Sang-Soon Park

The English language and cross-cultural variations

Its impact on Korean students in Australian undergraduate programs

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Verlag: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller Aktiengesellschaft & Co. KG
Dudweiler Landstr. 99, 66123 Saarbrücken, Deutschland
Telefon +49 681 9100-698, Telefax +49 681 9100-988, Email: info@vdm-verlag.de
Zugl.: Toowoomba, University of Southern Queensland, Dissertation, 2006

Herstellung in Deutschland:
Schaltungsdienst Lange o.H.G., Berlin
Books on Demand GmbH, Norderstedt
Reha GmbH, Saarbrücken
Amazon Distribution GmbH, Leipzig
ISBN: 978-3-639-22637-9

Imprint (only for USA, GB)
Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek: The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de .
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Publisher:
VDM Verlag Dr. Müller Aktiengesellschaft & Co. KG
Dudweiler Landstr. 99, 66123 Saarbrücken, Germany
Phone +49 681 9100-698, Fax +49 681 9100-988, Email: info@vdm-publishing.com

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Printed in the U.S.A.
Printed in the U.K. by (see last page)
ISBN: 978-3-639-22637-9

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CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

During the last decade, Australia has become an important international education provider for students from other countries. A recent Australian government report, 'The Economic Benefits to Australia from International Education', highlights changes in the number of international student enrolment. Currently, the Australian education system ranks among the top international education providers, competing with the US, UK, Germany and France (Australian Education International, 2003). It is ranked third amongst the English speaking countries, following the US and UK.

The emergence of Australia as an important provider of international educational services is illustrated by understanding the importance of this service provision to the Australian national economy. The International Development Program (2004, p.1) indicated that "for the January to September 2004 period, the total value of Australia's education exports reached $5.059 billion". This is the value of education provided to international students plus the total expected expenditure of those students while they are in Australia. The same source reported that education services had become Australia's third largest services' export item and the seventh largest individual export item for all goods and services.

At present, a large number of international students are enrolled in Australian education programs across all sectors of higher education, vocational education, school education, English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), and other similar English language preparatory programs. Australian Education International (2003, p.1) states that "student numbers first exceeded 100, 000 in 1994". By 2004, there were around 322,776 international students enrolled in Australian education programs (Australian Education International, 2004) and the growth of international student enrolments continues to increase substantially.

Australian Education International (2003, p.1) also reported "the establishment of important markets for Australian education, notably in the Asia-Pacific region: Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, Korea, India, Japan, Thailand and Taiwan". According to the 2004 market indicator data reported by the Australian government, these countries constituted 90.3 percent of the international market for Australian education. These international students are mostly from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE). Both recent research (Cho, 2001;

Moon, 2003) and anecdotal evidence collected during the study on Korean students who had been enrolled in Australian higher education programs, as well as those who were currently enrolled, revealed that Korean students experience difficulty with learning in the Australian undergraduate study context. Both language proficiency and cultural differences impact upon their ability to successfully complete academic programs in Western settings (Jones, Robertson & Line, 1999). However, Korean students are under great pressure to succeed not only in tertiary study but to be proficient in English in order to return home to obtain a good job. English is of paramount importance for both the domestic and the international job markets. Korean students who do not succeed lose face with regard to family and community upon their return. A Korean Broadcasting System media release (2005, p.2) pointed out that "even office workers spare their time and effort to master English as English skills have come to play a decisive role in their career promotion." They try to attend private English language institutes early in the morning in order to secure their positions.

Australia and The Republic of Korea (hereafter referred to as 'Korea') maintain a strong and mutually beneficial relationship as important trading partners (AKF, 2001). Minister for Trade, Vaile (2002, p.1) stated that "our bilateral trading relationship with Korea has developed rapidly since the 1960s and Korea is now Australia's fourth largest trading partner". Vaile also emphasised that "the strength of the Korean and Australian economies holds out good prospects for expansion into new areas such as telecommunications, technology and education".

Australia has been playing a successful role in providing educational commodities for Korean students. Since the Australian government's international student policy changed from an Aid to a Trade focus in 1985, there has been a steady expansion of Korean international students in Australian education programs (Park, 2001). In 2004 a total of 23,810 Korean students were enrolled in Australian education programs, 5,012 (21.05%) in higher education, 3,616 (15.19%) in vocational education, 4,455 (18.71%) in school education, 10,164 (42.69%) in ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students), and 563 (2.36%) in other programs (Australian Education International, 2005). These data indicate that the largest proportion of Korean students in Australia in 2004 was enrolled in ELICOS programs. It is also interesting to note that almost as many were studying higher education and vocational education, with a growing number attending schools.

According to the April 2005 market indicator data provided by the Australian Government, Korean students ranked fourth in the top 10 nationalities enrolled in Australian education programs. The Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development reveals that Australia is the

Korean students' third preference for studying and learning English (MOE, 2005). A total of 4,236 Korean students are enrolled in Australian higher education programs where they are ranked in seventh position in terms of total foreign students' numbers as at April 2005. Brian Freedman, Director of the International Development Office at the University of Newcastle stated that "the Koreans are coming here to foster ongoing relationships between the two countries" (UoN, 1999, p.1). Professor Jenny Graham, Pro-Vice-Chancellor External Relations pointed out that "Korean students' demand for study abroad could inject Australia with millions of dollars through the university system over the next five years" (UoN, 1999, p.1). Moon (2003, p.1) also stated that by 1997 Korean international students contributed approximately A$350 million to Australian education providers, a total number of 15,800 Korean students were enrolled in Australian education programs in that period (DEST, 1998), thus indicating that Korean students' participation in Australian educational programs has been an increasingly significant contributor to Australian education providers and the Australian economy in general.

The fact that students experience problems studying at the tertiary level in a language other than their native language is well established. Beaver and Tuck (1999, p.1) cite Samuelowicz (1987, p.121) as stating that the major problems faced by overseas students studying in Australia were "English language proficiency, coping with the Australian educational system and its demands, cultural adjustment to life in a foreign country and provision of support services and usefulness to overseas students". More recently, UniSA (2005) reported that a high percentage of students from a non-English speaking background (NESB students) studying at UniSA face difficulties with social-cultural adjustment and English language. Considering that Korean students are notable clients for Australian education programs, there is a strong argument to conduct research to investigate what problems Korean students encounter with the English language and with the cultural differences when studying in the Australian tertiary level academic context to ensure English language learning can be enhanced and appropriate strategies can be employed in the future.

1.2 Research Aim and Questions

Based on earlier preliminary research by the author (Park, 2001), the main aim of the present research is to investigate in depth the challenges faced by Korean students in learning in English as a second language and to identify the specific cultural variations in the academic context when they study in Australian undergraduate programs. This includes identification of the nature of Korean students' difficulties with English language use and cross-cultural adaptation, and the potential strategies that may be used to overcome such problems. Underlying this investigation is the

problem that Korean students continue to experience difficulties in these matters in Australian undergraduate academic programs. To date, there is no clear understanding as to why this is so, and few solutions have yet been found or implemented to overcome these issues. Thus, the conduct of research into these problems is both timely and strategically important.

The following research questions have been set for the study:

- *What are the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean education system?*
- *What are the best preparations needed for Korean students as they enter Australian undergraduate programs?*
- *What are the main difficulties that Korean students have in adapting to the use of the English language, particularly for Australian academic purposes?*
- *What are the critical cultural challenges that Korean students face in the Australian tertiary academic context?*

1.3 Focus of the Study

1.3.1 Expected outcomes

It is anticipated that this research will provide a significant overview of current academic practices followed by Korean international students, the reasons for their difficulties in adjusting to English language use and the wide range of cultural variations in the Australian tertiary academic mode. It is anticipated that the research will identify reasons underlying the range of difficulties Korean students encounter while they are attending Australian undergraduate programs. The implications for Korean students will be addressed, and appropriate teaching and learning strategies will be proposed, based on the results of survey and case studies, focused not only on Australian tertiary institutions, but also for the teaching and learning of English in Korea.

1.3.2 Significance of the study

This research aims to explore the specific issues of English language problems and cultural variations related to Korean students, of which relatively little is yet known. For instance, apart from investigating the Korean context, previous research was conducted by Armitage (1999), Cho (2001), and Choi (1997). The subject of Cho's study was undergraduate Korean students, whereas Choi's study dealt with Korean students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate level in a

variety of disciplines. Armitage's study focused on Korean students who were enrolled in ELICOS programs. Research findings from selected different target groups are given a different interpretation in this literature by the author. It is likely that Cho and Choi's approach will be helpful to defining and investigating specific difficulties faced by Korean students in the Australian higher education academic context, whereas Armitages's approach will guide investigation of problems with cultural variations.

This study will provide more concrete understanding about English language problems and about adjustments to the impact of cultural variations made by Korean undergraduate students attending Australian tertiary institutions. The main focus of this study is Korean students, who choose to come to Australia as their tertiary study destination and providing them effective methods of learning in Australian undergraduate programs. Additionally, the research findings will assist in making recommendations to Australian academics applying appropriate ways of teaching and learning pedagogy to Korean students. The research findings will also help Korean English teachers, who need to investigate ways of teaching English and the way Korean students learn English in order to enhance their students' ability to cope with the problems they will meet, improve their EFL practices and pedagogy. In relation to Australian tertiary academic programs, the results obtained from this research will highlight the need for cross-cultural understanding about the respective education systems of Australia and Korea, with particular reference to methods of English as added language pedagogy. It will provide an impetus for the Australian tertiary education industry to further enhance academic support services for Korean and all international students whose first language is not English.

1.4 Outline of the Chapters

The background to the study, the main aim of the research and research questions, focus of the study, and an outline of the dissertation are presented in this chapter. Chapter Two examines how Korean students begin to take an interest in choosing Australia as their study destination. It clarifies how trends in the Korean student movement to Australia have changed in the present era of globalised education. It also outlines historical changes in Korean government education policy and how they have affected Korean students studying in Australia, and examines the current Korean education system and the nature and structure of English education.

Chapter Three, the literature review, outlines the literature most relevant to the questions posed in the research. This chapter first provides background information about two major areas (English

language problems and cross-cultural factors) then moves on to a review of the key sources relevant to the issues of English language difficulties and cultural factors and how they affect language background other than English (LBOTE) students studying in Australian education programs. The specifics of Korean students' experiences are considered.

Chapter Four describes the research methodology and design for the study. It presents the research framework, the method of sample selection, data collection techniques, (quantitative and qualitative), and the data analysis plan.

Chapter Five presents the descriptive results of the survey and discusses them in terms of each research question. A 'provisional-level' analysis describes the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning English language in Korea; the best preparation for Korean students to enter Australian undergraduate study programs; the main difficulties of Korean tertiary level students in adapting to English language macro skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; the main problematic challenges affecting cross-cultural adaptation in Australian undergraduate study programs; and Korean students' judgements relating to their perceptions of the amount of time that should be spent on elements of English education for their successful study.

Chapter Six explores the implications of the patterns and expectations of Korean students' English language difficulties and cultural variations based on a 'tangible-level' analysis of the survey outcomes. The key aim of conducting a cross–tabulation of survey question data allows reflection upon the nature of Korean students' experience of English language usage and cultural variations in Australian undergraduate study environment. Moreover, the cross-tabulation of survey data identified the need for further investigation of research issues using in-depth interviewing. Importantly, therefore, this chapter additionally reports findings that emerged from collation of participants' responses to interview questions bearing on these research issues.

Chapter Seven examines how different types of preparation that Korean students experienced prior to entering Australian undergraduate programs impacts on their skills with English language and coping with cross-cultural difficulties. This chapter presents comparisons of results among different groups of Korean students who are participating in preparation for official English test(s) programs, Australian secondary schools, foundation studies programs, and TAFE courses.

Chapter Eight interprets the findings from the completed survey and in-depth interviews in the context of the central questions of this research. It identifies the main characteristics of Korean

students' experiences in learning English language in Korea, the best preparations for Korean students to enter Australian undergraduate programs, and the main academic and cultural challenges encountered by Korean students studying in Australian undergraduate programs.

Chapter Nine summarises the study's analytical conclusions based on the central questions. First, the chapter clarifies how Korean students have engaged with Australian education programs. Second, it investigates the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language and the problems of the English education system in Korea. Third, it analyses what is the best preparation they can make for Australian undergraduate programs. Fourth, it explains why Korean students have difficulties in their English speaking and writing in the Australian academic context. Fifth, it analyses how Korean students' anxiety, stress, and a lack of confidence in English as a second language cause problems of tutorial participation which is mainly influenced by moving from a teacher-centred to student-centred learning program. This chapter also discusses the correlations between research findings and analytical frameworks applied in this study. Finally, this chapter suggests recommendations obtained from the research findings and raises further issues that could be examined.

1.5 Summary

This chapter has briefly provided background information relevant to the study and has outlined its aims and central questions, expected outcomes and significance of the study, and provided an overview of the structure and content of the dissertation. With this in mind, Chapter Two presents a review of the important background issues and relevant policy and practice deemed to be essential to the research context before conducting the literature review pertinent to the research.

CHAPTER TWO

Korean Students' Movement to Australia and the School Education System in Korea

To provide an appropriate context for the questions later raised in this research, this chapter examines how Korean students begin to take an interest in choosing Australia as their study destination and it clarifies how trends in Korean students' movement to Australia have changed in the present era of globalised education. To provide this contextual understanding, the chapter discusses historical changes in Korean government education policy. The current Korean school education system and an overview of English language education in Korea are also addressed. The chapter also focuses on the Australian government's evolving education policy regarding students from overseas studying in Australia and how these policies have affected Korean students studying in Australia.

2.1 An Overview of the Korean Government Education Policy from the Late 1800s to 1948

To understand the evolving trends of the Korean government's education policy and its connection with the pattern of recent Korean students' movement to Australia, there is a need to look back in time to see how the number of Korean students has varied from their first appearance overseas. In essence, the first instances of Korean students venturing overseas occurred in the late 1800s. Lee (2000) states that the modern meaning of 'study abroad' was prompted by the opening of a Korean port to other foreign countries in 1876. After this measure, aimed at enriching and strengthening their country, Koreans had to contend with new occidental civilisations that challenged their more traditional views which until then had been based on a closed Korean culture. Lee (2000) explains that in 1881, what was called 'an inspection party' sponsored by the Korean imperial government, decided to visit Japan in order to obtain 'new knowledge' including information regarding foreign languages, advanced cultures and other civilisations that were familiar to Japanese society. Park (2001) states that this was the beginning of a real movement of Korean students travelling outside Korea, and this also provided vital momentum and concrete meaning to the idea and practice of Korean students studying abroad.

Under Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945), there were initially, approximately 500 Korean students studying in Japan from 1910. Lee (2000) notes that the number of Korean students increased by almost 30,000 by the beginning of the 1940s and that there had been Korean students in the USA and Europe from the late 1800s. This contact was the first instance of Korean overseas student

movement into Western style education. Those who returned from Japan, the USA and Europe, in those earlier years played an important role in promoting a sense of national identity and establishing the first independent Korean government after the end of Japanese colonial rule. They were not only to constitute the major group of elites leading the nationalist movement, but were to contribute to the opening of a dialogue with the rest of world. The first systematic Korean government education policy in this regard was launched after the first post-WWII Korean government took office in 1948. The then Minister of Education announced that the government had decided to send government-sponsored Korean students to Italy and Japan (MOE, 2000). This was the first substantial stage in the evolving Korean government policy for Korean students undertaking studies overseas (Park, 2001).

2.1.1 Formalising the Korean government education policy for Korean students studying overseas, 1950-1985

From the Korean War (1950-1953), Koreans came into greater contact with Western countries. Through ongoing contact and experiences with United Nations forces and personnel in Korea, the Korean government realised the importance of foreign languages. In 1955, the Ministry of Education enacted a regulation which required examination of the qualifications of applicants who were applying to study overseas (MOE, 2000, p. 16). The regulations included the applicants' ability to study abroad, the method of arranging documents, transferring money, and the introduction of scholarships. The examination administrated by the Ministry of Education was focused on testing national culture, history, and foreign languages. The Korean government regarded the proficiency of foreign languages, in particular, English and Japanese, as the most important subjects to meet the requirement of the test.

During this period, the Korean government began to pay more attention to formalising its education policy for Korean students studying overseas. During that period, the Korean government actively developed the educational administration of the Korean overseas student policy. For instance, from 1977, the Korean government began to sponsor a system of government-supported study for Korean students wanting to study abroad at the nation's expense (Park, 2001). Under this policy, graduates from all higher educational institutions in Korea who were able to get good academic records, were selected from a test administered by the government. Those students were allowed to study overseas and were supported with all expenses paid. This was the time when the Korean government began to realise the importance of overseas study for Korean students and to realise their potential to contribute toward developing the country.

The Koreans' enthusiasm for such educational opportunities had required permission to study abroad. The Korean government then abolished the test of self-funded study abroad applications (MOE, 2000). President Chun Doo-Hwan (1980-1987) and his government initiated policies for students studying abroad in 1981 (MOE, 2000). The Korean government's efforts in initiating these policies were mainly targeted toward better international cooperation and dealing with international competition. The policies were based on the idea that educational evolution would contribute greatly to cultural exchanges and establishing friendships with other nations. As a result, a total of 7000 Korean students left Korea for overseas study each year from 1981 to 1985. Most preferred to go to USA, Germany, Japan, and France. Australia was not a top-ranking destination for Korean students at that time.

2.1.2 The impact of the Korean education policy 'free to travel abroad' and se gye hwa (globalisation) policy from the late 1980s to 1997

Korean awareness of the importance of enhancing their understanding of the wider world became even clearer after successfully hosting the 1988 Olympic Games. The Korean government felt compelled to satisfy the desire for students to study overseas and saw it to be in the Korean national interest. In 1989, President Roh Tae Woo and his government (1988-1992) announced the policy of 'free to travel abroad' for all Koreans, in order to meet citizens' desire to travel overseas (MOE, 2000. p.19). In this policy, Koreans were granted approval to go overseas for any purpose. The government was committed to the policy of 'free to study abroad', which allowed overseas study for all self-funded (or parent-supported) students. This was a memorable event, as the Korean government embarked on a fundamental shift towards expanding the national education policy. Until this policy was developed, there were few official structures for Korean students to go overseas, except those who were selected for government-sponsored programs. This revolutionary policy contributed to enhancing the educational policy towards greater openness. This resulted in a rapid increase in the numbers of Korean students studying overseas.

The first civilian government of Kim Young Sam (1993-1997) initiated the general policy of se gye hwa, or globalisation. This was the key word at the time with regard to education in Korea (Kown, 1997). Chun and Kim (1999) state that globalisation was an important agenda for the Korean government, both in terms of fitting into the mainstream of world-wide trends and of following the prevailing ideology of 'neo-liberalism'. President Kim Young Sam and his government immediately established a Board of Education to manage this new policy direction and in 1995, an educational reform plan was announced that included reorganising the Korean government

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educational policy framework and movement towards the tenets of neo-liberalism (Chun and Kim, 1999). The impact of the se gye hwa policy provided the impetus for the Korean government to launch a major initiative during this period. Enhancing the learning of foreign languages, in particular English was judged essential for the realisation of the government's international objectives.

2.1.3 Continuing the Korean government education policy towards openness from the late 1990s to present

President Kim Dae Joong and his government (1998-2002) continued the previous government's education policy towards openness. One of the major educational policies was the government effort to continue the expansion of student exchange programs. Exchange programs provided under such agreements are intended to effect reciprocal exchanges of information, mutual understanding and cooperation between different peoples. During this period, the Korean government actively participated in exchange programs promoted by international organisation such as UNESCO, APEC, and the OECD. For instance, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO undertook programs to promote international understanding, provided information on the nation's cultural heritage and about foreign cultures, and hosted international training programs. It served as an agent and facilitator for the exchange of academics, professionals and students. In response to increasing demand, the Korean government continued to expand opportunities for overseas studies for the general public.

The Ministry of Education (2005, p.119) states that "to meet the demands of the age of internationalisation, overseas studies have been liberalised, so that any graduates of middle school can go abroad to study at personal expense". The main focus of current Korean government education policy is based on a shift from 'sending students overseas' to 'receiving students from overseas' (MOE, 2005). This is due to enhancing the international competitiveness of Korea's education through the qualitative improvement of higher educational institutions.

Eligibility for overseas study with government funding, earlier limited to university students and graduates, now is extended to high school graduates. The main focus of this program has the ultimate goal of developing domestic learning and training high quality manpower for the future. Furthermore, in line with the importance of globalisation, a program for the funding of teachers' and college professors' overseas studies are being prepared. As a result, the Korean government education policy continues to expand in terms of opening up to the rest of the world. As will be

discussed next, similar policy changes by the Australian governments have complemented those in Korea.

2.2 An Overview of the Australian Government Education Policy and Its Impacts on the Expansion of Korean Students in Australia

The first contact between Australia and students from overseas occurred in the early 1900s. Students from Asia were the main group at this time. The Committee of Review of Private Overseas Students Policy (1984) reports "the entry provisions at that time were designed to foster cultural exchange and trade with specific countries". The major concept of the Australian government in this early period was the importance of visits by students from neighbouring countries to the development of a closer relationship. There was no substantial plan specifically for students from overseas until the 1950s. The early Australian government policy on overseas students was designed from a humanitarian perspective and the private overseas students program was based increasingly upon providing aid to developing countries and an exercise to promote international goodwill.

The Australian government initiated the Colombo Plan in the early 1950s, which was formulated under the auspices of the Commonwealth association of countries. It was designed to bring students who aimed for studying in Australian tertiary, vocational and post-secondary levels from developing countries. The main purpose of this policy was to provide economic assistance and aid to the countries of South and Southeast Asia where a need was was seen to maintain democracy against communism in the Cold War period. Under this plan, the Australian government provided funds for a technical assistance scheme, which mainly involved bringing those levels of students from South East Asian countries to study in Australia. The Australian government expected that supporting students from overseas could lead to the promotion of international understanding and provide spin-off benefits to those developing countries. Bochner and Wicks (1972) indicated that the Australian government's supportive assistance to developing countries could not only promote a stable environment, but also create economic benefits that would present favourable opportunities for Australian trade expansion.

In 1973, the Australian government initiated another key change in its policy on students from overseas. The major concern of this policy was to protect against the loss of tertiary study opportunities for Australian students. The total number of private overseas students was restricted to a total of 10,000 (Committee of Review of Private Overseas Students Policy, 1984) and this decision continued the reversal of the previous government policy in terms of having an aid focus. The focus

of this policy was the control of numbers of overseas tertiary level students who were limited by a quota system. Therefore, intending overseas students could only apply for a limited number of places and the Australian government only allowed them to study if they selected courses or qualifications that were not available in the home countries (Committee of Review of Private Overseas Students Policy, 1984).

The recognition of Australian education as a category of trade gradually was developed from the early years, but an even more substantial change was effected by two major reviews of government policy initiated in 1984. These were the Jackson and the Goldring Reports (Park, 2001). On the basis of the two reports, the Australian government introduced a new international policy on overseas students in 1985. This policy entailed a fundamental shift in emphasis from aid to a trade (Moon, 2003). Problems with the aid-based policy had begun to arise mainly from the financial situation of the Australian government. The Australian government subsidies, in the form of sponsorships covering education fees and living expenses to support students from overseas, became a major issue of concern. Public concern was raised about the national interest or benefits to Australia. Thus, all new overseas students were required to pay the full costs of their education from 1 January 1990 (Andressen and Kumagai, 1996). This continues at present.

With regard to the Australian government education policy and its influence on Korean student movement to Australia, the first Korean students to study in Australia arrived in the 1960s. During this period, they were all sponsored by the Australian government scheme. It was related to Australian government policy that supported assistance to Korea from 1960, following the Korean War (DEETYA, 1997). It included funds for assisting the education sector in Korea, which led to several hundred Korean students studying in Australia under the Colombo Plan (Dupont, 1992). However, not very many Korean students arrived in Australia for study during period from the 1960s to the late 1980s. The main reason was that only students who were supported by the Korean government were allowed to go overseas to study until the Korean government announced the liberalisation of overseas study policies for private students in 1988. Furthermore, Australia was not then a preferred destination for these students, and most Korean students chose to go to the USA, Britain or Japan because of the strong connection to the political and economic relations between these countries.

The number of Korean students taking-up studies in Australia increased significantly from 1988 to 1997. This was because of changes in Korean government education policy and a variety of domestic and international pressures. Under the Korean school education system in this period, the

Korean government needed to respond to major issues. The first was the need to address the lack of tertiary places in Korea, and the second was the previously mentioned policy phenomenon called se gye hwa (globalisation). Therefore, overseas study became more popular, particularly in terms of the great importance attached to learning English that was required by most sectors of the now more global-oriented Korean society. Korean student movement to Australia steadily increased during the decade, prior to the Asian financial crisis in 1997. Figure 2.2 describes all major government education policy for both countries and Korean student movement to Australia.

Korea		Australia	
1876	The opening of a Korean port to other foreign countries		
		1900s	The first contact between Australia and Korean students occurred in the early 1900s.
1910	500 Korean students studying under Japanese colonial rule 1910~40		
		1950s	The Australian government initiated the Colombo Plan in the early 1950s.
1955	The Ministry of Education enacted regulations for students who were applying for overseas study		
		1973	The Australian government had a policy to protect opportunities for Australian tertiary students
1977	The Korean government began to sponsor students wanting to study abroad at national expense.		
1981	President Chun Doo-Hwan (1980-1987) and his government initiated policies for students studying abroad.		
		1984	Jackson and Goldring Reports. *They marked a transition from a basically aid-oriented to a trade-oriented international student program. * Australian government should realise and examine the extent to which the private overseas student program was the most appropriate for Australia's interests.
		1985	All overseas students were required to pay the full costs of their education.
1989	President Roh Tae Woo and his government (1988-1992) announced the policy of 'free to travel abroad' for all Koreans.		
1993	The first civilian government of Kim Young Sam (1993-1997) initiated the general policy of *Se Gye Hwa*, or globalisation.		
1998	President Kim Dae Joong and his government (1998-2002) continued the previous government education policy.		
Present	The main focus of current Korean government education policy is to shift from 'sending students overseas' to 'receiving students from overseas'.		

Figure 2.2: History of Korea and Australian government education policy

2.3 Korean Students' Influx into Australian Education

This part of chronological information is based on government documents from both Korea and Australia. The information held by the Australian government's Australian Education International (AEI) consists of various statistical data about international students in Australia. The changing pattern of international students' enrolments according to each sector of the education level provides specific information about the trends of Korean students' enrolment in Australian higher education programs. Information from the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MOE) in Korea is also important because it contains several relevant profiles of the destinations of Korean students.

It is important that here some key data from such sources is highlighted. According to recent data produced by Australian Education International (2004, p.3) a total of 61,649 international students were enrolled in English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) programs in Australia, of which Koreans constituted the second largest percentage (16.5%) (see Figure 2.3, a), with Chinese having the larger proportion of 24.3 percent.

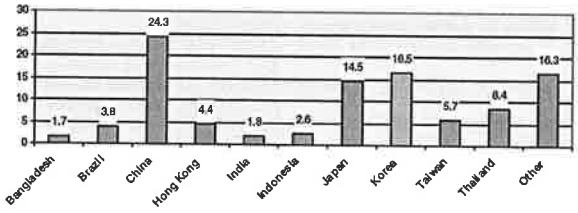

Figure 2.3 (a): ELICOS enrolments by top 10 nationalities by country of origin in Australia 2004

Source: Australian Government, Australian Education International (AEI). (2005, p.3). *Year 2004 market indicator data*. Extracted and reproduced from overseas student enrolments in Australia by country and major sector, 2003 to 2004. The total number of international students enrolled in English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) programs including general English, English for academic purpose and IELTS preparation in 2004 was 61,649.

By contrast, Korean students who were enrolled in higher education programs in Australia at the same time only comprised approximately 3.3% of the total, ranking eighth in the international

student population by country of origin in Australia (see Figure 2.3, b). It is interesting to note that China maintains a relatively high proportion of students in higher education.

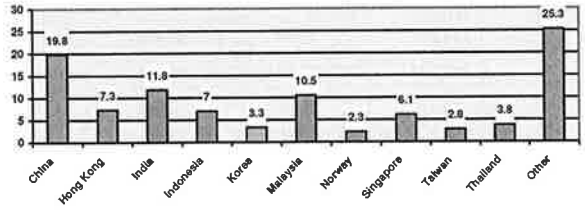

Figure 2.3 (b): Higher education enrolments by top 10 nationalities by country of origin in Australia 2004

Source: Australian Government, Australian Education International (AEI). (2005, p.3).*Year 2004 market indicator data*. Extracted and reproduced from overseas student enrolments in Australia by country and major sector, 2003 to 2004. The total number of international students enrolled in Australian higher education programs in 2004 was 151,798.

It is also important to note that there is absence of Japanese students on the basis of these data in that international student pathways to Australian higher education involve a variety of routes other than ELICOS. However, these statistical details clearly indicate that Australia has become a popular destination for Korean students to learn English. It is surprising, therefore, that students from Korea are subsequently enrolled in Australian higher education programs in comparatively smaller numbers than those from other countries. Apart from this unbalanced proportion of Korean students' enrolment in different Australian education programs, with the steady overall increases in numbers of Korean students and others in this period, Korea has continued to provide substantial numbers of students to Australia (IMIA, 2003) (see Figure 2.3, c). These numbers do not include overseas visitors who undertook a short course of study while travelling on a visitor's visa.

Country	1999	% change 1999 to 2000	2000	% change 2000 to 2001	2001
China	8,859	68.7%	14,948	79.6%	26,844
Hong Kong	18,833	10.1%	20,739	18.6%	24,602
Singapore	19,207	8.6%	20,866	11.0%	23,164
Malaysia	16,544	18.5%	19,602	3.2%	20,231
Indonesia	19,172	-6.8%	17,868	4.2%	18,619
Korea, South	**9,633**	**19.2%**	**11,485**	**57.2%**	**18,051**
Japan	9,828	4.0%	10,220	25.9%	12,869
Thailand	6,709	21.9%	8,179	36.0%	11,125
India	9,581	10.3%	10,572	-1.5%	10,416
Taiwan	5,912	3.2%	6,104	17.8%	7,191
Sub-total	**124,278**	**13.1%**	**140,583**	**23.1%**	**173,112**
Other Countries	38,587	23.6%	47,694	26.4%	60,296
Total	**162,865**	**15.6%**	**188,277**	**24.0%**	**233,408**

Figure 2.3 (c): Overseas student numbers in Australia from top 10 source countries, 1999 to 2001

Source: Australian Government, Australian Education International (AEI). (2005).*Year 2001 final international student enrolment data* http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/MIP/Statistics/StudentEnorlmentANDVisaStatistics/2001 (accessed on 20th of August 2005)

Note: Data in the table above relates only to students who were studying on a student visa.

In reviewing these data, the results indicate that Koreans continue to be disproportionally represented in academic programs. There is a need to thoroughly investigate these issues and identify possible reasons. Furthermore, if a solution to this problem could be found, then Australian higher education programs would stand to gain many more Korean students. Recent data on the number of Korean students studying overseas by the top ten countries from 1999-2003 shows Australia to be in third position as a host English speaking country (see Table 2.3, a).

Table 2.3 (a): Korean students overseas by top 10 countries 1999-2003

Country	Year			Total
	1999	2001	2003	
1. U.S.A. (1)	42,890	58,457	49,047	**150,394**
2. Canada (2)	19,839	21,891	14,058	**55,788**
3. Japan	12,746	14,925	17,339	45,010
4. China	9,204	16,372	18,267	43,843
→ **5. Australia** (3)	9,526	10,492	15,775	**35,793**
6. Germany	5,218	4,858	6,353	16,429
7. France	6,300	6,614	3,450	16,364
8. Philippines (4)	1,290	4,100	9,600	**14,990**
9. New Zealand (5)	2,172	2,711	9,870	**14,753**
10. U.K. (6)	2,463	1,398	7,759	**11,620**
Mean	11164.8	14181.8	15151.8	40498.4
Total	**111,648**	**141,818**	**151,518**	**404,984**

Source: Extract and reproduced from the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Korea (2005). *The students who study abroad* http://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/ENGLISH/G200/G200_Co.jsp (accessed on 17th of June 2005) English speaking countries are bold in type and a rank of students' size (1999-2003) is presented in bracket

It can be seen that Canada is now a major competitor with Australia and the most important fact is that "Canada began to advance in competition with Australia after 1988, and this trend is continuing" (Kent Korea Education network, 2003, p.1) (see Figure 2.3, d).

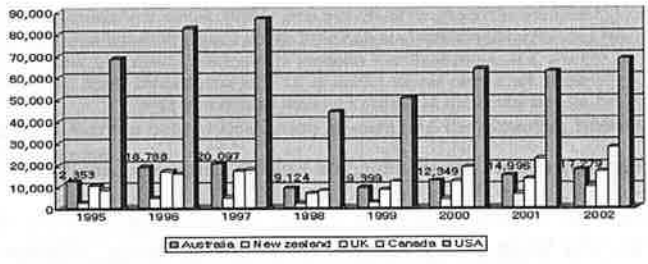

Figure 2.3 (d): Number of Korean students in English speaking countries

Source: Kent Korea education network. (2003). *Market trend in Korea.* http://www.kentkorea.com/English/market.htm#Market (accessed on 18th of November 2003)

It is important, therefore, to clarify the reasons for the increase in Korean students going to Canada in preference to Australia. As Figure 3.2.1 (d) shows, the overall number of Korean students in

1998 decreased by more than 50% compared with the previous year, 1997. This decrease was due to the Asian financial crisis. The Asian economy has since recovered slowly. But, the interesting fact is that Canada has been a preferred tertiary education location over Australia since 1999. It is probable, for example, that one important factor influencing Korean students' movements to Canada is their preference to learn a variety of English that is closer to American English and acquire something closer to an American accent.

Considering the brief history of Korean educational policy given above, not many Korean students were studying overseas before the late 1980s because of Korean government limitations. Only students who obtained government sponsorships were permitted to go overseas (Park, 2001). This phenomenon was initially accelerated by the Korean government's advocacy of se gye hwa, or globalisation, in 1993 (Cho, 2001). This government advocacy encouraged Koreans to realise the great importance of English and it has provided a stimulus for a more global-oriented Korean society. An understanding of Korean students' movements and their trends is important in undertaking this study. There have been rapid overall increases in the numbers of Korean overseas students since the beginning of the 1990s in particular (see Table 2.3, b).

Table 2.3 (b): The trends of numbers of Korean overseas students (unit: 1000)

Year	1980	1985	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003
Total	13.3	24.3	53.9	84.8	106.5	133.2	154.2	149.9	159.9

Source: Ministry of Education (MOE) in Korea. (1999). *Statistics of Korean overseas students and education of overseas Koreans* Extracted and reproduced from Kown, O. Y. and Park, S.G. *Australia-Korea relations in education: Issues and prospects.* Australian centre for Korean studies (2000). p. 22. The author added recent data (2001 & 2003) into the table from Australian education international (2004).

2.4 The Korean Concept of Globalisation and English Language Learning

This study also includes information produced by the Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development about the recent evolution of Korean education policy concerning globalisation. When this policy was formulated in the early 1990s, it led to enhancing greater interest in learning English than ever before amongst the Korean public (Park, 2001). The Korean education policy on this issue has its own particular emphasis because of the way globalisation is understood in Korea. As generally understood, globalisation refers to the process whereby social relations acquire relatively distanceless and borderless qualities, so that human lives are

increasingly played out in the world as a single place (as cited in Baylis & Smith, 1997, p.14). The Korean concept of globalisation is mainly focused on learning English. Because of this link between globalisation and English language, improving English proficiency is regarded as important for every Korean student and the general public. The Korean Bureau of Statistics also holds detailed statistical data on Korean overseas students, which is relevant to this research.

Various Australian government agencies also collect data on international students (e.g., ABS, 1999; AIDAB, 1991; DEETYA, 1997), but information held on Korean students is limited. Compared to Korean primary sources, Australian official documents provide more data. Official websites in Australia have comparatively large volumes of information related to international students in Australia, and they describe a wide range of their experiences in adjusting to Australian higher education. In contrast, official websites of Korea do not provide specific detail of the difficulties Korean students face with English language learning and cross-cultural adaptation in English speaking countries.

Awareness of the host English speaking country's education environment is thus a vital concern for Korean students in adjusting to a new leading environment. Koreans generally have not been seriously considered as a genuine part of the current globalised education environment. Obtaining details of the knowledge and experiences from the literature and information, mainly provided by Australia, will be important for Korean students to help them understand difficulties faced by other international students. As many of these primary sources also include valuable statistical information, they are thus crucial in providing fundamental information for the research.

2.5 The Current Korean School Education System and the Growing Importance of the English Language

The Korean government undertook the initial steps to organise its school education system in 1945 (Lee, 1998, p. 14), providing the momentum for initiating the legislative framework for the current school education system via the Education Law enacted in 1948 (AEC, 2000). These education policies guide the process of putting into practice all matters relating to schools and higher education programs. The structural framework of this new Korean school education system was directly influenced by the USA. It consists of pre-school education, six years of compulsory elementary school (Australian grades 1 to 6), three years compulsory middle school (Australian grades 7 to 9), three years of high school (Australian grades 10 to 12), and two (TAFE or College) or four years of

university education. It was decided to have two semesters per annum as in the USA school education system. Currently, in Korea, the first semester extends from early March to the end of July, and the second semester extends from the beginning of September to late December (Kwon & Park, 2000, p.14). The following Figure 2.5 shows the current Korean school education system.

In reference to Table 2.5, there are nine years of fundamental, compulsory school education, composed of six years of elementary school education and three years of middle school education. Nine years of compulsory school education are free. Each level of the Korean school education system is highly competitive and stressful not only for students themselves, but also for their families. This is because Korea is a strong family-oriented society and its education system has always been highly influenced by Confucianism in which individual success is regarded as important for the pride and status of the entire family. For this reason, educational enthusiasm among students and their families in Korea occurs from the level of pre-school education and most parents continue to actively support their children, including financially, until they complete their tertiary education programs.

Table 2.3.1: Current structure of the Korean school education system

Schooling Age		Classification		Age	
		Pre-school Education	Kindergartens	3	
				4	
				5	
1		Elementary Education	Elementary Schools Civic Schools	6	
2				7	
3				8	
4				9	
5				10	
6				11	
7		Middle School Education	Middle Schools Civic High Schools Miscellaneous Schools	12	
8				13	
9				14	
10		High School Education	High Schools Vocation High Schools Air & Correspondence High Schools Miscellaneous Schools	15	
11				16	
12				17	
	13	Junior College Education	Junior Colleges Colleges attached to Industrial firms Distance Learning Colleges Miscellaneous Schools		18
	14				19
13	15	University Education	Universities Teachers Colleges Industrial Universities Technical Colleges Broadcast & Correspondence Universities Distance Learning Universities Miscellaneous Schools	18	20
14	16			19	21
15				20	
16				21	
	17				22
	18				23
17	19	Graduate School Education	Graduate Schools at Universities Graduate Schools	22	24
18	20			23	25
19				24	
20				25	
21				26	
22				27	
23				28	

Source: Extracted and reproduced from Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development *Education in Korea 2005~2006* (2005). p. 35. Ministry of Education (MOE) and Korean Educational Development Institute, *Brief Statistics on Korean Education.* (1999). p. 4.

Originally, pre-school education was not free or compulsory in Korea, however as rapid economic development occurred from the 1960s, the Korean government began to realise the importance of early education for children aged between three and five years. The enrolment rate in pre-school education programs remained relatively low until the Korean government took action in enhancing the quality of pre-school education programs. Now most parents willingly invest high proportions of their income to educate younger children in kindergartens or childcare centres that have high status. Most parents spend considerable funds on the extra-curricular education programs of their

children in private institutions, in such areas as the creative arts, music, and martial arts, because they wish to optimise their young children's rounded development opportunities. Consequently, Korea is one of the more advanced countries in terms of providing quality pre-school education programs.

In Korea, elementary school programs consist of grades one to six. Students are taught various subjects including, but not limited to, mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, creative arts, and music. By the time students enter elementary school education programs, most have begun to spend more time having private lessons than normal school lessons. Usually, "the homeroom teacher covers most of the subjects, however, there are some specialised teachers in professions such as foreign languages including English" (Wikipedia, 2005, p.1). The major focus of their private study is English and mathematics, because these two subjects are extremely important to students who apply for higher education programs. For instance, these two curriculum areas used to dominate the total score in the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) which is also called university entrance examination.

In addition, the proficiency level of English is even more important, and conversational English, in particular, is required currently for all areas of life in Korea. Furthermore, Kown and Park (2000, p.20) note that "since 1933, an English listening ability test has been included as part of the university entrance examination, and a large percentage of Korean tertiary institutions choose to fill certain proportions of their first year enrolment based on students' English proficiency". This emphasis on English has a tendency to lead to the current movement of Korean students, from even the elementary school level, to English speaking countries for periods of study learning English.

From the middle school level and above, the Korean school education system becomes surprisingly competitive and stressful both for students and their families. Andressen and Kumagai (1996) describe that Japanese students in middle school are obliged to obtain a good school report and examination scores in order to enter the 'best' high schools, especially high schools which are designed for special purposes such as foreign languages and science, so they will be in a position to compete effectively for entrance to the more prestigious domestic universities. Korean students in middle school education programs are similarly confronted with this situation. There is no middle school entrance examination at present, and all elementary school graduates are allocated to middle schools near their residence by random selection. However, middle school education remains highly stressful not only for students themselves, but also their parents, because they realise that middle

school education is a preliminary stage in the process of obtaining a quality high school education program and subsequent tertiary entrance.

This highly competitive selection process for high school education programs is therefore an important period for all middle school graduates, as they determine their fields of study for life long careers and appropriate future jobs. Students select one of various fields of study offered by high school education programs which include academic, vocational and special focuses. The main purpose differs with each unique field of study. For example, students in the academic stream seek higher education programs and students in the miscellaneous areas such as vocational and special streams generally aim to study technology, commerce, and agriculture. The main purpose of special high schools, which are established to produce talented students good at foreign languages, science, and athletics, has been developed as a mechanism to guarantee entrance to highly favoured tertiary institutions.

The College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) in Korea, therefore, is central to the highly competitive nature of the Korean school education system. Acceptance to one of the prestigious tertiary institutions is described as the narrow gates of the 'examination hell' (Han, 1997, p.2). For example, "675,000 students and repeat examinees took the test at 878 locations nationwide, and competition is as fierce as ever to gain entrance into the elite universities in 2003" (Branch, 2002, p.1). As Branch (2002) describes, Korea is a deeply conservative society, where Confucianism still plays a major part in modern life, and a prestigious university degree is regarded as a symbol of status for the future. Thus, the failure of an examinee is considered a disaster for their family. Such a high-pressure environment causes students to concentrate on studying without sufficient sleep and conventional wisdom has it that students who sleep only four hours a night will pass The College Scholastic Ability Test with a high score. However, those who sleep for more than four hours will not be successful, therefore some students tend to take tablets to extend their study time.

Final year high school students have only one substantial goal, to gain successful test scores for entrance to tertiary institutions. During this period, all the members of a family unit become concerned about, and heavily involved in, the achievement of this goal. However, Smart and Ang (1995) state that an admission quota of some prestigious tertiary institutions is limited. Therefore, large numbers of students often attempt the test for their preferred tertiary institutions repeatedly and attend various types of 'cram schools' to assist them to improve test scores for the next attempt.

Kown and Park (2000) argue that tertiary education programs in Korea, as the information on the College Education Ability Test indicates, are taken very seriously in that all Koreans perceive tertiary education to be directly linked not only to higher social status, but also to material accomplishment. There are several different types of tertiary institutions in Korea. As Figure 2.3.1 has indicated, there are seven different fields of tertiary education programs. The majority of high school graduates prefer to enter four year university courses. There is still a significant shortage of prestigious undergraduate places as the keen competition of selection indicates. This is one of the factors that led to a rapid expansion from the late 1980s in the number of Korean students seeking tertiary study overseas to achieve degrees in English speaking countries. Once they have completed the degree program there, the proficiency level of English tends to be assumed by the public in Korea as being of higher calibre and hence an advantage in terms of employment or careers.

2.6 An Overview of Current English Language Education in Korea

The Korean school education system aims to foster a fundamental understanding of a more open globalised world through the school curriculum, including the social sciences, world history, geography, ethics and foreign languages. Education in foreign languages is seen to be not only a significant tool for understanding foreign cultures, but also a fundamental catalyst for introducing Korean culture to the outside world. Foreign languages are seen to be practical tools in international society and English as the major and commonly used international language is the first priority amongst other foreign languages in all levels of the Korean school education system.

English language is a compulsory subject from the commencement of middle school at age twelve. Since 1997, English has been reintroduced as a subject in the third year of elementary schools at age nine to ten (AEC, 2000). However, more recently Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development announced that they have a plan to provide an English language program in the first year of elementary schools from year 2008 (Kown, 2006).

Current English language teaching methods emphasise instruction in grammar and vocabulary, an approach driven by the examination centred education system in Korea. Although English language is taught at an early stage in the Korean school system, Korean students generally acquire limited speaking and writing skills. For this reason, an English language listening ability test has been included as part of the university entrance examination. Currently a large percentage of Korean tertiary institutions choose to select a certain proportion of their first year enrolment based on students' English language proficiency at this test (Kwon & Park, 2000). Proficiency in English has

become very important not only for students but also for job applicants in Korea. In particular, conversational English competence has been heavily stressed for people from all employment areas. Proficiency in conversational English has become a crucial part of recruitment tests by most big companies, the *Chaebols* or family owned conglomerates such as Hyundai, Samsung and LG (Kown, 1997). This emphasis on English has led to the increasing movement of Korean students to English speaking countries as their study destinations.

2.7 Summary

The Korean government's advocacy of globalisation provided the momentum for the expansion of overseas travel and study. This trend lasted until the Asian financial crisis of 1997. The impacts of the more recent return to buoyant financial circumstances and the Korean government's continued advocacy of globalisation has caused rapid expansion of the number of Korean students arriving in Australia. Since the Australian government introduced a new international policy for overseas students in 1986, entailing a fundamental shift in emphasis from aid to a trade, the numbers of Korean students in Australian education programs has been steadily increasing. Learning English has recently become very important for everyone in Korea. Korean students are considering Australia as a destination to learn English and to further their education. Within this context, Chapter Three presents a review of the literature most relevant to the questions posed in this research.

CHAPTER THREE
Literature Review

This chapter discusses the key literature relevant to the central questions of the study. It does so by identifying the fundamental issues of the research, particularly consideration of English language problems and cross-cultural factors pertaining to tertiary students studying in a language that is foreign to them. Three analytical frameworks underpin this study, namely second language acquisition, cross-cultural communication and adult learning as applied to the academic context. These frameworks enable one to better understand Korean students' learning experiences in Australian undergraduate programs, the demands of cross-cultural adaptation, and the difficulties they experience in terms of the reality of the academic context. The chapter then defines the discursive problems of international students and Korean students in Australian education programs. Summary of the literature is then presented in order to develop and support the design of the study. It does this by critically reviewing what is known about the English language problems and cross-cultural factors impacting on Korean students.

3.1 Analytical Approach and Justification

The major thrust of this research is devoted to fathoming the difficulties Korean students face with English language learning and with their cross-cultural adaptation to Australian undergraduate programs. The literature review has sought to identify what cultural factors affect Korean students, and what aspects of their cultural backgrounds are relevant to their experiences in the Australian academic culture. Borgatti (1999, p 1) states that "a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts like a theory, but not necessarily so well worked-out". Defining an appropriate theoretical framework to guide the research plan has helped to determine what things needed to be measured, and what outcomes the study might achieve. There are three such analytical 'frameworks' related to this research. These include the principles of second language acquisition (SLA), cross-cultural communication, and adult learning in the academic context. These mainframes elaborate how the theory guiding this study has allowed the research questions to be better addressed. An overview of the analytical framework is shown in Figure 3.1. (a).

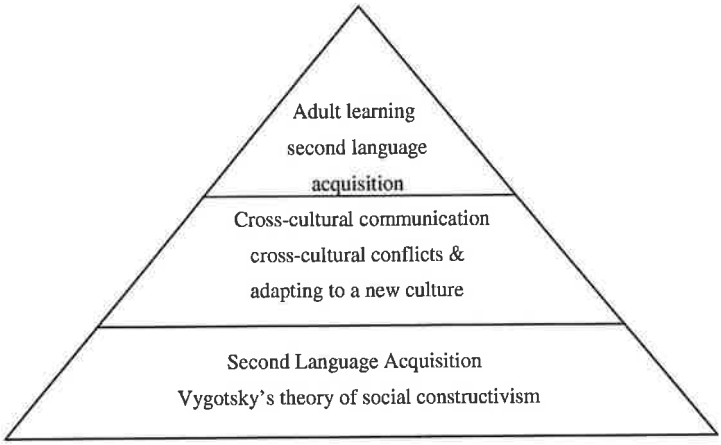

Figure 3.1 (a): Analytical framework

There are five main reasons why the researcher accepts Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development as a framework of analysis for this study.

1. Both Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1972) have had considerable influence on defining the theory of cognitive development of learning; however, Vygotsky placed relatively more emphasis on language development.
2. In Piaget's view, the role of social interaction is relatively less emphasised, whereas Vygotsky's theory suggests that the role of social interaction is to enable the learners to move from the actual to the potential level of development through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).
3. According to Vygotsky's theory, appropriate structuring (scaffolding) of the situation occurs so that the learner is achieving at a higher level than previously, thus allowing improvement to be mapped.
4. In cross-cultural communication theory, language and cultural conflict are inevitable in all personal relationships (Dodd, 1998 and Ting-Toomey, 1997). This fact is closely linked to Vygotsky's concept that the community culture is another force that influences cognitive development. In his theory, a child's development is a direct result of his or her cultural environment.
5. Adults are expected to be in control of the learning process and allow learners to progress more effectively through reciprocal social interaction. This is relevant to Vygotsky's emphasis on collaboration with others to develop cognitive knowledge and understanding.

Overall, the possible correlations with the theoretical framework of this study and relevant theories applied are shown as in Figure 3.1 (b).

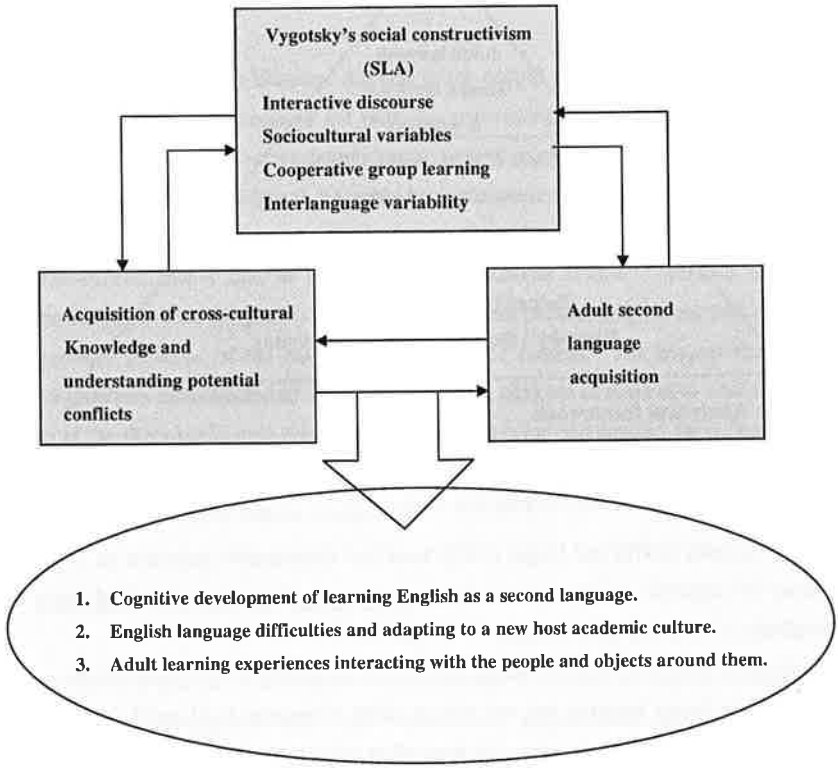

Figure 3.1 (b): An overview of the theory

According to Figure 3.1 (b), conceptualising the research problem of this study is provided by Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism and his emphasis on cognitive development which is influenced by social and cultural interactions. Acquisition of cross-cultural knowledge and its potential conflicts and adult second language acquisition lead to the research problems of Korean students' cognitive development of learning English language as a second language, English language difficulties, cultural adaptation and their learning experiences in Australian undergraduate programs.

3.2 Issues in Learning the English Language

3.2.1 Relevant issues in English as a second language (ESL) pedagogy

In regard to theories of second language acquisition, a constructivist perspective accounts for much of the cognitive psychological dimension in its emphasis on the primacy of each individual's construction of reality (Brown, 2000). For instance, constructivists like Piaget and Vygotsky argue, "all human beings construct their own version of reality" (Brown, 2000, p. 11). Typical themes of constructivism stress interactive discourse sociocultural variables, cooperative group learning, and interlanguage variability (Brown, 2000). Piaget (1972) emphasises the importance of an individuals' cognitive development as a relatively solitary act. Vygotsky (1978) focused on 'social interaction', which he saw as fundamental to cognitive development (as cited in Brown, 2000, p.29). Vygotsky's view of the importance of sociocultural influences on language development fits into current issues explored in this study. For instance, Vygotsky argued, "learning the skills of the culture is a key aspect of development" (as cited in Santrock, 2003, p. 118).

One of Vygotsky's most important concepts is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Santrock (2003, p. 115) notes that "ZPD refers to the range of tasks that are too difficult for an individual to master alone, but that can be mastered with the guidance and assistance of adults or more-skilled peers". Brown (2000, p. 200) emphasised that "the second language learner can make positive use of prior experiences to facilitate the process of learning by retaining that which is valid and valuable for second culture learning and second language learning". This highlights the importance of social influences on cognitive development. The nature of this theory is applied to the need for Korean students to learn and acquire the skills of the Australian culture as fundamental to the process of their cognitive development and learning in the different academic environment.

Concerning adult second language acquisition, Zimitat (1996, p.2) states "adults learn better when they are actively engaged in the learning process". However, one of the major factors that affects the process of adult learning is their prior experience. Korean students' background learning, therefore, is an important issue for this study. All learners need immediate feedback as soon as possible on their performance. Thus, feedback from social interaction should be an important aspect that encourages learners to help them evaluate and assess their own learning.

3.2.2 Issues of adult learning second language acquisition

According to adult second language acquisition and associated linguistic processes, Brown (2000, p. 68) argues, "Adults, who are more cognitively secure, appear to operate from the solid foundation of the first language and thus manifest more interference" from their mother tongue. In the study of personality variables in second language learning, Guiora (1972) proposed 'language ego' which describes, "one's self-identity is inextricably bound up with one's language, for it is the communicative process, the process of sending out messages and having them 'bounced' back, that such identities are confirmed, shaped, and reshaped" (as cited in Brown, 2000, p. 64). Adult students have a clear purpose for their learning. They usually have a specific reason for learning a new skills. To overcome problems in the academic context, Korean students in Australian undergraduate contexts need to concentrate on the development of facilitating factors which would be more related to the implementation of adult second language acquisition rather than factors which were already identified as having assisted the implementation of the second language acquisition.

3.2.3 Tertiary preparation programs for LBOTE students

Australian English language learning programs normally provide a special course which qualifies international students for Australian tertiary education entrance and addresses their special needs. For example, many Australian ELICOS institutions offer an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) program and other types of ELICOS classes such as General English, Business English and IELTS test preparation classes. Of all these programs, EAP is a tertiary preparation program that is especially designed to help students make a successful transition from their previous school environment to Australian tertiary institutions. Eckert (2004) notes that international students need to adapt their approach to learning to acquire the study skills necessary for successful tertiary education study in Australia. She emphasises the research findings of Wright (1982) on the differences between study skills required at university level and study skills at high school level. For example, new students at the university level often are unsure of what exactly they have to prepare. They also tend to continue applying inappropriate study skills to their tertiary courses. With regard to this, Weiland and Nowak (1999, p.6) argue that "the host culture mainly determines what is learned, how it is learned, the modes of communication for learning and motivation towards learning and communication in general". They also emphasise that "language and general adjustment are not great problems. However, cultural differences do have a considerable impact"

(p.3). Thus, the results of this study about Korean students in tertiary preparation programs for LBOTE should provide valuable information to consider.

3.2.4 The discursive problems of international students and Korean students in Australian higher education

The problems faced by international students and their difficulties while studying in the Australian education environment have been addressed to some extent in a number of previous studies, (for example: Yazbeck 2003; Hellstén 2002; Hughes 2002; Anderson 2001; Biggs 2001, 1990; Rambruth 2001; Coventry 1998; Ballard & Clanchy 1997, 1992, 1988; Malcolm & McGregor 1995; Barnet 1994; Philips 1994; Gassin 1992; Altback 1991; and Ballard 1989). These works focused on the problems experienced by international students, mainly from language backgrounds other than English, and have attempted to explain their difficulties. Bradley and Bradley (1984) reported that the key issues they focused on were mainly categorised into the areas of language difficulties and cross-cultural issues (learning to operate in a new language and in a different cultural learning environment).

An important entry requirement for LBOTE students is that all disciplines in Australian tertiary institutions demand high levels of English language competence to ensure achievement of expected positive academic performance and outcomes (DEET, 1988). Typically, the entry standard is IELTS 6.5 with no sub skill less than 6. The first learning process for international students is to adapt to the demands of academic requirements in Australia, including the English language medium (AIDAB, 1990). As Hofstede (1986, p.314) states "language is the vehicle of culture and it is an obstinate vehicle. Language categorizes reality according to its corresponding culture." Previous research shows that linguistic problems and cultural variations tend to occur at the same time, and they constitute a unique problem that normally comes about by means of reciprocal action between these two components. However, English language problems and cultural differences, in this study, are divided into two different sections in order to clarify the issues in detail.

In fact, the issue of many international students encountering all sorts of unexpected problems with their studies in Australia began to be actively considered by researchers from the late 1980s because Australian government education policy, as mentioned earlier, shifted from 'Aid' to 'Trade'. In relation to this, Williams (1989, p.15) states that "the surge of interest within the Australian education sector in the recruitment of students from overseas has been driven in large measure by the financial advantages for the institutions, an attitude actively promoted by the Australian

government". This fact was simply because lower government education funding during that time pushed many tertiary institutions even further to undertake market development in order to gain income from international students. This challenge was rapidly taken up by ELICOS program institutions and a few universities and colleges began to target and recruit full fee-paying international students (Park, 2001, p. 55).

The expanding number of international students (mainly from Asian countries) in Australian educational institutions from the late 1980s led to a need for many academic teaching staff to be concerned about overseas students' unexpected problems and to be informed as to how these students faced English language difficulties and cross-cultural adjustment to a new Australian academic environment. Ballard and Clanchy (1988) undertook a broad analysis of the difficulties with English that many overseas students faced while being in a different culture. This was mainly based on the researchers' work experiences with all levels of students mainly from Asian countries who were enrolled at the Australian National University. Their findings revealed that linguistic difficulties and cultural differences are not the only problems such students encountered. There are four important aspects that Australian teaching staff and overseas students themselves had not previously recognised. These include how students approach study, different styles of learning, different ways of developing arguments, and presenting ideas in a new academic context. They also argued (p.27) that "the move to tertiary education, in particular to university education, involves an important shift to a new approach to learning-the analytical approach".

Ballard and Clanchy also described cultural attitudes to learning strategies and provide a framework that is relevant to all education systems. However, these cultural attitudes to learning are manifold from the one country's education system to another. One of the major issues facing international students in Australian tertiary education programs is how to adapt to such transitional changes in patterns of learning styles. For instance, Ballard (1989, p. 42) stated these problems mainly result from "a mismatch between previous educational experience and what is now expected" (as cited in Anderson, 2001. p.2). This is an important point that is central to this study because Korean students' learning strategies may be influenced by such trends. Table 3.2 illustrates typical characteristics of different attitudes to gaining knowledge, different approaches learning and to different learning strategies. For example, it would be highly likely that a typical Korean tertiary student would be close to reproductive in learning approach. By contrast, Australian student would be more adopt an analytical and speculative learning approach.

Table 3.2: Different learning styles

Attitude to knowledge	conserving ◄——► extending			
Learning approach	reproductive ◄——► analytical ◄——► speculative			
Learning strategies	**Type**	memorization & imitation	critical thinking	deliberate search for new possibilities and explanations
	Activities	Summarizing describing identifying and applying formulae and information	questioning, judging and recombining ideas and information into an argument	speculating hypothesizing
	Characteristic questions	what?	why? how? how valid? how important?	what if?
	Aim	"correctness"	"simple" originality, reshaping material into a different pattern	"creative" originality, totally new approach/new knowledge

Source: Extracted from Ballard and Clanchy. (1988). p. 27. *Studying in Australia*

Given the significant values embodied in the different learning styles above, Anderson (2001, p.8) concludes that "one of the most important issues for teachers is the understanding of their own preconceptions and stereotypes of students' cultures". Anderson additionally argues that with a continuous growth in the number of international students' participating in Australian academic programs, it is important that academics need to minimise stress arising mainly from language and cultural barriers by developing appropriate strategies to produce effective cross-cultural communication skills and effective learning and teaching environments for international students.

In another study, Biggs (2001) identifies the point that international students' learning difficulties mainly arise from the stereotyping of an incoming student's own cultural background. He argues that full engagement with the Western learning culture is a crucial factor about which international

students need to be concerned so as to achieve their goals. For example, he points out that students from Asian countries have difficulties in changing patterns of their learning styles which are grounded in their cultural values, beliefs and practices in their home countries. Hellstén (2002) cites evidence that some international students can be characterised as 'passive' learners who make no contribution to class discussions and debates and may even be considered to lack knowledge of the importance of the ban against plagiarism in the Australian academic context. Hellstén (2002) argues that learning difficulties of international students in the Australian academic context emerge if confronted with a lack of concern or no facility to cater for them. He suggests (p.12) that 'student mentoring' programs may be one appropriate facility to support international students, stating "the effect of these programs is the availability of guidance provided by more experienced students who act as 'mentors' to incoming new students".

The research conducted by Brooks and Adams (2002) involved LBOTE students in their first year of academic work in a business program at Macquarie University. They pointed out that "international students had lower levels of frequency in using English than local students, and their academic assessment also was not as high as local students" (2002, p. 4). Armitage (1999, p.6) states that "the main reason why Korean students found participation in class discussions difficult is partly due to their lack of competence in spoken English." Lack of English language proficiency was identified as a greater impediment to their studies than differences in culture and learning pedagogies.

In addition, Brooks and Adams (p.2) note that although LBOTE students meet the English competency requirements for entry to Australian higher education, "this does not necessarily indicate that students' oral and written comprehension is adequate to enable them to cope well at a university level". Hughes (2002) argues that the most important problem areas LBOTE students face are differences in learning and communication styles between their home countries and Australia. For example, he notes that communication problems lead to poor comprehension and linguistic skills especially associated with spoken or written English. However, Yazback (2003) notes that the English language problems of LBOTE students in a different academic setting are diverse in nature and that these students are often stressed and frustrated when they fail to make adequate progress in their studies. In her case study research, Yazback argues that international students need to be supported by student advisors or counsellors and need to see an advisor who speaks English as a first language in dealing with the issues of developing their academic performance. She emphasises the importance of 'best practice' to support students from non-

English speaking background (NESB), but notes that many institutions are limited in their provisions for dealing with such emerging issues.

In spite of the time, effort and emphasis on learning English in Korea, when required to study in English in tertiary education Korean students typically do not find it easy (Cho, 2004). From the researcher's perspective, anecdotal evidence from fellow students suggests that Korean students do expect to have language difficulties with English while studying in Australia. Even though they met the requirements of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to enter Australian tertiary institutions, Korean students may still encounter many unexpected problems related to life in general in a different cultural environment as well as in the academic context.

Notably, it may also be suggested that most Korean students do not recognise their own lack of proficiency in English before actually commencing their courses in Australia. For example, Cho (2001) argues that there are always interaction difficulties when there is a deviation from one's expected norms or patterns of behaviour to another. The new norms that Korea students need to consider include understanding lectures, tutorials and textbooks, and what students produce also includes the methods of preparing essays and presenting seminar papers which should be applied to English as a second language. For instance, in Korea a written assignment is short and a common genre is a 'report', but Korean students maintained that the difficulties come from the different patterns and styles which were required in Australian tertiary academic context (Cho, 2001). This indicates that students need to adjust to these new norms in the new educational environment. However, Cho (2001, p.3) states that "students may or may not be aware of deviations". Furthermore, a lack of knowledge of the Australian academic context is usually a more serious problem than students expected (Cho, 2001). For example, Korean students are not accustomed to writing tasks in many different genres. It directly affects Korean students' ability to cope with the Australian academic context.

Korean students usually learn English as a second language from an early age in their home country. However, they soon realise the impracticality of the English language they have learned at home in Korea. For example, most Koreans become speechless in front of native English speakers. There are many reasons why Korean students feel uncomfortable with English usage. Todd (as cited in McNamara & Harris, 1997, p.176) points out that "some lecturers characterize the learning strategies of overseas students as relying on rote learning and memorization", referring to students

from non-English backgrounds. This leads to the understanding that Asian countries' school pedagogy depends heavily on passive learning and 'a cramming system' of education. It can thus be seen that a change in teaching style could lead Korean students to experience major difficulties, such as being unable to participate in class discussions or to think critically and analytically (Todd as cited in McNamara & Harris, 1997, p. 176).

In this study, the question is raised about the most useful language skills required to help Korean students cope with the difficulties they face in the Australian academic context. Specifically, all four macro skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are essential for Korean people learning English, or any other language for that matter. It is obvious that the level of skills in these categories differs with each individual's ability to learn languages. However, it is an important issue in the context of analysing the macro linguistic levels of these categories in order to develop appropriate pedagogies in Australian higher education programs. An appropriate pedagogy enhances language fluency for higher academic performance and optimum adjustment in the new environment. Competence in the use of English for academic purposes in Australia is one of the key areas of focus in this study, as well as its utility for Korean students to operate successfully in social terms.

Concerning the issues of the English language and cross-cultural problems of all international students, Asian students at tertiary level are particularly considered. However, information regarding Korean students' problems with English language and cross-cultural issues in Australian education programs is somewhat limited (Cho, 2001, Armitage, 1999, Choi, 1997). It is also true that, in the past, some institutions initiated programs aimed at introducing more creative or less traditional teaching and learning styles to which most international students are unaccustomed (AIDAB, 1990). The main purpose of these institutions' involvement in providing a different approach was to offer better programs which would be adapted easily by international students. Nevertheless, reference to anecdotal evidence and recent studies (Cho, 2002, Armitage, 1999) indicates that Korean students still refer to problems with English language usage and cultural variations in Australia. Cho (2001, p.316) argues that "the main difficulties students encounter while studying abroad involve not only acquisition of English language but also the way language is used in the academic context". For example, Korean students are confronted with variations in terms of interacting with lecturers, tutors and local Australian students in the class. Students are generally asked to prepare presentations and participate in class discussions. However, Cho (2001, p. 321) states "most students were not aware of different socio-linguistic rules relevant to this new

study genre, involving matters such as how and when to speak in classes. These were some of the norms they needed to acquire, and a lack of familiarity or exposure to these norms could make them less active in class". It is an important task, therefore, for academics in both countries to study how best to assist Korean students to undertake appropriate strategies in the Australian academic environment.

With reference specifically to Korean students, Armitage (1999) investigated factors affecting Korean students' adjustment to studying in Australia. That research provided a detailed profile of a small sample of Korean students who were enrolled in two English language centres in Melbourne and showed why they experienced difficulty in adjusting to learning in English Language programs. Choi (1997) found through the medium of surveying that the difficulties experienced by Korean students in Australian tertiary institutions with regard to cultural issues included participating in tutorials (ability to debate specific issues raised in class). This difficulty was due to their lack of competence in spoken English (as cited in Armitage, 2001, p.6). Korean students are likely to lack opportunities to discuss and share ideas with local Australian students, due to a lack of mutual and continuous relationships with classmates. With regard to the relationships with teaching staff, Choi (1997) found that Australian teaching staff are not likely to understand the difficulties encountered by Korean students in a new academic environment. Choi's research seems to focus more on cultural aspects than on linguistic issues. Moreover, Choi also noted "perceptions that teachers did not have an understanding of Korea and the Korean education system" (as cited in Armitage 2001, p.6). This study, therefore should provide a useful focus for specifying problems with the target students in terms of different academic norms.

Cho (2001) also emphasises that Korean students' previous educational backgrounds lead to an unawareness of different learning and teaching styles in a different system and so places them in situations where learning is hard in Australian higher education programs. According to Cho, the main areas of difficulty which Korean students encounter are writing essays, understanding lectures, participating in tutorials, note-taking and examinations. In particular, insufficient experience in listening to English and fewer chances to practise proficiency in English skills in the Korean education system make it even harder for them to understand what Australian academics speak about in classes. Both Armitage (1999) and Cho (2001) propose that previous educational background, a lack of preparation, and lack of awareness of cultural differences related to the use of Australian academic texts, are significant factors that lead to problems in dealing with academic tasks such as participating in tutorial classes. This is due to a fact that "students do not notice their

deviations and become frustrated when unexpected outcomes occur" (Cho, 2001, p.321). Armitage and Cho also state that Korean students' past experiences, and therefore expectations, of a hierarchical relationship between teachers and students and an authoritarian teacher-centred education system have created serious problems. In essence, these differences influence adjustments to new types of interpersonal relationships amongst peers, academics, and others. For instance, Anderson (2001, p. 5) argues that students in large power distance, "expect teacher to initiate communication", but Australian teachers expect students to initiate communication. This is a good example of why Korean students who are used to a 'cramming approach' to education tend to be afraid of being asked questions or discuss issues. However, the main reason for their sensitivity about their inadequate ability to speak English could in turn exacerbate their difficulties. This is possibly why most Australian academics have observed lesser participation in tutorials and lectures by many Korean students.

3.3 Cross-Cultural Issues

In terms of theories of cross-cultural communication, the researcher focuses on how to manage cross-cultural conflicts effectively, and how to adapt appropriately to a new culture. Ting-Toomey (1997) argued that conflict is inevitable in all social and personal relationships. Conflict can be defined as a state of dissonance or collision between two forces or systems. Korean overseas students' English language and cultural difficulties, therefore, are problems associated with this theme. While there are many dimensions in which cultures vary and differ, one that has received consistent attention from cross-cultural communication practitioners is individualism as opposed to collectivism. To the individualistic Australian, the conflict management process is described by verbal expressions, "to clarify one's opinion, to build up one's credibility, to articulate one's emotions, and to raise even objections if one disagrees with someone else's proposal" (Ting-Toomey, 1997, p. 8). In the collectivistic Korean culture, individuals hesitate to express their own opinions. Their expressions are often ambiguous, indirect verbal expressions. Dealing with conflict in this way tends to be seen as the typical behaviour of Korean students in academic settings.

According to Kim (1997), "many short-term sojourners' contacts with host cultures are mostly peripheral and, many of their previously held beliefs, taken-for–granted assumptions, and routine behaviours are no longer relevant or appropriate". In his notion of adapting to a new culture, strangers gradually manage to achieve a new level of learning and self-adjustment that helps them accommodate to the demands of the host cultural environment. It means that strangers try to

modify their cognitive and affective behaviours through the process of the "stress-adaptation-growth dynamic theory." In this theory, adapting to a new culture can be described as "arrow-like linear progression, but in a cyclic and continual 'draw-back-to-leap' pattern similar to the movement of a wheel" (Kim, 1997, p. 2). Adaptation is an interactive process involving both strangers and the host cultural environment. Members of the host country, therefore, need to actively encourage strangers to adapt through providing suitable programs making it possible to merge the incoming new sojourners into a cohesive social environment with the host culture. This theory relates well to Vygotsky's idea of the importance of 'social interaction' as a part of cognitive development.

Korean students' experiences in terms of cross-cultural difficulties and problems could also be analysed through to the results of Hofstede's (2005) power distance index and his theory. According to the power distance index, Korean students were accustomed to behaving in the large–power-distance environment. Hofstede (2005, p.55) argued that "in the large-power-distance situation, superiors and subordinates consider each other as existentially unequal; the hierarchical system is based on this existential inequality". For instance, Korean students' previous experiences with teacher-centred learning, strict order by teachers and teachers dominating all communication in the class could be variations between the two different cultures. As key differences between collectivist and individualist societies with regard to language, personality and behaviour, Hofstede (2005, p.97) stated "students in a collectivist culture will also hesitate to speak up in larger groups without a teacher present, especially if these are partly composed of relative strangers, or out-group members". Considering the issues of different gender, Hofstede (2005) indicated that students in masculine oriented cultures were not allowed to express aggression. This implies that Korean students' could have difficulty in the discussion-based learning system in Australian undergraduate programs. Hofstede (2005, p.179) note that "students from strong uncertainty avoidance cultures expect their teachers to be the experts who have all the answers". This intellectual disagreement or difference in Australian tertiary academic matters is frequently faced as a variation between the two different educational cultures.

According to Spencer-Oatey (2000, p.4), the definition of culture is "a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and his/her interpretation of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour". The process of studying in a foreign country requires students to adjust to the different cultural context and the unfamiliar surroundings in everyday life in a society such as Australia. An

initial barrier frequently encountered by LBOTE students is "culture shock", which can be described as confusion and the need to make emotional adjustments that arise when people live in another culture. Coping with new foods, climate, housing, and homesickness are all part of the difficulties experienced in culture shock.

The need to adapt to different study patterns is an essential requirement for Korean students. For instance, most Korean school systems rarely include tutorial classes, which are typical of Australian and Western tertiary pedagogy, as part of their teaching. Although it is possible to attend some tutorial classes, students are given almost no chance to actually participate in interacting with their peers. As Lovejoy (2001, p.7) indicates, not only international students of non-English speaking background, but also Australian students of English speaking background are frustrated with aspects of tutorials, but "local students are more likely to benefit from tutorial based learning". Cho (2001, p.5) states that "One conspicuously different feature in the university system is that only the lecture type of class is available in Korean universities and it is not accompanied by related tutorials, as in Australia." Mainly due to unfamiliarity with this new Australian way of learning as an important part of the academic context, tutorial participation for Korean students is one of the most difficult tasks to cope with (Cho, 2001).

This is one of major reasons why Korean students in Australia are reluctant to get involved in tutorial discussions. This may result in a loss of marks for a lack of participation and lead students to being perceived by others as shy, which is a trait not highly valued in Australia. The behaviour of Korean students' in Australian tutorial classes reflects the typical differences arising between them and local Australian students, and can lead to interpretations that are possibly detrimental to them.

Differences between the Australian and Korean cultures can affect the ability of Korean students to cope with Australian cultural values. According to Hofstede (1991), there are five different characteristics of cultural dimensions in his study. These are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, femininity versus masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term versus short-term orientation. Table 3.3.2 (a) defines the meaning of these five cultural dimensions.

Table 3.3.2 (a): Hofstede's five cultural dimensions

Index	Cultural dimensions	Characteristic
PDI	1. Power distance	The degree to which a society expects there to be differences in the level of power.
IDV	2. Collectivism versus individualism	Collectivism means that people are integrated from birth into a strong, cohesive group that provides protection. Individualism means that the ties to others are looser and that everyone is expected to look after themselves or their immediate family.
MAS	3. Femininity versus masculinity	Refers to the value placed on traditionally male or female values.
UAI	4. Uncertainty avoidance	Reflects the extent to which a society accepts uncertainty and risk.
LTO	5. Long-term versus short-term orientation	Long-term time orientation cultures share the belief that older people have more authority than younger people and that in work people should try to acquire skills and an education, be hard working, frugal, patient and preserving.

Source: Extracted and reproduced from Centre for Enhancing Learning and Teaching at CSU, *Teaching International Students*. (2005, p.1).
http://www.csu.edu.au/division/celt/html/celtres.html (accessed on 10th of November 2005)
Wikipedia, *Organisational culture* (2005, p.2).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organizational_culture (accessed on 7th November 2005)

Hofstede (1991) identified these dimensions in his research on different values in 58 countries and indexed a range of differences. Table 3.3.2 (b) shows the differences between Korea and Australia.

Table 3.3.2 (b): Different indexes of cultural dimensions between Korea and Australia

	PDI		**IDV**		**MAS**		**UAI**		**LTO**	
	rank	score	rank	score	rank	score	rank	score	rank	score
Australia	41	36	2	90	16	61	37	51	15	31
South Korea	27/28	60	43	18	41	39	16/17	85	5	75

Note: PDI: Power distance index
IDV: Individualism index
MAS: Masculinity index
UAI: Uncertainty avoidance index
LTO: Long-term orientation index

Source: Extracted from Hofstede, (1991). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind: Intercultural and its importance of survival,* McGraw Hill, New York.

His data clearly indicates that Korea is a society that maintains a higher level of power distance and that collectivism is regarded as a main theme in public attitude. Korea is also a society in which gender roles are primarily dominated by males, and people are unlikely to take on high risks and are generally considered to be averse to ambiguity. Korea is a society that more clearly endorses

continuity of the past compared to Australia. Ladyshewsky (1996. p. 2) additionally states, "Asian behaviours normally emphasise collectivism, whereas Western behaviours mainly focus on preserving one's individuality". Hofstede (1992, p.4) notes that "the main cultural differences among nations lie in values". For example, Armitage (1999) concludes that one of the major factors affecting the adjustment of Korean students is "moving from a Confucian based patrilineal, vertically structured and formal society to a horizontally structured and fairly informal society". In this context, Zang (1995) explains how Confucianism affects the behaviour of Asians. Zang argues that Confucianism influences students to take a more passive role in their styles of learning. Korean students are accustomed to passive learning and are not good at debating or participating in discussions during their tutorial classes.

Furthermore, they are not accustomed to practising critical thinking, logic, or even the analysis of issues arising in tutorials. For example, lecturers and markers find that Korean students' written assignments quite often do not include any argument. Students are unaware that descriptive writing alone cannot result in good academic performance in Australian tertiary institutions in the same way that enabled their academic success in Korea. This is due to the different learning styles that Korean students have previously experienced in the Korean education system. Cho (2001) identifies that the most common and preferred type of written genre a report which usually summarises their reading materials or texts. Korean students are not able to conceptualise the expectation of analytical and critical thinking required for written assignments that are typical of tertiary level studies in Australia.

Also central to this research is the identification of potential cross-cultural communication and intercultural communication issues. Dodd (1998) defines intercultural communication as, "Interaction between culturally different people that creates a system which demands an understanding of each participant's need to reduce uncertainty". His statement suggests that the findings of the research here should prove valuable. Ting-Toomey (1997) argues that strangers to a culture should choose adaptive techniques to reduce the stressful experience of coping with uncertainties and anxieties in the host society. Similarly, Ballard and Clanchy (1997) state that Asian students are often perplexed by the informality in Australian classrooms with the emphasis on discussion and enquiry-based learning, which contrasts strongly with the traditions of a Confucian heritage tradition based on a reserved attitude to the display of knowledge, a passive or rote learning style, and a degree of respect for teachers that really stifles students' initiative or ability to critique ideas presented.

Furthermore, the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee Code of Ethical Practice for international students recommends a policy of acculturation and states that "international students, to maintain standards of academic excellence, need to adapt to the dominant culture (which will promote) successful adjustment by international students to life and study at any Australian university" (cited in Davis and Olsen, 1999. p. 99). The meaning of acculturation in this context can be understood by recent research conducted by Hofstede and Hofstede's (2005) emphasis on defining the rules of the social game. They state (p.13) that "we need to fit in, to behave in ways that are acceptable to the groups we belong to". Both statements indicate that international students are required to have an adequate English language proficiency and cultural knowledge to adapt more easily to host countries.

Overall, cultural discomfort is certainly experienced by all Korean students in adjusting to the new culture in Australia, both in their studies and in general everyday life. For instance, Hofstede (2005) clarified differences between weak and strong uncertainty avoidance societies. Korean students who were included in strong uncertainty avoidance society background have a tendency to be hesitant towards the new environment, new products and technologies. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, p.137) also argued that "failing in school is a disaster in a masculine culture". An example for a strongly masculine country like Korea is the media reports about students who commit suicide after failing the university entrance examination. Family pressure in an academic-oriented society like Korea is different from the Australian education environment. Thus, dealing with the problem of cross-cultural adaptation is another important factor in supporting Korean students studying in Australian undergraduate programs.

3.4 Summary of the Previous Key Researches on the Study

With regard to the main research questions in this study, it has been necessary to define the meaning of 'good practice' in ESL pedagogy. Yazback (2003) argues that it is a common thing for ESL learners to be confronted with some degree of difficulty when they study a course of English as a second language in a foreign setting. She defines the meaning of good practice in ESL pedagogy as "the day to day processes, procedures, framework and philosophy that inform the decisions we make in regard to the leaner problems we encounter on a daily basis" (Yazback, 2003, p.1). Her research problems were based on advising best practice for learners in English language programs in Australia. She believes that awareness of the reality of best practice which should be realised by academics, student advisors and even administrators plays an important role in solving the problems

students encounter in a foreign setting. The methodology she applied to this study was based on case studies. These cases were introduced by teaching experiences of academics, students' advisors and administrative staff members of English language programs. The valuable insights of this study identified the key issues of the effectiveness with which English language institutions cope with student problems, and determined how the outcomes of studying in a foreign setting are appropriate for international students. The key issues and suggested strategies raised in this study seem to provide a good example of in-depth findings for this present research. The weakness is that there were only two case studies conducted in regard to this issue.

Brooks and Adams (2002) investigated ways to help international students from non English speaking backgrounds (NESB) cope with their first year of academic studies in Australian tertiary education. They focus mainly on the relationship between spoken English proficiency and academic performance. The methodology applied in this study was based on the analysis of the examination results of a university first year business subject. They applied to the survey method to identify the comparative levels of English language usage. Students' responses were analysed by using the Frequency of Speaking English (FSE) measure. The research findings clearly indicated that students who more frequently speak English reflect more confidence in using English as well as showing a higher level of academic performance in all course requirements. The student sample size of this study was large, with responses being collected from a total number of 285 local and international students enrolled in that business subject. They comparatively analysed the differences between international and local Australian students, including gender differences, among the international students. This study provides a sample of comparative study method to analyse a certain issue and how to elaborate the issues in an effective form.

A seminar presentation paper by Hellstén (2002) argues that insights into ways of realising the many problems faced by students from overseas and their transition into a new Australian academic setting are very important issues that relate to teaching and learning pedagogy. Her research explored various aspects of international students' difficulties with socio cultural adaptation, adjustment strategies, English language usage, and communication. The main aim of her study was how to deal appropriately with the problems international students face in the Australian academic context. Her research suggests the necessity for curriculum development to address the issue of how to prepare and implement a positive international education environment in Australia. The central statement in her research is that the problems international student encounter are more serious than Australian academics might expect and this implies a need for them to be more carefully concerned about establishing a viable international curriculum. The research was mainly

based on a small sample of responses obtained from interviews with nine international students who were enrolled in a range of academic disciplines including the postgraduate level. This research provides a good example of how to deal with a sample and how to analyse interview data. However, a singular methodology applied in her research is only one weakness.

Concerning the issue of the importance of effective cross-cultural communication with the growing presence of international students in Australia, Anderson (2001) investigated how Australian academics cope with the problems that international students have in their academic practices. She elaborated the different learning styles based on previous research conducted by Ballard and Clanchy (1988). She especially emphasised a model of the relationship between teaching and learning strategies and the different type of the cultural attitudes in terms of students gaining knowledge. In addition, she also emphasised the importance of cross-cultural variables. Anderson (2001, p. 4) argued that "in order to improve the quality of the learning environment within the global classroom, an appreciation of the cultural context is far-reaching". Her research referenced many previous research findings conducted by Hofstede about cultural differences among different societies represented by four dimensions of individualism versus collectivism, small power distance versus large power distance, weak uncertainty avoidance versus strong uncertainty avoidance and masculinity versus femininity. Her study, however, focused mainly on cultural differences in teaching and learning. She also addressed the importance of communication processes in minimising the barriers between academics and students. She thoroughly investigated the means of effective cross-cultural communication which could be valuable tools in appropriate teaching and learning conditions for both academics and international students. However, her research was only based on documentary analysis and this was the one weakness of her research.

In terms of cross-cultural issues, Biggs (2001) provides a wide ranging review of research findings of the main difficulties that international students face. He argues that there is a number of stereotyping problems related to students from Asian countries that have are misled many other researchers. In terms of 'the Asian style learning environment versus the Western', most previous researchers considered that students from Asian countries have difficulty in moving from the passive way of learning to active learning environment. However, he provided important evidence that many students from Asian countries continue to achieve high results in many academic disciplines in Australia. He argues that Asian students do not tend to have any difficulties in integrating a successful transition process into Australian learning environment. He provides evidence that they have only some difficulties in adjusting to new cultural learning environment such as academic writing genres. His research concluded that the international student transition

process should not be defined only within stereotypes. His research raised the issue of finding alternative ways to find out the difficulties international students encounter in Western set of leaning environment.

As another key issue of the internationalisation of Australian education, Ramburuth (2001) investigated the international students' strategies for coping with their difficulties and to facilitate appropriative learning and different socio-cultural adaptation in Australian higher education programs. Her research was mainly based on reviewing the previous studies that focused on academic difficulties and socio-cultural adjustment. She explored case studies on the issue of re-adjusting to their home cultures when they re-entered them. She explored culture shock and study shock, emphasising the importance of study shock and providing much evidence from previous studies. She argues that study shock is the most important difference in international students' attitudes about knowledge and the learning process that exists between their previous experiences at home and those underpinning current Australian institutions. The strong point of her research is that the management of students' difficulties and their transition to learning and socio-cultural adaptation were points carefully covered, with valuable recommendations. She did not clearly define the differences between Asian students and international students in her work.

In spite of the efforts of many researchers and practitioners in recent years, (e.g., Yazbeck 2003; Brooks & Adams 2002; Hellstén 2002; Anderson 2001; Biggs 2001, 1990; Rambruth 2001), to develop guidelines to help LBOTE students succeed academically in another country, problems with the English language and cultural variations are still major concerns. For instance, Coventry (as cited in Panfil & Wilson, 1998) argues that academic staff need to actively respond to their students' different backgrounds and to consider the lack of requisite skills and knowledge that students may be struggling with in their new learning environment. She also argues (p.3) that "academics currently involved in international education settings often do not do enough to meet overseas students' needs", and the students' own views tend to be ignored by teaching academics. Ramburuth (2001) suggests that institutions need to consider that teaching staff are fully trained about how to teach and how to manage international students from different cultural backgrounds. She states (p.10) that "teaching and learning expectations, assessment criteria, course requirements, etc. need to be made explicit, and assumptions about a student's prior learning and prior knowledge need to be cautious and informed".

In reviewing the literature relevant to this study, it is concluded that the research problem can be investigated through consideration of the two different areas of linguistic problems and cross-cultural differences. On the basis of the literature review it has been determined that it is both feasible and necessary for this research to focus on language background other than English (LBOTE) students in Australia, more particularly Korean students. Most previous studies in relation to international students studying in Australia indicate that the difficulties they encounter are mainly due to a different culture and academic practice grounded in their home countries. In terms of international students, most previous studies have mainly focused on students from Asian countries. Interestingly, it is found that many of them refer to 'Confucianism' as a common type of cultural background. However, there are many different types of cultures and religions in Asia. For example, Thailand is an Asian country, but 'Buddhism' is the dominant religion there. Indonesia is also an Asian country where Islam is the primary religion. Thus, each Asian country has its own unique culture and religious background, and it would seem unreasonable to regard all Asian countries as a homogeneous group founded on 'Confucianism'.

All studies state that LBOTE students' difficulty in using English as a second language is the most difficult aspect of the adjustment they encounter when studying in Australia. However, such issues are relatively less investigated than problems related to adjusting to a different culture. It can be concluded that English as a second language is an obvious problem for LBOTE students to cope with, and that written English and spoken English are the main difficulties they face. However, many of the prior studies have not taken into account their educational background, particularly previous English learning experiences. Previous experiences of learning English may be different from one country to another. There are a few countries where English is already the first or one of the official languages in use, including Singapore, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. There are also countries where Western cultural influences were embodied in the historical context. This means that the acknowledgment of language difficulties or cultural differences as a major issue may vary among students from differing nations.

There is virtually no information about which one of the four skills in the target language (speaking, listening, reading and writing) poses the most difficulty. Considering cross-culture issues, Korea is very open not only to English education nowadays, but the whole nation has oriented itself to the theme of 'Globalisation'. There are, therefore, questions about the degree to which current cultural differences impact on Korean students studying in the Australian academic context and the nature of their experiences in learning English in Korea.

On the other hand, previous key studies on Korean students in Australia are included (e.g., Moon 2003; Cho 2001; Armitage 1999; Choi 1997). Table 3.4 describes the main issues, research methodology, advantages and disadvantages with regard to this study. In terms of Korean students, it is consistently argued that difficulties within the academic context are primarily affected by different cultural backgrounds, particularly the experience of the different styles in their domestic learning and teaching environment. The studies reviewed are very helpful, particularly in their survey methods and analytical conclusions, and provide models to inform this research. On the other hand, there are some weaknesses. For example, most studies mainly focused on how Korean students cope when experiencing different cultural environments. However, they provide general information that could influence the adjustment of Korean students.

Table 4.3: Summary of key studies on Korean students in Australia

Author	The main issue	Research methodology applied	Advantage	Disadvantage
Moon (2003)	Korean students and student support staff perspectives at UNSW.	• Document research. • Interviews.	In-depth interviews with qualitative data results. International students should not be treated as a same homogenous group in all.	Mixed sample of Korean students (undergraduate & postgraduate).
Cho (2001)	Study strategies of Korean students.	• Document research. • Interviews.	Developing strategies to overcome Korean students' problems.	Small sample size.
Armitage (1999)	Factors affecting the adjustment of Korean students.	• Document research. • The Delphi method. • The survey questions.	Detailed findings of cross-cultural issues.	The selected samples of Korean students were only enrolled in ELICOS program.
Choi (1997)	Korean students and their intercultural issues.	• Document research. • The survey questions.	Firstly investigated the difficulties of Korean students experience while in Australian universities.	More focused on cross-cultural issues. There were no clear suggestions or strategies to overcome their difficulties.

The sample groups used in the investigations comprised Korean students in limited programs such as ELICOS and short term exchange programs. Therefore, some sampling data and the nature of

these groups (for example, Cho's group of Korean students who undertook a course for one or two semesters in an exchange program and Armitage's ELICOS level Korean students) may not be fully appropriate for this research, because they investigate only Korean students in Australian undergraduate programs. An appropriate way of solving or minimising Korean students' difficulties in the academic mode is to encourage them to strive for success in Australian tertiary institutions through the provision of strategies allowing them to overcome difficulties in English language and cultural variations. It is likely that Cho's approach, which provides sound methods of data collection and appropriate analytical procedures is helpful in reviewing and defining the difficulties faced by Korean students in the Australian higher education academic context. Choi and Armitage's approach provides a relevant method to identify problems concerning cultural variations.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has examined the importance and the need for a viable analytical framework and has justified relevant theories to conduct this research. Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism in second language acquisition and the theory of cognitive development of learning are applied as a main theoretical base. Concerning the theory of cross-cultural communication, this research is related to cultural conflicts and adapting to a host culture. With regard to age barriers, the research requires an approach based upon adult learning acquisition. To analyse the situation of Korean international students in Australian undergraduate programs, these three theories are essential in addressing the central research questions.

This chapter, therefore, has drawn the conclusion from the relevant literature that there are two major difficulties that Korean students encounter while studying in Australian tertiary education programs, namely cross-cultural variation and linguistic problems. With this in mind, the next chapter will clarify the research methodology and design of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methodology and Design

Defining an appropriate analytical framework in line with the theme and central questions of this study is important. This chapter identifies the key themes and issues and provides focus for the study. Drawn, in part, from a thorough review of the relevant literature, it clarifies the specifics that this study will investigate to better understand Korean students' difficulties in the English language and cross-cultural aspects of their learning.

4.1 Methodology

It goes without saying that an appropriate application of methodology is the most important factor for researchers to consider before conducting any study. Considering this specific issue, the author argues that the combination of an exploratory survey and case studies approach would be the most appropriate way to produce clear, valuable, and credible analytical findings in relation to the central questions addressed in this research.

As Denzin argues, "the diverse methods and measures that are combined should relate in some specified way to the theoretical constructs under examination" (1997, p.318). The main reason why this method applies to this research is that the use of multiple methods in an investigation assists in overcoming the weakness or biases of a single method taken by itself. According to Patton (1990), it is worth using multiple methods, comparison analysis, and convergent validity checks to enhance the quality and credibility of findings. As a consequence, the methodology applied to this research is a combination of two different approaches, an exploratory survey of the Korean international students attending Southeast Queensland undergraduate programs, and as a supplementary tool, the researcher has also conducted interviews with people who are working with international students in the educational sectors in both countries. These included English language teachers in Korea, and teachers, lecturers, and tutors in Australia. There were follow up interviews with some Korean students studying in Australian undergraduate programs. They were chosen on the basis of trends derived from the survey.

4.1.1 Data collection and analysis

There are three different types of data collected for this study. The main theme of this section is to provide a fundamental understanding of English language teaching pedagogy in Korea and its historical changes so that readers can ascertain the significance of this for the Korean students in academic programs delivered in English in Australia. First, a document analysis was applied to clarify the situation of international LBOTE students who have difficulties in studying in English in Australian higher education. Defining the English language learning background of Korean students, and recent changes in English teaching pedagogy in Korea, was examined within this context.

This was followed by the analysis of data obtained from the survey questionnaire responses. The information provided by the survey questionnaire was carefully considered and analysed to obtain appropriately validated answers. The responses to the survey questionnaire were then used to facilitate in-depth interviews. Within this context, the researcher carefully investigated relevant information concerning changes in English language teaching, different educational cultures at the tertiary level, and how Korean students move into Australian tertiary education institutions.

It was anticipated that the completed survey questionnaires would be returned to the researcher for collation and analysis using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The survey data was also analysed using cross-tabulations because the description and presentation of preliminary raw data would not be expected to provide sufficient, credible, and valuable information about issues involved. For instance, cross-tabulating data about Korean students' writing problems on the basis of gender would provide particular insights that otherwise would not be forthcoming. To provide more detailed information about this study, the research set up a comparative study on how three different programs that Korean students previously undertoook to enter Australian undergraduate programs impact on differentiating their English language difficulties and cross- cultural variations they encountered. These three groups include Korean students who undertaken TAFE or Foundation Studies Programs, Australian secondary school programs and preparation for official English test(s) programs.

The last phase was to extract reliable data from case studies with four selected Korean students who participated in the survey. The researcher also undertook semi-structured interviews with four English language teachers in Korea, four academics in Australian undergraduate programs. The researcher prepared an interview schedule in order to conduct consistent interviews with these

people, and thus quality data was collected. An interview schedule was developed derived from the analysis of the survey questionnaire results and the identification of issues that required in-depth follow up.

The type of role taken by the researcher is a very important one in establishing the credibility of the conduct of the research. Within this context, the researcher has chosen the role of 'observer-as-participant'. "Compared to the complete participant and participant-as-observer roles, a disadvantage of the observer-as-participant role is that it is more difficult to obtain an insider's view. On the other hand, it is easier to maintain objectivity and neutrality" (Johnson & Christensen 2000, p. 151). The main reason why the researcher has chosen this role is to prevent private knowledge or expectations that the researcher might have from distorting the credibility of research findings.

4.1.2 A pilot study

As a pilot study, a sample of 75 Korean international students was selected from the list of members of the Korean Student Association in Queensland universities and the Korean Society of Queensland Australia. Of these, 26 completed survey responses were returned. After reviewing the results of this pilot study, the author identified several mistakes and some ambiguous expressions in the contents of the survey which were not appropriate for asking questions in line with the main theme of this study. For example, some of respondents who participated in this pilot study were not able to understand questions therefore some of the questionnaire was rewritten in order to transfer the meaning more appropriately for the respondents. The author found that there were some questions not logically placed in order, so these questions were put into the right places associated with the main theme of the survey. The author recompiled the survey questionnaire to minimise the barriers that might lead to inappropriate responses before conducting the actual survey. A snowball technique was applied as a main method of approach to select additional Korean students, (who may or may not be members of the Association), aiming for a total sample size of 300 for the target sampling population of this study required later.

4.1.3 Sampling size and confidence level

The information gained in this study was obtained through the Association for Korean Students in Brisbane whose membership includes approximately 800 Korean international students. Further investigation was required in order to collect accurate and reliable information across the total

population of Korean international students who were enrolled at the time in Australian undergraduate education programs. Of these, the author contacted 300 Korean international students to complete the survey, and 152, more than half of the surveys sent out, were returned and completed in full. The author also expected that since all respondents would be Korean students, the heterogeneity reduced sampling error and provided data at the highest confidence level required for this research. This statistical figure constitutes a sampling a little greater than 1 in 6 students. This figure indicates that sample size, using the premise that it is 95% likely that the outcomes in the total population will be the same as in the sample. This enabled the sampling error to be calculated overall as a maximum 9.5%. Considering that all of the respondents participated in this survey were Korean students, the heterogeneity of responses to almost all questions reduced the sampling error to as low as 8% at the 95% confidence level.

4.1.4 Sampling institutions

The Australian tertiary institutions participated in this research include the University of Queensland, Central Queensland University branches in Brisbane and Gold Coast, Queensland University of Technology, Griffith University, and the University of Southern Queensland. The first four tertiary institutions are located in the urban region of Brisbane and Gold coast, while the fifth is located in the regional inland city of Toowoomba.

4.2 Method of Cross-Tabulation Analysis

The selection of key dependent and independent variables contained in the survey questionnaire was the first priority of this assessment. In conjunction with the analytical framework are seven key dependent variables which include gender, age group, field of study, previous experience of studying in English speaking countries, duration of Korean students' current visit, Korean students' experience of spending time with a native speaker, and Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia. Reliability of key independent variables was tested before cross-tabulation analysis. According to the results of a reliability test (Cronbach's alpha values), values obtained indicated that there are three groups of items which could represent each key variable. They are the difficulties of reading (4-a, 4-b, 4-c, and 4-d), the difficulties of writing (4-e, 4-f, 4-g, and 4-h) and the difficulties of speaking (4-j. 4-k, and 4-l) (see Appendix II survey questionnaire). However, it was found that the reliability of items dealing with the difficulties of listening, understanding of pronunciation and ten questions in line with cultural experiences and difficulties (different social academic environment, different teaching system and different learning system) in

the Australian academic mode were weak. Therefore these questions were cross tabulated separately. This is illustrated in Table 4.1.2

Table 4.1.2: Distribution of questions for cross-tabulation analysis

Subject / Items	Survey items for English language difficulties in the Australian academic mode	Survey items for cultural experiences and difficulties in the Australian academic mode	Self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level of English	Students' judgement of relative time appropriately spent on elements of English education	Number of outcomes revealed by cross-tabulation analysis
Level of difficulties in speaking	[4j, 4k, & 4l]				1
Level of difficulties in listening	4i				1
Level of difficulties in understanding of English pronunciation	4n				1
Level of difficulties in reading	[4a, 4b, 4c, & 4d]				1
Level of difficulties in writing	[4e, 4f, 4g, & 4h]				0
Influence of different academic practices		5a			2
Influence of different social academic environment		5d			1
Influence of different teaching system		5f			1
Influence of different learning system		5g			1
Present Korean students' proficiency level of speaking English			3h-a		2
Present Korean students' proficiency level of listening English			3h-b		2
Present Korean students' proficiency level of reading English			3h-c		3
Present Korean students' proficiency level of writing English			3h-d		2
Reading comprehension				6a	1
Practising English grammar				6c	1
Memorising vocabularies				6d	2
Memorising idioms				6e	1

Note: The questions placed inside the bracket [ ] are calculated by the following.

[4j + 4k + 4l / 3] = the new score representing the difficulties of speaking.
[4a + 4b + 4c +4d / 4] = the new score representing the difficulties of reading.
[4e + 4f + 4g + 4h / 4] = the new score representing the difficulties of writing.

There are seven selected independent variables applied to cross-tabulating the data.

1. Gender [1-a].
2. Age group [1-b].Field of study [1-c].
3. Field of study [1-c].
4. Previous experience of studying in English speaking countries [1-d].
5. Duration of Korean students' current visit [1-j].
6. Korean students' experience of spending time with a native speaker [2-b].
7. Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia [3-a].

4.2.1 Reliability test for cross-tabulation analysis

There are a total of nine dependent variables, five of which (i.e., levels of difficulty in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and cultural variation) are composite variables of specific items in the survey (refer to Table 6.1). A series of Cronbach's alpha analysis were conducted to test the reliability of each composite variable. Results showed high reliability scores for level of difficulties in reading = 0.63, level of difficulties in speaking = 0.87, level of difficulties in writing = 0.83. However, levels of difficulty in listening had low Cronbach's alpha value = 0.31, levels of difficulty in adapting cultural differences had reliable Cronbach's alpha value = 0.60, but did not find any significant relations when questions were grouped together. The two items that made up levels of difficulty in listening and cultural variations were analysed individually. The outcomes described in this chapter are based on "The ANOVA test" ($P<0.05$) which is designed for clarifying the differences between the two scores. In the case of more than two levels, "The Tukey test" is applied to identify significant differences ($P<0.05$) among levels of independent variables.

4.3 Method of a Comparative Study

In terms of academic practices and the rationale of designing the program, TAFE and Foundation Studies Program have a similar pattern of academic practice and purpose. Korean students who participated in the survey are divided into three different groups which include a group of Korean students who undertook TAFE or Foundation Studies Programs, a group of Korean students who experienced Australian secondary school prior to entering the Australian higher education program, and a group of Korean students who directly enrolled in ELICOS programs and studied particularly in preparation for official English test(s) programs. In order to prepare this comparative study, Korean students participated in responding a question 3-d in the survey are rearranged by coding

new capital letters which represent these new three dependent variables (A, B, and C) for this investigation. This is categorised by Table 4.3.3.

Table 4.3.3: New decoded dependent variables

Code	Representation
A	Korean students who had undertaken TAFE or Foundation Studies Programs.
B	Korean students who had undertaken Australian secondary school programs.
C	Korean students who had undertaken preparation for official English language test(s) programs.

To clarify the difference among these three groups of Korean students, "the Tukey test" was applied again to identify significant differences ($P<0.05$) among levels of selected independent variables which was shown in cross-tabulation analysis.

4.4 Method of Follow-up Investigation

In terms of follow-up investigation for this study, the information reported in this chapter is an important step towards gaining concrete understanding and in-depth knowledge of the difficulties Korean students face in the Australian academic context, including qualitative analysis of experiences of English language and cultural variations through a medium of conducting interviews. One focus of this chapter is reporting outcomes of semi-structured interviews with four Korean students (one female and three males) who participated in the survey component of this study. These students were selected from different preparation programs designed to prepare for later entry to tertiary courses which includes two students who undertook Australian secondary school programs, one student who undertook a Foundation Studies Program (University Preparatory Program) and one student who participated in an ELICOS program. In terms of assessing teaching staff's perspectives regarding the issues canvassed in this study, four academics (two females and two males) also participated in interviews and the level of their teaching is also considered (three academics in university level and one Foundation Studies Program level. Finally, four Korean English teachers participated in this study (one university lecturer, one middle school English teacher and two English teachers in private English institutions in Korea).

All interviewees expressed their willingness to participate in this assessment and filled out a consent form before conducting interviews. The author visited three different campuses to conduct interviews with Korean students on their home campus. Interviews with academics were also held

on four different campuses at which they worked. Interviews with two Korean English teachers were conducted by internet phone and the other two Korean English teachers were interviewed in Australia. All contents of conversations and words were treated as important so as not to ignore any significant findings or suggestions that might be relevant to the main theme of this study. Each interview lasted about 40-60 minutes per participant and was recorded on audio tapes. All interviewees were given open-ended questions in relation to their experiences and perspectives on the English language difficulties and cross-cultural issues raised by previous chapters. These questions asked in this study are provided in Appendix IV.

4.5 The Research Design

Research design is an important phase in conducting research. It can be described as drawing a preliminary picture of the expected final product because the researcher needs to constantly bear in mind the main aim of the research. Within this context, the researcher considers that the purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of Korean international students' experiences in adapting to English language and cultural variations, and most importantly, the impact of these factors on their academic performance in Australian undergraduate programs.

The first stage of the research included a review of the literature in the field, the development and piloting of a survey questionnaire and the administration of the survey questionnaire proper. A survey duplicate questionnaire was written in English and Korean. The questionnaire was composed of three major parts to provide details of previous educational background, second Korean students' experiences with English language problems, and their views about cultural variations in the Australian undergraduate academic context. The second stage of this research was to take the issues and findings of the survey and develop for further in-depth investigation. This research design is presented in Figure 4.1.

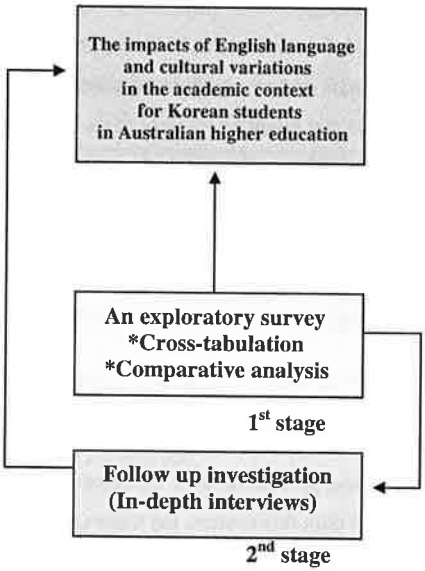

Figure 4.1: Diagram of the research design

4.6 Research Instruments

4.6.1 Document analysis

The historical method was utilised as the first research instrument because it involved studying, understanding, and explaining past events. When analysing the issue of changes in Korean use of English language teaching pedagogies and further implications for teachers and students perspectives, the English language teaching sector in Korea especially was an important analytical dimension to consider for this research topic.

Sproull (1995, pp. 152-153) noted that it is important to realise that the historical method has its limitations because there is no control over data collection of historical events or artefacts, and there are many uncertainties about their relevance as records. The purpose of historical research in the early chapters was to arrive at an understanding concerning cause, effects, and changes of past occurrences that may explain and anticipate present and future situations. It can be argued that finding the key aspects of English language education and understanding the important changes in education policies was to be significant to analysis in this research.

4.6.2 The survey questionnaire

The central questions raised in this research clearly require application of survey methodology as a research instrument using exploratory survey questionnaires to obtain reliable information. Thorough theoretical formation of the questionnaire, therefore, is essential, because a critically structured survey could provide a comprehensive result. This information should provide credible descriptions and explanations of the wide range of individual experiences of Korean international students in Southeast Queensland tertiary institutions. The use of survey questionnaires is a low cost way of obtaining data of significant detail compared to other alternatives, such as face to face interviewing of participants. Another benefit is that a wide geographical area can easily be reached using postal services. An important reason for choosing this method is the confidentiality and anonymity it provides for the respondents, especially since some of the items might be considered sensitive because of the degree of self disclosure involved and evaluative responses requested.

Prior to undertaking the survey questionnaire (and, later, the in-depth interviewing for the case studies), the researcher had obtained 'Ethical Clearance' as required by the Faculty of Education and the University of Southern Queensland. Central to this approval was the assurance of the confidentiality and anonymity for the subjects who will be the informants of the survey questionnaires (and the in-depth interviewing) as mentioned above. While confidentiality can be assured with other data gathering methods, a survey research questionnaire completed independently provides the same guarantee. The survey instrument allowed participants to respond at their own convenience and without any time constraints for completion. Korean international students were able to reflect on issues raised in the questionnaire at their own individual convenience, so the data should be more considered and accurate.

However, the survey questionnaire method also has limitations. Response rates can be low. In the case of significantly reduced responses, the validity of data could be prejudiced. A pilot study to refine the survey instrument, and assurances of confidentiality, helped to facilitate timely responses by the target population. In addition, the researcher conducted follow up e-mails on two further occasions, approximately two days apart.

4.6.3 In-depth interviews

Merriam (1988) described a case study as "an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or social group". The main concerns in

choosing case studies for this research are that, "they are particularistic, in that they focus on a specific situation or phenomenon: they are descriptive; and they are heuristic; they offer insights into the phenomenon under study" (Merriam, 1988, p.21). This qualitative research paradigm is important in leading research items and making them explicit at the outset of a case study investigation. The researcher conducted in–depth interviews as a part of the case studies. The methodology of in-depth interviews was an important research instrument that ensured uniformly framed requests were reliable, and that appropriate information would relate more closely to the research aims. Essential preparation for any in-depth interviews was the organisation, planning and delivery of the questions (using a sequence of carefully specified and framed questions) to elicit consistent information related to the research objectives. In-depth interviewing provided the interviewer with better quality information, which also highlighted areas requiring further investigation. Although an effective and practical way of obtaining information, in-depth interviews are more costly than some other information gathering techniques. This research instrument, therefore, was structured in detail to cover relevant issues that would not be fully obtained from the survey questionnaire. The trial of this in-depth interview method and development of its process as a part of the case studies, were important for the validity of information. The researcher continuously revised the interview questionnaire and updated the items related to this study.

This enabled the researcher to address the central research questions with a much greater degree of confidence. Table 4.6.3 indicates that there are alternative research questions that should be clarified by the means of three research instruments, however research findings and results would not be provided uniformly by using all research instruments. For instance, the first research question raised here obtained good quality information through the different types of approach, however, document findings and review of the literature proved to be more appropriate in providing solutions. The researcher has marked X in the box at the relevant range between research questions and research instruments.

Table 4.6.3: Map of data collection

Research instruments / Research Questions	Document findings & literature review	Survey questionnaire	In-depth interviews
English language learning contextual background of Korean students	X	X	X
The main strategic preparation for Korean students to enter Australian undergraduate programs		X	X
The main difficulties for Korean students in adapting to English language in Australian undergraduate academic mode	X	X	X
The cultural variations affecting Korean students' adjustment in academic context in Australian undergraduate programs	X	X	X
Possible recommendations to better prepare Korean students for studying in Australian undergraduate programs			X

4.7 Summary

This chapter has examined the importance and the requirements of methodology and justified the research design to conduct this research. There were three different steps applied which include conducting an exploratory survey. After the survey results were extracted, this study applied to cross-tabulation and then a comparative study method set up to provide in-depth findings related to the main aim of this research. Follow up investigation was administered as the last part of methodology. In line with this analytical approach, the next chapter provides a first-level of survey results.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Descriptive Results of the Survey

This chapter presents a first-level analysis of data generated by the survey questionnaire focusing on the central questions of the research. It placed emphasis on the academic and cultural difficulties of Korean overseas students' experiences while undertaking courses delivered in English in the Australian undergraduate programs. The survey was administered from late 2004 to early 2005 to provide fundamental data, identifying potential obstacles, problems and further issues, in the every day academic life of Korean students.

5.1 Composition of the Survey

The survey was composed of seven parts in total providing demographic information, and asking Korean students about their experiences in learning the English language in Korea and their background concerns; their current educational background and preparation to enter tertiary level institutions in Australia; the degree of their English language difficulties in the Australian higher education academic mode; the concept of their cultural experiences and difficulties in adapting to Australian academic life. The survey also provided information on how Korean students intended to distribute their time on elements of English education based on their experiences in Australia. Lastly, the survey asked students to provide comments or any recommendations with regard to the issues above. The survey document is provided in Appendix II.

5.2 Demographic Information

The survey asked a question about the gender of the Korean students. The results of their responses appear in Table 5.2 (a).

Table 5.2 (a): Gender distribution of Korean students (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	77	50.7	50.7
	Female	75	49.3	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	

Of the total of 152 Korean students who participated and returned the survey, 77 were male students (50.7%) and 75 were female students (49.3%). The composition of Korean students who participating in this survey was evenly distributed with regard to gender.

The survey posed a question regarding the age distribution of Korean students. The results are shown in Table 5.2 (b).

Table 5.2 (b): Age distribution of Korean students (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 20	22	14.5	14.5
	20~30	105	69.1	83.6
	Over 30	25	16.4	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	

Of the total respondents, the main age group in this research was between 20 and 30 years of age. One hundred and five students (69.1%) were counted in this age group. Twenty-two students were less than 20 years old (14.5%), and twenty-five (16.4%) students were over 30 years old. The results indicate that 83.6 percent of Korean students were less than 30 years of age. This is usually the main group who apply for admissions, mainly comprised high school graduates aged less than 20 years old, in both Korea and Australia. The proportion of the 20~30 year age group is much greater than the under 20 age group in the survey. This implies that Korean students studying in Australian undergraduate programs are 'lagging behind' compared to the general age group of applicants in Korea. These results also prove that this study is limited on adult second language acquisition with regard to age barriers which is a part of analytical framework for the study.

The survey asked a question to determine what percentage of Korean students was enrolled in various fields of study offered by Australian undergraduate programs at the time of the survey. The outcomes of the responses are provided in Table 5.2 (c).

Table 5.2 (c): Current field of study (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Arts	15	9.9	9.9
	Business & Commerce	85	55.9	66.2
	Education	7	4.6	70.9
	Information Technology	11	7.2	78.1
	Science & Engineering	15	9.9	88.1
	Other	18	11.8	100.0
	Total	151	99.3	
	Missing	1	.7	
Total		152	100.0	

In response to the question about their field of study, 85 students (55.9%) answered that they were enrolled in Business and Commerce, 18 (11.8%) responded that they were studying in other areas such as nursing, graphic design, and creative arts, while 15 students (9.9%) were studying in Arts,

Science and Engineering fields. There were also 11 students (7.2%) in Information Technology and 7 students (4.6%) studying in the Education field. These results clearly indicate that Korean students studying in Business and Commerce field are the major respondent group in this survey.

The survey asked a question about students' previous experience of studying in English speaking countries prior to study in Australian undergraduate programs. Table 5.2 (d) shows this distribution.

Table 5.2(d): Korean students' previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	26.3	26.5
	No	111	73.0	100.0
	Total	151	99.3	
	Missing	1	.7	
Total		152	100.0	

Of the total participants, only 40 students (26.3%) answered that they had previously studied in English speaking countries. There is 1 missing response related to this question. One hundred and eleven students (73%) indicated that they had not been to any English speaking countries before coming to Australia. Most Korean students came to Australia for their first experience of an English speaking country.

Otherwise, of the 40 respondents who previously studied in English speaking countries, twelve (30%) students had been to New Zealand, 9 (22.5%) students had studied in Australia, 8 (20%) students had been to USA, and 6 (15%) students had been to other English speaking countries such as Philippines and Malaysia. According to the information published in the JoongAng Daily Korean newspaper (2004), Korean parents are now looking for alternative options for their children's study destination such as Malaysia, India, South Africa, Philippines, and Fiji. The most important benefit of selecting those countries is they are less expensive compared to other countries. Five (12.5%) students had been to Canada. In response to the question concerning when students commenced their previous study of English in English speaking countries' education programs, only 32 students answered in total. Thirteen (40.6%) students began English medium study at university level, 9 (28.1%) students studied at high school level, 5 (15.6%) students commenced their study at middle school level, 2 (6.3%) students began to study English at primary school, 2 (6.3%) students began to study at postgraduate and above level, and only 1 (3.1%) student began to study at kindergarten level in the previous English speaking countries' education programs.

With regard to the question asked about duration of stay in other English speaking countries' education programs, of the total of 39 students who responded in full to this question, 14 (35.9%) reported that they had been to previous English speaking countries' education programs over 48 months, 12 (30.8%) students responded that they had been there less than 12 months, 11 (28.2%) students answered that they had stayed for 13 to 24 months, and only 2 (5.1%) students answered that they had been there 25 to 48 months. The results indicate that Korean students' duration of experiencing other English speaking countries' education programs is likely to be mainly divided into a longer stay group (over 48 months) and a shorter stay group (less than 12 months).

Students were also asked about their previous visit(s) to Australia, and their responses appear in Table 5.2 (e).

Table 5.2 (e): Previous Korean students' visit(s) to Australia (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	50	32.9	33.6
	No	99	65.1	100.0
	Total	149	98.0	
	Missing	3	2.0	
Total		152	100.0	

As Table 4.2(e) shows, 50 (32.9%) students replied that they had been to Australia before, whereas 99 (65.1%) students answered that they had never been to Australia.

Of the 50 respondents who had been to Australia, the main reasons for their visits were for a holiday (46%) and education (42%). The survey asked a question about the duration of Korean students' current visit to Australia. Table 5.2 (f) presents these responses.

Table 5.2 (f): Duration of Korean students' current visit (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 12 months	31	20.4	20.7
	13~24 months	25	16.4	37.3
	25~48 months	39	25.7	63.3
	> 48 months	55	36.2	100.0
	Total	150	98.7	
	Missing	2	1.3	
Total		152	100.0	

Apart from 2 missing data, 55 (36.2%) students indicated that they have been in Australia for over 48 months, 39 (25.7%) students have been in Australia for 25 to 48 months, 31 (20.4%) students

have been in Australia for less than 12 months, and 25 (16.4%) students answered that they have been in Australia for 13 to 24 months in total.

General background information on the Korean students in this region shows a gender distribution that is fairly balanced between males and females. The age distribution indicates that the age groups from 20 to 30 and over 30 are dominant. The choice of the Australian higher education program for study could indicate that many students are trying to take a new opportunity for studies overseas. The age distribution indicates that this research deals with adult learning acquisition. Most respondents are currently enrolled in Business and Commerce fields. Lastly, the period of students' current stays in Australia is generally more than 48 months. The duration of the Korean students' current visit is fairly evenly distributed over the periods less than 12 months; however, the majority have been longer in Australia.

5.3 Korean Students' Experience in Learning English Language in Korea

This part of the survey provides data about the background information related to Korean students' experience in learning English as a second language in Korea. To begin with, the survey asked a question about the time English was first learned in the Korean school system. This data is illustrated in Figure 5.3 (a) below.

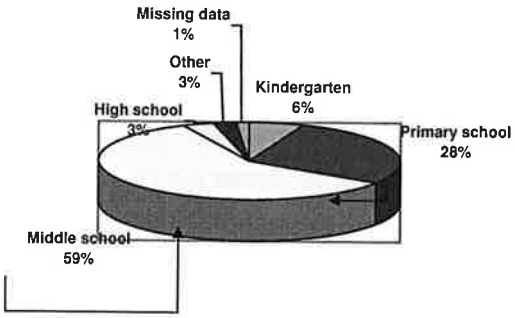

Figure 5.3 (a): When English is first learned in the Korean school system (N=152)

More than half of the respondents, 89 (58.6%) answered that they began to learn English when they first went to middle school in Korea (year seven in the Australian school system). Forty-three (28.3%) students responded that they started to learn English in primary school. This is a result of

the Korean educational reform that instituted a new program for English education in 1997. This educational reform suggested that the primary school system needs to initiate English language classes, delivered in English, from year 3 (year 4 in the Australian school system) (Madang21, 2003). Nine (5.9%) students responded that they began to learn English when they were at Kindergarten.

The survey posed a question about Korean students' experience of spending time with a native speaker in Korea. Table 5.3 (a) shows the responses.

Table 5.3 (a): Korean students' experience of spending time with a native speaker (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	68	44.7	45.0
	No	83	54.6	100.0
	Total	151	99.3	
	Missing	1	.7	
Total		152	100.0	

More than half of the respondents, 83 (54.6%) indicated that they had not had the chance to experience native English speakers in their school life in Korea. Sixty- eight (44.7%) answered that they had native English speakers as their teachers.

The survey asked for estimations by the Korean students of the time they spent in learning English with a native speaker during their school life in Korea. Responses are found in Table 5.3 (b).

Table 5.3 (b): Korean students' time spent in learning English with a native speaker during their school life in Korea (N=68)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little time (1~10%)	17	25.0	25.0
	A fair amount of time (11~25%)	16	23.5	48.5
	A moderate amount of time (26~40%)	14	20.6	69.1
	A substantial amount of time (41~55%)	9	13.2	82.3
	Much of the time (56~70%)	5	7.4	89.7
	Most of the time (71% or more)	7	10.3	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	
Total		68	100.0	

Of a total of 68 respondents, 17 (25%) responded that they had only experienced a little time in learning English with native English teachers. Sixteen (23.5%) students answered that they had experienced a fair amount of time and 14 (20.6%) students indicated that a moderate amount of time had been given to them. Nine (13.2%) students responded that they had a substantial amount

of time with native English teachers and only 5 (7.4%) students indicated that they had spent much of the time with them. Seven (10.3%) students answered that they had spend most of the time with native English teachers. These outcomes indicate that majority of Korean students were not likely to have an enough opportunity to learn English with native English teachers.

Students were also asked about the main focus of English language instruction by native English teachers in Korea. Figure 5.3 (b) shows students' self-report on the focus of this aspect.

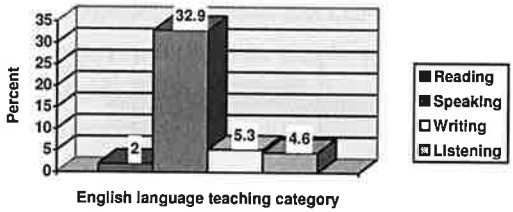

Figure 5.3 (b): The main focus of instruction by native English teachers in Korea (N=68)

Of the total of 68 responses to this question, 50 (32.9%) students answered that proficiency in speaking English was the main focus. Eight (5.3%) students indicated that writing was the priority and 7 (4.6%) students indicated that listening was the main focus. Only 3 (2%) students responded that reading was the major concern of their native English speaking teachers. This outcome clearly indicates that native English teachers primarily concentrated on improving the proficiency level of speaking for Korean students in Korea.

The survey investigated how much time Korean students spent learning English with Korean teachers who had English as a second language. Their responses appear in Table 5.3 (c).

Table 5.3 (c): Korean students' time spent in learning English with Korean teachers who had English as a second language (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little of the time (1~10%)	34	22.4	23.4
	A fair amount of time (11~25%)	25	16.4	40.7
	A moderate amount of time (26~40%)	31	20.4	62.1
	A substantial amount of time (41~55%)	19	12.5	75.2
	Much of the time (56~70%)	19	12.5	88.3
	Most of the time (71% or more)	17	11.2	100.0
	Total	145	95.4	
	Missing	7	4.6	
Total		152	100.0	

Of the total of 152 students, 145 responded and 7 answers were missing. Thirty-four (22.4%) stated they spent a little time, 25 (16.4%) stated they spent a fair amount of time, 31 (20.4%) responded they spent a moderate amount of time, 19 (12.5%) stated they spent a substantial amount of time, 19 (12.5%) indicated they spent much of the time, and 17 (11.2%) responded that they spent most of the time. These results imply that Korean students were likely to have substantial opportunity to be given time spent in learning English with Korean English teachers.

In contrast, the main focus of Korean students being taught English by Korean English teachers is different from the native English teachers' focus. Figure 5.3 (c) shows students' self-report on the main focus of instruction by Korean teachers of English.

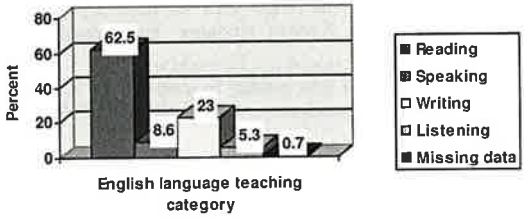

Figure 5.3 (c): The main focus of instruction by Korean English teachers in Korea (N=152)

Ninety-five (62.5%) students indicated that reading skill was the first priority, writing was next, and last was speaking. Only eight (5.3%) students answered that Korean English teachers focused their instruction on listening skills as a priority. Compared to the result of the native English teachers' focus on teaching English, this outcome indicates that reading skill was the main focus given by Korean English teachers.

The survey, therefore, raised the issue of the most important English language skills the Korean students needed in their study in Korea. The results are illustrated in Figure 5.3 (d).

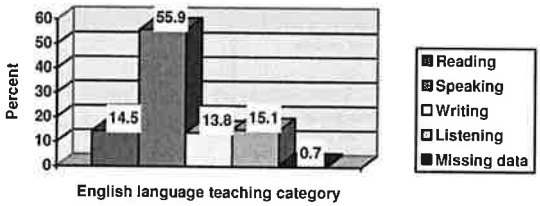

Figure 5.3 (d): The most important English language skills Korean students needed in their study in Korea (N=152)

The outcomes obtained in this question show a similar pattern with Figure 4.5(b). Of the total of 152 respondents, 20 (14.5%) students responded that reading skill was needed as a main focus. Eight three (55.9%) students indicated that speaking was the priority for their needs and 19 (13.8%) students responded that writing skill was the most important skill they need. Twenty one (15.1%) students indicated that listening was the most important skill. Nine (0.7%) students' responses were missing in these data. The outcomes indicate what language skills Korean students really wanted to obtain from English teaching categories were largely focused on improving speaking skills. It means that the main focus of native English teachers was consistent with Korean students' demands for their priority when learning English in Korea. In addition, it also shows that the main focus of Korean English teachers does not match with Korean students' priority in learning English.

The survey asked a question about Korean students' experiences in attending ELICOS like programs in Korea. The outcomes are as follows in Table 5.3 (d).

Table 5.3 (d): Korean students' experience of attending ELICOS like programs in Korea (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	47	30.9	31.1
	No	104	68.4	100.0
	Total	151	99.3	
	Missing	1	.7	
Total		152	100.0	

Most students had not attended ELICOS like programs delivered in Korea. Of the total of 152 respondents, 104 (68.4%) students indicated that they did not attend English language school programs in Korea. Only 47 (30.9%) students responded that they had been enrolled in these

programs offered in Korea. It means that most Korean students were likely to have experiences in ELICOS programs when they came to Australia.

Students were asked to indicate English proficiency level(s) achieved in the ELICOS like program. The outcomes obtained are described in Table 5.3 (e).

Table 5.3 (e): The level Korean students achieved in that ELICOS like programs in Korea (N=47)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pre-intermediate	6	12.8	12.8
	Intermediate	14	29.8	42.6
	Upper-intermediate	10	21.3	63.9
	Advanced	17	36.1	100.0
	Other	0	0	
Total		47	100.0	

Of the total of 47 respondents, 17 (36.1%) students reported that they believe themselves in the advanced level of the proficiency of English language and 14 (29.8%) students responded that they were in intermediate level. This program is not exactly the same in Australia as that provided in Korea. Most English language programs are designed to improve English skills. These programs are usually offered by private institutions or universities in Korea. There are several similar programs undertaken by these institutions in order to meet increasing students' demand. It shows that English language programs are very important foundations, especially for students who seek an English study destination abroad.

Concluding this part of the survey, students were asked whether they had sat any official English test in Korea. (see Table 5.3 (f)).

Table 5.3 (f): Korean students' experience of taking any kind of official English test in Korea (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	56	36.8	37.3
	No	94	61.8	100.0
	Total	150	98.7	
	Missing	2	1.3	
Total		152	100.0	

Of the total of 152 respondents, only 56 (36.8%) students answered that they had sat for an official English test before coming to Australia. This result implies that Korean students' previous

preparation to enter Australian undergraduate programs was not appropriately considered before coming to Australia.

The survey also requested the name of English test(s) students completed in Korea. The responses are shown in Figure 5.3 (e).

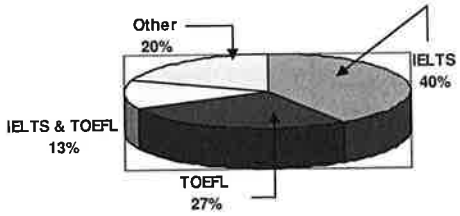

Figure 5.3 (e): The name of English test(s) Korean students completed in Korea (N=56)

Twenty-three (41.1%) students indicated that they had selected IELTS as their official English test in Korea. This result implies that there were a number of students who made preparations for studying in Australia. Fifteen (26.8%) students have taken a TOEFL test and 7 (12.5%) students have taken both IELTS and a TOEFL test. Eleven (19.6%) students answered that they chose other tests; however, all students who chose another category took the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) test. TOEIC is specially designed for measuring the ability of non-native English speaking people to use English in everyday work activities.

The last question in this section asked a question about English test result(s) students achieved in Korea. The results are presented in Table 5.3 (g).

Table 5.3 (g): The official English test result(s) Korean students achieved in Korea

Test results \ The name of English test				IELTS	Paper based TOEFL	Computer based TOEFL	Other (TOEIC)
IELTS	Paper based TOEFL	Computer based TOEFL	Other (TOEIC)	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
2.00	470.00	198.00	650.00	1	1	1	1
4.50	500.00	210.00	670.00	1	1	1	1
5.00	520.00	218.00	700.00	1	1	1	1
5.50	535.00	240.00	810.00	5	1	1	1
6.00	550.00	245.00	820.00	12	1	1	1
6.50	575.00	250.00	850.00	7	1	2	1
7.00	580.00		860.00	3	1		1
7.50	590.00		870.00	1	1		2
	600.00		900.00		1		1
Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean				
5.97	**546.67**	**230.14**	**800.00**				
Total				**31**	**9**	**7**	**10**

- IELTS: International English Language Testing System
- TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language
- TOEIC: Test of English for International Communication

Apart from the new educational reform, the fact that Korean students in primary school were entitled to English lessons in 1997, has been effective. The major group of tertiary level Korean students is now composed of students who were taught English when they were in middle school. In addition, almost half of the respondents revealed that they had a chance to learn English with native English teachers before coming to Australia.

The most interesting result found in this section of the survey is that substantially different outcomes are obtained from the issue of Korean students being taught English by two groups of teachers. It is obvious that the main theme of native English teachers is centred on enhancing speaking skills in English language teaching. In contrast, Korean English teachers focus all their energies on improving reading skills. This will be explained in more detail later in this chapter. The survey also found that approximately 31% of the total respondents had attended an ELICOS like program at home and revealed English proficiency achieved in that program to be mostly at the intermediate level.

5.4 Korean Students' Current Educational Background and Preparation to Enter Australian Undergraduate Programs in Australia

The survey explored Korean students' current educational background and the preparation they had undertaken before entering higher education programs in Australia. The results are illustrated in Table 5.4 (a).

Table 5.4 (a): Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	88	57.9	57.9
	No	64	42.1	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	

Eighty-eight (57.9%) of the 152 students indicated that they had enrolled in an ELICOS program before commencing their current study in Australian undergraduate programs in Australia. This indicates that many Korean students had experienced learning English in an ELICOS program before commencing their studies in Australian undergraduate programs.

The survey asked what English test results Korean students achieved in Australia. The outcomes are shown in Table 5.4 (b).

Table 5.4 (b): The official English test result(s) Korean students achieved in Australia

The name of English test / Test results				IELTS	Paper based TOEFL	Computer based TOEFL	Other (TOEIC)
IELTS	Paper based TOEFL	Computer based TOEFL	Other (TOEIC)	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
5.00	480.00	208.00		1	1	1	
5.50		210.00		7		1	
6.00				20			
6.50				18			
7.00				3			
7.50				1			
Mean 5.76							
Total				**50**	**1**	**2**	**0**

Compared with the outcomes of the previous section (see Table 5.3 g), it appears that Korean students have chosen IELTS as a priority because of its recognition especially by Australian undergraduate programs. It indicates that the mean IELTS test score that Korean students achieved

in Australia is lower than the mean IELTS test score they achieved in Korea, although there are increased numbers of applicants. Most students are narrowly distributed between 6.00 and 6.50. It shows that they were close to the minimum requirement for entry to Australian undergraduate programs.

The survey queried the length of Korean students' stay in ELICOS programs in Australia. This data is presented in Table 5.4 (c).

Table 5.4 (c): The length of Korean students study in ELICOS program in Australia (N=88)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< Less than 6 Months	41	46.6	46.6
	6~12 months	38	43.2	89.8
	13~18 months	5	5.7	94.5
	> More than 18 months	3	3.4	97.9
	Missing	1	2.1	100.0
Total		88	100.0	

Of the total of 88 students (including 1 missing respondent), 41 (46.6%) students answered that they had spent less than 6 months studying in ELICOS programs. Thirty-eight (43.2%) students indicated that they were enrolled in the Australian ELICOS programs for 6 to 12 months. Almost 90% of students spent less than 12 months. It seems that the majority of Korean students did not want to stay in ELICOS programs for an extended period of time.

Students were asked what was the main preparatory program undertaken for entrance to an Australian higher education program. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 5.4 (a).

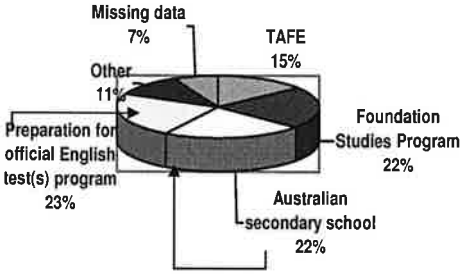

Figure 5.4 (a): The main program undertaken to prepare for entrance to Australian universities (N=152)

Out of a total of 152 students who responded, 11 students did not answer appropriately. The outcomes are distributed into five different categories with attendance in programs that were a preparation for official English test(s) having the higher frequency. Thirty-five (23%) students utilised these programs for entrance to Australian higher education programs. Thirty-four (22.4%) students answered that they had chosen Australian secondary school programs as their preliminary course before entering Australian tertiary level programs, and 33 (21.7%) students responded that they had been to foundation studies programs. Foundation studies or preparatory programs are specially designed for students from non-English backgrounds who have not yet completed high school or have not met necessary academic qualifications. These programs give students from overseas the appropriate level of English proficiency required for entry into Bachelor award programs at Australian universities (OPACS, 2005). Twenty-two (14.5%) students answered that they had been to TAFE College as bridging programs to Australian universities. Seventeen (11.2%) students indicated that they had chosen some other programs such as the general ELICOS program for their trial of direct entry.

The survey asked about the duration of time in completing the program students selected in order to enter Australian institutions. This data is presented in Table 5.4 (d).

Table 5.4 (d): Korean students spent their time on completing the prior courses to enter the Australian undergraduate programs (N=152)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< Less than 6Months	38	25.0	26.8
	6~12 months	62	40.8	70.4
	13~18 months	7	4.6	75.4
	> More than 18 months	35	23.0	100.0
	Missing	**10**	6.6	
Total		**152**	100.0	

More than 70% of the total respondents spent less than 12 months completing the program. Thirty-eight (25%) students answered that they had taken their courses for less than 6 months, and the largest group of 62 (40.8%) students indicated that they studied from 6 to 12 months. Only 7 (4.6%) students indicated that they undertook their course for 13 to 18 months. Thirty-five (23%) students responded that they spent 18 or more months completing their program. It would seem that achieving the appropriate standard of English in order to enter Australian undergraduate programs is not easy.

The survey asked students a question concerning English language tests that Korean students take to enter Australian undergraduate programs. The outcomes appear in Figure 5.4 (b).

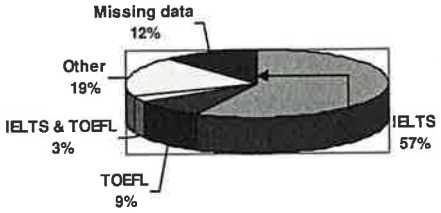

Figure 5.4 (b): The name of English tests Korean students selected for entering current Australian undergraduate programs (N=152)

In relation to this question, 88 (57.9%) students answered that they sat IELTS tests, and 13 (8.6%) the TOEFL test. Only 4 (2.6%) students sat both tests. Twenty-nine (19.1%) students indicated that they chose other English tests or categories. Most respondents who answered "other" to this question had chosen QCS (Queensland Core Skills) tests instead of these IELTS or TOFEL tests. There are also several students who responded that they had chosen the university entrance examination developed by the university itself. For example, a few students took an ISLPR (The International Second language Proficiency Ratings) test which is being used at Griffith University.

Students were asked to indicate their English proficiency level at the time they were ready to leave Korea and again for their current English proficiency levels. This is illustrated in Figure 5.4 (c).

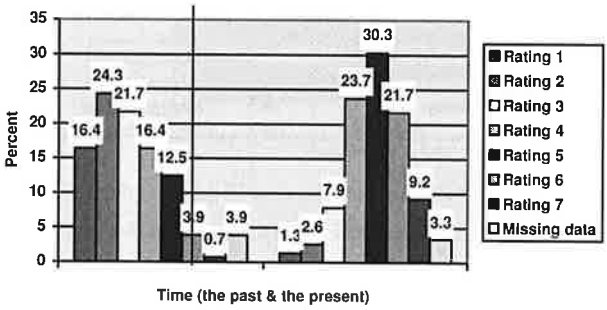

Figure 5.4 (c): Changes of self-estimation of proficiency level of speaking English (N=152)

The rating scale for each English language macroskill ranged from 1 to 7. The self-estimation of the proficiency level of their speaking English from the past to the present indicates that there are differences between the past ratings and current ratings. Thirty seven (24.3%) students estimated that they regarded their prior proficiency level of speaking English as in highest frequency at rating 2, whereas 46 (30.3%) students responded that they are now regarded as having a proficiency level of speaking English at rating 5.

Korean students' self-estimation of the proficiency level of their listening English and its results are presented in Figure 5.4 (d).

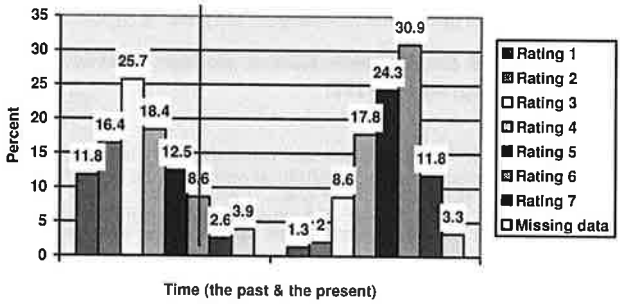

Figure 5.4 (d): Changes of self-estimation of proficiency level of listening English (N=152)

The highest frequency of students' listening estimation is at rating 3. Thirty-nine (25.7%) students answered that they previously belonged to this proficiency level, however 47 (30.9%) students had an improved proficiency level of listening English. After experiencing Australian higher education programs delivered in English current Korean students enrolled in Australian higher education programs moved up to rating 6. Compared to the changed ratings between speaking and listening, it has been found that proficiency levels of listening display a larger difference than speaking. According to the outcomes of ratings in the past, Korean students had not been granted sufficient time or opportunity to improve the proficiency level of their listening.

The survey clarified the differences between the past and present in reading. Students were asked about changing ratings of their self-estimation of the proficiency level of reading English. The results are presented in Figure 5.4 (e).

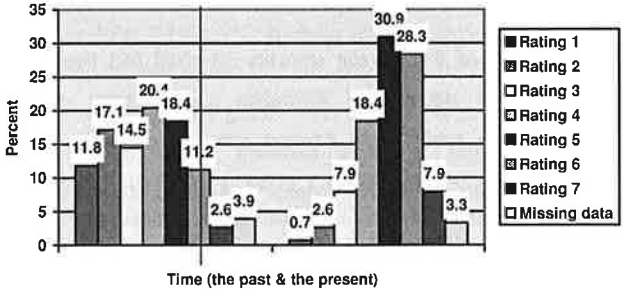

Figure 5.4 (e): Changes of self-estimation of proficiency level of reading English (N=152)

Figure 5.4 (e) indicates that there was a transition from the highest frequency at rating 4 to rating 5. This is not a remarkable change, however many students at lower rating scales have moved to higher ratings.

In response to the question about the changing patterns of Korean students' proficiency level of writing English, the outcomes extracted from the data indicated that corresponding results are almost similar to the pattern shown for writing. This is illustrated in Figure 5.4 (f).

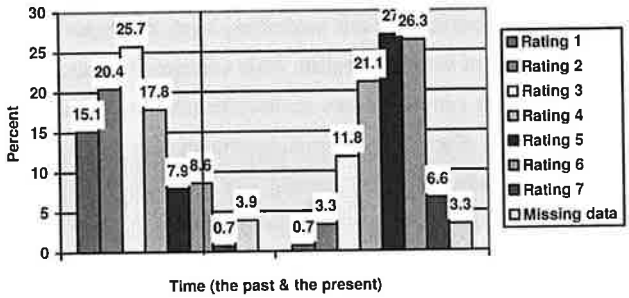

Figure 5.4 (f): Changes of self-estimation of proficiency level of writing English (N=152)

Thirty-nine (25.7%) students stated that their proficiency level of written English placed at rating scale 3 in Korea. At present, 41 (27%) students stated that they are mostly at rating 5.

In summary, more than half of the Korean students surveyed had been enrolled at ELICOS programs in Australia before studying in Australian undergraduate programs. The group participating in this survey is made up of students who are currently studying in Australian undergraduate programs. The main preliminary programs Korean students had taken to enter Australian universities are divided into three dominant types. Attending courses that are specially designed for preparing for the official English tests is the first. Studying in Australian secondary school and undertaking foundation studies programs are fairly evenly distributed. It has also been found that the duration of completing the programs students selected is usually less than 12 months, however there is a considerable group of students who have spent their time completing the programs for more than 18 months. The proficiency levels of English and the changing pattern of rating scales indicate that remarkable shifts occurred through all categories from the past to the present. All students moved positively to higher rating scales. The shifting pattern of the proficiency level of reading English differs from other categories. It reflects that Korean students' proficiency level of reading English is comparatively strong compared to other skills.

5.5 English Language Difficulties in the Australian Academic Context

This part of the survey relates to Korean students' experiences of studying in Australian higher education programs. The survey asked a question about the comparative time taken to understand reading materials related to their current field of study. It questions whether students feel they take

more time trying to understand reading materials than local Australian students. This information is shown in Figure 5.5 (a).

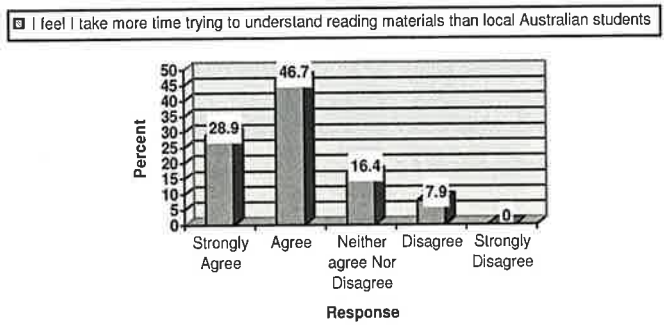

Figure 5.5 (a): Korean students' time spent on understanding reading materials (N=152)

Of the total of 152 respondents, 44 (28.9%) students strongly agreed, 71 (46.7%) students agreed, while 25 (16.4%0 students neither agreed nor disagreed. Twelve (7.9%) students answered that they disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. This data results indicate that Korean students are likely to have difficulties in reading materials written in English even though they were comparatively confident with the proficiency level of reading English in Korea.

The survey posed a question about how Korean students feel about the needs of English vocabularies associated with their study fields. The data is shown in Figure 5.5 (b).

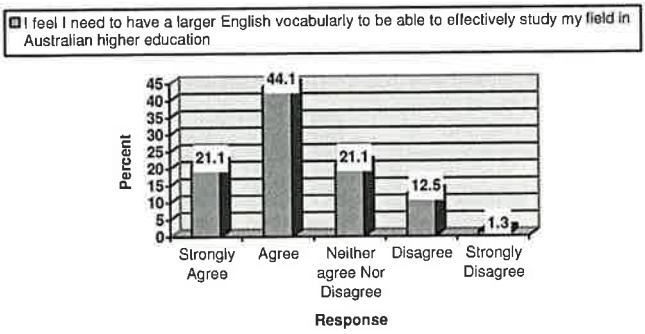

Figure 5.5 (b): The necessity of a larger volume of vocabularies for Korean students to study their fields effectively (N=152)

With regard to the question about the necessity of a larger volume of vocabularies in their current study fields, 32 (21.1%) students said that they strongly agreed, and 67 (44.1%) students agreed.

Thirty-two (21.1%) students answered that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 19 (12.5%) students disagreed, while only 2 (1.3%) students indicated that they strongly disagreed. The outcomes imply that Korean students need to study more vocabularies to cope with the current studies they are undertaking.

The survey asked a question about students' difficulty in noting the main theme or points when they read a book. This is illustrated in Figure 5.5 (c).

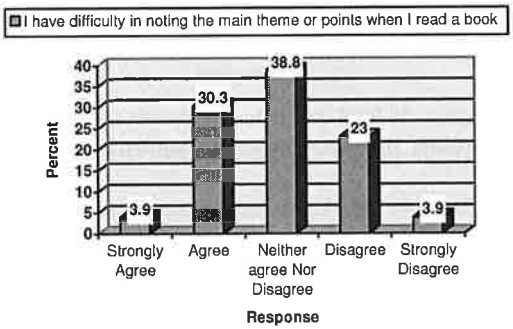

Figure 5.5 (c): Difficulty in noting the main theme when Korean students read a book (N=152)

In response to this question, 6 (3.9%) students said that they strongly agreed, 46 (30.3%) students agreed, while 59 (38.8%) students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Thirty five (23%) students answered that they disagreed, 6 (3.9%) students strongly disagreed. This data results show that the majority of Korean students' responses were placed in neither agree nor disagree. This indicates that Korean students need to improve their reading skills.

Students were also asked about difficulty in reading to develop an in-depth critical understanding of the material. This information is set out in Figure 5.5 (d).

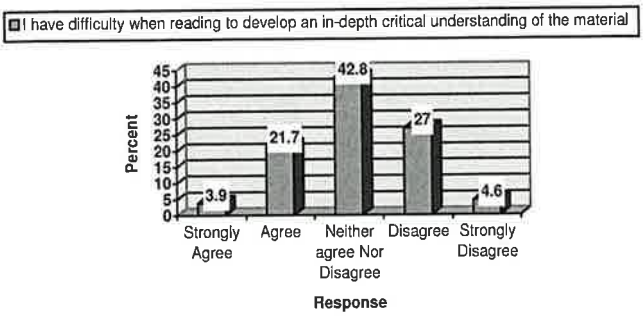

Figure 5.5 (d): Difficulty in reading to develop an in-depth critical understanding of the material (N=152)

Six (3.9%) students said that they strongly agreed, 33 (21.7%) students agreed, while 65 (42.8%) students neither agreed nor disagreed. A large number of respondents are distributed in the middle. Forty one (27%) students also disagreed, 7 (4.6%) students strongly disagreed. The outcomes of this question indicate that Korean students' adaptability into a way of critical thinking still lagged in behind on its standard.

In response to the question about Korean students' familiarity with the structure of English academic writing, more than half of the respondents answered that they are not well acquainted with the structure of English academic writing. This data is presented in Figure 5.5 (e).

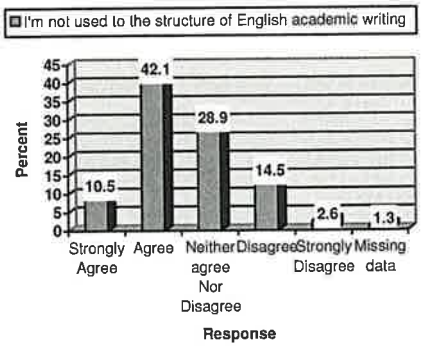

Figure 5.5 (e): Korean students' familiarity with the structure of English academic writing (N=152)

Sixteen (10.5%) students strongly agreed, 64 (42.1%) students agreed, whereas 26 (17.1%) students strongly disagreed or disagreed, while 44 (28.9%) students were not able to decide their self-

estimation on this question. This data results clearly reveal that Korean students have difficulty in adapting to the structure of English academic writing. This is a new form to which they need to adjust, but a lack of practice and ignorance about the importance of academic writing structure are likely to bring them to this difficulty.

The survey asked a question about students' difficulty in expressing their ideas when writing in English. The data is shown in Figure 5.5 (f).

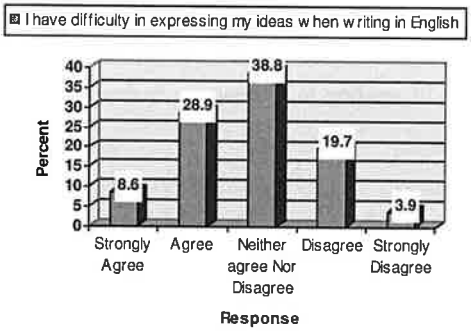

Figure 5.5 (f): Korean students' difficulty in expressing ideas when writing in English (N=152)

Thirteen (8.6%) students answered that they strongly agreed, 44 (42.1%) students said that they agreed. Fifty-nine (38.8%) students responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 30 (19.7%) students disagreed, and while 6 (3.9%) students answered that they strongly disagreed. This data indicate that expressing ideas in a written form is another difficulty for Korean students to overcome. It seems to be that this is due to a lack of writing practices in Korea.

Students were also asked about difficulty in organising their ideas in a logical sequence when writing in English. (see Figure 5.5 (g)).

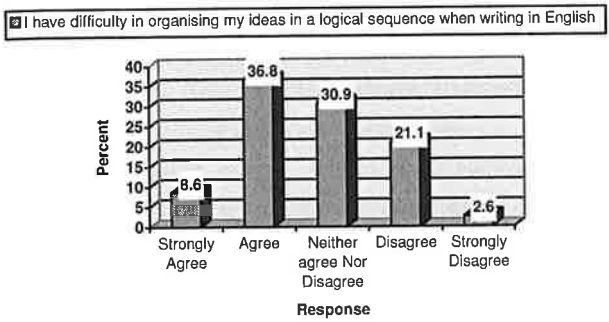

Figure 5.5 (g): Difficulty in organising ideas in logical sequence when writing English (N=152)

Thirteen (8.6%) students strongly agreed with this question, 56 (36.8%) students agreed, while 47 (30.9%) students neither agreed nor disagreed. Whereas, 32 (21.1%) students disagreed, only 4 (2.6%) students strongly disagreed. This data reveals that Korean students have difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing English. This phenomenon is closely related to the fact that Korean students have difficulty in adapting to critical thinking. This outcome provides one of the examples of how learning and teaching pedagogy impact on students' ability and the problematic characteristics of their academic performance when they undertake the course.

Students were asked to estimate the level of grammatical mistakes when writing in English. The data is shown in Figure 5.5 (h).

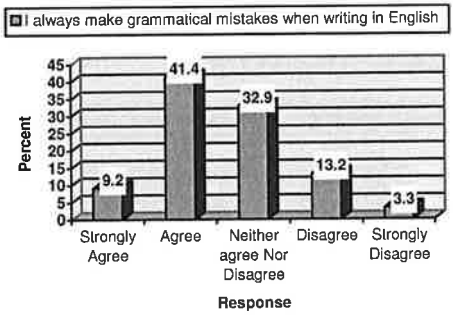

Figure 5.5 (h): Grammatical mistakes when writing in English (N=152)

In response to this question, 14 (9.2%) students said that they strongly agreed, 63 (41.4%) students agreed. Fifty (32.9%) students responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 20 (13.2%) students disagreed, while 5 (3.3%) students indicated that they strongly disagreed. This data

indicates that making grammatical mistakes when writing English is a common difficulty students encounter in Australian undergraduate programs. This would be an important issue for them to recognise how to diminish the rate of mistakes.

The survey presented a question about students' view of problems with understanding lectures when delivered in English. This data is shown in Figure 5.5 (i).

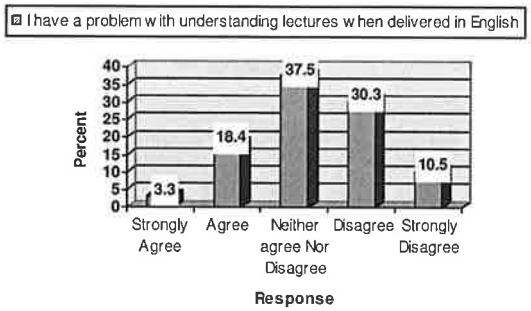

Figure 5.5 (i): Problems with understanding lectures delivered in English (N=152)

Of the total of 152 respondents, only 5 (3.3%) strongly agreed, 28 (18.4%) agreed. Fifty-seven (37.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed, 46 (30.3%) disagreed, while 16 (10.5%) said that they strongly disagreed. These outcomes show that Korean students were relatively confident with understanding lectures.

The survey provided a question about difficulty in expressing ideas when speaking in English in a tutorial class. This data is presented in Figure 5.5 (j).

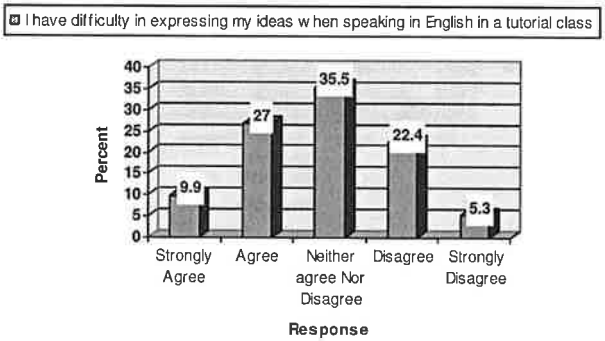

Figure 5.5 (j): Difficulty in expressing ideas when speaking in English in a tutorial class (N=152)

With regard to this question, 15 (9.9%) students strongly agreed, 41 (27%) students agreed, while 54 (35.5%) students neither agreed nor disagreed. Thirty-four (22.4%) students disagreed and 8 (5.3%) students strongly disagreed. These responses indicate that Korean students have a difficulty in expressing their ideas with speaking in English in a tutorial class.

The survey asked a question about problems with speaking when making a class presentation or seminar. This information is illustrated in Figure 5.5 (k).

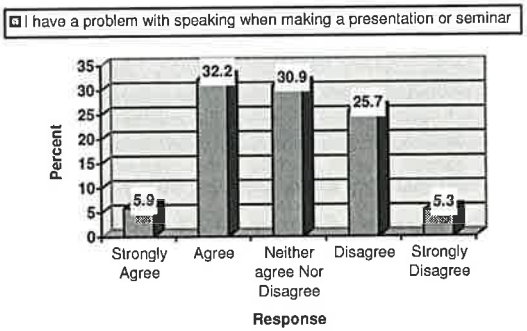

Figure 5.5 (k): Problems with speaking when making a class presentation or seminar (N=152)

Nine (5.9%) students strongly agreed, 49 (32.2%) students agreed. Fifty-four (35.5%) students responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 34 (22.4%) students disagreed, while 8 (5.3%) students said that they strongly disagreed. This data shows that Korean students have difficulty in making a presentation or participating in seminar activities when they need to speak English in Australian undergraduate programs.

The survey also asked a question about Korean students' anxiety in speaking English in front of native colleagues in class. This data is presented in Figure 5.5 (l).

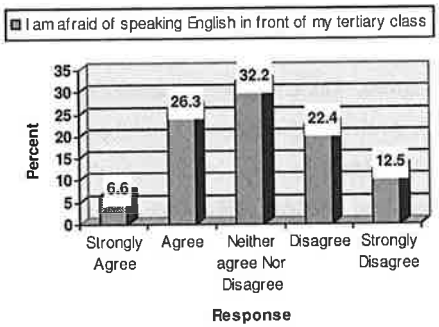

Figure 5.5 (l): Korean students' anxiety when speaking English in front of tertiary classes (N=152)

Ten (6.6%) students answered that they strongly agreed, 40 (26.3%) students agreed, 49 (32.2%) students said that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 34 (22.4%) students disagreed, and 19 (12.5%) students said that they strongly disagreed. This data indicates that Korean students' the level of anxiety when speaking English in their programs is not likely to be a problem.

The survey asked a question about students' view of differences between social and colloquial language and academic language in use. This is presented in Figure 5.5 (m).

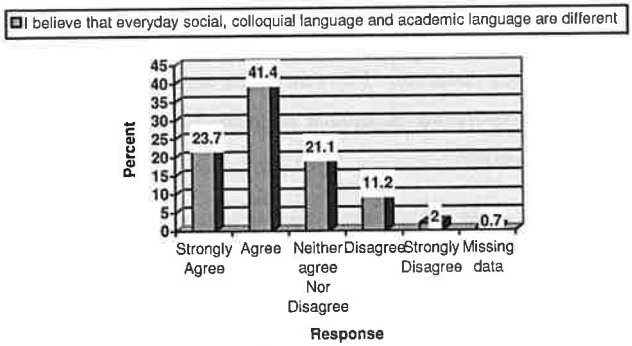

Figure 5.5 (m): Korean students' view of difference between social, colloquial and academic language in use (N=152)

Of the total of 152 respondents, 36 (23.7%) students strongly agreed and 63 (41.4%) students agreed. However, 32 (21.1%) students said that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Seventeen (11.2%) students disagreed, while only 3(2%) students strongly disagreed. One missing result is included. These responses clearly indicate that Korean students strongly believed there are

differences in the use of social, colloquial and academic language. Finding out what these differences are is an important factor for them to adjust in the Australian undergraduate programs.

A question asked Korean students about their understanding of native speakers' English pronunciation. The Figure 5.5 (n) presents the results.

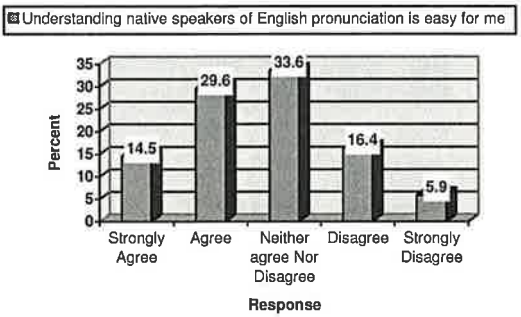

Figure 5.5 (n): Understanding Australian native speakers of English pronunciation (N=152)

Twenty-two (14.5%) students responded that they strongly agreed, 45 (29.6%) students agreed. Fifty-one (33.6%) students said that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 25 (16.4%) students disagreed, while 9 (5.9%) students strongly disagreed.

The outcomes reveal that Korean students were not comfortable in terms of understanding Australian pronunciation of English. This would be indicating that Korean students were accustomed to listening to an American accent and its pronunciation in Korea.

To sum up the results of this section of the survey, it can be said that Korean students have difficulty with the Australian academic context in general. Concerning proficiency of reading English in particular (see Figure 5.5, d), there is a slight tendency towards an opposite opinion. In a word, they do not agree about having any difficulty when reading to develop an in-depth critical understanding of the material. This outcome is in accordance with the data extracted from the responses to the question asking about changing patterns of self-estimation of proficiency level of reading English. In a similar result, it seems that Korean students do not have serious difficulty in understanding lectures delivered in English. As seen in Figure 5.4 (d), change in proficiency level of listening is the highest group of shifting from a lower level to higher level as rating at 6. Korean students are used to speaking English in tertiary classes they are currently attending. The results indicate that Korean students felt difficulty with most categories related to academic mode except fundamental requirements demanding a proficiency level.

5.6 Cultural Experiences and Difficulties in the Australian Academic Context

This part of the survey was set up to identify Korean students' experiences of cultural variations while they are studying in Australian higher education programs. Students were asked to rank activities undertaken at tertiary institutions from most to least difficult for students in adapting to tutorial participation, presenting ideas, preparing assignments, consulting academics, and participating in cooperative group work or experiment. This information is consolidated in Figure 5.6 (a).

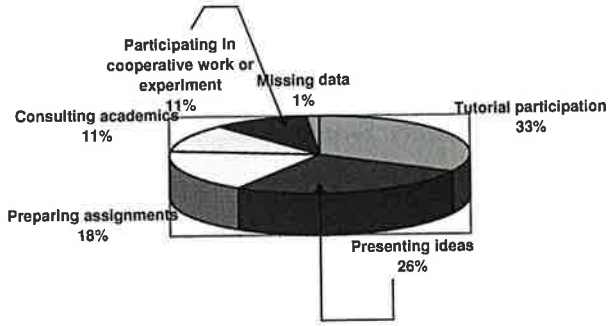

Figure 5.6 (a): Korean students' difficulty in performing activities offered by the Australian academic mode (N=152)

Of the total of 152 respondents, 50 (32.9%) students answered that tutorial participation is the most difficult activity for them to cope with. Forty (26.3%) students indicated that presenting ideas in a class is a major problem to overcome. It has been found that the third issue is preparing assignments. With regard to this, 27 (17.8%) students ranked this activity as the most difficult task to do. Seventeen (11.2%) students responded that consulting academics is the most difficult task to achieve, while 16 (10.5%) students described that participating in cooperative work or experiments presents the most difficulty. This data clearly indicate that tutorial participation was the most difficult activity that Korean students face in Australian undergraduate programs.

The following nine questions are related to Korean students' experience of cultural variations and their self-estimation in Australian higher education programs. Students were asked about the impact of religious background that is moving from a Confucianist based society into Judao-Christian

influenced society. Initial information indicates that having a different religious and social background does not cause problems with their current study. Figure 5.6 (b) shows the outcomes.

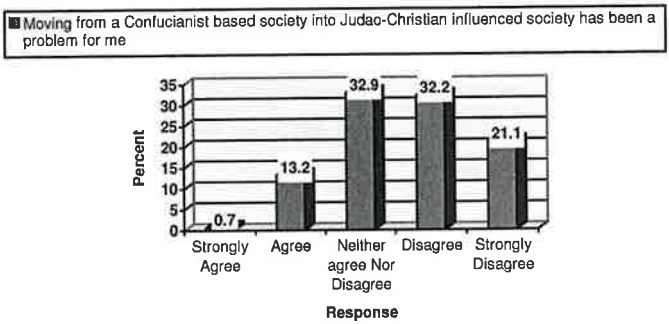

Figure 5.6 (b): Korean students' problems with Judao-Christian influenced society (N=152)

Of the total of 152 respondents, while only 1 (0.7%) student strongly agreed, 20 (13.2%) students agreed. Fifty (32.9%) students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 49 (32.2%) students disagreed, while 32 (21.1%) students said that they strongly disagreed. These figures indicate that there was little problem for Korean students caused by moving from a Confucianist society into Judao-Christian influenced society.

With regard to the question about moving from an authoritative and hierarchical society to an egalitarian-based society, no one strongly agreed to this opinion. The information is illustrated in Figure 5.6 (c).

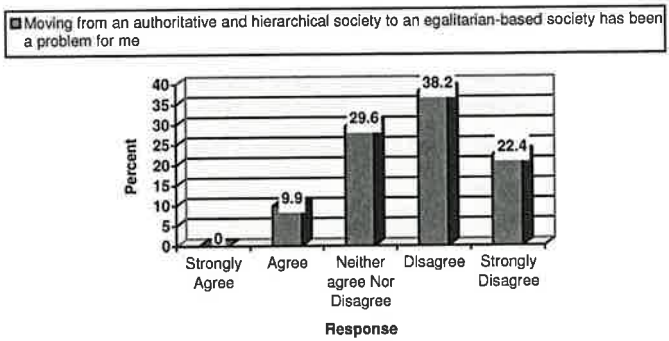

Figure 5.6 (c): Korean students' problems with an egalitarian-based society (N=152)

In responses to this question, 15 (9.9%) students responded that they believe that they encounter problems with an egalitarian-based society and its influence. Forty five (29.6%) students neither agreed nor disagreed. A large percentage of 58 (38.2%) students disagreed, while 34 (22.4%) students answered that they strongly disagreed. The outcomes indicate that there seems to be no connection between cultural adaptability and social structure. The outcomes also indicate that moving from an authoritative and hierarchical society to an egalitarian-based society is not likely creating problems for Korean students.

Students were also asked a question about moving from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society, and if it causes a problem with their cultural adaptability. The outcome is shown in Figure 5.6 (d).

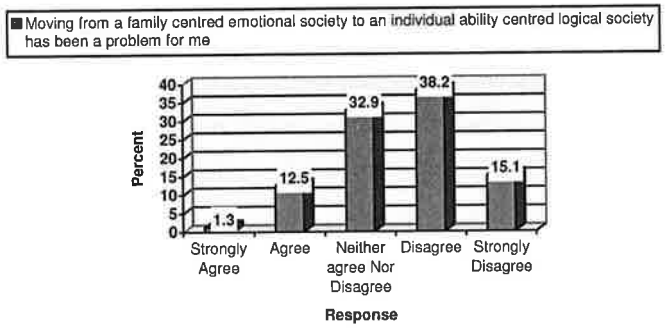

Figure 5.6 (d): Korean students' problem with individual ability centred logical society (N=152)

In response, only 2 (1.3%) students stated that they strongly agreed, while 19 (12.5%) students agreed. Fifty (32.9%) students responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 58 (38.2%) students answered that they disagreed, while 23 (15.1%) students strongly disagreed. This data shows that there were no problems caused by shifting from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society.

A question about the view of experiencing different educational practice reveals that students are not concerned about different educational circumstances and practice. The outcome is shown in Figure 5.6 (e).

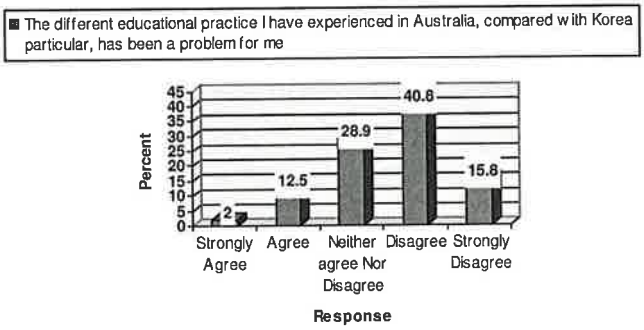

Figure 5.6 (e): Korean students' problem with different educational practice (N=152)

Only 3 (2%) students said that they strongly agreed, 19 (12.5%) students agreed. Forty four (28.9%) students responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed. A large percentage of 58 (40.8%) students responded that they disagreed, while 24 (15.8%) students said that they strongly disagreed. This data suggests that different types of educational practices that Korean students were undertaking are not likely to cause them problems.

The survey asked a question about the view of moving from a cramming-based education system to a free discussion-based education system. Figure 5.6 (f) presents the information.

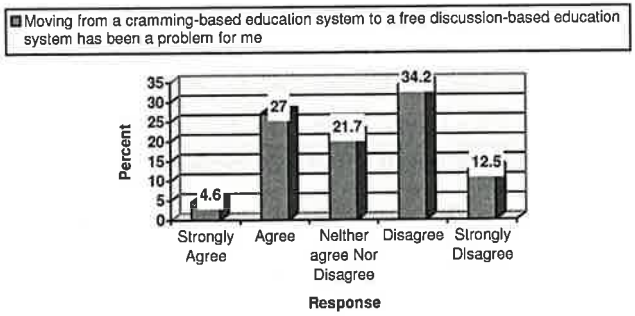

Figure 5.6 (f): Korean students' problem with discussion-based education system (N=152)

Seven (4.6%) students answered that they strongly agreed, while 41 (27%) students agreed. Thirty-three (21.7%) students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 52 (34.2%) students disagreed, while 19 (12.5%) students said that they strongly disagreed. This data implies that a typical pedagogy of educational practice they were previously accustomed to in the Korean education system does not seem to change easily.

The survey posed a question about Korean students' opinion of shifting from a teacher-centred to a student-centred learning system. Students were asked if there are any problems or difficulties presented by this different learning system. The data is presented in Figure 5.6 (g).

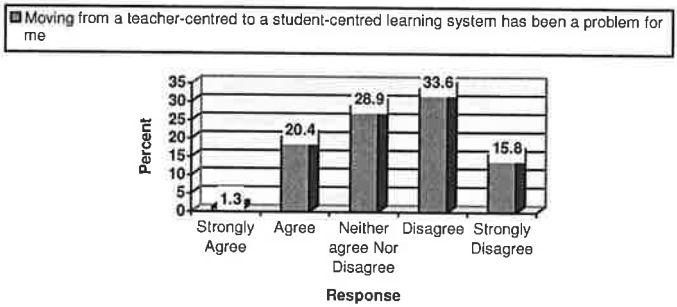

Figure 5.6 (g): Korean students' problem with students-centred learning system (N=152)

The results indicate that Korean students are not affected by this change. Two (1.3%) students responded that they strongly agreed, 31 (20.4%) students agreed, while 44 (28.9%) students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Fifty one (33.6%) students answered that they disagreed, while 19 (12.5%) students strongly disagreed. This data indicates that Korean students are not likely to be affected by this change.

Students were asked a question about the view of their stress or difficulty in moving from a system that values memorisation to one that emphasises critical thinking. The data is presented in Figure 5.6 (h).

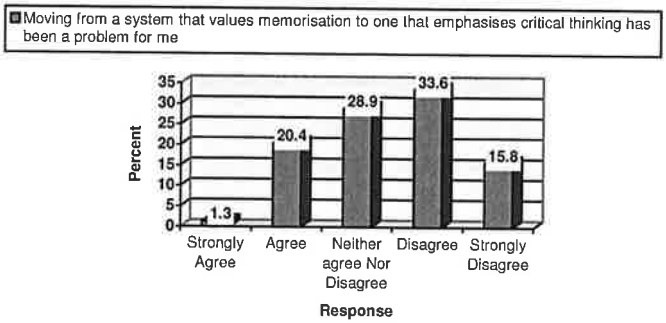

Figure 5.6 (h): Korean students' problem with learning method that emphasises critical thinking (N=152)

In response to that question, six (3.9%) students said that they strongly agreed, 31 (20.45) students agreed. Forty-three (28.3%) students answered that they neither agreed nor disagreed, 55 (36.2%) students disagreed, while 17 (11.2%) students answered that they strongly disagreed. The responses suggest that moving from an educational environment society that values a focus on memorisation to one that emphasises critical thinking does not cause problems for Korean students.

A question was asked about the view of their adaptability to writing assignments. The data results appear in Figure 5.6 (i)

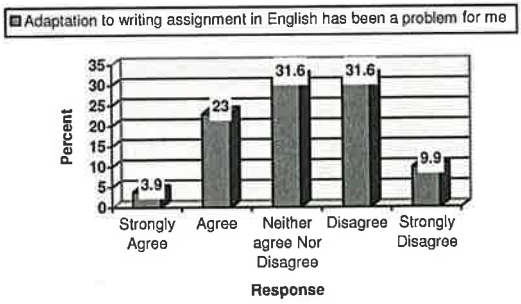

Figure 5.6 (i): Korean students' problem with adapting to writing assignment in English (N=152)

As seen in Figure 5.6 (a), preparing assignments is one of the difficulties that students must cope with. In response to this question, six (3.9%) students indicated that they strongly agreed, 35 (23%) students agreed. Forty-eight (31.6%) students said that they neither agreed nor disagreed, the same number of 48 (31.6%) students responded that they disagreed, while 15 (9.9%) students strongly disagreed. These outcomes indicate that adapting to writing assignments in English was not a critical problem.

The last question asked in this section of the survey was about the learning environment that shifts from a competitive learning context to one of greater cooperation. The data are illustrated in Figure 5.6 (j)

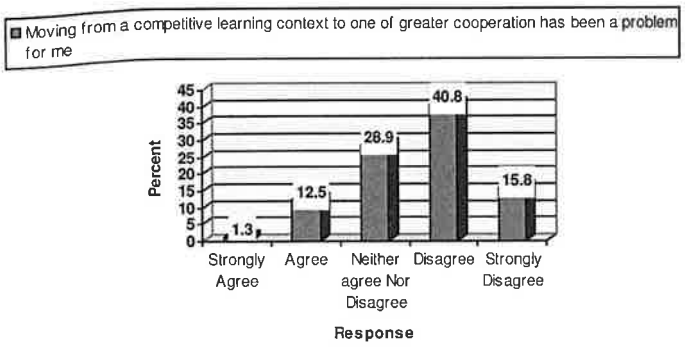

Figure 5.6 (j): Korean students' problem with cooperation type of learning context (N=152)

Only 2 (1.3%) students responded that they strongly agreed, 19 (12.55) students strongly agreed, while 44 (28.9%0 students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. A large percentage of 62 (40.8%) students answered that they disagreed, while 24 (15.8%) students strongly disagreed. There is 1 missing result included. It is likely that Korean students do not have a problem coping with this different type of learning context.

In sum, it was found that there was only two questions indicating a comparatively larger volume of responses towards agree or strongly agree. However, the outcomes of their responses to these two questions do not show clear differences compared to the rest of the other questions. The data provided a view of Korean students' changed pattern of learning and its impact on adjusting to their new environment. It was a question of how Korean students consider moving from a cramming-based education to a free discussion-based education system. The outcome obtained from the first question indicates that students have the most difficulty in adapting to tutorial participation in the academic context in Australia. Korean students have a problem with a free discussion-based educational practice. Free discussion is a typical practice required for students to actively participate in tutorial classes. The question about the view of their adaptability to writing assignments in English, presents a larger proportion of their responses to agree or strongly agree. Preparing assignments is the third most difficult task for Korean students.

5.7 Korean Students' Relative Time Spent on Elements of English Education.

This part of survey is designed for Korean students considering their experience in Australian higher education and how English is taught in Korea. The rating scales comprised of three different scales including spending more time, keeping the time the same and spending less time on the practices. Of the 152 respondents, there are eight missing responses to the first question, while other questions were answered by all 152 respondents. With regard to the first question about reading comprehension, 82 (53.9%) students responded that they are willing to spend time on this. As to practising reading original English books, two groups of 69 (45.4%) students answered that they want to allow more time for this practice or keep the same time. Seventy-seven (5.7%) students prefer the idea of keeping the same time practising English grammar. Forty-three (28.3%) students also indicate that they want to spend less time with grammar, while 32 (21.1%) students answered that they want more time with this. Korean students' judgement of relative time spent on memorising vocabularies is similar to the pattern above, with 79 (52%) students preferring to keep the same time on this. An item asked about memorising idioms also presents a similar pattern with the two questions asked above. Seventy-one (46.7%) students intend to keep the same time on memorising idioms, and 47 (30.9%) students decided that they want to spend less time on this practice.

The survey also revealed that Korean students prefer speaking English with colleagues. Eighty-nine (58.6%) students responded that they want to allow more time on this practice. The most prominent outcome obtained in this section is having a chance to speak English with native speakers. Of the total of 152 respondents, 101 (66.4%) students wish to have more time with this practice. In addition, speaking English in class is an item that students want to have more time for. The issue of practising writing in English also follows a similar pattern. Seventy-three (48%) students felt that they need to spend more time on speaking English in a class. With regard to the question about using the internet to communicate with native speakers of English, 60 (39.5%) students prefer to have more time with this practice. The last question asked in this section about practising sentence structure, and the majority of 76 (50%) respondents said that they want to spend the same amount of time. To sum up the outcomes in this section, Korean students are currently interested in developing their proficiency level of speaking English as their first priority. This outcome has an explicit link with the previous result that the most important English language skills Korean students needed in their study in Korea is speaking in English. This is illustrated by Table 4.9.

Table 5.7: Korean students' judgements of time spent on elements of English education (N=152)

Response (Percent) / Practice	More time	Keep the same	Less time	Missing data
Reading comprehension	29.6	53.9	11.2	5.3
Practising to read original English books	45.4	45.4	9.2	
Practising English grammar	21.1	50.7	28.3	
Memorising vocabularies	21.1	52	27	
Memorising idioms	22.4	46.7	30.9	
Speaking English with colleagues	58.6	32.2	9.2	
Having a chance to speak English with native speakers	66.4	28.3	5.3	
Speaking English in a class	57.2	38.2	4.6	
Practising writing in English	48	41.4	10.5	
Using the internet to communicate with native speakers of English	39.5	32.2	28.3	
Practising sentence structure of English	28.9	50	21.1	

5.8 Respondents' Comments on English Language Difficulties and Cultural Variations

The last part of the survey provides short answer questions dealing with difficulties in using English as a second language, and adapting to different cultural barriers in the Australian academic context. The questions were divided into two different sections to include English language difficulties and cultural barriers. The questions were arranged in columns to express respondents' ideas or perceptions. Ninety Korean students responded in written words. With regard to English language difficulties, most Korean students responded that they are confronted with difficulties of English in the Australian academic context. Writing essays, participating in tutorials, presenting ideas in group discussions, and Australian pronunciation are the main difficulties they face. On the other hand, most Korean students responded that different ways of thinking involving logical sequence, individualism, egalitarian society and different life style itself are hard to adjust to in the Australian higher education environment. Respondents' comments and recommendations are described in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Respondents' comments and recommendations

English language difficulties	Cultural variations
Writing essay	Social relationship
Speaking	Learning style (student-centred & cooperative)
Grammar	**Life style**
Listening	**Individualism**
Academic English	Food
Communication	Leisure
Presentation	Stereotype
Reading comprehension	**Way of thinking**
Expression	**Egalitarianism society**
Australian accent	Multicultural society
Group discussion	Hard to join into local Australian group
Australian slang	Making a friendship
Pronunciation	Media
Vocabularies	Racism
	Tutorial participation

5.9 Summary

The data obtained in the survey confirmed that a first-level basic analysis provides an outline of the research outcomes and valuable information that can support the main theme of this research. The results obtained from the section on demographic information describe the general characteristics of Korean students. The gender distribution of Korean students in this study is fairly balanced between males and females, and the age group of 20~30 commands an overwhelming majority in its distribution. Students prefer studying in Business and Commerce fields. With regard to their previous experience of studying in English speaking countries, more than 70 percent of Korean students had not been to other English speaking countries. Most participants began to learn English when they were in middle school. Approximately 45 percent of respondents have experience spending time with a native speaker. It seems that having a chance to learn English with a native speaker is quite difficult for them.

The most important results of this section reveal that the proficiency level of reading is the main focus of Korean students being taught English by Korean English teachers, while the proficiency level of speaking is the main concern for a native English teacher. Most students do not generally have the experience of enrolling and attending an ELICOS-like program. In addition, they did not take any kind of official English tests in Korea. However, almost 37 percent of students who responded, had experienced taking official English tests. The IELTS test is the first priority because

it can be said that students had to prepare minimum requirements to enter Australian higher education programs. Moreover, the IELTS test is highly recommended by all Australian tertiary level institutions. In reviewing the results of their official English tests taken in Korea, students have lower scores than Australian higher education programs require.

With regard to the outcome of Korean students' current educational background and preparation to enter Australian undergraduate programs, the participation in an ELICOS program has increased (approximately 58%) compared to the ratio obtained from their responses when they were in Korea. They spent less than 12 months studying in this program. IELTS is the main English test selected by Korean students in Australia. In addition, the outcome reveals that the main program undertaken to prepare for entrance to Australian universities, is attending a program designed for preparing for official English tests. However, some students have been enrolled in an Australian secondary school and a foundation studies program as a bridging course. They spent their time on completing the prior courses in less than 12 months. The most important outcomes of the survey in this section are the results of changing pattern of Korean students' self-estimation of proficiency level of English language in use. The outcomes reflect huge differences in proficiency levels in the English language. Korean students now believe that current proficiency levels of English language are much improved through all categories.

From the data obtained in the section of the survey about Korean students' English language difficulties in the Australian academic context, it is worth noting that students have less difficulty when reading to develop in an in-depth critical understanding of the material. They also have fewer problems with understanding lectures delivered in English. In addition, they are not afraid of speaking English in front of a tertiary class. On the other hand, concerning Korean students' responses related to the questions about their cultural experiences and difficulties in the Australian academic mode, they responded that they are not especially affected by different types of academic activities and cultural differences. For example, moving from a cramming-based education system to a free discussion-based education system and adapting to writing assignments with a new style in English are likely to have minimum effect. In reviewing the outcomes related to time spent on elements of English education, students are willing to spend time concentrating on the improvement of the proficiency level of speaking English. These outcomes reveal that the proficiency level of speaking English is their first priority. The survey results are summarised in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: The summary of survey results

Code	Outcomes of the Survey (Basic Analysis)
A	• Most students were taught English when they were in middle school. • Less than half percent of Korean students experienced with native English teachers. • Reading comprehension was the main focus by Korean English teachers. • Speaking was the main concern for native English teachers. • Most students did not attend an ELICOS like program in Korea. • One of third of students experienced in taking official English tests in Korea. • IELTS test was the preferred test for students preparing Australian higher education programs in Korea. • The tests' result showed lower scores to meet the requirements offered by Australian higher education in Korea.
B	• More than half percent of Korean students tended to attend ELICOS program in Australia. • They spent mostly less than 12 months studying in ELICOS program. • IELTS test was the preferred test for students in Australia. • Majority of Korean students were attending a course designed for preparing for official English tests in ELICOS program. • They spent less than 12 months in this course.
C	• Time spent on understanding reading materials. • Lack of vocabularies in their study fields. • Difficulty in noting the main theme when reading. • Unfamiliarity with the structure of English academic writing. • Difficulty in expressing ideas when writing. • Difficulty in organising ideas in logical sequence when writing. • Grammatical mistakes when writing. • Difficulty in expressing ideas when speaking. • Problems with speaking when making a presentation or seminar. • Difficulty in understanding Australian native speakers of English pronunciation.
D	• Korean students were not affected by different types of academic activities and cultural differences. • There were three minimum effects which was found as following • Student-centred learning system • Discussion-based learning system • Critical thinking-based learning system • Adapting to writing assignments with a new style
Extra Findings	• The proficiency levels of English and the changing pattern of rating scales proved that remarkable shifts occurred through all categories from the past to the present. • Students' judgements of time spent on elements of English education revealed as following • Students intended more time to practice reading original English books. • More time to speak English with colleagues. • More time to have chance speaking English with native speakers. • More time to speak English in a class. • More time to practice writing in English. • More time to use the internet communicating with native English speakers. • More time to practice sentence structure of English.

Note:

Code	Research Questions
A	What are the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean education system?
B	What are the best preparations needed for Korean students as they prepare to enter Australian undergraduate programs?
C	What are the main difficulties of Korean students in adapting to the use of the English language particularly for Australian academic purposes?
D	What are the critical cultural challenges that face Korean students in the Australian academic context?

The next chapter will explain what sort of implications arise from these findings and what new agenda is emerging in Korean students' experiences and participation in the Australian higher education programs. Finally, respondents who participated in this survey commented that appropriate expressions and writing essays are most difficult tasks to adapt to in relation to English language. Participating in tutorials, different ways of thinking and individualism are most difficult to adjust to in the Australian academic environment. The contribution of the data to the explication of the main theme of the study will be considered in the next part of the chapter together with the outcome of the cross-tabulation of selected items.

CHAPTER SIX

Cross-Tabulation Analyses Results of Korean Students' Difficulties with English Language and Cross-Cultural Variations

This part of the analysis focuses on the correlations between the two central questions of the research. This was conducted to clarify important issues and concerns for Korean students' difficulties with English language and cultural variations, some of which could lead to the necessity of further research at a later date. "Cross-tabulation is used to show relationships between answers made for two survey, responses from two questions are displayed in a table" (WISCO, 2005). Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, a first-level of analysis was run to present Korean students' responses to questions asked through the survey. Aside from the fundamental outcomes of the survey, an in-depth analysis of detailed aspects of selected issues relevant to the central questions of the research was undertaken by cross-tabulation analysis.

6.1 English Language Difficulties in the Australian Academic Context

6.1.1 The difficulties of reading in the English language by Korean students according to gender

The results indicate that there is a significant correlation between gender and Korean students' responses about English language difficulties in reading. This is based on questions 1-a (What is your gender?) and 4-a (I feel I take more time trying to understand reading materials than local Australian students), 4-b (I feel I need to have a larger English vocabulary to be able to effectively study my field in Australian higher education), 4-c (I have difficulty in noting the main theme or points when I read a book), and 4-d (I have difficulty when reading to develop an in-depth critical understanding of the material). The responses are illustrated in Figure 6.1.1.

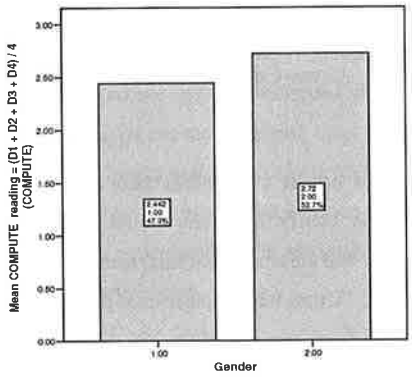

Figure 6.1.1: Korean students' English language difficulties of reading with regard to gender (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Gender* (1= Male Korean students and 2 = Female Korean students)
Dependent variable: Level of difficulty in reading (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed)

One significant result was that female Korean students (52.7%) have a significantly higher score than male Korean students (47.3%). Compared with the mean scores representing the difficulties of reading, the score of female Korean students is higher (2.72) than male Korean students (2.442). This indicates that female students' responses to the questions about English language difficulties with reading tend to be rated with more positive responses than male student's responses. This result shows that female students are somewhat better at reading than male students.

6.1.2 Korean students' difficulties in speaking the English language according to duration of their current visit

Cross-tabulation analysis found a significant correlation between the influences on Korean students' current visit, and how they relate to changes in English language difficulties in speaking. To clarify the relationships between a dependent variable and its external influential factors and the degree of hardships encountered when speaking, survey question 1-j was selected (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?) and cross-tabulated with the results of questions 4-j (I have difficulty in expressing my ideas when speaking in English in a tutorial class), 4-k (I have a problem with speaking when making a class presentation or seminar), and 4-l (I am afraid of speaking English in front of my university class). This data is presented in Figure 6.1.2.

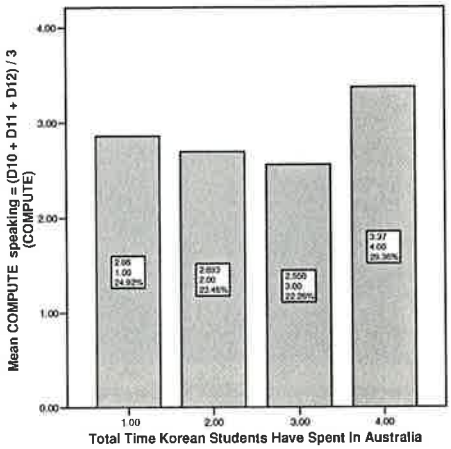

Figure 6.1.2: Korean students' English language difficulties of speaking according to duration of their current visit (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total* (1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent variable: Level of difficulty in speaking (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed

The outcomes show an interesting pattern of group responses. The mean scores obtained from the group of students who have been in Australia less than 12 months compared with the group of students who have been to Australia more than 48 months slowly decreased. For the group of students who have been in Australia more than 48 months, there is a significant rise in the figures. According to the Tukey test results, there are significant differences in difficulties encountered between groups of Korean students who have spent 13~ 48 months and the group of Korean students who have spent more than 48 months.

6.1.3 Korean students' English language difficulties in listening with regard to gender

The first outcome obtained from this analysis is that there is a significant difference between Korean students' English language difficulties of listening based on gender. There is a significant difference between male and female groups of Korean students' responses to a question asked about the level of difficulty in listening. This data is shown by Figure 6.1.3.

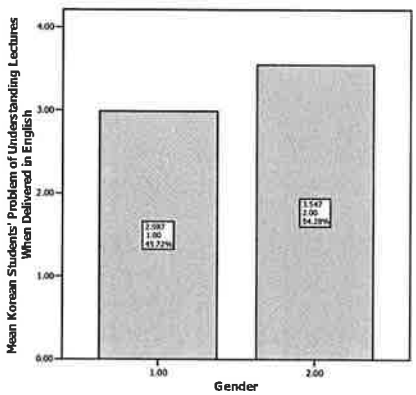

Figure: 6.1.3: Korean students' problem of understanding lecturers when delivered in English according to gender (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Gender* (1= Male Korean students and 2 = Female Korean students)
Dependent variable: Level of difficulty in listening (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed)

The percentage gained by female Korean students (54.28%) is much higher than male Korean students (45.72%). The mean score of female Korean students is significantly higher (3.547) than male Korean students (2.987). This outcome indicates that female Korean students are more confident and have fewer problems with listening.

6.1.4 Korean students' English language difficulties in understanding English pronunciation with regard to their experience of spending time with a native speaker

The correlations between the Korean students' English language difficulties in listening and their experience of spending time with a native speaker were explored. The responses to survey questions 2-b (During your school life in Korea did you spend time learning English with a native speaker?) and 4-n (Understanding native speakers of English pronunciation is easy for me) were cross-tabulated for this purpose. This is presented in Figure 6.1.4.

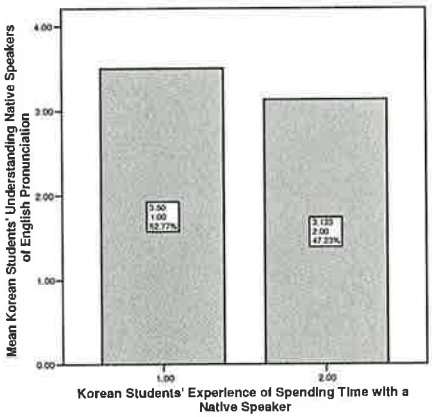

Figure 6.1.4: Korean students' understanding native speakers of English pronunciation according to their previous experience of spending time with a native speaker (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Korean students' experience of spending time with a native English speaker* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Level of difficulty in listening (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed

The result indicates that a significant proportion of Korean students who answered "yes" are likely to have less difficulty than Korean students who responded "no". Korean students who had experience with a native English speaker (52.77%) present a higher score (3.50) than Korean students who had no experience with a native English speaker (47.23%). They have a lower mean score (3.133).

6.2 Cross-Cultural Experiences and Difficulties in the Australian Academic Context

6.2.1 Korean students' difficulties of academic practice with regard to their experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia

The cross-tabulation analysis found there is a correlation between Korean students' difficulty in presenting ideas as a part of academic practice required by Australian higher education programs and their previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia. Cross-tabulation was conducted with results from question 3-a (Did you study in an ELICOS program outside Korea before you enrolled in your course at an Australian school, or other educational institution?) and 5-a (Rank the following from most to least difficult for you in adopting to academic life in Australian tertiary institutions). Figure 6.2.1 (a) illustrates this.

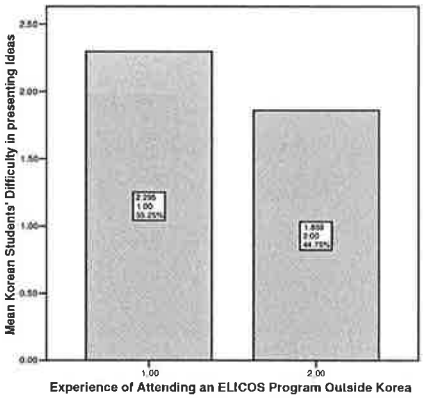

Figure 6.2.1 (a): Korean students' difficulty in presenting ideas with regard to experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Korean students' difficulty in presenting ideas (1= most difficulty, 5=least difficulty)

The outcome clearly indicates that Korean students who answered that they have attended an ELICOS program outside Korea (56.25%) have a tendency to experience less difficulty in presenting their ideas than Korean students who have not (44.75%). The former group of students has a higher mean score (2.295) than the latter group of students (1.859). Both groups expressed difficulty in adjusting to the new educational practice, however it can be said that adaptive abilities in the context of academic practices were influenced by their previous environment.

In conjunction with the context of academic practices, it has been found that there is a significant difference between Korean students' difficulty in participating in cooperative group work and Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia. The selected questions for this analysis were 3-a (Did you study in an ELICOS program outside Korea before you enrolled in your course at an Australian school, or other educational institution?) and 5-a (Rank the following from most to least difficult for you in adapting to academic life in Australian undergraduate programs). This is shown by Figure 6.2.1 (b).

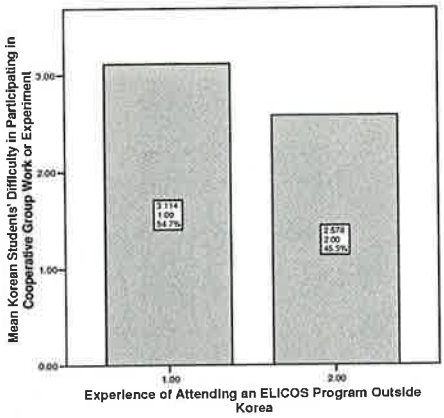

Figure 6.2.1 (b): Korean students' difficulty in participating in group activities with regard to their experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Korean students' difficulty in participating cooperative group work or experiment (1= most difficulty, 5=least difficulty)

The analysis indicates that Korean students who have experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia (54.7%) tend to have less difficulty in participating in cooperative activities than Korean students who have not had such experience (45.3%). The mean score that the former group of students gained (3.114) is significantly higher than the score from the latter group of students (2.578).

6.2.2 Korean students' problem with different social academic environment according to age group

The outcome obtained concerns Korean students' response related to changes of their social environment and whether or not the changes might affect Korean students' adaptation to a new Australian academic culture. There is only one significant finding between Korean students' problems with a different individual ability-centred society in conjunction with their current field of study. In relation to this analysis, the outcome obtained is based on questions 1-c (What is your current field of study?) and 5-d (Moving from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society has been a problem for me). This outcome is presented in Figure 6.2.2.

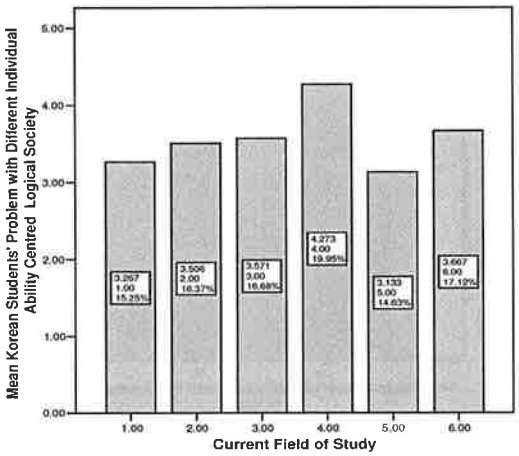

Figure 6.2.2: Korean students' problem with a different individual ability-centred logical society with regard to field of study (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Field of study*
(1 = Arts, 2 = Business & Commerce, 3 = Education, 4 = Information Technology, 5 = Science & Engineering, 6 = Other)
Dependent variable: Korean students' problem with different individual ability-centred logical society (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed)

The result showed that a group of Korean students who are currently enrolled in Information Technology (19.95%) have the highest score (4.273) and are likely to have less problems with changed with social environment than other groups of Korean students. However, there remains a question of why a group of Korean students enrolled in the Science and Engineering field (14.6%) ranks with the lowest score (3.133). The Tukey test results indicate that there is a significant difference between Korean students enrolled in Information Technology field and Science or Engineering fields.

6.2.3 Korean students' problem with a different educational teaching system according to age group

With regard to the context of a different educational learning system, the result indicates that there is a correlation between Korean students' problems with a different teaching system and their previous experience of spending time with a native English speaker. This analysis is based on questions 2-b (During your school life in Korea did you spend time learning English with a native speaker?) and 5-f (Moving from a cramming-based education system). The data are presented in Figure 6.2.3.

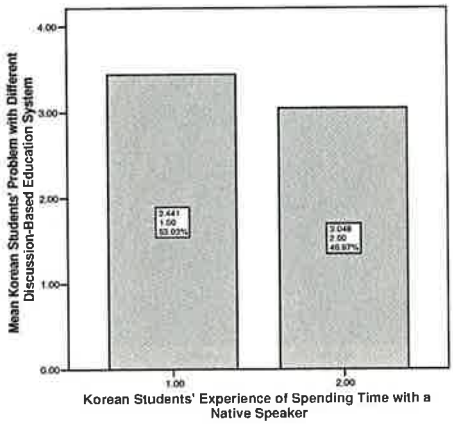

Figure 6.2.3: Korean students' problem with a different discussion-based education system with regard to experience of spending time with a native speaker (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Korean students' experience of spending time with a native English speaker* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Korean students' problem with a different discussion-based education system (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed)

As Figure 6.2.3 shows, Korean students who had experience with a native speaker (53.03%) are less likely to have difficulties with the changing circumstances of their learning system than a group of Korean students who had no experience (46.97%). The group of Korean students with a higher score (3.441) represents Korean students who are more confident with this variation than a group of Korean students with lower score (3.048).

6.2.4 Korean students' problems with a different educational learning system according to age group

There is a significant difference between Korean students' problems in adapting to a different learning system, especially moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred learning system with regard to different age group. This is based on questions 1-b (What is your age group?) and 5-g (Moving from a teacher centred to a student-centred learning system has been a problem for me). The finding in this analysis shows that older group of Korean students' tend to have more problems in adapting to a different learning system. The outcomes are illustrated by Figure 6.2.4.

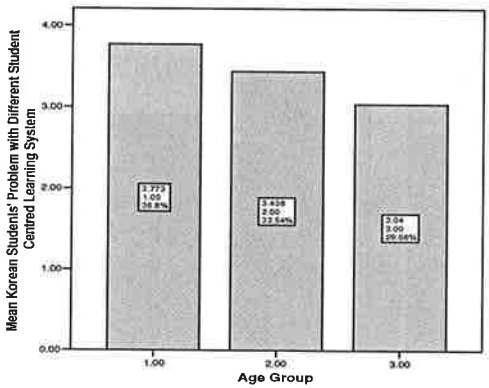

Figure 6.2.4: Korean students' problems with a different student-centred learning system with regard to different age group (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Age group*
(1= < 20 years, 2 = 20~30 years, 3 = > 30 years)
Dependent variable: Korean students' problem with different student-centred learning system (1= strongly agreed, 2=agreed, 3=neither agreed nor disagreed, 4=disagreed, 5=strongly disagreed

This data indicates that younger students are likely to have fewer problems with changes in the learning system. The youngest group of Korean students (36.8%) has a significantly higher score (3.773). The middle age group has a middle score (3.438), while oldest group has the lowest score (3.04). As a result of the Tukey test, there is a significant difference between Korean students less than 20 years and Korean students over 30 years.

6.3 Self-Estimation of Korean Students' Proficiency Level in English

6.3.1 Present Korean students' proficiency level in speaking English with regard to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries

There is a difference between the current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level of English and their previous experiences of studying in English speaking countries. The result obtained from questions 3-h-a (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of speaking) and 1-d (Have you previously studied in English speaking countries?).

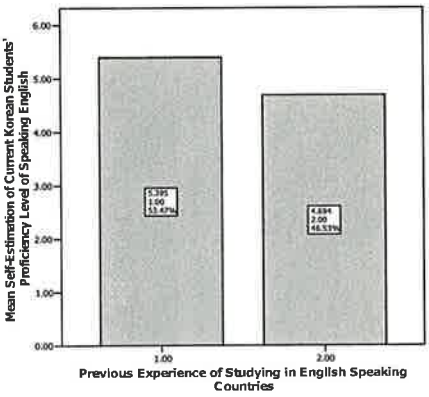

Figure 6.3.1: Present Korean students' proficiency level in speaking English according to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of studying in English speaking countries* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of speaking (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The result indicates that Korean students who had experience studying in English speaking countries have a higher proficiency level in speaking English than Korean students who did not have such experience. The former group of Korean students (53.47%) had a higher score (5.395) than the latter group of Korean students (4.694).

6.3.2 Present Korean students' proficiency level of speaking English according to duration of students' current visit

With regard to present Korean students' proficiency level of speaking English, the cross-tabulated result indicates that the total time Korean students have spent in Australia is a factor which brought about different frequency levels of speaking English.. This analysis is based on the questions 3-h-a (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of speaking) and 1-j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). This data is presented in Figure 6.3.2.

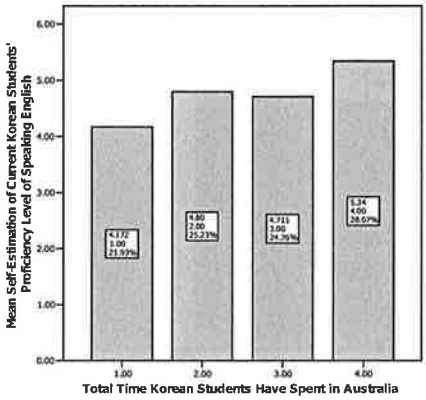

Figure 6.3.2: Present Korean students' proficiency level in speaking English with regard to total time they have spent in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total* (1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of speaking (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

According to Tukey test results, the outcome shows that there is a significant difference between a group of Korean students who have spent less than 12 months and a group of Korean students who have spent more than 48 months in Australia. There is a gradual improvement of the proficiency level in speaking English according to Korean students who have spent more time in Australia.

6.3.3 Present Korean students' proficiency level in listening English with regard to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries

In conjunction with current Korean students' proficiency level in listening to English, cross-tabulation analysis found that there is a significant difference between a group of Korean students who have experience in English speaking countries and a group who have not. The result is based on the questions 3-h-b (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of listening) and 1-d (have you previously studied in English speaking countries?). The results are found in Figure 6.3.3.

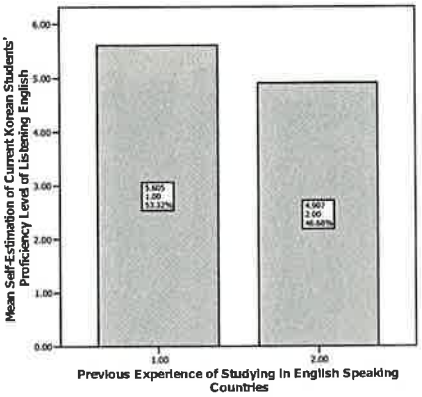

Figure 6.3.3: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in listening English according to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of studying in English speaking countries* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of listening (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The finding shows that the self–estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level in listening English is much higher (5.605) for Korean students who have had previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (53.32%). The mean score for one group of Korean students (46.68%) is lower (4.907) than the other group of Korean students.

6.3.4 Present Korean students' proficiency level in listening English according to duration of students' current visit

The cross-tabulation analysis reveals that there are differences between self-estimation of current Korean students' ability of listening to English and the total time Korean students have spent in Australia. This result is obtained from the questions 3-h-b (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of listening) and 1-j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). The outcomes are presented in Figure 6.3.4.

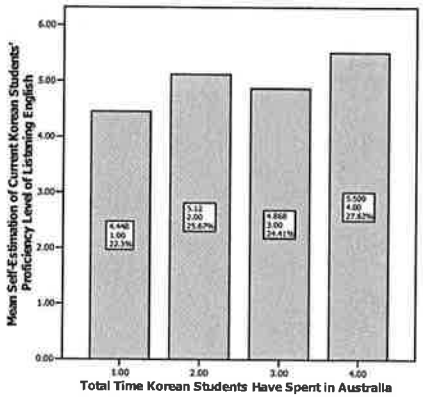

Figure 6.3.4: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in listening English according to the total time they have spent in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total* (1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of listening (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The Tukey test results indicate that there is significant difference between a group of Korean students who have stayed less than 12 months (22.3%) and a group of Korean students who have been in Australia more than 48 months (27.62%). It suggests that Korean students who have stayed longer have better abilities in English language listening skills. It indicates that there are no significant differences for a group of Korean students who have spent between more than 13 months and less than 48 months. As a result, it can be said that the proficiency level in listening to English would not see any improvement until Korean students have spent more than 48 months in Australia.

6.3.5 Present Korean students' proficiency level of reading English with regard to gender

The cross-tabulation analysis found that there is a difference between male and female Korean students related to current proficiency levels in reading ability in English. The finding is extracted from the questions 3-h-c (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of reading) and 1-a (What is your gender?). The results are described in Figure 6.3.5.

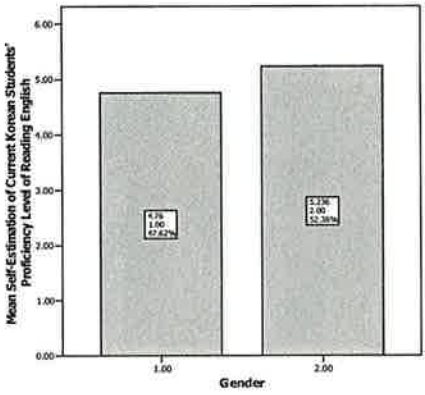

Figure 6.3.5: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in reading English with regard to gender (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Gender* (1= Male Korean students and 2 = Female Korean students)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of listening (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The findings indicate that female Korean students (52.38%) have better ability of reading English than male Korean students (47.62%). The former have a higher mean score (5.236) than the latter(4.76).

6.3.6 Present Korean students' proficiency level in reading English with regard to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries

With regard to current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in reading English, the cross-tabulation analysis found that their previous experience of studying in English speaking countries is a factor which differs from the current proficiency level in reading English. The questions applied to this analysis are 3-h-c (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of reading) and 1-j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). The data is presented in Figure 6.3.6.

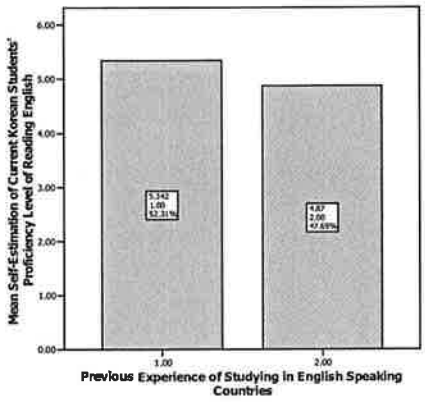

Figure 6.3.6: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in reading English according to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (n=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of studying in English speaking countries* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of reading (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The result reveals that a group of Korean students who had experience in English speaking countries (51.31%) have a better ability in reading English than Korean students who have not (48.69%). Those with experience in English speaking countries have a score of (5.342) whereas those without such experience have a score (4.87).

6.3.7 Present Korean students' proficiency level in reading English with regard to experience of spending time with a native speaker

With regard to Korean students' proficiency level in reading English, the cross-tabulation analysis reveals that Korean students' previous experience of spending time with a native speaker is a factor differentiating the level of reading skills. The result is obtained from questions 3-h-c (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of reading) and 2-b (During your school life did you spend time learning English with a native speaker?). The outcomes are presented in Figure 6.3.7.

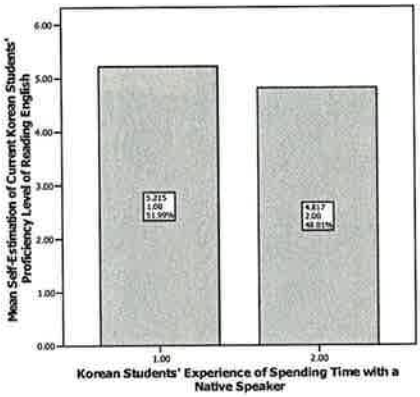

Figure 6.3.7: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in reading English according to experience of spending time with a native speaker (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of spending time with a native speaker* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of reading (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The result indicates that Korean students who have had experience of spending time with a native speaker (51.99%) have a higher self-rating proficiency level in reading English than Korean students who have not (48.015). The former group has a higher mean score (5.215) than the latter group (4.817).

6.3.8 Present Korean students' proficiency level in writing English with regard to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries

There is a correlation between Korean students' current self-estimation of proficiency level in writing English and previous experience of studying in English speaking countries. The outcome is based on the questions 3-h-d (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of writing) and 1-d (Have you previously studied in English speaking countries?). The outcomes appear in Figure 6.3.8.

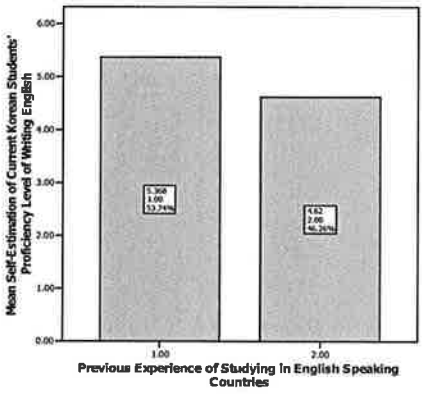

Figure: 6.3.8: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in writing English according to previous experience of studying in English speaking countries (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of studying in English speaking countries* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of writing (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

This outcome indicates that Korean students who have had experience in English speaking countries (53.74%) have a higher self-rating proficiency level in writing English than Korean students who have not (46.26%). The former group of Korean students' mean score (5.368) is higher than the latter group of Korean students (4.62).

6.3.9 Present Korean students' proficiency level in writing English according to experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea

The cross-tabulation analysis found that the current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in writing English is affected by their previous experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea. This analysis is based on questions 3-h-d (Please rate and circle your current English proficiency of writing) and 3-a (Did you study in an ELICOS program outside Korea before you enrolled in your course at an Australian school, or other educational institution?). The outcomes are presented in Figure 6.3.9.

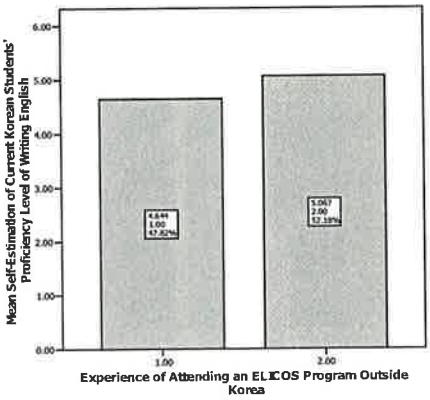

Figure 6.3.9: Current self-estimation of Korean students' proficiency level in writing English according to experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Previous experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea* (1= Yes and 2 = No)
Dependent variable: Self-estimation of current Korean students' proficiency level of writing (see appendix proficiency scale ratings in survey questionnaire)

The finding shows that Korean students who have had experience in an ELICOS program outside Korea (52.18%) have a higher self-rating proficiency level in writing English than Korean students who did not (47.82%). The former Korean students have a higher mean score (5.067) than the latter (4.644).

6.4 Students' Judgement of Relative Time Spent on Elements of English Education

6.4.1 Students' judgement of the relative time spent on reading comprehension according to the total time Korean students have spent in Australia

In relation to the context of Korean students' self-judgement about time spent on developing English language skills, the cross-tabulation analysis found that reading comprehension differs depending on the total time they have spent in Australia. This is based on the questions 6-a (Please circle the appropriate answer) and 1-j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). The outcomes are described in Figure 6.4.1.

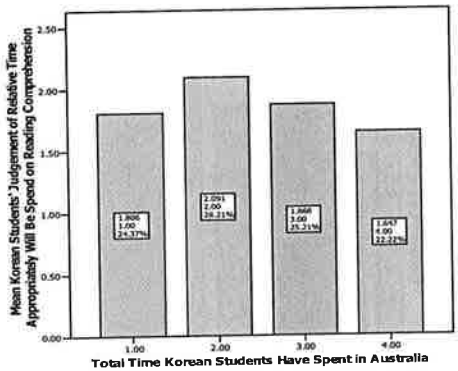

Figure 6.4.1: Korean students' self- judgement of the relative time spent on reading comprehension with regard to the total time they have spent in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total*
(1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent Variable: Korean students' self-judgement of relative time appropriately will be spend on reading comprehension
(1= More time, 2= Keep the same, 3=Less time)

According to the Tukey test results, there is a significant difference between a group of Korean students who have spent 13-24 months and a group who have been in Australia more than 48 months. Concerning the mean scores, the former group is higher (2.091) than the latter group of Korean students (1.647). The mean scores indicate that both groups are likely to spend time on reading comprehension.

6.4.2 Students' judgement of the relative time spent on practising English grammar with regard to age group

There is a correlation between Korean students' self-judgement of relative time spent on practising English grammar according to age. This is obtained from the questions 6-c (Please circle the appropriate answer) and 1-b (What is your age group?). The outcomes are illustrated in Figure 6.4.2.

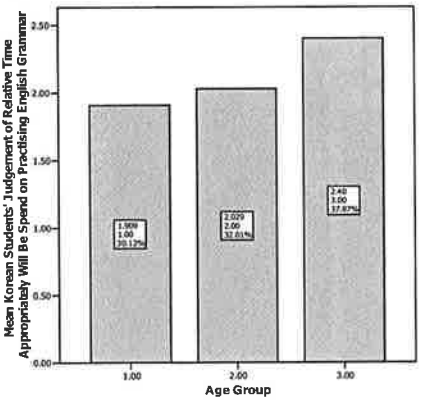

Figure 6.4.2: Korean students' self-judgement of the relative time spent on practising English grammar according to age group (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Age group*
(1= < 20 years, 2 = 20-~30 years, 3 = > 30 years)
Dependent Variable: Korean students' self-judgement of relative time appropriately will be spend on practising English grammar
(1= More time, 2= Keep the same, 3=Less time)

Tukey test results indicate that there is no significant difference between a group of Korean students aged under 20 years (30.12%) and 20 ~30 years (32.01%), however there is a significant difference between these students and a group of Korean students aged over 30 years (37.87%). The mean scores indicate that the students of less than 20 years (1.909) and less than 30 years (2.029) are likely to spend the same time practising English grammar. However, Korean students over 30 years of age are less inclined to study English grammar.

6.4.2.1 Students' judgement of the time they spent on memorising vocabularies with regard to gender

The cross-tabulation analysis found that there is a correlation between Korean students' self-judgement of the time they spent on memorising vocabularies and different gender. The outcome extracted from the questions 6-d (Please circle the appropriate answer) and 1-a (What is your gender?). The outcomes are presented in Figure 6.4.3.

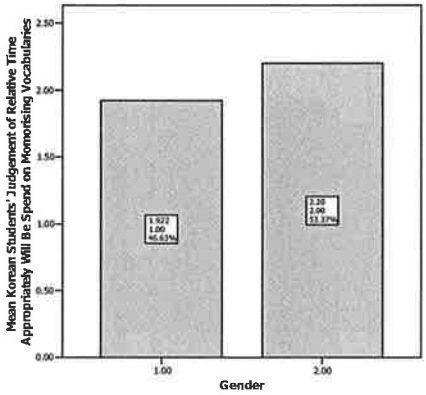

Figure 6.4.3: Korean students' self- judgement of relative time appropriately spent on memorising vocabularies according to gender (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Gender* (1= Male Korean students and 2 = Female Korean students)
Dependent Variable: Korean students' self-judgement of relative time appropriately will be spend on memorising vocabularies
(1= More time, 2= Keep the same, 3=Less time)

The outcome indicates that Korean female students (53.37%) are likely to spend less time memorising English vocabularies than males (46.63%). The Korean female students' mean score is higher (2.20) than the males' score (1.922). The mean scores shows that both groups of Korean students are keen to keep the same time for memorising English vocabularies, however the outcome reveals that male students seem to have more time to study English vocabularies.

6.4.3 Students' judgement of the time they spent on memorising vocabularies according to total time Korean students have spent in Australia

The cross-tabulation analysis has found that there is a correlation between Korean students' self-judgement of the time they spent on memorising English vocabularies and the total time they have spent in Australia. This is based on the questions 6-d (Please circle the appropriate answer) and 1-j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). The results are illustrated in Figure 6.4.4.

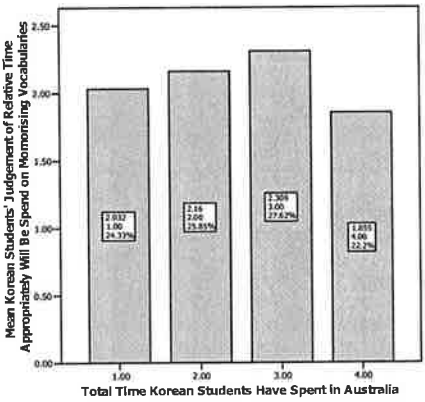

Figure 6.4.4: Korean students' self-judgement of the relative time they spent on memorising vocabularies according to total time they have spent in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total*
(1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent Variable: Korean students' self-judgement of relative time appropriately will be spend on memorising vocabularies
(1= More time, 2= Keep the same, 3=Less time)

According to the Tukey test result, the outcome indicates that there is significant difference between groups of Korean students who have spent 25~48 months (27.62%) and a group of Korean students who have stayed more than 48 months in Australia (22.2%). Concerning the mean scores, the former group of Korean students reveals a higher score (2.308) than the latter group (1.855), which means that Korean students are likely to spend less time for memorising English vocabularies.

6.4.5 Students' self judgement of the time they spent on memorising idioms with regard to the total time Korean students have spent in Australia

The cross-tabulation analysis found that there is a correlation between Korean students' self-judgement of time spent on memorising idioms and how long they have spent time in Australia. This outcome is obtained from the questions 6-e (Please circle the appropriate answer) and -j (How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?). The outcomes are presented in Figure 6.4.5.

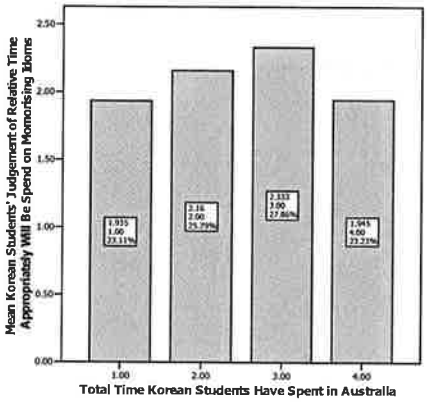

Figure 6.4.5: Korean students' self-judgement of the time they spent on memorising idioms according to total time they have spent in Australia (N=152)

Note: *Independent Variable: Present time Korean students spent in Australia in total*
(1= < 12 months, 2 = 13~24 months, 3 = 25~48 months, 4 = > 48 months)
Dependent Variable: Korean students' self-judgement of relative time appropriately will be spend on memorising idioms
(1= More time, 2= Keep the same, 3=Less time)

According to the ANOVA test result, there is a significant relationship between the two selected variables. However, the Tukey test result indicates that there are no significant differences among groups of Korean students who have spent different periods of the time in Australia. Figure 6.4.5 shows that the percentage of each group of Korean students wants to keep the same time on memorising idioms. In addition, Tukey test result does not indicate any significant differences ($P<0.05$).

6.5 Summary

The data results in this chapter are summarised in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: The summary of cross-tabulation data results

Code	Research Findings (Cross-tabulation)
A	N/A
B	N/A
C	• Female students had less difficulty in reading. **(Gender)** • Students' level of speaking improved after stying over 48 months in Australia. **(Length of stay)** • Female students were more comfortable when understanding lecture. **(Gender)** • Students who experienced with native English speakers showed better understanding of Australian's pronunciation. **(Experienced with native speakers)** • Students who experienced an ELICOS program had less difficulty in presenting ideas. **(Previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia)** • Students who experienced an ELICOS program had less difficulty in participating in group activities. **(Previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia)** • Students who experienced English speaking countries had more ability to speak listen, read and write English **(Students previous experiences at English speaking countries)** • Students who stayed longer were more fluent speakers and better listeners. **(Length of stay)** • Students who experienced with native English speakers showed a higher level of reading skills **(Experienced with native speakers)** • Students who experienced at ELICOS program in Australia showed a higher level of English writing skills. **(Previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia)**
D	• Students who studying Information Technology fields tend to have a little difficulty in adapting to new social academic environment. **(Moving from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society)** • Students who experienced with native English speakers were likely to have fewer problems with the impact of discussion-based teaching system. **(Experienced with native speakers)** • The younger Korean students had fewer problems with a different learning pedagogy. **(Moving from a teacher-centred to a students-centred learning system)**
Extra Findings	• Students who stayed longer were likely to spend less time on reading comprehension, memorising vocabularies, and idioms. **(Length of stay)** • Students who were over 30 years of age tended to focus on practising English grammar. **(Age group)** • Female students had better English vocabularies and were likely to spend less time on memorising vocabularies. **(Gender)**

Note:

Code	Research Questions
A	What are the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean education system?
B	What are the best preparations needed for Korean students as they prepare to enter Australian undergraduate programs?
C	What are the main difficulties of Korean students in adapting to the use of the English language particularly for Australian academic purposes?
D	What are the critical cultural challenges that face Korean students in the Australian academic context?

A number of important outcomes has been obtained from the cross-tabulation of selected questions in conjunction with the main theme of the research. The first result is Korean students' English language difficulties in reading according to gender. The mean scores gained from the combination of four questions, related to the difficulty of reading, indicate that female Korean students perform better than male Korean students. The outcome related to Korean students' English language difficulties in speaking according to the duration of their current visit shows that Korean students' level of speaking improves after staying over 48 months.

Korean students' problems in understanding lectures when delivered in English indicated that female Korean students are more comfortable than male Korean students. Korean students' understanding native speakers of English pronunciation and the correlation with previous experience of spending time with a native speaker indicates that Korean students who have experience with a native speaker have better understanding of native speakers of English pronunciation.

It has been found that there are two academic practices linked with selected independent variables. Korean students' difficulty in presenting ideas is affected by their previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia. A group of Korean students who have studied an ELICOS program have less difficulty than those who have not experienced an ELICOS program in Australia. Furthermore, the study shows that a group of Korean students who have attended an ELOCOS program has less difficulty in participating in group activities.

As to the theme of cultural variations and difficulties, different social and academic environments have an important affect on their current study. The level of problems between Korean students, who moved from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society and field of study, indicates that students studying Information Technology have little difficulty in adapting to a different social and academic environment. Concerning the issue of a different teaching pedagogy, Korean students who have experience with native speakers show that they are likely to have less problems with the impact of a discussion-based teaching system. Korean students' problems with moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred learning system with regard to different age group indicate a significant result in that the younger Korean students have fewer problems with a different learning pedagogy.

There are correlations between selected independent variables and the results of Korean students' proficiency level in English while studying in Australian higher education programs. In the case of

Korean students' proficiency level in English, the mean score indicates that Korean students who have had experience in English speaking countries have more ability to speak, listen, read, and write English than those who have never previously been to English speaking countries. Present Korean students' proficiency level in speaking and listening to English is influenced by the duration of time the students have spent in Australia.

A significant finding is that there is a definite gap between a group of Korean students who have spent less than 12 months and a group who have stayed longer than 48 months in Australia. The latter group of Korean students are more fluent speakers and better listeners. Gender and Korean students' experience of spending time with a native speaker have influences on Korean students' proficiency level in reading English. Female Korean students have better English reading skills than male students, and a group of Korean students who have had experience with native speakers shows a higher level of reading skills. With regard to the proficiency level in writing English, Korean students' experience of attending an ELICOS program outside Korea is a factor. Korean students who have attended an ELICOS program show a higher level of English writing skills.

In terms of Korean students' self-judgement of time spent on elements of English education, the four items that they consider for improving proficiency level in English are reading comprehension, practising English grammar, memorising vocabularies, and idioms. The cross- tabulation results indicate that students who have stayed longer are likely to spend less time on reading comprehension, memorising vocabularies, and idioms. A group of Korean students over 30 years of age tends to focus on practising English grammar and, interestingly, female Korean students have better English vocabularies are likely to spend less time on memorising vocabularies. Through in-depth interviews, the next chapter will examine what sorts of implications arise from these findings in Korean students' problems with English language and cultural differences. The contribution of the data to the explication of the main theme of the research will be considered in the next chapter to identify more specific problems.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Comparative Study of Three Groups of Korean Students who Undertook Different Preliminary Programs

This chapter assesses the nature and value of the preliminary programs Korean students undertook to prepare for entrance into Australian undergraduate programs. The outcomes of the survey in Figure 5.4 (a) of Chapter Five (The main program undertaken to prepare for entrance to Australian universities) noted that Korean students' participation in preparation for official English test(s) programs was the largest group (23%), followed by Australian secondary school and Foundations Studies programs with the same ratio (22%), and lastly TAFE courses (15%). This chapter investigates the differences among these three different groups of Korean students related to the different preliminary programs they carried out prior to study in Australian undergraduate programs. Group A was composed of Korean students who had undertaken TAFE or Foundation Studies programs, Group B included Korean students who had undertaken Australian secondary school programs, and Group C was made up of Korean students who had undertaken preparation for official English language test(s) programs, particularly the IELTS test. The main focus of the analysis is based on the four research questions previously referred to. This chapter also focuses on discovering what English language difficulties and cultural variations are faced by Korean students.

7.1 English Language Issues within Three Different Groups of Korean Students

7.1.1 Changed self-rating of current Korean students' proficiency level in speaking English with regard to the different programs they attended to enter the Australian higher education

This part of a comparative study and its results discusses how far the self-rated proficiency level of speaking English has been advanced compared to the prior level of speaking English among three different groups. This outcome is presented in Figure 7.1.1.

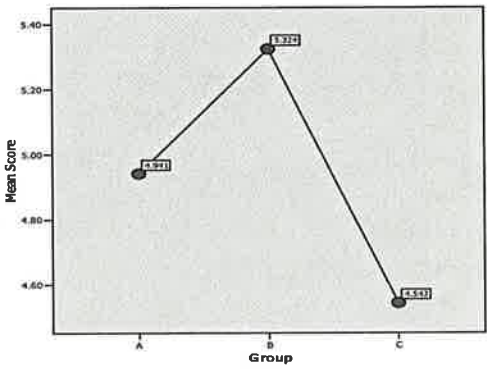

Figure 7.1.1: Changed self-rating of current Korean students' proficiency level in speaking English with regard to the different preparation programs they previously attended (N=120)

Note: The mean score is based on macroskill ranges from 1to 7 (1= worst, 7=best)

Of the total of 120 respondents, 51 (42.5%) students in A group obtained a mean score of (4.94), 34 (28.3%) students in B group obtained a mean score of (5.32), while 35 (29.1%) students in C group had a mean score of (4.54). The outcome indicates that there is a significant difference between B and C groups with an evidence of 'the ANOVA test' result ($P<0.05$) and 'the Tukey test' result shows a real significance of these two groups based on the figure of ($0.025<P$). B group is more confident with the current proficiency level of speaking English than C group. In reference, a proficiency scale rating (1 to 7) is seen in Appendix II. To find out the reasons for this, in-depth interviews explored the aspect and these results are discussed in the next chapter.

7.1.2 Comparison of difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence among different groups when writing in English

The outcome of this analysis details how these three different groups of Korean students were influenced by a new way of logical thinking which is commonly required for most Australian academic context. Coping with difficulties in setting up ideas or issues related to writing tasks and arranging form in a logical sequence are some of the hardest tasks involved in adjusting to a new academic environment. This is illustrated in Figure 7.1.2.

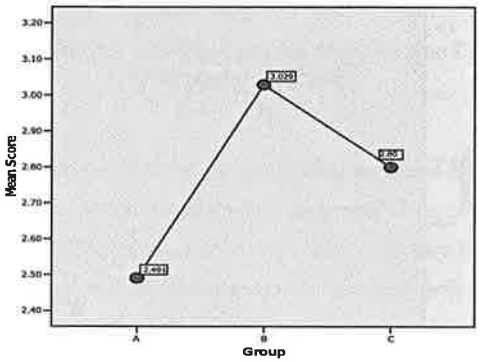

Figure 7.1.2: Difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing English with regard to different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1= strongly agree, 5= strongly disagree)

Of a total of 124 Korean students involved in this part of analysis, 55 (44.4%) students in A group obtained a mean score of 2.49, 34 (28.3%) students in B group scored a mean of 3.03, while 35 (29.2%) students in C group obtained a mean score of 2.8. According to 'the Tukey test' ($P<0.05$), there is a significant difference between A and B groups ($0.022<P$). The different mean scores between the two groups of students illustrate that Korean students in A group have less difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing in English than those in B group.

7.1.3 Comparison of the problems experienced by Korean students when speaking among different groups when making a class presentation or seminar

The outcome of this comparative analysis points out the differences of difficulty in speaking when Korean students undertake a class presentation or seminar in a course in which they are currently enrolled. This is shown in Figure 7.1.3.

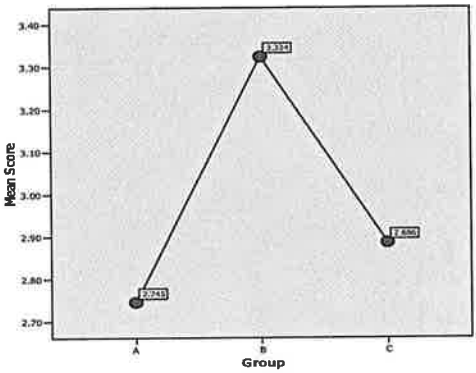

Figure 7.1.3: Problems with speaking among groups when making a class presentation or seminar according to different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1= strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree)

Of the total of 124 respondents, 55 (44.4%) students in A group obtained a mean score of 2.75, 34 (27.4%) students in B group with a mean score of 3.32, while 35 (28.2%) students in C group shows a mean score of 2.89. After conducting the 'ANOVA test' ($P<0.05$), it was found that there is only a significant difference between A and B groups ($0.025<P$) which is based on 'the Tukey test'. The outcome indicates that A group students tend to have fewer problems with a class presentation or seminar compared to B group students.

7.1.4 Comparison of anxiety with speaking among different groups when speaking English in front of classmates

This part of analysis provides the same pattern of outcome of 7.1.3. This is seen by Figure 7.1.4.

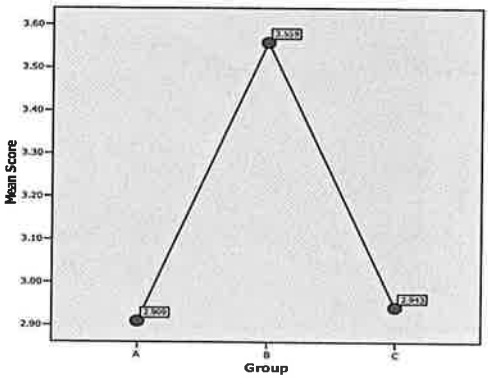

Figure 7.1.4: Anxiety about speaking in a class with regard to different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree)

Of the total of 124 respondents, 55 (44.4%) students in A group presented a mean score of 2.90, 34 (27.4%) students in B group a mean score of 3.56, while 35 (28.2%) students in C group show a mean score of 2.94. According to the 'the Tukey test' result (0.019<P), it was found that there is an only significant difference between students in A and B groups. The outcome indicates that A group students are likely to be more afraid of speaking English with a general purpose than B group students.

7.2 Cultural Issues and Difficulties Experienced by Three Different Groups of Korean Students

7.2.1 Comparison of the difficulty they had in preparing assignments with regard to the different preparation programs Korean students previously attended

This part of the comparative analysis was carried out on the three different Korean student groups in order to see if cultural differences appeared in the Australian academic mode. The first outcome relates to the students' difficulty in preparing assignments. This outcome is presented in Figure 7.2.1.

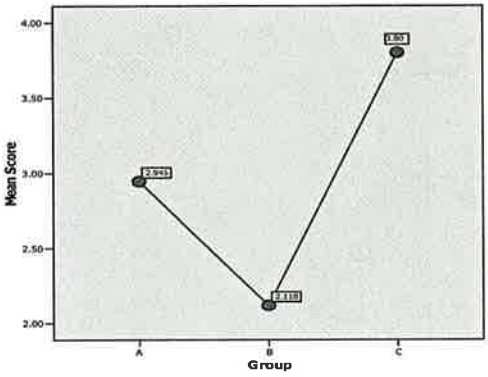

Figure 7.2.1: Difficulty in preparing assignments with regard to different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree)

One hundred and twenty-four students responded to this question. Fifty-five (44.4%) students in A group gained a mean score of 2.95, 34 (27.4%) students in B group obtained a mean score of 2.12, while 35 (28.2%) students in C group gained a mean score of 3.80. According to "the Tukey test" ($P<0.05$), there was a significant difference between students in B and C groups ($0.00<P$). The outcome reveals that Korean students who had experienced an Australian secondary school program (B group) tend to be faced with more difficulty in preparing assignments than students in C group who had experience in studying official English test(s) programs, including an ELICOS program.

7.2.2 Comparison of problems with student-centred learning system according to the different preparation programs Korean students previously attended

This part of the comparative analysis shows the result of how students in the three different groups were affected by a new student-centred learning system. The outcome is presented in Figure 7.2.2.

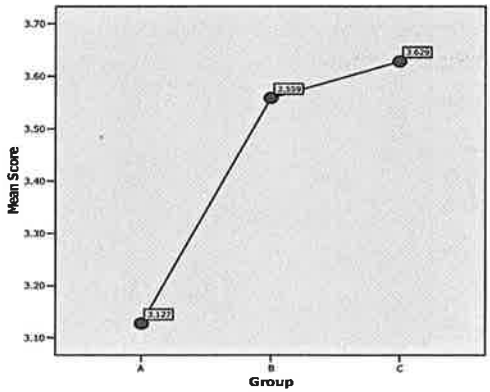

Figure 7.2.2: Problems experienced in a student-centred learning system with regard to the different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree)

Of the total of 124 respondents, 55 (44.4%) students in A group gained a mean score of 3.13, 34 (27.4%) students in B group scored a mean of 3.56, while 35 (28.2%) in C group had a mean score of 3.62. After conducting the 'ANOVA test' ($P<0.05$), it was found that there was a significant difference between A and C groups ($0.037<P$) which was obtained from 'the Tukey test'. The outcome indicates that students in C group who were enrolled in a preparation of official English test(s) course or in an ELICOS program are likely to have more difficulty in adjusting to a new student-centred learning environment than students in A group. In particular, Foundation Studies Programs are a preliminary course especially designed for students who are seeking to enter higher education, therefore a student-centred learning practice might be taught by academics in that program. It can be anticipated that this is a reason why students in C group gained a higher mean score than students in A group.

7.2.3 Comparison of problems experienced in a system that emphasises critical thinking according to the different preparation programs Korean students previously attended

The comparative analysis revealed an important issue about Korean students in a new educational environment. For instance, this part of the analysis investigated students' problems and adaptation to different systems which required critical thinking in education practices. The result is shown in Figure 7.2.3.

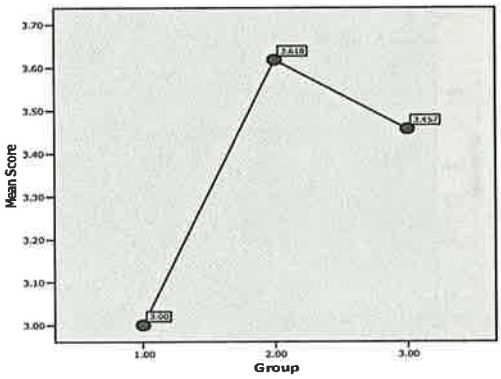

Figure 7.2.3: Problems experienced in a system that emphasises critical thinking according to the different preparation programs Korean students previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 5 (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree)

Of the total of 124 respondents, 55 (44.4%) students in A group scored a mean of 3.0, 34 (27.4%) students in B group gained a mean score of 3.62, while 35 (28.2%) students in C group had a mean score of 3.46. According to the Tukey test result ($P<0.05$), there was a significant difference between A and B groups ($0.09<P$). This result reveals that a group of students who studied in an Australian secondary school program as their preliminary course to enter Australian undergraduate programs are more adaptive for critical thinking as a part of their education practice than students who experienced Foundation Studies Programs or TAFE.

7.3 Comparison of Korean Students' Self- Judgement about Time Spent on Reading English Books according to Different Groups

In this last part of the comparative analysis, it was found that there is only one important issue of Korean students' intentions to improve the proficiency level of their English in a new academic environment. The outcome is presented in Figure 7.3.

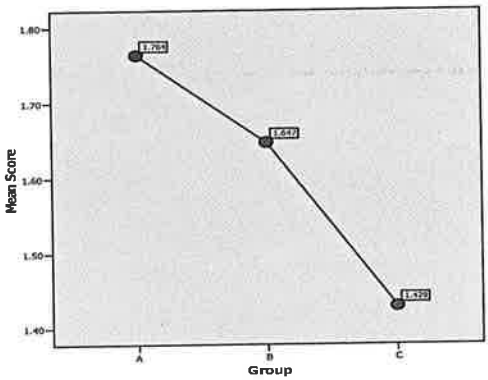

Figure 7.3: Korean students' self- judgement about time spent on reading English books according to the different preparation programs they previously attended (N=124)

Note: The mean score is based on ranges from 1to 3 (1=more time, 3=less time)

Of the total of 124 respondents, 55 (44.4%) students in A group gained a mean score of 1.76, 35 (27.4%) students in B group had a mean score of 1.65, while 35 (28.2%) students in C group scored a mean of 1.43. 'The Tukey test' ($P<0.05$) revealed that there is a significant difference between A and C groups ($0.41<P$). The outcome indicates that students who were enrolled in preparation of official English test(s) courses in ELICOS program are likely to have more time to spend on reading English books than C group who participated in Foundation Studies Programs or TAFE.

7.4 Summary

The outcomes in this chapter can be described as table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Significant outcomes of a comparative study

Group / Outcomes	A	B	C
Changing self-rated of current Korean students' proficiency level of speaking English		X	
Difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing English		X	
Problems with speaking when making a class presentation or seminar		X	
Anxiety of speaking with a general purpose in a class		X	
Difficulty in preparing assignment			X
Problem with a new student-centred learning environment	X		
Problem with a new system that emphasises critical thinking	X		
Student' self-decision of time spend on reading English books	X		

After conducting 'the ANOVA test' and 'the Tukey test' with new decoded dependent variables (A, B, and C), a number of important outcomes have been extracted from the comparative analysis based on the result of previous investigation. On the theme of English language issues, changing self-rated current Korean students' proficiency level of speaking English according to three different groups reveals that students who were experienced in Australian secondary school programs are more satisfied with their current level of speaking English. This group of students (A group) shows less difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing English, and they are more confident with speaking among these three groups even when making a class

presentation or participating seminar. On the other hand, students in A group were not afraid of speaking with general purpose in a class compared to the other two groups.

With regard to cultural issues, students in C group who studied in preparation of official English test(s) course are most likely to face difficulty in preparing an assignment. Students in A group seem to have no problems with this task. Interestingly, students in C group who experienced Foundation Studies Programs or TAFE course tend to have more problems with a new student-centred learning environment. Concerning the issue of different ways of critical thinking, students in A group have a tendency for fewer problems compared to the other groups of students. In conjunction with comparison of students' self-decision of time spend on developing the proficiency level of English, students in A group is focussed on reading English books. The next chapter elaborates these outcomes in detail through in-depth interviews.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Follow-up Investigation

In this research, the researcher has investigated Korean students' experiences of studying the Australian undergraduate level academic context. In particular, it has focused on Korean students' difficulties resulting from the need to use English as a second language and dealing with cross-cultural problems. Semi-structured in depth-interviews were selected as the main qualitative method of follow-up investigation to identify the complexities involved in such experiences. The methodology of in-depth interviews ensures uniformly framed enquiry and thus more reliable and focused information on the main themes of the research. Such interviewing can provide the researcher with deeper understanding and, importantly, can thus indicate areas deserving further investigation. The questions asked in the in-depth interviews were determined by reviewing the outcomes of the survey, which included findings based on the raw data as well as the results of cross-tabulations, and comparative analyses.

8.1 Structure of the Chapter and the Interview Data Analysis

The structure of presenting outcomes of these qualitative findings in this chapter follows the same sequence as that in which the research questions were posed. First, this chapter clarifies the issues of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean education system. The outcomes revealed in this part of the study should provide more concrete information in this regard, and it is expected that this information will contribute to a greater understanding of their difficulties in learning English language as a second language and what particular difficulties they are confronted with in their use of English in Australia. Second, the chapter seeks to identify the best preparation for future Korean students when they prepare to enter Australian undergraduate programs. A range of necessary supports could then be established by considering the feedback offered by participants. Third, the chapter examines the main difficulties of Korean students in adapting to the use of the English language for Australian academic purposes. Interviews conducted with regard to this issue were designed to reveal reasons for their difficulties and what sorts of learning and teaching foci are needed for their academic success. Fourth, the chapter explores in detail the reasons why Korean students may have difficulties with cross-cultural issues. Finally, the chapter suggests possible conclusions and recommendations about the focal research questions of the study. All participants in the interviews are identified by a code number, the details of which are shown in Table 8.1.

Table: 8.1: Encoding numbers assigned to all interview informants

Participants	Category and Status
S1	Second year student, experienced Australian secondary school program.
S2	Third year student, experienced Australian secondary school program.
S3	Third year student, experienced ELICOS program only.
S4	Second year student, experienced ELICOS and Foundation Studies Program.
AA1	A lecturer in USQ
AA2	A lecturer and program coordinator in QUT
AA3	A associate lecturer in Griffith University.
AA4	A lecturer in Griffith University.
KET1	An English teacher in Gae Won middle school in Korea
KET2	An English teacher in Wonderland English institution in Korea
KET3	A lecturer (teaching English) at Chung-Ang University & Shingu University in Korea
KET4	An English teacher in Isaac Academy in Korea

Note: S: Student, AA: Australian Academic, KET: Korean English Teacher

8.2 Responses of the Interviewees

8.2.1 Contextual background of the English language learning of Korean students

In terms of the English language learning experiences of Korean students, the interview questions asked about experiences in learning English in the Korean school system and the main differences they found when using English language in Australia. First, with regard to the description of their experiences in learning English in the Korean school system, all four Korean students who were interviewed explained the negative aspects of their experiences. The following comments were made:

> *In short, what English I was taught in Korea was not practical and it was quite a basic English after experiencing the usage of English language in Australian secondary school and university. (S1)*

> *My initial learning experience of English in Korea can be described as not practical. The fundamental ideas of learning English and our knowledge were acceptable. I believe we can manage other difficulties like speaking and writing if we spend more time on learning. (S3)*

The common theme of these two students is that their experiences in learning English in Korea were described as 'not practical'. This clearly accounts for their disappointment in learning English in Korea. The meaning of 'not practical', as described above, was that they had difficulties in

applying knowledge of English as a second language that they were taught in Korea to a real English speaking environment. Second language learners, as well as teachers, believe that the English language they were taught should be applicable in a real English speaking environment. However, respondents in these interviews stated that their English proficiency did not seem to meet the original goals or expectations. This indicates that English language learning in the Korean education system, and people who are involved in this area, need to consider this issue and develop a more practical English for a second language learning environment.

On the other hand, the other two students expressed their pedagogical experiences as follows:

> *In looking back at my experiences in learning English at school in Korea, we were taught according to correct English grammar such as subject and verb and their location in an English sentence. I do not remember any instructions for using colloquial English language in dealing with certain situations we might face. (S2)*

> *I remember that Korean English teachers tended to force us to memorise English words, but I think that the teaching and learning pedagogy I experienced has not been desirable. (S4)*

The grammar-based style of learning English, which required students to memorise new English words with a lack of teaching method about conversational English, was the major difficulty identified by these two students. According to comments by Student (4), students learning English in Korea were normally asked to memorise as many vocabularies as they could. Student (4) began to realise more precisely that each word can be applicable in a certain situations, and there were also differences among similar words once he experienced Australian education programs. This indicates that Korean students only tended to memorise the representative meaning of each word without a concern about additional meanings or applications of the words.

In addition, the main differences they encountered while studying in Australia were also discussed. The comment below by Student (1) indicates that Korean students have been taught English based on texts and a set form which has not allowed them to deal with the needs of everyday life. In other words, the examination, text and grammar-based styles of learning of English did not help Korean students deal with sophisticated situations they might encounter. For example, Student (3) described that his reading skill is not bad. He could understand the texts even though it takes a longer time to do it. But, he felt very nervous when faced with local Australians. He could not express ideas properly with spoken English language. This illustrates a typical situation that results from learning English where there is a lack of speaking English. It seems that proficiency gained

from the Korean school system is not wholly applicable for students to function well in a real English speaking environment.

> *What I have learned here in Australia is practical English that assists in coping how to cope with real situations occurring in every day life. The way of teaching English in Korea only focused on providing a fixed idea of the English language. This is the main difference that I could identify. (S2)*

> *What I found is that I felt uncomfortable and it was difficult to understand when local Australian students used technical terms or special jargon, especially in group work. (S1)*

Further to this, Student (3) emphasised the lack of time allowed during studies in Korea for using English such that, once in Australia, there were problems trying to adapt to the real life English language use in both the university and the external environment.

> *The most important difference is the frequency of the use of English language. For instance, we didn't have a chance to use English language in everyday life in Korea because it was not necessary to use English language. We have to use English wherever we go or in any situation in Australian undergraduate academic life, so what I believe is that it's a matter of how much we can use English. (S3)*

More importantly, Student (4) described that the stress placed on the importance of gaining entry to a prestigious university and the accompanying emphasis on English language proficiency in the Korean education system makes Korean students lose interest in learning English as a second language. Student (1) also commented that English language for academic purposes was never a concern in the Korean school system.

> *I was so stressed by my parents who always pushed me to enter one of prestigious universities in Korea; and to do this, they also emphasised the importance of English. So, I sometimes lost interest in learning English. (S4)*

> *In my experience, I began to realise the importance of the English language for academic purposes once I had enrolled at high school in Australia. Writing a diary and writing an essay is a totally different genre that we need to prepare in order to succeed in our courses in Australian undergraduate programs. I still believe that it is a quite essential factor that we need in order to survive in Australian undergraduate programs (S1)*

Consequently, the contextual background of Korean students can be described as one important issue in the responses of the four interviewees. In terms of 'not practical,' all interviewees were unsatisfied with the level of English language proficiency obtained from their previous English education programs in Korea. This is due to a lack of concern about how Korean students who were taught English as a second language could cope with problems which they might face once they

were in an English speaking environment. All four interviewees commented that English language usage and their experiences in Australian education programs were more helpful in terms of them obtaining practical ideas about using the English language when experiencing real situations. They stated that the knowledge of the English language they were taught in Korea is useless in a real English speaking environment. Of course, it is true that every individual has a different ability to learn other languages, but the contextual background of the English language learning of Korean students seems to be inferior. Above all, the examination-based English language learning of Korean students and a lack of concern about English language for academic purposes do not fit the needs for study in a real English speaking environment.

8.2.2 The best preparation needed for Korean students seeking to enter Australian undergraduate programs

In the descriptive results of the survey in Chapter Five, Australian academics and Korean English teachers were asked to express their opinions about the most appropriate way to prepare to gain entry and the best way of adaptation to courses offered by Australian undergraduate programs. A male Australian academic described his notion of the necessity of the English for academic purpose and the impracticability of the IELTS test.

> *I think you need to do approximately a year of English language study in other pathways or Foundation Studies programs before you enter. Australian undergraduate programs. I believe that this is definitely helpful in terms of recognising the nature of Australian academic contexts. I think realistically that unless you are very intelligent and you have really good English to start with and you already knew how to do referencing and writing and so on, then taking the IELTS probably works for you. But, I don't believe that the IELTS helps you to do all university assessments to a satisfactory level. For me, the IELTS is just like a driving test. I think English for academic purposes is more practical, in reality. It is your actual driving test. You can't drive unless you have the experiences to do that. (AA2)*

The comments presented by Australian Academic (2) emphasise the importance to English for academic purposes of a prior course in which Korean students need to be enrolled. He argued that most international students previously took the IELTS as the preferred test to enter Australian undergraduate programs without any concern about the academic difficulties they might face. The main focus of international students was their priority of intention to enter Australian undergraduate programs. However, he believed that an admission granted to international students does not mean anything by itself. It means that Korean students may not necessarily be successful without a full understanding of academic English and its use in everyday life. On the other hand, Australian

Academic (4) below described his view about what Korean students need to avoid in order to gain entry to Australian undergraduate programs.

> *Once students are transferred from a College or TAFE system, I found that it is a worst case because they get a different learning environment compared to university. Well, it depends on where they go. TAFE is like more school with a full time table and it's a very teacher-centred teaching and learning system as well. But here there is a greater need for students' responsibility; it's a very different environment. (AA4)*

He emphasised the risk of choosing College or TAFE courses as bridging programs to enter the Australian undergraduate programs as it involves a paradigmatic change for Korean students. His comments indicated that experience in the College or TAFE system in Australia does not greatly differ from Korean students' prior home learning environment. However, a female Korean English teacher who attended an Australian secondary school describes its importance below.

> *I had the experience of attending a Australian secondary school before, but what I would like to say is that Korean students need to understand Australian secondary school activities or curriculum in advance if they want to enter Australian higher education programs. It can be said that attending Australian secondary school is my best advice, but many Korean students are willing to enter Australian universities through the medium of English tests such as IELTS. I think they need to experience the secondary school system, for example what they learn, how to learn, and so on. I definitely believe that it is worth while knowing it for the better academic life in Australia. (KET2)*

Her view was that attending an Australian secondary school provides a more authentic knowledge of the Australian educational environment and gives students a chance to experience similar activities as those offered by Australian undergraduate programs. She suggested that experiencing the new learning and teaching environment through the medium of the secondary school system prior to entry to undergraduate studies should provide practical information to those who are wishing to study in Australian undergraduate programs. A male Korean English lecturer and a female Australian academic reflected this view.

> *I strongly believe that learning English at an early age and Korean students' exposure to and contact with native English speakers are very important tasks in the appropriate preparation for entering Australian undergraduate programs. It is a problem of cost, but such early experiences are the best choice in terms of overcoming English language difficulties and dealing with cultural differences. (KET3)*

> *I think that peoples' situations differ. You know, not everybody come here to primary or secondary school before university. Other people are skilled perhaps if they are mature aged coming through IELTS, and preparatory studies are very useful. So, I think it very much depends on different situations people have. For example, if you have a good amount*

of money, then you might consider different options such as coming to an Australian school first for your earlier exposure to overseas study (AA1)

These two comments indicate that Korean students' learning English as early as they can, both at home and in host countries, provides a way to cope more easily with English language difficulties and cultural differences, if there is not a problem of costs.

Overall, this part of interview results indicated that the most preferred strategy for Korean students to enter the Australian undergraduate programs is taking the IELTS test. But, it can be noted that the test results do not guarantee a successful academic life in the programs they undertake. Preparatory programs such as English for academic purposes and attending Australian secondary school programs are emphasised and they should experience these as early as possible. Concerning the contextual background of the English language learning of Korean students, it seems that Korean students definitely need to access preparatory programs offered by Australian education programs. Above all, they need to obtain the knowledge of academic English. As a result, research findings in this part suggest that Australian secondary programs are best option for Korean students to succeed Australian undergraduate programs if costs and time are available.

8.2.3 The main difficulties for Korean students in adapting to English language in Australian undergraduate programs

8.2.3.1 Speaking difficulty

According to the outcomes of the survey, it was noted that the difficulties Korean students encounter most can be described under the three main categories of speaking, writing and activities related to tutorial participation. The following comments by interviewees provide more detailed information that supports those findings. This section concerns the issue of Korean students' comments regarding difficulty in English oral communication (speaking). Two male students who experienced an ELICOS program and a Foundation Studies Program as their pathways to enter Australian undergraduate programs indicated their perceptions of difficulty in speaking English.

My biggest obstacle was that I was not able to express what I was thinking, particularly in class. I often realised that my English speaking was not sound enough to deliver my ideas to someone else. I was a little bit frustrated and I was not satisfied with my speaking. (S3)

The biggest problem I have is that I am not good at speaking English, and due to anxiety I have been daunted by it. (S4)

Both students commented that they were still not confident with the proficiency level of their speaking. In large measure, this is due to their lack of experience in communicating in spoken English in Korea. Student (3) explained that Korean students tended to be nervous and stressed by local Australian students' reactions. It is a question of whether local Australian students and academics can understand what Korean students speak about. This pressure sometimes led to a loss of confidence in English speaking proficiency. It seems that psychological anxiety towards native speakers is the most difficult variation that increases pressure on Korean students to cope with speaking problems. They fear making mistakes while they speak, but they also need to realise that this anxiety does not support their further studies in Australian undergraduate programs. However, students who had previously experienced Australian secondary school stated that they have difficulties with how to transfer meanings more clearly rather than with speaking itself. The following comments were offered by an Australian Academic.

> *It depends on the person. A lot of first language interference occurs where you've got the verb at the end of the sentence rather than middle of the sentence. It can make it a bit difficult for them to follow the topic. I think it really does come down to familiarity with their first language and also their cultural thought that they try to reach the ideal of speaking level. (AA2)*

He pointed out that the speaking difficulty of Korean students is due to a different language structure and higher expectations to master the perfect English language as native English speakers do. However, other Australian academics' opinions about speaking were not as negative as the Korean students' estimate of themselves as having a low proficiency level of speaking.

> *In general, it seems to me that their speech is quite good, there are no problems there, not grammatical errors, but I generally know what they saying and I just disregard mistakes. (AA3)*

> *Speaking is normally quite good from Korean students I've had. But, it's not perfect. Korean students sometimes make a few fragmentary mistakes, but they generally seem to be okay. (AA4)*

Overall, it was found that Korean students who previously experienced Australian secondary school programs are more confident about their speaking ability. A different language structure leads them to be poorly adapted to speaking, but it seems that even the minor mistakes Korean students make should not be ignored by academics. Nervousness and anxiety of Korean students' exposure to native speakers which was based on a conception of English as a second language does not help them to study successfully. They need to keep trying even though they make some mistakes once they speak. To do this, local Australian students' and academics' understanding of Korean students

who speak English as a second language are necessary for the latter to get more confidence in their speaking ability. For example, Student (3) responded that he was occasionally ignored by local Australian students and it made him more frustrated in class. For this reason, native English speakers need to understand the pattern or a structure of English language spoken by people who speak English as a second language and also need to patiently correct them to achieve the right expression.

8.2.3.2 Writing difficulty

This section provides specific information regarding the issue of Korean students' difficulty in writing. This was commented on by both Korean students and Australian academics. The following comments were expressions of their experiences regarding this issue.

> *We did not have much experience in writing English in Korea, so what I found is that a lack of experience in writing English was a real difficulty. In fact, it can be said that I actually began to learn how to write in English during an ELICOS program in Australia, so I can say that our writing experience is still not good enough. In addition, I found that it takes a longer time to write something like an essay or assignment compared to local students. (S4)*

He explained that writing assessments given to Korean students in Australia are an entirely new task and that a lack of previous experience in writing English in the Korean school system was a major reason why they have difficulty in writing English assessments, such as essays or other written assignments. However, the following two Korean students who previously had experience Australian secondary schools stated that the writing difficulties Korean students face are due to a lack of time and the different ways of expression that they are accustomed to given the structure of the Korean language.

> *In fact, it's a matter of time difference between local students and Korean students when they need to do written assignments. If I am granted more time to do written assignments or writing tasks, I can make it a similar product like local students' written work. At the same time, I also believe that sharing communication with local students is important to prepare written assessments. In addition, communicating with class mates, lecturers, and tutors is very important for Korean students to check the preparation of my writing because I was able to get right information through those conversations. The difference I found about writing difficulties is that local students can check written work for themselves, otherwise Korean students need native speakers for checking out their written work before submission. (S1)*

His response seems to be more positive than that of Student (4) as he argues that writing difficulty can be overcome if adequate time is available. But, he also indicates that Korean students cannot

check their written tasks by themselves. This may be one of reasons why Korean students tend to spend more time to finish their written tasks than local students. A female Korean student stated that her writing difficulty is due to the different manner of expression in a sentence.

> *I think that it is probably the way of expression in a sentence. Suppose that I write assignments using Korean language then I can put better expressions that can create perfect sentences because Korean is my first language. There is a limitation that I can't get over because English is our second language. It must be an unavoidable thing for users of English as their second language. (S2)*

She argues that the main difficulty in writing English for Korean students is due to the nature of English as a second language to which they need to adapt. The initial manner of expression is usually based on their first language structure, then they need to transfer that meaning into English language structure. This is likely one reason why Korean students are not good at English writing tasks. Related to this situation, Australian academics described the academic writing skills of Korean students in their experiences.

> *When they go to write their assignments, they have difficulty using what they think is better English for their assignments when expressing themselves. (AA3)*

She argues, in other words, that Korean students have difficulty in expressing their ideas in an appropriate from of written English.

> *A lot of Korean students have problems with paragraphing. I don't know why, but maybe its structure of Korean paragraphs as opposed to English paragraphs. What I found is that Korean students tended to paragraphEnglish sentences without connecting each sentence to the subject of themes or contents. They were paragraphing each sentence in every new line. I think they were perhaps taught to translate sentence by sentence especially when they were translating Korean into English. (AA2)*

He often found Korean students' problems with paragraphing in their writings. This probably illustrates that the previous learning environment of Korean students does not seem to be easily transferred to the Australian academic context. Australian academics were also asked to express their views about common mistakes in the writing of Korean students.

> *It is obvious that Korean students have a lot of knowledge of grammar. Grammar overrules the logic or overrules fluency of the language. This focus on being accurate in terms of grammar means that they sometimes lose the idea of being accurate in the overall communication of ideas. Now, that can also come about because of the sentence level. They have a lot of problems with the paragraph structure because although they know 'although', 'however', 'despite', and so on they are all very similar in meaning and they often put*

wrong words at the wrong time. So, it's actually a lack of familiarity of usage more than knowledge of systems. I mean a lot of these problems are typical for many learners. (AA2)

He argued that the grammar-focused in learning English and the lack of familiarity with every day English are crucial problems that Korean students have difficulty with in their writing. Moreover, other academics noted that Korean students are not good at using appropriate referencing and paraphrasing.

I think how to write an academic essay, how to integrate referencing, how to even tell, for example, when you are referencing surnames or family names and which is the first name of Australian or English writers is a different convention, is just really difficult, very difficult. (AA1)

In sum, Korean students' difficulties in their writing are due to unfamiliarity. Above all, it seems that they have not experienced English writing tasks in Korea because examination-based English learning in Korea did not require any serious writing tasks for their school curriculum. Thus, it can be said that writing English by Korean students who are currently enrolled in Australian undergraduate programs, whether it requires longer or shorter sentences in every genre, is a new obstacle for them to overcome. Moreover, they have difficulties in providing correct forms of academic writing including how to integrate referencing and paraphrasing. Again, this is due to a lack of English language for academic purposes. These research findings indicate the importance of English fundamental writing skills for Korean students, if they want to study in Australian undergraduate programs.

8.2.3.3 Anxiety about participating in tutorials

This section discusses the underlying reasons why Korean students are uncomfortable when attending tutorials, which are ordinary activities they need to cope with. There are problems mainly associated with their anxiety. Here are some examples.

I think that it is due to a lack of confidence and a feeling of uneasiness. In my experience of participating in tutorial classes, many Korean students tended to hesitate expressing their ideas. Local Australian students, including tutors, were likely to understand what they said, but it seemed to me that Korean students were very nervous and tended to fear local Australian students' initial reactions. This is entirely based on a lack of confidence. (S2)

We tend to worry about our background as well. For example, we Korean students have English as a second language, so psychological unrest during the class makes us not actively participate in discussions. While we think about the issue, the points that we were

preparing for had already gone in a discussion. A lack of the proficiency level of English and our anxiety mainly cause this uncomfortable situation. (S1)

These two students stated that a troubled mind (anxiety) leads to a passive role in tutorials and a lack of belief in themselves, and their English language skills, leads to more anxiety than local students have. As Student (3) stated, it is really hard to involve them in a discussion because it tends to be led by local students.

I can say that it is due to a lack of our proficiency level of English. As far as I know, interrupting conversations or discussions is normally acceptable in Australian culture, but I still feel uncomfortable doing it that way. I found that most tutorial classes tend to be dominated by local students, so it is really hard for me to get into discussions. (S3)

In line with these comments, an Australian academic also found that Korean students' anxiety and lack of experience in the Australian academic setting are the main factors why they do not take a more active role in tutorials.

I am sure about Korean students' attitudes and they are level of verbal skills they are having in my class. In my point of view, mostly reluctant to talk to native English speakers because they are anxious that they won't be able to express themselves. (AA3)

I think it is due to their lack of experience with local Australian students and the general expectations of how they behave in Australian academic setting. But, I think Korean students are not used to interrupting a teacher. For example, it seems to me that asking a question of your teacher is not done in Korea". (AA1)

As a similar result of speaking difficulty, it can be said that Korean students' anxiety about participating in tutorials arises from a lack of confidence and unfamiliarity with the Australian academic setting. For example, passive behaviour of Korean students who were accustomed to the previous Korean education system mainly causes raised anxiety in tutorials. In order to actively participate in tutorials, Korean students need to have a comparatively higher level of English proficiency in all areas, however a new pattern of learning activity and anxiety are definitely a huge burden for them to deal with. Above all, adapting to a new academic activity which they did not experience in Korea is likely to make it more difficult to participate. Also, in and of itself, knowing that they are using English as a second language is an obstacle that prevents them from an appropriate involvement in tutorials.

8.2.4 The cultural variations affecting Korean students' adjustment in the Australian academic context

According to the descriptive results of the survey, there were three main areas where Korean students have difficulties in adapting to the new culturally-engaged Australian undergraduate academic context. These include the student-centred learning system, the discussion-based learning system, and the critical thinking-based learning system. The following are expressions of students regarding this new context.

> *We are used to passive ways of learning. For example, Korean teachers usually cram our heads with knowledge and we did not experience discussion-based and student-centred learning systems, so we are often faced with difficulties in that. (S4)*

> *It is due to different types of early schooling systems. For example, we tended to be taught to memorise something without any suggestions or guidelines. In other words, a different way of teaching and learning pedagogy is the main reason why we are currently encountering difficulties in adjusting to discussion-based and student-centred teaching or learning systems in Australian higher education programs. In Australia, teachers tend to suggest and lead students to consider the issues for themselves. It is different from the cramming system of education we were accustomed to. (S2)*

> *I think it is due to a lack of experiences and we were not accustomed to the discussion-based and student-centred learning system. In a new teaching and learning system, I also found that there are some similarities which I got used to do in Korea as well, but the main difference is that we Korean students are used to teacher-centred learning system, Australian lecturers or tutors tend to expect us to study more independently. (S3)*

These three commentaries clearly indicate that Korean students are not accustomed to dealing with the student-centred and discussion-based learning dimensions of the Australian educational system.

The outcomes of the interviews also provide a similar pattern of reasons why they are not good at thinking critically.

> *It is probably one of problems caused by our previous experience in the cramming education system in Korea. To think logically, we need to get used to this educational environment. I believe that we need time for adjusting into a new learning system. Another important thing is that the Korean education system emphasises results or final products, whereas the Australian education system regards process as the most important part of any activities. (S4)*

> *I think that it is due to different types of eduction systems. Under the condition of cramming education and memory focused education in Korea, I believe that we can not expect any critical thinking and logic. (S2)*

Student (2) explained that Korean students' difficulty in thinking critically and in a logical sequence is particularly affected by their long term experience in the typical Korean education system. However, one interviewee said that it is mainly caused by a lack of English. This implies that it is not a problem of cultural differences but a problem of the English language itself.

> *I guess it totally depends on each individual's ability. What I believe is that critical and logical thinking are essential tasks for students. In my case, I can say that I am good at critical or logical thinking, but I cannot express my ways of thinking because of a lack of English. (S3)*

In terms of the viewpoint of Australian academics, the following statement of Australian Academic (4) indicates that the ability to think critically is not only a problem for Korean students, but it can be an important matter for local students as well.

> *It is a problem for domestic students as well as international students. I found it myself. I think domestic students don't quite have that logical ability. For example, I found one of the false things came through checking their writing assignment which has to be presented logically and to be done by right references and sources. However, I noticed that they don't much know about how to paraphrase or rearrange the sources they were going to use it when preparing their writing tasks. At the university level, they need to have basic essay writing skills at least, and the whole process of having references related to working materials command their logical structure. It's a time consuming process, but both domestic and international students have to know how to do that because it is not only students' responsibility, but also universities give them a pressure to overcome this issue. For international students, it's a more time consuming pressure for them to get logical structure because of English language barrier. (AA4)*

In addition, the following comments show that culturally engaged fixed ideas affect understanding things differently and they also cause a central problem for Korean students when they encounter the task of critical thinking in a logical sequence.

> *Maybe there are cultural differences. I think recognising those cultural differences is important. Recognising how each culture goes about recognising that different cultures do things differently. It's a vertical lock step by step logical thinking. (AA1)*

> *I think a lot of students seem to struggle with translating, understanding of the question into writing or in speaking, because they don't really understand the culturally-engaged question asked. For example, if we ask them to write a simple essay on something to do with the problems with cars, culturally Australian would expect pollution to be number one issue. However, most students go straight to focus on to too many cars in their logic so it tends to take me long way to get to my main point. What they prioritising is not exactly what we expect. They get it wrong in this way, so then there is a need to go back and train them until they notice the main point I emphasise. Teaching them prioritising the culturally-engaged issues properly is an important aspect to assist the development of their logical thinking. (AA2)*

To sum up, it can be said that Korean students regard their difficulty in thinking critically as one of the hardest tasks and this is mainly due to their experiences in the Korean education system before coming to Australia. Local Australian students have the same problems with this issue as well, and Australian academics explain the main reason of this is based on cultural differences. It is natural that prioritising a certain issue in culturally different society should be varied according to their sociological situations. They believe that it is a time consuming process, but they finally achieve a correct track of thinking as Australian academics planned.

8.3 Additional Insights Offered by the Cross-Tabulation Analysis

In relation to the issue of the main difficulties Korean students have in adapting to English language in the academic context, there are two key issues arising from the results of the cross-tabulated data. These are presented in Table 8.3. (a).

Table 8.3 (a): The outcomes of cross-tabulation analyses and key issues raised (English language difficulties)

The outcomes of Cross-tabulation analysis	Key issues raised
• Female students had less difficulty in reading. • Female students were more comfortable when understanding lecture.	**Gender**
• Students who experienced an ELICOS program in Australia had less difficulty in presenting ideas. • Students who experienced an ELICOS program in Australia had less difficulty in participating in group activities. • Students who experienced at ELICOS program in Australia showed a higher level of English writing skills.	**Previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia**

An interesting finding obtained from this data analysis concerns a gender issue. Female students indicated a better performance in reading English and understanding English language lecturers in Australian undergraduate programs than did males. Australian Academic (3) and Student (3) raised this issue.

> *I have found that female students have better English writing, communication and reading skills, both international and Australian students in fact. Apart from proven gender differences in these areas, I put it down to females being more interested and active listeners and being less shy about asking questions or seeking clarification (AA3)*

> *It seems to me that usually female students tend to read more books and other reading materials such as magazines and novels than male students. I guess that this is one of the reasons why female students are better at reading in English. (S3)*

The data on this issue also suggests that Korean students' previous experiences of attending an ELICOS program in Australia before they enter Australian undergraduate programs had an important effect on their academic adaptability and their skills in presenting ideas, their confidence with group activities and even their proficiency level in English writing skills. The following comment in this regard was made by Australian Academic (1).

> *ELICOS students would have been through a longer process which would have helped them cement their sources of help and support and to add to their confidence about presenting ideas and group activities. It would have also helped them become aware of the university expectations and become more familiar with what they needed to do to pass each course. (AA1)*

In short, female Korean students indicated to have better performances in reading English and understanding lectures delivered by in English in Australian undergraduate programs. Korean students who had experienced in ELICOS program were said to be more likely to adapt to the practices and expectations of the Australian academic context. This is one of the reasons why Korean students' previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia is important for them to do better performance compared to the student group that did not experience that program.

Concerning the cultural variations affecting Korean students' adjustment in the academic context, two key issues were raised (see Table 8.3. (b)).

Table 8.3 (b): The outcomes of cross-tabulation analyses and key issues raised (Cross - cultural variations)

The outcomes of Cross-tabulation analyses	Key issues raised
• Students who experience of with native English speakers were likely to have fewer problems with the impact of discussion-based teaching system.	**Experienced with native speakers**
• The younger Korean students had fewer problems with a different learning pedagogy.	**Moving from a teacher-centred to a students-centred learning system**

With regard to the issue of students' previous experiences with native English teachers, Student (1) described the impact of their previous experiences and how they performed in discussion-based learning system in Australian undergraduate programs.

> *It is natural that I should have fewer problems in adjusting to the discussion-based learning and teaching system because I had many experiences in learning English with native English teachers in Korea. The main difference I found was different instruction in teaching English by native English teachers was primarily discussion-based and they tended to ask*

more questions compared to Korean English teachers. I remembered that they wanted to listen to whether our answers were right or wrong. (S1)

In line with the issue of the impact of students' shift from a familiar to a different learning system, Korean English Teacher (1) made the following comments based on previous teaching experiences in Korea.

Whenever I needed to apply a new teaching and learning pedagogy, which was initiated by the decision of the Ministry of Education in Korea, it usually took time for students to adapt to the new pedagogy. We educators in Korea had tried to change the pattern of teacher-centred to a new student-centred teaching and learning system. For this reason, a new student group of my class in every year had a tendency to show better performance in a new system. After all, this also implies younger students' adaptability to a new practice was much better than the previous student group. So, I believe that Korean students in Australia would probably have a similar experience in this (KET1)

These responses indicate that Korean students' previous contacts with native English teachers are a crucial factor contributing to better performance by students in a discussion-based learning system. They also provide evidence that the younger student group showed a greater ability to adjust to the student-centred learning system.

Apart from the previous key issues, one additional aspect of the proficiency level of English was raised. The issue was that Korean students who were over 30 years of age tended to focus more on practising English grammar than other age groups. With regard to this, Students (2) made the following comment.

What I noticed is that the older student group tended to focus on English grammar as an important part of English language skills. Actually, I am not sure why they concentrate more on doing this, but my guess is that they were used to grammar–based learning English in the Korean education system. (S2)

And, Korean English Teacher (3) provided his view about the aspect of the age factor and how it impacts on selecting English grammar by Korean students as a primary concern while they are undertaking Australian undergraduate programs.

I can probably answer that this problem is due to a test-based and teacher-centred English language learning system. For example, in our generation we had to only focus on preparing for examinations and also there were many English tests based on testing the level of English grammar. I believe that this kind of learning and teaching pattern might be continued until now in the Korean English education system. Also, English teachers there focus heavily focused on English grammar as well. (KET3)

These two responses clearly indicate that students who were over 30 years of age have a tendency to spend more time practising English grammar than younger age groups. This indicates that students' familiarity of the previous grammar-focused practices in the Korean English education system still influences their selection of English grammar as a primary concern to improve their English language skills, even though they are taught in Australian undergraduate programs.

8.4 Key Outcomes of the Comparative Study

According to the outcomes of the comparative study, it was found that Korean students who undertook Australian secondary school programs showed much better performances in later study. First, they tend to have less anxiety about speaking English and fewer problems with speaking when making presentations or participating in seminars. The following responses illustrate this point.

> *If you assist me in choosing one of the difficulties in my speaking, I can probably organise the ideas in my mind according to what I wish to say and transfer the meaning of it so that listeners can understand the meaning in accordance with my original intention that I expected to deliver. (S2)*

> *I don't have any problems when I need to present my ideas, but I feel a little bit of hesitation to answer questions after presenting. (S1)*

Both students, who had previously experienced Australian secondary school programs indicated that they were only anxious about transferring the right meaning to listeners. Student (1) is nonetheless confident about his speaking ability, except a bit of hesitation in answering questions. This shows entirely different aspects of what they are mostly concerned about according to different experiences in previous programs they had undertaken. Second, this group of Korean students indicated that they had fewer problems with a student-centred learning system.

> *I really like the teaching and learning styles provided by the Australian education system. As far as I know, tutors play a very important role in leading group discussions. However, tutorial classes are usually led by students, so I really like this sort of environment. (S1)*

Interestingly, the final outcome of the comparative study indicates that this group of Korean students has problems with a new system that emphasises critical thinking. The comments offered by an Australian academic below explain that the issue of critical thought does not tend to be sufficiently covered by school curricula and practices at that level.

> *I think that Australian students begin to learn these tips by interacting with peers in everyday life when they are young. For example, all the knowledge they could get from*

their activities such as storytelling, painting, playing music and so on. They start to think of what is good or bad and whether it is important or not. If you have a local Australian peer group, you might realise the differences between your own and Australian students' way of thinking about a certain topic or issues. However, Australian students are also instructed in many ways about the importance of critical thinking. For example, I think teachers or educators continued to emphasise that this type of thinking is essential to cope with what we exactly wanted in academic tasks done by them. They were probably told even from their high school period that this is what we wanted, this is what you need to do to prepare good referencing and critical thought. But, I think local Australian students also have similar problems as Korean students. (AA3)

Compared to the other two groups, this group seemed to possess stronger confidence about their level of speaking. Adaptability to a student-centred learning system also presents a more positive response, but the preliminary programs for this group still did not provide the skill of critical thinking.

8.4.1 Additional outcomes of the comparative study

There were two additional outcomes obtained from the comparative study, which are shown in Figure 8.4.1.

Table 8.4.1: Additional outcomes of the comparative study and key issues raised

Additional outcomes of a comparative study	Key issues raised
• Students who undertook preparation for official English test(s) programs showed less difficulty in preparing assignments.	**Difficulty in preparing assignments**
• Students who undertook TAFE or Foundation Studies Program more time to spend on reading English books.	**Time to spend on reading English books**

The group of students who had undertaken preparation for official English language test(s) programs indicated that they tended to have less difficulty in preparing assignments. Student (3) made the following response.

In my opinion, students who had experience in the official English test(s) programs are often taught about the essay structure and how to prepare it appropriately in class. This was because we needed carefully to prepare for the essay part of the test(s). I believe that this is the main reason why I feel it is less difficult for me to prepare assignments. (S3)

On the other hand, it was found that students who had undertaken a TAFE or foundation studies program were more likely to concentrate on reading relevant English language reading materials and texts prescribed in the course. The following comments were made by Student (4).

I still remember that I had to read many reading materials related to my subjects, but it took a longer time than I expected and sometimes it was very difficult for me to finish reading on time as I planned. At that time, I also felt that my reading skill in English was not enough to undertake the course confidently. Therefore, concentrating on understanding the texts or other English books was the first priority for me in order to follow the course effectively. (S4)

Considering these two students' responses, it appears that the main purpose of each program has an influence on the students' own interests. This also impacted on students in terms of selecting the right focus and academic context most necessary to overcome any difficulties they faced.

8.5 Three Brief Case Studies of Korean Students' Experiences with English Language and Cross-Cultural Differences

The three brief cases that follow are accounts provided Korean students who are currently enrolled in Australian undergraduate programs. Each case tries to capture the experiences that were particularly important in the students' lives, what the main issues were, how they coped with those English language difficulties (as their second language), and the cross-cultural differences that they had encountered from the beginning of their studies in Australia. Since the cases are personal accounts, for confidentiality reasons the researcher does not provide the names of the informants. The three brief cases in this collection are based on in-depth interviews that focused on their experiences. This was done in a written form and sent back to the researcher. The responses are given here in verbatim form.

Case A

Student (4) had undertaken an ELICOS program and a Foundation Studies program for his preparation to enter Australian undergraduate studies. He is currently enrolled in an information technology program at University of Southern Queensland. He expressed his experiences as follows:

I arrived in Australia in 2001. My English skill was not good to talk so I started from language course. I had finished the course for five months. After I had studied foundation course. I started university study in 2002 and I am still studying in university. When I came to Australia I suffered from stress because I could not understand and I did not know what to say. I felt lonely. Fortunately, most Korean people and housemates helped me to overcome Australian life. Especially Asian people had a favour to help me. When I did not understand something about assignments, they explained to me in detail. After graduating from the foundation course, I did not have time to study English. I just listened to lectures without understanding everything. I failed several course by insufficient English skill and by some problems. For example, I had to go back to Korea to take care of my grandfather so I failed 4 courses. I had broken up with girl friend and I got investigated by a reason I

cheated about an assignment. At that time, I got shocked and frustrated about Australian life a lot. I could not concentrate on assignments so I did not finish. I failed four courses as well. I am still having a problem about English. My English is not improving as much as I expected. But I am trying to understand and speak to someone. I anticipate in near future, I can have good English skill. I hope and I believe. Differences of English vocabularies, accent and pronunciation are a bit different. In Korea, American English is used. When I heard a different vocabulary and pronunciation, I did not understand and I asked again.

This case reflects two important issues. First, there is the question of what program is needed for the improvement of students' proficiency level in the English language. For example, Student (4) may be a bit of a hard worker, but this interviewee's difficulty seems to be real, because he would probably have completed the course in 2004 or 2005 according to the normal length of Australian undergraduate courses offered in general. However, he is still undertaking the course even though he completed the preliminary courses for students who speak English as a second language, such as ELICOS or Foundation Studies programs as bridging courses before entering an undergraduate program. Many international students follow this general pathway. Above all, it is likely that he still has difficulties in listening and speaking. For example, he had to finish several assignments during a particular week, but was shocked by a lecturer's feedback. He managed to finish all the assignments on time, but the lecturers said that he had cheated even though he claimed that he did not actually cheat on those assignments. He really wanted to explain everything but he couldn't provide proper explanation as to why it happened due to a lack of English expression. In the end, they didn't believe him. Thus, his previous experiences in ELICOS and Foundation Studies programs did not seem to help him to accommodate to real difficulties. To make matters worse, he still had difficulty in understanding lectures. For example, the following comments explain his difficulty in dealing with lectures.

I don't understand everything that a lecturer says so I did not attend some parts of lectures. After I read textbook or lecture note again, I understand a bit more. Understanding is slower than Australian people. I should read the study material several times.

This might have contributed to his failing the four units. Also, his personal relationships and family problems affected his ability to adapt to the Australian academic environment. These external hardships seem to have given him another burden to deal with. With regard to cross-cultural perspectives, he was shocked about the differences in accents and vocabularies between American and Australian English. His comments about this were:

For example, when I wanted to connect internet access to uni, I call internet service providers but sometimes didn't know what they were saying. Conversation isn't easy with

Australian people. Sometimes a person speaks too fast and pronunciation isn't very clear for me.

Second, this case implies the need for appropriate guidelines or student service programs in order to help students' problems that might include unexpected private incidents during their course of study in Australia. It seems that he was stressed when he commenced the ELICOS program. He also experienced a feeling of isolation which was due to being far away from his home country, and this loneliness was a real burden in coping with a new educational environment. Students from the same ethnic background were a major help in assisting his understanding of assignments. Students from Asian countries were especially helpful in this regard. For this informant, it is necessary that he utilises student services and similar facilities which most Australian undergraduate programs provide to solve the problems. But, for whatever reasons, he didn't try to contact those facilities or organisations. In an education providers' view, this case indicates that there is a need to be more active in introducing student service programs once international students arrive. Consequently, while he seems to be so enthusiastic to overcome his English language problems which directly influence his academic assessments, he nonetheless admits that his proficiency level in English is not improving as much as he believed it should. For this interviewee, it can be predicted that English language would be a handicap until he finishes his study program in Australia.

Case B

Student (3) is currently enrolled in undergraduate business studies in Griffith University and had experienced taking the IELTS test as a main tool for his acceptance in that course. He stated that:

I decided to come to Australia when I finished first year at university in Korea. When I attended language school I realized that I would not be able to correct my English pronunciation. I have a really strong Korean accent as well as Busan (second largest city which is located in southern part of Korean peninsular) accent in my English and it is hard to correct myself because I am at a mature age. It is also difficult to speak logically even though I know most vocabulary and grammar rules. With an IELTS score of 6.0 I went to university in Brisbane. I can communicate in English quite well if it is under a general topic, however in lectures and tutorials I still find it difficult to understand some contents. When I read text books and course materials I can understand them better, but in lectures and group meetings, I sometimes get very frustrated as I can't understand them nor can I express myself well. For example, I can differentiate a sentence from a sentence when I listen to a lecturer but I would miss some words in the sentence when they are said fast or even at a normal speed. My pronunciation also creates a lot of trouble because I say a word with a stress at the wrong syllable, and the listener does not understand it. The most difficult thing that I find in learning English is speaking (pronunciation and fluency) maybe because I am conscious of my strong Korean accent.

This case provides the researcher an opportunity to discuss two other important issues, namely fixed pronunciation and differences between general and academic English. First, the informant commented that it was quite difficult to correct English pronunciation as local Australians do. He found that his typical strong Korean pronunciation does not seem to be easily changed to meet Australian pronunciation. It seems that wrong pronunciation also might cause a problem when transferring ideas to local Australians. He seems to be confident with English grammar and vocabulary and that was why he used the IELTS test as a main tool for entry into his current Australian undergraduate program. However, this case does provide evidence that the IELTS test is only a tool which officially allows students to enrol in Australian undergraduate programs and may have less value in terms of actual performance once in the course.

Second, he stated that in those academic activities, such as lectures and group meetings, he is not appropriately dealing with tasks offered. Reading comprehension is not the main problem for him, but there are difficulties in speaking and listening. These are strongly related to the comprehension of lectures and participating in group meetings.

Case C

Student (1) who is undertaking a business course at Griffith University (Gold coast Campus) and had experience in an Australian secondary school program before entry to her current Australian undergraduate program. She responded that:

> *I think English learning is an endless journey. I went to high school in Australia and people thought that it would be easier for me to master English skills. Having been in Australia for ten years my English pronunciation and accent have become quite native and most of all I feel very comfortable communicating in English. However, when it comes to vocabulary, I have to admit that I still have a long way to go. I believe that there is a limitation in learning a language naturally at a mature age. I learned hundreds of new vocabulary at high school, however I started laying back and not learning new vocabulary because most of the time I could get away with the vocabulary that I knew. For example, when I write an essay, I would use the word "develop" where it would be more appropriate to use the word "elaborate". I know both words, however I tend to choose a common word that I would use everyday. Even though the grammar is right and the meaning is right I think my level of vocabulary stays intermediate. Therefore, I think one of the challenges of learning English is to learn vocabulary and make use of them.*

Issues raised by this case are important in terms of understanding Korean students who had experience in an Australian secondary school program. There are two important issues to be reconsidered. First, learning English as second language cannot be mastered in a certain period. As she noted, a consideration of the nature of the English language and of the cognitive learning

behaviour obtained from personal experiences can provide an opportunity to identify a strategy of increasing an individual's proficiency in the English language. It seems that she also feels there is some difficulty about the English language, but it is not the same level of difficulty as that felt by Students (3) and (4).

Second, this case illustrates an adaptability to academic English and its practical use. She seems to have some difficulty in choosing proper English words in writing essays. She realises that common words used in general conversations when communicating with Australians and words used for academic purpose differ. However, she tended to use the same words repeatedly even though she acknowledged that fault. But, she continued to make such mistakes in writing. Choosing the right words and the right applications of words in various contexts are important means to overcome these problems. The findings of these three cases are summarised in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5: Summary of three different cases

	English language issue	Cross-cultural issue
Student (1)	• Learning English as a second language is endless journey. • The need of selecting appropriate words in writhing tasks.	
Student (3)	• IELTS test does not seem to provide any fulfilment of success. • A lack of speaking and listening skills.	• A lack of knowledge about the necessity of academic English and its purpose. • Stressful in group meetings.
Student (4)	• ELCOS and Foundation Studies Program do not seem to provide greater improvement of proficiency level of English to follow up Australian undergraduate programs. • A lack of speaking and listening skills	• Culture shock with academics and new environment. • The needs for student services programs and active roles in helping students out from their individual difficulties they might encounter in Australia.

Apart from the analysis of these three brief cases with respect to the main theme of the study, it is revealed that Student (1)'s response in a written form is seen as the best qualitative written expression compared to writing tasks responded by Student (3) and (4). This additional finding also supports the evidence that Korean student group that had undertaken a Australian secondary school program shows better academic performance in most Australian undergraduate programs they are involved in.

8.6 Summary

The nature of learning English and the contextual knowledge of Korean students who are currently enrolled in Australian undergraduate programs can be described as one of 'impracticability', which has been influenced by the typical the cram learning method in Korea. Regardless of the learning methods, the unavailability of opportunities by which they could practise or utilise the English language is another important reason as to why they report their initial feeling of 'impracticability" in situations they confront in Australia. In other words, the issue they firstly encounter within the Australian higher education environment is the realisation that their proficiency levels in English do not meet the academic requirements. The English they have learned in Korea is not suitable for adjusting to a real academic, or social, life in Australia.

The IELTS is the most preferred test that Korean students sit in order to enter Australian undergraduate programs. But passing the IELTS test does not necessarily provide a good indication that they will be on a right track to successfully undertake such academic programs. Academic contexts are more complicated than students might expect. The necessity of preliminary programs offered in the Australian education system, such as English for academic purpose or attending secondary school programs, are crucial pathways to introduce them to the abilities that they need to develop. A prior realisation of the requirements and the difficulties they might face in programs such as these would give them a realistic indication of the strategic preparation needed. In addition, the outcomes of the interviews indicate that an early experience in these programs will be most beneficial for them in terms of getting accustomed to dealing with such problems.

With regard to the issue of the difficulties Korean students have in adapting to the use of English language in the academic context, it has been found that students are confronted with difficulties of speaking, writing and activities relevant to tutorials. They are not satisfied with their proficiency level in speaking due mainly to the different language structures. However, Australian academics' estimations are more positive than those of Korean students. They feel the students are generally good enough to communicate meaning while speaking, even though they sometimes make minor mistakes. Apart from a lack of experience in writing English, Korean students seem to have a rather limited knowledge or understanding about Australian academic writing requirements, such as how to reference and how to paraphrase when they write. This outcome indicates that Korean students are not accustomed to academic writing and, when encountering a new academic environment such as in Australia, there is need for them to address such issues. Because of the weaknesses students have, participating in tutorials can be a huge challenge. Unfamiliarity in this

setting tends to make them seriously lose confidence in their ability to play an active role in classroom sessions. Also, culturally engaged behaviour poses uncomfortable situations they need to deal with.

Concerning the different cultural setting, it can be said that issues, including the student-centred, discussion-based, and critical thinking-based learning environment, are all new aspects of learning they must adapt to in Australian undergraduate programs. They have been trained in passive ways of learning and so are not accustomed to participating in discussions because they have been taught in a teacher-centred learning system. However, critical thinking is not only a problem for Korean students, it is also an important issue for many Australian students who need to make appropriate adjustments in this regard. In this case, both Korean and Australian students need to adjust to such demands, and they both need to get used to thinking critically because it is one of the most important skills that the Australian academic environment asks one to develop.

According to the outcomes of the comparative study, one student group that previously had experienced Australian secondary school programs showed much better performance in their speaking ability and in a student-centred learning system compared to the other two groups. More time to relate to peers and more exposure to Australian academic environments is likely to allow students to adjust with relative ease. However, Australian secondary school programs do not seem to provide adequate activities related to critical thinking.

The three brief case studies of Korean students' experiences in Australian undergraduate programs provided an opportunity to examine the different aspects of English language and cross-cultural problems that they face according to type of education programs they undertook in Australia. It can't be said that the findings collected from these cases necessarily apply to all Korean students in terms of their difficulties in the English language or in cross-cultural matters, but it does provide a meaningful guideline to evaluate these issues in more detail. Conclusions and possible recommendations regarding the central questions of the study and for better performance by Korean students in Australian undergraduate programs are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

Discussions and Conclusions

9.1 Korean Students in Australian Education Programs

Koreans are 'on the move' to experience other countries. They are leaving Korea as tourists, students, businessman, and migrants. In recent years, they have shown a preference to visit foreign countries with an increasing eagerness to learn foreign languages, especially English, and to have an 'adventure' in learning about different peoples and cultures. This rapidly growing trend has been encouraged by changes in the social and economic structures of Korea itself. There is no doubt that an important impetus for Koreans' attention to the outside world has been the high rate of growth of the Korean economy and their economic advancement. As a result of this progress, the number of Korean students applying to study in Australian education programs has increased steadily over the last two decades. Recent data, which relates to overseas student numbers in Australian from the top ten source countries, indicates that Korean students rank as the second largest group of students enrolled in ELICOS programs and also belong to the top ten source countries (more recently 8th) in Australian tertiary education.

According to the findings of Chapter Two and the reviews of relevant literature, there are clear indications that there was a timely coincidence when both countries initiated new education policies in the late 1980s. In terms of the Australian government education policy, recruiting students from overseas, particularly in the Asian region, became an important dimension of Australia's national economy after it shifted from 'Aid' to 'Trade'. During that period, Koreans also began to seek Australia as one of the preferred English speaking countries for their needs. This phenomenon is illustrated in Figure 9.1, which depicts the factors that have contributed most to this trend.

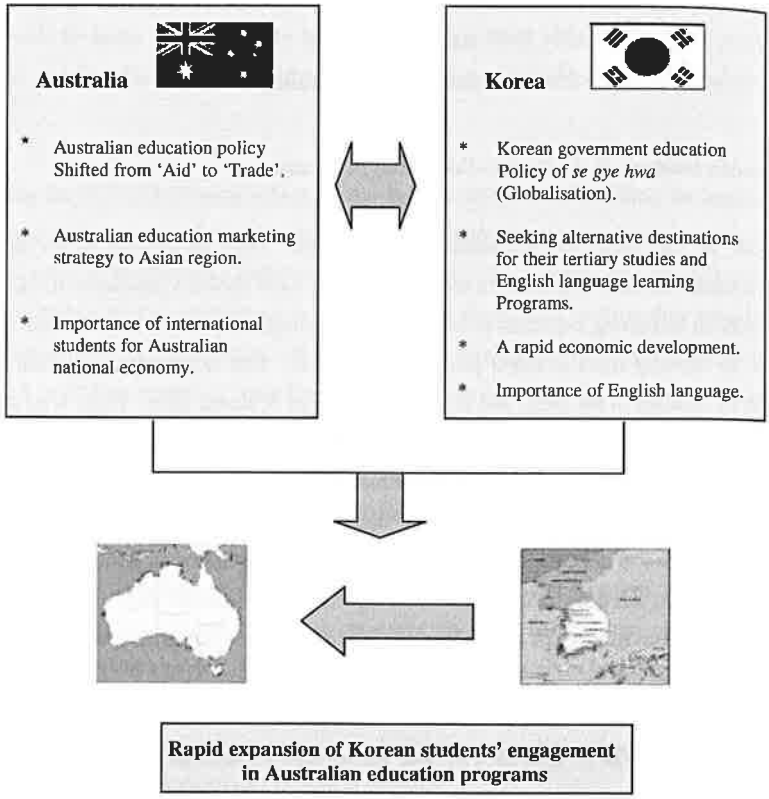

Figure 9.1: Factors contributing to Korean students' flows into Australian education programs from the late to the present

This remarkable phenomenon of 'educational engagement' between the two countries has occurred since the late 1980s. Korean government permission for self-funded and parent-supported overseas study by students of all ages was finally granted during this period. It was the beginning of a new era for Korean government education policy in terms of stepping forward in the context of globalisation. At present, the necessity of English language skills and their importance in this present era is a prime factor in stimulating travel to English-speaking host countries for academic purposes. The proficiency level of English and its wider utilisation are now crucial requirements for all working and academic areas in Korean society. The proficiency level of English is a major feature in testing students' entry to tertiary institutions, as well as in the recruitment of human resources in Korea. This enthusiastically supported social phenomenon has become a major issue nation-wide since the period of the first civilian government of Kim Young Sam (1993-1997). The

important landmark by his government was initiating a new policy called *se gye hwa* (Globalisation). That policy especially emphasised developing human resources, including the acquisition of at least one foreign language. As a result of this government policy, there was a rapid expansion of educational promotions by both government and the general public seeking to provide opportunities for Korean students to study, particularly in English speaking countries. This accelerated social phenomenon led ultimately to more Korean students undertaking overseas studies. It resulted in an enhancement of Australia's position as one of the preferred destinations for such purposes.

From the Australian perspective, the most prominent change in Australian government education policy was the shift from 'Aid' to 'Trade' that was launched in 1984. The specific policies advocated by the Jackson Report and the Goldring Report were that the Australian government's continuation of subsidising the cost of education for overseas students was no longer suited to the new circumstances and the needs of the Australian population. This provided a momentum to begin 'exporting education', exclusively targeting full fee-paying international students. Coincidently, this matched the Korean government's opening of its education policy, so that Australia's policy shift towards exporting education tended to facilitate an increasing number of Korean students choosing Australia as a study destination. After the Australian government accepted full-fee paying international students from the early 1990s, the number of Korean students seeking to study in Australian education programs still continues to increase.

9.2 The Main Characteristics of Korean Students' Experiences in Learning the English Language in Korea

The investigation of the characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in Korea focused on how they had been taught English as a foreign language in the Korean education system. In general, it was found that Korean students sampled in this study indicated that they had been typically accustomed to exam-based English language learning with a strong emphasis on reading comprehension. The underpinning approach can be concluded as a mainly teacher-centred learning pedagogy. Moreover, this research found that there are six additional aspects of their prior educational experience in Korea that have impacted upon their later learning in an English speaking environment. Firstly, the background of Korean students sampled in this study was that many did not have an opportunity to learn the English language with native English teachers. Even though some of them had experience with those who speak English as their first language, the main focus of the teaching pedagogy involving their speaking abilities did not

seem to help their development of English language proficiency. Due to the dominant environment of exam-based English language learning, speaking in a communicative context is not a priority concern for Korean students prior to entry into the prestigious universities in Korea's education system. Thus, Korean students do not have to demonstrate oral proficiency and teachers in Korea do not need to place priority on speaking when assessment is by pencil and paper activity.

In addition, Korean students sampled in this study revealed a lack of knowledge about the IELTS test system because of the dominance of the TOFEL test in Korea. There are many preparation programs for the TOFEL test in Korean universities and private English language institutions compared with IELTS testing centres. The British Council in Seoul and IDP (International Development Program) Education Australia in Seoul provide IELTS test centres in Korea. There are some specific tertiary preparation programs for domestic Korean students who seek to study in Commonwealth English speaking countries like Australia, Canada, UK, and New Zealand; however, they are taught according to the IELTS test preparation focus. More importantly, as the case study follow-up interviews with two Korean students, four Korean English teachers, and one Australian academic's revealed, there is little concern about the importance of English for conversing and for academic purposes in general in the English language learning pedagogy in Korea. The findings are summarised in Figure 9.2.

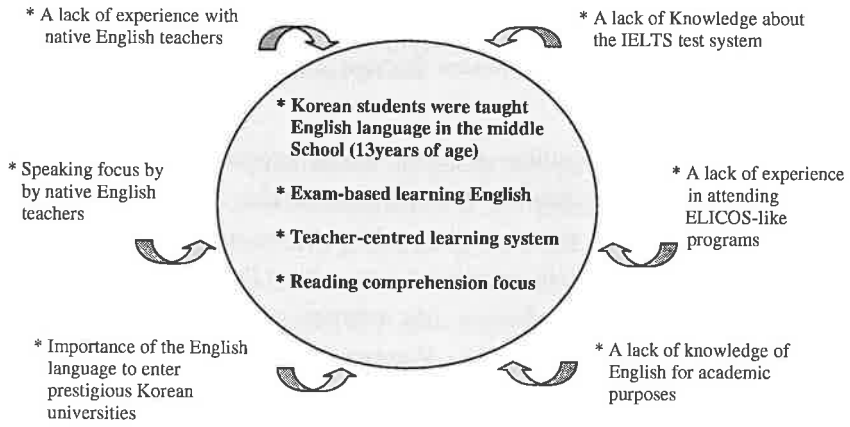

Figure 9.2: Background of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean education system

All the Korean students sampled in this study were currently enrolled in Australian undergraduate programs. They were introduced to English language when studying in middle school programs in Korea (year 7 or 8 in the Australian school system). Less than half of them (44.7%) experienced native English teachers in Korea. Access to a native English teacher was mainly obtained by attending a fee-paying private English language institution. The official recruitment of native English teachers in the Korean primary school education system only began when the new English education policy was launched in 1997. The research outcome with respect to the issue of different pedagogical concerns that Korean students noticed through experiencing native English teachers shows that reading comprehension was the main focus of Korean English teachers. By contrast, enhancing the proficiency level of speaking was the major concern for native English teachers. A test-based English learning education system and the high pressure of learning English as an important tool for entry to prestigious Korean tertiary institutions or to gain a better opportunity to be employed by major companies meant that reading comprehension has always been a crucial part of English language tests.

Concerning the issue of a pre-departure preparation strategy for Korean students intending to study in Australia, there is evidence here that Korean students are not sufficiently prepared in Korea to meet the minimum requirements of the proficiency level of English needed for most Australian undergraduate programs. Students needed to prepare for such requirements, including the enhancement of their oral proficiency level in English and their understanding of the academic environment of Australian undergraduate programs. However, Korean students sampled in this study revealed that they did not attend an ELICOS-like program in Korea in order to cope with such possible problems while studying overseas. In general, even though those who wished to study overseas realised the importance of taking official English tests, only one-third of the Korean students in this study took them in Korea. The evidence of the survey outcomes in this study reveals that the IELTS test is the most preferred by Korean students entering Australian undergraduate programs. This is not surprising because all Australian tertiary institutions emphasise this test as a main measurement of LBOTE students' ability and whether or not they can undertake Australian undergraduate programs.

9.3 The Best Preparation for Korean Students to Succeed in Australian Undergraduate Programs

The research findings can contribute to the discussion and formulation of strategies to develop more effective ways for Korean students to prepare for Australian undergraduate programs. Successful

achievement of their goals and gaining an understanding of their new academic context are the real burdens for Korean students. Currently, these are barriers that prevent them from adapting both academically and culturally. Korean students sampled in this study clearly indicated that they had shown different levels of adaptation according to the previous programs they experienced prior to entering Australian undergraduate programs. Figure 9.3 illustrates current performances of the Korean students sampled and their responses in adjusting to the Australian academic context. In other words, this figure reflects the research findings relevant to Korean students' prior experiences and their later adaptability to Australian undergraduate programs.

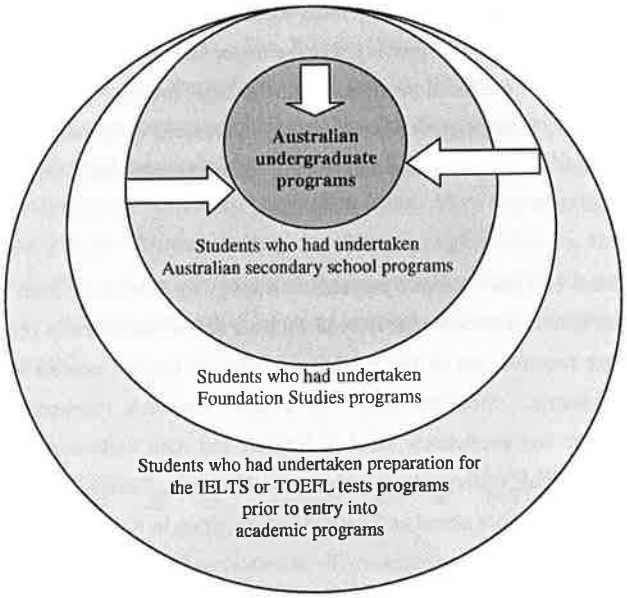

Figure 9.3: Korean students' proximal distance in adjusting to the Australian academic context according to their previous experiences and their current performance

More than half of the Korean students who participated in this study had experienced ELICOS programs before commencing their courses in Australian undergraduate programs. In particular, a majority of them attended a course offered by the ELICOS program that was mainly designed to prepare them for the official IELTS test. Similarly, the IELTS had been chosen as the most preferred official English test that Korean students took to meet the entry requirements of Australian undergraduate programs. Korean students sampled in this study are likely to spend less than 12 months studying in such a preparation program. Typically, the Korean students sampled in

this study appeared to depend on passing the IELTS test to gain permission to study in Australian undergraduate programs once they arrived in Australia.

For the present sample of Korean students, however, the case study involving Australian academics and Korean English teachers has revealed that as time has gone by the IELTS test as only one measure for entry and not necessarily one that assures their success in tertiary learning. In fact, this research indicates that most Korean students continue to face English language difficulties and cross-cultural challenges in the academic context while undertaking their undergraduate studies. The Australian academics who had previous experience in teaching Korean students in this study believed that the proficiency level of English acquired by passing the IELTS test differs from the proficiency level of English which would be utilised in real life situations dealing with the academic requirements of study. A lack of knowledge and skills associated with English for academic purposes is a major reason. Korean English teachers sampled in this study admit that the level of English learning and teaching does not meet the level that Australian undergraduate programs require because the current Korean English education system and its learning environment are not practical enough to achieve the high proficiency level of English that is essential for Korean students.

The research findings obtained from the comparative analysis clearly indicate that Korean students who had experienced an Australian secondary school program showed better performance in all areas compared to the other two Korean student groups who had experienced Foundation Studies programs and students who were enrolled in an ELICOS program where the IELTS test preparation was a focus. Korean students were found to have difficulties in meeting the required levels of proficiency in the English language of Australian undergraduate programs. The recognition of the English language problems that students encounter while undertaking their current programs is described by informants in the in-depth interviews as the 'impracticability' of their knowledge about English language because of the way it was taught in Korea. Also, the research found that with respect to cross-cultural issues, students who had undertaken Australian secondary school programs demonstrated more adaptability in most areas of later learning. For example, this group of students responded that they were satisfied with proficiency level of speaking English and were confident and had less anxiety when they needed to speak in a class. This group of students also had less difficulty in organising ideas in a logical sequence when writing English. Moreover, they were likely to have less problems when making a spoken class presentation.

Consequently, the research suggests that the best preparation for Korean students as they enter Australian undergraduate programs and achieve successful results is to attend Australian secondary programs where they can achieve early acculturation and pre-preparation by experiencing interaction with native English speakers in real academic situations. This suggested pathway would likely offer future Korean students a more realistic opportunity to overcome problems currently faced by Korean undergraduate students.

9.4 The English Language Difficulties that Korean Students Face in the Australian Academic Context

The third dimension of the research question was to identify the English language difficulties that Korean students face from an educational perspective while they were undertaking Australian undergraduate programs delivered in English. The research findings revealed that Korean students' speaking and writing problems are the main issues to overcome during their courses. There are several important factors contributing to students' difficulties in these two aspects in the Australian academic context. As discussed in the background of Korean students' experience in learning the English language in Korea, these factors are ultimately related to problems with English language pedagogy in Korea. It can be said that Korean students' background experiences in learning the English language directly reflect the problems of Korean students' speaking and writing difficulties in the Australian academic context. The findings obtained from this research clearly indicate that English language pedagogy in Korea did not provide any opportunities for the development of students' speaking and writing abilities. These factors are illustrated in Figure 9.4.

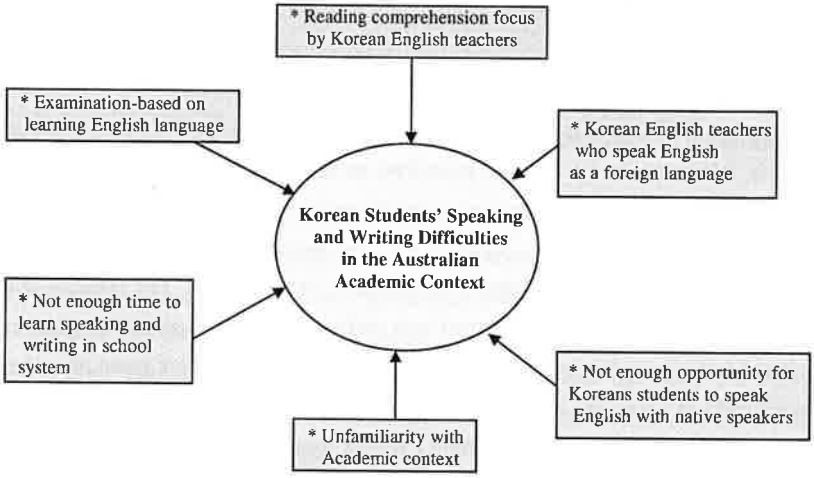

Figure 9.4: Factors contributing to Korean students' difficulties in speaking and writing English in the Australian academic context

In short, Korean students in this study who spoke English as a second language and were currently enrolled in Australian undergraduate programs were shown to have difficulties in adapting to the use of the English language. With regard to adaptation difficulties, two important findings of this study were a lack of exposure to a real English speaking environment and an unfamiliarity with the use of English, particularly for academic purposes. The research findings from sample responses in this study clearly indicate that Korean students mainly face speaking and writing problems. The descriptive results of the survey revealed that Korean students have difficulty in expressing ideas when speaking, including when they are involved in classroom discussions and presentations. They are also unfamiliar with the structure of English academic writing, have difficulty in expressing ideas when writing, and find it difficult to organise ideas in a logical sequence when writing. The cross-tabulation analysis found that Korean students' speaking abilities are related to their length of stay, previous experience of attending an ELICOS program in Australia, and their previous experience in English speaking countries. In addition, the same is the case in terms of the level of their English writing skills.

The research findings here indicate that Korean students' difficulties in speaking and writing activities are affected by teaching and learning methods that were adopted in the Korean education system. It was found that that pedagogy in Korea relies heavily on examination-based and text-based reading comprehension language foci. As the descriptive results of the survey have shown, there were differences of focus in the pedagogies of native English teachers compared with Korean English teachers. Korean English teachers emphasise the improvement of reading comprehension, while native English teachers emphasise the enhancement of speaking skills. English language taught by Korean English teachers who speak English as a second language, coupled with a lack of time spent by students on speaking and writing activities in the school curriculum, are also important factors that were reported to affect the current Korean students' difficulties in coping with English language in Australian undergraduate programs.

9.5 The Main Cross-Cultural Factors that Impact on Korean Students' Difficulties in the Australian Context

Lastly, this research asked about the main cross-cultural variations that impact on Korean students' difficulties in the Australian undergraduate learning environment. In general, the research findings indicated that cross-cultural discourses presented fewer problems compared to English language difficulties. However, the most important finding of this research is that Korean students are heavily influenced by changed patterns of their learning environment, particularly moving from a

teacher-centred to student-centred system. This also was shown to have an impact on Korean students' difficulties in participating in tutorials and other in class activities. The impact of this shift also influenced Korean students' confidence with the English language, and created anxieties and stress in tutorial sessions. Figure 9.5 illustrates one way of coping with the impact of the shift from a teacher-centred to student-centred learning system so that Korean students can better achieve academic success.

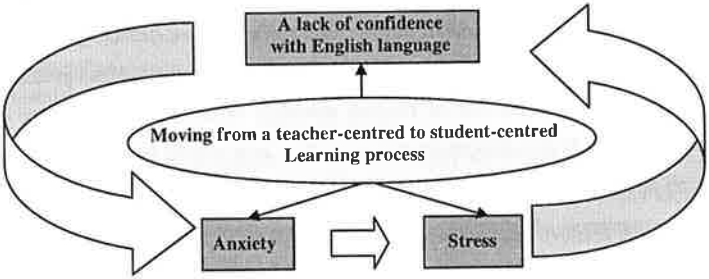

Figure 9.5: The impact of the shift from a teacher-centred to student-centre learning process in Korean students' academic success

The above research findings indicate that Korean students sampled were not affected as much by different types of academic activities and cross-cultural differences as the researcher expected. However, the following three important aspects of the new academic context influenced Korean students sampled in this study. These were moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred, discussion-based and critical thinking-based learning system as found in Australian undergraduate programs. According to the cross-tabulation results, students who had experience with native English speakers tended to have fewer problems in the discussion-based approaches of the teaching system. The younger Korean participants in the survey (under 20 years of age), in particular, were likely to encounter fewer problems adapting to a different learning system. Students whose undergraduate major was in Information Technology were likely to have some difficulty in adapting to an Australian individual ability-centred academic environment. According to the comparative study findings, the student group that undertook Australian secondary school programs only had same difficulty in preparing assignments. Moreover, this group showed a higher adaptability in all other categories with respect to the cross-cultural issues raised in this study.

This research indicates that participation in tutorials or group activities is the most difficult task for Korean students to cope with while studying in Australian undergraduate programs. The analytical outcomes obtained from the four different methodologies applied to this study, namely the descriptive results of the survey, the cross-tabulation analysis, the comparative study, and in-depth

interviews, indicated that three contributing factors. The first is a lack of confidence with their proficiency level in English as a second language which was due to a self-realisation about the inadequacy of their preparation and tuition with regard to the way they were taught English language in Korea. As previously mentioned, they were taught examination-based, text-based and reading comprehension focused English language learning experiences. These learning experiences tend to make them anxious when required to participate in tutorial sessions and group meetings, which is the predominant pedagogy in tertiary teaching. Furthermore students' anxieties arise from a lack of confidence with all major English language skill categories, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. These anxieties also lead to students having psychological stresses with regard to such activities. Consequently, it can be concluded that the shift from a teacher-centred to student-centred learning system is the main cross-cultural factor that causes situational problems.

9.6 Discussion Related to Analytical Frameworks of the Research

The three major analytical frameworks that underpinned this study were second language acquisition, cross-cultural communication and adult learning. First, these frameworks were based on Vygotsky's social constructivism which suggested possible correlations with the function of Korean students' interactive discourse, sociocultural variables, cooperative group learning and their interlanguage variability as a second language learner group. Second, this research aimed to identify the relationships between Korean students studying in Australian undergraduate programs and their adaptation to, or acquisition of, cross-cultural knowledge and understanding the potential conflicts they encountered. Lastly, this research conceptualised the nature of Korean students, as an adult group through their experiences in Australian undergraduate programs.

Concerning these analytical frameworks, this research provided findings that reflect the current situational problems Korean students face and how this research could contribute to Korean students, Australian academics and students and Korean English teachers in terms of better understanding of Korean students' learning processes in Australian undergraduate programs, overcoming the cross-cultural issues, and coping with difficulties in terms of the new academic context they needed to adapt to in an Australian environment.

This part of the chapter discusses these frameworks based on research findings based on four research questions asked. To provide a better understanding and make it a clear transformation of this research, the researcher divided Korean students' difficulties into two different stages. Table

9.6 summaries the correlations between the analytical frameworks underpinning this study and the research findings with respect to the two different stages of Korean students' experiences.

Table 9.6: The correlations between research findings and analytical frameworks applied in this study

Group / Research Frameworks	Korean students' experiences in learning English as a foreign language in Korean education system	Korean students' experiences in coping with English language and cross-cultural difficulties in Australian undergraduate programs
Vygotsky's social constructivism based on second language acquisition	• It was hard to create interactive discourses during English language learning process (Teacher-centred learning system). • Homogeneous group of learning environment. • A limited cooperative group learning in English language (Tutorial is not a formal activity in Korean school system). • A lack of experiences in recognising interlanguage variability.	• Interactive discourses from different academic context (Student-centred learning system). • Multicultural group of learning environment. • Faced with cooperative group learning environment (tutorials and group meetings). • The first Korean language interferes with the development of the proficiency level of English language.
Cross-cultural adaptation	• A lack of knowledge of English speaking countries. • A lack of cross-cultural knowledge. • A lack of knowledge of academic context.	• The realisation of the importance of academic context. • Exposure to gain the knowledge of cross-cultural aspects. • Essential to adapt to a new academic context.
Adult learning second language acquisition	• Korean students' first contact with English language began at an ambiguous period with a consideration of their stage of cognitive development. They were not children and were not adults either. • A lack of recognition of learning English language as a second language. • Needed a full guidance from someone to check their mistakes when learning English. • Not as emotional as adult second language learner	• The greater realisation of the importance of English language for academic purposes. • Having an ability to check out the needs they feel (Changes of self-estimations of proficiency levels of English language in the survey showed a substantial improvement of their English language skills in Australia. • The realisation of having anxiety, stress and a lack of confidence with English language.

9.6.1 Issues raised relevant to Vygotsky's social constructivism

The first issue raised in this research was related to Vygotsky's social constructivism in the theme of second language acquisition. It focused on discourses that might reveal important aspects of English language difficulties through looking at Korean students' experiences in learning English language in the two different education systems. According the research findings here, Korean students sampled in this study were accustomed to a teacher-centred learning environment. The development of Korean students' knowledge about learning patterns in this system seems not to suit them to learn English as a second language. For example, it seems that it is comparatively hard for Korean English language teachers to establish what sort of difficulties the students have in learning the English language. Basically, the teacher-centred learning system is likely to prevent them from handling the problems they face because most teachers in this environment are only regarded as feeders. In a word, the teachers' role in this system is not appropriate for Korean students' development of English language acquisition if the teacher-centred learning system continues.

According to Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, children's cognitive development is achieved through interacting with peers, and these interactive discourses are very important to create ways of developing the proficiency level of second language learners. Korean students sampled in this study are largely those who shifted to a student-centred learning system and thus encountered many problems with their new learning environment. They therefore would have more chance of experiencing unexpected English language difficulties in terms of interacting with local Australian students, academics and people in the host community. It is natural that a student-centred learning system should provide a better situational opportunity for Korean students to create interactive discourses whereby they could utilise it for the development of their English language abilities.

The second issue raised in this context is about the composition of the learners group that might impact on the development of English language learning process. According to research findings about the Korean students' background of English language learning in the Korean school system, the learners group of English language learning were mainly composed of Koreans who speak Korean language as their priority. It means that Korean students did not have much chance to improve their proficiency level of speaking. In addition, it is natural that they should speak in the Korean language if they had something to ask to the Korean English teachers in class. It is necessary for Korean English teachers to lead an English class with spoken English. This is a reason why current Korean English education programs require Korean English teachers'

development through experiencing school curricula and teaching methods in English speaking countries. It would be a positive sign if the Korean English education system would continue this practice towards better provision of the transformation of the system.

The multicultural group learning environment in Australian undergraduate programs offers Korean students experiences that can provide wider chances of interacting with students from different countries who speak English as a second language. In these circumstances, English language usage is the first priority among these groups, whether or not their proficiency level of English is sufficient to communicate with each other. One evidence to support this argument is that the survey results of self-estimation of the proficiency level of English language skills after experiencing Australian undergraduate programs showed that they improved their English language skills within all categories once in the Australian learning environment. Considering this outcome, it can be emphasised how important it is to arrange an appropriate environment to learners of English as a second language. This is a reason why the Korean English education system needs to recruit as many native English teachers as possible, especially if the system does not evolve a multicultural group learning environment in Korean education system. It is the best option to provide similar environments to English speaking countries.

With regard to the importance of a cooperative learning environment, the tutorial type of activity is not a formal part of the Korean education system. There are similar types of sessions offered in Korean tertiary institutions, but it is not like that in the Australian education system which regards it as an essential part of the learning and teaching pedagogy. This means that Korean students are not prepared to participate in cooperative learning activities such tutorials and group meetings. They are not good at sharing ideas or discussing the issues that might be raised in class. This is a major difficulty Korean students have in adapting to cross-cultural differences faced in Australian undergraduate programs. It is a new challenge for them to overcome this essential task in order to undertake their courses successfully. However, it is also true that it would not be changed in a short term because Korean students have not been taught a discussion-based style with peers and teachers in Korea. Therefore, this is a crucial issue for both the Korean English education system and Australian tertiary education providers. For the Korean English education system, professionals who are involved need to be concerned that they provide a teaching pedagogy in line with the theme of a cooperative group learning environment for Korean students. This is because the findings of this research indicate that students' lack of experience in a cooperative learning environment heavily impact on their second language acquisition. In addition, Australian tertiary education providers and people who are involved in this area need to pay attention to the fact that Korean

students' difficulty in tutorial participation is one which interferes with or prevents students from developing second language acquisition while they study in Australian undergraduate programs.

The last issue raised in this context is that of interlanguage variability which might occur during the process of English language learning in a different environment. The learning environment where Korean language is the priority (as in Korea itself) does not provide specific interlanguage variability. However, Korean students in real English speaking environments are directly influenced by the differences between their first language of Korean and the English language. For Korean students sampled in this study, English is the first priority, so it is natural that the distance between two different languages would create language interference whenever they use English in activities that are a part of the Australian academic context. However, the recognition of interlanguage variability would be a positive sign that could provide a momentum for building up the proficiency level of English language amongst Korean students.

9.6.2 Issues raised relevant to cross-cultural adaptation

The correlation findings with cross-cultural adaptation in the theme of analytical frameworks of this study revealed Korean students' experiences in learning English as a second language at home and in Australian undergraduate programs are different. Firstly, Korean students did not have enough chance to learn about Australia, even though Australia had been regarded as one of the preferred English speaking countries Korean students seek for their undergraduate studies. In fact, Korean English education programs do not provide enough information about English speaking countries in their curriculum. This also tended to lead to a lack of knowledge and cross-cultural awareness for Korean students regarding their targeted countries. On the other hand, Korean students' exposure to such knowledge and cross-cultural aspects was likely to be recognised once they arrived in Australia and commenced their courses in Australian education programs. It can be argued that Korean students' well- organised preparation before departing their home country is crucial for better adaptation to the new learning environment.

More importantly, the research findings in this context emphasised a lack of knowledge of the academic context that is also important issue. The fact that the Korean English education programs are not complying with the academic context is an extra concern. This may be the most serious problem that causes current Korean students' English language difficulties when adapting to the Australian academic context (as well as other English speaking countries' academic contexts). For this reason, Korean students only began to realise the importance of the academic context as they

encountered the new or real academic environment. Concerning the general trend of Korean students' choosing English speaking countries for their education, it is necessary for people or organisations to initiate programs of English language for academic purposes as an essential part of the school curricula. These would better connect with the real lives and requirements of the learners in their new locate. In addition, an awareness about developing a better understanding of cultural differences, especially targeting English speaking countries, should be pre-examined prior to making a final decision through school programs and by students themselves who are seeking to go to English speaking countries.

9.6.3 Issues relevant to adult learning second language acquisition

According to the findings from the survey, Korean students sampled in this study had begun to learn English as a foreign language at an inappropriate period of life in terms of their cognitive development as second language learners. The negative situation is that they were between childhood and adulthood when they were given a chance to learn the English language. Learning the English language at the age of 13 years is rather late in terms of experiencing more effective development of their second language learning skills. It seems that Korean students were not fully confident about why they had to learn English and how far they could progress in their proficiency level of English. They were taught English language by Korean English teachers who required them to learn in passive ways from the top down. This meant that Korean students needed constant guidance from mostly Korean English teachers about their mistakes during the learning process.

These Korean students must be regarded as adult learners when considering their age according to the results of the survey. As adult learners, they likely could realise the importance of English language especially for academic purposes. It can be said that their greater realisation of this context was mainly based on experiences of interacting with a real Australian academic learning environment. As a result, they came to realise what sort of preparation they needed and how they might better cope with unexpected problems faced in Australian undergraduate programs. It means that they had opportunities to discover through their experiences how to deal with English language difficulties and cross-cultural differences at this age level. In addition, these Korean students revealed that their anxiety, stress and lack of confidence with English as a second language create a psychological difficulty in participating in tutorials. Regarding the issues discussed above, a range of possible recommendations can be offered that might provide a valuable direction for Korean students, the Korean English Education system and Australian education providers and people who

are involved in this sector. These might be considered in order to improve Korean students' performances in Australian undergraduate programs in the future.

9.7 Recommendations

9.7.3 The preparation strategy

The following recommendations are aimed at *assisting the implementation of strategies in the Korean English education system that would enhance the development of Korean students' proficiency levels of English and their better preparation before going to English speaking countries for undergraduate studies.*

1.1 More native English teachers should be recruited so as to enhance the development of speaking, listening and writing skills.

Recruiting more native English speaking teachers is the general strategy in the current English language education system in Korea. For example, in recent years the central government of Korea and some regional state authorities have cooperated to establish 'English Villages' designed to create English speaking environments for young Korean students. This strategy allows them to have opportunities to practise their English language and experience a real life situation of English speaking environment. For this trend, many native English teachers have been recruited from English speaking countries. However, there is a more practical and effective way to recruit and utilise such teachers than at present. For Korean students who wish to study in Australia, it would be better for them to learn English and understand cross-cultural differences from Australian English speaking teachers. This would also apply to other English speaking countries where Korean students intend to study. This targeting of teaching personnel is an issue of concern for Korean people and both public and private institutions involved in recruiting native English teachers for instruction in Korea.

1.2 The value of English for academic purposes amongst Korean students who might be interested in studying in English speaking countries should be promoted with greater vigour.

The research findings from the in-depth interviews with Korean students and Korean English teachers sampled in this study showed that it is difficult for them to make time available specifically for teaching English for academic purposes. Such opportunities should be increased in the curriculum of English education in the Korean school system and even in private institutions because Korean students' movement to English speaking countries has been recognised by the

Korean public these days. Focusing on academic English is necessary for not only Korean students, but also Korean academics interested in publishing books or writing journals or articles that should be written in English if they are to be recognised internationally.

1.3 The background of English speaking countries' education programs should be introduced so as to acknowledge both similarities and differences between the Korean and non-Korean systems.

In this case, Korean students who have successfully completed their studies in Australia should be more involved in teaching and curriculum development in Korea so as to utilise their experiences in preparing future Korean students who might be interested in seeking entry to tertiary programs in an English speaking environment. Receiving preliminary knowledge about Australian undergraduate programs prior to departing Korea would be a great help in terms of students' abilities to cope with difficulties.

1.4 A preparatory studies program for English and cross-cultural awareness should be provided before Korean students leave Korea.

Creating a preparatory studies program designed to prepare for tertiary education programs in English speaking countries would be a great help if it were arranged in both the public and private Korean English education systems. All native English speaking academics and teachers should be recruited from the major English speaking education providers such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the USA and the UK. Through their participation in such programs, Korean students would be offered valuable information about the typical academic context of countries that they select for their further studies before their exposure to the new English speaking academic environment.

9.7.4 Korean students' adaptability in Australian academic activities

The following recommendations are provided *for the improvement of Korean students' adaptability to and better performance in, academic activities in Australian undergraduate programs.*

2.1 Korean students should be advised to obtain experience in an English speaking environment, as early as possible.

As mentioned earlier in the research findings, Korean students who previously experienced Australian secondary school programs showed a better ability to cope with English language

difficulties and cross-cultural differences. The Korean students sampled in this study noted that earlier exposure for them to accommodate to the new learning environment was much better in terms of the adaptation of abilities they need in Australian undergraduate programs. That said, there also were those who argued that there were negative effects on their first language. For example, a focus on English when students are young negatively impacts on the later development of their first language. But, a research finding in this study is that obtaining early experiences in real English speaking environments is most advantageous and would probably out-weigh this problem. With regard to this issue, many young Korean students in primary schools in Korea seek to travel to English speaking countries for experience in an English speaking environment during their school holidays. In this new social trend, some of them tend to stay for longer periods (6 to 12 months) in current times because students' parents regard their children's earlier exposure to a real English speaking environment as an important factor to facilitate learning of English as a second language. As previously mentioned, organising facilities such as 'English Villages' is a new scheme that follows a recognition of the value of such English speaking environments for young Korean English learners.

2.2 Once in Australia, Korean students need to be encouraged to have more interaction with local Australians in the tertiary institutions and community.

This recommendation seems to be quite simple, but in reality there are some difficulties for Korean students to interact with local Australians in these institutions and in the broader community. In this case, Australian tertiary education providers need to be seriously concerned about creating opportunities for Korean students to meet with local Australian students, academics, and other people once they commence their courses in Australian undergraduate programs. For example, local Australian students, given some minimal training, can play a role in assisting Korean students to adapt through their guidance. It means that general orientation programs that most Australian tertiary education providers operate for new students from overseas should consider creating more efficient programs with more in-depth cultural experiences to support their clients with respect to personal and educational concerns. To do this, Korean students need community support from both other Koreans and local Australians. For example, Australian tertiary education providers could recruit volunteer groups of people such as retired teachers or persons who are interested to find out about and experience Korean culture. Meetings or functions could be organised with Korean students to facilitate cultural engagement and mutual understanding. In this process, Korean students who have had experience in Australian undergraduate programs could play an important role in enhancing the development of new Korean students and giving them encouragement. This

type of approach could be applied to local Australian students who wish to actively be involved, and who might also desire to enhance their own cross-cultural credentials.

These suggestions are based on the research findings which found that Korean students who had experience with native English speaking teachers in Korea, and who became more accustomed to cognitive knowledge gained under such instruction, and Korean students who undertook Australian secondary school programs, where they experienced real situations, are best prepared for successful study in Australia and thus offer an available 'reservoir of talent' for such new arrivals.

9.7.5 Overcoming speaking and writing difficulties

The following recommendations relate to *overcoming the main English language difficulties (speaking and writing) that Korean students currently face in the Australian academic context.*

3.1 Korean students need to be encouraged to develop greater confidence in their proficiency in English as a second language.

Most informants participating in in-depth interviews noted that they were daunted by a lack of confidence despite the fact that they had been taught English as a second language. However, Korean students need to realise that it is not a handicap but an essential challenge to overcome if they select English speaking countries like Australia for their studies. Students need to be encouraged and assisted to develop strong confidence in their ability to develop their proficiency level of English by maintaining optimistic perspectives all the time. In this regard, student counselling programs, in particular those having Korean councillors with relevant experiences in Australian undergraduate programs, might particularly help with this issue.

3.2 Korean students need to identify persons who are able to assist in the correct expressions of their speaking and writing, both before and after they complete their academic tasks.

It is true that most Australian tertiary education providers include student academic support programs to help both local Australian students and students from overseas. However, the question remains as to whether they are providing appropriate and tailored services that students require. The most important thing is that they should be assisted and monitored by native English speakers who are familiar with cross-cultural learning until they have a confidence with their speaking and writing proficiency in English. As mentioned above, if there are meetings or functions organised to support Korean students' adaptation to the Australian academic context, the next step is to arrange

participation by Australians from the local community or educational institutions in order to interact with each individual Korean on a regular basis. Another possibility is that Korean students could have their own meetings to discuss how they were assisted or treated the matters that confronted them, and to share their experiences in coping with difficulties through the support of local Australians. Australian tertiary institutions need to make an effort to inform the Korean (and other international) students of the significance of the local Australian community's involvement. This would build-up an effective hospitality that might impact on the development of overseas students' confidence and overcome their speaking and to some extent their writing difficulties. For Korean students, it is a way of correcting English usage and strengthening their ability to cope with the two most important tasks about which both Korean students and Australian academics need to be reminded.

3.3 Korean students need to practise as many English language expressions as they can and prepare a sufficient level of speaking skill through practice, especially in their main fields of study.

3.4 Korean students need to practise writing structures, and formats, genre and patterns, especially in their main fields of study.

3.5 Korean students need to bear in mind previous corrections and feedback about their performances to avoid making the same errors again.

In these three matters, Korean students need to attend such sessions or programs that Australian tertiary education providers offer about how students should present their ideas. Australian tertiary education providers need to arrange these types of activities aimed at enhancing the development of Korean students' level of fluency in speaking English if they have not yet provided it. Korean students also need to practise as much as possible, including through guidance prepared by native English speakers. However, the most important thing is that these three considerations could be solved if the Korean English education system provided a program that would be mainly designed for English for academic purposes.

On the other hand, Australian tertiary education providers need to emphasise the crucial importance of speaking and writing abilities in particular when Korean students apply for entry to Australian undergraduate programs. Apart from the entry requirement of the proficiency level of English considered by official language tests such as IELTS or TOEFL, providers need to remind students of these significant aspects prior to commencing their courses.

Also, Korean students need to develop writing and speaking abilities through their own recognition of the feedback or corrections offered by native English speakers. Korean students should be reminded that local Australian students, academics, or others from the local community who assist them are only helpers. They cannot write something for them or create and develop their ideas. This can be developed by regular discussion-based meetings with helpers to discuss the errors that Korean students made with regard to speaking and writing skills. In this context, a student-centred learning pedagogy would be more appropriate because they would have a chance to become accustomed to the new learning system as well as to enhance how they would cope with those difficulties for themselves. This would lead students to more independent learning behaviours and thereby increase their sense of confidence.

9.7.6 Coping with tutorial participation

The following recommendations are provided to *assist Korean students to cope with the main problems of tutorial participation that are influenced by cross-cultural differences between Australia and Korea.*

4.1 Australian academics need to consider that Korean students should be encouraged to present ideas in tutorials even though they are not good at speaking in the English language.

4.2 Australian academics need to understand that Korean students experience a degree of emotional adjustment (as both young adult and adult learners) and that such difficulties are crucial factors that directly impact on the nature and degree of success of their tutorial participation.

Korean students sampled in the in-depth interviews stated that they were sometimes frustrated by both Australian academics' and local Australian students' negative reactions as they presented their ideas in tutorial classes. For example, due to imperfect expressions in discussions or conversations, they were not able to involve themselves, and sometimes they were ignored. Of course, this is not in every case, but it is necessary for Australian academics and local Australian students to understand such difficulties and to make an effort to acknowledge the manner of expression that students who speak English as a second language often use. The most important thing that needs to be recognised is that Korean students can be emotionally affected by Australian academics' and local Australian students' reactions or feedback.

4.3 Australian academics and local Australian students need to understand the background of Korean students who speak English as a second language, as well as their different cultural background. To do this, time should be devoted in courses where there are international students to explaining to local Australian students the cross-cultural and ESL difficulties that such learners may face.

Regarding this issue, the development of local Australian staff and students appreciation of cross-cultural understanding should be considered as a component of the orientation regular program basis at beginning of each semester. This would provide knowledge about students having ESL difficulties and making cross-cultural adaptations in the new academic environment. Australian academic experts in this field, Local Australian students' experiences in interacting with ESL students, administrators with experience in working with ESL students, and members of the local community with similar understanding should participate in this program. This would further facilitate the development of better understanding of ESL students in Australian education programs.

4.4 Korean students should be encouraged and provided with services and assistance to continue to make an effort to adjust to the new academic context as an essential element in reaching their goals.

Australian tertiary education providers should consider that Korean students have difficulties in adjusting to the Australian academic context as a result of their different earlier learning and teaching environment. As mentioned previously, Korean students who have already completed their Australian undergraduate programs can introduce and prepare guidelines as a part of orientation, counselling or teaching activities.

4.5 Korean students need to be encouraged to develop positive thinking to prevent psychological feelings of anxiety, stress and a lack of confidence with English as a second language.

The Korean students sampled in this study constitute a 'model' in terms of the challenges they face in the shift from a teacher-centred to a student-centred learning process. This was shown in Figure 9.5. With regard to this model, Korean students' anxiety, stress and a lack of confidence with the proficiency level of their English impact on each other. In this model, the development of confidence is a real priority. Importantly, this model should be introduced to Korean students so that they could bear it in mind as crucial preliminary knowledge of the situation they might face. More importantly, this type of difficulty for Korean students (and other groups of international students) can be acknowledged through the provision of a training program for Australian academics aimed at their better understanding of international students' behaviours. This would

encourage academics to develop teaching strategies to address such issues. It also is necessary for Australian tertiary education providers to train or employ specialists who can deal with this issue at least for the top ten source countries providing students to Australian tertiary education programs.

9.8 Further Research

Having proposed the above recommendations based on the research undertaken here, three important issues have emerged that could be examined through further research. Firstly, there is a need to investigate Korean students' experiences and difficulties in undertaking postgraduate level study in Australian higher education programs. This would provide another dimension to the main theme and findings of the present research which has been focussed on Korean undergraduate students in Australia.

Secondly, the phenomenon of the 'policy of globalisation' that began in Korea in the early 1990s and continues to motivate Koreans to study abroad has promoted the importance of English for all in Korean society. Also, their eagerness to learn the English language has led to an increase in the number of young Korean students taking up study in Australian primary, secondary and language schools usually accompanied by their parents or guardians. They have tended to come to Australia during the Korean school holiday period and to stay for at least three weeks to a maximum of three months. This is significant for Korean education development. It requires further research, (there is some research that shows anything less than 2 to 3 weeks is not very effective and can have a negative impact I will send a reference later as I have to find it) and it would be worthwhile to investigate the effectiveness of the visits to Australia and how such visits impact on the improvement of students' proficiency level of English when they return to Korea and subsequently seek entry to tertiary studies in English speaking countries.

Thirdly, from 2007 Korean students choosing to go to abroad for tertiary studies will represent a new cohort in Australian (and other countries') undergraduate programs. In due course, these students will bring a different English language background to their academic studies. They were taught English in Korea when they were year 3 of primary school (8 or 9 years of age), which is much earlier than the present cohort who began English language study in year 1 of middle school (13 years of age). This is another interesting area where further research should be undertaken to compare the analysis in this study with that focusing on the new cohort of Korean students. It could provide crucial information about the current status and utility of the Korean English language education programs and how Australian tertiary programs might need to adjust to this evolving

pattern. Further research findings on this issue could also provide further information to identify more effective ways of determining how Korean English language education programs can help students develop a better proficiency in English in the future.

Based on the various types of methodology applied in this research, namely the descriptive results of the survey, the cross-tabulation analysis of survey data, a comparative analysis, and semi-structured in-depth interviews with three case study participants, the study has obtained a number of critical understandings about Korean students' difficulties with English language and cross-cultural differences as regards education relevant to their English language education at home and their overseas study in Australia. The decision to adopt such a multi-method analytical approach has resulted in the establishment of objective and reliable 'triangulated' findings about the Korean students sampled in this study. The findings from the sampled Korean students are vital as they contribute beneficial findings which could assist future Korean students who speak English as a second language, and those in Australia who may host them, to pursue more effectively pursue their studies in Australia.

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Consent Form

Dear Colleagues,

I am at present a postgraduate (Doctor of Education) student at the University of Southern Queensland. I am currently conducting my research project, a part of which is to survey Korean students about their experiences studying in Australian higher education programs. I would like to invite you to participate in this study. Your participation will be highly valued. I would be very pleased if you could complete the attached survey questionnaire.

Participation is entirely voluntary. It involves completion of a survey of your Australian higher education experiences at undergraduate level, and seeks your opinion about English language and cultural differences in the academic mode in particular.

Your complete anonymity is assured and will be maintained by using a pseudonym in place of your name. At the completion of my project, I will be happy to share the results of what I have found. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Thank you for considering this request. If you are willing to participate, please complete the permission form below.

Should you need to discuss the survey, I can be contacted on E-mail:
Phone:

Faithfully,
Sang Soon Park
EdD Candidate
University of Southern Queensland

1. I hereby agree to participate in the above research project conducted by Sang Soon Park of USQ.

2. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, that I may withdraw from the project at any time, and that should I withdraw, any data gathered from me will be destroyed immediately.

3. I understand that every effort to protect my anonymity will be made, that data collected from this project will be securely stored and remain strictly confidential.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail Survey Questionnaire of Korean Students Studying in Australian Undergraduate Programs: English Language and Cultural Barriers

설문 조사

1. Demographic Information

Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number.
다음 질문 사항들에 관해 O 로 표기 답변해 주십시오

1-a What is your gender? 성별

1. Male 남성
2. Female 여성

1-b What is your age group? 연령

1. Under 20 years
2. 20~30 years
3. Over 30 years

1-c What is your current field of study? 현재 전공 분야

1. Arts 인문계
2. Business & Commerce 상경계
3. Education 교육계
4. Information Technology 정보관련계
5. Science & Engineering 이공계
6. Other: please specify 기타 서술 표기

[_____]

1-d Have you previously studied in English speaking countries?
이전 영어권 국가에서 유학 경험 유.무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 1-h]** 질문 **1-h** 로 가십시오.

1-e If 'yes', in what English speaking countries have you previously studied? 이전 영어권 유학국가

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. New Zealand
4. USA
5. UK
6. Other: please specify

[_____]

1-f At what level did you commence your previous study in the English speaking school system?
이전 영어권 유학국가에서 학습 시작 과정 단계

1. Kindergarten
2. Primary School
3. Middle School
4. High School
5. University
6. Postgraduate and above

1-g How long, in total, were you in the other English speaking school system before coming to Australia?
이전 영어권 유학국가 체류 기간

1. Less than 12 months
2. 13~24 months
3. 25~48 months
4. Over 48 months

1-h Have you been to Australia before? 과거 호주 방문 유. 무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 1-j]** 질문 1-j 로 가십시오.

1-i For what reason were you previously here? 과거 호주를 방문한 이유

1. Business 사업
2. Education 교육
3. Holiday 여행
4. Visiting Relatives 친지 방문
5. Other: please specify [_____]

1-j How long in total have you been in Australia during your current visit?
현재 호주 체류 기간

1. Less than 12 months
2. 13~24 months
3. 25~48 months
4. Over 48 months

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2. Korean Students' Experiences in Learning English Language in Korea

Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number.
다음 질문 사항들에 관해 O 로 표기 답변해 주십시오

2-a When did you begin to learn English? 처음 영어 교육을 받은 시기

1. Kindergarten 유치원
2. Primary School 초등학교
3. Middle School 중등학교
4. High School 고등학교
5. Other: please specify [_____]

2-b During your school life did you spend time learning English with a native speaker?
본인의 이전 학교 생활동안 원어민 영어 선생님으로 부터 수학 유.무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 2-e]** 질문 2-e 로 가십시오.

2-c If 'yes', please estimate how much of your time during your school life was spent learning English with a native speaker?
본인이 위 질문에서 원어민을 선택 하셨다면 얼마 만큼 원어민과 영어 학습 을 위해 시간을 보내셨습니까?

1	2	3	4	5	6
A little of the time	A fair amount of time	A moderate amount of time	A substantial amount of time	Much of the time	Most of the time
1-10%	11-25%	26-40%	41-55%	56-70%	71% or more

2-d What was the main focus of your being taught English by native English speaking teachers?
원어민 영어 선생님들의 중점 교육사항

1. Reading 읽기
2. Speaking 말하기
3. Writing 쓰기
4. Listening 듣기

2-e How much of your time during your school life was spent learning English with Korean teachers who had English as a second language?
본인은 얼마 만큼 영어가 제 2 외국어인 한국 영어 선생님과 영어 학습을 위해 시간을 보내셨습니까?

1	2	3	4	5	6
A little of the time	A fair amount of time	A moderate amount of time	A substantial amount of time	Much of the time	Most of the time
1-10%	11-25%	26-40%	41-55%	56-70%	71% or more

2-f What was the main focus of your being taught English by Korean English teachers?
한국 영어 선생님들의 중점 교육사항

1. Reading 읽기
2. Speaking 말하기
3. Writing 쓰기
4. Listening 듣기

2-g Which English language skills were most important in your study in the Korean education system?
한국내 영어교육에서 본인이 가장 필요로 했던 부분

1. Reading 읽기
2. Speaking 말하기
3. Writing 쓰기
4. Listening 듣기

2-h In Korea, did you attend an ELICOS program like before coming to study in Australia?
한국에서 호주 대학과정 이전 영어학교 경험 유.무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 2-j]** 질문 2-j 로 가십시오.

2-i If 'yes' please indicate English proficiency level(s) achieved in that ELICOS program.
위의 질문에서 본인이 '예' 라고 선택하셨다면 본인이 그 과정에서 취득한 영어 성적을 표기 하여 주십시오.

1. Pre-intermediate 기초급
2. Intermediate 중급
3. Upper-intermediate 상급
4. Advanced 고급
5. Other: please specify [_____]

2-j Have you sat any kind of official English test in Korea?
한국에서 공인 영어 시험 경험 유.무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 3-a]** 질문 3-a 로 가십시오.

2-k If 'yes' please indicate the name of English test(s) you completed.
위의 질문에서 본인이 '예' 라고 선택하셨다면 본인이 시도했던 **영어시험 명**을 표기 하여 주십시오.

1. IELTS
2. TOEFL
3. IELTS & TOEFL
4. Other: please specify [_____]

2-l Please indicate English test result(s) you achieved.
본인이 취득한 영어시험 성적을 표기 하여 주십시오.

The name of the test	Test result
a:IELTS	
b:TOEFL	**Paper Based Test:** **Computer Based Test:**
c:Other: please specify [_____]	

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3. Current Educational Background and Korean Students' Preparation to Enter Tertiary Institutions in Australia

Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number.
다음 질문 사항들에 관해 O 로 표기 답변해 주십시오

3-a Did you study in an ELICOS program outside Korea before you enrolled in your course at an Australian school, or other educational institution?
호주에서 대학과정 이전 영어학교 경험 유.무

1. Yes
2. No **[Go to 3-d]** 질문 3-d 로 가십시오.

3-b If 'yes' please indicate English test result (s) you achieved outside Korea.
본인이 외국에서 취득한 **영어시험 성적**을 표기 하여 주십시오.

The name of the test	Test result
a:IELTS	
b:TOEFL	**Paper Based Test:** **Computer Based Test:**
c:Other: please specify [_____]	

3-c If you answered 'yes' to the question asked above, how long in total, have you studied in ELICOS programs?
호주 영어학교 등록 기간 표기

1. Less than 6 months
2. 6 ~ 12 months
3. 13 ~ 18 months
4. More than 18 months

3-d Which programs did you undertake to prepare for entrance to an Australian higher education program? Please select one 호주에서 호주대학 진학을 위한 이전 교육 과정을 선택해 주십시오.

1. TAFE 전문대
2. Foundation Studies Program 대학 예비과정
3. Australian secondary school 호주 고등학교
4. Preparation for official English test(s) program 영어 시험 준비과정
5. Other: please specify [_____]

3-e How long did you spend completing the program you circled above to enter the Australian higher institution you are currently attending?
현 학위 과정을 위해서 본인이 위 질문에서 선택한 과정이나 코스에서 공부한 기간
표기

1. Less than 6 months
2. 6 ~ 12 months
3. 13 ~ 18 months
4. More than 18 months

3-f What English language tests did you undertake to prepare to enter Australian higher education programs?
호주에서 호주대학 진학을 위한 이전 교육 과정중에서 본인이 할애했던 영어시험 종류를 선택해 주십시오.

1. IELTS
2. TOEFL
3. IELTS & TOEFL
4. Other: please specify [_____]

3-g **Start using the rating scales at the end of the survey (See Appendix p.11~13),** to estimate your English proficiency level at the time you were ready to leave Korea to study in Australia. Please circle the appropriate answer on the tables below.
이설문 조사지 맨 뒤 (p.11~ 13)에 있는 실력 평가 등급설명을 참고로 현 과정에 입학하기위해 호주로 오기전 한국에서 당시의 영어 실력을 평가해 O 로 적당한 란에 표기해 주십시오.

- **1 low 7 high**

Skill Category	When I left Korea to study in Australia I rate my proficiency level at :						
a: Speaking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b: Listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c: Reading	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d: Writing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3-h Consider your current English proficiency levels. Please rate and circle your English proficiency today. **Using the rating scale provided at the end of the survey and circle the appropriate answer.**
현재 본인의 영어 실력을 고려 하십시오. 현재영어 실력을 **이설문 조사지 맨 뒤에 있는 실력 평가 등급 설명을 참고로** 본인의 영어 실력을 평가해 O 로 적당한 란에 표기해 주십시오.

- **1 low 7 high**

Skill Category	Today I rate my proficiency level at :						
a: Speaking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b: Listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c: Reading	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d: Writing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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4. English Language Difficulties in the Australian Academic Mode

The following statements relate to your experiences studying in Australian higher education programs. Please put an X in the box at the appropriate range between Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree, e. g.
다음 질문들은 여러분의 호주대학 교육과 관련된 사항들입니다. 적당한 란에 X 표기를 해 주십시오. (강한 긍정 부터 강한 부정 까지)

Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree
	[X]				
강한 긍정	긍정	중립	부정	강한 부정	

Please answer the following questions as quickly as you can.
다음 질문들을 가능한한 신속히 표기해 주십시오.

4-a I feel I take more time trying to understand reading materials than local Australian students.
본인은 호주학생들에 비해 도서내용 이해에 더많은 시간이 필요하다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-b I feel I need to have a larger English vocabulary to be able to effectively study my field in Australian higher education.
본인은 호주대학에서 전공를 공부함에 있어서 더많은 전공관련 용어가 필요하다고 느낀다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-c I have difficulty in noting the main theme or points when I read a book.
본인은 책을 읽을때 주제 혹은 요점 파악에 문제가 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-d I have difficulty when reading to develop an in-depth critical understanding of the material.
본인은 책을 읽을때 심층 사고력에 문제가 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-e I'm not used to the structure of English academic writing.
본인은 한국과 비교해서 학술적 작문 (영문) 에 익숙하지 않다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-f I have difficulty in expressing my ideas when writing in English.
본인은 본인의 생각을 글 (영어)로 표현하는데 어려움이 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-g I have difficulty in organising my ideas in a logical sequence when writing in English.
본인은 본인의 생각을 논리적으로 표현하는데 어려움이 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-h I always make grammatical mistakes when writing in English.
본인은 항상 영어 작문을 하면서 문법적 오류를 범한다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-i I have a problem with understanding lectures when delivered in English.
본인은 강의 시간에(영어)듣기에 문제가 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-j I have difficulty in expressing my ideas when speaking in English in a tutorial class.
본인은 토론 시간에 본인의 생각을 말로 표현하는데 어려움이 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-k I have a problem with speaking when making a class presentation or seminar.
본인은 학습 발표 시간에 영어로 말하기에 문제가 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-l I am afraid of speaking English in front of my university class.
본인은 학교수업 시간에 영어로 말하는데 두려움이 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-m I believe that everyday social, colloquial language and academic language are different.
본인의 생각으로 사회적 일상 대화와 학문적 언어는 다르다고 믿는다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

4-n Understanding native speakers of English pronunciation is easy for me.
본인은 학교수업 시간에 호주 원어민의 발음 이해가 쉽다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

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5. Cultural Experiences and Difficulties in the Australian Academic Mode

5-a Rank the following from most to least difficult for you in adapting to academic life in Australian tertiary institutions, (When #1 is Most Difficult for You, to #5 which is Least Difficult for You).
본인이 호주대학에서 수학하면서 겪는 어려움을 순위대로 표기 하십기오 (1 번 가장 어려움, 5 번 가장 적응이 용이함)

☐ Tutorial Participation 토론식 수업 참석

☐ Presenting Ideas 의견 발표

☐ Preparing Assignments 과제 준비

☐ Consulting Academics 교수 혹은 강사와의 의견 교환

☐ Participating in Cooperative Group Work or Experiment
공동 과제 협력및 실험 참여

The following statements relate to your experiences of cultural variations in Australian higher education programs. Please put an X in the appropriate box ranging between Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree, e. g.
다음 질문들은 여러분의 호주대학의 문화적 차이점과관련된 사항들입니다. 적당한 란에 X 표기를 해 주십시오. (강한 긍정 부터 강한 부정 까지)

Strongly Agree ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

강한 긍정 긍정 중립 부정 강한 부정

Please answer following questions as quickly as you can.
다음 질문들을 가능한한 신속히 표기해 주십시오.

5-b Moving from a Confucianist based society into Judao-Christian influenced society has been a problem for me.
본인에게 유교 문화에서 서양 문화로의 문하적 이동 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-c Moving from an authoritative and hierarchical society to an egalitarian-based society has been a problem for me.
본인에게 권위 계급 사회에서 평등 사회로의 문하적 이동 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-d Moving from a family centred emotional society to an individual ability centred logical society has been a problem for me.
본인에게 감정적 가족주의 사회에서 이성적 개인주의 사회로의 이동 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-e The different educational practice I have experienced in Australia, compared with Korea particular, has been a problem for me.
한국과 비교해서 본인이 경험한 다른 교육실행 방식은 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-f Moving from a cramming-based education system to a free discussion-based education system has been a problem for me.
본인에게 주입식에서 자유 토론식의 새로운 교습 방식으로의 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-g Moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred learning system has been a problem for me.
본인에게 선생 위주에서 학생 위주의 학습 방식으로의 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-h Moving from a system that values memorization to one that emphasises critical thinking has been a problem for me.
본인에게 암기 위주에서 논리적 학습 방식으로의 적응변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-i Adaptation to writing assignments in English has been a problem for me.
본인에게 과제 작문 방식의 적응은 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly Agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

5-j Moving from a competitive learning context to one of greater cooperation has been a problem for me.
본인에게 경쟁적에서 협력적 학습 분위기로의 변화는 본인에게 문제가 되고 있다.

Strongly agree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Disagree

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6. Students' Judgements of Relative Time Appropriately Spent on Elements of English Education

Considering your experiences in Australian higher education and how English is taught in Korea, if you could choose in the future, which of the following would be the BEST fit: spend more time, keep the time the same or spend less time on the following practices? Please circle the appropriate answer.
본인의 호주 대학 경험을 바탕으로 본인의 영어 실력 향상과 한국 영어 교육 변화에 바라는다음 각각의 사항에 대해서 본인의 시간 할당에 적합한 표기를 해 주십시오. **(더 많은 시간 할당, 동일한 시간 할당, 더 적은 시간 할당)**

6-a Reading comprehension. 영어 독해

1. More Time **더 많은 시간 할당**
2. Keep the same **동일한 시간 할당**
3. Less time **더 적은 시간 할당**

6-b Practising to read original English books. 원서 읽기 학습

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-c Practising English grammar. 영문법 학습

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-d Memorising vocabularies. 단어 외우기

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-e Memorising idioms. 숙어 외우기

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-f Speaking in English with colleagues. 친구들과 영어로 말하기

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-g Having a chance to speak English with native speakers. 원어민과의 대화 기회

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-h Speaking English in a class. 학습실에서 영어로 말하기

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-i Practising writing in English. 영작문 학습

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-j Using the internet to communicate with native speakers of English.
인터넷을 통한 원어민과의 대화

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

6-k Practising sentence structure. 영문 구조 학습

1. More Time 2. Keep the same 3. Less time

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7. Comments & Recommendations

If you are facing any difficulties in using English as a second language and adapting to cultural barriers in the Australian academic environment, please identify three of them each part by write them down below.
현재 본인이 겪고있는 어려움이 있다면 각항에 가장 어려운점 세가지를 선택해 표기해 주십시오.

7-a English Language Difficulties 영어의 어려움 **7-b** Cultural Barriers 문화적 차이

1._____ 1._____

2._____ 2._____

3._____ 3._____

Proficiency Scale Ratings
실력 등급 평가

When you rate yourself please choose the number which best describes your proficiency level at the time noted in the question. Each macroskill ranges from 1 to 7.

현재 질문이 주어진 상황에서 본인의 영어 실력을 평가할때, 가장 잘 표현된 단계를 선택해 주십시오. (등급 1 부터 7)

SPEAKING: 말하기

1. I cannot communicate anything at all by speaking in English.
   본인은 영어로 전혀 대화할수 없다
2. I can communicate when speaking in English by using isolated, memorised phrases.
   본인은 부분적이고 암기된 표현범으로 대화할수 있다.
3. I can hold very simple face-to-face conversations in English about things I am familiar with. I can use sentences but I make a lot of mistakes.
   본인은 본인에게 익숙한 일에 관해서 어느정도 얼굴을 마주하는 대화를 할수있다. 본인은 문장를 사용할수 있으나 많은 실수를 한다.
4. I can describe familiar things or events fairly precisely in English and convey my opinions about them. I can use fairly complex sentences but I make mistakes.
   본인은 본인에게 익숙한 일이나 사건에 관해서 꽤 자세하게 표현 할수있으며 그 일에 관해서 본인의 의사를 전달할수 있다. 본인은 꽤 복잡한 문장를 사용할수 있으나 실수를 한다.
5. I can discuss my own and other people's opinions in some detail in English, but I can't always come up with the right word. I can generally adjust my language to suit familiar social or work situations.
   본인은 영어로 본인의 의견이나 다른 사람들의 의견을어느정도 상세히 토론할수 있으나 늘 바른 언어 선택은 하지 못한다. 본인은 일반적으로 친숙한 사회 혹은 일 상황에서 본인의 언어를 조정할수 있다.
6. I can easily hold my own even in complex discussions with native speakers of English in social or work situations. Their oral language is mostly accurate and occasionally I may be regarded as native speakers.
   본인은 쉽게 영어로 사회 혹은 일 상황에서 본인의 의견을 원어민과의 복잡한 토론에 참여할수 있다. 본인의 언어 구사 능력은 정확할 뿐만 아니라 간혹 원어민으로 간주된다.
7. I can speak as well as native speakers of English does.
   본인은 영어를 원어민 같이 할수 있다.

LISTENING: 듣기

1. I cannot understand anything at all when I hear English spoken.
   본인은 영어를 들을때 전혀 이해하지 못한다.
2. I can understand very short simple questions, statements and instructions that I have heard often in English.
   본인은 본인이 자주 들은 아주 단순한 질문, 진술 그리고 지시들은 이해할수 있다.
3. I can understand very simple face-to-face conversations in English about familiar things if the other person speaks slowly and rewords things to help them.
   본인은 본인에게 익숙한 일에 관해서 상대방이 말을 천천히 하고 반복 보충하면 어느정도 얼굴을 마주하는 대화의 내용을 이해할수 있다.
4. I can understand fairly well when having a conversation in English with a native speaker about familiar things or events, and I can get the main idea of simple radio news items on general topics.
   본인은본인에게 익숙한 일이나 사건에 관해서 대화하는 내용은 꽤 이해할수 있으며 본인은 일반적 주제의 단순한 라디오 소식의 주된 내용을 청취할수 있다.
5. I can generally follow conversations in English between native speakers but I miss some things. I can understand most of the radio news.
   본인은 일반적으로 원어민과의 대화내용을 따라갈수 있으나 몇몇의 내용를 놓친다. 본인은 라디오 소식의 대부분을 이해할수 있다.

6. I can understand most things in English, even things as difficult as complex radio documentaries with fast speech. I miss out on some subtleties.
본인은 심지어 복잡하고 빠른 라디오 기록 방송 청취도 대부분 이해할수 있다. 본인은 약간의 난해한 부분은 놓친다.

7. I can understand English as well as native speaker of English does.
본인은 영어를 원어민 같이 이해(들을수)할수 있다.

READING: 읽기

1. I cannot understand anything at all when I see English written.
본인은 영어로 쓰여진 문장을 이해하지 못한다.

2. I can read and understand very short, simple texts in English such as shop names and road signs which I have seen often.
본인은 본인이 자주 접하는 상호명이나 길 표시판 같은 아주 짧고 간단한 문구는 읽고 이해 할수 있다.

3. I can get the main point of simple texts in English such as advertisements for familiar events or products, and I can follow short simple instructions about things I am familiar with.
본인은 익숙한 일이나 물품 같은 간단한 영어 문구의 주된 내용을 알수 있으며 본인에게 친숙한 짧고 간단한 지시 사항들을 따를수 있다.

4. With the use of a dictionary I can understand personal letters about everyday topics and I can get the main idea of simple general new stories in daily papers.
본인은 영어 사전 사용의 도움을 통해서 일상 주제에 관한 개인의 편지를 이해할수 있으며 일상 신문상의 단순하고 일반적인 주된 내용도 이해할수 있다.

5. With the use of a dictionary, I can understand general news stories in daily papers in English and, given plenty of time, I can read a popular novel for enjoyment.
본인은 영어 사전 사용의 도움을 통해서 일상의 영자 신문의 내용을 이해할수 있으며 시간만 충분히 주어진다면 유명 소설도 재미로 읽을수 있다.

6. I understand even complex articles such as editorials in a serious newspaper in English. I read these nearly as fast as a native speaker does though I miss some subtleties.
본인은 영자 신문의 연재로 집필되는 사설같은 복잡한 내용을 이해할수 있다. 본인은 몇몇의 난해한 부분은 놓치지만 거의 원어민 만큼의 빠른 속도로 이것들을 읽고 이해할수 있다.

7. I read English as well as a native speaker does.
본인은 영어를 원어민 같이 읽고 이해 할수 있다.

WRITING: 쓰기

1. I cannot communicate anything at all by writing in English.
본인은 영어 문장으로 전혀 전달할수 없다.

2. I can communicate when writing in English by using simple stock phrases that I see or write often.
본인은 본인이 자주보고 쓰는 간단한 어군을 사용함으로써 영문을 전달할수 있다.

3. I can communicate very basic information when writing English or give very simple instructions about familiar things. I can use sentences but I make a lot of mistakes.
본인은 아주 기본적 정보와 익숙한 일에 관한 매우 단순한 지시들을 전달할수 있다. 본인은 문장들을 사용할수 있지만 많은 실수를 한다.

4. I can describe familiar things or events when writing in English and I can broadly convey their opinions about them. I can use fairly complex sentences but I make mistakes.
본인은 익숙한 일이나 사건들에 관해서 영문으로 표현할수 있으며 포괄적으로 그 주제와 연관된 의견들도 전달 할수 있다.

5. I can write about my own and other people's opinions in some depth in English and develop English arguments logically. I can generally adjust writing to suit the purpose but I can't always find the right work or structure.
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6. I can write documents as complex as a project report or a senior school history assignment. My English is mostly accurate and appropriate.
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7. I can write English as well as a native speaker does.
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Aspects of this survey are drawn from that used in: Ingram, D. E. & O'Neill, S. (2000) Cross-cultural attitudes as a global goal of language teaching in the global context. In Ho Wah Kam & C. Ward, edit., *Language in the Global Context: Implications for the Language Classroom.* Anthology series 41. SEMEO Regional language centre, Singapore, Singapore. pp. 104-163.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Consent Form

Dear Colleagues,

I am at present a postgraduate (Doctor of Education) student at the University of Southern Queensland. I am currently conducting my research project, a part of which is to conduct interview with Australian academics, Korean students and Korean English teachers about their experiences teaching Korean students and studying in Australian higher education programs. I would like to invite you to participate in this interview. Your participation will be highly valued.

Participation is entirely voluntary. It involves completion of an interview of your Australian higher education experiences in teaching and learning at undergraduate level, and seeks your opinion about English language and cultural differences in the academic mode in particular.

Your complete anonymity is assured and will be maintained by using a pseudonym in place of your name. At the completion of my project, I will be happy to share the results of what I have found. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Thank you for considering this request. If you are willing to participate, please complete the permission form below.

Should you need to discuss the survey, I can be contacted on E-mail:
Phone:

Faithfully,
Sang Soon Park
EdD Candidate
University of Southern Queensland

1. I hereby agree to participate in the above research project conducted by Sang Soon Park of USQ.

2. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, that I may withdraw from the project at any time, and that should I withdraw, any data gathered from me will be destroyed immediately.

3. I understand that every effort to protect my anonymity will be made, that data collected from this project will be securely stored and remain strictly confidential.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Four Selected Australian Academics, Who are Experienced with Korean Students Interviewed:

I will explain the outcomes of the survey to interviewees prior to actual interview. Then ask if interviewees realise **the issues of English language difficulties, cultural barriers encountered by Korean students in Australian higher education programs and the main strategic preparation needed for Korean students to enter Australian higher education programs** then follow up with questions provided below.

1. How would you describe the academic writing skills of Korean students in your experience?

2. According to your experiences, what were (are) the common mistakes in their writing?

3. What kinds of preparations do they need to meet the appropriate proficiency level of writing English, particularly for academic purposes?

4. How would you describe the proficiency level of speaking English of Korean students, especially when you meet them to discuss the issues related to study?

5. What sorts of mistakes did they make when speaking?

6. Do you have any suggestions for them to improve their speaking ability?

7. What was (is) the main problem that you have noticed in tutorial classes in which Korean students were (are) involved?

8. What is the appropriate strategy for them to cope with the student-centre and discussion-based learning system in classes?

9. How would you describe the insufficiency of organising ideas in a logical sequence when they present ideas with regard to subjects?

10. How do they overcome these in practice?

11. Would you like to describe the best strategic preparation needed for Korean students to achieve in order to complete their studies successfully in Australian higher education programs?

12. Do you have any other recommendations to help them best achieve their goals?

Four Selected Korean English Language Teachers Interviewed:

I will show the outcomes of the survey to interviewees prior to actual interview. Then ask if interviewees realise **the issues of the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning the English language in the Korean school education system and the main strategic preparation needed for Korean students to enter Australian higher education programs** then follow up with questions provided below.

1. Have you noticed any changing of proficiency level of English for students in your class after Korean government introduced a policy that English should be learned from primary school programs age of 8 in 1997?

2. If there was (is), what were (are) the main differences you noticed?

3. Were (are) you satisfied with the current pedagogy of teaching English which has mainly been focused on reading comprehension?

4. What was (is) the main difficulty in teaching English speaking skills as you are a non-native speaker in your class? (If there was (is), why?)

5. Do you believe that the current pedagogy of teaching English in Korean English education system provide suitable time on writing and listening?

6. How would you describe Korean students' English proficiency level in your class? (Do you believe that they are sufficient for the requirement of higher education programs in English speaking countries?) (If yes, how? If no, why?)

7. Many Korean students attend ELICOS programs prior to commencing courses to meet the requirement for entering Australian higher education programs. How would you describe this situation?

8. Generally, students experienced in Australian secondary school programs are likely to cope well with English language difficulties and cultural differences they encounter. How would you describe this?

9. Do you believe that IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOFEL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test results make Korean students study in Australian higher education programs less difficulty?

10. What kinds of preparation are needed for students to enter Australian higher education programs

11. Should Korean education authorities make any changes to English language learning pedagogy? (If yes, how?)

Four Selected Korean Students, Who are Currently Enrolled in Australian Higher Education Programs Interviewed:

I will show the outcomes of the survey to interviewees prior to actual interview. Then ask if interviewees realise **the issues of the main research questions** then follow up with questions provided below.

1 How would you describe your experiences in learning English in the Korean school system?

2 How would you describe the main differences in English language compared to your experiences with using English language in Australian higher education academic life?

3 Having experienced Australian higher education programs, how would you describe the best way of preparing Korean students to enter Australian higher education programs?

   a. Was (is) attending an ELICOS program or official English test(s) program (IELTS) in Australia helpful for you entering current program you are enrolled?

   b. Was (is) studying in an Australian secondary school program useful for you entering current course you are enrolled?

   c. Was (is) attending a Foundation Studies Program beneficial for you entering your current program?

4 How would you describe the main difficulties when you needed to prepare written assessments?

5 How would you describe the difficulties in speaking when you needed to present your ideas in academic contexts?

6 Why do you think that tutorial participation is an uncomfortable experience for Korean students in general?

7 Why do you think that Korean students were (are) faced with difficulty in discussion-based and student-centred learning systems?

8 Why do you think that Korean students were (are) not used to the ways of thinking, particularly critical thinking in a logical sequence that Australian higher education programs required?

9 Do you believe that Korean English education is sufficient to meet international demands?

10 What would you recommend to Korean English teachers or high authorities regarding these issues?

Sample Transcription of an Interview-Male Australian Academic

Key: I = Interviewer.
P = Interviewee.

Main Body:

I = How would you describe the academic writing skills of Korean students in your experience?

P= "A lot of Korean students have problems with paragraphing." "I don't know why, but maybe its structure of Korean paragraphs as apposed to English paragraphs." "We tend to find one sentence then new line another sentence then new line another sentence and we don't see that with any other group of students" "It seems to be perhaps their experiences in school or universities when they translating Korean into English perhaps they taught translate sentence by sentence."

I = According to your experiences, what were (are) the common mistakes in their writing?

P = "I mean it is obvious that Korean student have a lot of knowledge of grammar." "Grammar over rules the logic or over rules fluency of the language." "This focus on being accurate in terms of grammar that they sometimes lose the idea of being accurate in overall communication." "Now that can also come about because of the sentence level." "They have a lot of problems with, the paragraph structure of logic because although they know although, however, despite and so on there all very similar meaning they often put that wrong words at the wrong time so it's actually lack of familiarity usage more than knowledge of systems." "Once again, structure maybe interference of the first language, I mean a lot of these problems are typical for many learners."

I = What kinds of preparations do they need to meet the appropriate proficiency level of writing English, particularly for academic purposes?

P = "They need to learn referencing, they need to learn good paragraph structure across a variety of genres, and in particular you know something is their processes and so on." "The way that they are taught too, there are problems because teaching process by itself teach cause effect by itself, but all paragraphs have combination of all these sorts of things." "Getting them to one level to save example to cause and effect depends upon a process that is very high sophisticated variety for anyone." "What they need to do is for example, we are working on paragraph, I always start with paragraphs, looking at basic topic sentence and support but you put in referencing and paraphrasing." "You need to look at very easy subjects and take it to really basic." "A very easy level of content so that then they can get an idea of not only paraphrasing and referencing but then put it into logical paragraph and then you can do up to content a little bit then once you get up paragraph level is very right then you can start looking at how the paragraphs work with each other how you need to relate structure of the essay to the question because questions always written in a logical way that lecturer wants you answer rather than the way you want to answer it." "It is beyond grammar."

I = How would you describe the proficiency level of speaking English of Korean students, especially when you meet them to discuss the issues related to study?

P = "It depends on students". "Some are very outgoing some are very reserved". "I think it also comes down to the education system, whether they are used to discussions for the course". "Not only are you perhaps dealing with persons who are shy, but you are dealing with whole groups of people who culturally have not had this chance". "Now, that actually is not different to the Australian students." "It is only when you get into senior high school in Australia that you really start doing a little bit of this a little bit that basically is the same." "You know this could come down to really stereotyping Confucious." "Confucious way of respecting elders and listening to what your elder has to say." "But, you know as much as the Western system tries to say that we all about learning and sharing ideas it's basically the same".

I = What sorts of mistakes did they make when speaking?

P = "It depends on person". "A lot of first language interference where you've got the verb at the end of the sentence rather than middle of the sentence." "It can make it difficult for them to follow the topic a little bit." "I think really does come down to familiarity and also their cultural thing just talking about the ideal of speaking."

I = Do you have any suggestions for them to improve their speaking ability?

P = "The obvious one is to speak English twenty four seven." "If you are not speaking English every second of the day then you are denying yourself the opportunity to improve your language." "There are students who do speak English outside class." "Other ones, who generally improved quickest, now may not be their grammar that is improving, but their fluency is improving and that is very important." "The main thing you can live in home stay or you can live in share house, it doesn't matter, but the main thing is you've got an environment where you are speaking English with other people, it doesn't matter if they are Chinese, Spanish, whatever, doesn't matter that broken English that you hearing, the main issue is you are still recognising language, you are still using language and you've got to activate your brain that is how you become to fluent." "It is like keep learning how to talk." "The only way they learn how to talk is about processing communication."

I = What was (is) the main problem that you have noticed in tutorial classes in which Korean students were (are) involved?

P = "In group discussions, I am more likely to do EAP or general English something like that." "I don't think there are any main problems I think that it depends on the person." "If you make it clear to them that they have to participate then most of the time they will some will not, some will think what they have to say is not interesting or don't know about the topic." "Recently I found that if you pick easier topics to teach them how to use skills that topics are not challenging in terms of intellect they found that most of them have vocabularies." "In Korea perhaps nursing students go through two year college to become a nurse they don't feel as academically very smart, so they can struggle with thinking that what they've got to say is worth while and that is not the case because of that fact that

Koreans are not seeing as real university, it just, you know, two year course like TAFE, so sometimes they can have lack of confidence in that regard."

I = What is the appropriate strategy for them to cope with the student-centred and discussion-based learning system in classes?

P = "If they come through general English TAFE course first they should learn having to discuss, transferring ideas, so it is a part of fluency strategies dealing with English learning." "Once gain, if you want to build up those things and this is about language learning point of view start with these contents and build it up." "You got to tell students that when they go to university, first 6 months to a year is always difficult because they don't have the vocabulary to deal with their topic and major area." "Once I learn that vocabulary and English then I have the tools." "I say you are like apprentices your first year." "Apprenticeship is just why I'm doing this but once you stop picking up that vocabularies associated with your specialty or major then you will be able to do it and then it is up to you as a person." "So, a lot of strategy there is, tell them is OK encourage them do better and help them realise in the future thy will get better."

I = How would you describe the insufficiency of organising ideas in a logical sequence when they present ideas with regard to subjects? --- and how do they overcome these in practice?

P = "I don't go for the patterns of logic that old books like (inaudible) staff like so that another circular and come to the conclusion at the end because it's rubbish idea." "I think a lot of comes down to understanding what is required from the question and then transferring how they related information with Korean pattern or English pattern, there is difference although I said rubbish about certain ideas just in general." "I think a lot of students struggle with translating, understanding of the question into writing or into speaking, because they don't really understand the question." "They have lack of familiarity with culture and what we would see as a good answer, so that could be culturally or they thought they don't have much experience of the world as the person who is teaching with us." "For example if we ask them to write a simple essay on something to do with cars, what are problems with cars, culturally we expect pollution to be number one OK, most students get straight to too many cars so takes me too long get to my work." "What they prioritising is not what we will expect they tack on pollution at the end that's important ,but you know it is all about like if you look at that sociological thing that is talking about society what is important for society." "They get in wrong that way, so then it is going back and training them." "Hang on then if you thought about what really impacts on humans, what would be the major issue also going back to teaching them prioritising properly or perhaps I don't like those terms."

I = Would you like to describe the best strategic preparation needed for Korean students to achieve in order to complete their studies successfully in Australian higher education programs?

P = "I think you need to do approximately a year in other pathways or foundation program." "I think realistically unless you are very very very very intelligent and you have really good English to start with and you know how to do referencing and writing and so on English IELTS is OK, but I don't believe that IELTS helps you to do university in Australia." "Nothing for me, all it does is show that you have a certain standard of the language, but it

does not help you to be successful, I think even though you can do IELTS to get into university, specially Queensland recognise this because they now run academic programs, but you still happy to get IELTS to get in." "For me IELTS is like driving test, EAP is practical, your actual driving test, you can drive unless you got the experiences to that, I think that IELTS doesn't do that is all it is paper test."

I = Do you have any other recommendations to help them best achieve their goals?

P = "Too many students want to get in, but they don't realise getting in is nothing, it is passing, and as I tell many students who do our EAP they don't get 65 percent, that's fine. "What it means is you need more English." "Now we can let you in, but you won't pass." "When you go home and you are going to get a job, what do you want to tell your employer?" "I went to uni, but I really struggled, my English is still not great." "You want to the person who gives you jobs, not only do I speak right English, I write right English, I can discuss in English, I did really well my uni course, that's what you need to say." "The only way to shorten that time is to immerse yourself in language, that's the only way that you can do it, and that doesn't mean studying 24 hours a day." "You've got a balance between studying and playing, but making sure that the study is focused, not just focussing on grammar, sometimes you need to back to a little bit of grammar, you need to compare what is learned, what the reality is, but really taking in all your input in that language, and doing that writing in that people not just doing half things like that because many students I'll do that tomorrow." "So you really need to be watching not just news, a variety of TV shows, immerse yourself in language." "Reading text source also that when you get better have something to do with your major." "Not when you are in an IELTS 3, you don't want reading text that hasn't a meaning." "You got to pick text that's the right level for you, because it's gradual improvement and its important there."

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This research covers all the key aspects of the main characteristics of Korean students' experiences in learning English as a second language, the best preparations required for them to enter Australian undergraduate programs, the main difficulties faced by them in adapting to the use of the general English language, particularly for Australian tertiary level academic purposes, and the critical cross-cultural challenges that they encounter in Australian undergraduate programs. This research is designed both for Korean and other international students and particularly for those who are involved as English language education providers. This research is an ideal guide to assist students through that demanding first year of study preparation and for teachers this will provide you with an accessible source of knowledge and a pedagogical guidance about international students who speak English as a second language.

Sang-Soon Park
As the first international student to achieve a Doctorate having completed all awards at USQ, he joined Open Access College at USQ as an academic staff in 2008. He is currently a member of KAREC at UNSW, APACALL, a Reviewer of the International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning and the National Conference for Enabling Educators.

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978-3-639-22637-9