy has faced formidable criticism from the liberal intellectuals and civic pressure groups representing the general public's viewpoints. In the next section, then, much attention will be paid to the exploration of an ELT instruction model considered optimal to the nation's distinctive contexts.

## IV. DISCUSSION

All foregoing considerations related to the reform of Korea's EFL education policy enable me to infer a general set of guidelines for exploring a classroom instruction model optimal to the nation's unique contexts based on ethnically and linguistically homogeneous society:

(1) In the light of the dimensions of bilingualism, it would be appropriate to pursue the track of *coordinate and additive bilingualism* rather than compound and subtractive one with the consideration that exogenous bilingualism is still premature;
(2) From the typological points of view, it would be reasonable to substitute the current weak-form ELT system by a *strong type of bilingual education*; and
(3) With regard to contemporary pedagogical models, it would be necessary to positively

consider the introduction of CLIL – C*ontent and Language Integrated Learning* – methods to public EFL education.

I may find it sensible here to examine the validity of a feasible CLIL model with the help of reviewing two dimensions of linguistic competence – the distinction between BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) – in an effort to elaborate a conceptual but reliable proposal for such an alternative. In so doing, I wish to draw on Cummins' (2000) arguments and other related viewpoints. He points out that although language minority students are able to converse socially with their interlocutors, they are poor at understanding and performing their content-area activities. With the two-fold levels of competence – BICS and CALP, he explicates such a proficiency gap on the ground that the minority students' abilities for target language are substantially differentiated in *context-embedded* speech and *context-reduced* academic tasks. In this respect, Carrasquillo and Rodriguez (2002, p. 28), based on scholars' other research findings supporting Cummins' theory above, concludes that:

> If language minority students do not manifest these two components of language development (*interpersonal* and *academic*), they are labeled as 'limited English proficient'. A crucial step in meeting the needs of language minority students is the identification of those students who need language assistance for the development of the English academic language (Italics added).

What appears to be of importance here is, as pointed out earlier, the extent to which public schools in Korea are prepared for accepting such a content-based instruction primarily in terms of target language proficiency. Also, among other crucial aspects of the CLIL method is the interface of language and content – the selection, sequencing and balance of these two components (Wesche & Skehan, 2002).

From a different viewpoint, Feng's (2005, p. 538) statement about feasible models introduced in China's bilingual schooling offers basic insights on exploring ELT models suitable to the Korean settings:

> Early total immersion at nursery level is reportedly officially banned in some cities such as Shanghai. ( . . . ) ideological concerns in language education are most likely the real motives for this stance. For this reason, the model widely used and promoted for schools is typically *partial immersion*, in which both English and Chinese are used as the media of instruction.

Prior to this observation, he presented the fact that immersion programs used (or experimented with) in schools are reported as 'the most effective way' to develop learners' target language competence (*Xinwen Chenbao*, 2003, cited in Feng, 2005, p. 538). Further, given the positive results gained from substantial research on immersion education and its typical models (ibid., p. 539), it would be useful here to take into due consideration the similarities between China's and Korea's overall EFL education settings.

Therefore, I shall posit that these objective data, with the implications of KICE's annual NAEA report specified earlier, enable me to propose a *semi-CLIL model* as a 'pilot EFL instruction model' for students of third grade and beyond in the nation's primary schools. And then, in due consideration of the overall results to be gained from this experimental mode, it would be sensible to determine whether such an alternative may be conducted at a secondary level. Hence, this proposed method may be defined as a componential set of principles designed for the development of additive bilingualism, which is targeted initially towards primary school children, as in the following:

(1) Teachers are composed of two members – one native speaker of Korean and the other of English – for each of the designated content subjects;
(2) The designated content subjects are composed of mathematics, geography, history and science, which are co-taught and co-assessed by the two native speakers in a form of team teaching at a separate time from each other; and
(3) The media of instruction are composed of Korean and English languages, of which the instruction time is equally allocated to each language in a subject;

Such an alternative model emphasizes that native and target languages should be equally used and treated in teaching content subjects, thus considered to be a middle-ground solution to linguistic nationalism and biculturalism in a pursuit of balanced bilingualism. The well-integrated ELT model suggested above is anticipated for the government authorities to maintain national identity, and more importantly, for EFL teachers to facilitate students' target language learning through authentic communicative cues with substantive weight on the level of CALP.

## V. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have addressed a wide range of concepts, types and issues associated with bilingualism and bilingual education in an effort to draw up a new alternative of EFL education to Korea's current system. As described earlier, given the nation's unique

homogeneous ethnicity and mainstream language, including sociocultural and other relevant factors, I have proposed a semi-content/language-integrated ELT model as an experimentally feasible option for the future EFL pedagogy in Korea. It is, however, to be pointed out that the final outcome of this investigation contains its inherent limitations in terms of relying heavily on various secondary sources related to bilingualism and bilingual education.

Such a conceptual framework of public ELT instruction falls at the central part of a continuum which involves the integrated content and language paradigms. At one pole of the continuum are *content-driven* approaches with heavy weight on content-learning objectives such as immersion, partial immersion or sheltered subject-area courses. And, at the other pole of the continuum are *language-driven* approaches with a strong emphasis on language learning objectives, employing content as an authentic vehicle for developing language proficiency (Met, 1998; Stoller, 2004).

Hence, both content and language teachers may often encounter various challenges for the effective implementation of CLIL practices designed to meet students' dual needs. A common set of difficulties in this respect is known to stem largely from whether purpose-oriented contents are prepared, competent language and content teachers are developed, and language and content faculty are able to properly collaborate on their major tasks, including systematic assessment. It would be essential, therefore, to recognize the fact that to achieve the desired results of the proposed alternative – a semi-CLIL instruction model – in Korea's public EFL education depends mainly on whether the teachers and program coordinators involved are all capable of sufficing the requirements for carrying out the specialized content-based language teaching in the nation's unique ELT contexts.

## REFERENCES

Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism (4th ed.).* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Bialystok, E. (2001). *Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy and cognition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brisk, M. E. (2006). *Bilingual education: From compensatory to quality schooling (2nd ed.).* London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Brown, D. (2000). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy (2nd ed.).* London: Pearson Educational, Inc.

Byram, M. (1998). Cultural identities in multilingual classrooms. In J. Cenoz & F. Genesee (Eds.), *Beyond Bilingualism* (pp. 96-116). Clevedon: Multilingual

Matters.

Carrasquillo, A. L., & Rodriguez, V. (2002). *Language minority students in the mainstream classroom (2nd ed.).* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Christian, D., Spanos, G., Crandall, J., Simich-Dudgeon, C., & Willets, K. (1990). Combining language and content for second language students. In A. M. Padilla et al. (Eds.), *Bilingual Education: Issues and Strategies* (pp. 141-156). Newbury Park: Sage.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cummins, J., & Swain, M. (1986). *Bilingualism in education: Aspects of theory, research and practice*. London: Longman.

Edwards, J. (1994). *Multilingualism*. London: Routledge.

Feinberg, R. C. (2002). *Bilingual education: A reference handbook*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

Feng, A. (2005). Bilingualism for the minor or the major?: An evaluative analysis of parallel conceptions in China. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *8*(6), 529-551.

Freeman, R. (1998). *Bilingual education and social change*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Hamers, J., & Blanc, M. (1989). *Bilinguality and bilingualism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hoffmann, C. (1991). *An introduction to bilingualism*. London: Longman.

Jeon, B. M. (2004). A comparative study of English test items of college entrance examinations in Korea, China, and Japan. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, *10*(2), 113-132.

Kaufman, D. (2004). Constructivist issues in language learning and teaching. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 303-319.

Kim, J. W. (2006). Problems in teaching English and effective learning methods. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, *12*(3), 167-186.

Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation. (2005). National Assessment of Educational Achievement. trans. *Research & Evaluation Report 2005*. Seoul: KICE.

Met, M. (1998). Curriculum decision-making in content-based teaching. In J. Cenoz & F. Genesee (Eds.), *Beyond bilingualism* (pp. 35-63). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development. (2005). The five-year comprehensive EFL education promotion plan. trans. *School Policy & Guidelines for 2006-2010.* Seoul: MOE.

Nahm, N. (1988). *Korea: Tradition and transformation – A history of the Korean people.*

NJ: Hollym International Corp.

Stoller, F. L. (2004). Content-based instruction: Perspectives on curriculum planning. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 261-283.

Swain, M., & Johnson, R. K. (1997). Immersion education: A category within bilingual education. In R. K. Johnson & M. Swain (Eds.), *Immersion education: International perspectives* (pp. 1-16). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wesche, M. B., & Skehan, P. (2002). Communicative, task-based, and content-based language instruction. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 207-228). New York: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, G., & Lee, H. S. (1974). Social attitude patterns in Korea. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *94*, 27-30.

**Examples in : English**

**Applicable Languages: English**

**Applicable Level: College**

Jong-Hee Lee
Department of English Language & Cultural Studies
College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Kangwon National University – Samcheok Campus
1, Joongang-ro, Samcheok-si, Kangwon-do 245-711, Korea
Tel: (033) 570-6652
Fax: (033) 574-6653
Email: freshfields@kangwon.ac.kr

Received in Jul., 2007
Reviewed in Aug., 2007
Revised version received in Sept., 2007