

The key factors shaping native English teachers' sense of self-efficacy to teach Korean university students

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Kim, Yoon Jung. "The Key Factors Shaping Native English Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students." *Studies in English Language & Literature* 45.1 (2019): 297-329. Teachers' sense of efficacy, referring to teachers' own beliefs in their ability to execute courses of action to perform a specific task, has been widely studied in the field of education. Given the increasing numbers of native English-speaking (NES) teachers at all academic levels in Korea, the current study aims to explore what contributed to and threatened their sense of self-efficacy to teach English-medium courses at Korean universities. The questionnaire, including demographic profiles, the *Korean University Teachers' Sense of Efficacy in Teaching English* (KUTSETE) scale, and four open-ended questions, was distributed online to 50 NES teachers. The findings reveal that the NESs scored highest in efficacy for speaking English, followed by classroom management, instructional strategies, student engagement, and finally, at the lowest score, speaking Korean. Furthermore, Korean linguistic and cultural proficiency turned out to be the dominant factor shaping the participants' self-efficacy in teaching Korean university students. In addition, teachers' academic majors, teaching experience, command of native English, emotional support, and sense of humor strongly influenced their levels of efficacy. Since most teacher efficacy studies in Korea to date have been limited to Korean-born English teachers, the present study may yield implications for teacher education. (Pusan National University)

Key Words: teachers' sense of efficacy, native English speaker (NES), Korean, linguistic proficiency, cultural proficiency

* This paper is based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation.

I. Introduction

In order to enhance the quality of classroom instruction and management, it is necessary to examine teachers' beliefs. Since what and how they think, behave, and assume influences teachers' actions, their behaviors and their beliefs cannot be regarded as two distinct entities (i.e., beliefs and behaviors). In other words, teachers can explain what they do in the classroom and why they do certain things in the classroom based on their beliefs (Clark & Peterson, 1986). Among these, *teachers' sense of efficacy*, referring to teachers believing in their own capability to perform successfully at specific tasks and in specific contexts (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), has been one of the prevalent issues discussed in the field of education (Cruikshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2003; Henson, 2001). Specifically, it strongly influences teachers' commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992), their job satisfaction (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni & Steca, 2003; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca & Malone, 2006), their adoption of innovation (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997; Guskey, 1982), their classroom management (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1980; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), student outcomes (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Podell & Soodak, 1993), students' sense of efficacy (Ross, Hohaboam-Gray & Hannay, 2001), and student motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer & Eccles, 1989).

In spite of these considerable effects, a majority of empirical studies have targeted mathematics (e.g., Brown, 2003; Swars, 2005), science (e.g., Gencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Wingfield, Freeman & Ramsey, 2000), first-language (e.g., Parker, 1994), or ESL (English as a second language) (e.g., Yough, 2011) classrooms. A growing number of studies investigating EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers' sense of efficacy have been mostly restricted to nonnative English-speaking (NNES) teachers (e.g., Chacón, 2005; Lee, 2009; Shim, 2001) by assuming a positive correlation between their low self-perceived English proficiency and their sense of efficacy to teach in English. However, these studies could not provide a complete picture of teacher self-efficacy in a Korean context, since NNES teachers are not the

only instructor group teaching there.

As English increasingly gains importance in EFL contexts, including Korea, and English classrooms in Korea become more fluency-oriented, an increasing number of native English-speaking (NES) teachers have been hired. In 1995, the Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (KMOE) implemented the English Program in Korea (EPIK), and NES teachers began to co-teach with Korean teachers in Korean public elementary and secondary schools (Ahn, 2011). This situation also applied to private schools and universities. Many of the NES teachers were employed especially to teach communicative language skills, such as speaking and listening. However, teacher efficacy studies have mostly been confined to lower education levels (i.e., preschools and elementary and secondary schools), thus arguing for the need to investigate university instructors' sense of efficacy. Thus, this study poses the following four research questions and aims to examine NES instructors' sense of efficacy to teach Korean students at the university level:

- 1) What were the NES teachers' levels of self-efficacy to teach Korean university students?
- 2) How did the NES teachers' self-perceived Korean-language proficiency influence their efficacy to teach Korean university students?
- 3) How did the NES teachers' self-perceived Korean cultural proficiency influence their efficacy to teach Korean university students?
- 4) What other variables significantly affected the NES teachers' sense of efficacy to teach Korean university students?

II. Literature Review

2.1 Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy Beliefs

In order to understand the values of teachers' self-efficacy, it is useful to adopt

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory as a theoretical framework. Social cognitive theory emphasizes human agency (Bandura, 2001, 2006) and triadic interactions among (inter)personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in human development, adaptation, and change (Bandura, 1997). Unlike the majority of previous studies only advocating the significance of either external/environmental factors (Bandura, 2001) or individuals' biological factors (Pajares, 2003), social cognitive theory crucially takes "human agency" into account. According to Bandura (2006), rather than viewing people as "simply onlookers of their behavior" (Bandura, 2006, p. 164), they should be considered as "proactive and self-regulating" (Pajares, 2003, p. 139) agents. Moreover, social cognitive theory claims that each (inter)personal, behavioral, and environmental factor should be reciprocally related to the others in order for human action to develop, change, or adapt.

Self-efficacy belief, which is the main topic of the present study, refers to "a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action" in order to succeed at a given task (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). It differs from one's actual capabilities from time to time, since an individual may underestimate or overestimate his or her competence. It also differs from a similar concept, *self-esteem*, in that it evaluates or judges one's "capability" rather than self-worth (Bandura, 1997). Bandura and Wood (1989) further claimed that the self-efficacy belief enables an individual to understand the current situation and foresee future success. Moreover, people with high levels of self-efficacy tend to set higher goals (Schunk & Swartz, 1993). In addition, people's attitudes toward impediments may vary greatly depending on their level of self-efficacy. Unlike low-efficacy people, who see impediments as insurmountable, highly efficacious people positively believe that the power of their "self-regulatory skills and perseverant effort" (Bandura, 2006, p. 171) can overcome them. Accordingly, highly efficacious people may have lower levels of stress and depression than low-efficacious people (Bandura, 2006).

Four traditional sources of self-efficacy belief have been examined: enactive mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal (social) persuasion, and

physiological arousal (Bandura, 1986, 1997). First, enactive mastery experience, as the name itself denotes, means that teacher efficacy is determined by a teacher's former success or failure with students within a similar teaching context. A teacher who has continuously succeeded in the similar context will steadily feel highly efficacious regardless of occasional failures or challenges. While the rest of the sources prevail during a teacher's early career, the enactive mastery experience gradually becomes the dominant source as a teacher gains teaching experience (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Second, vicarious experience means that a person believes she or he can succeed by witnessing others' success. The more that someone observes models succeeding in the same context, the higher level of efficacy that person is able to achieve (Bandura, 1997). However, the degree to which this person identifies with the model is very important. If one thinks there is a huge gap between him or her and the model, the model's failure at certain tasks is unlikely to affect one's self-efficacy. This resource stands out in preservice teacher education (Labone, 2004). Third, verbal or social persuasion, an indirect and weak source (Bandura, 1997), refers to getting feedback from "important others in the teaching context, such as administer, colleagues, parents, and members of the community" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007, p. 945). In spite of the potential advantages of verbal persuasion, on the contrary, it may decrease self-efficacy if it is exaggerated or misused. This self-efficacy source is especially influential with regard to teachers who have low levels of teaching efficacy (Cho, 2011). Last, physiological arousal is how much an individual's affective states (i.e., mood, anxiety, stress, fatigue, and subjective threats) influence one's self-efficacy. According to Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998), "high levels of arousal can impair functioning and interfere with making the best use of one's skills and capabilities," whereas "moderate levels of arousal can improve performance by focusing attention and energy on the task" (229).

2.2 Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

A teacher group has frequently become the focus of inquiry within self-efficacy studies (Rastegar & Memarpour, 2009). In detail, teachers' sense of efficacy is defined as their own belief in their ability to perform specific teaching tasks in particular teaching contexts, even with unmotivated or difficult students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Highly efficacious teachers are willing to devote more time and effort to helping those students' academic success (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Furthermore, teachers' sense of efficacy is context-specific and subject-matter specific (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), meaning it varies with situation or task types. The same EFL teachers' level of self-efficacy may be different when teaching different groups of students. Similarly, the teacher may display different levels of self-efficacy when teaching at public schools compared to private institutions, since several types of restriction may be imposed as well. The following table illustrates how high-efficacious and low-efficacious teachers differ, before proceeding to the outcomes of teachers' sense of efficacy in detail.

Table 1. Different characteristics between high- and low-efficacy teachers
(Ashton, 1984, p. 29)

Areas	High-Efficacy Teachers	Low-Efficacy Teachers
A sense of personal accomplishment	Because they believe they have a positive effect on student learning, they consider their work important and meaningful.	They feel frustration and discouragement while teaching students.
Positive expectations for student behavior & achievement	They expect their students to progress, and the students mostly satisfy the teachers' expectations.	They expect their students' failures, negative reactions to teacher efforts, and misconduct.
Personal responsibility for student learning	They believe they are responsible for seeing student learning; therefore, if the	They believe that students themselves are responsible for learning. Thus, students' failures

	student fails, they are willing to find ways and exert more effort to be helpful.	result from the student's ability, family background, motivation, or attitude.
Strategies for achieving objectives	They set appropriate goals for their students and themselves and discover strategies to achieve them.	Due to a lack of concrete goals, they might have trouble identifying what they expect their students to learn. Consequently, they cannot plan appropriate teaching strategies.
Positive affect	They have positive feelings about themselves, student teaching, and their students.	As they often feel discouraged to teach students, they don't possess positive feelings about themselves, student teaching, and their students.
Sense of control	They feel confident that they can control their student learning.	Their sense of futility affects their students' learning.
Sense of common teacher-student goals	They feel that teachers and students should work together to achieve their common goals.	They feel that the students' goals and concerns are in opposition to their own and may result in a struggle.
Democratic decision-making	They involve students when deciding goals and the strategies to achieve those goals.	They don't involve students in the process of decision making. Rather, they only impose their own goals and learning strategies on students.

2.2.1 Consequences of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

A huge number of empirical studies up to the present have investigated how strongly teachers' sense of efficacy affects their teaching and classroom management. First, researchers found a negative correlation between teacher burnout (i.e., failure in handling work-related stress) and teacher efficacy (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Chemiss, 1993; Fives, Hamman & Olivarez, 2007; Friedman, 1999, 2002; Leiter,

1992). Once teachers obtain a higher self-efficacy, they tend to successfully moderate work-related stress (Grau, Salanova & Peirò, 2001). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) further argued for a reciprocal relationship between these two variables, meaning that a low level of efficacy leads to teacher burnout and vice versa. In a similar vein, highly efficacious teachers are more likely to willingly choose to teach as their profession again (Coladarci, 1992). Second, since high-efficacy teachers believe they are capable of successfully performing assigned tasks, it is not surprising to see that they enjoy a high level of job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2003; Kang, 2006; Klassen, Bong, Usher, Chong, Huan, Wong & Georgiou, 2009; Lee, 2007). Specifically, teachers' self-efficacy becomes a significant mediator between student achievement and teacher job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006). The fact that high-efficacy teachers place significance on interpersonal relationships with students and their families, staff, colleagues, and principals (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Brissie, 1992; Imants & Zoelen, 1995) adds value in terms of job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006).

Third, although the results were mixed, a few researchers have found a close correlation between teacher efficacy—specifically, personal teaching efficacy (PTE)—and the adoption of innovation. While some studies have revealed that high-efficacy teachers resist adopting new innovations (e.g., Guskey, 1982), others have concluded that such teachers believe instructional innovations positively influence their teaching (e.g., Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997; Guskey, 1988). Fourth, each teacher tends to manage his or her classes differently depending on the level of teacher efficacy, especially general teaching efficacy (GTE) (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Low-efficacy teachers seem to resist providing much student autonomy, thus adopting a custodial (i.e., highly controlled) management approach (Barfield & Burlingame, 1974; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). In contrast, high-efficacy teachers prefer a humanistic approach, meaning less teacher control (Barfield & Burlingame, 1974; Cousins & Walker, 1995).

Teachers' self-efficacy greatly influences not only their handling of classes but also students' academic performance and attitudes toward learning. In terms of student

academic achievement, highly efficacious teachers were shown to be especially beneficial for low-achieving students (Podell & Soodak, 1993), by making effective use of time, persisting with those students, and guiding such students' correct answers (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). In a similar vein, these high-efficacy teachers are less likely to refer students with mild learning and behavioral problems to special education (Soodak & Podell, 1993). In addition, students' sense of efficacy tends to increase by seeing their highly-efficacious teachers, due to the vicarious experiences explained above (Ross et al., 2001). This aspect may be a low-achieving students' external motivator in continuing their academic performance, as they lack self-confidence compared to high-achieving students (Midgley et al., 1989).

2.3 Empirical Studies on Native-Korean English Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Despite a dearth of studies investigating English teachers' sense of efficacy in Korean contexts, many researchers have been interested in determining the close correlations between native-Korean English teachers' self-perceived English proficiency, especially oral skills, and their sense of efficacy to teach English. First, some studies looked into English teachers' sense of efficacy in early-childhood classes. For instance, Ki, Ahn and Lee (2008) found a positive correlation between teachers' education levels, academic majors (i.e., English or non-English), or years of job experience and their efficacy to teach English. A different study (Jeong, Jung & Kim, 2009) concluded that teachers' level of efficacy has a strong influence on preschoolers' English interests and English literacy development. Moreover, according to Kim (2012), Korean teachers have a relatively lower sense of efficacy than native English-speaking teachers.

Lee's doctoral dissertation (2009), on the other hand, targeted elementary school teachers, and those teachers' efficacy levels in all three subscales of teacher efficacy (i.e., instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management) were lower than those of previous studies conducted in other EFL contexts. In accordance

with other efficacy studies, she examined the correlations between teacher background variables and their sense of efficacy. Most significantly, teachers' self-perceived English proficiency turned out to be highly correlated with their sense of efficacy. Kang (2013) conducted an empirical study with elementary school English teachers and specifically looked into their sense of efficacy to teach handicapped students. The study deduced that high-efficacy teachers make more of an attempt to implement diverse instructional innovations to integrate disabled students into their classrooms. For example, teachers often assign group work so other classmates can assist handicapped students with achieving class objectives. Shim (2001) targeted in-service secondary school (middle and high school) teachers and demonstrated how strongly those teachers' English proficiency influences teacher efficacy. His follow-up study (Shim, 2006) also examined secondary school teachers' self-efficacy and subdivided teacher efficacy into four dimensions: (1) teaching improvement, (2) classroom management, (3) confidence in English, and (4) students' affect. Jung (2017) found an interesting result that teachers' personality traits, specifically conscientiousness and extroversion, positively correlate with teacher efficacy and, in turn, teacher job satisfaction.

Jang (2014) was unique because it examined teachers at diverse levels: elementary, middle, and high school. The results showed that middle school teachers' level of efficacy is lowest. In addition, the study found that teachers' background characteristics (e.g., age, teaching experience, and job-training experience) and perceived English proficiency influences their teaching efficacy. Only one study was discovered regarding university instructors' sense of efficacy (Shin, Kang & Shin, 2014). It simply found correlations between gender, overall teaching experience, teaching experience relative to English, and English-speaking-country living experience on teacher efficacy.

III. Methodology

3.1 Participants and Research Context

Fifty native English-speaking instructors (42 males and 8 females), either part-time or full-time lecturers, participated in the current study. They were recruited from over 150 Korean universities via systematic sampling. In order to protect their privacy, each was labeled with a generic term, such as NES 1, NES 5, and NES 50. The following figure illustrates that the United States and Canada were the top two countries from which the participants originated. As to the results, no differences were found depending on the teachers' nationality.

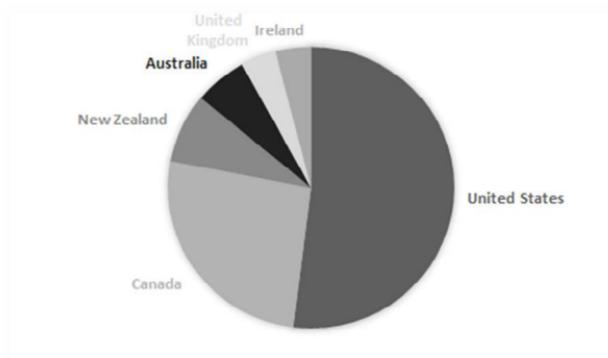


Figure 1. Nationality of the participants

Besides gender and nationality, the participants' educational and professional backgrounds are worth examining. In terms of academic major, the majority were non-English majors, as this is not required for them to teach English at Korean universities. With respect to academic degree, 12% had a bachelor's degree, 74% had a master's degree, and 14% had a doctoral degree. Table 2 below summarizes the participants' professional backgrounds.

Table 2. Professional background of the participants

	Overall Teaching Experience	EFL Teaching Experience	University Teaching Experience
Less than a year	0	1	1
1-3 years	0	4	8
4-6 years	5	12	9
7-9 years	10	9	12
10+ years	35	24	20
Total	50	50	50

The survey was conducted online, and the questionnaire was distributed and collected via Google Forms.

3.2 Instrument

The questionnaire included demographic profiles, a teachers' sense of efficacy scale, and open-ended questions. First, to investigate the influence of teacher background characteristics on teachers' self-efficacy, nine items briefly inquired participants' demographic information, such as educational and professional background. Second, the Korean University Teachers' Sense of Efficacy in Teaching English (KUTSETE) scale developed by Kim (2016) was mainly used to measure the participants' level of efficacy to teach at Korean universities. The scale was constructed based on earlier teacher efficacy scales, such as the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), the Teacher Efficacy for Teaching the English Language Learner (TETELL) scale (Yough, 2008), and the Korean Elementary Teachers' Sense of Efficacy in Teaching English Scale (KETSETES) (Lee, 2009). The KUTSETE scale is a 9-point Likert type, ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 9 = *a great deal*. It is comprised of 42 items, which are categorized into five factors (efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for student engagement, efficacy for classroom management, efficacy for speaking target language (English), and efficacy for speaking students' language [Korean]), and four additional items. Since the participants lived all

over Korea, it was impossible to conduct interviews of all of them; therefore, open-ended questions became a valuable data source to interpret the participants' thoughts in depth. While two questions asked about their Korean language and cultural-learning experiences, the rest inquired about what strongly influenced, either positively or negatively, their sense of efficacy to teach Korean university students. The partial survey is included in the Appendix at the end.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The researcher began a recruiting process by searching hundreds of Korean university websites. She made a list of potential participants after searching each university's English-major departments and language institutes. Based on systematic sampling, the researcher then sent a recruiting e-mail with explanations of the present study. Once a participant showed a willingness to take part in the study, the researcher provided them with a link to Google Forms to fill out the questionnaire. When they submitted their response, only the researcher was allowed to access it. A 5,000-won Starbucks gift card was sent via mobile as an incentive.

Numeric data from the questionnaire set the ground for data analysis. Specifically, descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation of the KUTSETE scale, were computed using SPSS version 22. The main data source, qualitative data, was analyzed using grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) in order to find emerging themes from the open-ended questions.

IV. Findings and Discussion

4.1 NES Teachers' Level of Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students

As table 3 below illustrates, NES participants demonstrated fairly high levels of

efficacy across all efficacy subscales, excluding only efficacy for speaking Korean. First, since NES participants are native speakers of English, it was natural for them to show the highest mean scores in terms of efficacy for speaking English. Specifically, among nine items categorized in this subscale (item 6, 7, 12, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36), the NES teachers felt the most efficacious when responding to unprepared questions in English (item 7: $M = 8.10$). It might be because they are confident they possess the diverse lexical knowledge to describe anything in English. Moreover, with respect to specific language skills, they felt more efficacious to teach productive skills such as speaking and writing. Because they had been trained to teach student-centered classes since their early days of college and the beginning of their careers, they might believe those classes make the most of their abilities. The second highest efficacy score was discovered in the dimension of classroom management. Due to the nature of the university setting, each class is less likely to involve students who exhibit behavioral problems (i.e., disruptiveness, impoliteness, or aggressiveness), compared to elementary or secondary levels. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that the NES participants would show confidence in setting principles and managing their classes. The efficacy for instructional strategies was the last subscale in which the NES participants scored higher than 7. Among 12 items within this dimension, the NES teachers seemed to exhibit confidence especially when implementing instructional innovations. For instance, they scored highest on item 20 (7.64), demonstrating their capability to craft good questions to elicit students' responses. On the other hand, they showed a relative lack of confidence at effectively teaching low-achieving students (e.g., "To what extent can you explain central themes of each class so that even the low-achieving students understand?").

The participants' scores on the rest of the subdimensions of teachers' self-efficacy levels were below 7. In terms of student engagement, the NES teachers showed lower efficacy compared to that in the subscales discussed above, mostly due to the fact that they had a low understanding of Korean schools and Korean students. Because traditional Korean schools are teacher-centered, Korean students tend to be

attentive but quiet during class, a behavior completely different from that of students in Western culture. Since these NES instructors never expected quiet classrooms, they required a long time to become accustomed to it and to find suitable strategies to motivate introverted Korean students to get actively involved in their classes. Specifically within the 10 items in this category, while the NES participants felt most efficacious at making their classes meaningful, they felt least efficacious at motivating students with a low interest in English learning. The last self-efficacy dimension, efficacy for speaking students' language (Korean), showed the lowest score, as Korean is a foreign language to them. They scored 4.25, meaning they believe they exert less than "some influence" on their Korean university students. A lack of self-perceived Korean linguistic and cultural proficiency would prohibit their other efficacy scores from reaching the level of 8 or 9. This point will be further discussed through research questions 2 and 3. However, the NES teachers felt more efficacious to understand than to speak Korean, partly because of the difficulty of code-switching while speaking. The following table summarizes the descriptive statistics on the KUTSETE scale.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics on KUTSETE scale

Subscales of Teacher Efficacy	Scores
Instructional strategies	M = 7.15 (SD = .32)
Student engagement	M = 6.82 (SD = .40)
Classroom management	M = 7.33 (SD = .24)
Speaking target language (English)	M = 7.54 (SD = .42)
Speaking students' language	M = 4.25 (SD = .14)
Additional items	Item 39: M = 8.26 (SD = .78)
	Item 40: M = 8.24 (SD = .85)
	Item 41: M = 8.10 (SD = 1.20)
	Item 42: M = 8.20 (SD = .99)

4.2 Relationships between Self-Perceived Korean-Language Proficiency and Self-Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students

Out of 50 participants, nine listed teachers' Korean-language proficiency as one of the most crucial factors influencing their self-efficacy to teach at Korean university levels. Accordingly, quite a number of respondents commented that they had learned the Korean language on purpose in order to enhance their job performance, as the excerpts below indicate:

Excerpt 1: Learning Korean was not a requirement of my job, but I learned enough Korean language to do my job effectively. Such skills include reading students names in Korean, using the university computer system, posting grades online, and so forth. (NES 6)

Excerpt 2: I audited Korean language course for one semester after first moving to Korea. Since then, I listen to recordings of Arirang Korean language broadcasts in the car daily to and from work (I'm trying). Learning to speak fluent Korean is one of my primary goals so that I can communicate effectively with my students. (NES 35)

Most of the participants (94%) had started learning Korean after beginning their teaching career in Korea, and they had learned it in three different ways: (1) formal education, (2) informal learning, and (3) both formal and informal learning. First, some NES teachers enrolled in a Korean-language course through a university; a language institute; or a KIIP (Korea Immigration and Integration Program), a government-run program to help the spouses of Koreans learn the language and culture. Second, informal learning occurred specifically through either casual learning or self-study. A majority of the respondents had a Korean spouse (along with the spouse's family, who spoke Korean) or a Korean partner (18 of the respondents), so it was natural for them to have more exposure to the Korean language. The remainder learned Korean from friends (e.g., rock-climbing friends, NES 50), colleagues, neighbors, books, or CDs. Those who learned the Korean language through formal as well as informal learning showed certain tendencies. Some NESs, after having learned basic Korean in class, felt that self-study was sufficient to build upon their already acquired linguistic knowledge and thus moved toward informal

learning. Other NESs went in the opposite direction. Having encountered difficulties or limitations in self-study, they began to take formal classes. Simultaneous learning, the last type, used both methods.

The participants' self-perceived Korean proficiency levels varied according to these diverse Korean-language learning experiences. Among the 19 participants who perceived the strong influence of Korean-language proficiency, 7 reported that they are still at the very beginner level and confront occasional limitations when teaching Korean students. They felt that although they were teaching English-mediated courses, providing some explanations in Korean was inevitable for low-level students. Moreover, a few NESs seemed to believe that speaking students' mother tongue to some extent may help build close ties with students, enhancing their self-efficacy to teach them. For example, NES 25 commented, "I think my poor Korean speaking ability distances me from my students." Like her, they feel a close correlation between their Korean proficiency and their psychological/emotional support for students.

4.3 Relationships between Self-Perceived Korean Cultural Proficiency and Self-Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students

Using the third research question, the researcher attempted to examine the effects of Korean cultural-learning experiences and self-perceived Korean cultural proficiency on the NESs' sense of efficacy to teach at Korean universities. Since the majority of them seemed to feel that Korean cultural elements were more significant than the Korean language per se, and they pinpointed this aspect as the most threatening to their self-efficacy, a detailed discussion in a separate section is necessary.

Unlike consciously learning the Korean language, cultural aspects are learned mostly through natural acquisition. Since the NESs participants are currently living in Korea, they are inevitably exposed to Korean culture everywhere on a daily basis. NES 48, for instance, stated, "I don't actively study the culture. What I've learned

by OSMOSIS...” Many respondents were married to Koreans, meaning they were more strongly motivated to know and experience Korean culture. They celebrate Korean national holidays, such as the Lunar New Year and Thanksgiving Day, and attend life cycle events, such as first birthdays, weddings, funerals, and 61st birthdays. In addition, through interacting with Korean friends, colleagues, and even students, the NESs have naturally and continuously become more familiar with Korean culture. However, quite a number of participants enthusiastically devote extra time and effort to learning Korean culture. They commonly visit museums, temples, mountain fortresses, historical places, or traditional concerts/performances (e.g., NES 1, NES 5, and NES 10). Some NESs read English-language Korean newspapers, novels, and history books or watch Korean television programs or movies (e.g., NES 5, NES 9, and NES 45). Moreover, some responded that they enjoy extensive conversations with native Koreans about Korean history, culture, and social issues (e.g., NES 5, NES 17, and NES 44) and even attend lectures related to Korean cultural or social issues (e.g., NES 12 and NES 26). Surprisingly, some even made productions related to Korean culture, as the quotes below reveal:

Excerpt 3: I photographed and wrote about many traditional events for magazine and newspapers throughout Joellanamdo. (NES 1)

Excerpt 4: I hosted a radio program called “Hello Korea” ... I became a bit of expert on Korean culture... I wrote a weekly radio column on the trivial cultural differences between Westerners and Koreans... and we discussed it often in the station and studio. (NES 23)

These diverse attempts at learning Korean culture increased NES participants’ sense of efficacy to teach Korean students. Not only general Korean culture but also Korean educational culture was prominently reported to jeopardize NES teachers’ self-efficacy to teach at Korean universities, as representative excerpts below imply:

Excerpt 5: The grading curve at Korean universities tends to take away my motivation to inspire the lowest-level students. (NES 3)

Excerpt 6: I find it difficult to follow the Korean practice of introducing competition into so many aspects of academic. For example, in most of classes, students are subject to “the 40% rule,” which means that only 40% of students can get a B+ or higher. I personally do not support this kind of competition. I think that students should be judged against the reasonable expectations of the professor. I have no choice but to follow this rule though. (NES 6)

Excerpt 7: Because of the way the university allows students to register for my classes, some students are near fluent while others are at a low level. In this case, I lack of confidence to provide worthwhile content to the higher level students and to not overwhelm the lower level students. As a professor, I want to improve all students. (NES 32)

Excerpt 8: I am unfamiliar with elementary and secondary educational styles in Korea, so I have a difficult time understanding my students' behavior in class. ... They often refuse to participate in speaking exercises. They seem to have different expectations about the class and my teaching style, and I have expectations from them that are not met. (NES 26)

The most prevalently discussed issue (about 60% of the respondents) in this regard was *grading curve*, a relative grading system. The NESs perceived this evaluation system as meaningless, especially because they are teaching language-skill-focused classes. When they felt their hands were tied, it was obvious their internal motivation to teach decreased, and consequently, their sense of efficacy was threatened. Another risky factor, quoted in the third excerpt, was the mixed level of students in one class. The participants might lack the confidence to design classes to meet all students' needs as well as implement fair grading criteria. Thus, it was unavoidable for their self-efficacy to drop. The last quote reveals a lack of understanding of Korean students. The NES teachers never imagined how shy or

modest Korean students are during class. Therefore, the NESs could have misinterpreted their students' behavior to mean they did not like the class or did not want to take part in class activities, resulting in lower teacher self-efficacy. In other cases, students just wanted to pass a class that was a required course. They had no special interest in learning English, which sometimes puzzled the NES teachers. Again, this negatively affected their sense of efficacy.

4.4 Other Variables Affecting Self-Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students

Besides Korean linguistic and cultural competence, teachers' educational and professional backgrounds play a decisive role in NES instructors' levels of self-efficacy. Participants (36%) prevalently stated that their academic major has influenced their efficacy in teaching English-mediated courses in two ways.

Excerpt 9: I'm experienced and knowledgeable in the field of English education, since I majored in TESOL. (NES 4)

Excerpt 10: I have a good understanding of teaching English in a foreign environment thanks to my CELTA. (NES 42)

Excerpt 11: I am a TESL Canada trained English language educator with 10 years of experience teaching English at universities in Canada and Korea. Additionally, I have a Masters degree in Cultural Studies, so I make attempts at understanding the educational, social, and cultural needs of my students. (NES 36)

As all three excerpts indicate, 18% of the participants felt that English-related majors exert a positive influence. However, this does not mean that all these participants initially majored in English literature, English education, or linguistics. Except these three NESs, as they teach at Korean universities, they realized the necessity for training in those areas and thus started to earn a TESOL certificate or

a master's degree. And they confessed that it definitely enhanced their efficacy. The rest of the participants, including NES 36, held somewhat different perspectives – that non-English majors are still beneficial when teaching English to Korean students because they can competently handle diverse topics. Someone who had studied history, cultural studies, or Asian studies would especially benefit from their academic major because she or he may have received many opportunities to hear or study Korean cultural aspects. As a result, these non-English major teachers reported a fairly high level of efficacy in teaching English-medium courses.

Next, their amount of teaching experience (i.e., overall teaching experience, teaching experience in EFL contexts, or university teaching experience) was reported to be another dominant factor (32%) influencing NESs' self-efficacy in teaching English at Korean universities. In a similar vein as a majority of previous studies, it is straightforward to assume a positive correlation between the overall amount of teaching experience and teachers' sense of efficacy. To give an example, NES 1 commented, "Having taught English in the USA for six years at the college level and seven years in middle school, as well as six years in Korea, I am comfortable with my skills as an English professor." Furthermore, teaching experience specifically within EFL contexts should also be taken into account.

Excerpt 12: I think my strengths are related to over a decade of experience teaching at Korean universities, and my commitment to continually adapt to my students' needs and abilities as well as cultural changes and technological advances. (NES 18)

Excerpt 13: I have taught all levels of students in Korea, and I keep up to date on emerging teaching principles ... I am confident to teach all kinds of classes such as reading, listening, conversation, or cultural based classes. My evaluations are always extremely good. (NES 32)

Excerpt 14: My strengths are my experience teaching at the university level, the creativity I bring to the classroom to make the language learning process authentic and relevant. (NES 22)

Based upon these quotes, the NESs' teaching experience in Korea enhanced their self-efficacy to teach at Korean universities, particularly with respect to understanding the characteristics of Korean students and the cultures of Korea or Korean schools. Several participants had already taught in their native countries and lacked understanding specific to a Korean context. They had encountered unexpected situations during their early teaching careers in Korea; therefore, their sense of efficacy was somewhat decreased. As they accumulated more experience teaching Korean students, they became accustomed to this new context and retrieved their high level of teacher efficacy. They learned how to adapt their class contents or organization according to students' English proficiency levels or needs. They realized the effectiveness of using Korean-related examples whenever applicable to intrigue their students' interests. When using issues relevant to a Korean context, even low-level or low-motivated students might feel less anxious and more willing to talk, as they at least know the contents well. In addition, since teacher efficacy may vary depending on academic level, the amount of teaching experience in university may positively affect NESs' self-efficacy to teach English-mediated courses at Korean universities.

Although reported less than a typical expectation (22%), NES teachers' full English proficiency and Anglophone cultural knowledge equipped them with a fairly high level of self-efficacy to teach English-mediated courses to Korean students. This aligned with the literature arguing the power of NES teachers' fluent English on their efficacy to teach English (Reves & Medgyes, 1994). As the following excerpts imply, they are confident that they can explain in English using numerous lexical expressions, regardless of unexpected questions or situations.

Excerpt 15: I have a good knowledge of English from a linguistic point of view and extensive knowledge of English writing... confident to give meaningful lecture to Korean students. (NES 33)

Excerpt 16: Being a native English speaker, teaching English-mediated courses is not too difficult. My strengths, I suppose, are being able to explain things in multiple

ways without much difficulty, and being able to rephrase examples or explanations for different language levels. (NES 43)

Excerpt 17: True 'ear' in English grammar and clarity from constant exposure to English language books and other published material ... Extensive vocabulary and [Anglophone] cultural knowledge from reading not less than 100 English books per year as well as listening to English language podcasts on a variety of subjects. (NES 44)

Other than the factors examined thus far, two points related to psychological aspects were discovered to significantly influence the NESs' self-efficacy to teach English-medium courses at Korean universities. Most prevalently, they perceived "empathy" as a strong element shaping their level of self-efficacy, not only by affecting student outcomes but also by showing a sense of humanity to their students. Contrary to literature insisting that NES teachers lack empathy toward EFL learners (e.g., Reves & Medgyes, 1994), based on their own foreign-language-learning experiences, NES teachers know how challenging it may be to learn a second language, especially in a context where learners are not naturally exposed to it. They would also expect that a huge gap between Korean and English would make it more difficult for Korean students to achieve fluent English proficiency. NES 5 commented, "I have sympathy for the difficulties and rigors of learning a language and even a sense of empathy which helps me to understand expression, frustration and other feelings that my students go through." Last, a few participants commented that they have a special advantage: unlike the relatively strict and formal style of Korean teachers, they felt able to be humorous and entertaining, which also contributes to their sense of efficacy. For instance, NES 47 said that being very open and funny in class would help her students to stay focused and to feel comfortable asking questions or advice.

V. Conclusion and Implications

The current study examined what factors significantly influenced native English-speaking teachers' sense of efficacy to teach Korean university students. According to the results, the NES teachers felt quite efficacious in most of the teacher efficacy dimensions. Due to their native English command, they scored highest in terms of efficacy for speaking a target language (English). Additionally, they felt most efficacious in classroom management, probably due to the nature of the university context. While they also felt quite efficacious in instructional strategies, they expressed a lack of confidence in engaging introverted Korean students in their classes. When they did not acknowledge Korean culture and the characteristics of Korean students, they encountered difficulties in handling unexpected situations from time to time. The lowest score was with respect to efficacy for speaking the students' language (Korean), since they are nonnative speakers of Korean, and most did not have an opportunity to learn the Korean language or culture before starting a career in Korea. The most distinguishing result from this study is that the NESs prioritized Korean-language and cultural proficiency over English. They commonly reported that having a certain level of Korean linguistic proficiency and Korean cultural knowledge helped them deal with low-level or low-motivated Korean students, crucially enhancing their level of self-efficacy. Moreover, teachers' academic major, teaching experience, English proficiency, emotional support, and sense of humor were other factors shaping participants' sense of efficacy.

Based on the findings of the present study, some implications are proposed as follows. First, moving beyond focusing on nonnative English teachers' sense of efficacy in an EFL context, further studies scrutinizing how NES teachers feel about their self-efficacy in their nonnative countries are necessary. They may have concerns other than those of native Korean teachers. Such studies in both a Korean and in a non-Korean context may be valuable. Second, a longitudinal study

examining changes in NESS' self-efficacy may also provide interesting results, since their efficacy levels may potentially vary during their teaching careers in Korea. Third, an administrative program, sponsored by either a university or a government, assisting the NESS' learning of the Korean language and culture may be required. If possible, this could minimize the time period threatening their self-efficacy in teaching Korean students.

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Appendix

Survey: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy to Teach Korean University Students

Section II: Korean University Teachers' Sense of Efficacy in Teaching English (KUTSETE) Scale

Directions: Please indicate how confident you are presently in each of the following statements. For each question, please MARK the number, from 1 (not at all) to 9 (a great deal), that best matches your response.

Not at all	Very little	Some influence	Quite a bit	A great deal				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

1. To what extent can you motivate your students who has a low interest in learning English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
2. To what extent can you flexibly adjust your English lessons depending on the class situations (e.g., size of class, accessibility of equipment, and length of class)?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
3. How well can you evaluate students' academic achievement?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
4. To what extent can you help your students to believe they can successfully learn in your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
5. How well can you establish a classroom management system with students in your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
6. How effectively can you deliver course contents to your students in the English language?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
7. How well can you respond to unprepared questions in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
8. To what extent can you do to motivate your students to interact with the teacher in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9. To what extent can you do to motivate your students to interact with their classmates in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10. How well can you do to figure out students' level to perform in English-mediated classes?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
11. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
12. To what extent can you make your expectations clear to your students in English language?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

13. To what extent can you help your students value their learning?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
14. To what extent can you control your students' misbehavior during the class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
15. To what extent can you control even the most aggressive students?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
16. To what extent can you help your students to think critically?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
17. How well can you figure out/understand the source of student difficulties in your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
18. How well can you know your students' interests in your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
19. To what extent can you get students to do their best even when working with difficult problems?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
20. To what extent can you craft good questions to elicit students' response?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
21. How well can you foster your students' creativity inside of your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
22. To what extent can you implement diverse teaching methods?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
23. How well can you make diverse classroom activities and assignments?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
24. To what extent can you get all students to behave politely in your class?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
25. To what extent can you make your English-mediated course meaningful?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
26. To what extent can you explain central themes of each class so that even the low-achieving students understand?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
27. To what extent can you feel competent to keep updating your teaching methods and materials?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
28. To what extent can you motivate your students to keep taking English-mediated courses?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
29. How well can you maintain discipline in any school class or group of student?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

30. How well can you maintain your confidence in teaching your class when students do not satisfy your expectations?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
31. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example in English when students are confused?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
32. To what extent can you effectively teach listening in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
33. To what extent can you effectively teach speaking in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
34. To what extent can you effectively teach reading in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
35. To what extent can you effectively teach writing in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
36. To what extent can you feel competent to teach the target culture in English?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
37. To what extent can you use Korean language to assist students' understanding?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
38. To what extent can you understand Korean language to enhance students' comprehensibility?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
39. To what extent can you feel competent to teach English at a university level?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
40. To what extent can you feel competent to teach Korean students?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
41. To what extent can you enjoy to teach English-mediated course?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
42. Overall, to what extent can you feel competent to become an effective teacher of English-mediated course at Korean universities?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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