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The Beliefs about Language Learning of Korean College Students and Their Teachers of English

Kyung Ja Kim
(Woosong University)

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This study investigated differences in beliefs about English learning of 286 EFL college students and 52 English teachers in Korea. Data was collected using Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory and compared between students and teachers in beliefs. To address the research questions, the data were analyzed through descriptive statistics including frequencies, factor analysis, MANOVA, ANOVA, *t*-test, and reliability coefficients. The results showed four factors in student beliefs: Difficulty of learning English, nature of learning English, importance of correctness in learning English, and motivation and perceived importance of learning English. Clear differences were found in students and teachers' beliefs in English learning aptitude and importance of translation, error correction, and grammar rules. A few belief differences were also identified between Koreans and native-speaking English teachers related to the importance of vocabulary learning, pronunciation, and cultural knowledge. The findings of the study indicated that background variables such as gender and major field of study have an effect on student beliefs about L2 learning. The present study also provided pedagogical considerations to reduce mismatch between students and teachers beliefs and to improve the L2 planning and instruction.

[beliefs about English learning/individual differences, 영어 학습에 관한 신념/개인차]

I. INTRODUCTION

Learners' beliefs about how second or foreign languages (L2) are learned have received a lot of attention in recent years. Many studies since Horwitz's pioneering study in 1985 have indicated that learners' preconceived beliefs would affect the way they learn (Cotterall, 1999; Diab, 2006; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Kim, K. 2001; Sakui & Gaies, 1999). Furthermore, such beliefs have been linked with other learner variables, such as L2 learning strategies (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Kim, H. 2001; Kim, K. 2001; Park, 1995; Yang, 1999), L2 anxiety (Horwitz, 1988; Truitt, 1995a), attitudes (Mantle-Bromley, 1995), and L2 achievement (Huang & Tsai, 2003; Kim, H. 2001; Mantle-Bromley, 1995; Mori, 1999; Peacock, 1999). As Horwitz (1987) reported, learner beliefs may influence students' expectations of, commitment to, and satisfaction with their language learning, for example, learners' counterproductive or unrealistic beliefs regarding L2 learning are detrimental to their L2 learning and are likely to restrict the variety and flexibility of their strategy use (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Horwitz, 1985, 1988; Kern, 1995; Yang, 1999), which will influence their learning behavior and motivational patterns and in turn will affect their L2 performance. Beliefs, for that reason, are a central construct in learning experience and achievement. L2 teachers, accordingly, must not ignore learners' beliefs about the nature of L2, about the L2 learning task, about outcomes, and about personal L2 learning strengths and weaknesses.

Likewise, comprehensive reviews of teacher beliefs indicated a reciprocal nature between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices (Richards & Lockhart, 1995; Richardson, 1996). More specifically, L2 teachers' theoretical and pedagogical beliefs about L2 learning and teaching and their instructional practice are considered to shape a critical part of their prior knowledge through which teachers perceive, process, and act upon information in L2 classrooms (Allen, 2002; Banya & Cheng, 1997; Horwitz, 1985; Johnson, 1992; Kern, 1995; Peacock, 2001). In this way, L2 teachers' beliefs may guide their expectations about student behavior and the decisions they make in the design and implementation of effective L2 instruction. Accordingly, teachers' beliefs about how L2 learning process takes place and how L2 ability develops play an important role in improving L2 teaching that might best suit different types of

individuals in a school environment (Johnson, 1992; Kern, 1995; Yang: 2000). Both learners and teachers bring their unique beliefs which have the potential to affect their experiences as L2 learners and teachers, for that reason, learners' and teachers' L2 belief systems are of course integral elements to our understanding of L2 learning in school settings.

A growing number of studies investigated beliefs about L2 learning of different groups of EFL learners from various cultural backgrounds. Studies which contain references specifically to Korean students' beliefs have been found to relate to the use of learning strategies (Kim, H. 2001; Kim, K. 2001; Park, 1995), learners' anxiety (Truitt, 1995a), and their attitudes (Seong, 1999). However, thus far, no study has yet explored the beliefs about language learning of EFL teachers in Korea while previous research in students' beliefs has raised a question of teacher influence because learners are likely to regard their L2 teachers as experts in language learning matters and teachers may convey their own assumptions about language learning to students through classroom practices (Kern, 1995). Furthermore, the discussion about the degree of match between learner and teacher beliefs suggested that gaps between the two beliefs can lead to reduced learner confidence in L2 ability and satisfaction with the class, and they, in the long run, result in negative learning outcomes (Horwitz, 1988; Mantle-Bromley, 1995). Therefore, it is entirely appropriate to examine both Korean students and their English teachers' beliefs about language learning to understand the potential that affects their actions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term belief refers to, according to Richardson's (1996) definition, psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true. In order to assess L2 learners' beliefs, Horwitz (1988) developed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), which has been used with several L2 learning settings in the U.S. (Horwitz, 1987, 1988; Kern, 1995; Mantle-Bromley, 1995; Mori, 1999; Rifkin, 2000). A number of studies also used the translated version of the BALLI to research EFL and ESL student beliefs. Korean (Kim, H. 2001; Kim, K. 2001; Park, 1995; Seong, 1999;

Truitt, 1995a, 1995b), Japanese (Sakui & Gaies, 1999), Chinese (Peacock, 1999, Peacock, 2001), Taiwanese (Banya & Cheng, 1997; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Yang, 1999, 2000), and Lebanese (Diab, 2006) adult language learners or teachers have been targeted in BALLI studies. Results of these studies suggested that beliefs play a critical role in learning and teaching experience and achievement and that the BALLI was a valid and reliable measurement tool for EFL learners' beliefs (Sakui & Gaies, 1999). The BALLI assesses learners' beliefs about L2 learning in five major areas: (1) foreign language learning aptitude, (2) the difficulty of learning a foreign language, (3) the nature of language learning process, (4) learning and communicative strategies, and (5) motivations and expectations about language learning (Horwitz, 1987, 1988).

Several researchers attempted comparative studies of two L2 learning environments to examine the influence of cultural backgrounds and previous experiences on learner beliefs. Truitt (1995b) compared the beliefs of 204 Korean EFL students with those of ESL students (Horwitz, 1987) and American students of foreign languages (Horwitz, 1988), and Chinese EFL students (Yang, 1992, cited in Truitt, 1995b), and found several differences. The ESL and American foreign language students in the U.S. had more confidence in their L2 ability and more integrative motivation than Korean EFL students, while the Koreans had more instrumental motivations than the Americans. However, similarities appeared between the Korean and Chinese students due to their similar culture, English education systems, and the role of English in the two countries. However, the Chinese students displayed greater confidence in their English ability than the Koreans. Subsequently, Horwitz (1999) examined differences in beliefs among different cultural groups of learners and found that learning situational differences may be important sources of between group variation. Lately, Diab (2006) has given theoretical support to Horwitz's (1999) idea that learners' beliefs about the difficulty of and motivations for L2 learning seemed to be contextualized in politically and socio-culturally bound learning situation.

Although the number of comparative studies investigating beliefs about L2 learning of different groups of learners across various cultural backgrounds increases, to date few studies have been made to consider learners' background factors such as gender and major field of study that might be important

components of within group differences in learner beliefs (Horwitz, 1999). It seems obvious that beliefs about language learning would seem to be naturally related to learner background variables. Support for this estimate comes from Truitt (1995b) who found that Korean learners' academic majors and living abroad experience made significant differences in their confidence in speaking in L2. Furthermore, Diab (2006) reported significant gender differences in the Lebanese students' beliefs about L2 learning. In order to further the knowledge base in this area, thus, it is now appropriate to investigate the contention that background variables may be important elements in learner beliefs about language learning.

Another important research concern about the topic is comparison and mismatch of beliefs between students and teachers. Kern (1995) compared the beliefs of French learning students and their teachers and produced complex results. Students' beliefs about children's superiority, language aptitude, need for practice, and use of guessing strategies were consistent with those of teachers, but students' certain beliefs conflicted and mismatched with those of teachers. For example, students' opinions on pronunciation, error correction, and the importance of grammar rule learning considerably contrasted to those of teachers. Similar results displayed in a study of Taiwanese EFL students and their teachers (Banya & Cheng, 1997) that there were mismatches existing in the views of both groups about English learning. Taiwanese students believed that English learning is mostly a matter of memorization of new vocabulary, grammar, or translation. Later, Peacock's (1999) comparative study reported very similar results to those found by Kern and Banya and Cheng in that student beliefs differed from their teachers' about the same issue. He suggested that students with beliefs about memorization of vocabulary and grammar rules may be very dissatisfied with a teacher who does not emphasize the learning of vocabulary and grammar in classroom tasks, materials, and homework. The mismatches in beliefs between teachers and students can be concluded that students may blame difficulties in L2 learning, slow progress, and failure of learning L2, leading to further lack of confidence, frustration, and dissatisfaction (Peacock, 2001).

On the other hand, research in L2 learning and teaching context on teacher beliefs, few empirical studies appeared despite the importance of the topic. With

an adopted version of BALLI, Yang (2000) surveyed Taiwanese pre-service English teachers regarding beliefs about learning English, and cross-culturally compared his results with those reported by Horwitz (1985) and Kern (1995) in terms of similarities and differences in beliefs of both pre-service and in-service L2 teachers. As Horwitz (1999) warned, the data compared did not indicate any unambiguous differences in three groups investigated. Therefore, although Yang attempted to examine the cultural differences in teacher beliefs and reported a number of group differences, it seemed inappropriate to conclude that teacher beliefs about L2 learning vary across different cultures. More recently, Peacock (2001) examined the beliefs about L2 learning of 146 pre-service ESL teachers and compared their beliefs with those of experienced ESL teachers, however, he also brought the experienced teacher data from Peacock (1999). On that ground, his findings of differences between the groups can be attributed to individual differences such as age, gender, and stage of life rather than differences in the groups compared. Besides, the results of Yang (2000) and Peacock (2001) are also likely limited by the situational conditions. Thus far, none of the published research, to my knowledge, has yet explored and compared the beliefs about language learning of English teachers in Korea. No attempt has been made to investigate cultural differences in teacher beliefs between Korean EFL teachers and native English-speaking teachers, collecting necessary data from both groups of instructors at the same time.

Given the review of literature about the issue, it seems reasonable to presume that learner and teacher beliefs about language learning influence how learners and teachers approached and felt about their L2 classes. In order to further to the theoretical underpinning the foundations of L2 beliefs, it is important to investigate the beliefs that Korean college students and their instructors have and cultural and situational differences of the beliefs in EFL contexts. In addition, the research on the topic in ESL settings has the difficulty of generalizing findings across EFL contexts. This difficulty may be linked in part with the situational, political, and socio-cultural factors that affect learners' and teachers' beliefs about learning English. What is more, there still appears to be a shortage of empirical studies since Horwitz study (1999) that examined teacher beliefs and comparative studies on the issue.

The main purpose of this study was to examine whether the BALLI

sub-components reported in several studies following Horwitz's (1988) can be found in the EFL context in Korea and to investigate the differences in beliefs about English learning among students (S), Korean English teachers (KET), and native-speaking English teachers (NET). Furthermore, this study aimed to determine the effects of students' background factors on their beliefs. Thus, the present study addressed the three following research questions:

1. What do Korean EFL college students believe about English learning?
2. How do students' beliefs about English learning compare to those of KET and NET?
3. How do background factors such as students' gender and major field of study influence their beliefs?

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Participants

Eleven EFL intact classes from a university took part in the present study. A total of 286 participants' average age was 18.6, ranging from 17 to 32. All the students were first-year students, native speakers of Korean, and enrolled in a compulsory English course "General English" at the time of participating in the study. There were 150 males (52.4%) and 136 females (47.6%). Of the total sample, 93 (32.5%) have majored in Tourism Management, 87 (30.4%) in Engineering, 68 (23.8%) in Food Science, and 38 (13.3%) in English. The greater part of the participants believed that travel to English-speaking countries (N=251, 87.8%) or having English-speaking friends (N=267, 93.4%) would help them learn English. Furthermore, 97 students (33.9%) indicated that their own independent study is the most influential factor in their effective learning of English, followed by teachers (N=81, 28.3%) and learning materials (N=43, 15%). The participants represented a wide range of English proficiency, even though 175 (61.2%) reported their proficiency as not good compared with other students in their class. Eleven (3.8%) rated their level as good, 72 (25.2%) as medium, and 28 (9.8%) as very poor. However, none of them reported it as excellent in the self-assessed English proficiency.

The 52 teachers who took part were the student participants' English teachers and staff from General English program. The male-female ratio was 50:50. The teachers ranged in age from 26 to 62, with an average of 38.2. Twenty-nine (44.2%) were foreign native speakers of English and the remaining 23 were Korean teachers. The average amount of English teaching experience was 3 years, while Korean teachers (M=3.6) had slightly more experiences. Of the 52 teacher participants, 31 (59.6%) rated their students' English proficiency as not good. In addition, 227 (79.4%) students and 37 (71.2%) teachers believed that emphasis on speaking and listening skills in English classes is more important than that on reading, grammar rule, writing, or culture.

2. Instruments and Procedures

The present study consisted of a modified version of the BALLI and a background information questionnaire designed by the researcher. The BALLI contains 34 items to survey learner beliefs with 5-point Likert scales (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for participants to self-report the extent to which the statements applied to themselves. For the validity of the BALLI, the original items were developed from an extensive collection of interviews with language learners and teachers (Horwitz, 1985). In order to complete the items in students' native language, the BALLI without an established Korean version was translated into Korean by English-Korean bilinguals. Furthermore, as Sakui and Gaies (1999) suggested the need for the development of context-sensitive instrument to measure beliefs about L2 learning, some modifications were made to the original BALLI items to correspond to a Korean-specific English learning and teaching context. "Foreign language" and "some languages" were replaced with "English" to ensure that the scale referred only to a student's beliefs about learning English instead of foreign language learning in general.

An adapted version of BALLI for teachers was used to elicit teacher beliefs about English learning that might be unique to the target population and to allow comparison of students' beliefs with those of their teachers. This scale was almost identical to the student BALLI and contained 28 items, while 7 items (5, 13, 16, 21, 24, 29, 31) that were not relevant to teachers were excluded

(e.g., "I feel timid in speaking English with other people") from the student version. The teacher version of the BALLI was completed in English. Furthermore, one item was added to both student and teacher inventories to consider the role of memorization in L2 learning.

The second questionnaire was designed to obtain background information about the students and teachers, such as their gender, age, major field of study, travel experience to English-speaking countries, nationalities, and teaching experiences. In addition, questions including student participants' self-assessed English proficiency, effectiveness of travel abroad experience for English learning, the most influential factor for students' English learning and aspect that should be emphasized in English classes were asked.

Classroom teachers administered both BALLI and background information questionnaires to their students during their regular English class meeting in the beginning of spring semester in 2006. The response rate, thus, was 100%. The student surveys were not completed anonymously to examine the associations between their belief systems and English proficiency in further studies. Student identification numbers, hence, were included in the survey to use only in conjunction with the students' responses and their final course grades in English. The teacher version were distributed to all 68 teachers who were teaching General English and 52 completed and returned, with a response rate of 76%.

3. Data Analyses

Quantitative data analyses with several statistical procedures were performed in this study: (1) Descriptive statistics including frequencies were computed to summarize and compare the students and teachers' responses to the BALLI items as well as background information of the participants; (2) a factor analysis with a principle component was performed to extract underlying factors for the student beliefs; (3) MANOVA, ANOVA, and independent samples *t*-test were performed to examine influences of background variables on students' beliefs. The reliability of the Korean version of the BALLI for students was .72 and .79 for teachers. Although the teacher participants were smaller than the students in number, slightly higher reliability on the surveys for teachers

indicated the teacher participants' responses were more consistent across items of the BALLI.

IV. RESULTS

1. Similarities and Differences between Students' and Teachers' Beliefs

In order to discern the underlying factors of Korean college student's belief systems about English learning, a factor analysis with a varimax rotation, an orthogonal method, was conducted to make the factors more interpretable. Four factors with eigenvalues greater than 2.0 were extracted and labeled: (1) Difficulty of Learning English, (2) Nature of Learning English, (3) Importance of Correctness in Learning English, and (4) Motivations and Perceived Importance of Learning English, respectively. The four factors accounted for 48.5% of the total variance. The results of the four-factor solution and students' and instructors' responses in percentage to all items¹⁾ are summarized in tables 1 through 4 for easier comparisons. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, and thus may not add to 100. The factor loading of each item is presented in parentheses. Items with factor loadings below .40 were included in each table to provide the comparative data among students, KET, and NET.

1) Difficulty of Learning English

The items obtained high loadings in Factor 1 as shown in Table 1, seemed to represent the general difficulty of learning English. In addition, items about the students' difficulty of learning of the specific aspect of English also loaded on this factor. Concerning students' ability for learning English, 47% of the students believed that they would learn to speak English very well although more than two-thirds of them felt that they did not have a special ability to

1) Item 11 which dealt with the specialized ability for learning English compared to math or science loaded four factors simultaneously, with a loading of -.17, .11, .10, and -.18, respectively, and thus, it was excluded from the analysis and further.

learn English (78%) and 70% of them felt anxious about speaking English with other people.

TABLE 1
Difficulty of Learning English

Item		1*	2	3	4	5
16. I have a special ability for learning English. (.72)	S	32	46	20	2	0
5. I believe that I will learn to speak English very well. (.68)	S	4	19	29	42	5
6. Korean students are good at learning English. (.65)	S	5	21	40	25	10
	KET	13	13	48	26	0
	NET	14	28	52	7	0
4. English is a/an (1) very difficult, (2) difficult, (3) medium difficult, (4) easy, or (5) very easy language. (.57)	S	12	60	26	1	1
	KET	0	61	39	0	0
	NET	17	38	31	14	0
21. I feel timid speaking English with other people. (-.56)	S	3	11	15	40	30
33. Everyone can learn to speak English. (.54)	S	2	4	14	48	32
	KET	0	13	0	26	61
	NET	7	14	10	48	21
34. It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it. (.51)	S	12	12	24	33	19
	KET	13	43	22	22	0
	NET	14	31	24	24	7
10. It is easier for people who already speak a foreign language to learn English. (.49)	S	3	26	23	39	9
	KET	0	0	26	61	13
	NET	0	0	24	62	14
25. It is easier to speak than write English. (.47)	S	12	10	29	30	19
	KET	0	35	0	52	13
	NET	3	14	10	45	28
30. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent. (.36)	S	4	16	23	35	21
	KET	0	52	13	35	0
	NET	7	17	59	17	0
15. If someone spent one hour a day learning English, it would take him or her to speak English very well for (1) 1-2 years, (2) 3-5 years, (3) 6-10 years, (4) over 10 years, (5) he/she can never learn English well. (.35)	S	19	52	17	10	3
	KET	13	52	26	9	0
	NET	3	48	21	14	14
3. English is easier to learn than other languages. (.32)	S	9	25	45	16	6
	KET	0	13	48	26	13
	NET	31	31	21	3	14

* 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

While 35% of the students and 26% of KET agreed that Korean students were good at learning English, only a small number of NET (7%) selected this response. Eighty percent of the students, 87% of the KET, and 69% of the NET believed that everyone could learn to speak English although a majority of each group surveyed judged English a difficult language, while 12% of the students and 17% of the NET judged it very difficult. Furthermore, a large number of the both KET (74%) and NET (76%) thought that it was easier for people who already speak a foreign language to learn English; whereas 48% of the students agreed to this item. However, the three groups' estimates of the amount of time required to learn English were quite similar that about one-half of each group felt it would take from three to five years to learn English if someone spent an hour a day learning English. However, 14% of the NET believed that English could never be learned under the condition.

On the subject of the difficulty of the specific learning aspect of English, sixty-two percent of the NET disagreed that English was easier to learn than other languages, while only 13% of the KET and 34% of the students rejected this response. Nearly half the NET (45%) and KET (56%) disagreed that reading and writing in English are easier than speaking, whereas over one-half of the students (52%) agreed to the statement. However, all the three groups agreed that speaking is easier than writing.

2) Nature of Learning English

As Table 2 displays, Factor 2 included various issues related to the nature of learning English. For example, items 17 and 28 concerned the students' expectation about the focus of the English learning task, while items 8 and 12 considered the role of environment or cultural contact as an important factor for successful English learning. Students' beliefs about foreign language aptitude and the relative ability between children and adults and between male and female in learning English also loaded on the second factor. A large number of the students (85%), KET (100%), and NET (81%) felt that English learning involved a lot of memorization. Furthermore, most of the participants believed that learning English is different from learning other subjects and it is best learned in an English-speaking countries with percentages ranging from 69% to

94%. The participants also endorsed children's superiority in learning English.

TABLE 2
Nature of Learning English

Item		1	2	3	4	5
35. English learning involves a lot of memorization. (.71)	S	1	4	10	42	43
	KET	0	0	0	87	13
	NET	3	10	3	69	14
12. It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country. (.69)	S	2	10	14	42	32
	KET	0	26	0	61	13
	NET	0	21	10	24	45
2. Some people have a special ability for learning English. (.66)	S	5	29	33	28	5
	KET	0	4	0	70	26
	NET	0	7	10	48	35
17. The most important part of learning English is learning vocabulary words. (.64)	S	3	8	23	53	12
	KET	0	0	13	35	52
	NET	10	48	21	14	7
27. Learning English is different from learning other academic subjects. (-.60)	S	0	8	19	49	24
	KET	0	13	9	78	0
	NET	0	3	3	59	35
32. English is structured in the same way as Korean language. (.56)	S	29	36	24	9	1
	KET	52	48	0	0	0
	NET	86	14	0	0	0
28. The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from Korean to English. (.47)	S	5	25	44	18	8
	KET	13	70	4	13	0
	NET	38	48	14	0	0
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn English. (.45)	S	2	6	12	57	23
	KET	0	9	9	57	26
	NET	0	24	3	35	38
11. Female students are better than male at learning English. (-.39)	S	15	20	46	12	7
	KET	0	13	52	35	0
	NET	14	28	31	21	7
8. It is necessary to know English-speaking cultures in order to speak English. (.34)	S	4	20	20	43	13
	KET	0	0	0	26	74
	NET	24	42	3	14	17

On the other hand, the majority of the KET (96%) and NET (83%) believed in the existence of special abilities for English learning, while only 32% of the students believed in the concept of English learning aptitude. Fifty-eight percent of the NET rejected that the most important part of learning English was

learning vocabulary words, although 65% of the students and 87% of the KET supported the item. In addition, the majority of NET (86%) and KET (83%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that learning English is mainly learning to translate from Korean. But this disagreement drew less support from the students (30%). Sixty-six percent of the NET also showed either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that it was necessary to know English-speaking cultures in order to speak English, although all the KET participants and 56% of the students placed a very high value on learning target language cultures. What is more, 46% of the students and 52% of the KET chose the neutral response when asked if females are better than males, however, 42% of the NET did not endorse the statement.

3) Importance of Correctness in Learning English

As shown in Table 3, Factor 3 addressed students' beliefs about the importance of accuracy and correctness in learning and speaking English. Items related to learning (Items 18 and 26) and communication (Items 9 and 14) strategies which directly linked to students' actual English learning practices also had moderate loadings on this factor. The vast majority of the participants agreed that it is OK to say something in English although it was not correct. Accordingly, a large number of all groups agreed or strongly agreed that guessing a word in English is permissible. However, a substantial number of students (77%) revealed that it would be difficult to speak correctly if beginning students were allowed to make errors in English without correction, while the KET (52%) and NET (66%) rejected this idea. Furthermore, Korean students (73%) and teachers (74%) endorsed the importance of practicing English with cassettes or tapes, as a matter of course, they agreed that it was important to speak English with an excellent accent. But, support for the primacy of practice and accent was considerably weaker among the NET. A clear difference between the students and teachers was found in the importance of grammar study. The KET and NET groups (65% and 73%) disagreed with the primacy of grammar learning, while only 33% of the students disagreed with the statement.

TABLE 3
Importance of Correctness in Learning English

Item		1	2	3	4	5
22. If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English without correction, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later. (.60)	S	0	10	13	47	30
	KET	0	52	13	35	0
	NET	14	52	14	7	14
9. People shouldn't say anything in English until they can say it correctly. (-.58)	S	58	37	5	0	0
	KET	48	35	4	0	13
	NET	90	10	0	0	0
23. The most important part of learning English is learning grammar. (.57)	S	7	26	31	26	10
	KET	0	65	22	13	0
	NET	21	52	10	3	14
26. It is important to practice English with cassettes or tapes. (.53)	S	1	5	21	47	26
	KET	0	13	13	74	0
	NET	7	45	14	14	21
18. It is important to repeat and practice English a lot. (.50)	S	0	2	2	31	65
	KET	13	4	9	13	61
	NET	3	10	0	48	38
14. It's OK to guess if you don't know a word in English. (.46)	S	6	8	15	59	12
	KET	0	13	4	48	35
	NET	0	0	3	31	66
7. It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation. (.36)	S	0	11	11	39	40
	KET	0	39	0	48	13
	NET	21	35	14	21	10

4) Motivations and Perceived Importance of Learning English

Five items loaded on Factor 4 as appeared in Table 4. The items on this factor dealt with motivational components in learning English such as the enjoyment derived from practicing English (Item 13) and the likelihood of using it in the future (Items 24 and 29). One item reflected the perceived value of English in Korean society also loaded on the fourth factor. Almost all of the students (97%) believed in the association of English ability with better job opportunities, accordingly, they (94%) wanted to learn to speak English well. However, 70% of them disagreed that they enjoyed practicing English with the target language speakers they meet. Moreover, 63% of the students rejected that their intention to learn English was to get to know English-speakers better. All of the KET and many students (69%) believed that ability to speak English was important in Korea, while support for this statement was markedly weaker

with the NET (48%).

TABLE 4
Motivations and Perceived Importance of Learning English

Item		1	2	3	4	5
13. I enjoy practicing English with the English-speakers I meet. (.66)	S	38	32	22	7	1
31. I want to learn to speak English well. (.64)	S	0	3	2	19	75
29. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities for a good job. (.64)	S	0	2	1	20	77
24. I like to learn English to get to know its speakers better. (.59)	S	21	42	18	16	4
20. Korean students think that it is important to speak English. (-.42)	S	4	9	18	36	33
	KET	0	0	0	65	35
	NET	3	21	28	41	7

2. Effect of Background Variables on Students' Beliefs

Two sources of within group variation used in the present study were students' gender and major field of study. Composite scores²⁾ for the four factors were constructed. Each composite consisted of the calculation that the items loaded on each factor were added up and then divided by the number of the items of each factor.

TABLE 5
Comparison of Beliefs about Learning English by Gender

	Male (N=150)		Female (N=136)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Factor 1**	2.95	.31	3.17	.29
Factor 2*	3.30	.35	3.40	.31
Factor 3**	3.44	.32	3.60	.34
Factor 4	3.51	.53	3.55	.46
Overall**	3.25	.25	3.39	.22

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ in the t-tests.

2) The result depends on the one's unit of analysis. When one treats each item as the unit of analysis and compares it based on participants' background information, more variation and differences would appear (Kern, 1995).

The MANOVA result indicated a significant multivariate effect for gender on beliefs with an $F(5, 277)=9.73$ ($p<.001$). As illustrated in Table 5, however, the t -tests revealed different results to a degree. Females had higher mean scores on all the four factors as well as their overall score than males. With the exception of the mean difference in Factor 4 ($t=-.81$, $p=.42$), student belief systems were significantly different between males and females.

TABLE 6
Comparison of Beliefs about Learning English by Major

	Tourism Management (N=93)		Engineering (N=87)		Food Science (N=68)		English (N=38)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Factor 1**	3.17	.29	2.93	.31	2.89	.28	3.15	.32
Factor 2**	3.46	.31	3.30	.33	3.25	.30	3.32	.39
Factor 3*	3.58	.28	3.50	.30	3.49	.40	3.47	.36
Factor 4**	3.51	.54	3.70	.43	3.14	.45	3.88	.47
Overall**	3.42	.24	3.26	.23	3.22	.23	3.38	.24

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$ in the ANOVAs.

With regard to the effect of students' major field of study on their belief systems, there was a significant MANOVA result with an $F(5, 279)=11.55$ at $p<.001$. As reported in Table 6, the students in Tourism Management had the highest mean score, while those in Food Science had the lowest as a whole. However, English major students showed the highest mean score on Factor 4 ($M=3.88$), while Food Science majors revealed the lowest score on Factor 1 ($M=2.89$). Furthermore, the ANOVA confirmed significant mean differences in the four factors among the four major groups. On that account, students' beliefs were significantly different across four major groups. The overall mean score for each group also differed significantly across academic majors.

V. DISCUSSION

The four factors indicated that the students displayed the difficulty of learning English, opinions about the nature of the English learning process,

importance of correctness while learning and speaking English, and motivation in relation to the perceived value of English in Korean society. A major category of beliefs of Korean college students was the difficulty of English learning. The study showed that the students had optimism about learning English that everyone including themselves could learn to speak English well, accordingly, their perception of the length of time needed to learn English was 3-5 years or less. This optimism about L2 learning and the estimates of needed time were very similar to those reported by Banya and Cheng (1997), Park (1995), Peacock (1999), Truitt (1995b), and Yang (1999) that examined EFL learner beliefs.

With regard to the learning a specific aspect of English, over half the students thought that reading and writing English are easier than speaking while about half the KET and NET disagreed with the idea. Furthermore, the students thought that English was a difficult language to learn and they felt timid when speaking it. Consistent with these findings, the students' low self-confidence in English was also reported in the analysis of the background information questionnaire that about two-thirds of them rated their proficiency as not good. This reflected the English learning context in Korea. The Korean students do not enjoy or continue English study long enough to achieve minimal communication skills after one or two years of required enrollment for their degrees. The participants in the study were also enrolled in General English classes to complete their English requirement. This is at the heart of the lack of motivation toward and confidence in speaking English (Ramage, 1990).

In terms of students' beliefs about the nature of learning English, they overwhelmingly agreed that English learning involves a lot of memorization. In line with the previous research findings across culture (Banya & Cheng, 1997; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Truitt, 1995a, 1995b; Yang, 1999), it is no wonder that Korean students including their teachers supported children's superiority. As shown in the summary result of the background questionnaire about the effectiveness of travel abroad, the majority of Korean students and teachers believed that English would be best learned in English-speaking countries being in contact with the target language culture. This recognition of the importance of exposure to the target language and cultural learning endorses the issue that exposure to cultural situations reduce the social and psychological barriers to

achieving competence in L2 (Cheung, 2001). Furthermore, the present study also provides empirical evidence of EFL students' beliefs about L2 learning that vocabulary learning is more important than learning grammar or translation (Horwitz, 1988; Truitt, 1995b; Yang, 1999).

On the other hand, some conflicting beliefs appeared with students in relation to the importance of correctness in learning English. Many students thought that it is impossible to learn English without guessing and making mistakes. However, 77% of them supported error correction. While the students believed that it was necessary to practice speaking English, they were also anxious about making mistakes, which might become a barrier to their progress. This situation poses a paradox. As reported in the background questionnaire, although many students (N=227, 79%) perceived that emphasis on communicative competence such as speaking and listening in class is very important, they wanted to avoid speaking (70%) or felt timid while speaking in L2 with other people. Finally, with respect to motivation, the students believed that English ability is important for their career advancement. Accordingly, the students with this instrumental motivation did not want to learn English for the purpose of getting to know English-speakers better.

Some clear differences were found related to English learning aptitude and importance of translation, error correction, and grammar rule among the three groups. While the students rejected their own aptitude of English learning, they showed great variability about the general concept of English learning aptitude that 34% disagreed, 33% were neutral, and the remaining were agreed. However, more uniform agreement to the language learning aptitude was elicited from both groups of teachers. Teachers were more or less optimistic about L2 learning and their professional status in a field of L2 teaching seemed to help understand that aptitude is a feature of successful L2 learners. Furthermore, the students gave more credence to the importance of vocabulary, translation, and error correction than did teachers. This finding appears to have been contrasted with the previous ones (Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Park, 1995; Truitt, 1995a, 1995b), however, it extends the issue to the Korean EFL context. Korean students did not reject the primacy of grammar learning, although they have studied English for so long using grammar translation and do not feel that it has been effective. The students strongly endorsed the idea by McCargar (1993)

that one of important roles of L2 teachers is to correct student errors.

In the meantime, a few belief differences between Koreans and NET were identified suggesting cultural differences. These groups differed related to the importance of vocabulary learning, pronunciation, and cultural knowledge. The Korean students and teachers believed more strongly that learning vocabulary and L2 culture are keys to English learning than NET. Furthermore, the Koreans considered that accent acquisition of English is one of the most important learning components. As Horwitz (1999) and Kim (2004) illustrated, it is possible that these contrasts may reflect some cultural differences. However, it seems more likely that they have to do with the linguistic differences and stage of learning. English is not structured in the same way as Korean language, and the different L2 structure such as word order and pronunciation, may require low level of learners to focus their attention on mainly learning new vocabulary words and practicing unfamiliar pronunciation. Lastly, while the students' belief systems significantly differed in terms of their gender and major field of study, a clear-cut conclusion seems difficult. If one compares the individual item of the BALLI, he or she may find more frequent instances of differences in beliefs based on the participants' background variables.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study was designed to examine Korean EFL college students and their teachers' beliefs about English learning and to compare similarities and differences in their belief systems. Every student had a unique set of beliefs about L2 learning, and some of which may be productive in their motivation, attitudes, strategy use, anxiety, and L2 achievement, others counterproductive (Banya & Cheng, 1997; Horwitz, 1988; Rifkin, 2000; Shin, 2003). In addition, the student beliefs were often consonant with those of their teachers, while the student-teacher mismatch in beliefs also existed that may fuel student frustration with L2 learning (Kern, 1995; McCargar, 1993, Peacock, 1999). As the student participants indicated that teachers have a profound influence on students' L2 learning, the results of this study can provide L2 teachers with pedagogical considerations. By investigating teacher and student beliefs about L2

learning, teachers can lead to more effective instructional design and implementation of lessons (Mantle-Bromley, 1995; Sakui & Gaies, 1999); simultaneously, students can lead to more effective L2 learning behaviors as well as greater self-knowledge and autonomy (Cotterall, 1999; Horwitz, 1988). In order to reduce gaps between student and teacher beliefs, teachers should try to correct student misunderstandings about how an L2 is learned (Horwitz, 1988; Johnson, 1992; McCargar, 1993; Kern, 1995; Peacock, 1999). Furthermore, it is proposed that teachers explain to students course objectives and the theoretical underpinnings behind instructional methods.

Finally, several limitations must be acknowledged in this study. The results of the study showed only a static examination of participants' beliefs. One should be, therefore, cautioned that many other factors such as personality traits, level of instruction, nature of institution, and time, might play in shaping the beliefs of the participants. Furthermore, in an effort to identify learner characteristics in beliefs, this paper compared the BALLI items with composite scores, however, the data in each item points to the possibility of much variation. In relation to the limitation, additional research is needed in the area of beliefs about L2 learning. The extent to which student beliefs are changeable over time and by instructor intervention deserves investigation. In addition, studies on the interactions between beliefs and other learner characteristics, such as attitudes, motivation, style, and strategy use, and between beliefs and learning contexts to be researched. Further investigation about the link between beliefs and L2 proficiency, as suggested by Huang and Tsai (2003), Mantle-Bromley (1995), and Peacock (1999) and others, will certainly improve the L2 learning and teaching environment.

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예시 언어(Examples in): English

적용가능 언어(Applicable Languages): English

적용가능 수준(Applicable Levels): College

Kyung Ja Kim
Dept. of English Language Communication
Woosong University
17-2, Jayang-dong, Dong-gu
Daejeon 300-718, Korea
Tel: (042) 630-9785
Email: kyung19@woosong.ac.kr

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