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A case study of curriculum and material evaluation:

Elementary English as a foreign language in South Korea

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ABSTRACT

English as a foreign language (EFL) is quite different from English as a second language (ESL) in many respects. Few EFL studies, however, have been conducted with consideration given to the unique EFL environment. This case study of South Korean elementary EFL was designed to evaluate the previous (1997-2000) and new (2001-) curricula and materials based on the researcher's experience and a review of the literature.

This study first suggests communicative language teaching (CLT) criteria appropriate for elementary school pupils who are beginning to learn EFL in Korea, and then evaluates the two CLT-based curricula for the 4th grade based on the suggested criteria. Second, this study aims to examine the two different material sets for the two curricula focusing on spoken language communicative activities. For the material comparison, the Sisayoungasa Co. material set, one of 16 sets based on the previous curriculum, is compared to the new material set based on the 7th curriculum.

Perceptions of the curriculum and material change were considered from three perspectives: three teachers, a policy maker and a researcher. It was revealed that opinions from the three perspectives vary considerably. The study also found that despite the recent attempt to implement CLT-based elementary EFL, there are still deficiencies in the Korean elementary EFL curriculum and materials.

RÉSUMÉ

L'anglais langue étrangère (LLE) diffère de l'anglais langue seconde à bien des égards. Il y a pourant peu d'études de LLE qui tiennent compte de l'environnement unique de LLE. Cette étude de cas de LLE au primaire en Corée du Sud a été conçue pour évaluer les programmes scolaires et les matériaux antérieurs (1997-2000) et nouveaux (2001-) basé sur l'expérience de la chercheuse ainsi que sur une critique de la littérature dans ce domaine.

Cette étude suggère premièrement des critères d'enseignement du langage communicatif propre aux élèves à l'école primaire qui commencent à apprendre l'anglais langue étrangère en Corée. Selon ces critères, cette étude évalue ensuite deux programmes scolaires de 4ème année basés sur l'enseignement du langage communicatif. Deuxièmement, cette étude vise à examiner deux ensembles de matériaux pour les deux programmes scolaries en se concentrant sur les activités communicatives du langage oral. Pour la comparaison des matériaux, l'ensemble des matériaux de Sisayoungasa Co., un des 16 ensembles basé sur le programme scolaire précédent, est comparé au nouvel ensemble de matériaux basé sur le 7ème programme scolaire.

Les perceptions concernant le changement du programme scolaire et des matériaux ont été considérées de trois perspectives: celle de trois enseignants, celle d'un décideur, et celle d'une chercheuse. On a révélé que les opinions des trois perspectives varient considérablement. L'étude révèle aussi que, malgré les efforts récents de mettre en pratique l'anglais langue étrangère au primaire fondé sur l'enseignement du lagage communicatif, il existe toujours des défauts dans le programme scolaire et les matériaux de l'anglais langue étrangère au primaire en Corée.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the increased globalization of the world, geographical boundaries between countries are breaking down. Through Internet and satellite broadcasting, people all over the world are now exposed to English more than ever in history, and they communicate with each other in English about politics, economics, society and culture. Therefore, English is not merely knowledge needed for studies or professional purposes anymore, but a tool, like a car or a computer, that is necessary in order to live in the 21st century.

Many aspects of South Korean secondary English education, however, are not adequate for today's needs. Although Korean secondary students learn English as a regular mandatory subject for six years, and some continue to study English in universities, they still have difficulties in communicating in English (Ministry of Education, 1997). The recognition of the importance of English and the inefficiency of formal secondary English education in South Korea created the demand for elementary English education. "[In] 1994 the government decided that English teaching would begin at a younger age (Grade 3 in elementary schools) starting in 1997" (Li, 1998, p. 681).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) was included for the first time in the national elementary curriculum in 1997. This curriculum was the 6th national curriculum, and based on this curriculum, elementary school children started to learn English as a regular subject. Four years after the implementation of EFL in the 6th elementary curriculum, the Ministry of Education developed a new 7th elementary curriculum including EFL; the second elementary curriculum with an EFL component. Both curricula are based on one common underlying approach, the communicative approach aiming at, and emphasizing, the students' acquisition of communicative language ability. With the curriculum change, the Ministry of Education also changed the materials that could be used by the students and teachers. In the 6th curriculum, each elementary school chose one material set out of a possible 16 sets which were developed by private publishers and officially approved by the Ministry of Education. In the 7th curriculum, however, the Ministry of Education developed only one material set to be used by all elementary schools.

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I was thus motivated to examine the differences between the EFL components in the 6th and 7th curricula and the materials. In order to analyze and compare both curricula, I developed my own communicative language teaching (CLT) criteria that are suitable for EFL situations, specifically for beginner level elementary school children in Korea. According to Richards & Rogers (1986), CLT is an approach rather than a method because there are many ways to interpret what it means and how it can be operationalized. "There is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative" (p. 66). Thus, there exist great possibilities for individual interpretation and variation at the level of design and procedure. Unfortunately, however, there are not many interpretations of CLT for EFL situations. For this reason, I was motivated to develop my own CLT criteria by considering and drawing on a variety of different CLT models and characteristics. After developing the CLT criteria, each of the two curricula were compared to my CLT criteria separately, and then they were compared to each other.

For the material analysis, I examined the extent to which the material sets correspond to their respective curricula in terms of spoken language communicative activities – one of the major differences between the two curricula according to the Ministry of Education. I then examined whether differences in the spoken language communicative activities presented in the two curricula are reflected in the materials. Interviews were also conducted with three elementary teachers and a policy maker in order to compare various perspectives on the curriculum and material changes.

The study is limited to a comparison of the two curricula and material sets developed for the 4th grade since only 4th grade teachers and students have had the opportunity to learn EFL based on both curricula within two years, 2000 and 2001. To make my research feasible only one material set, that was developed by Sisayoungasa Co., is examined out of the 16 possible sets developed for the 6th curriculum.

Before presenting the study, it is necessary to define terms which are frequently used in this research. The first term is *evaluation*. Evaluation is not the same as assessment or testing in terms of its scope and purpose (Lynch, 1996). Assessment instruments or tests might be used in an evaluation, but an evaluation is not limited to such forms. "[It] is defined here as the systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgments or decisions" (p. 2). The next term is *curriculum*. Brown (1995) considers the essential elements of curriculum separately, such as needs analysis, objectives, testing, material, teaching, and evaluation, and shows how these components interact with each other in teaching situations in his book, *The Elements of Language Curriculum: A Systematic Approach to Program Development*. In this research,

curriculum is treated in the same way; that is, as an integration of the subcategories identified by Brown above. Another term is a *material* or *textbook set*. Through my study, material or textbook set refers not only to the textbook itself, but also to supplementary materials available to students in the classroom such as audiotapes, videotapes, and CD-ROMs.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to this thesis. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature related to CLT, communicative competence, approaches to language teaching for children or early stages learners, development of CLT curriculum, and material evaluation. Chapter 3 describes the research questions and methodology, including the purpose of the study, the context of elementary EFL in Korea, the participants, the instruments for the curriculum and material evaluation, the procedures of the study, and the methods of data analysis. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the results of the evaluation. It largely consists of three parts, CLT criteria for curriculum analysis, curriculum evaluation based on CLT criteria, and material evaluation from various perspectives. Chapter 5 concludes the study with the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

CLT is an approach, rather than a method, to language teaching. There are many ways to interpret CLT, and teachers apply their own interpretations to their language teaching. Some teachers, for example, focus exclusively on meaning and communication when interpreting CLT while others focus on the balance of form and meaning. However, "there is no single text or authority on [CLT], nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative" (Richards & Rogers, 1986, p. 66). Although the interpretations of CLT vary depending on several factors such as language teaching, learning context and learners' stages of language learning, CLT models share several major distinctive characteristics which differentiate them from other language teaching approaches.

According to Richards and Rogers (1986), the main focus of CLT is on meaning, rather than form. Consequently, the sequencing of the lesson is decided upon content, function, or meaning, not grammatical complexity. At the same time, fluency is regarded as more important than accuracy with immediate and frequent error correction avoided. According to Larsen-Freeman (1986), students' errors are a natural part of the language learning process; the teacher and other students generally pay little attention to them. This is not to say, however, that the importance of accuracy is not acknowledged in CLT. Another characteristic of CLT mentioned by Richards and Rogers (1986) is that it is student-centred, where the teacher's role in the CLT-based classroom is that of co-communicator and facilitator. The teacher establishes situations in which students communicate with each other, and motivates students to communicate. This attempt to communicate starts from the beginning of language learning. Most importantly, CLT aims at students' acquisition of communicative competence.

CLT-based classroom observations carried out by Larsen-Freeman (1986) support the characteristics of CLT raised by Richards and Rogers (1986). To these she also adds that CLT aims at introducing *authentic* language to students, that is language used in real life situations by native speakers, for example the sports column from a newspaper. The objective of the class is not only to expose students to the target

language, but also to provide opportunities for them to use the authentic language in classroom communication by encouraging them to express themselves and get their meaning and intention across using the target language.

Larsen-Freeman also specifies some of the communicative activities used in the classroom that she observed. In order to maximize students' language use, small group activities are planned through communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. Realistic situations in which genuine communicative needs must be met, such as information gap and feedback, are offered, giving students the opportunity to negotiate their meanings. That is, in the CLT classroom, "almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent" (p. 132).

Li (1998) summarizes the characteristics of CLT features mentioned above, as follows:

1. a focus on communicative functions;
2. a focus on meaningful tasks rather than on language per se (e.g., grammar or vocabulary study);
3. efforts to make tasks and language relevant to a target group of learners through an analysis of genuine, realistic situations;
4. the use of authentic, from-life materials;
5. the use of group activities; and the attempt to create a secure, non-threatening atmosphere (p. 679).

All but the last of the points above, a secure, non-threatening atmosphere, had been previously described as characteristics of CLT by Richards and Rogers (1986) and Larsen-Freeman (1986). This point is closely related to student-centredness: in the CLT classroom, the teacher does not take on an authoritative role; students should thus be able to feel secure, unthreatened, and non-defensive when trying to communicate in the target language.

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

As emphasized in the previous section, the desired goal of CLT is learners' acquisition of communicative competence. Hymes (1972) proposed the term, communicative competence in order to add a communicative view to language absent in Chomsky's account of linguistic or grammatical competence. Chomsky argues that everyone is born with a special ability to discover the grammatical rules and knowledge, referred to as competence, necessary to produce grammatically correct language (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Richards & Rogers, 1986). Hymes (1972), in contrast,

views Chomsky's definition of linguistic competence as limited in that it does not take into consideration the sociocultural norms at play in language use. His definition of competence, therefore, is more general with communicative competence dependent on both "tacit knowledge" and "ability for use." He suggests several components of communicative competence, of which grammatical competence is only one. In brief, those who acquire communicative competence acquire both underlying knowledge and ability for language use with respect to:

1. whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;

2. whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;

3. whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;

4. whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails (p. 281).

Thus, according to Hymes (1972), communicative competence is what a learner needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community.

Canale and Swain (1980) include three competencies in their framework for communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology. Sociolinguistic competence consists of two sets of rules. The first set is sociocultural rules of use which refer to the ways in which utterances are produced and understood appropriately within a given sociocultural context. The other set is rules of discourse. These rules are understood in terms of cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (meaningful links, appropriate combination of communicative functions). Strategic competence refers to verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that are used to compensate for learners' insufficient ability to get their meaning across. Canale and Swain (1980) conclude that "the second language learner cannot be expected to have achieved a sufficient level of communicative competence in the second language, in our opinion, if no knowledge of probability of occurrence is developed in the three components of communicative competence" (p. 31).

Canale (1983) makes a further distinction between sociolinguistic competence (sociocultural rules of use in the earlier version) and discourse competence (rules of discourse). He divides communicative competence into four main components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and

strategic competence. Discourse competence is interpreted as the learner's ability to connect utterances or sentences. According to Riggenbach (1999), however, this aspect is only at the micro-level of discourse competence, and the discourse competence which Canale (1983) proposed implies a broader contextual awareness which is required to create and maintain text-level cohesion and coherence.

Bachman (1990) offers a more effective and insightful view of communicative competence (see Figure 1). He uses the term communicative language ability instead, and divides it into three parts separating strategic competence from language competence: language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. Language competence refers to knowledge of language, and it consists of two competences: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organizational competence is further divided into grammatical competence and textual competence, and pragmatic competence includes illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Strategic competence refers to learners' ability to use language. It relates language competence to "the speaker's knowledge structures" and "the features of the context" in which communication takes place. Thus, strategic competence is not a mere ability to compensate for deficiencies in other competencies. This strategic competence includes three components: assessment, planning, and execution. Psychophysiological mechanisms characterize the auditory, visual channel and receptive, productive mode in which competence is applied.
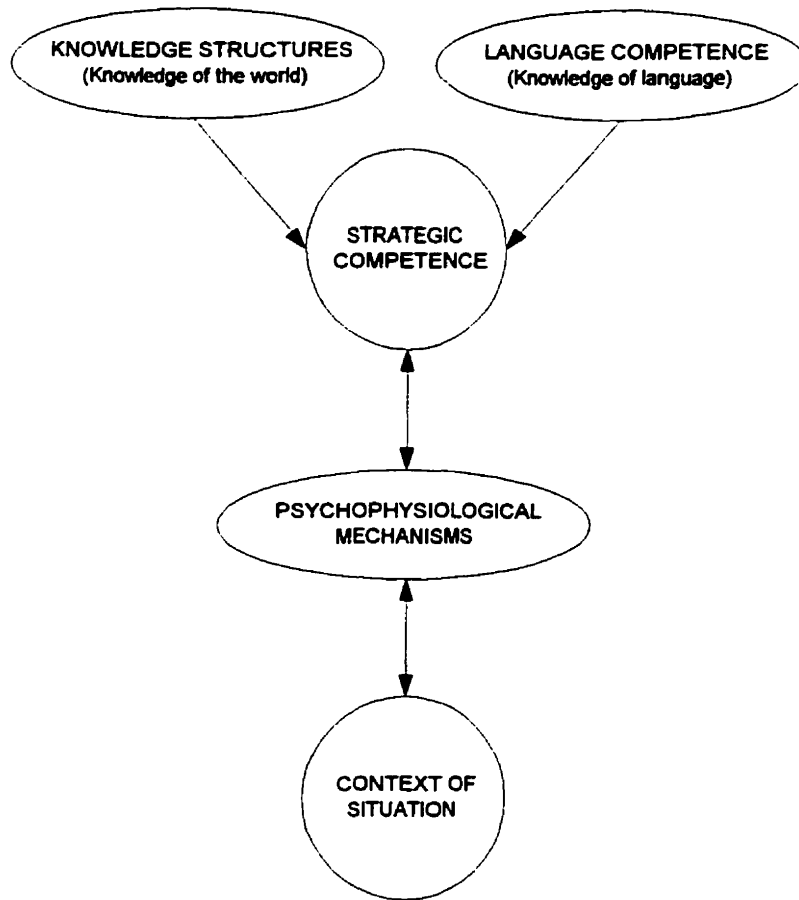
Figure 1. Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use

Note. From *Fundamental consideration in language testing* (p. 85), by L. F. Bachman, 1990, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Copyright 1990 by Oxford University Press.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) created a model of communicative language ability based on that proposed by Bachman (1990). Here they define communicative language ability as two main components. One component is language knowledge, previously called language competence, and the other is strategic competence or metacognitive strategies. Bachman and Palmer (1996) emphasize the interrelationship between the two by saying that "it is this combination of language knowledge and metacognitive strategies that provides language users with the ability, or capacity, to create and interpret discourse" (p. 67).

APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR CHILDREN OR EARLY STAGE LEARNERS

The Natural Method

The natural method was neither developed nor proved effective for child or beginner language learning; however it was developed based on observations of child language learning, which can be generalized to early language learning stages. The main characteristics of the natural method are briefly introduced in this section.

According to Richards and Rogers (1986), the nineteenth century language learning reformers built a language teaching methodology based on observations of child language learning. They paid attention to naturalistic principles of child language learning, and tried to make second language learning like first language learning. The representative proponent of the natural method, Sauveur, and other believers argued that a second or foreign language could be taught without translation or the learner's mother tongue. That is, second language or foreign language learners could learn the target language through demonstration and action which make meaning understandable and clear to the learner.

Franke (as cited in Richards & Rogers, 1986) also emphasized direct and spontaneous use of the target language in language learning. According to Franke, a language could be best taught through active use of the target language in the classroom, rather than analytical explanations of grammar rules. Exposure to language use would make learners induce grammar rules automatically, with grammar thus taught only inductively. Franke's ideal language teaching and learning situation was characterized by the following: In the early stages of teaching the target language, teachers take the place of textbooks, pay systematic attention to pronunciation, and use the learners' known words to teach new vocabulary, using mime, demonstration, and pictures. Since the grammar-translation method was proved ineffective in preparing students to communicate, the natural method emerged in which language is primarily speech, and the purpose of language teaching and learning is communication.

The Total Physical Response Method

James Asher's total physical response method is based on the belief that children acquire language with motor activity (Richards & Rogers, 1986). According to Larsen-Freeman (1986), this method was developed based on observations of how children acquire their mother tongue. This comprehension-based approach to language teaching and learning focuses on listening comprehension during the early second or foreign

language learning process. The method allows students to concentrate fully on listening without any pressure to produce language. It is expected that students will speak when they are ready. Feelings of success and low levels of anxiety are thought to facilitate language learning and further motivate learners. The teacher is tolerant of students' errors, and explanations of language form are postponed until students become somewhat more proficient in the target language. In this method, learners' mother tongue is allowed to be used with the target language. For these reasons, the total physical response method is a recommended approach for early-stage child and adult language teaching. The goal of the method also proves its appropriateness:

> Teachers who use the Total Physical Response Method believe in the importance of having their students *enjoy* their experience in learning to communicate in a foreign language. In fact, the Total Physical Response Method was developed in order to reduce the stress people feel when studying foreign languages and thereby encourage students to persist in their study beyond a beginning level of proficiency (p. 116).

DEVELOPMENT OF CLT CURRICULUM

As mentioned earlier, the goal of CLT is to enable learners to acquire communicative competence, which is broken down into several communicative skills. The communicative approach aims not only at students' development and use of the four major skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), but also aims at combining and integrating the four skills in use (Xiaoju, 1990).

Richards (1990) pointed out five characteristics of the nature of verbal communication that should be carefully considered in designing second or foreign language curriculum in order for learners to acquire communicative competence. The first characteristic is that "communication is meaning-based." The priority of communication is getting meaning across, and for this purpose, utterances or sentences that second or foreign language learners produce do not need to be grammatically correct. Learners can convey their meaning and intention even with only a little vocabulary. This point is more important when considering the first stage of language learning.

The second characteristic is that "communication is conventional." Communication consists of many conventional language uses, for example, conversational openers such as "How are you?" and memorized clauses such as "Pardon me?" Native speakers use these "pre-programmed" conventional languages regularly.

Thus, introducing different forms of conventionalized language helps learners communicate naturally.

The third characteristic that needs to be considered when designing second or foreign language curriculum is that "communication is appropriate." Although the first and second characteristics may be satisfied, language learners should learn how to communicate appropriately. That is, utterances or sentences should be appropriate between a speaker and listener (or writer and reader) in a given setting and circumstance. This point is closely related to sociolinguistic competence under language competence, specifically pragmatic competence in Bachman's (1990) communicative language ability model. Thus, materials, one part of curriculum, need to provide practices in choosing appropriate language for a situation depending on interlocutors' ages, rank, and social status, and practices in communicating based on these learners' own judgments.

The fourth characteristic is that "communication is interactional." This point is similar to strategic competence in Bachman's (1990) communicative language ability model. The speaker's verbal and visual signatures, canned topics and formulaic utterances, and appropriate turn-taking strategies make communication natural. Language learners should acquire the interactional skills that are also a component of communicative competence.

The last characteristic is that "communication is structured." From a macro perspective, different rhetorical tasks require different forms of utterance organization; from a micro perspective, words and phrases in the discourse should be cohesive. Communication is an ongoing organization of these two perspectives. This structural aspect refers to textual competence under language competence, specifically organizational competence in Bachman's (1990) communicative language ability model. According to Richards (1990), these five characteristics are essential for learners' acquisition of communicative language ability which is the primary goal of CLT. Consequently, it is necessary that CLT curriculum include these crucial characteristics.

Keeping these characteristics in mind, the first thing to consider when designing a curriculum are the following questions: Who are the students? What are their needs? and What is the goal of the curriculum? (Hammer, 1991; Lynch, 1996; Stern, 1992). Brown (1995) defines needs analysis, goals, and objectives, and explains the relationship between them. A needs analysis refers to the activities carried out to gather information on the learning needs of a target group of students. An analysis of the learning context and educational policy can help provide insight into students' needs (Stern, 1992). The needs analysis identifies the purposes of the curriculum, expected types of communication, and the level of learner proficiency. The goals and objectives of the

curriculum are thus determined according to the outcome of the needs analysis. The goal, as defined by Brown, is a different concept from the objective. "Goals are defined ... as general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims based on perceived language and situation needs" (Brown, 1995, p. 71). Alternatively, objectives are defined "as specific statements that describe the particular knowledge, behaviors, and/or skills that the learner will be expected to know or perform at the end of a course or program" (Brown, 1995, p. 73). That is, goal statements form the basis of the development of objectives, and objectives are the building blocks for accomplishing goals. In addition, Stern (1992) notes that the objectives must be defined as clearly as possible with samples of the language level expected to be attained by the end of teaching. It is important that the curriculum enable flexibility in the teaching context; too much flexibility and too few systematic plans, however, could be risky.

Although concrete objectives and systematic plans are required in the development of curriculum, curriculum certainly needs flexibility, as mentioned earlier, largely because the CLT curriculum pursues student-centredness. "The communicative approach demands a high degree of initiative from learners .... Only one's own active efforts can ensure the development of [communicative competence]" (Xiaoju, 1990, pp. 68-69). Thus, there is no director in the communicative language classroom. The teacher is another participant, and the teacher's role is to provide the conditions for students' communicative activities, guide these activities, help students along with the process, and evaluate them. Consequently, the CLT curriculum needs to permit some flexibility for students' communicative activities.

Communicative activities are central to the CLT curriculum as they guide language learners to acquire communicative language ability. Communicative activities are defined as any activities that put learners into real communication situations (Stern, 1992). According to Stern, for example, when a teacher asks a student to open a window, this activity becomes a communicative activity only if the teacher's genuine intention is a request. If the teacher's purpose is to practice the imperative form with this activity, it is not a communicative activity, but a linguistic exercise. Xiaoju (1990) suggests three conditions to be met for communicative classroom activities. The first condition is "real situation, real roles." In order to be able to produce an appropriate utterance in a given situation, learners' mental reactions to the situation should precede verbal reactions. If learners do not practice using these mental reactions in a real situation with a real role, they cannot develop the ability to use mental reactions, although they can sometimes produce appropriate utterances. The second condition is "need, purpose, and substance for communication." In real life, need, purpose, and substance

are what make people communicate.   Therefore, when teachers want to make their students communicate in the classroom, they need to provide the students with need, purpose, and substance for communication.   The last condition is "freedom and unpredictability."   In a language classroom, students often repeat pre-written dialogues or utter sentences following a prescribed pattern.   There is neither freedom nor unpredictability here, and students are in a protected position.   However, language learners need to learn and practice how to handle freedom and unpredictability because they are not always in a protected situation in a real communicative world.

The classroom cannot provide students with the same environment where the target language is naturally used, but it is possible to provide some of the characteristics of real situations.   Stern (1992) classifies some of the communicative activities that can be integrated in the communicative language classroom.   They include student-teacher interaction in the target language for classroom management, topics and activities arising from learners' personal life such as family and daily life events, and classroom exercises such as information gap, jigsaw, and role-play.   Stern (1992) further argues that these communicative activities can be integrated in curriculum at a very early stage of language learning.   "Communication is not a late phase that follows language instruction; it is an integral part of instruction from the beginning" (p. 179).   He also suggests some ways to integrate communicative activities into the curriculum of early-stage language learning. The first suggestion is based on the assumption that standard expressions are easier than expressions that include unpredictable uses of language.   Thus, it is reasonable to introduce standard expressions to beginners and to leave the more unpredictable language uses for an upper level.   Another suggestion is to do receptive activities, rather than productive activities, at an early stage so that beginner learners do not feel pressured to produce.   The last suggestion is to relieve beginner learners' burden by giving them activities involving short turns.

Communicative activities examined above play an essential role in the CLT curriculum.   However, this does not mean that the communicative approach ignores an analytic aspect of language teaching.

In a communicative syllabus the language aspect is subsidiary to the demands of the topic or situation. Even if the teacher pays attention to specific language items (grammatical structure, vocabulary, style, or intonation), the activity is communicative so long as the intention is to transmit meaning, rather than to focus on the code. It is, therefore, quite within the scope of the communicative syllabus to exercise a certain degree of linguistic control, which can best be visualized as a continuum (Stern, 1992, p. 201).

Thus, both linguistic and communicative components within the curriculum are required, and complement each other.

MATERIAL EVALUATION

Brown (1995) discusses the essential elements of a curriculum – needs analysis, objectives, testing, material, teaching, and evaluation, and shows how these components interact with each other in teaching situations. The most relevant of these elements to my study is materials.

In my study, materials or textbook sets refer not only to the textbooks themselves, but also to supplementary materials available to students and teachers in the classroom. The criteria for material evaluation reviewed below, therefore, includes the evaluation of supplementary materials.

Harmer (1991) points out the importance of textbooks. Textbooks give teachers ideas about what to teach and how to teach, often functioning as a basic syllabus for a class. As such, they strongly influence what type of teaching takes place. Low (1989) also argues that "teaching materials are one of the major determinants of what gets taught in language teaching programmes" (p. 136). As both Harmer and Low suggest, material is considered an essential component of the curriculum, and consequently material evaluation should be included in an evaluation of the curriculum.

There are many factors to be analyzed in material evaluation. Cunningsworth (1984), presents a checklist of evaluation criteria for EFL teaching materials. The relevant factors are categorized, with each containing subcategories of questions. An overview of the issues addressed in each of Cunningsworth's categories follows.

The category of "language content" addresses how language form, language function, and patterns of communicative interaction are organized; which language forms are taught, such as phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse; how appropriate the language taught is to the context; and what language skills are taught, such as receptive and productive skills. The category of "selection and grading of language items" addresses the selection and sequencing of the language taught; and the extent to which the grading of the language content is checked. The category of "presentation and practice of new language items" examines the basis of the language teaching approach taken; the ways in which new structures and vocabulary, and the phonological system are presented; and the adequacy of practice activities in terms of meaningfulness, appropriateness, and relevancy to learners' needs and interests. The category of

"developing language skills and communicative abilities" addresses the communicative/interactive based activities and whether they are representative of real language use. The category of "supporting materials" addresses the usefulness of supporting materials such as visual material, and a teacher's book is also evaluated. The category of "motivation and the learner" addresses whether the content and activities presented in the materials are designed according to the learners' age, needs, and social and cultural backgrounds, so that they are appealing to students and encourage students to be actively involved in the learning process. The last category of "conclusions and overall evaluation" allows evaluators to discuss their overall opinion of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the materials evaluated.

Skierso (1991) suggests a different framework for textbook analysis. She argues that the first step for material evaluation is to gather information about the students' background, the course syllabus, and the learning context. As a second step, she divides materials into five subsections: bibliographical data, aims and goals, subject matter, vocabulary and structures, and layout and physical makeup. She also suggests that the teacher's manual be evaluated as a part of material evaluation. Like Cunningsworth, each section has a series of questions addressing the issue at hand.

Many other scholars, for example Ellis (1997), Sheldon (1988), and Williams (1983), also suggest criteria for material evaluation, and many aspects of their criteria overlap. These criteria provide information on the breadth of elements that can be considered in a material evaluation and point out which elements, specifically, among the many aspects of materials are most essential to examine. Thus, material evaluation helps the adoption, adaptation, and development of material appropriate for a teaching situation.

In this Chapter I reviewed the literature on (a) the characteristics of CLT, (b) communicative competence, the desired goal of CLT, (c) two main approaches to language teaching for children or early stage learners, (d) CLT curriculum development, and (e) material evaluation. The main focus of the literature reviewed in this chapter was on the English as a second language (ESL) learning context. The study presented in this thesis addresses the Korean EFL context.

Chapter 3 describes the research questions of the study and methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND

METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Li (1998) points out that one of the problems of CLT is its inadequate account of EFL teaching. "Accounts of CLT have not taken into consideration some of the salient features of EFL learning and teaching. Consequently, introducing CLT [developed for Western language teaching] into the Korean EFL context could be problematic" (p. 694). One of Li's research participants also commented that "EFL is very different from ESL. But many people tend to confuse them and often ignore the special elements of EFL situations. I think that's why we EFL teachers usually find Western language teaching methods difficult to use" (p. 694). Therefore, it is important that CLT be interpreted and applied according to the specific context, that is, unique CLT should be established for elementary EFL in Korea. For this purpose, I now turn to a case study of Korean elementary EFL based on the North American CLT literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of my thesis.

The purpose of this research is twofold. First, it is to develop appropriate CLT criteria for elementary school pupils who begin learning EFL in Korea. I then evaluate whether both CLT-based 6th and 7th national curricula for EFL are consistent with the essential components of my criteria and what aspects of the new curriculum have been changed for better or worse. Second, the purpose is to examine how the curriculum change affects one component of the curriculum, the materials. For material evaluation and comparison, I focus on spoken language communicative activities. One of the many elements covered in a textbook set is *communicative activities*. I have chosen to examine these activities because one major difference between the two curricula is that in the 7th curriculum the *communicative activities* section is categorized separately from language skills and emphasized more, while in the 6th curriculum *communication* is emphasized under language skills (J. K. Lee, 2000). According to *English Educational Policies in Elementary Schools* (1997), the material contents are focused on the spoken language due to the fact that pupils in elementary levels are young and are being taught

English for the first time as a regular subject. Written language is gradually introduced in order for the pupils to improve their understanding of the spoken language. The alphabet is introduced partly for the purpose of facilitating the perception of words in the 3rd and 4th grades, and partly for the purpose of aiding comprehension of the spoken language in the 5th and 6th grades. Therefore, in my analysis I focus on spoken language communicative activities when analyzing how the curriculum change affects the newly developed material. In other words, I investigate how spoken language communicative activities are emphasized in the new material.

For the curriculum and textbook set evaluation and comparison, I analyze the 6th and the 7th national curriculum for grade 4. The students who started learning English in 2000 based on the 6th curriculum are in grade 4 in 2001, continuing to learn English, but based on the new curriculum. Only these students have had the opportunity to learn English based on the two curricula within two years (2000 and 2001). I believe that the perceptions of the teachers and the students who have experienced both curricula and materials are most appropriate for my study. For my evaluation and comparison, I therefore analyze teachers' perceptions, including their reports of their students' reactions, towards the change of textbook sets due to the curriculum change. In order to compare material based on the 6th curriculum to that based on the 7th, I have chosen one textbook set out of 16 based on the 6th curriculum. Comparing only two sets of materials and, moreover, limiting my focus to spoken language communicative activities make the research feasible. For this purpose, I have chosen a textbook set from Sisayoungasa Co., one of the most prominent English education publishers in Korea.

There are therefore two major areas of inquiry in my research: (1) the development of CLT criteria for elementary EFL in Korea and evaluation of the 6th and 7th curricula; and (2) a comparison of the respective curricula materials focusing on spoken language communicative activities. The specific research questions are: (1) To what extent are the two 4th grade elementary EFL curricula in Korea CLT-based?; and (2) Through exploring various perspectives, to what extent do the respective 4th grade textbook sets correspond to spoken language communicative needs? First I compare the 4th grade EFL curricula to my CLT criteria (for the 6th and 7th curricula respectively), and then I compare the 6th curriculum to the 7th to identify any differences. After the curriculum evaluation, through an exploration of various perspectives I examine whether the 6th and 7th curricula textbook sets for the 4th grade correspond to their respective curricula in terms of spoken language communicative activities, and whether the

curriculum changes are truly reflected in the textbook sets, again in terms of spoken language communicative activities.

CONTEXT

Elementary EFL in Korea first started in 1997. The first elementary English curriculum, the 6th national curriculum, was implemented for the 3rd grade in 1997, expanded to the 3rd and 4th grades in 1998, to the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades in 1999, and finally included the 6th grade in 2000 (Ministry of Education, 1997). According to this curriculum, the approach to elementary school English teaching and learning was a communicative approach, unlike the secondary English curriculum which was based on grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods.

Since March 2001, the new 7th national curriculum has been gradually implemented in elementary EFL starting in the 3rd and 4th grades. It will be implemented in the 5th and 6th grades in 2002 (Lee, 2000). This curriculum, like the 6th, is also based on the communicative approach (Ministry of Education, 2000).

The 4th grade pupils, the target grade of this research, are 10 years old and have been learning English since the 3rd grade. Last year, these pupils learned English with the Sisayoungasa Co. material, one of 16 possible material sets developed by different publishers and officially approved by the Ministry of Education for the 6th curriculum. The materials consisted of a textbook, audiotapes, and videotapes. This year, in their second year of English learning, these pupils are learning English with material developed by the Ministry of Education for the new 7th curriculum. This material consists of a textbook, audiotapes, and CD–ROMs. Although private English education in small group lessons or in private institutes is rapidly increasing in the big cities, most Korean pupils still do not have the opportunity to listen to or use English outside the EFL classroom.

PARTICIPANTS

In this research, I developed CLT criteria for Korean elementary EFL as an external evaluator in order to evaluate the 6th and the 7th curricula and materials. The development of CLT criteria was based on my experience in Korea as a student who learned EFL for over 10 years, on my experience in Korea as a tutor who taught elementary children, and on my extensive review of the literature. According to Lynch (1996), both "internal evaluators" and "external evaluators" are important in order to obtain various viewpoints: internal evaluators for taking advantage of their close

understanding of the context, and external evaluators for greater objectivity. Therefore, as an outsider, I acted as an external evaluator on the recent development of elementary EFL in Korea.

To obtain an internal evaluator's perspective, three teachers and a policy maker were involved in this research. In interviews with the teachers, I asked them for their perceptions of the curriculum and material change. According to Li (1998), "teachers' perceptions of the feasibility of a CLT innovation in a particular context are crucial in determining the ultimate success or failure of that innovation" (p. 678). Thus, teachers' perceptions of the curriculum and material used in the classroom should be regarded important data and considered carefully. The teachers were also asked in the interviews about the students' reactions towards the change. While interviewing the children directly might provide the best insight into their perceptions about the change, I thought that the children would be too young to articulate the differences. Because the teachers consciously and unconsciously sort through all of the complexity in class, they can make judgments about how successful and effective their classes are and what their classes still need. Thus, I decided to ask the teachers about their students' reactions.

> The teacher and only the teacher should make judgments about the particular students in a given
> class. These judgments can be very important as the teacher deals with the myriad cognitive,
> affective, and personal variables that will be interacting for the particular students at a particular
> time to form the unique characteristics of a given class (Brown, 1995, p. 23).

Two of the three teachers involved in this study, A and B, are homeroom teachers, teaching all elementary subjects as well as EFL at a public elementary school located in a small rural area of Korea. The third teacher, C, in contrast, is an EFL teacher, teaching only EFL, at a private elementary school located in Seoul, the capital of Korea, where education is centralized. The environment of a classroom or school, such as class size, may affect the teachers' perceptions, so I chose three teachers from different schools; as mentioned above, two are homeroom teachers at a public school, and the other is an EFL teacher at a private school. All three teachers taught 4th grade English using the Sisayoungasa Co. material for the 6th curriculum and also teach 4th grade English now for the 7th curriculum. More detailed information about the teachers will be described with the interview results.

To obtain another internal evaluator's perspective, I interviewed a policy maker, a senior supervisor in the School Policy Office of the Department of Education & Human Resources Development.

INSTRUMENTS

For the first part of the research – CLT criteria development for elementary EFL in Korea and the evaluation of curricula – the case study approach introduced by Stern (1992) was adapted to illustrate my criteria. Within that framework both the 6th and 7th national EFL curricula are described and evaluated simultaneously. Stern suggests five areas of curriculum to be considered: objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), evaluation of progress, and resources. My CLT criteria for curriculum evaluation are divided into four main sections: objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), and evaluation of progress. Each section describes in detail elementary EFL components appropriate in Korea based on what Stern includes in each area. Stern's last area, resources, is not included in this part of my analysis since this area is relevant to the evaluation of the materials, and will be covered in the second part of my analysis. The CLT criteria developed for Korean elementary EFL are presented in Chapter 4, the chapter on presentation and discussion of results.

For the second part of the research – material comparison focusing on spoken language communicative activities across the 6th and 7th national EFL curricula – I gathered various perspectives on the material change from three teachers and a policy maker as internal evaluators, and myself as an external evaluator. Written questionnaires and oral interviews based on the questionnaires were used for my data collection instruments. Question content was based on the literature review and my own experience in the Korean context. Both written questions and oral interviews were carried out in the participants' mother tongue, Korean. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

The questions asked for teacher opinions about the changes in both the curriculum and textbook set in general, and about the effects of the new curriculum on the spoken language communicative activities presented in the new textbook set. Teachers were also asked for their opinions on whether my CLT criteria seemed appropriate for Korean elementary school English learning situations. The policy maker was asked for his opinion concerning the effects of the new curriculum on the spoken language communicative activities presented in the new textbook set. In addition, he was asked why it was considered necessary for a new curriculum to be implemented in 2001, given that the previous curriculum was also based on the communicative approach. Finally, he was asked why the Ministry of Education published only one textbook set to be used in the 7th curriculum, rather than providing a choice of materials from a variety of publishers as was the case in the 6th curriculum.

PROCEDURE

All appropriate ethical procedures were followed for the data collection (see Appendix C for a copy of the Ethical Certificate from the Faculty of Education at McGill University). Participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the research through a written consent form with more detailed oral explanations on the phone. They were informed that they would voluntarily participate in the research and were assured that any information offered to the researcher would be remain confidential and would be used only for the purpose of this study.

First, I developed the CLT criteria for Korean elementary EFL. Both the 6th and the 7th curricula were described and evaluated separately based on these criteria, and the two curricula were then compared to each other. After this curriculum evaluation, I as an external evaluator identified the material change in terms of spoken language communicative activities. In order to compare different viewpoints on the material change across the 6th and 7th curricula and to obtain an "internal" evaluation, I interviewed three teachers and a policy maker both orally and in a written form.

I prepared semi-open interviews for the internal evaluators in which specific and defined questions were determined in advance. Elaboration on the questions and the answers was allowed during interviews for the purpose of obtaining more information and clarifying vague statements. Written interview questions were distributed to the participants in advance so that they could review and think about the questions. The interviewees wrote their responses on a separate paper, and then sent them to me, by mail or email, with their consent forms. I was in Montreal, Canada, and the interviewees were in Korea. After gathering all the responses, I interviewed the interviewees on the phone for more detailed explanations or clarification. It was during the telephone interviews that the three teachers were asked for their opinions about my CLT criteria.

DATA ANALYSIS

For the analysis of the internal evaluators' data, the oral interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for later analysis. The transcription of the oral interviews and the written answers, both written in Korean, are available upon request.

In order to provide my opinion as an external evaluator on the recent development of elementary EFL curricula, I divided my material evaluation criteria into four main areas: *Definition of spoken language communicative activities*; *Correspondence of the 6th material (Sisayoungasa Co.) to the 6th curriculum*; *Correspondence of the 7th material to the 7th curriculum*; and *Curriculum changes across*

the materials from the 6th to the 7th. I first examined whether the 6th and 7th curriculum materials corresponded to their respective curricula in terms of spoken language communicative activities. For the examinations, I referred to the curriculum evaluation findings and selected the parts of each curriculum related to spoken language communicative activities based on my definition of spoken language communicative activities and based on the CLT criteria that I developed for the evaluation of elementary EFL in Korea. Specifically, for the 6th curriculum, as the curriculum parts related to spoken language activities, I selected goals, content, student-centred activities, small group activities, flexibility for each learning context, and the use of both Korean and English in the classroom. For the 7th curriculum, I chose goals, content, interactive activities, the emphasis on repetition, pupils' active participation, small group and student-centred activities, flexibility for each learning context, separate lessons based on level, and the greater emphasis on receptive skills than productive skills. I then compared these related curricula parts to both materials separately, the related parts of the 6th curriculum to the 6th material and the related parts of the 7th curriculum to the 7th material. After examining the extent to which the curriculum and material corresponded in terms of spoken language communicative activities, I examined whether the curriculum changes, revealed in the earlier curriculum comparison, were truly reflected in the materials, again in terms of spoken language communicative activities. During this time, I asked myself some of the same questions given to the internal evaluators in order to compare my viewpoints to theirs. These questions included, "What does the term communicative activities mean to you, in terms of spoken language activities?", "Do you feel that spoken language communicative activities are emphasized more in the 7th textbook set than in the 6th as the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation claims? If yes, what kinds of activities contribute to this change in the materials?", "Which textbook set is more effective for spoken language communicative activities?", "Does the textbook set change have positive effects on spoken language communicative activities?", and "Focusing on spoken language communicative activities, what is your perception of the curriculum and material changes? What do you think are the positive and negative changes? Where do you think there are still deficiencies in the spoken language communicative activities in the 7th textbook set?"

This chapter explained the purpose of the study and the research questions, provided background information on the implementation of elementary EFL in Korea, and described the participants of the study, the instruments used for the curriculum and

material evaluations, the data collection procedures, and the methods of data analysis. Based on this research design, the next chapter presents and discusses the results.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF

RESULTS

CLT CRITERIA FOR CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

The following CLT criteria were developed for analysis of curricula based on the review of literature in the previous chapter and my own experiences in Korea as a student who learned English for over 10 years, and as a teacher who taught English to children. The CLT criteria were designed in order to analyze EFL curricula which have been used for beginner level elementary school education in Korea. Consequently, the criteria were developed in view of the specific EFL context, the learners' early stage of English learning, and the CLT approach to language teaching. The form of the case study approach introduced by Stern (1992), which consists of objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), evaluation of progress, and resources, is adapted to illustrate my criteria.

Objectives. The goals and objectives of learning English should be clearly indicated in the curriculum based on an analysis of the learning context and needs analysis. A vague description of the goals and objectives will not suffice as a guide for either teaching or evaluation. Thus, when describing objectives, the expected output at the end of semester or year should be concretely stated with examples.

Content. Content appropriate to pupils' interests and needs should be provided. The outcome of a needs analysis focusing on the pupils who are learning EFL in Korea, their environment and learning context, and their English language learning goals, should form the basis of the curriculum content areas. It would prove helpful if the procedures for such an analysis were described. Concrete examples of the content should also be provided.

Procedures (classroom treatment variables). (a) In the CLT classroom, students should play a major role as initiators. The teacher is a facilitator or guide, not a director. Thus, the curriculum should give flexibility to each learning context for student-centred classroom activities. (b) Small group activities, compared to whole class activities, permit more time for pupils to communicate in the language classroom.

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Thus, pair-work and small group activities should be used more, especially for Korean pupils who are exposed to English only in the English class and who rarely have the opportunity to use English outside the classroom. (c) Because the children are in the first stage of English learning, receptive skills, such as listening, should precede productive skills such as speaking, so that children do not feel pressured to produce language.

Evaluation of progress. (a) The primary goal of CLT is the acquisition of communicative competence. Thus, how effectively and appropriately the pupils can communicate should be the first evaluation criterion. The pupils' performance should not be judged based on repetition and memorization. (b) The priority of CLT should be given to comprehensible utterances; meaning should be emphasized over accuracy. Thus, grammatical errors should be tolerated, and immediate and frequent error correction should be avoided. (c) Ongoing evaluation programs corresponding to teaching procedures should be clearly articulated and formally documented.

Feedback on CLT Criteria

During the oral interviews, I asked the teachers who participated in my study (Teachers *A*, *B*, and *C*) their opinion on the CLT criteria that I developed for elementary EFL in Korea. The teachers generally agreed with my criteria without offering any corrections or further suggestions in terms of the division of the criteria into the four sections (objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), and evaluation of progress), and in terms of the detailed descriptions of each section. Teacher *B* affirmed the importance of ongoing evaluation programs through teachers' close observations, and teacher *C* affirmed the importance of small group activities and the need for flexibility in the curriculum to accommodate different learning contexts.

CURRICULUM EVALUATION BASED ON CLT CRITERIA

In this section, I evaluate both the 6th and 7th elementary EFL curricula based on my CLT criteria developed for elementary EFL CLT in South Korea. Below I describe and critique the two curricula within the CLT criteria framework.

The 6th National Elementary EFL Curriculum

In 1997, based on the 6th national curriculum in Korea, the subject of English was introduced into every elementary school. This was the first attempt to teach English as a regular subject at the elementary level. The pupils were taught English in two 40-minute classes a week. The Ministry document, *Explanation of Elementary*

School Curriculum (IV) – English (Ministry of Education, 1996), which is written in Korean, served as the main source for the description of the 6th elementary EFL curriculum.

Objectives. The primary goals of the 6th curriculum were to encourage pupils to be interested in and confident with English, to enable them to understand basic English used in everyday life, and to teach them how to express basic ideas in English. These goals are divided into five areas, covering all four areas of language: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The first is to enable pupils to understand a simple text or conversation after listening to it. The second is to enable pupils to understand an easy and simple text after reading it. The third is to enable pupils to express themselves in simple speech. The fourth is to enable pupils to express themselves in easy and simple writing. The last is to heighten pupils' understanding of their mother tongue, Korean, through English learning.

The secondary goal of learning English is related to culture education. "Culture might be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time" (Brown, 1993, p. 164). However, culture is not simply the sum of these separate parts. According to Condon, "it is a system of integrated patterns, most of which remain below the threshold of consciousness, yet all of which govern human behavior" (as cited in Brown, 1993, p.164). A language is one of the components which characterize a culture. According to Brown (1993),

> a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. The acquisition of a second language...is also the acquisition of a second culture (p. 165).

Thus, it is expected that through exposure to English in the curriculum, pupils will become more aware of the customs of English speaking people, develop positive attitudes towards English speakers, and recognize the differences in language and culture between Korea and English speaking countries. Korea is a monoculture – there is only one race and one language; consequently, it is difficult for Koreans not only to learn a foreign language but also to understand other people and their cultures. Thus, an attempt to teach English from a cultural perspective is a very strong component of the curriculum.

The curriculum states objectives separately for each grade (grades 3 to 6). The target group of this study is grade 4, so only objectives of the 4th grade are described. Since writing is yet to be introduced in the 4th grade, the objectives of the 4th grade EFL

cover listening, reading, and speaking. The objectives for each of these areas follow. (a) Listening: by the end of year, students should be able to respond to simple comments; find colors, numbers, and figures after listening; choose a picture which best describes an oral explanation; and understand an easy, simple conversation related to introduction, feeling, thought, and nature. The curriculum defines an 'easy, simple conversation' as entailing easy vocabulary in sentences of less than seven words. (b) Reading: by the end of the year, students should be able to recognize and read the alphabet. (c) Speaking: by the end of the year, pupils should be able to sing easy English songs; explain simple movements; play games using easy, simple English; and ask and answer simple questions. The objectives of speaking component also highlight cultural differences. The way of introducing oneself in Korea, for example, is different from the way it is done in English speaking countries.

As revealed above, the goals and objectives of learning English are clearly indicated in the curriculum, with the expected output at the end of the year concretely stated. The attempt to introduce culture along with the English language comes after careful consideration of the learning context of Korean elementary school pupils who cannot experience the foreign culture first-hand.

However, concrete examples of the goals and objectives are not offered. Furthermore, the goals and objectives are not based on a needs analysis. The only analysis done and presented is of the developmental characteristics of pupils at their age. The handbook (Ministry of Education, 1996) describes elementary school pupils as being in the "concrete operational" period, requiring concrete experiences in the learning process. They also note that the children have short concentration spans, move around a lot, and prefer playing to studying. Based on these characteristics, the handbook suggests methods such as how to offer appropriate input to children and how to arouse their interests with examples. It also suggests various approaches to teaching children EFL. Despite having analyzed the pupils' developmental characteristics and having provided suggestions, the Ministry of Education did not do a needs analysis. Neither the pupils' learning needs nor their interests or preferences are considered. One of the first goals indicated in the handbook is that elementary EFL aims at arousing pupils' interests in the English language. Yet, nowhere is there an analysis of who the pupils are and what they are interested in doing – factors needing to be considered before the goals and objectives of the curriculum are set.

Content. According to the 6th curriculum, the selected content should be closely related to situations and events which pupils often face. It should also be prepared to arouse pupils' interests and curiosity by addressing subjects that pupils are

familiar with.   The curriculum does not indicate possible content areas for each grade level separately, but suggests only one set of content areas for all grades to be used.   The areas presented in the curriculum are matters about private life, friendship, school life, family life, health, hobby, sports, weather, and nature.   It is also stated that anything that pupils are interested in can be a matter of content.

At the end of the curriculum, examples which are normally used for communication are presented as an appendix, and these examples are recommended to be taught and used for classroom communicative activities as well.   The examples are classified under several subheadings such as like/dislike, introduction, invitation, appointment, telephone conversation, habit, agreement/disagreement, direction, and so on.

The *content* section contains the same problem as the previous *objectives* section. That is, although pupils' interests and needs are most important in selecting content, it is not indicated in the curriculum whether these selected content areas reflect the opinions of the pupils, teachers, or curriculum developers.   Thus, it is hard to say whether the basis of the curriculum content areas are a result of a needs analysis focusing on the pupils who are learning EFL in Korea, their environment and learning context, and their English language learning goals.

Procedures (classroom treatment variables).   The 6th elementary EFL curriculum was developed based on CLT that is different from the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods on which secondary EFL is based.   In the 6th curriculum, CLT is compared to previous language teaching approaches, that is, the newly introduced elementary EFL is compared to secondary EFL.   One of the differences between the two is who plays the main role in the classroom.   According to the 6th curriculum, students play a major role as initiators in the elementary EFL classroom, and teachers are promoters, mediators, and facilitators for students' activities.   It is also clearly stated that classroom activities can be modified for each classroom context, since students are supposed to lead classroom activities actively.   In other words, the curriculum permits flexibility to each learning context for student-centred classroom activities.   The recommended 6th curriculum teaching procedures, such as the students' and teachers' role in the classroom, the flexibility of the curriculum for each learning context, and student-centred activities, are well matched to what I proposed as desirable classroom management procedures in my CLT criteria.

CLT-based elementary EFL emphasizes pair work and small group activities over whole class activities.   This is desirable given the Korean context and also for student-centred CLT classroom management.   Korean pupils rarely have the opportunity to meet English speakers or to use English outside the EFL classroom.   Thus, pair work

and small group activities provide more opportunities for pupils to communicate in English. The importance of pair work and small group activities is clearly stated and recommended in the curriculum. However, concrete directions or specific example activities are not given at all. This might cause teachers' difficulty in implementing these activities in the classroom.

Elementary English education emphasizes the spoken language. Due to the fact that children in elementary levels are young and English is taught for the first time as a regular subject, the contents are focused on communicative language skills, especially the spoken language. The written language is gradually introduced in order for children to improve their understanding of the spoken language. The alphabet is introduced partly for the purpose of facilitating the perception of words in the 4th grade, and for the purpose of aiding comprehension of the spoken language in the 5th and 6th grades.

The curriculum divides English into spoken language and written language, and emphasizes spoken language over written language. However, in the curriculum, receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) are not further distinguished from one another. In the early stage of language learning, receptive skills need to precede productive skills, so that pupils do not feel pressured to produce language. The curriculum failed to further specify the advisable teaching orders of skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing within the spoken and written language components.

Evaluation of Progress. The pupils' first opportunity to learn English is in elementary school. Thus, it is essential that they become familiar with English, have self-confidence, and remain interested. In order to relieve the psychological pressure of evaluation, grades such as A, B, C, D, and F are not used for the purpose of indicating student achievement. Instead, teachers observe the pupils' degree of participation, interest, enthusiasm, understanding, and achievement in the classroom. These observations include all four skill areas, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The focus of the elementary English evaluation is more on spoken language (listening and speaking) than on written language (reading and writing) since spoken language is emphasized over the written language in the teaching procedures. The teachers' observations of students' language achievement and overall attitude in class are documented and then given to parents to inform them of their children's performance.

At the beginning stage of learning English, the pupils have yet to establish their communicative language ability. Thus, in the 6th curriculum, the evaluation is based on observations throughout the learning process rather than on tests or interviews. Pupils are allowed to show their understanding in Korean as well as in English or through

physical responses.   By close observations, teachers check how much communicative language ability their students have achieved in the beginning stage.   The observation of the pupils' degree of participation, interest, and enthusiasm as well as their achievement is very desirable because it means that this evaluation is based on the learning process rather than on the final product, and it reflects the curriculum goal that the content of instruction be of interest to the pupils.

Another characteristic of elementary EFL evaluation is that the pupils' attempts to produce comprehensible language based on their understanding and situation are more important than the minimal number of accurate utterances.   That is, meaning is emphasized over accuracy.   The 6th curriculum encourages pupils to try to communicate and get their meaning across in English regardless of the grammatical errors that may be found in the pupils' utterances.   As a result, it is said that frequent and immediate error correction, especially in the middle of an exchange, should be avoided if the meaning has been conveyed successfully.   The teachers' encouragement of the communication and their tolerance to errors can bring about positive effects on the pupils' confidence in English.   Thus, the error treatment suggested in the 6th curriculum is appropriate for the primary goals of elementary EFL.

The results of evaluation are used to inform students of their achievement and appropriate directions for their further study.   The results also give teachers information concerning pupils' achievement level so that teachers can set objectives for future lessons and adjust their teaching level accordingly.   Thus, an ongoing evaluation plan throughout the learning process is as important as the final evaluation at the end of a course or program.   The 6th curriculum suggests several methods to be used for ongoing evaluation in the classroom, such as anecdotal reports and a teacher's checklist.   These methods are explained with examples so that teachers can apply them in their own classroom.   The concrete examples of anecdotal reports and a teacher's checklist presented in Korean are translated into English:

Date: April 6, 1997	Activity	
Name	Participation in communicative activities	Efforts for communication
Hong Gildong Kim Younghee		

Figure 2. An example of anecdotal reports

After observing a student, indicate the extent to which the student can perform the objectives. Indicate the date of observation and score.	
Objectives	**Score**
A student can do the followings:	
1. pronounce learned words, phrases, and sentences.	30
2. properly react to the teacher's comments.	
i.e., "Turn to page ____." "Write ____."	
"Spell ____." "Get your English book."	20
"Close your book." "Repeat ____."	
3. answer the questions about name, age, and address.	10
4. use appropriate manner for greetings.	10
5. convey her or his intentions most of the time.	30
Date of Observation: **Total:**	100

Figure 3. An example of teacher's checklist

The 7th National Elementary EFL Curriculum

The Ministry of Education developed the new national elementary EFL curriculum in order to analyze and improve problems that emerged in the 6th curriculum. Although the 7th curriculum has been slightly modified from the 6th, both curricula share most of the common essential points (Kim, 2000). The new 7th national curriculum has been applied to the 3rd and 4th grades since March, 2001. With the curriculum change, the two 40-minute EFL classes a week for the 6th curriculum were decreased to one 40-minute EFL class a week for the 7th curriculum in order to reduce the pupils' study burden. Ministry documents, *Explanation of Elementary School Curriculum* (Kim, 2000) and *Elementary School English 4 – Teacher's Guide* (Ministry of Education, 2000) which are written in Korean, served as the main sources for the description of the 7th elementary EFL curriculum.

Objectives. The 7th elementary EFL curriculum is developed in order to link CLT-based elementary EFL to secondary EFL so that elementary EFL would gradually phase into secondary EFL, rather than exist as a separate and distinct curriculum. Thus, the goals and objectives of the 7th curriculum are more systematically set and described than those of the 6th curriculum. The general goals of EFL in Korea, from elementary school to middle and high school, are to enable students to cultivate communicative

competence and to accept foreign culture with a positive attitude.   The curriculum categorizes these general goals into four concrete objectives, two of them indicated to be appropriate for the elementary level.   One of the elementary EFL goals is that pupils become interested in and confident with English, and develop basic communicative language ability.   The other goal is that pupils come to understand the Korean culture better and establish their values from exposure to foreign cultures.   As mentioned in the analysis of the 6th curriculum, exposure to cultural aspects of the target language is desirable for foreign language learners.   In this sense, the second goal of the 7th elementary EFL curriculum takes into consideration the learning context of Korean pupils.

Like the 6th curriculum, objectives for the 7th differ from grade to grade (grade 3, 4, 5, and 6).   The objectives of the 4th grade, the target group of this study, are separately set in terms of listening, speaking, and reading; writing is not yet introduced in the 4th grade.   The objectives for each of these areas follow.   (a) Listening: by the end of the year pupils should understand basic, day-to-day conversation; understand easy explanations about objects and people; react physically to one or two sentence comments; perform tasks following instruction; determine contexts in which a conversation takes place; find main words during a conversation; and understand the contents of a role-play. (b) Speaking: by the end of the year pupils should be able to talk about day-to-day life; ask and answer simple questions about objects and people; order something with one sentence; request when necessary; sing short and easy songs; and participate in a role-play.   (c) Reading: by the end of the year pupils should be able to read the alphabet; recognize the difference between capital letters and small letters; repeat easy words by looking at them; and understand the meanings of easy, simple words with the support of pictures, real objects, and movements.

As mentioned above, the goals of the 7th elementary EFL curriculum are systematically presented in a bigger framework in view of establishing a link to the secondary curriculum.   Unlike the goals, however, the objectives are not clear since many of the words used for description of the objectives are vague, such as "basic," "easy," and "simple."   The vague objectives make it unclear which outcome is expected at the end of the year.   Moreover, the curriculum does not provide any examples of the expected output.

The 7th curriculum analyzes the characteristics of elementary school pupils at the very beginning stages of learning.   The pupils are described as having a strong sense of curiosity about the many things around them and their thinking processes dominated by the senses and actual experience.   It is also noted that they have short attention spans

and they learn quickly and easily, but that they forget what they have learned just as quickly. Based on these characteristics, the curriculum suggests that interactive activities and games should be used to reinforce learning through repetition, using various teaching approaches and media. However, like the 6th curriculum, information about pupils' own interest is absent. It is hard to find evidence that the goals and objectives outlined above are based on a needs analysis.

Content. The content of the 7th curriculum is mainly centred around topics that children feel familiar with. One of the main concerns of the curriculum is to choose topics which arouse the children's interests and help them naturally acquire communicative language ability and problem solving skills. The topics proposed for all grades (grade 3, 4, 5, and 6) are matters about children's life, family, school life and friendship, relationship with others, habits, health, sports, hobbies, entertainment, travel, animals, seasons, weather, and so on. The content of the 7th curriculum also includes culture: life and customs in English speaking countries, appropriate verbal and non-verbal etiquette when communicating in English, and the comparison of English culture to Korean culture.

The curriculum entails several problems in the *content* section. The first problem is that concrete examples of the content provided in the appendix do not match the topics mentioned above, although the number of expressions and examples provided has been increased from the 6th curriculum. Most of the examples are conventionalized language and idiomatic expressions, for example, "Pardon me," "Good luck!" and "That's a good idea." The examples of content should have been provided according to the proposed topics so that material developers can use those examples when designing materials, and so that teachers can refer to extra examples when necessary. Another problem is that the topics related to culture are not clear. Even though the curriculum aims at introducing English culture to pupils with the language, a very positive aspect as mentioned in the analysis of the 6th curriculum, what English culture means and which aspects of the culture are appropriate to introduce to the pupils have not been operationalized. The next problem is that some topics provided are too difficult for the pupils to deal with in English. That is, the level of content is not appropriate for nine to twelve year old pupils. For example, the curriculum suggests human rights, equality of man and woman, and environmental protection as topics. These topics do not match the pupils' level of English proficiency nor communicative events in their everyday life. The final problem is that there is no indication as to how the topic areas were selected. The 7th curriculum argues that the selection of the content for the 6th curriculum was not based on students' needs and interests, but rather according to the opinions of the

Ministry of Education, the schools, and the teachers.   However, the new 7th curriculum does not indicate the source of content selection either: whether topics have been selected for the new curriculum based on pupils' needs analysis or whether pupils are involved in the topic selection process.

Procedures (classroom treatment variables).   The 7th elementary EFL curriculum values "open education."   Open education is characterized by the pupils' active participation, small group activities, and flexible classroom management depending on the pupils' previous experiences or background knowledge.   Open education also expects teachers to be mediators and motivators in the classroom rather than directors.   The characteristics of open education clearly suggest the elementary EFL teaching procedures of the 7th curriculum which will be described below. According to the 7th curriculum, students are communicators, negotiators, and interactors, and they are active participants in the classroom.   Alternatively, teachers are needs analysts, counselors, group process managers, motivators and facilitators.

The curriculum suggests separate lessons for different levels.   That is, a basic lesson which everyone takes is given first, and then the lessons are divided according to student proficiency levels.   Students who are in the lower levels take follow-up classes in order to fully understand the previous basic lesson, and other students who are in higher levels are challenged by new content.   Both follow-up and challenging classes are conducted around group work.   The positive side of these separate lessons is that these kinds of small group activities provide pupils who rarely meet an English environment outside the EFL classroom more opportunities to practice English. Another positive note is that the curriculum also permits flexibility to each group in the learning contexts in which different students are involved since the activities are designed based on each group's level.

The curriculum aims to improve students' communicative language ability not only by covering the four separate language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), but also by integrating the four.   However, pupils are not expected to achieve this goal in the early stage of learning English.   It suggests the order of language skills to be gradually learnt.   Listening is first introduced, followed by speaking, then gradually reading, and then finally writing.   The 7th curriculum emphasizes receptive skills over productive skills and the spoken language over the written language, while the 6th curriculum emphasizes the spoken language more than the written language and does not further divide language into receptive and productive skills.   To introduce the spoken language first, especially receptive skills, is reasonable for pupils who are learning English for the first time.   In this sense, the 7th curriculum suggests an

appropriate order of language teaching, classifying not only the spoken and written languages but also the receptive and productive skills.

Evaluation of progress. The ways of evaluating the 7th curriculum are much the same as those suggested in the 6th curriculum. Teachers evaluate the pupils through observations of small group activities – observations of not only the pupils' communicative language ability but also their participation and attitude. In other words, the primary concern of the evaluation is to provide a constant, overall description of the pupils in the ordinary classroom, of which language ability is just one element.

As indicated in the 6th curriculum, the 7th curriculum also emphasizes meaning over form, and fluency over accuracy. Moreover, error is regarded as a natural process of language acquisition. As a result, immediate error correction is avoided if the meaning is understood, especially in the middle of an exchange. According to the curriculum, immediate and frequent error correction may make pupils worry about making errors, and as a result, may prevent pupils from participating actively in class and becoming fluent. Thus, teachers should encourage students to self-correct and correct errors at the end of class as a wrap-up if necessary. This permits elementary pupils who are in the early stage of English learning to try to get their meaning across without any pressure, or anxiety, at being corrected all the time.

The process-based evaluation through observations and error treatment suggested in the 7th curriculum correspond well to the goals concerned with the pupils' interest and confidence in English. However, concrete explanations and example methods as to how to observe the pupils adequately throughout the learning process are not provided in the curriculum. These should have been clearly articulated in the 7th curriculum.

COMPARISON OF THE 6TH AND THE 7TH CURRICULA

In the previous section I made some comparisons between the 6th and 7th curricula while critiquing the curricula according to the CLT criteria I developed for elementary EFL in Korea. In this section I will point out some of the more prominent differences between the two curricula and examine which aspects have been improved or worsened, according to the CLT criteria developed for elementary EFL in Korea, with the change of curriculum from the 6th to the 7th.

The first difference between the two curricula is the description of goals and objectives. The 7th curriculum states the goals and objectives in a broader framework while the 6th curriculum states the goals and objectives for each grade of the elementary

level (B. H. Lee, 2000). The 7th curriculum first describes the goals of learning EFL in Korea, covering elementary school education to secondary school. Then it explains more specific goals for elementary students, and gives concrete objectives for each grade level (grades 3, 4, 5, and 6) separately. Although no examples are provided along with the goals and objectives as to what should be achieved at the end of program, the statements of the goals and objectives in a bigger framework does make it possible to link elementary EFL to future secondary EFL. This should help teachers and students understand what exactly is expected to be covered in the elementary level in preparation for EFL education in secondary school.

Another difference between the two curricula is that the 7th curriculum recommends separate class activities in addition to the basic class activities (B. H. Lee, 2000). A small number of students are grouped for the separate class activities according to their achievement and proficiency levels. As mentioned in the analysis of the 7th curriculum, students who understand the basic class activities are challenged with new content while other students who do not fully understand the basic class activities go over what they already learned in a small group again. Specific plans on ways to decide grouping and appropriate timing for the separate group activities are not proposed in the curriculum. Thus, teachers may have difficulties in implementing these activities in the classroom. However, it is certain that these small group activities will help both students and teachers. Lower level pupils have an opportunity to repeat what they did not exactly understand, and higher level pupils have an opportunity to be challenged by something new based on what they have already learned. Teachers can also adjust their teaching levels depending on the levels of small groups. Thus, the EFL class can be managed more effectively and efficiently.

J. K. Lee (2000) notes that there is more emphasis on communicative activities in the 7th curriculum, compared to the 6th. However, I, the researcher, found no evidence of this difference in either of the curricula. That is, both curricula emphasize the acquisition of communicative language ability as a goal of elementary EFL, and the 7th curriculum does not suggest any different communicative activities from the 6th.

The last major difference between two curricula is the emphasis on culture as a content area in the 7th curriculum (J. K. Lee, 2000). This difference is also found in the description of goals: culture education is one of the main goals in the 7th curriculum while it is only a secondary goal in the 6th. However, there is no mention at all in the new curriculum about how and what aspects of culture will be integrated with the language.

Although the previous 6th and the new 7th curricula share many common points, the 7th curriculum was newly developed in order to correct the shortcomings of the 6th

curriculum.   After comparing the two curricula based on my CLT criteria, it appears that the new suggestions made in the 7th curriculum are very positive, but concrete methods for the application of those suggestions are yet to be articulated.   More specific plans with examples should be given to teachers to implement those positive changes.

MATERIAL EVALUATION FROM VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES

In this section, the 4th grade material sets of the 6th curriculum (published by Sisayoungasa Co.) and the 7th curriculum are evaluated in order to determine the extent to which they correspond to their respective curricula, and to which the curriculum changes related to spoken language communicative activities are reflected in the material sets. This issue was explored through different perspectives: an external evaluator (the researcher) and internal evaluators (three teachers and a policy maker).

External Evaluator's View and Description

Definition of spoken language communicative activities.   Spoken language communicative activities involve both listening and speaking.   Based on the literature review and the analysis of both elementary EFL curricula, I define spoken language communicative activities as any activity that includes a purpose and need for engaging in verbal communication.   For example, an activity involving pupils asking and answering questions about themselves to each other can be considered a spoken language communicative activity only if the pupils want to know each other and share new information concerning themselves.   Further, spoken language communicative activities are also likely to occur in real situations, with the pupils playing a real role appropriate to their own age and situation.   That is, the pupils are involved in a real communicative event where freedom is given and unpredictability exists: they do not know in advance what they might hear, and they should be able to decide what they want to say.   Spoken language communicative activities primarily aim at conveying meaning between the speaker and listener.

It is difficult to recreate real life situations in the EFL classroom, but it *is* possible to integrate some spoken language communicative activities as defined above into the classroom.   Some of the classroom activities suggested by Stern (1992) are giving and following instructions in English; transferring information, such as interpreting a timetable; completing an information gap or jigsaw; solving a problem; engaging in informal talk; and role-playing.   Teachers can prepare these spoken language communicative activities according to the pupils' English proficiency.   Such activities are also appropriate for the EFL context where teachers do not have native-like

fluency in English.   Another spoken language communicative activity suggested by Stern (1992) is classroom management in English.   If teachers use English regularly in the classroom, for example greetings and comments, students would be accustomed to hearing English and gradually start speaking in English themselves.   The activities proposed by Stern include the essential characteristics of spoken language communicative activities defined above.

Does the 6th curriculum material set (Sisayoungasa Co.) correspond to the 6th curriculum?   All of the 16 material sets developed by independent publishers and officially approved by the Ministry of Education consisted of a textbook, audiotapes, and videotapes.   The textbook and audiotapes were distributed to students; the videotapes were available only for teachers.   In the material set from Sisayoungasa Co., the 6th material set focused on in this study, every spoken language communicative activity is designed around the textbook, with audiotapes and/or videotapes used depending on the textbook activity.

The textbook is organized in the same way throughout the book.   Each unit consists of seven sections presented in the following order: "Look and Listen," "Listen and Point," "Your Turn," "Look and Say," "Your Turn," "Let's Play Games," and "Do It Yourself."   In the first section, "Look and Listen," audiotapes and videotapes provide many contexts in which the target expressions of a unit occur.   In the "Listen and Point" section, the pupils listen to the target expressions of a unit and then practice matching the oral expressions they hear to the pictures in the textbook.   After these two listening sections, listening exercises called "Your Turn" are given in order to check whether the pupils have understood what they have learned so far.

From the next section, "Look and Say," the pupils start speaking. Conversational contexts are presented with pictures and empty spaces to be filled orally. The problem with this section is that the pupils do not actually speak; rather, they listen to and repeat expressions from the audiotapes or videotapes.   There is no turn taking in which the pupils can engage in conversation using the learned expressions because the answers are already spoken in the audiotapes and videotapes.   Thus, it is not a real communicative activity.   In the "Your Turn" section, pupils have an opportunity to speak with a partner or in a small group.   No pattern or dialogue is given to practice speaking, but the tasks are designed for pupils to use what they have learned in a unit.   An example of "Look and Say" and "Your Turn" is presented in Appendix B.

Following the speaking sections, is the "Let's Play Games" section which involves students in small group listening and speaking activities.   Since the games naturally induce pupils to use the target expressions of a unit, the pupils interact with

each other in small groups using language they learned while playing games. The last, wrap-up section, "Do It Yourself," checks whether pupils have understood the main expressions in that unit. Throughout the materials, Korean is used with English, mainly for the instructions.

The content of the material matches the suggested content of the curriculum. As the curriculum asserts, the material provides topics that pupils feel familiar with. The topics of the material are what pupils often face and express in their daily lives, for example, greetings, introductions, telephone conversations, stories about family members, comments on school subjects, favorite foods, hobbies, weather, and friends' birthdays. The organization of small group activities and the use of both Korean and English corresponded well to the teaching procedures of the 6th curriculum. Student-centred activities and flexibility for each learning context in the material are also consistent with the teaching procedures of the curriculum. Every activity encourages student participation. Thus, the material is based on student-centred communicative activities, and the role of the teachers is that of a guide. The material also allows flexibility for each learning context. There is no single way to use the spoken language communicative activities suggested in the material; that is, teachers can make the activities different for different situations, for instance, the way of grouping for activities.

Most importantly, the material should correspond to the goal of the elementary EFL curriculum. The material set achieves one of the major elementary EFL curriculum goals: it encourages pupils to be interested in learning English and confident using it. This is achieved by providing activities with colorful animations, stories that pupils are familiar with, and songs comprising the key expressions of each unit. It also draws on the pupils' everyday life situations, such as in the classroom and playground, whenever it provides contexts for listening practices. Thus, the material set attempts to make the pupils feel comfortable with the activities and interested in learning English. However, the other major goal of the curriculum, cultural education, is not found anywhere in the material set. This is a major omission due to the heavy emphasis placed on cultural awareness in the curriculum.

In summary, after examining what aspects of the 6th material correspond to the 6th curriculum goals and teaching procedures and what aspects do not in terms of spoken language communicative activities, my overall impression is that the material set successfully represents the 6th curriculum insofar as it provides engaging activities to interest and motivate the pupils, and it corresponds to the CLT approach.

Does the 7th curriculum material set correspond to the 7th curriculum? The 7th curriculum material set developed by the Ministry of Education consists of a textbook,

audiotapes, and CD-ROMs.   One CD-ROM is for the teachers, the other is for the students.   The teachers' CD-ROM was developed in order to help non-fluent teachers of English teach English effectively.   The students' CD-ROM was developed in order to enable students to study by themselves outside the classroom (B. H. Lee, 2000).   While the textbook of the 7th curriculum material set is compulsory, whether the schools choose the audiotapes and/or the CD-ROMs is optional.   The 7th curriculum material set for my evaluation was provided by the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation. Unfortunately they were unable to get the audiotapes to me on time, therefore I was only able to evaluate the textbook and CD-ROMs.

Like the 6th curriculum material set, the CD-ROM corresponds to specific activities in the textbook.   The first section "Look and Listen (1)" presents key expressions of a unit with pictures.   The students' CD-ROM offers explanations of the expressions in Korean.   Next section "Listen and Repeat (1)," which is provided only in the teachers' CD-ROM, presents real contexts in which the expressions learned in the first section are used.   After learning the target expressions in the first two sections, other new expressions are introduced and practiced in "Look and Listen (2)" in both the teachers' and students' CD-ROMs and "Listen and Repeat (2)" only in the teachers'. Then in the sections of "Let's Chant" and "Let's Sing," a chant and song that summarize the target expressions of a unit are played.   Although pupils can follow chants and songs when listening to them, there is no turn for the pupils only.   The section of "Let's Role-play" shows a whole story with an animation first and then let students choose one of the roles in the story.   Pupils listen to each separate section of a story and record their own voice repeating what they have just listened to.   This recording activity follows the story section by section, and after recording all sections, the pupils listen to the story again with their own voice recorded in one of the roles.   This recording activity is only presented in the students' CD-ROM.   The last section, "Let's Review," is only available in the teachers' CD-ROM, and it wraps up the content of a unit.   In this section there is a listening activity accompanied by pictures in the book and a speaking activity in which the pupils look at a conversational picture and fill in the blanks orally.   In this section the pupils are also encouraged to talk about the content dealt with in a unit with a partner or in a small group.   The "Let's Play" sections consisted of only a large picture and were not accompanied by any instructions or methods in the textbook or CD-ROMs, although they may be available in the teachers' guide which I was not given.   Thus, the "Let's Play" sections cannot be evaluated here.

The 7th curriculum material set satisfies one major goal of the 7th curriculum, which is to enable children to become interested and confident in English.   Unlike 2-

dimensional pictures, animations in the CD-ROMs are always moving.   The chants and songs are easy to follow and make it easier to become familiar with new expressions.   The stories in the role-play section are based on children's stories that many Korean pupils are familiar with.   These characteristics may help pupils feel comfortable and interested in learning new English expressions.   The CD-ROMs also make it possible for teachers and students to easily repeat the content as many times as they want.   Repetition of the sections in the students' CD-ROM may increase their confidence in English.   Such repetition with regard to pupils' characteristics is emphasized in the curriculum as well.

The content areas are mostly matched to the curriculum.   Like the 6th curriculum material set, the content of the 7th curriculum material set is also closely related to situations and events which pupils often face and feel familiar with, for example, requests for help, questions and answers about friends and family, permission and rejection followed by suggestion, and asking the price in a store.

However, there is no content that corresponds to another goal of the curriculum: to understand Korean culture better by being exposed to English.   It was claimed in the curriculum that content topics on life and customs in English speaking countries, verbal and non-verbal etiquette, and a comparison between English and Korean cultures would appear in the materials.   However, there are no topics on either culture in the material set.   Again this is a major oversight as in the 6th curriculum materials.

The 7th curriculum emphasizes the need for receptive listening skills over productive speaking skills in the spoken language communicative activities.   It is true that listening is more emphasized in the materials than speaking.   The problem is, however, that the speaking activities that *are* included in the materials are not designed for real communication.   For instance, students do not have the opportunity to *communicate* even in the "Let's Role-Play" section; rather they are expected to listen and repeat verbatim what they hear.   The activities do not prompt active student participation; rather, they make the pupils listen and repeat.   The only student-centred small group activities are provided in the "Let's Review" section.   There is neither freedom nor flexibility in the material since students only repeat pre-spoken English, even in the "Let's Role-play" section as mentioned above.

Another mismatch between the curriculum and the material is the absence of different content for separate group activities for lower level and higher level students. While the 7th curriculum emphasizes the importance of separate group activities according to the students' proficiency levels for effective classroom management, the

newly developed 7th material set does not include any different activities or content that teachers may implement for separate small group activities.

The use of the CD-ROM in the 7th curriculum material set may arouse the pupils' interest and curiosity, but my impression after evaluating the material is that pupils are only passive recipients in most activities, even though the curriculum aims at having the pupils become communicators and interactors by actively participating in the learning process. The 7th material set offers few opportunities for students to communicate in real communicative roles in real situations.

Are the changes in the curricula reflected in the material sets? Both the 6th and the 7th curricula were evaluated separately based on my CLT criteria in four areas, objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), and evaluation of progress, and then were compared with each other. The 6th and the 7th curricula material sets were also examined separately to determine the extent to which they correspond to their respective curricula. Based on these analyses of the curricula and material sets, I now examine the extent to which the changes made from the 6th to the 7th curricula are reflected in the 7th curriculum materials in terms of spoken language communicative activities.

Both the 6th and the 7th elementary EFL curricula were developed based on CLT and emphasize spoken language over written language. Although the two curricula share a basic approach to elementary EFL, there are several differences revealed in the comparison of the two curricula. One of the differences between the two curricula in terms of spoken language communicative activities is that there is more emphasis on communicative activities in the 7th curriculum. Since elementary EFL focuses much more on the spoken language than the written language, it can be said that the 7th curriculum emphasizes especially spoken language communicative activities more than before. As mentioned earlier, however, this change is not reflected in the 7th curriculum material set when compared to the 6th curriculum material set. On the contrary, the pupils seem to have fewer opportunities to be communicative with the 7th curriculum material because most of the activities in the 7th material lead pupils to listen and repeat what they hear. On the other hand, the 6th curriculum material gives the pupils more opportunities to interact with peers and to create what they want to say in real situations. For example, there are opportunities for pupils to communicate in the sections of "Your Turn" and "Let's Play Games," and these spoken language communicative activities are qualitatively different from simply repeating or pretending to be someone else, using someone else's words in an unauthentic situation. Another difference between the two curricula is the intention in the 7th curriculum to develop separate lessons for different

proficiency groups so as to elicit more effective communicative activities in the classroom. This change is not found anywhere in the newly developed material. Another difference is that there is more emphasis on combining culture with language education in the 7th curriculum than the 6th. While the 6th curriculum briefly mentions culture education as a secondary goal of English learning, the 7th curriculum emphasizes as a primary goal the importance of culture education in language education. Thus, the content of the 7th curriculum includes cultural aspects such as life and customs in English speaking countries, verbal and non-verbal etiquette, and the comparison of English culture and Korean culture. Despite the emphasis given to culture education, neither curricula material sets include any cultural topics. As indicated earlier, this is a major problem with both the 6th and 7th curriculum material sets.

The only curriculum change reflected in the materials is the emphasis on receptive skills over productive skills within spoken language (listening and speaking) in the 7th curriculum. While the 6th curriculum only mentions that spoken language (listening and speaking) precedes written language (reading and writing), the 7th curriculum first emphasizes spoken language over written language, then specifies receptive (listening) and productive (speaking) skills within spoken language, and concludes by suggesting the relative importance of listening to speaking for elementary EFL.

Thus, the new curriculum proposes teaching the language skills in the following order: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The spoken language communicative activities in the 7th curriculum material reflect the relative importance given in the curriculum of each of the language skills. That is, there are more listening activities than speaking activities in the 7th curriculum material compared to the 6th curriculum material. It is difficult at times to distinguish listening activities from speaking activities because each activity type includes the other. However, in the 6th curriculum materials, there are only four listening activities in what is regarded as the listening section, while in the 7th curriculum materials, there are seven listening activities in the listening section

To conclude the material evaluation from the external evaluator's view, the 6th curriculum material set accurately represents the 6th curriculum in terms of spoken language communicative activities, and the spoken language communicative activities presented in this material set are more representative of CLT than the activities in the 7th material. The use of CD-ROM in the 7th material makes it possible for the pupils to interact with the computer, rather than passively watch videotapes; this enables them to control the level and pace of their learning. Despite the potential for the CD-ROM as a learning tool, however, many of the activities in the present CD-ROM do not require

pupils' active participation, but rather require them to listen, watch and repeat.   In order to maximize the effectiveness of CD-ROM, more interactive spoken language communicative activities between pupils and the computer should be prepared.   In addition, two major points emphasized in the curricula were not found in the material evaluation.   One is the absence of cultural aspects in both the 6th and 7th materials, and the other is the absence of different activities for different proficiency levels in the 7th material set.

Internal Evaluators' Views

The Teachers

The three teachers who participated in this study all taught 4th grade English last year using the Sisayoungasa Co. material set for the 6th curriculum (March 1997–February 2001), and they all teach 4th grade English now for the 7th curriculum (March 2001–).   Teachers *A* and *B* are homeroom teachers who teach English in the same public elementary school located in a small town.   There is no EFL teacher solely responsible for EFL in their school, thus both *A* and *B* teach all elementary subjects, including English.   Along with the textbook for the 7th curriculum, their school distributed the teachers' CD-ROM and audiotapes to the teachers and only the audiotapes to students.

A is a female teacher and has taught EFL for five years since elementary EFL was first implemented in 1997.   She taught EFL under the 6th curriculum for five years. For two of those years she taught 4th grade students, but used the Sisayoungasa Co. material set in only one of those years.   Teacher *A*, therefore, has one year experience teaching 4th grade English with the Sisayoungasa Co. material set under the 6th curriculum.   She has had about four months experience teaching the 4th grade with the material set introduced only recently under the 7th curriculum.   Although she compared the two curricula according to her whole EFL teaching experience, in this study *A* compared two material sets based mainly on her one year and four month experience. The average number of pupils in her grade 4 classes is 41 in both the 6th and 7th curricula classes.   Concerning the curriculum change from the 6th to the 7th (see interview questions for teachers, question II. 1., in Appendix A), *A* responded that she did not feel much difference between the two curricula, although she was positive about the material change because the newly developed material aroused the pupils' interest more through the chants and songs.   She also commented that the material change resulted in changes in her classroom activities.   For example, the CD-ROMs make it possible for the pupils

to repeat over and over again in the classroom, and this repetition activity has increased the pupils' interest in learning English.   She also found that the CD-ROM with audiotapes is easier for her to use than videotapes and audiotapes.

Regarding the spoken language communicative activities, she first defined spoken language communicative activities as listening and speaking activities.   Contrary to the Ministry of Education's intention to change the curriculum and material, A did not feel spoken language communicative activities to be emphasized more in the 7th curriculum material set than in the 6th.   Although A did not feel any difference between the two material sets in terms of spoken language communicative activities, she did find the material change to have had positive effects on spoken language communicative activities, since pupils seemed more involved and interested in the new material.

A indicated 'easy repetition using CD-ROM' to be an improvement that came out of the change in the curriculum and material set.   She commented, though, that pronunciation practice should be more systematically prepared.   For the open-ended question (see interview questions for teachers, question V. 1., in Appendix A), she concluded that elementary EFL should be taught by an EFL teacher, not by the homeroom teacher, because homeroom teachers like her cannot concentrate only on English, and as a result, they do not feel confident in teaching English which is a new challenge for them.

B is also a female homeroom teacher, and the average number of students in her grade 4 classes is also 41 in both the 6th and 7th curricula classes.   Like A, she has taught with the 4th grade Sisayoungasa Co. material under the 6th curriculum for one year, and has taught the 4th grade under the 7th curriculum for four months. B has much less experience in teaching EFL than A.   One year and four months is the whole of her EFL teaching experience.

B felt that there were differences between the two curricula in terms of the increased variety of teaching resources offered, the change of evaluation method, and the reduction of time devoted to the EFL class under the 7th curriculum.   Concerning the material change, she again mentioned the change in method of evaluation.   According to her, the newly developed material offers an evaluation section in every unit.

B indicated that the material change also resulted in changes in classroom interaction and activities.   As A pointed out, the use of the CD-ROM in class made it easier to repeat the material as often as she liked in her classroom. B also regards this change as positive.

B defined spoken language communicative activities as listening and speaking activities that deal with everyday life situations and topics.   Like A, B also does not feel

that spoken language communicative activities are emphasized more in the 7th textbook set than in the 6th. However, she added that the material change had positive effects on spoken language communicative activities because pupils like the new material and are more involved in it.

B indicated the greater variety of teaching resources as being an improved aspect of the curriculum and material change. She also mentioned that the reduction of the number of units due to the decreased EFL class time from two hours to one hour a week allows more time to go over the content and decreases the burden. Still a deficiency even after the change, B pointed out, is the lack of teaching resources which provide the teachers with some basic English expressions that can be used for instructions and management in the EFL classroom. Since she is not fluent in English, she would find such material useful when guiding spoken language communicative activities in English.

C is a female EFL teacher, and unlike A and B, she teaches only English. Her school is a private elementary school located in Seoul. She has been an elementary EFL teacher for five years since elementary EFL started in 1997. She has taught 4th grade English using Sisayoungasa Co. material under the 6th curriculum for only one year and has been teaching 4th grade English under the 7th curriculum for four months. She has about 43 to 45 students in a class. Along with the textbook for the 7th curriculum, her school distributed the teachers' CD-ROM to the EFL teachers and the students' CD-ROM to the students instead of audiotapes.

C indicated that she does not feel any difference between the 6th and the 7th curricula. She did find differences in the material sets, though. She indicated that the 7th curriculum material set had fewer units due to the decreased EFL class time, and easier, more interesting chants and songs. She also mentioned that the CD-ROM made the pupils more interested and involved in learning English. The videotapes used in the 6th curriculum material set broke up the flow of the activity because the rewind and fast-forward functions took up a lot of time. For her, the CD-ROM is easier to use effectively and efficiently for classroom activities. Moreover, she mentioned that another reason pupils are more interested in the 7th curriculum material is that they are already accustomed to using computers in their everyday life. Thus, the new material allows more time for effective communication between her and the students, for example, there is no need to wait for technical operations in the middle of class. As a result, C considers the CD-ROM to have had positive effects on the spoken language communicative activities.

C defined spoken language communicative activities as activities in which the pupils understand what their partner is talking about and try to express themselves

regardless of accuracy. She thought that spoken language communicative activities were emphasized more in the 7th curriculum material set since the amount of listening and the opportunity to repeat were increased compared to the 6th curriculum material set. *C* pointed out this as being a positive result of the change because the new material did not push pupils to produce language. However, she thought that the new material was not appropriate for student-centred activities because pupils do not really have an opportunity to actively participate in activities; rather they listen and repeat most of the time.

C feels confident teaching elementary EFL due to her many years of experience and efforts to arouse the pupils' interest and curiosity. She feels that the 4th grade material sets for both the 6th and 7th curricula are generally too easy for the 4th grade pupils, since many of her students have private English tuition outside the school.

The Policy Maker

As another perspective, I asked a policy maker what he thinks about the changes made to the 7th curriculum and the consequent change in materials. The policy maker started his career teaching English in secondary schools where he gained eight years of experience. He then worked for the Ministry of Education as a supervisor for over ten years, before becoming the senior supervisor in the curriculum policy division in the area of textbooks, where he stayed for around 2 years. Now he is a senior supervisor in the School Policy Office of the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development, which was launched in January 2001 in the reorganization of the former Ministry of Education and expansion of its scope.

I asked him why it was considered necessary to develop the new curriculum even though the previous one was also based on the communicative approach. To answer this question, he pointed out the difference between the CLT approach in the two curricula. In the 6th curriculum, while the content was selected and ordered according to the notional-functional syllabus, the 7th curriculum is organized around structural and situational syllabuses which were implemented in addition to the traditional notional-functional syllabus.

I also asked why the Ministry of Education decided to change the process of material development; that is, why the Ministry of Education develops and publishes only one material set instead of giving teachers a choice from 16 material sets which were developed by independent publishers and officially approved by the Ministry of Education for the 6th curriculum. His answer was that the learning materials should be systematically researched and continuously improved; the private publishers, according

to him, are likely to be less successful than the Ministry of Education in carrying out systematic research and improving the materials accordingly. Another reason for the change is that it costs much less for the Ministry of Education to develop one material set themselves than it costs to approve 16 different textbook sets developed by private publishers.

According to the policy maker, the Ministry of Education invited teacher participation in the process of developing both the 6th and the 7th curricula and materials. According to Stern (1992), it is very important to involve teachers in the development of curriculum and material.

> The translation of a curriculum into classroom reality—its implementation by teachers who have not necessarily participated at the preparation and design stage—is, therefore, likely to present problems. Teachers do not always share the preoccupations and concerns that prompted the curriculum change in the first place. They may not be aware of what the innovation is supposed to achieve. They may not understand in what way it is different from existing practice. They may recognize the nature of the change but resist it. They may regard it as unnecessary or feel threatened by it, or they may feel inadequate to carry it into effect (p. 46).

Thus, teacher participation is an essential procedure in the development of the curriculum and material, and this procedure was completed in the development of both the 6th and the 7th curricula and materials. According to the policy maker, the only difference in the development of the curricula and materials is that more teachers were involved in the 7th than in the 6th. Teachers participated in every step of the development, from the beginning stage of carrying out the needs analysis to the final approval stage. If this was the case, the methodology for conducting the pupil's needs analysis was not documented in either curricula, as revealed in my evaluation of the curricula and material sets.

The policy maker indicated that there are no big differences between the two curricula, supporting the findings of my evaluation of the curricula. As small changes he listed a reduction in the amount of required work, formulation of more concrete objectives to be met by the end of the grade or program, and more effective organization of the textbook for communicative activities.

Concerning the material change, the policy-maker first defined spoken language communicative activities as activities that involve listening and speaking. As improvements to the material set that came out of the change, he indicated that the material of the 7th curriculum was organized around spoken language communicative

activities more than the material of the 6th curriculum, and that a variety of activities, such as games and role-plays, had been included. He suggested that more meaningful communicative activities and problem–solving tasks are still required to improve the curriculum. For the open-ended question (see interview questions for a policy maker, question IV. 1., in Appendix A), he suggested that the amount of time devoted to learning English should be increased from one EFL class a week in the 7th curriculum to two classes a week, as it was in the 6th curriculum.

A Comparison of the Various Perspectives

The three teachers all spoke of the effectiveness of the CD-ROM. They felt that the use of the CD-ROM made classroom management more effective and efficient than the use of videotapes. Moreover, the CD-ROM was perceived having a positive effect on spoken language communicative activities since the pupils became more interested and involved in the CD-ROM related classroom activities. Thus, all of the teachers interviewed considered the 7th curriculum material set to be more effective than that of the 6th as a tool for the teachers and for its communicative value for the pupils.

The teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of the new material differ in some ways and also differ from my own (external evaluator's) analysis. I did not find the 7th curriculum material set to be designed for student-centred activities, a point also brought up by teacher C. For this reason I preferred the 6th curriculum material to the 7th since the 6th curriculum material allowed the pupils more opportunity to be involved in interaction, while the 7th curriculum material is designed mainly with listening and repetition for the pupils. The discrepancy in opinion between the teachers and myself may be a result of my not being familiar with the actual characteristics of the pupils. Because the teachers know the pupils better than me and can observe them in class, they have a better idea of which activities the pupils would prefer to be involved in and what most stimulates their interest. The differences also suggest that the teachers do not have a very communicatively-oriented understanding of CLT, even if they do have the pupil's interests at heart. For the analysis of the effectiveness of the two curricula and material sets, the teachers did not point out any of the deficiencies that I revealed in my analysis, such as the need for authentic spoken language communicative activities with realistic roles in realistic situations. As mentioned earlier, teacher C found the new material set to provide more spoken language communicative activities than the old material set because it gives students more opportunities for repetition. It is difficult to conceive of the value of repetition in spoken language communicative activities.

It seems that the Ministry of Education did not provide enough information about all of its intentions about the curriculum and material change to the teachers. Teacher C pointed out that there was more emphasis on listening in the new material, as I found in my analysis, and teachers B and C also acknowledged the decrease in EFL class time as changes in the new curriculum and material. Except for these, none of the teachers mentioned any of the changes that the policy maker introduced in his answers on behalf of the Ministry of Education. Teachers A and C did not find any differences between the two curricula, even though both have been teaching elementary EFL for five years. Moreover, similar to my own conclusions, none of the teachers mentioned anything about there being separate classroom activities based on the pupils' levels and cultural components in the new curriculum; but instead they mentioned that these were not represented in the material sets. Thus, it can be concluded that the intention of the Ministry of Education was not conveyed through the curriculum and materials to the teachers, or, possibly more accurately, that the way it was presented was not accessible to the teachers.

During the interviews, it was evident that the three teachers showed different levels of confidence in teaching EFL. According to the Ministry of Education (1997), three months after the implementation of elementary EFL, Media Research Inc. conducted a public opinion poll of 1000 3rd grade teachers throughout the country. The results showed that 84.3 percent of teachers responded that they were confident teaching EFL, although 83.8 percent of participating teachers thought that there was a need for more specialized EFL teachers. The homeroom teachers in my study, A and B, also emphasized the need for EFL specialists in their school. While the EFL teacher, C, showed confidence in teaching elementary EFL, both A and B showed a lack of confidence in teaching elementary EFL as homeroom teachers, contrary to what the survey results suggested. Possible reasons for this can be: (1) that homeroom teachers may not be able to prepare for EFL class as well as specialized EFL teachers due to the fact they must prepare several subjects and (2) that they may lack confidence in their English proficiency.

There was also variation among the teachers in terms of how appropriate they considered the level of the materials was for the pupils. Teachers A and B said that the level of activities was appropriate for their students' level for the 6th and the 7th material sets whereas teacher C said that the activities introduced in both material sets were too easy for the pupils. This difference might be attributed to the location and type of the schools. The school which A and B work for is a public school located in a rural area

whereas C's school is a private school located in Seoul.   Thus, as C mentioned, pupils in a big city like Seoul have greater access and means to private English education.

This chapter presented and discussed the results of the curricula evaluation based on the CLT criteria developed for elementary EFL in Korea, and the results of the materials evaluation from various perspectives.   The final chapter concludes the present study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

OUTCOMES OF THE RESEARCH

To answer the first research question of this study – To what extent are the two 4th grade elementary EFL curricula in Korea CLT-based? – overall, both the 6th and 7th elementary EFL curricula are CLT-based according to the curricula evaluation based on my CLT criteria. These criteria consisted of four sections: objectives, content, procedures (classroom treatment variables), and evaluation of progress. The research results show that the 6th and 7th elementary EFL curricula are not incompatible; they were constructed on the same foundations. Both curricula were developed based on the communicative approach, and both emphasize spoken language over written language. Despite their common features, the 7th curriculum was developed in order to improve upon the 6th curriculum. The improvements of the 7th curriculum take the form of a more systematic description of the goals and objectives, suggestions of separate class activities based on pupils' levels, and more emphasis on communicative activities and culture education along with language. These changes, however, were not articulated concretely. The 7th curriculum fails to indicate how the changes can be implemented in the classroom. Moreover, providing culture education along with language education and organizing separate level group activities, the two points emphasized in the 7th curriculum, were omitted in the 7th textbook set. With the exception of there being more receptive listening activities than productive speaking activities, the material set does not reflect the changes made in the 7th curriculum.

To answer the second research question of this study – Through exploring various perspectives, to what extent do the respective 4th grade textbook sets correspond to spoken language communicative needs? – the multiple perspective (teachers, policy maker, and researcher) exploration into the curriculum and material change revealed different perceptions within and between the external and internal evaluators. As an external evaluator, my overall evaluation of the spoken language communicative activities in both material sets for the 4th grade EFL curricula revealed that the 6th curriculum Sisayoungsa Co. material set corresponds more closely to its respective curriculum, and takes a stronger CLT approach than the 7th curriculum since it allows

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more opportunities for the pupils to listen and speak English in real situations. The 7th curriculum material set, on the contrary, primarily drives the pupils to listen and repeat, as recipients.

The teachers' opinions on the curriculum and material change show variation from the conclusions of my own evaluation. The three teachers who participated in this study emphasized that after the Ministry of Education introduced the new curriculum and material set, both the teachers and the pupils found the classes more effective, particularly because of the new CD-ROM teaching/learning tool. Besides this change, the teachers mentioned few other features that differed between the 6th and 7th curriculum and their respective material sets. On the contrary, the policy maker emphasized that the 7th curriculum material set provided more spoken language activities than the 6th not only because of the CD-ROM but also because of the organization and design of activities. This suggests that the intended curriculum and material set changes may not have been effectively conveyed by the Ministry of Education or may not have been accessible at the school level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After doing this case study of Korean elementary EFL curricula and materials evaluation, I would like to suggest several recommendations for the development and comprehensive description of future curricula and material sets. First, the methodology used in the development of curricula and material sets should be informed. The sources used in the process of setting goals and objectives and of selecting the content are not indicated in either the 6th or 7th curricula. This is essential if the appropriateness of curricula and material sets is to be accurately evaluated.

Another recommendation is the need to provide clearly articulated 'plans of action' in the curricula and material sets. Throughout my curricula and material sets evaluation, it was found that suggested methods for elementary EFL were not accompanied by concrete means of implementation. For instance, while small group activities and pair work were emphasized, no guidance was offered to teachers as to how to implement these activities. As emphasized earlier, preparation for separate group activities and culture education are omitted not only in both the 6th and 7th curricula but also in both textbook sets.

The last recommendation is the development of *real* communicative activities. Activities presented in both the 6th and 7th curriculum material sets should correspond more closely to real life communicative situations. As mentioned in the definition of

spoken language communicative activities, communicative activities should have a definite purpose and real roles to be played out in authentic situations.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present research entails several limitations. First, what I found after completing my analysis of the curriculum was that my CLT criteria for evaluating the pupils' progress should have specifically addressed various aspects of the pupils' performance. That is, the evaluation criteria should have included an assessment of the pupils' level of interest, degree of participation, enthusiasm, and so on. The pupils have a beginner's level proficiency of English; for this reason it may not provide a complete picture to evaluate their achievement based only on how well they can communicate.

Second, my data collection procedure for identifying participant perspectives was quite limited: I used only one instrument, a written questionnaire which was followed by oral interviews for clarification and elaboration. Different data collection instruments may result in different research outcomes. Thus, a variety and combination of instruments will be needed in future studies.

Third, I interviewed only three teachers and one policy maker. The limited number of participants raises the question of internal validity. I cannot be certain how representative my sample is concerning the populations in Korea of the elementary EFL teachers, learners, and policy makers. More extensive studies on the analysis of curriculum and material for elementary EFL in Korea will need to involve more teachers from different schools. For more valid results, it would be necessary to ensure that the schools participating in the research are representative of a diverse subsection of Korean elementary EFL schools. The schools would need to cover diverse regional locations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and teaching environments.

Fourth, I did not obtain the pupils' reaction to the curriculum and material set change by asking them directly, rather I asked their teachers. Direct questioning may have resulted in a different evaluation of the change, with a more precise needs analysis. Had I spoken to the pupils directly I would have been in a better position to carry out my own needs analysis for the pupils, which may also have made it possible to evaluate the appropriateness of the objectives and content suggested in both curricula. This was not done, however, because it was thought that the children might have difficulty articulating the differences between two curricula and between the two material sets.

Fifth, the evaluation of audiotapes, an optional component of the 7th curriculum material set, was not included in this study since I could not obtain the audiotapes. As a

result, it was not possible to compare the effectiveness of the 7th curriculum audiotapes to those of the 6th curriculum, in the same way that I compared the effectiveness of the 7th curriculum CD-ROM to the 6th curriculum videotapes.

Sixth, since I interviewed the three teachers and the policy maker over the phone, the interview answers of this study are sometimes too general. The interview could have been longer, but due to constraints (i.e., overseas call) this was not possible.

Finally, since the 7th curriculum has only recently been implemented, the interviewees had only four months to experience and evaluate the new curriculum and materials. If the interviewees had had more time to experience the new curriculum and materials, their evaluations of the two curricula may have been quite different. More time to observe and examine the effects of the curriculum should be given to both internal and external evaluators in order to allow them to compare the curricula and materials with which they have the same degree of familiarity. These changes will make future studies in this area more reliable and valid.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD

Despite its limitations, my study makes practical contributions to elementary EFL teaching in Korea. In this study, I developed CLT evaluation criteria targeted specifically at elementary school students learning EFL in Korea. Although interpretations and applications of CLT may vary depending on the teacher, my CLT criteria may help provide elementary teachers with a more systematic understanding of what EFL CLT means, and how their EFL classes can be managed under a CLT-based curriculum.

My other contribution to the field is recommendations for future curriculum and material development based on my evaluation of the 6th and 7th curricula and the respective material sets. In my evaluation, I included the perceptions of internal evaluators: three teachers, including their accounts of the students' reactions as participants in the classroom, and a policy maker. I also included my own perceptions, as an external evaluator. Because I gathered information from various perspectives about the change in curriculum and material sets, my evaluation can be used as a reference to teachers' main concerns regarding their evaluation of CLT-based elementary EFL, as classroom participants who are using a curriculum and materials in the classroom. The external evaluator's views are also useful to consider since an external evaluator may provide a more objective analysis, as an outsider, of the current use of the curriculum and

materials. It is necessary that "the evaluation be carried out by persons external to the program, for greater objectivity" (Lynch, 1996, p. 4).

To continue to contribute to the specific context in this thesis, that is elementary EFL in Korea, one can look to the future. Based on my research and the CLT criteria that I developed, it might be interesting to compare the present 7th curriculum and material set to new curriculum and material sets developed in the future. Such an analysis may contribute to understanding how elementary EFL CLT in Korea has been changed since its first implementation based on the 6th curriculum, and how it can still be improved. It might also be worthwhile to develop CLT criteria targeted at different age levels, proficiency levels, and learning contexts since the Ministry of Education intends to gradually replace secondary EFL based on grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods with a CLT-based approach. The CLT criteria used for the evaluation of the elementary EFL curriculum can guide developers to systematically consider the essential components of secondary EFL CLT.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

인터뷰 질문 – 교사 (ORIGINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN KOREAN – TEACHERS)

이 인터뷰는 '커리큘럼과 교재평가에 관한 케이스 분석-한국의 초등학교 영어' 프로젝트의 Part-II 를 위한 자료수집의 방법입니다. 이 단계에서는 제 6차에서 제 7차로의 커리큘럼의 변화가 새로 개발된 7차 교재에 대해 어떤 영향을 미쳤는지에 관해 음성언어 의사소통활동을 중심으로 분석하고자 합니다.

교재는 6차에서 사용되었던 교재들중, 4학년 시사영어사 교재와 7차 교육과정에 바탕으로 두고 교육부가 개발한 새 4학년 교재가 비교될 예정입니다.

I. 여러분의 경력에 관한 질문
1. 한학급당 학생수는 대략 어느정도입니까?
2. 얼마나 오랫동안 6차와 7차 초등학교 커리큘럼을 가르쳐 오셨습니까?
3. 이중 4학년을 가르치신 기간은 얼마동안입니까?
4. 6차 커리큘럼 상에서 시사영어사 교재를 사용하신 기간은 얼마동안입니까?
5. 현재의 7차 커리큘럼에 근거한 교재를 사용하신지는 얼마나 되셨습니까?

II. 커리큘럼 변화에 관한 질문
1. 제 6차 커리큘럼(1997-2000)과 제 7차 커리큘럼(2001-)은 모두 의사소통에 그 기본취지를 두고 있습니다.
   여러분께서는 두 커리큘럼의 차이를 느끼고 계십니까?
   만약 느끼신다면, 어떤 부분에서 가장 현저한 차이를 느끼십니까?

III. 교재변화에 관한 질문
1. 커리큘럼이 6차에서 7차로 옮겨감에 따라 16종의 교재가 1종으로 바뀌었습니다.
   여러분께서는 두 교재 (시사영어사 교재와 새 교재)의 차이를 느끼십니까?
   만약 느끼신다면, 어떤 부분에서 가장 현저한 차이를 느끼십니까?
2. 교재의 변화로 인해 수업활동의 변화가 생겼습니까?
   만약 생겼다면, 어떠한 변화가 생겼습니까?
   여러분께서는 이 변화들을 긍정적으로 보십니까? 혹은 부정적으로 보십니까?

IV. 음성언어 의사소통활동

1. 한국교육과정평가원에 따르면, 두 커리큘럼의 주목할 만한 차이중의하나는 7차 커리큘럼상의 의사소통활동, 특히 음성언어 의사소통활동으로 그 강조점을 옮긴데 있다고 합니다.

   a. '의사소통활동' 특히 '음성언어 의사소통활동'의 의미를 어떻게정의하십니까?

   b. 교재에 있는 활동중, 어떠한 활동을 의사소통 중심의 활동이라고 생각하십니까?

   c. 여러분께서는 한국교육과정평가원의 발표대로 음성언어 의사소통활동이 7차 커리큘럼에서 더욱 강조되어 있다고 생각하십니까?

   만약 그렇게 생각하신다면, 7차교재의 어떠한 활동들이 이러한 변화를 가져왔다고 생각하십니까?

2. 6차교재에는 교과서, 오디오테잎, 비디오테잎이 포함되어 있는 반면, 7차교재에는 교과서, 오디오테잎, CD-ROM이 포함되어 있습니다.

   a. 여러분께서는 이 교재들을 어떻게 사용해 오고 있으십니까?

   b. 어떤 교재가 더 사용하기에 편리합니까?

   c. 어떤 교재가 음성언어 의사소통활동에 더 효과적입니까?

   d. 어떤 교재에 학생들이 더 흥미를 느끼고 적극적으로 참여합니까?

   e. 교재의 변화가 음성언어 의사소통활동에 긍정적인 영향을 미친다고 생각하십니까? 혹은 부정적인 영향을 미친다고 생각하십니까?

3. 음성언어 의사소통활동에 촛점을 맞추어, 커리큘럼의 변화와 그에 따른 교재변화에 대한 여러분의 의견을 묻고싶습니다.

   a. 개선된 점과, 개선되어야 할 점에 대해 말씀해 주십시오.

   b. 여러분의 경험에 비추어 볼때, 아직도 여전히 부족한 점은 무엇이라고 생각하십니까?

V. 이 인터뷰는 여러분과의 토론에 개방된 인터뷰입니다

1. 더 심층있는 토론을 원하시는 부분이 있으시다면, 말씀해주십시오.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – TEACHERS (TRANSLATION FROM KOREAN)

In the study entitled "A Case Study of Curriculum and Material Evaluation: Elementary English as a Foreign Language in South Korea," the interview is the data collection procedure used in the second part of the research: examining how the change from the 6th curriculum to the 7th affects the newly developed material, focusing on spoken language communicative activities. For the material comparison, the 4th grade material published by Sisayoungasa Co. for the 6th curriculum is compared to the new 4th grade material developed by the Ministry of Education for the 7th curriculum.

I. Background
1. How long have you been teaching the 6th and 7th elementary English curricula?
2. How long have you been teaching these curricula to grade 4 children?
3. How long did you use Sisayoungasa Co. material for the 6th curriculum?
4. How long have you used the new material based on the 7th curriculum?
5. How many students do you usually have in a class?

II. Curriculum change
1. The 6th (1997–2000) and the 7th (2001–) national curricula share one common underlying approach, the communicative approach. Do you feel any difference between the two curricula? If yes, what do you think are the most notable differences or changes?

III. Material change
1. With the curriculum change, materials also have changed; that is, 16 different textbook sets for the 6th curriculum to the one textbook set for the 7th. Do you feel any difference between the two textbook sets? If yes, what do you think are the most notable differences or changes?
2. Did the material change result in changes in classroom interaction and activities? If yes, what are the changes? Do you see them as positive or negative?

IV. Spoken language communicative activities
1. According to the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation, one of the big differences between the two curricula is the emphasis on communicative activities in the 7th curriculum, specifically on spoken language communicative activities.
   a. First of all, what does the term "communicative activities" mean to you, specifically in terms of spoken language activities?

b. Which spoken language communicative activities in both textbook sets do you consider to be "communicative"?

c. Do you feel that spoken language communicative activities are more emphasized in the 7th textbook set than in the 6th as the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation claimed?   If yes, what kinds of activities contribute to this change in the materials?

2. The 6th textbook set includes a textbook, audiotapes, and videotapes, while the 7th textbook set includes a textbook, audiotapes, and CD-ROM.
   a. How have you used these materials in your classroom?

   b. Which textbook set is more convenient for you to use?

   c. Which textbook set is more effective for spoken language communicative activities?

   d. In which textbook set are students more involved and interested?

   e. Does the textbook set change have positive effects on spoken language communicative activities?

3. Focusing on spoken language communicative activities, what is your perception about the curriculum and material changes?
   a. What do you think has been improved and worsened?

   b. According to your classroom teaching experiences, where do you think there are still deficiencies in the spoken language communicative activities in the 7th textbook set?

V.   Open-ended question
1. Is there anything you would like to further discuss?

인터뷰 질문 – 정책자 (ORIGINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN KOREAN – A POLICY MAKER)

이 인터뷰는 '커리큘럼과 교재평가에 관한 케이스 분석-한국의 초등학교 영어' 프로젝트의 Part-II 를 위한 자료수집의 방법입니다. 이 단계에서는 제 6차에서 제 7차로의 커리큘럼의 변화가 새로 개발된 7차 교재에 대해 어떤 영향을 미쳤는지에 관해 음성언어 의사소통활동을 중심으로 분석하고자 합니다.

교재는 6차에서 사용되었던 교재들중, 4학년 시사영어사 교재와 7차 교육과정에 바탕으로 두고 교육부가 개발한 새 4학년 교재가 비교될 예정입니다.

I. 교육정책에 관한질문

1. 6차 커리큘럼이 주안점을 둔 의사소통 활동에 관한 부분과, 7차 커리큘럼이 강조점을 둔 의사소통활동의 차이는 무엇입니까?

2. 6차 커리큘럼에서는 출판사에서 개발되고 교육부 에서 검정을 받은 16개 교재중 각 학교가 한교재를 선택하고 사용하는 방식이었습 니다. 한편, 이번 7차 커리큘럼에 의하면 교육부가 교재를 개발하고, 모든학교가 이 교재를 사용하는 방식으로 전환되었습니다. 이 러한 변화를 기획하시게 된 의도는 무엇입니까?

II. 커리큘럼과 교재의 변화에 관한 질문

1. 두 커리큘럼의 가장 주목할만한 차이는 무엇입니까?
   또한 이 커리큘럼의 차이가 새로 개발된 교재에 어떻게 반영되어
   있습니까?

2. 7차 새 커리큘럼 개발과정에서 일선 선생님들의 참여가 있었습니까?

III. 음성언어 의사소통활동에 관한 질문

1. 의사소통활동, 특히 음성언어 의사소통활동의 의미를 어떻게 정의하십니까?

2. 커리큘럼과 교재의 변화가 일선 학교의 학급 내 활동에 어떤 변화를 줄 것을 기대하십 니까?
   이러한 학급 내 활동의 변화가 음성언어 의사소통활동에 어떠한 긍정적인,혹은 부정적인 영향을 줄 수 있으리라고 생각하십니까?

3. 음성언어 의사소통활동에 촛점을 맞추어, 커리큘럼의 변화와 그에 따른 교재변화에 대한 여러분의 의견을 묻고싶습니다.

   a. 개선된 점과, 개선되어야 할 점에 대해 말씀해 주십시오.

   b. 아직도 여전히 부족한 점은 무엇이라고 생각하십니까?

VI. 이 인터뷰는 여러분과의 토론에 개방된 인터뷰입니다

1. 더 심층있는 토론을 원하시는 부분이 있으시다면, 말씀해주십시오.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – A POLICY MAKER (TRANSLATION FROM KOREAN)

In the study entitled "A Case Study of Curriculum and Material Evaluation: Elementary English as a Foreign Language in South Korea," the interview is the data collection procedure used in the second part of the research: examining how the change from the 6th curriculum to the 7th affects the newly developed material, focusing on spoken language communicative activities.   For the material comparison, the 4th grade material published by Sisayoungasa Co. for the 6th curriculum is compared to the new 4th grade material developed by the Ministry of Education for the 7th curriculum.

I. Policy

1. Why was it considered necessary for a new curriculum to be implemented in 2001 even though the previous one was also based on the communicative approach?

2. For the 6th curriculum, schools were given a choice out of 16 textbook sets which were developed by publishers and officially approaved by the Ministry of Education. However, for the 7th curriculum, the Ministry of Education developed and published only one textbook set to be used by all schools.   What made you decide to make this change?

II. Curriculum and material change

1. What are some of the most notable differences between the two curricula?   How are these differences reflected in the newly developed material?

2. In the development of the new curriculum, did the Ministry of Education invite teacher participation?

### III. Spoken language communicative activities

1. How do you define "communicative activities," specifically spoken language communicative activities?

2. What kinds of classroom interaction and/or activities changes do you think the curriculum and material change will lead to?   What do you think are the positive and negative effects these changes will have on classroom activities, specifically spoken language communicative activities?

3. Focusing on spoken language communicative activities, what is your perception about the curriculum and material changes?   What do you think has been improved and worsened?   Where do you think there are still deficiencies in the spoken language communicative activities in the 7th textbook set?

IV. Open-ended question

1. Is there anything you would like to further discuss?

APPENDIX B

An Example of "Look and Say" and "Your Turn"
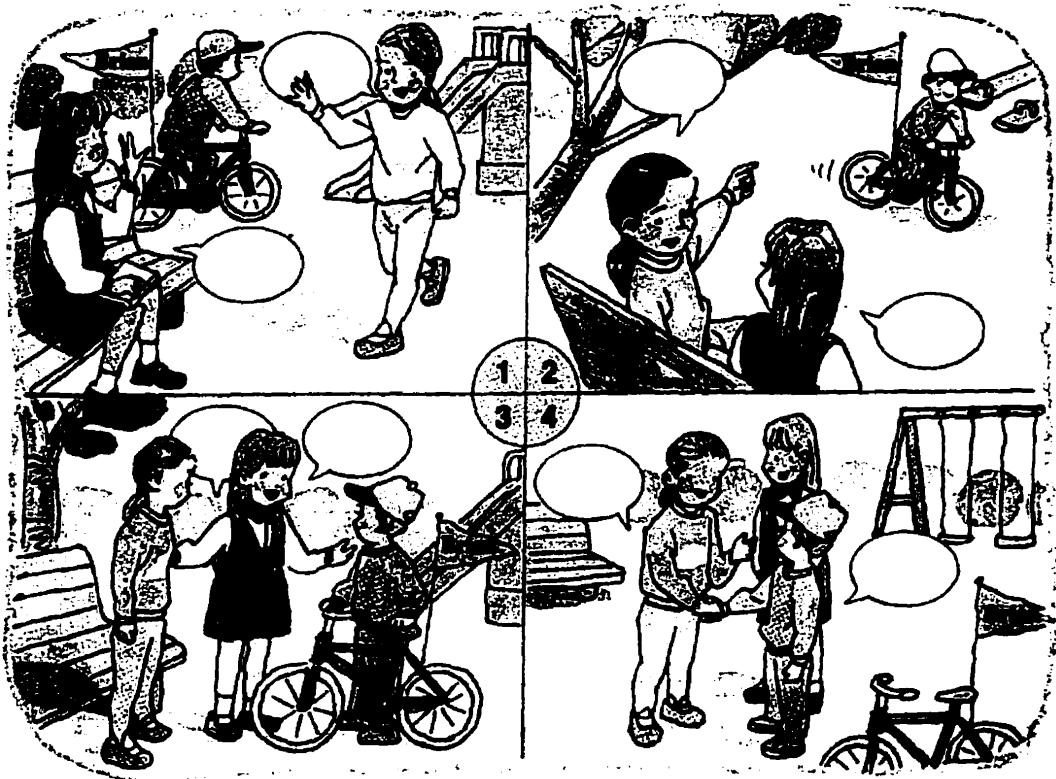
Han, C. H., Hwang, H. S., Lee, H. S., & Park, K. H. (1998). *Elementary school English 4.* Seoul : Sisayoungasa Co. (p. 18. Written in Korean)
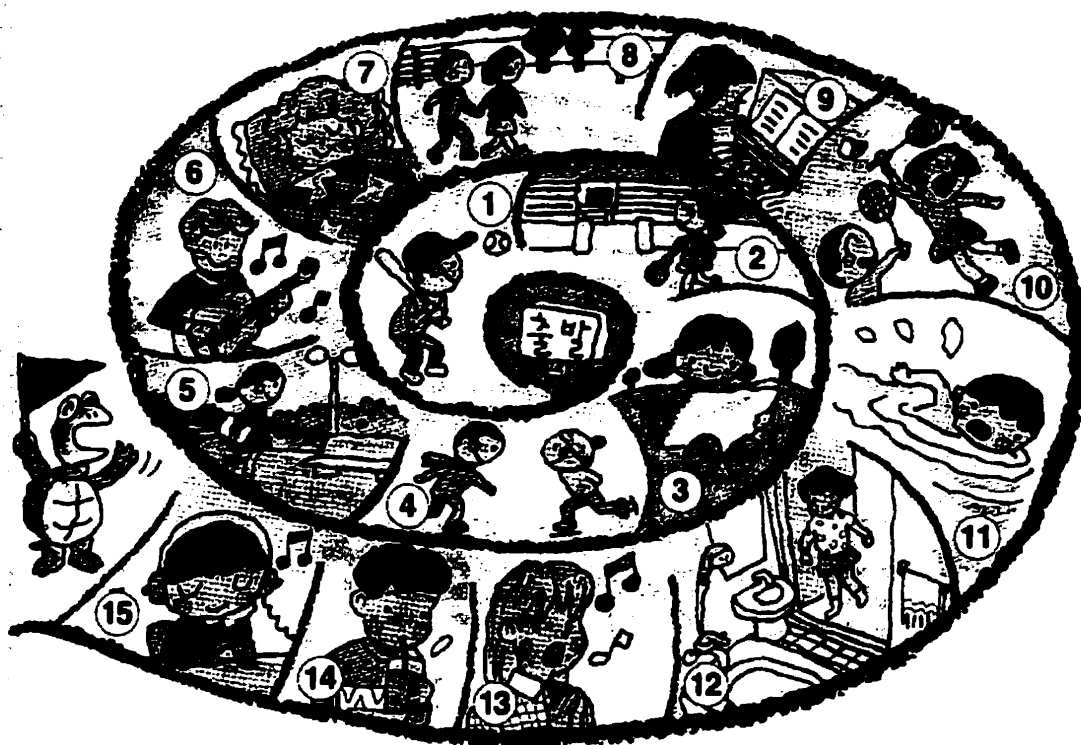
Han, C. H., Hwang, H. S., Lee, H. S., & Park, K. H. (1998). *Elementary school English 4.* Seoul : Sisayoungasa Co. (p. 83. Written in Korean)

APPENDIX C

Certificate of Ethical Acceptability