

A Comparative Analysis of EFL Students' Needs and Evaluation of English Curriculum: A Case Study from Korea*

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Given the important status of students as major stakeholders of the National English Curriculum, this study investigated specific needs of curriculum-takers for an English curriculum and compared the results with analyses of curriculum evaluation from curriculum-completers. We implemented a needs assessment survey targeting 68 elementary school students (current curriculum-takers) and an evaluation survey targeting 27 high school students (curriculum-completers) in Korean EFL context. Results showed similarities between students' needs and evaluation in terms of the ideal time for starting English education and time allotments. However, we found significant gaps between the two groups in several domains related to their specific goals of learning English. While the current curriculum-takers showed a high motivation to learn English for both instrumental purposes and integrative purposes, the curriculum-completers were strongly biased toward instrumental purposes. Our findings provide useful insight into curriculum development and improvement for seeking educational effectiveness in EFL settings. This study also provides helpful resources for conducting needs and evaluation analyses.

Key words: needs analysis, evaluation, English curriculum, Korean EFL context

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1. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum improvement is a crucial process for achieving a high quality of education. Curriculum developers are required to make constant attempts to revise curriculum design and promote their teaching plans to increase the effectiveness of education (Norris, 2006, 2009). The importance of curriculum development holds especially true for foreign language education where learning a foreign language poses great challenges for learners. Many Asian countries teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) have made continuous efforts to improve the English curriculum for fostering students' communicative language abilities (Butler, 2004). However, educators and administrators in those countries often encounter difficulties because curriculum design and enhancement involve considerably dynamic and convoluted processes that are determined by a multitude of factors, such as objectives, stakeholders' needs, their views towards language and language learning, socio-political considerations, and available resources (Watanabe, 2006). Such a complex nature of the curriculum enhancement process makes it difficult to make decisions about a number of important issues, for example, who should be involved, what area of the curriculum needs improvement, what kind of information is required, and how such information is gathered.

Among several factors that affect the process of English curriculum improvement, this study focuses on one of the most influential but largely understudied considerations, the "intended users" (Patton, 1997, p. 20). Intended users of a curriculum consist of a cross-section of stakeholders including the government, researchers, teachers, parents, and students (Harrop, 1999). However, it is often the case that the degree of participation in this process is imbalanced among various stakeholders (Elder, 2009). In Korea, for example, the English national curriculum improvement process almost always involves government, researchers, and teachers, but often excludes students, the pre-conceived target for the curriculum. As a consequence, students' needs and opinions about the curriculum have often been overlooked, leading to criticism on some materials and plans designed for teaching English in Korea as not reflecting the students' needs (e.g., Park, 2015).

In light of this issue, the current study aims to provide curriculum developers and EFL teachers with useful directions for assessing students' needs and evaluations on an English curriculum. For this purpose, we conducted a needs analysis and a post-evaluation analysis with Korean EFL students to investigate how students perceive and evaluate the English curriculum currently implemented in Korea. Main objectives of our study are two-fold: (a) identifying specific needs for the English curriculum from 6th grade elementary school students who are currently under the influence of the curriculum and (b) examining how their needs have been reflected throughout the curriculum practice by analyzing evaluation from 12th grade high school students who completed the curriculum. To the best of our

knowledge, no previous work has systematically compared EFL students' needs for an English curriculum with their evaluation on it. We expect that analyzing specific needs and evaluations from student groups at the two ends of the recipients of the curriculum will present a good reference point for advancing our understanding of the current English curriculum in Korea and improving the curriculum for the benefits of all stakeholders, particularly teachers and students. Our findings pertain foremost to the English education practice in Korea but may also be applicable to other EFL contexts.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Needs Analysis

A needs analysis in language classrooms refers to the systematic collection and analysis of information which identifies “general and specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and content in a language program” (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 156). Importantly, the information collated from a needs analysis helps determine what needs to be supplemented for curriculum development (Alderson & Scott, 1992; Coleman, 1992; Mackay & Bosquet, 1981; Palmer, 1992), for curriculum change or improvement (Snow & Brinton, 1988), and for material development. These resources can guide the curriculum developers and teachers in establishing and improving the specific goals and contents of the curriculum as well as helping them select tasks and activities appropriate to the established goals.

Despite the well-attested value of a needs analysis in curriculum development and enhancement, it has received relatively little attention in the EFL context (Gardener & Winslow, 1983; Long, 2005; Richterich, 1983; Seedhouse, 1995; Watanabe, 2006; West, 1994); most needs analysis studies have focused on the context of English for specific purposes (Bosher & Smalkoski, 2002; Cameron, 1998; Cowling, 2007; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Jasso-Aguilar, 1999; So-mui & Mead, 2000) or on the context of English for academic purposes in an ESL classroom (Ferris, 1998). Moreover, few studies have targeted child language education (for needs analysis studies on adult language education in an EFL context, see Lee & Villacorta, 2017; Nam, 2005). The lack of research on children's needs in language classrooms may stem from the relatively short history of the English curriculum implemented in elementary schools, which had begun in 1997, and the recognition that children are not sufficiently mature to appreciate their own needs. However, children have been recently viewed as those who are “able to play an active role in the planning of/and participation in [educational practice]” (Broström, 2012, p. 1; see also Howell, 2018). In line with this view, we consider it important to identify specific

needs from child learners, which have not received much attention so far from curriculum researchers. To address this issue, we conducted a needs analysis with 6th-grade elementary school students in Korea, who had numerous opportunities to express their opinions through engagement in several decision-making processes in class and thus are considered an appropriate target group for a needs analysis.

2.2. Curriculum Evaluation

Brown (1989, 1995) defined a curriculum evaluation as a process in which all relevant information is systematically collected and analyzed with the aim of assessing the effectiveness of a curriculum and improving it under the context of the particular institutions. Similarly, Worthen and Sanders (1973) contented that a curriculum evaluation is a determination of “the worth of a program, product, procedure, or object, or the potential utility of alternative approaches designed to attain specified objectives” (p. 19). These defining properties implicate that analyzing participants’ evaluations can supplement a needs analysis for systematic and complete implementation of curriculum enhancement. In other words, once students’ needs are identified, an important step to follow is to examine the extent to which the currently implemented curriculum has met students’ needs. A proper evaluation of the curriculum helps connect all the curriculum elements including needs analysis, objectives, and curriculum materials (Brown, 1995). However, there is no research yet, to the best of our knowledge, analyzing both students’ needs and their evaluation in a complementary way. To address this research gap, we conducted a curriculum evaluation survey, in addition to the needs analysis, with 12th-grade high school students, who had already completed the National Common Basic curriculum of English in Korea. In this analysis, we focused on the high school students’ assessment of the curriculum with regard to its effectiveness in general and in specific components (e.g., objective, activity).

2.3. The National Common Basic Curriculum of English in Korea

Enforced in Korea since 1997, the National Common Basic Curriculum requires that English be taught for eight years from the 3rd grade in elementary school until the 10th grade in high school (Lee & Villacorta, 2017). When the mandatory English program is complete, the 11th and 12th graders are offered with a number of elective English courses that are tailored to students’ interests and needs, such as English I, English II, Reading Comprehension and English Writing, and English Conversation. Under the main goal of developing students’ communicative ability in English, the National Common Basic Curriculum of English specifies generalized knowledge required for students in the four

domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kim & Jeon, 2005; Ministry of Education of Korea, 2015a). For example, sets of generalized knowledge for speaking and writing are organized to involve communicative skills, such as abilities to use words, phrases, and sentences to express ideas for particular situations and purposes. Generalized knowledge sets for receptive skills such as listening and reading include abilities to understand a variety of linguistic units like sounds, words, sentences, and discourse information.

The English curriculum designates different class hours for each level. It requires that 3rd and 4th graders in elementary school learn English for 2 lesson hours per week, or 80 minutes in total, and 5th and 6th graders for 3 lesson hours per week, or 120 minutes in total (Yim, 2016). In middle school, approximately 3–4 lesson hours per week (135–180 minutes in total) are allocated to English classes for 7th to 9th graders, and 4.5–5 lesson hours per week (225–250 minutes in total) to 10th graders.

Regarding classroom activities, the curriculum allows teachers to select certain types from a list of tasks according to specific class objectives and contexts. These activities include pronunciation practice, rote memorization of vocabulary or sentences, writing after a model (e.g., word, sentence), listening to a dialogue in the textbook, watching a movie clip, reading a story either in or out of the textbook, writing a sentence or text, English-to-Korean translation, fill-in-the-blank activity, correction exercise, singing a song or a chant, roleplay, game, self-study, pair work, group work, presentation, exam, and so forth.

The current English curriculum in Korea has been designed with the ultimate aim of developing students' communicative competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is clearly stated that the curriculum is "learner-centered and aims to promote students' autonomy and creativity" (Ministry of Education, 2015b, p. 6). However, little is known about what students want to obtain from English education and how they evaluate the current English curriculum from their own perspectives. Investigating the students' needs, perceptions, and evaluation of the curriculum in this regard will serve as helpful resources for the curriculum designers and implementers to determine how the curriculum should be organized, extended, revised, and/or improved.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Questions

Given the discussion above, this study asks the following research questions:

- (1) What specific needs do current curriculum-takers (elementary-school students)

have for the current English curriculum in Korea?

- (2) How do curriculum-completers (high-school students) evaluate the current English curriculum?
- (3) What are the similarities and gaps between the perceived needs and the evaluation of the English curriculum?

We addressed these questions with a particular focus on eight key components for the curriculum development and improvement: (a) purposes of learning English, (b) necessity of English education, (c) starting point of English education, (d) time allotments, (e) expected difficulty of learning English at different school levels (i.e., middle school, high school), (f) domain, (g) generalized knowledge, and (h) activities. Most of these components (i.e., (a), (b), (c), (d), (f), (g), (h)) were selected based on the key constructs of the English curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2015a, 2015b); component (e) was included because there have been concerns regarding the continuity problem between elementary and secondary English education (e.g., Kim, 2014). Although these components are closely associated with the English curriculum, it remains less well understood how each of them affects students' perception and evaluation of the curriculum. Moreover, few studies have compared needs from the current curriculum-takers with the evaluation from the curriculum-completers. Therefore, understanding students' needs and evaluation of the key components of the English curriculum will provide a solid basis for policymakers, curriculum developers, and teachers to seek effective ways to promote the English curriculum development and improvement.

3.2. Participants

We recruited 68 elementary school students (ESS, 34 female) for the needs analysis survey and 27 high school students (HSS, 15 male and 12 female) for the evaluation survey from, respectively, Jongno in Seoul and Cheonan in South Korea. The elementary school students in the ESS group were 6th graders who had a month remaining before their graduation at the time of participation. They had completed half of the English curriculum (almost 4 years in elementary school) and were expected to receive an additional 4 years of the curriculum through regular English courses in middle and high schools. They had taken part in several decision-making processes in class, such as regular class conferences and group discussions on social issues (e.g., environment protection, human right), which ensures that they had experienced numerous opportunities to express their own ideas, providing a justification for our selection of these students as participants of the needs analysis survey (see also Broström, 2012; Howell, 2018). One participant in this group was excluded due to incomplete responses in the survey, leaving us with a total of 67 students

for the analysis.

The HSS group consisted of 12th graders who had already completed the English curriculum approximately 2 years ago at the point of the survey. Accordingly, they were considered as valid respondents to the evaluation survey. They were college-bound students who had finished the National College Scholastic Ability Test (NCSAT), a nationwide college entrance exam, and had two months remaining before graduation of the high school.

The two groups' language background and biographical information are summarized in Table 1, which were obtained from the items Q1 to Q7 of the needs analysis and evaluation surveys.

TABLE 1
Participants' Language Background Information

	ESS (<i>N</i> = 67)	HSS (<i>N</i> = 27)
Age (years)	12.99 (<i>SD</i> = 0.12)	16.89 (<i>SD</i> = 0.32)
Age of English onset (years)	7.15 (<i>SD</i> = 2.14)	8.52 (<i>SD</i> = 2.21)
Number of students learning English out of school	51 (76.12%)	13 (48.15%)
Hours of learning English out of school per week	6.92 (<i>SD</i> = 4.29)	6.96 (<i>SD</i> = 6.80)
Number of students self-studying English	33 (49.25%)	24 (88.89%)
Hours of self-studying English per week	4.32 (<i>SD</i> = 3.63)	6.52 (<i>SD</i> = 6.64)
Number of students having an experience in an English-speaking country	6 (8.96%)	0 (0%)
Response to the item "English is important to me" (on 4-point scale)	3.14 (<i>SD</i> = 0.83)	3.24 (<i>SD</i> = 0.83)
Response to the item "I like English language" (on 4-point scale)	2.70 (<i>SD</i> = 0.74)	2.74 (<i>SD</i> = 0.98)
Response to the item "Learning English is interesting" (on 4-point scale)	2.49 (<i>SD</i> = 0.73)	2.56 (<i>SD</i> = 0.85)
Response to the item "I am confident of my English" (on 4-point scale)	2.33 (<i>SD</i> = 0.69)	2.41 (<i>SD</i> = 0.75)

3.3. Materials

The surveys for the needs analysis and evaluation were developed following the basic procedures in Watanabe (2006). We maintained a learner-centered perspective throughout the material development process, taking into consideration cognitive and affective factors on the part of the students, such as their attitudes, learning wants, and learning expectations (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989; Kaewpet, 2009). For example, all survey items were written in Korean, the students' native language, to help students' understanding of the questions. Furthermore, when the terms used in the survey items were regarded as

technical or difficult to understand, especially for the ESS group, additional definitions or examples were provided in parentheses. For example, the term “intonation” was accompanied by the supplementary explanation “the sound changes produced by the rise and fall of the voice (e.g., rising intonation of a question).”

The survey materials were improved in a multi-step procedure through consultation with experts in English education and survey development. As a first step, four experienced teachers, two in elementary and two in high schools, provided feedback on the earlier version of the surveys. Based on their comments, some items were revised or replaced with new items. Following the initial stage of item selection, we finalized the survey materials by consulting a survey research expert for item selection and reformation. The whole list of items for the needs analysis and evaluation surveys can be found from the first author’s GitHub site (<https://github.com/Haerim-Hwang/Education>).

While the needs analysis and evaluation surveys contained basically the same contents of questions, the needs analysis survey focused more on what needs students have for the English curriculum, whereas the evaluation survey required respondents to evaluate the curriculum. Each survey contained 22 items aligned in three main parts. In the beginning part of the surveys, participants provided language background and biographical information (Q1–Q6) and then answered questions about their attitudes towards English, their own English proficiency, and their problem areas in English learning (Q7–Q9). The main part contained eight constructs, querying (a) purposes of learning English (Q10, which is a closed-response question consisting of 10 sub-items, and Q11, which is an open-ended question), (b) necessity of English education (Q12–Q13), (c) starting point of English education (Q14–Q15), (d) time allotments for English classes (Q16 consisting of 4 sub-items), (e) expected difficulty of learning English at different school levels (Q17 comprising 2 sub-items), (f) importance of the four domains of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) alongside grammar (Q18 comprising 5 sub-items), (g) importance of generalized knowledge associated with English learning (Q19 comprising 18 sub-items), and (h) English learning activities (Q20 comprising 21 sub-items). The last part of the surveys included two open-ended questions, asking about additional contents that need to be included in the English curriculum (Q21) and personal opinions about the curriculum in general (Q22). Since the last two items were included only for a referential purpose, participants’ responses on these items will not be discussed in this paper.

To get an indication of the reliability of internal consistency for each component in the surveys, Cronbach’s α was calculated. As shown in Table 2, the reliability of each component ranged from $\alpha = 0.715$ to 0.957 for the needs analysis survey and from $\alpha = 0.732$ to 0.941 for the evaluation survey, showing fair to strong internal consistency.

TABLE 2
Component Reliabilities in the NA Survey and the Evaluation Survey

Component	<i>k</i>	NA survey (<i>N</i> = 67)	Evaluation survey (<i>N</i> = 27)
(a) Purposes of learning English	10	.715	.732
(b) Necessity of English education ^a	1	-	-
(c) Starting point of English education ^a	1	-	-
(d) Time allotments	4	.814	.792
(e) Expected difficulty of learning English at different school levels	2	.861	.837
(f) Domain	5	.833	.871
(g) Generalized knowledge	18	.957	.941
(h) Activities	21	.910	.919

Note. ^aThe reliability estimate was not obtained for this component because it consists of only one item.

3.4. Procedure

The surveys were conducted in the last month of the academic year. The needs analysis survey was administered to the ESS group during a creative experiential activity period. The evaluation survey was implemented to the HSS group during a regular English class. The surveys were presented in a booklet, and participants individually completed them without any time constraint. They were allowed to stop and take a break whenever they felt tired or bored. The overall procedure took approximately 40 minutes for the needs analysis survey and 30 minutes for the evaluation survey.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We conducted comparative analyses of the data obtained from the needs analysis and evaluation surveys for each of the eight constructs. We first report descriptive statistics on each comparison, followed by results of statistical analyses (Mann-Whitney U tests for non-parametric analyses and independent sample t-tests for parametric analyses). We then present interpretations of the findings and discuss some relevant issues.

4.1. Purpose of Learning English

This construct, asking specific purposes of learning English, contained one open-ended question and one closed-response question with 10 sub-items. We analyzed participants' responses to these questions in terms of whether each response corresponded to an instrumental or an integrative purpose. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), an

instrumental purpose is a motivation to learn a foreign language for practical gains, such as academic or job achievement, whereas an integrative purpose refers to a desire to learn a foreign language to interact with members or culture of the target language community.

The open-ended question (Q10. Why do you learn English (What is the purpose of your English learning)?) was responded by 54 out of 67 in the ESS group and 19 out of 27 in the HSS group. The ESS group's responses were evenly distributed between instrumental and integrative purposes: 20 out of 54 students (37.04%) who responded to this question expressed their instrumental purposes by answering that they were learning English to enter a good university or to get a good job in the future; Twenty-four students (44.44%) indicated integrative purposes by responding that they were learning English to travel to foreign countries or communicate with foreigners ($N = 17$, 31.48%) or because they simply think learning English is important or necessary ($N = 7$, 12.96%). In contrast, the HSS group's responses to this question showed a stark contrast between the instrumental and integrative purposes. They were strongly biased toward the instrumental purpose. A large number of students ($N = 15$, 78.95%) among the 19 participants who responded to this question mentioned that getting into a good university or having a good job is the main reason for learning English. Only three (15.79%) said that they were learning English because they wanted to travel to foreign countries or communicate with foreigners.

A similar pattern was found in the two groups' answers to the subsequent closed-response question (Q11. Do you learn English for the purposes below? Please rate each item). Before analyzing the results, we categorized each of the 10 sub-items in terms of instrumental versus integrative purposes using a principal component analysis (PCA). This method allows for clustering participants' responses to the 10 sub-items into a smaller set of components by identifying the responses that co-occur frequently with each other, thus enabling characterization of each set of correlated variables under the same label (Dillon & Goldstein, 1984). The PCA produced two components with the eigenvalue greater than 1.0, which respectively accounted for 38.81% and 27.41% of the total variance of data. (Table 3 shows the component loading of each item, indicating the amount of variance explained by a component, after varimax rotation for the participants' responses.) The item 11-10 was removed in a further analysis because of its low loadings on both components. The two components extracted from the PCA were respectively labeled instrumental purpose (11-01 to 11-04) and integrative purpose (11-05 to 11-09), adopting the Gardner and Lambert's (1972) terms. The items in each component had high reliability, indicated by the Cronbach's α of .866 for the instrumental purpose and .860 for the integrative purpose.

TABLE 3
Principal Component Loadings for the Participants' Responses
to the Items about "Purposes of Learning English"

Item	Description	Component	
		1	2
11-01	to get a good grade in school	-.138	.886
11-02	to enter a good university	-.018	.940
11-03	to get a good job in the future	.109	.878
11-04	to be acknowledged by other people	.308	.654
11-05	to use it in real life situations	.791	.061
11-06	to have a conversation with foreigners	.820	.067
11-07	to travel to another country	.832	.031
11-08	to understand songs and dramas in English	.730	.167
11-09	because I just like English	.763	-.001
11-10	I don't know why I learn English	-.700	.020

Note. Loadings higher than 0.50 are boldfaced.

For each of the two components, we compared the two groups in terms of their mean ratings, using independent sample t-tests. For the instrumental purpose component, there was no significant difference, but the HSS group ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.05$) had numerically higher ratings than the ESS group ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.88$). In contrast, a marginal significance was found for the integrative purpose component ($t(92) = 1.75$, $p = .08$, Cohen's $d = 0.37$), with higher ratings in the ESS group ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 0.85$) than in the HSS group ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 1.13$).

We also compared the two components for their ratings in each group, using a paired sample t-test. This analysis showed that while the ESS group did not show a significant difference in their ratings between the two components ($t(64) = 1.04$, $p = .30$, Cohen's $d = 0.13$), the HSS group had significantly higher ratings for the instrumental purpose component than for the integrative purpose component ($t(24) = 3.48$, $p < .01$, Cohen's $d = 0.70$).

We further compared the student groups for each of the sub-items (see Table 4 for the statistics). The analyses showed that the ESS group gave lower ratings than the HSS group to all of the items categorized as instrumental purposes (e.g., 11-01 to 11-04) while giving higher ratings than the HSS group for the items corresponding to integrative purposes (e.g., 11-06 to 11-09). A Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference between the two groups in the item 11-04. to be acknowledged by other people ($U = 682.0$, $p < .05$), with higher ratings by the HSS ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.82$) than by the ESS group ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 0.89$). Both groups gave the lowest ratings to the two items: 11-09. because I just like English (ESS: $M = 2.33$, $SD = 0.83$; HSS: $M = 2.30$, $SD = 1.03$) and 11-10. I don't know why I learn English (ESS: $M = 1.66$, $SD = 0.77$; HSS: $M = 1.96$, $SD = 1.08$).

TABLE 4
Purposes of Learning English

Item	Description	NA		Evaluation		<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
11-01	to get a good grade in school	3.01	0.96	3.41	0.64	716.5	.09
11-02	to enter a good university	3.13	0.85	3.37	0.63	785.0	.28
11-03	to get a good job in the future	3.25	0.82	3.33	0.73	871.5	.76
11-04	to be acknowledged by other people	2.45	0.89	2.85	0.82	682.0	.05
11-05	to use it in real life situations	3.06	0.95	2.62	1.10	669.5	.07
11-06	to have a conversation with foreigners	2.97	0.93	2.67	1.07	748.5	.21
11-07	to travel to another country	2.88	0.95	2.70	1.10	819.0	.53
11-08	to understand songs and dramas in English	2.96	0.93	2.52	1.01	692.0	.06
11-09	because I just like English	2.33	0.83	2.30	1.03	857.0	.76
11-10	I don't know why I learn English	1.66	0.77	1.96	1.08	760.0	.30

Taken together, the HSS group was biased toward the instrumental than the integrative purpose while the ESS group rated on the two components nearly to the same extent. The HSS group's preference for the instrumental purpose may reflect their practical issues. Since these students had just taken the NCSAT, they may have focused on learning English for practical gains such as obtaining high English scores in the tests for a college. The ESS group, by contrast, mostly found the motivation of learning English in integrative purposes, such as using the language as a tool for communication, presumably because they were relatively free from the burden of exams. The gap in the response patterns between the two student groups suggests that the English curriculum needs to be designed specific to students' current needs and purposes. That is, more weight on the contents related to instrumental purposes will be desirable for students at higher grades, whereas communicative English classes will be more appropriate for lower-grade students. For example, lower grades can get more benefit when the curriculum focuses heavily on listening and speaking and provides more communicative tasks in which they can practice and use key expressions. On the other hand, higher graders can be more motivated to participate if the curriculum increases the contents of listening, reading, and grammar, as these skills are crucial for the currently implemented examinations for college entrance in Korea.

4.2. Necessity of English Education

This construct consisted of two questions that asked whether participants think English should be taught only to those who want or need it (Q12) and why they think so (Q13). In responses to Q12, a noticeable difference was found between the two groups. The ESS group did not entirely agree to the claim that English should be taught only to those who

want or need it, as indicated by the relatively low agreement ratings ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.82$) on a scale from 1 to 4. Among the 66 respondents who answered the open-ended question Q13, 45 (68.18%) provided generally positive reasons for the necessity of English education. Twenty-four of them (36.36%) wrote that English is necessary, important, or useful in real life, 30 (19.70%) responded that English is necessary as a global language, and 8 (12.12%) noted that English is crucial in order to enter a good university or to get a good job. The remaining 21 students (31.82%) took a negative stance toward the necessity of English education, mentioning that English is not necessary for all students.

Compared to the ESS group, the HSS group gave higher ratings for the claim that English should be taught exclusively for students who want or need it ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.87$). A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the ratings of the HSS group were significantly higher than those of the ESS group ($U = 616.0$, $p < .01$). In the following open-ended question in Q13, 11 (50.00%) out of 22 in the HSS group responded that English should be taught only for students who need it: six answers (27.27%) concerned uselessness of learning English; three (13.64%) expressed the unnecessary of learning English; one (4.55%) responded that English is too difficult; one student (4.55%) mentioned that learning English is unnecessary with the aid of an automatic translator. The remaining 11 respondents (50%) argued for the necessity of English education for all students for the reasons that English is useful and necessary ($N = 6$, 27.27%) and should be learned as a global language ($N = 5$, 22.73%).

Overall, more of the HSS group students objected to the idea that English education is necessary for all students than the ESS group did. These results offer important implications for establishing the objectives for the English curriculum at different school levels. As the majority of Korean students map out their career plan after entering a high school, it may be necessary to allow students to choose how many lesson hours they would receive to further improve their English, according to their career plan, from 11th grade at which the mandatory English curriculum is complete and the elective English curriculum begins. Some students may consider English less important for their future career and thus find it more worthwhile spending their school time learning other subjects relevant to their career; others may think it essential to achieve a high level of English proficiency according to their career plan. For lower graders, on the other hand, whose future plans are not yet clearly established, it may be necessary to provide them opportunities to develop their English proficiency on the basic skills in a balanced way while placing more emphasis on listening and speaking (see Section 4.2). For example, elementary school teachers may organize their class contents to help students have a variety of language use experience in the domains of speaking and listening in addition to reading and writing through intriguing activities and tasks.

4.3. Ideal Time for Starting English Education

When asked about the best time for starting English education (Q14), the ESS group chose 1st grade ($N = 18$, 26.87%) and 3rd grade ($N = 18$, 26.87%) most frequently. The next preferred option was 2nd grade ($N = 12$, 17.91%), followed by after 6th grade ($N = 8$, 11.94%), 4th grade ($N = 6$, 8.96%), and 5th grade ($N = 5$, 7.46%). The HSS group also selected 3rd grade ($N = 9$, 33.33%) most frequently as the appropriate starting point of English education, but differed from the ESS group in their preference order of the other options: after 6th grade ($N = 8$, 29.63%) being the next most highly preferred choice, followed by 1st grade ($N = 4$, 14.81%), 2nd grade ($N = 3$, 11.11%), 5th grade ($N = 2$, 7.41%), and 4th grade ($N = 1$, 3.70%).

It is noteworthy that both groups selected 3rd grade as the most appropriate point to start English education. Given that this level is the actual starting point of English education under the current curriculum in Korea, this finding indicates that the current timing of starting English education generally meets students' needs. However, it should also be noted that a considerable number of the HSS respondents chose after 6th grade (29.63%) as the optimal starting point, reflecting their view that English education should start much later. In fact, six students out of 15 who answered the open-ended item Q15 asking the reason for their choice of the ideal time for English education in Q14 noted that it is Korean that should be full acquired before starting to learn English. Unlike the HSS group, a smaller proportion of students in the ESS group responded with after 6th grade (11.94%) as the best time of starting English education. This response pattern may be somewhat related to the relatively weak agreement with the necessity of English education among the students in the HSS group (see Section 4.2).

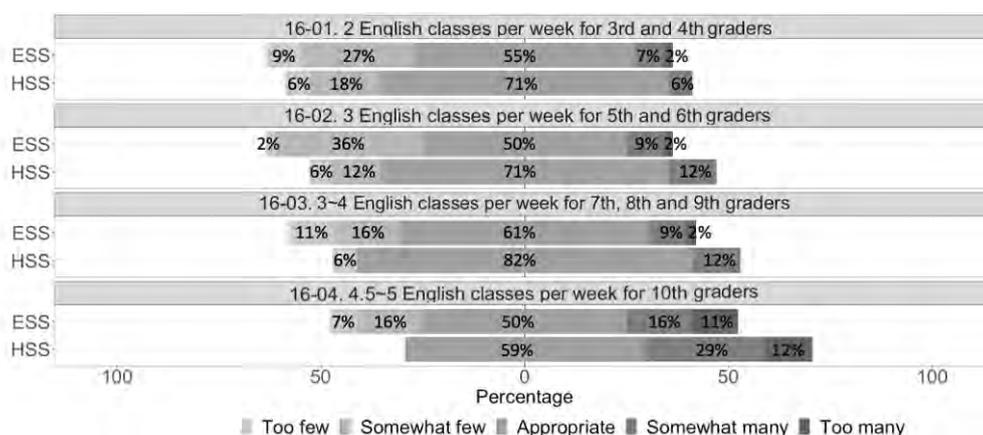
4.4. Time Allotments

This question asked how appropriate the time allotments were for the English classes currently implemented at different levels. Participants rated each item on a scale from 1 (too few) to 5 (too many) with 3 (appropriate) in the middle. The ESS group chose 4.5~5 English classes per week for 10th graders as the most appropriate ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.96$), followed by the choices of 3~4 English classes per week to 7th to 9th grades ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.83$), 3 English classes per week to 5th and 6th grades ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.71$), and 2 English classes per week to 3rd and 4th grades ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.79$). The HSS group gave the highest ratings to 4.5~5 English classes per week for 10th graders ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.69$), followed by 3 English classes per week for 5th and 6th graders ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.60$), 3~4 English classes per week for 7th to 9th graders ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 0.62$), and 2 English classes per week

for 3rd and 4th graders ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.59$).

The analysis of the percentage of students' responses revealed that at least half of the students in each group regarded each time allotment appropriate (see Figure 1). Furthermore, the two groups' mean ratings to all items were close to 3 and did not show any significant difference in Mann-Whitney U tests. These results indicate that both groups considered each of the time allotments as appropriate.

FIGURE 1
Time Allotments



One noticeable finding is that no one in the HSS group chose “somewhat few” or “too few” for 4.5–5 classes allotted to English to 10th graders, although 41% of the students in this group chose either “somewhat many” or “too many” for this item. This response pattern suggests that at least some students in the HSS group thought it necessary to reduce the amount of time for English classes provided to 10th grade students in the current curriculum. This tendency is consistent with the recognition in some students that English is not necessary for all students (see Section 4.2) and that English education needs to begin later than the 3rd grade (see Section 4.3). As will be discussed in Section 4.8, this response pattern is also related to this group’s choice of “self-study” as the most preferred activity during a high school English class.

4.5. Difficulty Gaps Between Different School Levels

This question asked about how afraid ESS group participants are if English would get harder at different school levels (i.e., middle school after graduating the elementary school, high school after graduating the middle school) and how difficult it actually was for HSS

group participants to study English at different school levels. Participants provided the degree of their concerns on this issue on a scale from 1 (Not concerned at all) to 4 (Concerned a lot). The ESS group showed more concerns about expected difficulties of learning English in the high school ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.86$) than in the middle school ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 0.92$); the difference in this group's ratings between these two sub-items showed approaching significance ($U = 1760.0$, $p = .057$). In line with these results, the HSS group responded that they experienced greater difficulties in the high school ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.92$) than in the middle school ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.81$), also showing a marginally significant difference between the two sub-items ($U = 223.5$, $p = .057$). These results indicate that the difficulty gaps anticipated by the elementary school students resonated with the difficulties actually experienced by the high school students.

Based on these findings, future work should identify potential reasons underlying the different degrees of difficulty gaps among different school levels using a qualitative method, such as an interview. Importantly, administrators and teachers need to pay attention to the greater concerns about the difficulty gap between the middle and high schools than between the elementary and middle schools. Depending on the causes of the difficulties that high school students experience, different approaches should be taken to the curriculum design. For example, if major sources of difficulties in high school English courses stem from textbooks, it may be helpful to compare textbooks used in different school levels and adjust structural complexity and lexical diversity to minimize difficulty gaps between them.

4.6. Domain

In this question, the ESS group and the HSS group rated each domain of language function according to its necessity and its helpfulness, respectively. The ESS group indicated strong needs for all domains, with the highest rating for speaking ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.70$), followed by grammar ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.83$), listening ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.73$), writing ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.70$), and reading ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.73$). In contrast, the HSS group's mean rating for each domain was lower than that of the ESS group, with reading ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.78$) and listening ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.75$) rated somewhat higher than writing ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.98$), grammar ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.85$), and speaking ($M = 2.22$, $SD = 0.80$).

Mann-Whitney U tests showed significantly higher ratings in the ESS group than in the HSS group for every domain (listening: $U = 461.5$, $p < .01$; speaking: $U = 250.0$, $p < .01$; reading: $U = 593.0$, $p < .01$; writing: $U = 504.0$, $p < .01$; grammar: $U = 404.5$, $p < .01$). Unlike the ESS group who had high ratings across the domains (range: 3.21–3.46), the HSS group responded that reading and listening were more helpful than writing, grammar, and speaking. Part of the reason for the HSS group's response pattern may be found in the

importance of these language skills in preparing the NCSAT, which includes reading and listening as the two main constructs of assessment. These results also align with the HSS group's motivation to learn English for instrumental purposes (see Section 4.1). The two groups' contrasting response patterns point to the need for designing the English curriculum appropriate to the current needs and specific goals of students at different school levels.

4.7. Generalized Knowledge

The ESS group rated each piece of the generalized knowledge outlined in the English curriculum according to the perceived importance, and the HSS group evaluated how each piece of knowledge was well-acquired. The two groups' ratings on each item of this component are present in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Generalized Knowledge

Item	Description	NA		Evaluation		<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
19-01	distinguish sounds, stress, rhythm or intonation	2.88	0.77	2.89	0.75	877.5	0.90
19-02	comprehend a word, a phrase or a sentence	2.92	0.83	3.07	0.73	819.5	0.51
19-03	comprehend the detailed information of speech or conversation	3.20	0.71	3.00	0.73	748.0	0.18
19-04	comprehend the topic of speech or conversation	3.21	0.73	3.33	0.62	828.0	0.55
19-05	comprehend the flow of the speech or conversation	2.92	0.83	3.11	0.64	798.0	0.39
19-06	repeat after the sound	3.17	0.71	3.07	0.73	828.5	0.55
19-07	say a word or a sentence	3.42	0.72	3.19	0.62	686.5	0.05
19-08	convey meaning in speech	3.24	0.84	3.22	0.58	816.0	0.48
19-09	exchange meaning in conversation	3.00	0.91	2.78	0.93	769.5	0.28
19-10	understand the relationship between sound and spelling	3.36	0.78	3.11	0.64	683.0	0.05
19-11	comprehend a word or a sentence in text	3.30	0.76	2.85	0.82	611.0	0.01
19-12	comprehend the detailed information of a text	3.32	0.77	3.15	0.72	743.0	0.21
19-13	comprehend the topic of a text	3.35	0.77	2.93	0.87	635.5	0.02
19-14	comprehend the logical relationship within a text	3.39	0.76	3.04	0.76	643.5	0.02
19-15	understand the connotative meaning of a text	2.89	0.95	3.07	0.78	800.5	0.48
19-16	write alphabet letters	3.06	0.80	3.04	0.71	853.0	0.73
19-17	write a word or a phrase	3.26	0.78	3.07	0.73	737.0	0.18
19-18	write a sentence	3.27	0.78	3.00	0.78	705.5	0.09

The ESS group gave high ratings (range: 2.88–3.42) for all pieces of the knowledge, with the three most highly rated ones of *saying a word or a sentence* ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.72$), *comprehending the logical relationship within a text* ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.76$), and *understanding the relationship between sound and spelling* ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.78$). This group gave the lowest ratings to *distinguishing sounds, stress, rhythm or intonation* ($M =$

2.88, $SD = 0.77$), *understanding the connotative meaning of a text* ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.95$), and *comprehending the flow of the speech or conversation* ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 0.83$). The HSS group responded that all pieces of the knowledge were relatively well-acquired (range: 2.78–3.33). The highest-ranked knowledge was *comprehending the topic of speech or conversation* ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.62$), followed by *conveying meaning in speech* ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.58$), and *saying a word or a sentence* ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.62$). In contrast, the least well-acquired knowledge was *exchanging meaning in conversation* ($M = 2.78$, $SD = 0.93$), *comprehending a word or a sentence in text* ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.82$), and *distinguishing sounds, stress, rhythm or intonation* ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.75$). Mann-Whitney U tests revealed significant differences between the needs ratings from the ESS group and the achievement ratings from the HSS group in the three items: *comprehending a word or a sentence in text* ($U = 611.0$, $p < .05$), *comprehending the topic of a text* ($U = 635.5$, $p < .05$), and *comprehending the logical relationship within a text* ($U = 643.5$, $p < .05$), all with the significantly lower ratings from the HSS group than from the ESS group. This result indicates the gap between the perceived importance of these types of knowledge and the evaluation of their achievement. Noticeably, these pieces of knowledge are strongly associated with reading, suggesting that despite the perceived importance and helpfulness of reading as indicated by the students' response patterns (see Section 4.6), the current curriculum was considered to fall short of fulfilling the needs from the students for achieving specific reading skills. The relatively low achievement ratings provided by the HSS group in this domain highlight the importance for curriculum developers to assign more contents and activities dedicated to improving students' reading skills. For example, the Korean EFL textbooks mostly contain only a single text per lesson unit. Increasing the number of reading texts in the textbook and/or offering more supplementary text materials can be an effective way to facilitate students' achievement associated with reading.

4.8. English Learning Activities

This question asked the students to rate each activity according to their usefulness on a scale from 1 (Not useful at all) to 4 (Useful a lot). Table 6 provides statistical details of each item. The ESS group rated *translation* ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.70$), *exam* ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.82$), and *rote memorization of vocabulary* ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.85$) as the most helpful activities. The activities that received the lowest ratings were *roleplay* ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.02$), *singing a chant* ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 0.96$), and *singing a song* ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.92$). The HSS group gave the highest ratings for *self-study* ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 0.66$), *translation* ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.75$), and *rote memorization of vocabulary* ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.68$) while giving the lowest ratings for *roleplay* ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.89$), *fill-in-the-blank activity* ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.89$), and *pair work* ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 0.95$).

TABLE 6

Activities

Item	Description	NA		Evaluation		<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
20-01	pronunciation practice	3.07	0.74	2.74	0.66	664.5	0.02
20-02	rote memorization of vocabulary	3.22	0.85	3.00	0.68	710.0	0.07
20-03	rote memorization of sentences	3.01	0.84	2.67	0.92	702.5	0.07
20-04	writing after a model (alphabet letter/word/sentence)	2.90	0.92	2.74	0.86	807.5	0.38
20-05	watching a dialogue in the textbook	2.81	0.82	2.56	1.01	780.0	0.27
20-06	watching a movie clip	2.99	0.75	2.81	0.92	813.0	0.41
20-07	reading a story in the textbook	2.90	0.76	2.88	0.86	869.5	0.99
20-08	reading a story not in the textbook	3.09	0.79	2.81	1.00	767.5	0.22
20-09	writing a sentence or text	3.19	0.78	2.74	0.81	620.0	0.01
20-10	translation	3.33	0.70	3.11	0.75	754.0	0.16
20-11	fill-in-the-blank activity	3.05	0.73	2.48	0.89	575.0	0.04
20-12	correction exercise	3.10	0.74	2.67	0.83	655.5	0.02
20-13	singing a song	2.72	0.92	2.85	0.95	838.0	0.56
20-14	singing a chant	2.57	0.96	2.56	1.01	896.5	0.94
20-15	roleplay	2.52	1.02	2.41	0.89	835.5	0.55
20-16	game	2.93	0.94	2.70	0.87	762.0	0.21
20-17	self-study	2.82	0.90	3.15	0.66	739.0	0.14
20-18	pair work	2.72	0.95	2.54	0.95	774.5	0.39
20-19	group work	2.95	0.95	2.56	0.93	678.5	0.06
20-20	presentation	3.18	0.78	2.85	0.86	701.5	0.06
20-21	exam	3.24	0.82	2.70	0.99	624.0	0.01

Mann-Whitney *U* tests demonstrated that the ESS group gave significantly higher ratings than the HSS group for the five following activities: *pronunciation practice* ($U = 664.5, p < .05$), *writing a sentence or text* ($U = 620.0, p < .05$), *fill-in-the-blank activity* ($U = 575.0, p < .01$), *correction exercise* ($U = 655.5, p < .05$), and *exam* ($U = 624.0, p < .05$).

Analyses of needs and evaluation for the activity component showed both similarities and dissimilarities between the two groups. We focus on three interesting patterns observed. First, *self-study* was rated as the most helpful activity. This may be relevant to the fact that the high school students needed more time to study alone for the NCSAT. Since the exam requires students to read long texts and answer comprehension questions within a restricted amount of time, students need to have faster access to vocabulary by memorizing words and phrases, to grasp main ideas and specific details of a text, to become familiar with different item patterns in the exam, and to learn how to manage time efficiently, which call for concentrative and intensive training that may be effectively achieved through self-study. The high rating of *self-study* among the HSS group also indicates that the activities provided by the current English curriculum should be reconsidered in terms of their effectiveness. In this sense, curriculum developers need to pay more attention to the high schoolers' specific needs, designing activities that help them achieve their instrumental purposes (see Section 4.1).

Second, the HSS group rated pair work and group work activities considerably low. Their low ratings for these activities, which are concerned with speaking, match their perception of the speaking domain as the least helpful (see Section 4.6). Unlike this group, the ESS group gave higher ratings to these two activities, consistent with their strongest needs for speaking. The two groups' different perspectives toward the need of speaking activities require curriculum developers and teachers to take different approaches when designing a curriculum for each level. For lower-grade students, for example, the quantity and quality of activities dedicated to communication should be further improved. For instance, elementary school teachers can apply task-based language teaching (TBLT) in a speaking class where oral tasks involve meaningful communicative activities (Lee & Park, 2001) with topics that intrigue young students. Another helpful activity to facilitate speaking skills is to record students' interactions during task performance and allow them to review their performance afterward, as they can trace their own speaking and develop speaking strategies through self-monitoring (e.g., Chamot & Kupper, 1989). For older students, on the other hand, more attention should be given to other activities that help them prepare for the NCSAT, such as self-study, translation and rote memorization of vocabulary. More importantly, teachers can make use of these activities and integrate them with the other highly-rated activities, such as reading a story in the textbook ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.86$), presentation ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.86$), and singing a song ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.95$). For example, they can facilitate students to prepare for a presentation while making the students use new vocabulary items that they provide. This way, students can improve their general English communicative competence and also be ready for the NCSAT.

Finally, the ESS group rated translation, exam, and rote memorization of vocabulary as the most helpful while considering roleplay, singing a chant, and singing a song as the least helpful. These results are somewhat unexpected given that young learners generally prefer somewhat active activities like roleplay (e.g., Ba & Huan, 2017) and singing (e.g., Džanić & Pejić, 2016) over rote learning and memorization. While it remains less clear about this outcome, we speculate that such active activities currently implemented in elementary school classrooms fall short of motivating students. Since the success of those activities depends on several factors, such as students' confidence and contents associated with the activities (Ba & Huan, 2017), future work needs to consider these factors to find effective ways to implement those activities in EFL classrooms.

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There have been several studies that individually focused on either needs analysis or evaluation on English curriculum (Gardener & Winslow, 1983; Long, 2005; Richterich,

1983; Seedhouse, 1995; Watanabe, 2006; West, 1994), yet little research has compared students' needs with evaluation across different school levels in the EFL context. Furthermore, in the course of curriculum development and improvement, young students have often been overlooked despite their status as the major stakeholders (Long, 2005; Watanabe, 2006) and the emphasis of the learner-centered approach placed in the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2015b). To address these gaps, this study aimed to offer productive directions for improving the current English curriculum in Korea by comparing perceived needs from elementary school students as current curriculum-takers and evaluation from high school students as curriculum-completers through needs analysis and evaluation surveys.

Our analyses of the surveys revealed similarities and differences between the students' needs for and evaluation of the English curriculum. The two student groups agreed upon the starting point of English education and the time allotment at each level in general. However, significant gaps were found between the two groups in several components of survey items, including the English learning purpose, the necessity of English education for all students, the domain of language function, generalized knowledge, and English-learning activities. Notably, the two groups' response patterns on these components reflected the difference in their specific goals of learning English: Whereas the curriculum-takers had balanced views toward learning English between instrumental purposes and integrative purposes, the curriculum-completers focused more on the former than on the latter and evaluated the curriculum based on whether it sufficiently met their current objectives.

Our findings shed light on the curriculum improvement for educational effectiveness in several aspects. First, the distinct response patterns between the groups suggest that the curriculum should be designed and adjusted to students' current goals. According to our survey results, communicative language teaching seems desirable to young students than high school students, which reflects the main objectives of the current classrooms to some degree. Elementary school teachers can thus improve the curriculum components associated with listening and speaking by devising oral tasks involving meaningful communicative activities and interesting topics. In contrast, high school teachers need to carefully design their curriculum to help students prepare the NCSAT by providing more texts to read and allowing students more time for training for the exam and improve their general English communicative competence. Such learner-oriented approaches to curriculum development may increase the effectiveness of class contents by inducing students' participation and helping them achieve their current goals.

Second, our results implicate the importance of considering students' perception and evaluation of the curriculum in the course of curriculum planning and implementation. In our surveys, many students expressed ideas that diverged from what is actually

implemented under the current English curriculum. For instance, the high school students gave low ratings on communicative activities such as roleplay and pair work, although these activities are currently administered in many high school classrooms. In addition, the students displayed a strong preference for self-study, suggesting that they saw this activity as one of the most helpful activities for achieving their present objectives. These results do not necessarily indicate that activities such as roleplay and pair work are less helpful and thus should be minimized in a classroom. Rather, it is important to diagnose potential reasons that these activities received low ratings from the students and explore diverse ways to implement them more effectively. Since learners' needs and evaluations play an important role in student engagement in classroom activities (e.g., Yim, 2016), our findings indicate that the curriculum needs to be modified and implemented in a way that motivates students to participate in classroom activities more actively. For example, while keeping the class content closely associated with the NCSAT, teachers can conduct a variety of activities that students like in class. They can design a task where students need to translate and use memorized vocabulary items while reading a story in the textbook, singing a song, and giving a presentation.

Third, the products of our study may offer a promising framework for follow-up research, providing resources for teachers and curriculum developers interested in conducting needs and evaluation analyses. Researchers may benefit from the survey items developed for this study that were validated through consultation with several education and survey development experts. Further studies using our survey items will thus allow for cross-study comparisons that involve learners from various backgrounds in diverse learning contexts, which can advance our understanding of students' perceptions of curriculum and contribute to the field of curriculum development and improvement.

Finally, we note some limitations and directions for future research. One limitation is that the two groups may not be comparable in terms of the regions where they lived: curriculum-takers were an urban Korean population in Seoul, whereas curriculum-completers were residing in Cheonan, a city located in the northeast part of South Chungcheong. While we were unable to control for these gaps by collecting data from different regions due to practical reasons, further studies should consider the regional variable of student samples to minimize its influence on the results of surveys. In addition, as anonymous reviewers pointed out, these two groups could have gone through different English learning experience by the point of participating in this study due to generational changes (e.g., more importance of English learning placed on the younger generation) and policy changes (e.g., changes made on the NCSAT). Also, we cannot exclude a possibility that the cognitive abilities and past language learning experiences in these two groups affected the results. These gaps between the groups may have had significant impacts on the current results, which requires some caution regarding the interpretation of our findings. Another limitation concerns the

relatively small number of participants. Future work should include more participants from various regions in Korea to generalize the present findings. Furthermore, future work should identify specific reasons underlying participants' responses on each survey item, using a qualitative method, such as a post-survey interview. This work would help determine what aspects of the curriculum should be improved. Along with these future directions, the current study is expected to offer insights into what aspects of the general English curriculum should be modified and how they can be improved.

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