

## **Globalization and English Language Education: Comparative Study on Critical Success and Failure Factors of EFL in El Salvador and South Korea**

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### **Abstract**

Nowadays, English Language Education is a trending issue in many countries, as it has become a lingua franca for globalization. The proficiency in that foreign language is a basis for international cooperation and development. That is why many countries have been working for implementing different policies to enhance and improve English as a Foreign Language in schools. This paper provides an overview of the Critical Success and Failure Factors in EFL education in El Salvador and South Korea. The first chapter presents general information on English language education as part of the globalization process. The second and third chapters explain the different EFL education policies implemented in both El Salvador and South Korea in the past few decades. The fourth chapter analyzes the EFL programs of both countries based on the language policies suggested in the paper *Language-in-education policy and planning* by Kaplan and Baldauf in 2005. Finally, this paper concludes with a brief explanation about the EFL education in both countries based on the Critical Success Factors of English language education in South Korea.

*Keywords:* EFL education, English education, education

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## Introduction

### Globalization and English Language Education

Aiming at globalization, many countries have been implementing different policies to seek development, especially in terms of education. Since globalization refers to bringing different nations together for economic and social development, it is necessary first to establish a common communication system between the countries. This is how English becomes an important source of communication and fundamental element in globalization (Alfehaid, 2014).

Despite English being the lingua franca for international communication (Kirkgöz, 2009), English proficiency actually varies from country to country and from person to person due to the differences in the quality of the teaching-learning process. Depending on the country, English can be taught as a second or foreign language, and the level of proficiency may vary depending on the support given to the teaching programs in each country.

In El Salvador, since the late 1990s, the government has created various programs to develop education, especially English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, helping to improve the level of English proficiency in recent years. According to the English Proficiency Index (EPI) statistics, in 2024, the country ranked #55 out of 116 countries worldwide (Education First, 2024).

On the other hand, after the 1950s, Korea achieved significant economic development through the application of various policies, especially in education (Lee, 2008). Korea has implemented different programs to improve English education, such as EPiK (English Program in Korea) and TEE (Teaching English in English) (Han, 2010). In 2024, the EPI ranked Korea at #50 out of 116 countries (Education First, 2024).

### Objectives of the Study

This dissertation analyzes EFL education programs in El Salvador and Korea. For El Salvador, it mainly focuses on the COMPITE<sup>1</sup> program from the Plan 2021<sup>2</sup> implemented in 2004. The program (COMPITE) was created to enhance English language education in public high schools all across the country. For South Korea, it focuses on the EFL programs implemented by the government: EPiK and TEE, which sought to enhance the English communication in classrooms. This dissertation aims to illustrate the success and failure factors of COMPITE program's implementation in public high schools in El Salvador, as well as the EPiK and TEE programs in South Korea.

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<sup>1</sup> COMPITE is a program to improve the English Education system in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> grades, as well as at the high school level in public schools in El Salvador (MINED, 2005b).

<sup>2</sup> Plan 2021 [National Plan of Education 2021] is an initiative of the Government of El Salvador, under the coordination of Ministry of Education (MINED), to reinforce the national education system. Its main objective is to create new long-term policies and goals for the following years, as well as make short-term, medium-term and long-term commitments to achieve important outcomes in education by 2021, when the country celebrates 200 years of Independence (MINED, 2005b).

## Methodology

A qualitative analysis of secondary data was conducted to analyze the EFL programs in both countries. For El Salvador, official data was collected from various governmental and nongovernmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Education of El Salvador, USAID, Education First, and various academic journals. For Korea, official documents from the Ministry of Education of Korea, the National Institute for International Education, and the Korea Development Institute were collected.

### EFL Education in El Salvador

The Ministry of Education of El Salvador (MINED)<sup>3</sup> has been implementing different programs to enhance EFL education. Since 1995, the government has implemented an education reform called *Plan Decenal de Reforma Educativa (1995-2005)*<sup>4</sup>, which included English language education in the education process. In 2004, the government implemented *Plan 2021*, aiming to increase the abilities of students through: “a) English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Education, b) Technology access, c) Technical and technological specialization, d) High education, science and technology” (MINED, 2005b, p. 25). The plan included the program titled COMPITE, seeking “to transform the traditional methods to teach English in the National Education System” (MINED, 2005a, p.8).

### COMPITE Program

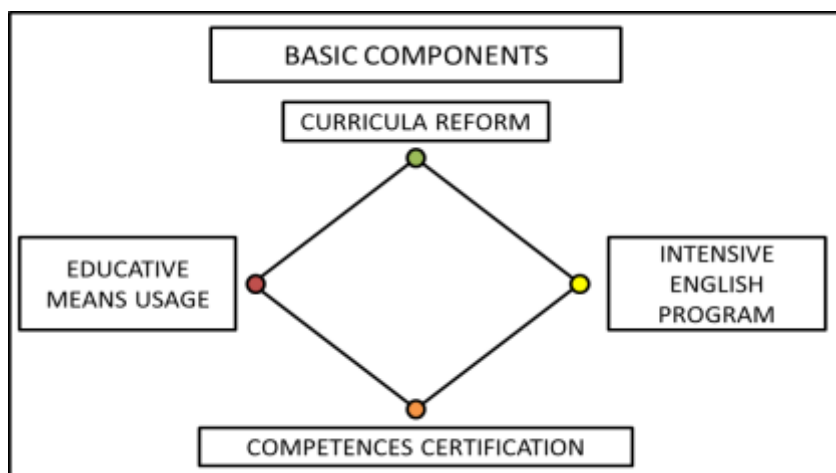
COMPITE aimed to “create opportunities for young people to learn English” through four basic components: curriculum reform, EFL intensive programs, English proficiency certification, and effective methodologies and resources (Figure 1) (MINED, 2005a, p.8). COMPITE was a new curriculum reform based on the successes and failures of previous EFL education initiatives. Consequently, the COMPITE action plan focused on four aspects: a) certifying teachers with pedagogical skills and English proficiency, b) enhancing the level of English proficiency in middle and high school students of public schools through intensive EFL programs, c) making use of technology and mass media in EFL education, and d) expanding English education to primary and elementary schools through TV programs.

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<sup>3</sup> MINED is a governmental institution focus on “contributing to create responsible people, capable to be part of society in terms of culture, politics and economy; with critical thinking, values, in order to make an equal, democratic and developed country through an qualify education”. It seeks to become a “leading institution in the development of qualify education” (<http://www.mined.gob.sv/index.php/institucion/filosofia>).

<sup>4</sup> Decade Plan of Educational Reform 1995-2005.

**Figure 1**  
*COMPITE Basis*



Source. MINED, 2005a, p.9

MINED worked together with other national entities to accomplish these goals and help promote English language education across the country. *Escuela Americana*<sup>5</sup> was one of them and helped evaluate teachers' proficiency, providing them with special training to improve their language skills. Escuela Americana had experience in training students and teachers through the program *Escuela Americana Extensión (EAX)*, whose main goal was "to support the development of El Salvador through education" (Escuela Americana, 2013). In 2005 and 2008, EAX trained English teachers to improve their foreign language knowledge and skills and provided a wide range of courses to students and faculty, including English courses to improve the language proficiency as well as the *Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)* course for teachers.

MINED cooperated with ITCA-FEPADE<sup>6</sup> to provide EFL intensive courses to selected students. ITCA-FEPADE collaborated in the creation of the National English Center (NEC) "to increase the quantity of Salvadorian English speakers and improve their proficiency in that language" (MINED, 2006, p. 34). The program consisted of weekend intensive courses totaling 600 hours for selected students from public high schools, providing proficiency certification at the end of the course (MINED, 2005a). ITCA-FEPADE supported the program with human resources and methodologies, while MINED provided the infrastructure, equipment, and financial resources to run the NEC program. The program gave students the opportunity to participate in special weekend English courses to increase their opportunities in the labor market (MINED, 2006; MINED 2009a).

Moreover, MINED worked together with two important newspapers in the country: *El Diario de Hoy* and *La Prensa Gráfica*, to promote English learning in and outside schools by publishing educational English articles and providing teachers with extracurricular materials to improve their English teaching methodologies (MINED, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Escuela Americana (American School) is a private institution accredited by AdvancEd and MINED. It seeks to help children develop their potential through a high-quality education. Its main goal is to make students capable of communicating effectively in English and Spanish.

([https://www.amschool.edu.sv/easite/eahistory.aspx?mnu\\_id=1&slc=10](https://www.amschool.edu.sv/easite/eahistory.aspx?mnu_id=1&slc=10))

<sup>6</sup> ITCA-FEPADE is a public institution with private administration that aims to prepare successful professionals through education, especially in engineering studies. ITCA was created by FEPADE, a private association that seek to promote education development in El Salvador. (<http://www.itca.edu.sv/index.php/nuestra-institucion>)

In 2006, FIDES<sup>7</sup> provided the copyrights for the TV show *Sesame English* to MINED, which was broadcast on national TV channel *CANAL 10*<sup>8</sup> (MINED, 2006). This coalition sought to bring English education to children, enhancing their motivation to study English (MINED, 2006), through a fun and engaging program, broadcast three times a week for one year. This project gave children and young people the opportunity to learn English outside the classroom (MINED, 2005a). The project was also implemented inside public schools. However, due to limited technological resources and equipment, MINED selected only 54 schools nationwide. MINED equipped schools with TVs and provided language and technology training to 61 teachers to improve the quality of English education and the use of technological equipment in classrooms.

According to some program reports, it had several irregularities. First, the analysis of the COMPITE program implementation shows that MINED focused its efforts on providing high-quality EFL education to only a few cities (San Salvador, Apopa, San Marcos, Soyapango, La Unión) (MINED, 2006), rather than expanding the program to the entire population.

Also, the total number of participants was a low percentage of the total population of public high schools in the country. For instance, according to the official report, in 2004 only 5,438 out of 417,561 students participated in the program, while in 2005, 7,034 out of 430,894 students participated (Table 1) (MINED, 2006). Additionally, MINED's 2008-2009 report indicated that only 3,584 students out of 461,828 (Table 2) participated in the NEC program (MINED, 2009b). Thus, less than the 2% of the population, respectively, were part of the program. In terms of faculty, 1,529 teachers received special training to improve their English proficiency, but only 23 TOEIC certifications were awarded (MINED, 2009b).

**Table 1**

*Rate of Enrollment From 2000 to 2008*

Rates of enrollment 2003-2006 in 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> year and High School				
	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Public and Private School</b>				
7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	320,813	332,000	337,509	339,884
High School	167,702	177,842	186,693	192,773
<b>Public Schools (%)</b>				
7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	87.4	87.8	87.9	87.6
High School	69.7	70.9	72.0	72.5

Source. MINED, 2009a

<sup>7</sup> FIDES (Fondo para Iniciativas del Desarrollo Educativo - Fund for Educational Development Initiatives in English) is a branch of FUNDEMÁS, an association of enterprises that collaborate to strengthen the good practices in social responsibility in order to contribute to the competence and sustainable development of El Salvador. (<http://www.fundemas.org/quienes-somos/que-es-fundemas>)

<sup>8</sup> Canal 10 is the national TV channel in El Salvador, which seeks to become an icon of culture-sharing inside and outside the country, as well as to promote El Salvador's identity and the participation of the country's population. (<http://tves.sv/somos-tves/>)

**Table 2***Rates of Enrollment From 2009 to 2012*

Rates of enrollment 2009-2012 in 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> and High School Public School				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
7 <sup>th</sup>	126,233	131,871	132,502	132,674
8 <sup>th</sup>	106,137	112,081	115,609	117,178
9 <sup>th</sup>	88,821	96,813	100,995	104,280
TOTAL (a)	321,191	340,765	349,106	354,132
High School (1 <sup>st</sup> year)	68,016	66,581	72,662	78,696
High School (2 <sup>nd</sup> year)	49,170	52,148	54,074	61,349
High School (3 <sup>rd</sup> year)	23,022	24,086	24,034	25,559
High School (4 <sup>th</sup> year)	429	412	354	205
TOTAL (b)	140,637	143,227	151,124	165,809
<b>TOTAL (a + b)</b>	<b>461,828</b>	<b>483,992</b>	<b>500,230</b>	<b>519,941</b>

Source. MINED, 2012

However, based on other reports, the program benefited “more than 23 thousand students from 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, high school, and vocational school<sup>9</sup>” (MINED, 2009a, p. 66). The statistics show a clear disparity between the results of the implementation and evaluation of the COMPITE program (Table 3). These disparities in the national reports make the information about the implementation of the COMPITE program confusing and unreliable.

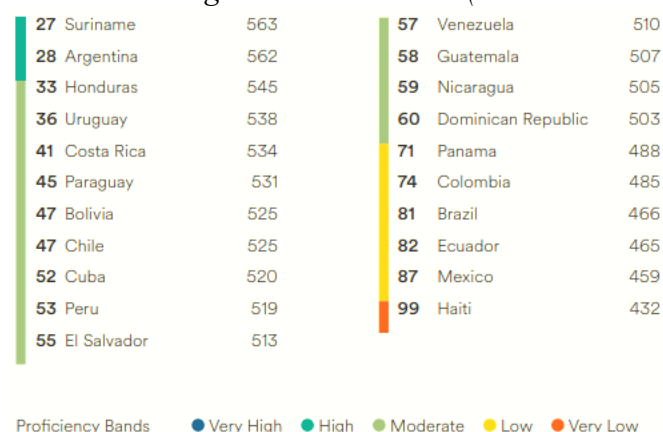
**Table 3***Rates of Participation in COMPITE Programs From 2004 to 2009*

Rates of participation in COMPITE program from 2004 to 2009							
School Year & Program	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
Sesame English	--	2,427	2,724	--	--	--	--
7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	1,204	1,257	1,146	1,105	227	0	4,939
High School	0	2,291	2,096	1,451	2,903	857	9,598
Technical High School	0	1,429	3,150	4,426	0	0	9,005
NEC program	--	280	403	568	1,395	315 <sup>(1)</sup>	2,646
TOTAL <sup>(2)</sup>	1,204	5,257	6,795	7,550	4,525	1,172	26,503
<sup>(1)</sup> Until 2009							
<sup>(2)</sup> No including <i>Sesame English</i>							

Source. MINED, 2009a

Currently, El Salvador ranks 11<sup>th</sup> in English proficiency in Latin America (Figure 2) and 55<sup>th</sup> out of 116 countries worldwide (Education First, 2024). Comparing the EF EPI data, the level of English proficiency in El Salvador has increased in recent years, moving from “very low proficiency” in 2016 to “moderate proficiency” in 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Vocational school refers to post-high school studies, consisting of 3 years of education, which replaces college studies because it is easier and faster to obtain a diploma and find job opportunities after completion.

**Figure 2***EF EPI Rankings in Latin America (Education First, 2024)*

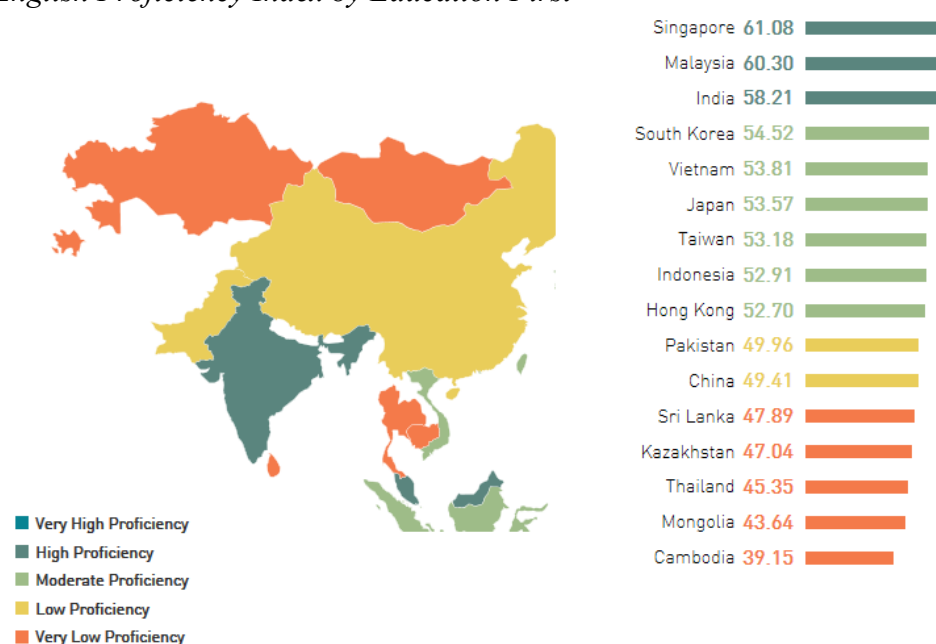
MINED (2005b) stated that “learning a second language gives more possibilities for people to learn and to communicate, as well as provides the opportunity to be more competitive at work and to become multicultural in relationships with people from different countries around the world” (p. 26). In 2009, MINED created various projects to enhance the quality of education. However, these were more focused on IT education rather than EFL education. There is, however, not enough research on the education programs in El Salvador: “there is not enough information and knowledge about English education in the public schools of El Salvador. [...] There is no research, analysis, experience systematization, or debates about that” (Martínez, 2009, p. 41). Thus, it is not possible to detail the outcomes of the COMPITE program and other recent initiatives over the years.

### English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Education in South Korea

South Korea has become a role model for many developing countries because of its rapid economic growth and development. “Korea’s miraculous development is due to the establishment and effective enforcement of its strategies for national development [...] During this process, Korea’s education and the educational policies [...] have contributed greatly to the cause” (KEDI, 2008, p. 10). By prioritizing education, Korea laid the foundations for significant development in a short time.

As English became the global language, Korea also implemented diverse policies to enhance English language education, positioning the country in 27<sup>th</sup> place out of 70 countries, and 4<sup>th</sup> place on the Asian continent, in the English Proficiency Index (EPI) by Education First in 2015 (Figure 3). Since 1950, various reforms in EFL education have been emphasized using methods such as grammar-translation, audio-lingual and communicative approaches. However, with the 6<sup>th</sup> curriculum, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), aimed to revolutionize English education by focusing more “on the development of communicative competences in Korean students” (Chang, 2009, p. 87).

**Figure 3**  
*English Proficiency Index by Education First*



Source: <http://www.ef.edu/epi/>

Following this, the 7<sup>th</sup> curriculum reform was an innovative step for EFL education, introducing the proficiency-based language program, which allows “students to learn according to their own abilities and interests” (Chang, 2009, p. 88). This last reform had five major goals: “(i) to focus on daily and practical English; (ii) to enhance English proficiency; (iii) to create an activity and task-oriented learning environment; (iv) to clarify the achievement standards; and (v) to provide appropriate English learning conditions” (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 1998; Kang, 2007; Lee, 2010 p. 7). The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> curriculum reforms were critical steps toward transforming and improving EFL education in South Korea.

Chang (2009) stated that if the main goal of Korea is “to function effectively as a nation in the era of globalization, Korean people must be able to communicate effectively in English” (p. 94). For this reason, both reforms included various projects aimed at all levels of the national education system, enabling students to participate actively and improve their English skills. Two of the most relevant projects from these reforms were: (1) the inclusion of English in elementary schools, and (2) the hiring of native English speakers.

The Ministry of Education of Korea has been implementing a variety of programs in order to improve English education and “to enhance students’ communication competences” in the foreign language (Chang, 2012, p. 3). Two of the most representative programs in the last 30 years are the English Program in Korea (EPiK), launched in 1995, and Teaching English in English (TEE), introduced in 1997 (Yook, 2010).

### English Program in Korea (EPiK)

The English Program in Korea (EPiK), previously known as the Korea English Teacher Training Assistant (KORETTA), was introduced by the Ministry of Education in the mid-1990s. The main objective was to hire native English speakers as teachers “to improve the



English speaking abilities of students and teachers in Korea, and to reform English teaching methodologies” (Jeon, 2009 in Vaish, 2010, p. 169). Originally, the program was implemented in the early years of school, but in 2010, it was expanded to senior elementary and middle schools.

According to Jeon Min-hyon (2009) “EPiK program is an example of Korea’s active response to the globalization process through which Korea not only accommodates external demands but also strategically pursues national interests through equipping its citizens with the command of English and improving its image in the world” (as cited in Vaish, 2010, p. 161). Through EPiK, Korea aimed to open society to a more international environment. The presence of English in Korean schools demonstrated that the country was treating “English language as a global language and Native English speakers as an ideal language teacher” (Jeon, 2009, as cited in Vaish, 2010, p. 175).

Despite benefiting students, Jeon Mi-hyon (2009), in her work *Globalization and South Korea’s EPiK (English Program in Korea)*, explained the discontent of several teachers. One of the interviewees expressed that there was low communication and cooperation between co-teachers in lesson planning and classroom execution: “Co-teachers go. ‘Great teachers! You have great ideas. But you’re here only one hour a week. We are here until sixty-two years old. No, thanks’” (Jeon, 2009, as cited in Vaish, 2010, p. 172). Another participant mentioned the shortage of materials covered during the working period, claiming that she only taught a quarter of a lesson unit, while the co-teacher completed the rest (Jeon, 2009, as cited in Vaish, 2010). The researcher concluded that EPiK teachers often feel like “performing monkeys,” giving about 40 minutes of class per day and having little or no influence on improving students’ English learning (Jeon, 2009, as cited in Vaish, 2010).

Moreover, EPiK teachers also complained about dealing with the typical “Korean adolescent” attitude, such as using the phone during class, coming without books and pencils, sleeping in class, looking in mirrors, etc. (Jeon, 2009, as cited in Vaish, 2010). Despite the EPiK program being designed to enhance English language education and provide the same quality of instruction that parents and children expect when studying abroad and attending private institutes, EPiK participants reported that their role did not extend beyond the label of “native English speaker teacher,” the international work experience, and economical benefits it provided.

### Teaching English in English (TEE)

Teaching English in English (TEE), also known as Teaching English Through English (TETE), was a program focused on teaching EFL in an entirely English-speaking environment to improve the communicative skills. In Korea, TEE “is one of the government-driven policies to improve students’ communicative competences” (Lee, 2010, p. iv). It was introduced to the Korea English education system in 1997, as part of the *Segyewha*<sup>10</sup> (globalization) policy, introduced by the former President Youngsam Kim in 1994 (Lee, 2010).

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<sup>10</sup> *Segyehwa* is a policy created by Korean Government in 1995. Its objective was to enhance the country’s competitiveness and integrate it into the globalization process. Following significant events such as the Asian Games (1986) and Olympic Games (1988), Korea sought to improve its global image, and develop its economy and education. It included the 6<sup>th</sup> Curriculum Reform, which focused on enhancing students’ communication skills through the improvement of English language education (Jeon, 2009).

As with the EPiK program, the main goal of TEE was to create an “English-only class” to reinforce students’ communicative skills. The policy “encourages Korean EFL teachers to use English as a medium of instruction and, if possible, to use English only in class” (Yook, 2010, p. 25). However, this policy was not fully realized due to the lack of confidence among teachers and broader societal trends in Korea that interfered with its implementation.

Kim (2009) expressed that “educational methods for English in English in Korea do not seem to work very effectively unless English input is widespread in English classrooms” (p. 132). In his paper *Teacher and Student Perceptions of New English Language Education Policy*, Kim (2009) explained that the implementation of an English-only program will not succeed unless both teachers’ and students’ language proficiency is sufficiently high, and the high expectations of the education system do not interfere with the process. Furthermore, social trends in Korea make people eager to learn the language but afraid to communicate in it. As Cho (2014) noted, “if they cannot prove their English abilities, they will be left behind and not have any chance to stand out in South Korea” (p. 5). This situation seriously affects the self-confidence of students and teachers, hindering the implementation of TEE in the classrooms.

### Comparison of El Salvador’s and Korea’s EFL Education

In the paper *Language-in-education Policy and Planning*, Kaplan and Baldauf (2005) explained that a language policy is composed of seven important agendas: “(1) access policy; (2) personnel policy; (3) curriculum policy; (4) methodology and materials policy; (5) resourcing policy; (6) community policy; and (7) evaluation policy” (as cited in Butler, 2009, pp. 3-4). Based on these language policies, EFL programs in El Salvador and South Korea can be analyzed as follows (Table 4):

**Table 4**

*Comparative Chart of Language Policies in El Salvador and Korea*

Kaplan & Baldauf’s Language Policies						
Kaplan & Baldauf’s Language Policies	EL SALVADOR			SOUTH KOREA		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Access Policy (what, to whom, and when)	X					X
Personnel Policy (teachers)		X			X	
Curriculum Policy (objectives)		X			X	
Methodology and materials Policy		X			X	
Resourcing Policy	X					X
Community Policy			X		X	
Evaluation Policy (assessments and evaluation)		X			X	

Language policy in both, El Salvador and South Korea, differs in three key aspects: access, resources, and community. First, the access policy reflects a significant gap between the two countries. In El Salvador, the main reason for low accessibility is that the COMPITE program was only implemented in a few cities across the country, while in Korea, EPiK and TEE were implemented nationwide. With full coverage, EFL education in Korea has contributed “to a reduction in social inequality and an increase in upward mobility” (Lee, 2001, p.2).

Regarding the resourcing policy, Korea had sufficient resources, provided by the government and other entities, to effectively carry out its programs. On the other hand, El Salvador faced limited monetary and non-monetary resources, which affected the promotion, expansion, and sustainability of the program.

In terms of community policy, Korea made good use of resources to promote English education. In contrast, while the COMPITE program in El Salvador carried out several projects making good use of media and offering extracurricular activities, the level of community engagement in El Salvador was comparatively low.

On the other hand, the personnel policy, curriculum policy, methodology and materials policy, and evaluation policy demonstrated some similarities between both countries. Despite the socio-economic development gap, the implementation of COMPITE in El Salvador, and TEE and EPiK in Korea, resulted in medium-level language policies in both nations, as suggested by Kaplan and Baldauf (2005). To better understand these similarities, these policies can be divided into four sections: human resources, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

### **Human Resources**

Both countries have made significant efforts to improve the quality of EFL teachers and, by extension, the quality of EFL education. However, both nations faced challenges regarding the quality of human resources, which impacted the effectiveness of EFL education.

A positive aspect of Korea's EFL education was the adoption of native English speakers through the EPiK program, which added significant value by providing students with opportunities to practice the language in real-time. However, Korean English teachers faced challenges due to a lack of continuous professional development (Choi & Lee, 2008). According to Kim (2009) "it seems that there is no need for candidates to have English education majors, but rather only be able to speak English." In his work *Teacher and Student perceptions of new English Language Education Policy*, he noted that many Korean students in education majors were trained to become English teachers, despite their low English proficiency (Kim, 2009).

In El Salvador, the quality of English education was low due to teachers' insufficient proficiency and pedagogical skills. McGuire (1996), in her work *Language Planning and Policy and the ELT Profession in Selected Central America Countries*, noted that "public school teachers commonly are required to teach English whether or not they want or are able to" (p. 175). During the COMPITE program, the Salvadoran government implemented various training initiatives to improve teachers' skills and administered English test to assess their language abilities. However, with the discontinuation of the program, these efforts were terminated, limiting further improvement in teacher qualifications.

### **Curriculum**

Regarding curriculum policy, both countries' EFL education programs share the same primary objective: improving EFL education to ensure participation in a globalized world. However, that objective is difficult to achieve if EFL education does not fully address the four language competences. "English education in Korea has been intensively focused on reading, grammar, listening and vocabulary [...] public schools and private institutes in

Korea have not been concentrated on English speaking skills” (Cho, 2014, p. 42). In other words, most EFL classes in Korea were focused on absorbing the language rather than reproducing it.

In El Salvador, the low proficiency in English hindered both teachers’ and students’ ability to speak freely in the language. Fear of making mistakes or the prevailing social trends impacted students and teachers, limiting the development of communicative skills and the speaking competences.

### **Pedagogy**

In terms of methodology and materials policy, both Korea and El Salvador had good EFL programs, though both countries faced challenges in implementing effective methodologies and utilizing appropriate materials.

In Korea, teachers predominantly used materials focused on grammar understanding, reading and listening skills (Cho, 2014, p. 4), often neglecting speaking skills. Similarly, during the COMPITE program in El Salvador, the focus on IT and media usage took precedence over updating textbooks and methodologies to better address all four language competences.

On the other hand, both countries made good use of technology and media to teach EFL in public schools. For instance, Korea used ICT to develop listening, reading, writing, pronunciation and grammar skills, employing internet resources, e-books, and PowerPoint presentations (Choi & Lee, 2008, p. 14). In El Salvador, the use of computer and the national transmission of the T.V. show *Sesame English* reflected the innovative approach to EFL education.

### **Assessment**

The evaluation policy in both countries reached a medium level in terms of the language policy, indicating that the assessment and evaluation system were functional but needed improvement in certain areas.

English language tests are a significant requirement in many countries. “English test scores play a large part in college entrance and access to employment in white-collar jobs” (Jeon, 2009, in Vaish, 2010, pp. 162-163). Despite having English testing methods, improvements are needed in these systems to achieve a higher level of evaluation.

Korean EFL assessments mainly focus on memorizing words and grammar points, rather than enhancing students’ language abilities through essay writing and free conversations. On the other hand, El Salvador’s EFL evaluation system was not standardized. Teachers had the autonomy to design their own tests. While El Salvador also offers international exams like TOEFL and IETLS, the cost barrier prevents many students from taking these tests.

### **Conclusions**

Both Korea and El Salvador have implemented diverse programs to improve EFL education, utilizing technological equipment, media, and human resources to provide quality of education to students. While these programs have succeeded in many areas during

implementation, they have also faced several challenges that became critical obstacles in achieving the desired outcomes.

In case of El Salvador, the MINED reformed EFL education through the COMPITE program. The Critical Success Factors of this program include the implementation of proficiency tests for teachers and training courses aimed at improving their teaching and language skills. Additionally, the provision of extracurricular classes for high school students was instrumental in enhancing their language knowledge and proficiency. The transmission of *Sesame English* through national broadcast was also a significant element, making English language content accessible to the entire population.

However, El Salvador's EFL education also had several Critical Failure Factors. For example, the extracurricular English classes were offered only to select students in few cities, limiting the program's reach. Another major limitation was the absence of a standardized proficiency test. Without such a test, it was difficult to evaluate students' language proficiency accurately or assess whether the program achieved the intended results. This lack of evaluation made it challenging to track progress and inform future reforms in EFL education.

For Korea, the Critical Success Factors included the effective use of both human and economic resources. The adoption of native English-speaking teachers through the EPiK program was pivotal for students' motivation and for easing the economic burden on families. The program allowed students to interact with native speakers without the need to study abroad, which greatly enhanced their motivation to practice the language and develop their communication skills.

However, there were also Critical Failure Factors in Korea's approach. One significant issue was the lack of autonomy of EPiK teachers in the class planning. EPiK teachers had limited or no control over the teaching and learning process, and their role was confined to assist Korean teachers during lessons rather than leading them. This lack of autonomy hindered their ability to improve students' English communicative skills effectively.

Regarding Teaching English in English, the concept of an "English-only" classroom can only succeed if the teacher uses English exclusively, with little to no reliance on the students' mother tongue. However, the implementation of this policy faced difficulties when lacked confidence in using English themselves due to low proficiency. This led to a negative impact on students, as neither the teachers nor students were able to produce the language as intended.

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### **Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process**

During the preparation of this work, the author declares that ChatGPT software was used in order to check grammar structures and possible mistyped words. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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