EXPLORING SOCIAL PRACTICES IN ENGLISH CLASSES

- A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF CLASSROOM TALK IN A KOREAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines English language teaching practices at a public secondary school in Korea. The study documents teaching practices and participation and interaction in class, within the context of the National Curriculum for English Education. Classroom practices, the Curriculum and the textbook used by the teacher are analysed from the perspective of language as a meaning-making resource and language learning as learning how to mean.

An ethnographic research approach to data collection and analysis has been employed. Classes were video-recorded and transcribed in order to describe English language use. This took place in two stages. In the first stage the teacher’s normal English lessons based on a textbook were documented. In the second, intervention stage, the teacher and researcher planned and implemented text-based lessons with the same class.

The analysis of the Curriculum, the textbook and English use in normal classes reveals a theory of language and language teaching based on learning traditional grammar and memorization of words and phrases. The intervention lessons offered alternative opportunities for students to share meanings in English.

The evidence from this study has provided insights into the social practices and discourses in an English as a foreign language secondary school class. The analysis
shows discourse changes depending on the type of texts used. The use of authentic texts offered students opportunities for making meanings in context. This has implications for teaching English in Korea, particularly given the National Curriculum’s aim to develop communication skills in English. The study proposes further research into the application of text-based and content-based teaching to develop learners’ meaning-making in English.
STATEMENT OF THE AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has previously been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and, to the best of the candidate’s knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. The author also consents to the thesis being made available for photocopying and loan when accepted for the award of the degree.

Signed.  

Date.
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