Capability and core competency identification of a knowledge-based organization

Case studies of Wonderland Academy and Incheon English Village

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Abstract

The concept of core competencies has been discussed for the last 20 years; however, the concept itself has yet to be standardized. Using the theories concerning core competencies as laid out by Porter, Prahalad, and Hamel, and using a framework created by Clayton M. Christensen that adds support to the identification of core competencies through the examination of capabilities, this paper illustrates a path that supports a method of identifying core competencies through the capabilities of an organization.

Research was conducted at two private education businesses located in South Korea. A multi-case study research method was employed in order to perform cross-analysis of the case studies. The primary source of data collected was from interviews conducted with the staff and management found at both businesses and by the observations of the researcher. The case studies were cross-analyzed to contrast and compare different capabilities that lie within each organization.

After establishing several capabilities found at both organizations, the researcher determined that most of them failed to meet the criteria to satisfy being labeled core competencies. The process of identifying the core competencies found within these case studies supports the idea that core competencies are not just success stories to be shared, but are assets with roots that can be identified and cultivated.
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*“Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”* - Vince Lombardi
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Chapter 1 — Introduction

1.1 - Purpose
The purpose of this research is to compare and contrast two knowledge-based businesses through the exploration of a capabilities-based framework in order to add knowledge to the field of core competency identification. This framework, as proposed by Clayton (2003), demonstrates the importance of resources, processes, and values as keys to defining and finding capabilities and subsequently core competencies, adding support to another perspective to the core competency field of study.

1.2 - Motivation
The motivation for this project lies in practical, personal, and theoretical reasons. First, as this research is being conducted at two private education businesses located in South Korea, it should be noted that, according to the OECD (2010) South Korea, as of 2005, is the world’s leader in private education expenditures. With such a tremendous amount of money being spent on education, there must be a tremendous amount of competition. With a greater number of competitors, finding competitive advantages becomes more difficult. Thus, any study that will help to identify core competencies specific to the business of education will be beneficial to companies trying to develop their operations. This research should help education businesses in South Korea to reflect on their own operations in order to identify and develop capabilities and core competencies found in their organizations. The results should also be enlightening to organizations outside of South Korea when examining their own operations in order to evaluate their capabilities and competencies.

On a personal level, the researcher has been working in South Korea for the last few years, mainly in management positions at private education businesses. Working and living in Western cultures all of his life, he was not entirely ready for the Korean business culture. After some time, he discovered that he needed to learn more about the business culture that existed in South Korea while continuing his studies in business administration.

From a theoretical perspective, this research is being motivated by the need for a better understanding of core competency identification. In the 20 years since Prahalad (1990) first proposed the concept of the core competency, the concept has progressively advanced in depth and meaning. Ljungquist (2007, p.397) states that the core competency concept is, “a complex and challenging concept; it is difficult to specify theoretically, to identify empirically as a phenomenon, and to apply in practice.” Which is probably why, that despite there being an abundant amount of research on the concept of core competencies, “the terminology of
resources, competences, and capabilities has not been standardized to date.” (Katkalo, 2010, p.1176) The aim is to add more support to the concept of core competencies.

1.3 - Problem Discussion

Competitive advantage as described by Michael Porter (1990) is a way of qualifying the strategies that businesses use to outperform their competitors. To define what a strategy is for the purposes of this research, a strategy is, “a specific pattern of decisions and actions taken to achieve an organization’s goals.” (Davies, 2003, p.295) In a global economy where resources, management methods, and business ideas are easily shared and copied, competitive advantages need to be understood. So, how do companies achieve competitive advantage over their competitors? Porter (1990, p.74) answers this question by saying, “Companies achieve competitive advantage through innovation.” Without constant innovation a business’s advantages will eventually be emulated by another business thus destroying the advantage.

These strategies are further discussed by Prahalad & Hamel (1990) when they wrote about the core competencies of corporations. They defined core competencies in several ways. Core competencies are a company’s unique skills that allow them to be a leader in their field. To be more specific, “Core competencies are the collective learning in an organization, especially how to coordinate diverse production skills and integrate multiple streams of technology.” (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990, p.82) Throughout their discussion of core competencies, Prahalad and Hamel use companies that developed tangible products as examples, but it should be noted that the research conducted for this paper will be in an industry where end products are not physically produced and instead will be focusing on education programs as the end product. The following is a chart produced by Prahalad and Hamel to describe the flow of product development from core competencies to the end product.

![Figure 1.1: Core competency development chart (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990, p.81)](image-url)
One company used to demonstrate this flow chart was Honda. They explained that an engine developed by Honda is a core product that emerged from the combination of various competencies and with this core product many end products could be produced. (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990, p.84) If this rationale is applied to a knowledge-based business such as a private education business then many different competencies could create core products, which would then produce various end products, that being an educational program. For example, competencies related to inspiring employee innovation and/or producing quality curriculum in efficient ways could help to develop the teachers that become proficient at program and curriculum development. As the teachers produce the educational program (end product) they could be looked at as a core product.

Prahalad and Hamel (1990) state that there are 3 criteria that core competencies share:

- “a core competence provides access to a wide variety of markets”
- “a core competence should make a significant contribution to the perceived customer benefits of the end product”
- “a core competence should be difficult for competitors to imitate” (Prahalad, 1990, pp.83-84)

Understanding what a core competency is brings us to the problem of identifying them. Although, there has been much research on the identification of core competencies, it is still an ongoing field of research. A problem with the identification process is expressed by Jens F. Christensen (2006, p.39) when he notes that the concept of core competency “is expansive, elastic, and tends to be identified as an ex post ‘good’ asset: ‘There being no apparatus by which to advise firms on when and how to reconfigure their core competencies, the arguments relies on ex post rationalization: show me a success story and I will show you (uncover) a core competence.’” It may be true that there is no apparatus to advise firms on when and how to reconfigure their core competencies; J.F. Christensen’s latter statement is too dismissive, for there are several researched methods on core competency identification that go beyond the idea of a “success story”.

“The process of identifying core competencies usually entails having employees identify core competencies by scanning and assessing company critical resources, capabilities, and competencies (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990) – three factors commonly referred to as “associated concepts”. (Ljungquist, 2007, Pg. 394) These associated concepts help to support the identification process, but they also create more questions. “In fact each concept is acknowledged to be substantial enough to have its own major research stream in the strategic management field, namely, the resource-based, competence-based, and dynamic capability-based streams” (Barney, 1991; Sanchez, 2004; Teece et al., 1997 cited in Ljungquist, 2007, p.394) Ljungquist (2007, p.395) goes on to say that, “Because of its diverse origins and
applications, contemporary core competence issues are impossible to classify according to any one particular theory.” So, in order to bring a better understanding of the core competence, through a case study, Ljungquist (2008) proposed the following model:

![Core Competency Model](image)

Figure 1.2: Core competency model (Ljungquist, 2008, p.87)

In his model, capabilities play an important function of supporting core competencies, but he also made the following statement, “Furthermore, a capability’s support notion is proposed as having a more active conception: the initiation of change.” (Ljungquist, 2008, p.88) This idea of the capability as the initiation of change that will be explored in this paper. Ljungquist followed his statement with a proposed topic of research, “Thus, there is a need for more research on how the characteristics influence core competencies: to what extent can capabilities be used to manage core competencies?” (Ljungquist, 2008, p.88) Thus suggesting the idea for more research on the capabilities and core competency relationship.

Of the three associated concepts that Ljungquist refers to, dynamic capabilities appears the most connected to this research. Dynamic capabilities were described by Teece (1997, p.510) as “an emerging and potentially integrative approach to understanding the newer sources of competitive advantage.”

Teece (1997, p.516) also defined dynamic capabilities “as the firm’s ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments.” This concept of capabilities being directly related to the development of competences adds support to the purpose of this research to explore another capabilities-based framework.
More recently, Katkalo (2010, p.1179) stated that “dynamic capabilities reflect the capacity a firm has to orchestrate activities and resources/assets within the system of global specialization and co—specialization. They also reflect the firm’s efforts to create/shape the market in ways that enable value to be created and captured.”

Clayton Christensen (2003. Pg 183 - 184) provided another perspective to the identification process by opening a door to a core competency investigation that adds strength to the core competency concept through the identification of capabilities in his book The Innovator’s Dilemma. Christensen (2003) is known for his research on disruptive technologies. “His work also has been cited extensively by scholars working in diverse disciplines and topic areas, including new product development (NPD), marketing, strategy, management, technology management, and so forth.” (Daneels, 2004, p.246)

Daneels(2004, p.249) summarizes the concept of disruptive technology as “a technology that changes the bases of competition by changing the performance metrics along which firms compete.” However, the research in this paper is not as concerned with Christensen’s work on disruptive technologies, but is more concerned with an element found in his research concerning capabilities and core competencies. It was during his research on this field of work that Christensen proposed using a framework in order to identify competencies through a better understanding of capabilities.

Christensen refers to his framework as the RPV framework. He used it to come to a conclusion and explain an observation from his research that “companies that succeeded in addressing disruptive technology were those that created independent organizations whose size matched the size of the opportunity.” (Christensen, 2003, p.186)

Clayton Christensen (2003, p.186) divided an organization’s ability to accomplish a goal by defining 3 categories to investigate: resources, processes, and values. These categories are the foundation to determine whether a company is “competent or incompetent when confronted with a necessary change.” (Christensen, 2003, p.186) He also suggested that this framework should help to bring “greater precision to the core competency concept.” (Christensen, 2003, p.186)

One problem with Christensen’s framework that was not discussed by Christensen is that he did not provide any background to the creation of his framework. In his discussion of the framework he describes its benefits and how helpful it was in his research, but without any background, it does present some difficulty in building support for the framework. But, despite that problem, the framework has been further studied with a call for further research. For example, another researcher has pointed promise in this framework. Daneels offers this opinion about Christensen’s RPV framework (Daneels, 2004, p.252):
“However, the most promising area for research would be to provide data specifying resources, processes, and values (called RPV by Christensen in a chapter added in the new edition of the book). A possible research question might be how the resources, processes, and values of incumbents that succeed versus fail compare.”

This research question offers more support for the research being conducted in this paper.\n
1.4 - Research Question

The researcher believes that Christensen’s capabilities-based framework could be useful in adding knowledge to the field of core competencies, specifically in terms of identification. Working with the original idea of the core competency as offered by Prahalad (1990), the suggested research questions as proposed by Ljungquist (2007) and Daneels (2004), and the framework developed by Christensen (2003), the following research question is presented as the foundation for this paper:

- How to identify core competencies in a knowledge-based context using a capabilities-based framework?

A continuing discussion of the theory supporting this research is presented in the following chapter.
Chapter 2 — Theory

2.1 — RPV Framework

Clayton Christensen (2003, p.186) acknowledges a problem of identifying core competencies as the concept of core competencies is “sufficiently vague that some supposed competence can be cited in support of a bewildering variety of innovation proposals.”

As discussed in the previous chapter, “competitive advantage is achieved through innovation.” (Porter, 1990, p.74) Following this logic, the RPV framework leads to the capabilities which support an organization in its ability to develop core competencies which then lead to competitive advantages.

![Figure 2.1: RPV Framework (Christensen, 2003, pp.183-84)](image)

Christensen notes two different capabilities that may arise from the RPV framework. One being a “technical capability that reflects a team-based capacity to mobilize resources for particular productive activities, and, on the other hand, an (integrative) competence that reflect a high-order managerial capacity to mobilize, harmonize, and develop a diverse set of (tradable) resources and capabilities to create value and competitive advantage at the system level. (Christensen, 2006, p.187) It is from either of these capabilities that a company may develop a core competency.

The remaining sub-chapters are divided into 3 sections. The three sections relate to Christensen’s RPV framework: resources, processes, and values. Through these three sections
various theories that connect to the three categories will be explored. The decision behind this division follows the idea that the RPV framework can help categorize the capabilities of an organization to help identify core competencies which in turn help an organization achieve competitive advantages. Thusly, each category should be reviewed for clarity.

2.1.1 - Resources

Christensen (2003, p.186) describes resources as the “most visible of the factors that contribute to what an organization can and cannot do. Resources include people, equipment, technology, product designs, brands, information, cash, and relationships with suppliers, distributors, and customers.” The resource of note in this research is that of people. As a result, an important concept to discuss is the idea of the knowledge worker.

Peter Drucker explores the importance of the knowledge worker. Drucker (1999) states that, “knowledge workers are rapidly becoming the largest single group in the work of every developed country.” As the workers in the case studies of this research are knowledge workers, this concept will be explored further.

Drucker (1999, pp.83-84) points out six major factors determine knowledge-worker productivity:

- What is the task?
- Responsibility lies on the worker and they have to manage themselves
- Continuing innovation has to be part of the task
- Continuous learning and teaching are required of the knowledge worker
- Quality and quantity are equally important
- Knowledge workers must be seen as an asset and not as a cost

Understanding and applying the factors stated above, in theory, should help the productivity of an organization that utilizes knowledge workers. Improved productivity would increase the chance for improved capabilities.

Knowledge workers differ from manual workers in that in knowledge work the task does not program the worker. (Drucker, 1999, p.85) If you follow this concept then some personal authority will need to be given to the knowledge worker in order for them to conduct their own work. Where do these workers find the motivation to proceed with their tasks? Drucker suggests trying to understand the motivations of volunteers. “Volunteers, we know, have to get more satisfaction from their work than paid employees precisely because they do not get a
paycheck. They need, above all, challenge. They need to know the organization's mission and to believe in it. They need continuous training. They need to see results.” (Drucker, 2001, p.60)

McGregor (1957, p.352) points out that the education of the knowledge worker for the benefit of the company is the, “responsibility of management to make it possible for people to recognize and develop these human characteristics (motivation, potential for development, and capacity for assuming responsibility) for themselves.” The key characteristic that the researcher is concerned about is the one for the potential of development. The more a team can develop the more opportunities there are to create innovations.

2.1.2 - Processes

Christensen (2003) defines processes when he stated, “organizations create value as employees transform inputs of resource-people, equipment technology, product designs, brands, information, energy, and cash-into products and services of greater worth. The patterns of interaction, coordination, communication, and decision-making through which they accomplish these transformations are processes.” Christensen also notes an inherent problem with processes. “The very mechanisms through which organizations create value are intrinsically inimical to change.” (Christensen, 2003, p.187) The idea is that processes are designed to complete very specific tasks, but when a company is faced with any kind of change then those same processes are not designed to handle the newly created task. A company that can manage its process well will be able to improve its chances of creating capabilities that lead to core competencies. But, how does a company manage its processes in a flexible manner?

McGregor gives a piece of the puzzle. “The essential task of management is to arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals best by directing their own efforts towards organizational objectives.” (McGregor, 1957, p.352) Workers with the knowledge to direct their own work and to arrange for new processes will be more flexible to handle changes and in turn more ready to seek and seize opportunities.

McGregor (1957, p.353) also suggests some steps for a company to move in the right direction through decentralization which “allows employees a degree of freedom to direct their own activities, to assume responsibility, and to satisfy their egoistic needs.” And Hammer expands on this when he discusses his concept of reengineering. “Most of all, though, reengineering has changed the perspective of business leaders. No longer do executives see their organizations as sets of discrete units with well-defined boundaries. Instead, they see them as flexible groupings of intertwined work and information flows that cut horizontally across the business, ending at points of contact with customers (Hammer, 1999, p.108). Hammer also discusses the importance of the actual physical location of units in order to work efficiently.
“Because processes cut across those vertical divisions, process workers need to be drawn from them into a new location where they can work as a team.” (Hammer, 1999, p.108) With units closely working together, sharing information, and focusing their energies to satisfy the customer a company can expect to establish more capabilities that lead to core competencies.

Prahalad (1998, n. pag.) also added more support for the importance of processes supporting capabilities when he said, “Process and behavioral learning are as much a requirement as the analytical or scientific capabilities of individuals. The concepts of a team and a family group are embedded in the framework of competence. Therefore, processes that improve the ability of teams to develop special skills are critical.”

2.1.3 - Values

The final piece of the Christensen’s RPV framework concerns values. Christensen (2003, p.189) begins by defining values as “the criteria by which decisions about priorities are made.” However, he expands on this definition to define it within the RPV framework. “An organization’s values are the standards by which employees make prioritization decisions – by which they judge whether an order is attractive or unattractive; whether a customer is more important or less important; whether an idea for a new product is attractive or marginal; and so.” (Christensen, 2003, p.189) The values of an organization are another way of determining if a company is capable of achieving core competencies.

It is important that leadership communicate these values throughout the company in order for all levels of the organization to function more efficiently. While discussing McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y concept of human relations in an organization, Carson (2005, p.458) stated that a Theory Y organization would have “substantial cooperative teamwork present throughout the organization. Decisions are made throughout the organization, and with consideration and awareness of the problems of lower level employees.”

Drucker (2001) discusses values in the following quote:

As a result, decisions affecting the entire business and its capacity to perform are made at all levels of the organization, even fairly low ones. Risk-taking decisions—what to do and what not to do; what to continue work on and what to abandon; what products, markets, and technologies to pursue with energy and what markets, products, and technologies to ignore—are in the reality of today’s business enterprise made every day by a host of people of subordinate rank, very often by people without traditional managerial title or position, e.g., research scientists, design engineers, product planners, and tax accountants. (Drucker, 2001, p.17)
It is this kind of leadership that delivers its organizations’ values and empowers those at all levels to ensure that those values are being held will be flexible enough to handle innovation and change.

2.2 — Summary

Weaving together the 3 pillars of the RPV framework, Christensen (2003, p.192) explained how it benefited him when examining why different disk drive making companies performed better during periods of new innovation. His research indicated that larger companies, while having the adequate resources, did not have the right processes in place nor the values to generate new processes to adapt to innovation. It was actually the smaller companies that tended to have the adequate resources, processes, and values in place to succeed. More precisely, he stated that, “the organizations developed a capability for doing these things, which resided in their processes. Sustaining technology investments also fit the values of the leading companies, in that they promised higher margins from better products sold to their leading-edge customers.” (Christensen, 2003, p.192)

Christensen describes how the three pillars support each other. Without one, the other two will fail to support the development of new capabilities. For example, a company may have the proper values and processes in place to develop new innovations, but lack the resources to initiate them. Perhaps, another company may have the resources and processes available, but the company lacks the values to lead towards any new innovations. Without having the capability to innovate, companies will be at disadvantage to develop core competencies and in turn gain competitive advantages over their rivals.

Through the next chapter a methodology will be presented in order to present how the research will be conducted, collected, and analyzed.
Chapter 3 — Methodology

3.1 - Research Method

For any researcher there are a plethora of methods available, but deciding the right depends on several factors. Several different research methods were reviewed in order to find the one that best suited the goals of this research. The following is a discussion of that review.

3.1.1 – Selecting a Research Method

The researcher began by determining if the research paper deemed a quantitative or a qualitative approach. “Although in many instances the decision as to whether one should use a quantitative or qualitative research strategy is not clear-cut, it is largely determined by the goal of the research and nature of the research problem.” (Beuckelaer and Wagner, 2007, p.213) Both methods have several differences which Bazeley (2004) summarized as:

Qualitative and quantitative approaches have been distinguished (and thereby defined) on the basis of the type of data used (textual or numeric; structured or unstructured), the logic employed (inductive or deductive), the type of investigation (exploratory or confirmatory), the method of analysis (interpretive or statistical), the approach to explanation (variance theory or process theory), and for some, on the basis of the presumed underlying paradigm (positivist or interpretive/critical; rationalistic or naturalistic). Pg 142 (Bazeley, 2004)

Using the above notions, the researcher examined the nature of the research, the access to information, and the goal of the research. Echambadi (2006, p.1816) suggests that, “it is important for researchers to think creatively about what the best tool or combination of tools for a research question may be so as to address it in an optimal manner.” In this case, as the research is exploring a framework, has limited access to statistical information, and the logic being employed is inductive in reasoning, the researcher saw the qualitative research method as the path that suited this paper.

It should be noted that the qualitative research method has been criticized. “Unfortunately, one of the difficulties faced by qualitative research over the years has been the impression that new ideas derived from qualitative inquiry are unsystematic, thus resulting in many qualitative researchers encountering difficulties in the journal review process”. (Sutton, 1993 cited in Shah and Corley, 2006, p.1824) However, the same researcher also counters with, “While many have claimed a bias against qualitative research in our field’s top journals (a reality that certainly existed in the past), most top journal editors have shown an increased interest in high-quality qualitative research.” (Shah and Corley, 2006, p.1829)
For clarity, the researcher provides the following definition of qualitative methods, “Qualitative methods are a set of data collection and analysis techniques that can be used to provide description, build theory and to test theory” (Van Maanen, 1979 cited in Shah and Corley, 2006, p.182) With that as a foundation, the researcher examined several qualitative research methods, but eliminated them each for various reasons. For example, any qualitative research methods that required immersion into the research being studied, including participant observation and ethnographic research methods were eliminated due to the researcher’s scheduling conflicts. The content-analysis research method was eliminated as it requires the coding of documents and the researcher felt that the total information at hand did not support the coding process, in terms of quantity. Other qualitative research methods that were considered, but also eliminated were methods requiring the gathering of individuals. These include the Delphi and focus group methods. Unfortunately, the researcher could not arrange the gathering individuals due to scheduling restraints.

After narrowing the field, the researcher decided upon a case study research method. As defined by Yin (2003), a case study can be defined as follows:

“A case study is an empirical inquiry that:

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident
- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.” (Yin, 2003, pp.13-14)

These criteria fit the reality of the situation. The researcher had access to two business entities and is trying to observe a phenomenon all of which is being supported by prior research.

In his book, Case Study Research; Design and Methods, Yin (2003, p.7) explains that, “the first and most important condition for differentiating among various research strategies is to identify the type of research question being asked.” As the researcher is seeking to identify unknown variables and to understand how these unknown variables develop in particular environments, research strategies that are exploratory in nature will be implemented. These exploratory research strategies will be used to determine the capabilities that exist in the
businesses being investigated and to then determine if any core competencies exist within those capabilities.

Yin (2003, p.2) states that, “the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena.” Trying to understand how managers, supervisors, general staff, and customers all interact to achieve desired results also support using a case study in this situation.

This project will be a multiple-case study. “As indicated by Dubois and Araujo (2007), the comparative multiple case study logic relies on identifying causal relationships within particular cases, and an examination of the extent to which these relationships are generalizable to other cases.” (Beuckelaer and Wagner, 2007, p.214) Multiple cases were chosen for the purposes of comparing the results found in each case. Having multiple cases to work with will provide more results to examine and will also provide the opportunity to see if the results from one case can be replicated in the other case. “Analytic conclusions independently arising from two cases, as with two experiments, will be more powerful than those coming from a single case (or experiment) alone.” (Yin, 2003, p.53) With this rationale, ideally, more cases would be beneficial, but the researcher is currently confined to two case studies for the sole reason that the researcher has been unable to acquire approval to conduct research from any other business.

Arguments have been made that case studies are not scientific because they cannot be replicated (Garson, 2008). However, Garson (2008) answers these by stating that:

“If the case researcher has developed and tested a model of hypothesized relationships, then a future case researcher can replicate the initial case study simply by selecting cases on the basis of the same theories, then testing the theories through pattern matching. If pattern matching fails to uphold theories supported by the first case researcher, the second case researcher may engage in explanation building, as discussed above, to put forward a new model.” (Garson, 2008)

His statement provides a path to validate or invalidate any case study through follow-up research. The researcher believes he has offered a re-testable framework of research which allows others to build support or to offer dissent from their testing of the theory.
3.1.2 – Data Collection

Data will be collected primarily through interviews. One reason for using interviews is tradition. “The use of each of these techniques – particularly observation and interviews – is common in management research.” (Shah and Corley, 2006, p.1826) Another reason is that the researcher was given full access to conduct interviews with any staff members.

Shah and Corley (2006, p.1828) states that, “Interviewing presumes that one can understand how the world is known by asking informants to answer open-ended (but structured) questions about their experiences.” With that presumption, the interviews were constructed and administered to the employees of both businesses.

All interviews were made to be open-ended to encourage fruitful discussions about general operations in order to help identify the core competencies of these 2 organizations. More specifically, the questions all were written with the aim of trying to elicit information about the three pillars from the RPV framework; resources, processes, and values. A complete list of questions with an explanation of how they are relevant is listed in the appendix A of this paper.

For the sake of trustworthiness, all interviews were recorded and kept on file. Any citations in the paper were cited by the interviewees name along with the date of the interview. Any interviews cited are referenced in the Works Cited and a full interviewee list is provided in appendix B along with a description of why they were selected for interviewing.

3.1.3 – Analysis Method

Yin (2003, p.109) describes a difficulty with analysis methods for case studies when he stated, “The analysis of case study evidence is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies.” Yin (2003, pp.111 - 115) offers three strategies to assist in case study analysis:

- “Relying on theoretical propositions: following the theoretical propositions that led to my case study.”
- “Thinking about rival explanations: define and test rival explanations.”
- “Developing a case description: develop a descriptive framework for organizing the case study.” (Yin, 2003, pp.111 - 115)
As part of the purpose of this paper is to explore an already proposed theory, the researcher was led to use the first strategy suggested; to rely on the theoretical propositions that are guiding my case studies. That being the RPV framework and the supporting theory described in Chapter 2.

Through data collection in the form of interviews, the capabilities of the schools were analyzed. Christensen (2003) lays out the following to examine whether a company is capable of completing any given task by using the following 3 categories to create a framework:

- Resources: this “includes people, equipment, technology, product designs, brands, information, cash, and relationships with suppliers, distributors, and customers.”
- Processes: “the patterns of interaction, coordination, communication, and decision-making through which they accomplish these transformations”
- Values: “the criteria by which decisions about priorities are made.” (Christensen, 2003, pp.186-88)

Christensen (2003, pp.192-93) states, “Managers who face the need to change or innovate, therefore, need to do more than assign the right resource to the problem. They need to be sure that the organization in which those resources will be working is itself capable of succeeding - and in making that assessment managers must scrutinize whether the organization’s processes and values fit the problem.” This statement will be put into practice to help the researcher focus his findings. The researcher will be searching for capabilities that are intertwined with supporting resources, processes, and values.

As the researcher is comparing two case studies that are exploratory in nature, the researcher will be using a cross-case synthesis technique as suggested by Yin (2003, p.133). Yin offers several techniques to accompany various qualitative research methods such as pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, and logic models. However, those techniques lean towards explanatory, descriptive, or predictive research. Also, as Yin (2003, p.137) states that the cross-case synthesis “is directly analogous to cross-experiment interpretations, which also have no numeric properties when only a small number of experiments is available for analysis.” For this technique Yin (2003, p.134) offers this statement, “If there are large numbers or individual case studies available, the synthesis can incorporate quantitative techniques common to other research syntheses (e.g., Cooper & Hedges, 1994) or meta-analyses (e.g., Lipsey). However, if only a modest number of cases is available, alternative tactics are needed.”

The tactic for this analysis will be to extrapolate various capabilities from the interviews being conducted using the above guidelines and to demonstrate how they are supported by
resources, processes, and values. From those capabilities, core competencies of two knowledge-based businesses will be identified as defined by Prahalad and Hamel (1990). To summarize, they said a core competency would be difficult to imitate, create access to a many markets, and would create a perceived benefit to the customer (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). An example of a core competency that might be discovered at a school is the following example presented by Davies (2003):

“Thus, in a school, the teachers may have an above-the-surface skill in teaching the latest version of the national numeracy or literacy strategy, but would need extra training if a new initiative were brought in. Examples of core competencies or strategic capabilities would be a fundamental understanding of teaching and learning or an ability to work as a team that would allow the school to tackle new developments from its own resources over a long period of time rather than waiting for short-term inputs from the external world.” (Davies, 2003, p.309)

The data collected is discussed in chapter 5, which is dedicated to the cross-case analysis of both case studies.

3.2 - Case Study Selections

Part of the purpose of this research is to explore a framework at a knowledge-based organization. The researcher is currently located in South Korea and as such is limited to the companies found in the country. There is a large pool of such organization operating in South Korea, but the research will be focusing on English education schools. There are two reasons for focusing on English education schools as the knowledge-based organizations for this research. First, logic dictates that English academies tend to hire English speaking Koreans and foreigners to teach English which will make the research into these schools less difficult in terms of acquiring data. Another reason is from a personal standpoint; the researcher has been working in this field of English education for the last few years and feels his experience in this field can help with the research involved with this project.

Of the two case studies selected, the first school provides English education to all age levels and was founded in 2006. The school was selected for a few reasons. One, the school itself has taken an innovative approach to educating English as a second language students (ESL) by providing students with a week-long, camp-style, English immersion experience. As a result of functioning like a camp, the school is constantly in a recruiting mode. Their aim is to
recruit 300 students on a weekly basis, 50 weeks out of the year; which comes to about 15,000 students every year. In other words, they sell their educational (end) product to 15,000 customers every year. Second, the school has several other programs that are not connected to their camp, adding to their customer base. Third, the school has a staff of about 100 employees. The diversity of the staff is unusual in Korea, with about half of the staff consisting of foreigners. Furthermore, the company has taken an interesting approach and has made various management positions available to foreigners, again not a common practice in Korea. Also, in terms of student recruitment, number of programs, staff, and reputation has been growing steadily for the last 4 years.

The second school is a smaller academy, but like the first school has a foreign staff that represents almost half of the staff. This academy provides education to pre-school students to 8th graders with a total staff of 16 employees. Research is being pursued at this academy for the following reasons. This academy runs a common business model, thus may be more relatable to a wider audience. Also, this particular academy has been in operation for 9 years and in terms of the size of the business, has not grown too much. The school is not failing, but their growth is not spectacular. It also shares many of the same difficulties as the other school, but on a smaller scale.

Both schools have permitted access to interview any/all staff members. Some internal surveys and some financial information are being provided, as well. Unfortunately, the schools have not permitted any interviews with any customers. Also, one of case studies did not grant the authority to conduct surveys with either employees or customers.

3.3 - Limitations

3.3.1 – Validity

The researcher did have some concerns about the collection of data for this project. One concern is that of the size of the research pool. The researcher is appreciative of the granted access to the aforementioned schools, but if more time was available then the researcher would seek out a larger pool of businesses. Attempts were made to gain access to several other
businesses, but the owners were all wary of allowing a stranger in to see their organization’s inner workings.

Another concern of validity was that the researcher had very little access to any financial information. Nor was there any access to the customer. Both of these aspects would have provided more support to any results found in this research.

However, to counter these statements, it should be noted that the two case studies did provide enough information to analyze. And, along with the research methods being used, the researcher is confident of his results.

3.3.2 – Reliability

Another limitation was a language barrier. All Korean interviewees have an English background, but as English is not their native language the interviewees sometimes they did have trouble trying to initially express their points. This problem was overcome by the ability of the interviewees to work through their own difficulties, time, and by the interviewer’s Korean language ability.

Also something that is not really a limitation as it will not affect the results of my research, but nonetheless should be commented on. Although the researcher has access to a vast library of information, the researcher is under the assumption that there have been resources produced in South Korea that are specific to this topic and might be beneficial to this study. Unfortunately, most of that research is probably only available in the Korean language which would make it beyond my ability to interpret and analyze.

On a similar note, although there are works that discussed the RPV theory, the researcher was unable to find works, aside from Christensen’s own research, that researched and/or tested the RPV theory. This is either a failure of proper researching or there is a lack of research available on the RPV theory. The researcher is under the assumption that the problem is the latter and that this not really a limitation, but rather an opportunity to explore a theory.

3.3.3 – Trustworthiness

Another concern that may have affected the results is a cultural barrier. Korean managers are very concerned about their company’s reputation and any negative insight to that Korean business may be covered up so as not to expose a flaw in the company. Also, Koreans follow a
traditional Confucius life-style, thus many Koreans are reluctant to speak about their true feelings towards the actions of the company they work for or their supervisors. The researcher was concerned that these cultural barriers may create “sunny” results, when in fact the real results may be very negative. However, after conducting all of the interviews and hearing the responses, the researcher is confident that the interviewees gave honest and direct answers.

A final note is that all of the case study analysis was completed by the researcher, thus all interpretations were made by a single person. In retrospect, it would have been beneficial to seek out a partner as the option was made available. Not for the benefit of a shared workload, but for a supporting or dissenting perspective on the analysis of the data. However, a single perspective shouldn’t diminish the research found in this research. Beuckeler (2007, p.214) explains why when he said, “In contrast to quantitative research, comparative multiple case study research does rely on key principles of constructivism; i.e., reality is socially constructed and thus subjective.” As such, others are open to view the same research and come to different interpretations. Beuckeler (2007, p.214) elaborates further by saying, “Different case study researchers may interpret the same data differently even if they do not differ from one another in terms of their national background.” Shah and Corley (2006, p.1823) expanded on this by saying, “Interpretive research is based on the belief that a deeper understanding of a phenomenon is only possible through understanding the interpretations of that phenomenon from those experiencing it.” The researcher feels that his collection and analysis of the data as applied to the framework being explored will stand the test of authenticity through thoughtful, supportive, and objective interpretations.
Chapter 4 - Case Studies

4.1 - South Korea

As this research is being conducted in South Korea, a brief review of knowledge-based businesses in the context of this country will be discussed. South Korea is, to say the least, a dynamic country with a troubled history. In just the past 100 years, Korea was forcefully colonized by the Japanese, fought a civil war and in turn became a divided country. Today, according to the World Bank’s World Development Indicators (n.d.) South Korea can boast that, in terms of GDP, it ranks in the top 20 of developed countries. With this prosperity, South Koreans are investing a large portion of the incomes into private education. As of 2005, South Korea was the biggest private education spender of all of the country members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2010) It is this dedication to education that is leading this study. With such a large investment being made, private education businesses have sprouted up in large numbers. As of 2008, there were over 70,000 private academies open for elementary to high school students. (Gwang-Lip, 2009) Compare that with the 28,000 located in the United States, which has a population of six times that of South Korea, as cited by the Data 360.org. (2010) With greater numbers of competitors, it becomes more difficult for organizations to gain a competitive advantage.

As of 2009, according to the World Bank (2010), South Korea is the 15th largest economy in the world and it lies geographically between China and Japan, the second and third largest economies. With 1/20 the population of China and 1/3 the population of Japan and few natural resources to export, South Korea depends on the strength of its human capital to succeed in the world. Perhaps, this is another reason why the country is strongly educationally motivated. This plethora of academies has led to the copying of business models and to the innovation of new business models.

The research found in this report used 2 similar but different business models. The following 2 sections will provide an overview of each school.

4.2 - Case Study 1: Incheon English Village

Incheon English Village, a school located in the city of Incheon (population 2,700,000), is a subsidiary of Global-Edu, Inc. Incheon English Village was established in 2006 under the supervision of the CEO, Dr. Lee. The school originally opened by winning a contract from the
city to run a 5-day camp on a weekly basis for 200 students, totaling almost 10,000 students annually. From those beginnings, the school has expanded its weekly enrollment to 300 students, effectively adding 4,900 students to the total yearly student enrollment. To accomplish this task of cycling through new students every week, the school employs 40 native-English teachers, 30 Korean teachers, and other staff members in various support positions from marketing to human resources.

In addition, it has continually added new programs. For example, a recent program is the International English School (IES). IES currently enrolls 203 elementary students using 13 foreign teachers, 11 Korean teachers, 1 coordinator, 1 head teacher, 1 assistant director, and all supervised by the Director of Education. This IES program is of particular interest as it shares many similarities with the second case study in terms of size and direction.

Although there are some similarities, there are big differences, for example the time frame for enrollment is handled monthly at the second case study and students visit the school daily, however the IES program is a Saturday program where the students study from 3pm to 6pm. As the program is a weekly one-day program, ICEV is able to efficiently utilize its existing corp of teachers to work in this program by offering overtime and by manipulating the weekly schedule to free-up some time for the IES managers.

To manage this school the following the school has evolved to the following organizational chart:

![Organization Chart](image)

Figure 4.1: ICEV organizational chart (Anon., 2010)
Each department is headed by a director and supported with 1 to 2 assistant directors. The Education Division gets further management support with the addition of head teachers. As most of the interviews were conducted with the Education Division, the following chart displaying the Education division’s arrangement is presented:

![Organizational Chart](image)

Figure 4.2: ICEV Educational Division organizational chart

### 4.3 - Case Study 2: Wonderland

Wonderland is an educational academy franchise found throughout South Korea, franchised by Edupia. The Wonderland in this report is found in Cheongju, South Korea. Cheongju is a mid-sized city with a population of over 700,000 citizens. It’s driving economic force is a local semi-conductor business. The city has been growing creating a larger pool of customers for local businesses. For the purposes of this report, Wonderland will refer to the academy visited by the researcher in Cheongju.

Wonderland opened in 2000, and unfortunately, little can be reported about the first 3 years of the business because in the first 4 years ownership changed hands 5 times, finally resting in the hands of Mr. Lee Heon Jeong. When Mr. Lee purchased Wonderland in 2004, he became the 5th owner of a severely underperforming school. In his first year, Wonderland only had 40 students, that number doubled by the time he started his second year.

Wonderland saw some expansion in its student enrollment over the first few years of Mr. Lee’s ownership, but has recently seen kindergarten enrollment numbers plateau, but elementary enrollment numbers continue to increase.
The enrollment over the years are reflected in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>130</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
<td><strong>195</strong></td>
<td><strong>195</strong></td>
<td><strong>242</strong></td>
<td><strong>285</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.3: Wonderland enrollment numbers 2004 – 2010

Wonderland currently employs 5 native-English speaking teachers, 7 Korean teachers, 1 Korean-American, and is owned and managed by Mr. Lee. The management team is organized in the following way:

Figure 4.4: Wonderland organizational chart
4.4 - Case Study Summary

These two schools found in these two case studies both share some similarities. They are seeking the same kind of clientele; parents who want to help their students improve their children’s English speaking ability. They both focus on younger students. They are both seeking to grow and expand their operations. They both employ a diverse staff in a cultural sense. However, are the comparisons just in their appearances and goals, or do they also appear in their capabilities, and to what extent? These will be explored in the next chapter.

A benefit of having 2 private education businesses of different size and varying business models should bring to light and help support any common capabilities between the 2 schools. Observing the varying capabilities will help the researcher identify potential core competencies.

The following chapter contains a cross-analysis of both case studies. Through interviews and observations, the researcher has listed several capabilities that are possessed by one or both of the case studies. The analysis will highlight how resources, processes, and values all support each other in the existing capabilities.
Chapter 5 - Cross-Case Analysis

The following cross-analysis is from over eight hours of recorded interviews and from the observations of the researcher after visiting both schools.

The sections are divided between the 3 categories of the RPV framework; Section 5.1 – resources, 5.2 – processes, and 5.3 – values. Through these 3 sections the data is discussed and analyzed in relation to the RPV framework and related theories. In the summary, the analysis is summarized in order to present the capabilities identified in each case study.

Each sub-section representing an RPV category will contain various capabilities held by one school or shared by both schools. Although, those capabilities lend themselves to one category it will be demonstrated that they are all supported by the other categories. The division is for organization of the analysis, to focus the results, and to analyze the data.

5.1 - Resource Utilization and Investment

The primary resource being discussed in the research is that of the knowledge-worker. Both schools employ native-Korean teachers and foreign-English speaking teachers. Both companies have invested capital to bring foreign teachers to Korea. Where they diverge is how they utilize these investments. Wonderland uses foreign teachers primarily for the purpose of teaching and as a symbol of the quality of education they can offer their students. ICEV does the same, but they also use their teachers for marketing, managerial, and developmental purposes. If education businesses only view their teachers as knowledge dispensers, then they may be failing to gain an advantage over their competitors.

From the interviews, several capabilities that focus on utilizing knowledge workers as a resource are presented in section 5.1. They include program and curriculum development, teacher training, and internal mobility. To be clear, these capabilities involve all three categories, but they all revolve around knowledge worker resource utilization.
5.1.1 - Program & Curriculum Development

Both schools are responsible for delivering educational programs to their customers. Private schools have a difficult task in that they must both produce programs (end products) that are interesting to their students and give the perception of quality to the parents. A single product must satisfy two wildly different perspectives.

Discussing program development with the management of both schools, it can be shown that the 2 schools have 2 very different methods of product acquisition. The processes in place began to show the capabilities of the 2 schools.

Of the programs found at each school, the managers of both schools are responsible for supplying the end product to the customers. However, between the 2 schools, ICEV has the capability to produce all of its programs and curriculums in-house. Wonderland must rely on a 3rd party to acquire its product.

Kelly Oh (Oh, October 15, 2010), Assistant Director at ICEV stated in an interview that, “When we need to develop our...curriculum they [management] kind of help me make a big committee for designing the curriculum then they kind of pay for the teachers to develop which makes my job much easier” Kelly talks about the school’s support for the development of in-house curriculum development. They support development by allotting more time on the schedule to the curriculum development team and through different kinds of compensation for the teachers. In a cost-control effort, instead of paying for overtime during curriculum development periods, the school offers comp days that the teachers may use as personal or vacation days at a later period. This flexibility to offer different forms of compensation allows the school to effectively use the creativity found in its pool of teachers it has hired. This demonstrates how ICEV has the capability to produce its own programs and curriculums in-house through using its labor resources beyond the traditional role of teaching.

ICEV will update its programs almost annually, where as Wonderland limits its program re-development to a single program every year. The programs are not changed all at once due to a belief by management that it would be risky to do so, even if the curriculum is found to be lacking by the staff. No programs or curriculum are developed in-house.

Thus it must rely on outside companies for its curriculum. This curriculum may appear to fit the bill in the ordering process, but when actually implemented is found to be ineffective. The purchasing of programs and curriculum is a common practice.
Due to scheduling restraints, Wonderland lacks the time to properly hunt for the right curriculum. Once the curriculum is purchased, it is purchased for the year. They do not have the process in place to correct their course mid-year and are forced to work with curriculum they may find to unsatisfactory.

Most academies rely on outsourcing their own program and curriculum development by purchasing pre-fabricated programs and curriculum because they lack the labor resources to develop their own curriculum. Moreover, they also lack the processes and values to achieve this capability. Having the capability to develop its own tailored curriculum allows ICEV to have more control of its end product, the educational program. By being in control, they have the choice to update, upgrade, or discard any or all of their programs.

5.1.2 - Teacher Training and Development

One of the advantages that Wonderland shares with ICEV is having foreigner teachers working at the school. Just being able to say that you have a foreign teacher working at your school is enough to draw parents to the school. However, what the companies do with their foreign teachers shows some contrast between the 2 companies.

Drucker (2001, p.89) explained that, “continuous learning and teaching are required of the knowledge worker” was a factor in determining knowledge-worker productivity. This concept of continuous training and development is not shared by both schools. Examining Wonderland, basic training practices are almost non-existent. This appears to be a common problem amongst Korean academies. Many academies inherently do not have the proper skills to conduct training. Furthermore, teachers arrival dates are arranged to coincide with the departure of previous teachers.

This can be a problem for incoming teachers. There are few requirements for foreigners to teach in South Korea; be a native-English speaker, have a college degree, and have no criminal record. Easy entry into the position combined with the high demand for foreign teachers, results in many people being hired with no teaching experience, especially in the field of English as a second language teaching.

In addition to not having any process set up for new hire training Wonderland also does not have any kind of professional development. Here is another difference between the two company’s capabilities. ICEV and Wonderland both fill their teachers’ schedules so that they only have an hour of non-teaching time a day. However, ICEV arranges their schedule to fit
in workshops to their schedule. Here is a good example of the values in place at ICEV to maintain processes that invest in resources, in this case labor hours,

A week long training program is implemented at ICEV. By having a process in place for new hires to be led through an organized training session, direction is provided that allows the new hires to further develop the program.

ICEV’s capability to run a training program has long lasting benefits. One, it creates a unity of understanding amongst the teachers. Two, it provides the teachers with a sense of organization. Third, it allows management to impart the company’s vision to the teachers. Finally, with a week of scheduled observation, the teachers are presented a framework of how to conduct themselves in the classrooms. These advantages are not found at Wonderland which appears to be from a lack of values and processes.

**5.1.3 - Internal Mobility**

Supporting internal mobility faces four barriers in South Korea. One barrier faced by the foreign teacher is that foreign teachers are usually not granted the authority to fill managerial positions in Korean companies. There is no law denying this or any kind of prejudicial reason, most of the time it is just a language barrier. The second barrier has cultural origins. Korean citizens live their lives under the guidance of traditional Confucius standards. This has an effect in every aspect of Korean society. Case in point, a strong determinant in granting promotions to managerial positions is the person’s age. This cultural barrier sometimes puts a less capable person in a supervisory position for the sake of cultural harmony. This barrier affects foreigners and Koreans alike. The third barrier lies in managers wanting to retain the subordinates that they invested their time and effort into. The final barrier is one of economics and applies to foreign teachers. Foreign teachers are paid a higher salary than Korean counterparts. From a bottom-line perspective it is difficult to justify paying a foreigner more money than a Korean to do the same job.

ICEV has taken strides to overcome these barriers. These values trickle down from upper management, allowing ICEV to ignore traditional Korean business practices of promoting by age, educational background, and/or seniority and instead focus on the abilities of the individual worker. The ability of a company to forgo its own country’s business culture in an effort to benefit the company may lead to a competitive advantage.

Jini Eum (Eum, October 15, 2010), ICEV Director of Education notes, “This company really values capability. So, even if someone is young if someone is capable then promotion. If
foreign teachers...are good managers and show good capability they get promoted. Promotion [based on capability] is strong and extreme in some case, in comparison to other Korean companies.” The company attempts to maintain a harmony between different people; Korean and foreign, old and young, newly employed and the long-term employee. The company also has a process in place to create internal mobility between divisions. This internal mobility offers a couple of benefits. One, it brings fresh ideas and thinking into different divisions without having to hire new staff. Second, it creates a more knowledgeable staff through cross-training.

This capability of to grant an internal promotion to an employee based on merit instead of age or nationality, allows for an advantage over competitors by having a larger pool of internal candidates with which to internally develop.

Having the capability to use its resources on promoting foreigners to managerial positions has added significance. Foreigners are usually paid a higher salary than their Korean counterparts. But, the benefits are clear to see, if your end product is in English education. It makes sense to have a native English speaker on the management team assisting with producing, observing, and developing English programs. Furthermore, having positions available to foreigners that go beyond teaching might inspire employee retention. Every foreigner in a managerial position has re-signed their contract for at least year, with the exception of one foreigner, as she has only been with the company for 3 months.

ICEV does not hire externally to fill its management positions. This practice of internal promotion offers incentive to teachers by offering career growth in a country where it is difficult to advance in a company as a foreigner.

Although, Wonderland does have the values and process in place to promote foreign teachers to management positions, it doesn’t utilize it as much as ICEV does. As a percentage, ICEV has more positions available for foreign teachers to be placed into. This offers a level of diversity that appears to benefit ICEV in terms of development and innovation.

5.2 - Process Management

Wonderland and ICEV deal with process management in different ways. For example, their internal communications are handled in drastically different ways. Wonderland, being a smaller operation, handles its communication through informal channels. ICEV continually attempts to improve its communication channels and appears that it must do so just because
of the more complicated organizational make up. Although, both companies are successful in communicating, they both share common problems.

Connected to the ways both companies communicate, the distribution of responsibilities throughout the 2 cases will reviewed. However, as will be discussed, ICEV’s necessary focus on better communications has allowed for new beneficial processes.

5.2.1 – Scheduled Communication

ICEV’s ability to focus on professional development is another capability that shows ICEV’s use of resources along with the values to ensure that they remain consistent and the processes in place to make sure they occur. Providing professional development allows ICEV to develop one of their most important resources, the teachers. In an industry without physical products to produce, teachers share many characteristics with core products. As core products are used to build end products, teachers are used to build programs and curriculum. This professional development arose from ICEV’s management having the resources and values available to allot time during consistently busy weeks to consistently schedule meetings.

Jini Eum (Eum, October 15, 2010), Director of Education of ICEV explains two interesting points. “Our meeting system is really efficient too. On Tuesday, during the management meeting, we have a meeting in the education division with the Headmaster and each team goes around the table and reports the important things that happened this week and will happen next week” They have weekly meetings with different staff at least twice a week. Jini also states that, “almost all of the managers participate in delivering the message” The management team has encouraged an innovative method of information delivery. In most companies a single manager is responsible for the distribution of information at a single meeting. But, ICEV started having several managers deliver information to the staff in a single meeting to show the unity of the management team.

Wonderland does not share this process of scheduled meetings. The current structure of the schedule does not allow for an all staff meeting. Wonderland management currently only conducts short meetings with supervisors only to handle problems. This lack of meetings between management and the staff does allow for teachers to be scheduled for more teaching time, but the researcher would also pose the question, “How does Wonderland disperse its values?” If the values are not being actively shared, then are they being expressed passively through example and informal communications?

If the values of Wonderland are not being actively expressed then they may not be being actively developed. This lack of organized development possibly reduces the capabilities of
Wonderland to become competent in different areas. However, there seemed to be a desire to initiate processes that would develop and maintain schedule communications. Wonderland seems to be developing the values that might lead them to new communication processes.¹

This value of seeking organization permeates through ICEV. For example, the main role of the Director of Education at ICEV is to oversee the education division of the school also working with all of the directors to facilitate the flow of information and strategies. The values of upper management trickle down to the middle managers. These values are held by various levels of management and are demonstrated by several of those managers initiating scheduled meetings through their own accord.

Although ICEV appears to have an advantage in terms of communication processes, ICEV faces its own internal communication problems. Currently, many of the departmental middle managers only have meetings with each other when problems arise, the same situation that appears at Wonderland. Scheduled meetings with each other would possibly reduce inter-department conflict by foreseeing and discussing conflicts before they become fires.

### 5.2.2 - Decentralization

McGregor (1957) suggested that decentralization provides a chance for workers to be more autonomous and thusly more self-directed. In this aspect the two companies vary. Wonderland and ICEV both have apparent potential advantages due to their respective sizes. Wonderland, having a smaller operation, should be able to make important decisions faster and adjust operations quickly. While ICEV, being a much larger operation, would appear to be handicapped by their size when it comes to the decision-making process and operational adjustments. However, ICEV’s ability to decentralize their operations has created many benefits for the company.

Looking over Wonderland’s organizational chart and discussing the distribution of responsibilities, it became apparent that the owner carries a heavy burden in terms of responsibilities.

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¹ A development that occurred after the completion of the analysis and was brought to the attention of the researcher by an employee of Wonderland is that, indeed, the management at Wonderland has just recently introduced processes to maintain scheduled meetings. The researcher finds this interesting as it illustrates the evolution of a capability within this framework. This capability appeared to have two of the three RPV categories present; it just needed a third to develop it. However, it is not being added to the body of this work as it occurred after the observations were made and the analysis completed.
His responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the supervision and hands-on:

- Hiring all new hires
- Assisting foreign teachers with their living conditions and everyday lives in a foreign country
- Handling the financials of the schools
- Gathering of new students
- Overall supervision of the daily operations of the school
- Assisting with program re-development

All of the responsibilities listed above have been distributed to various departments throughout ICEV. The distribution of responsibilities allows the CEO of ICEV, to able to oversee the general well-being of ICEV and ensure that his vision and values for the school are being embraced.

Having these responsibilities, the owner of Wonderland appears to have a better understanding of the daily workings of the school and puts him in a more hands-on position. It also allows him to share his values and to adjust processes quickly. Unfortunately, it also appears that the owner may also become mired by the trappings of daily work and may have difficulty in developing change.

ICEV’s operations are divided into several departments, including education, marketing, and human resources. This decentralized operation allows each department to focus on different aspects that affect the organization. As such, this capability seems to support several other capabilities. Due to its size, Wonderland doesn’t appear to have the proper amount of human resources to decentralize as much as ICEV, but there also appears to be room for a little decentralization and to reorganize the managerial responsibilities in order to relieve the owner of some of his tasks.

5.2.3 – Internal Hiring Process

Wonderland depends on an outsourced company for its hiring needs. The only in-house process occurs when the owner interviews potential candidates. The owner, who must contend with a language barrier, is the only person at Wonderland who communicates with candidates. Wonderland must rely heavily on the recruiting company for its hiring.

At ICEV, a human resources department is in operation and is responsible for hiring foreigners. Like Wonderland, the person in responsible is a Korean who has a language
barrier that he must contend with. However, ICEV has a 2-tier system for hiring. After the initial interview with a Korean human resources manager approved candidates are passed upward to the Headmaster, for a final interview. The human resources manager also has the benefit of having to fill a larger pool of positions. This experience has given him the ability to conduct hundreds of interviews and better assess candidates.

It would appear that the final decision would be better suited in the hands of a native English speaker who will be better able to detect the subtleties and nuances found in the language. Although Wonderland has the ability to accomplish this, they do not have the process in place to do so.

5.3 — Values through Leadership

5.3.1 — Effective Senior Management

South Korea is a country with strong Confucius traditions affecting the lives of all the people in South Korea. Koreans in leadership roles often lead without any form of dissent from employees at any level. This structure seems to have a strong influence on the dissemination of values. The leadership’s capability to develop and spread the values of the organization will be explored.

In September of 2010, the CEO of ICEV bestowed upon the Headmaster most of his responsibilities. This transition was an interesting development at ICEV. In the past 5 years, the school has had 5 headmasters. Despite having a headmaster to supervise and develop the programs at ICEV, the CEO was hands-on in the management of the school. With the transition of authority to the Headmaster, ICEV showed its continued effort towards creating an English school that incorporated foreigners in its decision-making process. However, to be clear, although the CEO is not involving himself in the daily management of the school, he is still abreast of the major concerns of the school.

A common observation about Korea from foreigners is the ability of Korean businesses to execute an idea rapidly and successfully, while executed with what appears to be little planning. Usually the company is “catering” to the wishes of the top decision maker. In the case of ICEV, this seems to be a positive attribute, but as a result of the capabilities of the senior management. When asked about the things that the ICEV does well to succeed, several employees highlighted the fact that ICEV executes change rapidly and usually from the guidance of senior management.
Other employees referred to the ability of ICEV to plan in the long-term. This long-term planning is coming from two directions. One, the CEO provides a vision for his school. As discussed earlier, he is freed from the daily operations of the school and thus is able to think more about the growth of the school and long-term plans. Another factor is the foreign element that is sitting in several management positions, including the headmaster position that do not manage in a Korean business style. This foreign element adds a level of diversity to the management of ICEV.

The owner of Wonderland is in a different situation than that of ICEV’s CEO. This is his 6th year as owner and he has done a good job at growing the business. He credits part of his success to his origins as a social worker which has given him the ability to be a good counselor with the students. His hands-on approach may be more suitable, or necessary, for a smaller business like Wonderland, but it might also benefit him to find ways to free himself from task related activities to focus more on long term planning and development.

The Director of Education receives direction from two sources. The CEO guides the school in a general business direction while the headmaster guides the school towards its educational goals. However, it would appear that the headmaster and CEO’s responsibilities do overlap each other to some extent.

The idea of fusing Korean business culture with foreign business culture is not common in Korea. It shows how ICEV is actively seeking to practically apply the benefits of a diverse staff. Furthermore, this active delivering of direction and vision allows for the spreading of company values from top to bottom.

5.3.2 – Seeking Opportunities

Through many interviews at ICEV, a re-occurring theme arose in the form of the school seeking out new opportunities. This search seems to be incorporated into many processes and also seem to flow down from the management team.

ICEV seems to be proactive in its search for new opportunities. Stu Smith (October 15, 2010), ICEV Teacher, said in an interview, “One thing that is really going well here is the research...like we’ve researched the most popular class.” Stu has no managerial responsibilities as a teacher, he is on the bottom of the organizational chart. Yet, through his statement he expressed an understanding of the company’s values. ICEV’s values lead it to plan, research, and develop its programs with its customer in mind.

Reviewing Wonderland’s capability to seek opportunities uncovers a different method. Wonderland has started classes for middle school students to retain the business of current
students. The school is offering 3 free years of teaching for long-term students. The idea is that if parents know that Wonderland offers free classes to its long-term students then parents may be willing to keep their students enrolled at Wonderland. There is a hope that this will springboard into an expansion of the current academy into a new program focused at middle school students. This is a method that has been used before at Wonderland with little no success.

The problem with using this method for program growth lies not in the concept, but in the weak process used to see it through. In a traditional Korean style, Wonderland seems to have implemented an idea, but as voiced by the employees of the school, hasn’t set up any system to develop it. Again, this may just be a function of running a smaller business. Despite the reason, this difference between the two schools does provide an advantage to ICEV as they can more effectively develop programs through a more thoughtful and organized process.

5.3.3 – Initiating Change

ICEV has demonstrated a capability to initiate change, despite a cultural barrier and theoretical barrier. One example of change is that of incentive programs. For instance, foreigners are given a bonus at the end of their contract if they manage not to use any sick days. They have also tested incentive programs where teachers receive a bonus if students from their class re-appoint for a second session. These changes are relatively new to the company, but both ideas came from the bottom-up, but were still accepted and incorporated into policy.

Employees also pointed to a recent change in the supply ordering process. This change was suggested by assistant director who found a problem and procured a solution. The solution was accepted and implemented by upper management. The result is an easier ordering system that reduces confusion, receiving time, and cost through bulk ordering.

Several employees point out that the school will support new and creative ideas from any level on the organizational chart. This jumps a cultural barrier, because in Korean business culture accepting change does not always show a willingness to grow, but instead can be seen as acknowledging and taking blame for errors of the past.

In terms of a theoretical barrier, this represents a difficulty with accepting change as described by Christensen. As noted by Christensen (2003), companies set up processes in order to increase efficiency, thus any new process is hard to implement because the original process is too engrained in the company and thus the new process faces strong opposition as it disrupts the status quo.
Wonderland does have this capability to initiate change. It shares the same values as ICEV, but does not share the same processes or resource utilization. Although they are different they do work for Wonderland. The size of the companies appears to be a factor in the differences between how and where change initiated. Change initiation was observed at various levels of the organizational chart at ICEV, but they appeared to flow mainly from the top at Wonderland.

5.4 — Analysis Summary

Throughout the chapter several capabilities were presented. The table below serves as a quick reference showing the capabilities presented in relation to the RPV framework. The first column on the left holds the list of capabilities discussed in the chapter. The last 3 columns represent the 3 categories from the RPV framework. If a school demonstrated that it had either the resources, processes, or values to develop and maintain the capabilities from the first column then the that school’s name is placed in the appropriate column. For example, ICEV has the proper resources, processes, and values to develop programs and curriculum internally, while Wonderland has the proper resources, but lacks the processes and values to achieve this capability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capabilities</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program &amp; Curriculum Development</strong></td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Training &amp; Development</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Mobility</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheduled Communication</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decentralization</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Hiring Process</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
<td>ICEV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective Senior Management</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Seeking Opportunities**</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiating Change</strong></td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
<td>ICEV, Wonderland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.1: Identified capabilities in both case studies
All the capabilities listed were found to be held by ICEV. Whereas, Wonderland either lacked the resources, processes, or values to develop or sustain some of the capabilities found at ICEV. The following explains the above table more in more detail by listing the capability and reviewing the comparisons of the two case studies in relation to the RPV framework:

- **Program & Curriculum Development**
  - ICEV has the processes in place and is using its human resources to develop programs and curriculum internally which allows it to tailor its end products to the customer more efficiently and effectively.
  - Wonderland has the human resources but has no processes established nor is the school prioritizing its decision making in this direction. It must rely on established programs and curriculum.

- **Teacher Training & Development**
  - ICEV has the processes and values to initially educate and to continually educate its human resources.
  - Wonderland does not the values or processes in place to initially train or develop its human resources.

- **Internal Mobility**
  - ICEV has maintained this capability from its onset. Having the process and values in place to promote foreign teachers has brought diversity to the company that has brought many new ideas and changes.
  - Wonderland does have the values, processes, and resources to achieve this capability. However, diversity is limited as there are fewer positions available for foreigners.

- **Scheduled Communication**
  - ICEV has the values to prioritize regular scheduled meeting and a process in place to maintain them allowing them to communicate and organize development through their human resources.
  - Wonderland has the values in place, but does not have a process in place to gather its human resources for the purposes of communication.

- **Decentralization**
  - ICEV has the values to have a decentralized operation and the processes to keep them connected. They also have the human resources to run several departments which allows them to focus on different aspects of the organization.
- **Wonderland** is smaller in scale, but it seems to have the human resources to decentralize to small extent. But, it currently lacks any processes or values to develop the capability. However, even if it could achieve this capability, it may not benefit from this capability due to its size. A redistribution of responsibilities may be more in order.

- **Internal Hiring Process**
  - **ICEV** has this process as a result of the way it decentralized its operations. A better hiring process allows for the potential for higher quality teachers to be employed.
  - **Wonderland** has no internal hiring process. If it had the values in place to do so, they could utilize some of their workers to create this process.

- **Effective Senior Management**
  - **ICEV** again takes advantage of its decentralized operations to free their upper management from tasks that can be accomplished by middle managers allowing for an upper management team that can better evaluate, strategize, and develop.
  - **Wonderland** has the potential for this capability. It has an experienced leader in its owner and the desire to manage more effectively, but it lacks the processes to allow upper management to reflect on the operations effectively.

- **Seeking Opportunities**
  - **ICEV** is actively using its resources to seek out new opportunities. As a result of its decentralized operations, there is one specific department with the objective of growth. Several growth opportunities were initiated from several levels of the organizational chart.
  - **Wonderland** values for seeking opportunities stem primarily from the top. The owner sets forth the goals and does not utilize his workers in the development process but rather in the execution processes.

- **Initiating Change**
  - **ICEV** has several processes that support this capability. In this capability, it not just resource utilization, it’s the values that allow the resources the freedom to pursue change themselves.
  - **Wonderland** has this capability to initiates change. There is a priority to develop change and the processes in place, but they seem limited to the highest level of management.
Comparing their resources, Wonderland and ICEV both share a common beneficial resource, foreign teachers. However, a difference lies in the fact that ICEV uses its teachers beyond the traditional role of teacher and employs them for variety of things, including program and curriculum development, training, hiring, and managing. Unlike Wonderland, this resource seems to support the development of new processes.

When their processes are examined, again ICEV demonstrates several advantages. Processes seem to be actively developed, maintained, and cultivated at ICEV whether you look at their communication, hiring, or program development processes. Wonderland’s processes seem to be less formal and in turn less organized.

The use of these resources and the processes that arise from them seem to stem from the values found in upper management. There is a conscious decision to move beyond cultural barriers at ICEV that allows it to incorporate new ideas into its business. These new ideas support new processes and effectively use resources. Wonderland seems to want change and to develop more efficiently, but it does not demonstrate the development of effective processes and resource utilization.
Chapter 6 - Conclusion

This paper aimed to explore a capabilities-based framework to identify core competencies. The following two sections are divided to discuss the implications that arose from the research of using the framework and then the subsequent identification conclusions. The third section describes some ideas for further research.

6.1 - Implications

Focusing on the resources, processes, and values as described by Christensen to outline capabilities led this research. The framework was used to design an exploratory tool in the form of interview questions and to identify capabilities from those same interview questions. Each interview provided many points of interest, but the researcher was able to focus on the points that revolved around resources, processes, and values. This led to the decision as to whether or not to classify a point of interest as a possible capability.

While exploring the two case studies, several capabilities were uncovered applying the RPV framework that were and were not shared by both companies. The RPV framework provided a foundation in which to explore the capabilities of each case study which allowed the researcher to extrapolate two core competencies.

The two case studies represented two knowledge-based organizations that focused on producing a similar end product targeted at similar customers. However, a difference, that was not foreseen, appeared that may have affected the results of the capabilities identified. The difference is found in their size and general operations of both schools. ICEV’s were on such a scale that identifying capabilities was easier. For example, walking into the offices, the researcher could quickly visualize a decentralized operational team. Walking into Wonderland those delineations are not as apparent. ICEV’s larger operations seem to have developed capabilities that are not needed at Wonderland. On the other hand, the researcher would pose the question: are there capabilities that Wonderland possesses that ICEV does not? The researcher is assuming there might be some not identified as the school is successful in the city they are operating. With the more time, observation, and data collection perhaps more capabilities could have been identified at Wonderland.

Beyond the roots of the RPV framework, an interesting observation arose from the use of the framework in that the capabilities themselves seem to support each other. For example, maintaining scheduled communications with the teachers allows for decentralized departments to develop programs and their own resources.
The following is a chart showing how all of the capabilities that were identified in this research support each other:

![Capability Support Flowchart](image)

**Figure 6.1: Capability support flowchart**

Why do these capabilities seem to support each other? The researcher observed that several of the capabilities shared some of the same resources, processes, and values. It would make sense that they would be intertwined with each other if their roots are intertwined.

The flowchart helped the researcher to visualize the capabilities and how they functioned within the organization. Christensen's (2003, p.186) hope was that the RPV framework would add “greater precision to the core competence concept, by presenting a framework to help managers understand, when they are confronted with a necessary change, whether the organizations over which they preside are competent or incompetent of tackling the challenges that lie ahead.” The researcher believes that the research presented in this paper adds support to that concept.

The actual identification of the core competencies led to an observation about the RPV framework. A problem with the framework is that, although it does present a model to identify capabilities, it does not discuss how those capabilities translate into core competencies. As Christensen does not detail the jump from capabilities to a core competency, the researcher relied on previous definitions as described by Prahalad. To be clear, the RPV framework does not actually identify core competencies. However, it can be
used as a tool to extrapolate capabilities of a company and from those capabilities a core competency can be identified using other theories

6.2 - Identifying Core Competencies

To review, the main research question of this paper was:

- How to identify core competencies in a knowledge-based context using a capabilities-based framework?

Throughout the cross-analysis of this paper, several capabilities were listed and examined using the RPV framework as a tool. Reviewing those capabilities and applying the definition of a core competency as listed by Prahalad and Hamel, I believe two core competencies can be identified:

- **Program and curriculum development through in-house processes**

The core competency to create and update programs and supporting curriculum in-house to suit the needs of its customers provides a business with a tremendous competitive advantage over its competitors. It also allows ICEV to reach into new markets as it may develop a program for any situation. This core competency requires many resources, mainly personnel, making it difficult to emulate. In the case studies presented, ICEV has this core competency where as Wonderland lacks the resources to have the capability to achieve this core competency. Specifically, Wonderland lacks the personnel and expertise to accomplish this competency. This competency's strength lies in the resources available, but it also takes established communication processes and the values of the leadership team to reach this core competency.

- **Strong and diverse senior management that communicates the values of the company**

A strong and diverse senior management creates a competitive advantage as the organization benefits from the expertise, vision, and guidance of said leadership. When an organization is working under the same set of values the organization is more streamlined to meet their set goals. This is difficult to emulate as it requires a unique and diverse management team along with the processes in place to allow them to communicate their values top to bottom. This competency also allows access to new markets as it facilitates several capabilities that open the doors to new opportunities and growth. Again, in the case studies researched in this paper, ICEV has this advantage while Wonderland lacks it. Wonderland’s senior management is a
team of one without a business background and the school lacks the proper communication processes in order to deliver the values of the senior management. The strength of this competency lies in the values of the leadership, but also in the processes established to communicate and the leadership, which themselves are resources.

6.3 –Further research

One thing that that would be of interest to further explore that was not covered in the scope of this research is how economies of scale affect the development of core competencies. Many of the capabilities demonstrated by ICEV seemed to stem from its larger-sized operation. For example, its ability to develop in-house products lies in the fact that it must hire 4 times the staff that Wonderland must hire. I observed that within this larger sized staff lies a factor that leads to the capability to develop in-house products.

The researcher noted that almost all of the research on core competencies was conducted using technological companies as a foundation for research. I believe that more research should be conducted in industries where physical products are not being produced. For example, the core products in this research are teaching programs. These teaching programs do have physical components but are not the main selling point. Expanding research into other industries may shine a light on unexpected discoveries.

Finally, the researcher would like to see more general research done on the RPV framework. The researcher feels that the framework provided a tool in capability identification that might support other models that utilize capabilities in their identification process. In addition to more qualitative studies, a quantitative investigation would provide more clarity and support to this theory.
Appendix

A - Interview Questions

Listed below are the formal questions presented to the interviewees at ICEV and Wonderland. The list of questions may seem short, but, as the questions were open-ended, the interviewees often branched off to connecting issues which greatly added to the analysis of this research.

All of the questions were constructed with a particular RPV framework pillar in mind. However, although the questions were constructed in that fashion, the researcher found that the discussion often incorporated all three categories.

The following questions were written in order to explore capabilities starting from resources perspective:

- Can you describe your role here in the company? How is your position valued in relation to the company as a whole?

- How does this company support you as a worker? How does this company support change?

- What is something that this company does well to succeed? How are you connected to that thing

The following question was structured in order to try to investigate the capabilities of the organizations through a values perspective:

- How effective is management in this company? How effective are the policies? How are decisions decided upon?

The following questions were constructed to try to investigate the capabilities of the organizations through a process perspective:

- What do you think are the driving forces in the success of this organization?

- What kind of innovations have manifested here at this organization?
The final question was written for the sake of validity. The researcher wanted to illicit honest responses from the interviewees and also wanted to measure different interviewees statements to each other in order to seek out consistency from the responses.

- Do you see any areas of improvement that would help the company develop?

**B - Interviewees List**

The researchers aim in acquiring interviewees was to take a sampling from all levels of the organizational chart. Of course, management was important as they are the policy makers and leaders of the company. But, the researcher also wanted to get samplings from the bottom of the organizational chart. This was important as the researcher felt that this would demonstrate how well the values of the company were being distributed, give a more balanced understanding how well these resources were being utilized, and to get a different perspective on the processes in place.

The sampling size was greater at Incheon English Village as they were the larger of the two case studies and provided a larger pool from which to interview. The only other constraints in the number of interviewees were as a result of trying to interview these employees during working hours and the researchers own scheduling restraints. This sometimes made it difficult to arrange interviews with more individuals.

Below is a list of the interviewees (alphabetically) from Incheon English Village along with their job titles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choi, Russell</td>
<td>Human Resources Assistant Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eum, Jini</td>
<td>Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fryers, Jimmy</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hine, Nico</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Erena</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson, Charles</td>
<td>Headmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson, Kylie</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, Kelly</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode, Bill</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolish, Elise</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Stu</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A.1: Incheon English Village interviewee list
Below is a list of the interviewees (alphabetically) from Wonderland along with their job titles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cloete, Liz</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im, Rachel</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koh, Gayeon</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Jeong Heon</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras, Lumari</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Yu</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A.2: Wonderland interviewee list
Works Cited


