English Language & Literature Teaching, Vol. 21, No. 4 Winter 2015

Needs Analysis: Beauty Students' Self-Assessment and Their Take on English Education

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Shin, Christian Youngwan (2015). Needs analysis: Beauty students' self-assessment and their take on English education. *English Language & Literature Teaching, 21*(4), 85-106.

A two-pronged approach is taken to explore the needs of beauty students as English learners at a four-year university. The students' self-assessed levels of confidence and proficiency are examined along with their thoughts on the projected demand for English ability required of beauty professionals. Attention is also drawn to the students' thoughts on various elements of the English curriculum, followed by coverage of their satisfaction with the aspects. In essence, the students' needs are identified, based on their perspectives and perceptions on English education. The study reveals that the students are largely interested in furthering their communicative ability, especially their verbal language skills, conceivably in anticipation of encounters with foreigners in their professional capacity. The students are, however, of the opinion that they are not being adequately equipped with skills necessary for effective communication in social and work-related contexts. The state of affairs calls for the education that is closely aligned with students' aspirations so that they will be able to successfully interact with foreigners while providing goods and services. English education tailor-made to the needs of students whose career paths lie in service industries can help raise a future workforce ready to thrive in a globally-linked society.

[needs analysis/English for specific purposes/beauty students]

I. INTRODUCTION

Beauty-related programs (BRPs) at the tertiary level of education have enjoyed popularity over the last two decades or so; at present, there are approximately 120 two-year programs and 30 four-year programs in Korea (Kang & Choi, 2012). Along with recognition of the importance of English, special attention has begun to be paid to English

education in the BRPs (Jeong, 2012). However, little is known about the nature and extent of the education provided in the BRPs, which can be attributed in part to a small body of research that exclusively examines foreign language education in these programs.

The paucity is unsettling to some degree considering both special privilege given to the language worldwide and importance attached to English education in Korean society (Lee, 1999). The present study aims to add to our understanding of English education in four-year BRPs in relation to beauty students' needs. To achieve the aims, perspectives and perceptions of beauty students in a four-year BRP are explored. In this pursuit, self-assessment of the students as English learners is also juxtaposed with their satisfaction, or the lack thereof, with the education given at university.

This study is meaningful in that insights yielded can shed light on needs and expectations of future beauty professionals while highlighting potential areas of improvement, which would require special attention during curricular development and revision. Although the study is not meant to be generalized to a wider population of students in different BRPs and, by extension, other service-oriented fields of study, it has practical implications for the future of English teaching in these fields.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Needs Analysis for Curriculum Development

Needs analysis (also called needs assessment) is essential for provision of education tailored to suit learner needs (Brown, 1995). Pratt (1980) succinctly defines needs analysis as "an array of procedures for identifying and validating needs, and establishing priorities" (p. 79) among a particular group of students. In the words of Brown (1995), needs analysis refers to "the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the learning needs" of a specific group of students (p. 35).

To grasp student needs, according to Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985), "both subjective and objective information (e.g., data from questionnaires, tests, interviews, observation)" can be adopted (p. 189). More specifically, procedures for needs analysis can include "syllabus analysis, analysis of past examination papers, diagnostic tests and other analyses of student performance (e.g., scrutiny of previous written work, classroom observation), feedback from other teachers, student questionnaires, interviews and group discussion" (McGrath, 2002, p. 20). It is sensible to utilize as diverse sources as accessible to ascertain a complete understanding of learner needs.

Curriculum building has to be grounded in needs analysis, as explained by Brown

(1995): "Once identified, needs can be stated in terms of goals and objectives which, in turn, can serve as the basis for developing tests, materials, teaching activities, and evaluation strategies, as well as for reevaluating the precision and accuracy of the original needs assessment" (p. 35). In other words, systematic curriculum design and development must begin with needs analysis (Long, 1985).

Needs analysis can also lay the base for curricular revision by revealing curricular strengths and shortcomings from students' perspectives. Insights into what concerns students and how deeply can be instrumental in identifying and prioritizing particularly troublesome areas of improvement from the standpoint of students. Taking students' points of view into consideration from the outset can lead to efficient curricular renewal in a manner that is compatible with student needs and expectations (Ko, 2010; Kwon, 2012).

Alignment of English curriculums with student needs and expectations can foster positive learning experiences and increase the effectiveness of English education, especially when complemented by effectual teaching practices and materials. Curricular alignment can heighten the students' sense of satisfaction with the education as well as their overall experience of the whole program. When students are the ultimate beneficiaries of education, their satisfaction with it is an important measure for its success.

2. Learning Needs of Beauty Students in Higher Education

Korean university students' needs as English learners have been assessed in various fields of study, for example: aviation (Choi, 2014; Chung & Chung, 2015); bio-technology (Cho, 2007); cosmetology (Sung, 2011; You, 2015); engineering (H. H. Kim, 2013; Lee & Hong, 2010); English language and literature (Kim & Kim, 2013); hospitality (H. R. Kim, 2007); law (Kang & Lee, 2014); medicine (Lee & Kim, 2011); and nursing (E. J. Kim, 2008; Soh, 2004). These studies predominantly relied on questionnaires administered to students, and, in some cases, involved other stakeholders (e.g., faculty members and working professionals) as well.

As mentioned earlier, there is not a great deal of published research that explicitly investigates needs of Korean beauty students as English learners and users. A noteworthy, albeit distantly-related, study was conducted by Cho and No (2008), which touches upon needs and expectations of two-year beauty students with the intention of determining compatibility of English teaching materials. The study found the following: The beauty students have a low level of proficiency in English but are willing to learn to speak English. Based on this finding, the authors conclude that teaching materials and methods, specifically tailored to students' learning abilities and needs, should be employed to maximize the benefit of their language learning.

Another study deserving of note was carried out by You (2015) covering needs and

motivations of students in nine four-year BRPs. According to the students' self-assessment, their level of proficiency is low-intermediate. With regard to three language skills, the students find speaking to be most difficult and reading the easiest while placing listening between the two. As far as the students' interest goes, they are eager to develop their speaking and listening. Along with speaking, grammar is also considered very difficult by the students, as found by Cho and No (2008). In connection with the students' motivations, it is put forth in the You's study that they are keen to learn English for occupational purposes (EOP), a point which is also made by Jeong (2012).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Participants and Their Learning Experience

A self-reported questionnaire was distributed to beauty students in an English course at a four-year university in Seoul, who were from six different classrooms (typically with less than 16 students per class). The questionnaire was administered toward the end of the fall semester in 2014. Out of 72 students present in class, 70 students filled out the copies of the questionnaire. An incomplete questionnaire was discarded. In the end, 69 valid questionnaires remained for data analysis.

The English course that participating students were taking was the last in the sequence. The students had previously taken other English courses for five consecutive terms at a minimum, spending six to nine hours per week each semester. They are given one to two course credits per semester, depending on the total number of hours assigned. A total of 10 units must be earned to graduate.

All English courses that the students had taken before were conducted by native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) except for the author. English had been the primary medium of instruction in all courses. Three NESTs and the author were teaching the students at the time of study. It can be surmised that the students had had ample time to form their own opinions about English education provided to them in the BRP.

English courses had been oriented toward English for general and occupational purposes until 2013. However, in the beginning of 2014, the English curriculum underwent a dramatic change. Materials related to a standardized test became the backbone of all courses. In effect, the change inadvertently shifted the focus of teaching away from the development of language skills. A significant portion of class time was allotted to coverage of materials and language functions that had little to do with social and work-related oral discourse.

Going back to the participant profiles, all but two students are female. Except for 18

fourth-year students (26.1%), all others were in their third year of study. The students' age averaged at 21-years, ranging from 20 to 25. In terms of the students' educational background, 57 students (82.6%) previously attended mainstream high schools. Nine students graduated from commercial high schools leaving two students who respectively went to an arts high school and a technical high school.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was designed for Korean beauty students in higher education (but can be modified or expanded in scope if necessary). Multiple-choice and ranking type items were mainly adopted. In addition, a couple of open-ended items were also inserted to provide a venue for students to voice their concerns pertaining to their English curriculum. The questionnaire administered was written in plain English, accompanied by Korean translation.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections (Appendix). The first section seeks basic biographic information from individual participants. The second section gathers additional information, such as confidence of participants as English users, their perceived proficiency in English, and their needs as language learners. The third section explores participants' thoughts on the curricular elements as well as the anticipated demand for English ability. The last section looks into participants' satisfaction with the elements considered earlier.

TABLE 1
Reliability Analysis

Classification	Number of items	Cronbach's α
Language skills and components		
Self-assessment	7	.844
Expectations	7	.854
Anticipated demand for language skills in the workplace		
Within Korea	4	.718
Outside	4	.723
Survey of English curriculum		
Importance	15	.764
Satisfaction	15	.888

The beauty students in question were asked to complete the questionnaire anonymously and on a voluntary basis. Since students were taking the last compulsory English course, the survey can also serve as an exit interview in paper form with respect to English education. Findings of the study can shed light on what students perceived beneficial,

lacking, or hindering in English courses. Findings can in turn benefit succeeding generations of beauty students.

Students' responses were analyzed in reference to past studies on needs analysis (e.g., Choi, 2014; You, 2015). The responses were tabulated and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 18.0 after data coding and cleaning. Reliability was checked in terms of Cronbach's index of internal consistency. As the Alpha value greater than 0.7 is generally considered acceptable, data gathered are established to be reliable, as shown in Table 1.

To show the participants' general characteristics and their response patterns, descriptive statistics were carried out. Inferential statistics (e.g., *t*-tests) were also performed where appropriate. With respect to the participants' written-in responses to open-ended items, they were read and reread multiple times to identify emergent themes and categorize the responses. Informal discussions were held with students to clarify and expand on findings of the study.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Students' Self-Assessment as English Learners

1) Confidence and Proficiency

Students as a whole have a low level of confidence as English users (Item 5). When it comes to using English, merely three students feel confident while 43 students (63.2%) feel that their confidence is either low or very low. For 23 students who choose not to articulate their feelings either way, it can be assumed that they are not particularly self-assured as well. The finding that only a few students feel confident is puzzling to some degree, especially when all students have received a good deal of English education over a period of three years. It is an undesirable situation as the low level of confidence in students could deter them from taking an active role in learning and using the language (Dörnyei, 2001).

With regard to proficiency in English (Item 7), about 40% of students confide that they have trouble using English, which is no surprise considering the responses to Item 5. Seven students (10.1%) believe that it is almost impossible for them to converse in English, and 21 students (30.4%) express that it is generally difficult to articulate their thoughts. These responses can partially account for the students' low self-efficacy of using English for communicative purposes.

However, many other students generally have a comparatively high opinion of their ability. Twenty-nine students (42.0%) are of the opinion that they are able to carry basic

conversation, and 12 students (17.4%) take the view that they are capable of conversing with ease as long as discourse deals with familiar topics. Plainly, a large proportion of students think that they are conversant in English, contrary to the lack of confidence conveyed collectively. The findings indicate that the situation necessitates implementation of proactive measures to boost the students' confidence by letting them experience success in using the language as a tool of communication.

2) Language Skills and Components

Consideration is given to language skills of students (Table 2). In response to Item 6, students rank their language skills in descending order of strength as follows: reading (M = 3.09); listening (M = 2.90); writing (M = 2.25); and speaking (M = 2.09). In other words, students perceive their speaking to be the weakest while their reading is regarded as the strongest, as has been found in previous studies dealing with Korean university students (Cho & No, 2008; Lee & Im, 2005; You, 2015).

TABLE 2
Students' Assessment of Their Language Skills

Classification	Self-assessment		Expectations		*t-value*	*p*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Listening	2.90	1.017	4.16	.760	-6.975***	.000
Reading	3.09	.853	3.83	.890	-4.089***	.000
Speaking	2.09	.800	4.51	.585	-17.026***	.000
Writing	2.25	.898	4.13	.839	-10.169***	.000

*** $p < .001$.

Turning to language skills that need to be improved from students' perspectives (Item 9), students place the skills in ascending order of importance as follows: reading (M = 3.83); writing (M = 4.13); listening (M = 4.16); and speaking (M = 4.51). Statistically significant differences exist across all language skills in Table 2 when the students' self-assessed proficiency is compared with their expectations ($p < .001$): listening (t = -6.975); reading (t = -4.089); speaking (t = -17.026); and writing (t = -10.169). The results indicate that students feel that there is a gap between what they see themselves as English learners and their image of ideal self as English users, notably concerning their productive skills (i.e., speaking and writing).

What the results indicate is that speaking does, in the minds of students, deserve the greatest emphasis, whereas reading merits the least attention in comparison. The aforementioned is reasonable on account of the finding that speaking is perceived to be the weakest while reading is the strongest. An interesting result is that students place listening before writing in regard to importance, which is suggestive of the following: Special attention should be paid to enhancement of students' verbal skills (Bang, 2004); even though there is admittedly considerable scope for improvement in their writing ability.

TABLE 3
Students' Assessment of Their Proficiency Pertaining to Language Components

Classification	Self-assessment		Expectations		*t-value*	*p*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Grammar	2.10	.972	4.12	.900	-10.372***	.000
Pronunciation	2.55	.963	4.06	.802	-8.508***	.000
Vocabulary	2.28	.820	4.16	.885	-10.943***	.000

***$p < .001$.

Student needs for improvement extend to language components (Table 3), such as grammar (M = 4.12), pronunciation (M = 4.06), and vocabulary (M = 4.16). Slight differences exist in student perceptions on the components. Having diagnosed that their pronunciation (M = 2.55) is reasonably acceptable, students attach comparatively less importance to teaching geared to enhancing it. By comparison, likely based on recognition that their grammar (M = 2.10) and vocabulary (M = 2.28) are not as strong as their pronunciation, students feel a greater need to improve their grammar and vocabulary (p < .001): grammar (t = -10.372); pronunciation (t = -8.508); and vocabulary (t = -10.943). The students' inclination to place a greater emphasis on the language components that are deemed to be poorer is understandable.

3) Projected Demand for English Use

There appears to be a general consensus among students that communicative competence is indispensable for making a success of their career in the future. When asked which language skill(s) are important, students do not assign the same value to every skill. Moreover, they take the view that language skills required of beauty professionals can vary moderately, depending on whether the professionals are situated in or outside of Korea.

For beauty professionals in Korea (Item 10), students place a greater value on verbal

skills over written skills: Speaking (M=4.71) and listening (M=4.61) are rated close to "very important" while reading (M=3.90) and writing (M=3.67) near "important" (Table 4). Students seem to be of the opinion that beauty professionals mostly interact with foreign customers face-to-face or over the phone rather than via written correspondence. This is why students generally place a high value on oral fluency in English.

Concerning language skills for a successful career overseas (Item 12), a similar response pattern is observed, in spite of two noteworthy differences from the responses to Item 10 (Table 4). With the broadened geographical base of professional activities, there are slight increases in anticipated importance across verbal skills along with slightly more noticeable rises in written skills (p<.05), as revealed by t-test: listening (t=-2.046) and speaking (t = -2.387) versus reading (t=-2.414) and writing (t=-2.709). It appears that students take the view that professionals working abroad should be more highly proficient in all language skills, including reading (M=4.10) and writing (M=3.91), in comparison to those in beauty industries in Korea.

TABLE 4
Anticipated Demand for Language Skills in the Workplace

Classification	Within Korea		Outside		*t-value*	*p*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Listening	4.61	.521	4.72	.511	-2.046*	.045
Reading	3.90	.825	4.10	.710	-2.414*	.018
Speaking	4.71	.517	4.83	.382	-2.387*	.020
Writing	3.67	.761	3.91	.836	-2.709**	.009

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Students' written-in remarks support the results. According to student comments made in response to Items 17 and 18, there is a popular demand for the further development of speaking skills, as explicitly pointed out by four students. It should be noted that no comment was made about any other language skills and components. A closely related point is made by another student who suggests that more class time be allotted to free talking than is currently utilized. In addition, the importance of honing their speaking skills is stressed by four other students, specifically for use in the workplace, the implication being that there is a strong demand for the development of verbal skills for practical applications.

For the aforementioned reason, students are likely enthused by practical aspects of the

language usage dealing with everyday and work-related topics. For the purpose of aligning language teaching closely with students' interests and aspirations, its primary focus should be the development of their verbal skills that enable them to interact with foreign customers, an important point to bear in mind when resetting educational goals and courses objectives. While endorsement of the whole language approach is propitious, a sensible course of action is to take advantage of reading and writing tasks to facilitate verbal communication.

4) Workplace Language Functions

When given a set of work-related tasks, students find (or speculate) some tasks more difficult than others to be performed in English (Item 11). Thirty-five students (50.7%) find it to be the most challenging to have to explain products and procedures to customers. Sixteen students (23.3%) conceive that the most formidable English usage in the workplace would occur in the actual act of rendering services to customers. Merely 9 students (13.0%) rank first the task of dealing with customer complaints in terms of difficulty. Incidentally, 47 students (68.1%) put forth that consultation with customers is the easiest task.

A deep understanding of how students feel about real-world tasks can be salient (Long & Crookes, 1986). The understanding can help decide where to put emphasis during the course syllabus design; especially if decision making is accompanied by research that encompasses a comprehensive coverage of social functions and work-related tasks, as regarded and encountered by both students and field practitioners respectively. When student needs are reflected in in-class learning tasks and activities, the effectiveness of language learning and teaching can increase (Candlin, 1987).

2. English Curriculum in Place

1) Importance of Curricular Elements

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to go into depth about all aspects of the English curriculum, it is worthwhile to draw attention to the dimensions that students find particularly important. Students put a high value on certain elements, as shown in Table 5, possibly conceiving that these exert greater impacts on their learning than the others.

Students find class atmosphere ($M = 4.35$) the most important, followed by teaching methods ($M = 4.13$), in-class language practice ($M = 4.13$), medium of instruction ($M = 4.12$), teacher feedback ($M = 4.10$), class proficiency ($M = 4.09$), support outside class ($M = 3.97$), integration of cultural teaching ($M = 3.65$), contact hours ($M = 3.61$), class size ($M =$

3.52), textbooks (M = 3.36), performance evaluation (M = 3.36), use of vocational terms (M = 3.35), supplementary materials (M = 3.30), and homework assignments (M = 3.10).

TABLE 5
Survey of the English Curriculum

Classification	Importance		Satisfaction		*t-value*	*p*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Class atmosphere	4.35	.783	3.33	.852	7.538***	.000
Class proficiency	4.09	.636	3.46	.719	5.694***	.000
Class size	3.52	.901	3.61	.790	-.569	.571
Contact hours	3.61	.895	3.01	1.007	3.905***	.000
Homework assignments	3.10	1.073	3.35	.744	-1.752	.084
In-class language practice	4.13	.726	3.51	.720	5.412***	.000
Integration of cultural teaching	3.65	.921	3.26	.995	2.758**	.007
Medium of instruction	4.12	.631	3.65	.703	4.531***	.000
Performance evaluation	3.36	.985	3.25	.695	.929	.356
Supplementary materials	3.30	.792	3.23	.789	.672	.504
Support outside class	3.97	.840	3.03	.874	6.104***	.000
Teacher feedback	4.10	.926	3.55	.883	3.646**	.001
Teaching methods	4.13	.765	3.49	.797	5.150***	.000
Textbooks	3.36	.822	3.16	.868	1.749	.085
Use of vocational terms	3.35	.855	3.07	.896	2.013	.048

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

The elements on which students place a comparatively high value merit special consideration as it can provide clues as to what curricular aspects the learners attach great importance to and what underlies their choices. Students definitely deem vital an enjoyable and productive climate in the classroom (M = 4.35). A friendly ambience can facilitate teacher-student and student-student interactions by lowering the students' affective filter. Such an environment can be crucial to vigorous language practice and use, especially when the teacher's native language and culture differ significantly from students'.

Considering that the development of speaking skills has been established to be the top

priority among students, it is natural how the individuals lay special emphasis on the factor (i.e., class atmosphere) that is closely linked to the development of verbal skills. This association with students' preoccupation with speaking skills development seems to extend to the other elements that are perceived to be important. Since instructional methods that are in line with learner needs and expectations can promote the use of language skills (i.e., in-class language practice, $M=4.13$), the high value placed on teaching methods ($M=4.13$) also makes sense.

As another example, students feel strongly about the medium of instruction ($M=4.12$). Both regular exposure to spoken English and arguably frequent oral discourse in the classroom can partially account for the students' feelings, even though it could have been demanding for many students to process information and articulate their thoughts in the language. Hypothetically speaking, if the medium had been Korean all along, students could have missed out on the opportunity to hear and speak English to a large degree. It appears that the use of English as the medium of instruction is appreciated by students.

Nevertheless, some students believe that it would have been beneficial to have English courses that are specifically designed for students with comparatively low levels of proficiency. In the minds of the students, bilingual teachers who can judiciously give instruction in Korean can better serve the purpose of facilitating language learning of low-level students than NESTs. While the use of English as the medium of instruction is well regarded in general, a small proportion of students could have derived some benefits from special courses closely befitting their proficiency and aptitude.

Relatedly, as recommended in the two students' responses to the open-ended items, a greater utilization of multimedia in English classrooms can be of use. As English has been the medium of instruction in every English course, the salient use of presentation tools and audiovisual materials can help enhance students' comprehension, leaving more time for language practice.

2) Satisfaction with the Curricular Elements

The levels of student satisfaction vary slightly. Students are most satisfied with the medium of instruction ($M=3.65$), followed by class size ($M=3.61$), teacher feedback ($M=3.55$), in-class language practice ($M=3.51$), teaching methods ($M=3.49$), class proficiency ($M=3.46$), homework assignments ($M=3.35$), class atmosphere ($M=3.33$), integration of cultural teaching ($M=3.26$), performance evaluation ($M=3.25$), supplementary materials ($M=3.23$), textbooks ($M=3.16$), use of vocational terms ($M=3.07$), support outside class ($M=3.03$), and contact hours ($M=3.01$).

The results show that students are not unsatisfied with a number of the elements and, by extension, the English curriculum. Nevertheless, students are not entirely satisfied either,

which suggests that their needs and expectations have not been fully met. In the spirit of student-centered teaching, a level of dissatisfaction or satisfaction in students can help point to curricular areas in which those in charge of English education should invest, respectively, more or less attention in the pursuit of ensuring a positive learning experience. In this regard, the elements at the bottom (e.g., contact hours, support outside class, and use of vocational terms) deserve close attention.

First, students are unsatisfied with contact hours ($M = 3.01$). As evident in a student's comment (Item 17), English education has taken up a seemingly inordinate amount of time. At issue here is the students' concern that they are not adequately recompensed for the time they spend in English classrooms. Also, despite the students' recognition of importance of English, it is possible that some students find being in English classrooms difficult for different reasons (e.g., low levels of interest and proficiency). If administratively feasible, it will be worthwhile to explore ways of adequately rewarding students for their involvement in English courses and enhancing their learning experience.

The second element at the lower end of student satisfaction has to do with support outside class ($M = 3.03$). A large number of students perceive that extra practice and assistance are not readily available, whereas support outside class can serve as an extension of classroom teaching and a venue for remedial work. Although further inquiry is called for to have a clear understanding of exactly what kind of support students expect in and outside of the classroom, a greater level of personal care and attention to individual students can be an astute move to ameliorate the situation.

In fairness, students do not seem to exercise due diligence (Item 14). Fifty-seven students (82.6%) usually spend little or no time studying English outside class, whereas five and four students spend approximately one and two hours a week, respectively. Only three students claim that they study English on their own for more than two hours. Most students do not appear to spend sufficient time to take full advantage of their in-class learning, make use of it, and expand upon it.

A lack of available study time can in part account for the amount of student self-study time, owing to both heavy course loads and laborious hands-on activities (e.g., involvement in practicum and fieldwork) required by students' major-related courses. Another viable explanation is that the English curriculum may have fallen short of continuously engaging students in learning. In other words, it is possible that meaningful homework and extracurricular opportunities have not been provided, which can be used to induce students to further practice and develop their language skills. This possibility is corroborated by the result that 33 students (47.8%) have taken one or more elective English courses in addition to all the compulsory courses in the program (Item 15). What the particular outcome signifies is that the courses offered in the program have not met certain needs of students, thereby compelling them to seek learning opportunities outside.

Third, students seem to perceive that EOP is not adequately incorporated into the curriculum, at least not to their satisfaction (M = 3.07). When most students are understandably eager to learn to speak English befitting for the anticipated use in their professional capacity, English learning and teaching can be beneficial that draw extensively on conversation that can transpire at the workplace (Jeong, 2012). Language lessons with customized content can help engage students in practice and use (Hutchinson & Waters, 1984), and teaching materials that correspond to students' aspirations can help amplify their interest in the classroom (Sung, 2011).

When the perceived importance of the curricular matters is contrasted with how satisfied students are, statistically significant differences are observed for the following ($p < .05$): class atmosphere ($t = 7.538$); class proficiency ($t = 5.694$); contact hours ($t = 3.905$); in-class language practice (t = 5.412); integration of cultural teaching (t = 2.758); medium of instruction (t = 4.531); support outside class (t = 6.104); teacher feedback (t = 3.646); teaching methods ($t = 5.150$); and use of vocational terms ($t = 2.013$). On the whole, student satisfaction is comparatively low in relation with importance attached to the matters.

3) Efficacy of English Education

Many students do not have a very high opinion of English education provided in the program. Despite their extensive involvements, students are not convinced of significant improvement in their language skills during their study (Item 8). Thirty-six students (52.2%) take the view that their English proficiency has not improved substantially since high school, and 22 students (31.9%) have ambivalent feelings about the degree of improvement. In other words, all but 11 students are doubtful as to whether their ability to use English has improved considerably.

While the results (i.e., the degrees of improvement or the lack thereof) do not necessarily reflect the effectiveness of English teaching in the program, they do support the finding that English education has fallen short of satisfying student expectations, as discussed earlier. In response to Item 17, a student wrote that it was very difficult to learn English in the current setting, and voiced that students should be given autonomy. By that, the student could have meant that students should be able to make their own decisions as to "what they should be learning" and "how they should learn it" (Nunan, 1988, p. 20). Simply put, there seems to be a concern about the way in which the education is conducted.

The main focus of English education should, in the students' view, be returned to the development of verbal skills, primarily for occupational purposes, for the BRP in question. Preservation of the status quo (i.e., test-oriented teaching) will be not only insensible but also potentially detrimental to students' language learning in the long run. This is because students are, in effect, being told to study some aspects of the language for an extended

period, which are, in their view, largely irrelevant and of little value to them. Although English education geared to preparation for one or more standardized tests could enhance employment prospects of some students, including those who aim to embark on careers in cosmetics companies, it is far from being prudent to subject all students to it (Choi, 2014).

During the process of prioritizing curricular areas of improvement, the aspects with which students are mostly unsatisfied can take precedence over others in consideration (Pyo, 2006). For instance, the three elements discussed above (i.e., inadequate recompense for contact hours, lack of support outside class, and insufficient attention to EOP) are prime candidates for immediate consideration and need to be more closely investigated; whereas some others (e.g., class size) may be regarded as relatively low priorities for the present.

In a positive light, university English education has not been a negative experience for all students, as evident in the comment made by a student who wrote that her English had improved greatly at university. It is not insignificant at all that 11 students (15.9%) acknowledge substantial improvement in their ability to use English. Also, besides the 11 students, many other students would likely have been more forthcoming about improvement in their English if the modifier 'greatly' had been removed from Item 8. In the absence of formal assessment of students' proficiency at entry and exit, it is difficult to attain a completely objective description of their communicative ability and their achievement over time (Shin, 2015). The students' responses to Item 8 should be understood in context.

There is a positive relationship between the students' self-assessed speaking ability (Item 7) and their feelings about improvement ($r = .303$, $p < .05$). A possible explanation for the correlation is that the students' conversational ability can in large part be attributable to quality education in the BRP. At the same time, it is also plausible that high-level students have actually derived greater benefit from English courses (i.e., taught by NESTs) from the outset than have students whose level of proficiency is comparatively low. This alternative possibility raises a concern about the necessity of adopting preparatory and remedial measures for low-level students, which can be used to help prepare the individuals to take full advantage of English teaching.

Examination of student perceptions on the English curriculum, as done in the study, can give a broad overview of concerns that students have about curricular matters. Moreover, it can provide a basis for further investigation into specific areas for a greater understanding of English education. In other words, once specific areas are identified in which student satisfaction is comparatively low, these areas can be carefully scrutinized for a deeper understanding. In this regard, qualitative research methods can be powerful tools to delve into curricular issues and explicate student concerns in depth (Richards, 2001).

V. CONCLUSION

The present study has attained the thoughts of Korean university students in a field of study on English learning and teaching. Findings are never meant to be generalized, as stated earlier, on account of the study being context-specific and preliminary in nature. Nonetheless, the study has the merit of shedding light on some pertinent needs and expectations of Korean university students who are going to procure employment in service industries, by having pointed to the necessity of achieving and promoting student-centered curricular improvements.

It is opportune for tertiary institutions to present and extend specialized learning opportunities to those who are going to build a career in different sectors of the service industry–taking into account that the opportunity cost can be exorbitant of continuing with English education not attuned to the prospective workers' specific needs. In other words, the education that does not adequately integrate anticipated usage of English specific to particular service industries frequented by foreigners can, in effect, perpetuate an elite workforce that is not ready upon graduation to take on challenges and opportunities in the increasingly multi-racial and multi-ethnic business environment.

After all, it is crucial to ensure that motivated students have ample opportunities at university to learn to successfully interact with foreigners. To satisfy a growing demand in the era of intensifying globalization and internationalization to cultivate a workforce who can work well with foreign customers, colleagues, and business partners (Hong & Lee, 2011; Sung, 2011), conventional teaching of EOP alone will not suffice, however (Kim & Park, 2011). While EOP teaching is of practical value as it can help prepare students to perform "convincingly" as professionals in English, as reasoned by Robinson (1980, p. 11); it cannot completely fulfill the wants of those who desire to acquire an overall mastery of the language. A recommended course of action is to incorporate work-related vocabulary and expressions into pedagogical materials intended to enhance students' overall communicate competence, accompanied by efforts to engage students in language practice for typical social and business situations.

An onus is on tertiary institutions to provide and foster an environment conducive to learning English as an international language, in response to the demand; however, curricular renewal does not have to be conceived, implemented, and promoted at the institution level. Discussion for curricular renewal can begin at the program, department, and school levels, and the groundwork can even be laid given that resources are available. The fast-changing and intensely-competitive nature of businesses makes it necessary for the individual entities (i.e., programs, departments, and schools) to take the initiative to expedite introduction of desirable curricular changes.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Questionnaire items cover the English curriculum. Honest and complete responses will be instrumental in improving English education. Check or circle proper responses. Also, feel free to write your responses in English and/or Korean. Your participation is deeply appreciated.

Section A BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Year: 1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4 __
2. Gender: Female __ Male __
3. Age: _____
4. High school type
   a. Mainstream b. Arts c. Technical d. Commercial e. Others: _____

Section B SELF-ASSESSMENT

5. My confidence level in using English for communication is _____.
   a. Very low b. Low c. Neither low nor high d. High e. Very high
6. Self-assessment of language skills and components

	Very poor	Poor	Neither poor nor strong	Strong	Very strong
Speaking	□	□	□	□	□
Listening	□	□	□	□	□
Writing	□	□	□	□	□
Reading	□	□	□	□	□
Pronunciation	□	□	□	□	□
Vocabulary	□	□	□	□	□
Grammar	□	□	□	□	□

7. _____ in English.
   a. For me, it is nearly impossible to converse
   b. It is generally difficult for me to articulate myself
   c. I can carry basic conversation
   d. Despite some difficulty with unfamiliar topics, I can usually converse well enough
   e. I can converse fluently
8. My English proficiency has improved greatly since high school.
   a. Strongly disagree b. Disagree c. Neither disagree nor agree
   d. Agree e. Strongly agree

9. Language skills and components that need improvement.

	Very little	Little	Neither little nor much	Much	Very much
Speaking	□	□	□	□	□
Listening	□	□	□	□	□
Writing	□	□	□	□	□
Reading	□	□	□	□	□
Pronunciation	□	□	□	□	□
Vocabulary	□	□	□	□	□
Grammar	□	□	□	□	□

Section C LEARNING AND USING ENGLISH

10. To be successful in your chosen career, which language skills are important?

	Least important	Not so important	Moderate	Important	Most important
Speaking	□	□	□	□	□
Listening	□	□	□	□	□
Writing	□	□	□	□	□
Reading	□	□	□	□	□

11. Rank the choices in order of difficulty of tasks in English (1 being the most difficult and 4 the easiest).
__ a. To consult with customers
__ b. To explain products and procedures
__ c. To provide services
__ d. To deal with customer complaints

12. To be successful beauty professionals outside Korea, which skills are important?

	Least important	Not so important	Moderate	Important	Most important
Speaking	□	□	□	□	□
Listening	□	□	□	□	□
Writing	□	□	□	□	□
Reading	□	□	□	□	□

13. Check the importance of the following choices for learning English.

	Least important	Not so important	Moderate	Important	Most important
Textbooks	□	□	□	□	□
Supplementary materials	□	□	□	□	□
Teaching methods	□	□	□	□	□
Medium of instruction	□	□	□	□	□
Class size	□	□	□	□	□
Class proficiency	□	□	□	□	□
Class atmosphere	□	□	□	□	□
In-class language practice	□	□	□	□	□
Use of vocational terms	□	□	□	□	□
Integration of cultural teaching	□	□	□	□	□

Contact hours	□	□	□	□	□
Homework assignments	□	□	□	□	□
Performance evaluation	□	□	□	□	□
Teacher feedback	□	□	□	□	□
Support outside class	□	□	□	□	□

14. The time I normally spend studying English on my own is _____ per week.
    a. None b. Less than 30 minutes c. About 1 hour
    d. About 2 hours e. More than 2 hours
15. I have taken elective English courses at university. Yes __ No __

Section D ENGLISH COURSES AND CURRICULUMS

16. Check your levels of satisfaction with different aspects of English courses.

	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Moderate	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Textbooks	□	□	□	□	□
Supplementary materials	□	□	□	□	□
Teaching methods	□	□	□	□	□
Medium of instruction	□	□	□	□	□
Class size	□	□	□	□	□
Class proficiency	□	□	□	□	□
Class atmosphere	□	□	□	□	□
In-class language practice	□	□	□	□	□
Use of vocational terms	□	□	□	□	□
Integration of cultural teaching	□	□	□	□	□
Contact hours	□	□	□	□	□
Homework assignments	□	□	□	□	□
Performance evaluation	□	□	□	□	□
Teacher feedback	□	□	□	□	□
Support outside class	□	□	□	□	□

17. Leave any additional comments.
    _____
    _____
18. Leave any suggestions.
    _____
    _____

Thank you for your participation.

Note. The questionnaire items are renumbered and slightly modified for readability.

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Tertiary

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Received in October 15, 2015
Reviewed in November 26, 2015
Revised version received in December 5, 2015