

During the introductory “Text Class” of Friday October 27, you were asked to identify some of the hurdles that you face in trying to implement TETE in the classroom. Here is what you said:

- **Language fluency** – especially as it relates to language use that is appropriate to both the situation and to the needs of the learners. In short, English teachers in Korea need to be flexible in their language use and must be able to use suitable language depending on the classroom environment.
- **Social atmosphere** – as Korea is homogeneous (linguistically, ethnically, and culturally), teachers and students share a similar background knowledge and ethos. As such there is no real need for English in Korea. For example if a teacher or teachers were to use English in the staffroom, they may be ostracized. The same is true for students. Often students who have obtained a high level of English proficiency are reluctant to use it for fear of being alienated.
- **Efficiency** – using English in the classroom takes more time, so to cover everything prescribed by the curriculum becomes difficult.
- **Intelligibility** – when teaching with TETE, students often misunderstand instructions, directions, commands, etc. In these cases, using the L1 may be more effective
- **Teaching load** – demands on teachers’ time (extra classes, homerooms, record keeping etc.) prevent teachers from effectively using TETE (see efficiency above)
- **Materials** – most English textbooks isolate the four linguistic skills into discrete lessons, but these skills must be integrated for proper language acquisition.
- **Professional Development** – there are too few PD opportunities for teachers during summer and winter recesses. As such, any teachers wanting to develop themselves professionally are burdened with having to abandon their classes during the semester.

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Walter’s note on “Social atmosphere” – during my time in Korea I have identified “social atmosphere” as the biggest obstacle to not only teaching English in English, but to English language acquisition itself. It is my opinion that the purpose of language is communication. In Korea however, I have observed the purpose of English to be evaluation. Needless to say, as these two purposes are diametrically opposed, the conflict between the two impedes true and effective language teaching and learning. I presented a paper on the conflict between English for evaluation and English for communication at a workshop for the Chungbuk Secondary English Teachers’ Association (CBSETA). A copy of my paper is available at:

www.walterforeman.com/text

Two other opposing elements whose conflict obstructs language teaching and learning are prescriptivism and descriptivism; but that’s a story for another time...

This list, and lists from previous trainees, can be downloaded from:
www.walterforeman.com