

Enhancing Multicultural Society in South Korea: English Language Curriculum Adaptation for
South-East Asian Students at Public Middle School in Incheon

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Abstract

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This study explores the examination of the English Language curriculum to better cater to the needs of Southeast Asian students in a multicultural context within the specific context of public middle schools in Incheon, South Korea, specifically targeting first-grade middle school students. The significance of this research is heightened by the increasing number of students from multicultural backgrounds, particularly those from Southeast Asia, in the city of Incheon. It involves the themes of diversity and inclusion within the national and local curricula of South Korea, as well as in a specific ESL textbook and its teacher's guide. Through qualitative content analysis, the study examines the consistency and alignment between the broad objectives of the national curriculum and their specific implementations in the textbook and teacher's guide. The findings highlight the need for coherence in curricular approaches to diversity and inclusion, providing recommendations to enhance these aspects in English language classrooms.

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Introduction

Background

South Korea (hereinafter, Korea) is currently undergoing a progressive transition towards the development of a multicultural society for two reasons. This transformation is primarily driven by two significant factors. First, there is a growing number of international marriages between Korean men and younger women from Southeast Asian countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Second, there is an increasing trend of labor migration among Southeast Asian males to Korea, primarily motivated by opportunities to work in 3D (dirty, dangerous, demeaning) jobs. This trend is especially evident in the city of Incheon, one of Korea's urban centers. Out of 536 elementary and middle schools in Incheon, 96% (517 schools) have multicultural students. According to one news article, the population of multicultural students in 2023 has increased by 12.5% compared to the previous year, totaling 12,258 students in Incheon (박현주, 2023). This growth rate is the highest recorded in the country, highlighting the rapid pace of multiculturalism in the region.

The previously mentioned demographic changes have resulted in unique educational challenges. Despite ostensible academic and social support for both Korean and Southeast Asian students, Korean multicultural education in public schools falls short of the stated goal of assisting integration (Park & Watson, 2011). The Ministry of Education in Korea has long placed significant emphasis on the integration of the concept of "*damunhwa*" (multiculturalism) within the educational curriculum. In addition, much allocated funds have supported multicultural education policy research, Korean language textbooks and programs, and teacher training programs (Park & Watson, 2011). Further, teacher support has been further planned for professional development

and teaching material distribution (Park & Watson, 2011). While these efforts seemingly conform to the standards outlined in Article 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, emphasizing the commitment of parties to adopt immediate and effective measures, in the fields of teaching, education, culture, and information, inadequate Korean multicultural education and its characteristics still results in confusion about the concept in Korean context (United Nations, 1965). This confusion is exacerbated by the lack of a coherent multicultural education philosophy, which stems primarily from a tendency to transplant foreign theories onto the Korean educational landscape. The deeply entrenched Confucian philosophy in Korean education, which emphasizes social harmony and uniformity, often conflicts with the principles of heterogeneous education. These principles, which promote diversity and inclusion, are fundamental to effective multicultural education. Thus, integrating multicultural education and foreign theories within Korea's educational paradigm presents substantial challenges.

Moreover, stereotypes and biases persist in educational settings, particularly affecting students from low-income or less-educated families, especially those from Southeast Asia (Park et al., 2012). Moreover, Korean middle school students invest a significant amount of time and money in private education, exacerbating the social and academic gap between South Koreans and marginalized students such as South Asian middle school students (7th grade to 9th grade, usually 13-15). Typically, their private education concentrates extensively on traditional academic subjects, predominantly English and mathematics. The existence of private education may inadvertently limit South-Asian students' access to resources, privileges, and social capital. Ultimately, this results in the social stigmatization of these students by Korean students, educators, and parents.

The implementation of comprehensive change can be a complex and time-consuming process. Apart from their teaching responsibilities, South Korean middle-school educators are overburdened with administrative tasks, which are exacerbated by the need to address parental concerns about both academic performance and social development among students. However, given the growing population of Southeast Asian students, it is imperative to investigate effective curriculum adaptation strategies for South Korean middle schools to meet both the linguistic needs and cultural needs of all students.

Purpose of Study

Born in South Korea and raised in four different countries, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Canada, and the United States, I directly witnessed the power of inclusive education. Although multicultural education wasn't explicitly included in the curriculum, I have observed how the curriculum subtly evolved across various subjects. For instance, during my time in Canada, teachers incorporated myriad perspectives from diverse cultures within the social studies curriculum. This concerted effort not only facilitated a more profound comprehension of global issues but also instilled in students a heightened appreciation for cultural diversity. In contrast to the parochial focus on local affairs, this inclusive pedagogical approach encouraged learners to embrace and respect cultural disparities on a broader scale. Conversely, upon temporarily returning to Korea to attend public middle school in Incheon, I observed a stark contrast in the outdated curriculum of public schools especially in multicultural education.

Considering the high usage and demand for the English language in Korean public middle schools, it is pragmatic to adjust the current curriculum. English, one of the core interdisciplinary subjects, offers flexibility for teachers to incorporate diverse topics, activities, and modalities to

tailor to the needs of South-East Asian students. Implementing incremental modifications in programs could yield significant progress.

The goal of this master's thesis is to investigate how the current Korean education system addresses multiculturalism in public educational documents, specifically focusing on an ESL textbook and teacher guides. By analyzing documents, I aim to delve into the alignment of these documents to determine how effectively they emphasize the concepts of diversity and inclusion for both educators and students. Addressing the educational needs of immigrant students while recognizing the wider student population poses a complex and arduous task that must be resolved to foster inclusion within the Korean context. Every small step towards equity and diversity serves as a foundational element for significant transformation. Therefore, this study is crucial in identifying and analyzing the alignment between these educational documents incorporating elements of diversity and inclusion.

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

- 1) How do the objectives of the national and local curriculum address diversity and inclusion?
- 2) How do a Korean ESL textbook and teacher's guide address diversity and inclusion?
- 3) How do they both align with each other?

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Diversity and Inclusion

Understanding diversity and inclusion within the broader educational context is paramount, despite their potential variances in interpretation. While the terms "diversity" and "inclusion" have distinct meanings, their concepts and practices often intersect and complement each other (Iniesto

& Bossu, 2023). Specifically, diversity pertains to recognizing and valuing the presence of varied individuals, encompassing differences in culture, race, ability, class, and appearance within open educational communities. Conversely, inclusion involves the effective integration and utilization of open educational resources to foster practices that acknowledge marginalized voices and provide a sense of belonging (Iniesto & Bossu, 2023). This provides a more concrete definition to distinguish both the concept of diversity and inclusion in terms of Korean middle school education for my further studies, despite their overlapping components.

The significance of children's social experiences in school and the critical role of teachers cannot be overstated (Hymel & Katz, 2019). Efforts to design intentional positive social interactions among peers should extend beyond this aim to include training support, the universal design of learning, and the creation of classrooms that are both socially and academically inclusive (Hymel & Katz, 2019). Guðjónsdóttir and Óskarsdóttir's study emphasizes the need for more inclusive teacher education as a solution for developing inclusive schools. This encompasses not only the supportive conditions provided for schools and teachers but also the establishment of a framework of competencies and quality assurance measures (Guðjónsdóttir & Óskarsdóttir, 2019). However, in environments where communication between schools and teachers is limited, implementing these measures may pose challenges.

In the context of foreign language classrooms, where linguistic diversity and dialectal sensitivity are prevalent among students, the role of instructors in recognizing and addressing these diversities is crucial (Pérez-Leroux & Glass, 2000). To foster a favorable social and learning environment, Pérez-Leroux and Glass (2000) suggest three key activities: training instructors to recognize linguistic diversity, understanding language biases, and effectively managing language conflicts. Lu and Troyan (2022) highlight the urgent need to acknowledge cultural and linguistic

diversity in language classrooms, specifically within K-12 Chinese language education. The current pedagogical approaches often adopt a "one size fits all" approach, promoting an essentialized worldview by dichotomizing students based on an English/Chinese divide. This is particularly problematic given the diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of (Lu & Troyan, 2022). Similar issues are evident in the Korean educational context, where educators must devise effective strategies that do not overly burden them with the need for significant alterations.

Examining the intersection between social inclusion and linguistic diversity, Piller and Takahashi (2011) provide a comprehensive overview of social inclusion agendas and outline how language intersects with these agendas (Piller & Takahashi, 2011). The study emphasizes the necessity of drawing attention to inclusion and exclusion in institutions such as schools, particularly in nations like Japan and Korea, where these topics are often overlooked even in multilingualism research. By effectively disseminating successful practices and policies of social inclusion, these concepts can be more widely adopted and implemented in educational settings (Piller & Takahashi, 2011). Despite the minimal inclusion of social inclusion agendas, the issue may be exacerbated if schools and teachers, given their considerable autonomy, choose not to incorporate these concepts into their educational practices. Although the literature represents diversity and inclusion in a variety of contexts, the research will primarily focus on the application of diversity and inclusion in foreign language classes in South Korea.

Multi-Cultural Education in Korea

It is imperative to recognize the significance of understanding the underlying emphasis on multiculturalism within the South Korean education system. By comprehending the reality and effectiveness of acquiring knowledge about Korean multiculturalism within educational

environments, an examination can be conducted to determine whether the primary cause arises from both internal factors (curriculum design) and external factors (public opinions and national education policy).

In addition, recognizing how multicultural education is both explicitly or implicitly or even not included in the curriculum could be the primary initial step to further advance education. 권순구 and 권미경's (2022) research on middle school curriculum reveals the ongoing deficiency in multicultural education. Only 40% of multicultural education is integrated into creative activities classes, while 48% of instruction relies on teacher lectures, and theoretical textbook contents (권순구 & 권미경, 2022). Such findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive curriculum improvements to foster a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.

In the context of English language education, Park et al. (2022) extensively examine the contents of Grade 1 Middle School English textbooks, emphasizing the necessity of incorporating diverse racial representations beyond Korean and white (English-speaking countries). Notably, foreign countries mentioned predominantly align with Korea's historical and cultural proximity to China and Japan. This alignment underscores the need for a more nuanced approach to curriculum development (Park et al., 2022). Hwang's article (2011) emphasizes the predominant focus of multicultural education in Korea, primarily involving Korean language education and a multicultural understanding of Korean culture. These programs are usually confined to designated multicultural schools and after-school programs that focus exclusively on Korean students (Hwang, 2011). This might perpetuate cultural assimilation and neglect the unique identities of minority groups. Cho et al. (2020) stress the significant effect of language programs on influencing perceptions of multicultural education. He states that language education that serves these diverse student populations includes either English (common in most public schools) or the native

language of students or their parents' home countries besides Korean (Cho et al., 2010). Yet these bilingual programs do not promote mutual understanding among students.

Examining specific institutional frameworks, the examination of the curriculum in both Incheon Hannurai School (a multi-cultural school designated by the Korean national government) and Saenal School (an alternative school designed for students who have difficulties engaging in traditional school systems) reveals differences in their middle school curricula. While Hannurai School allocates 50% of the curriculum to specialized courses related to career counseling, educational development, and multicultural education, Saenal School allocates 10% of the curriculum to cater to the needs of non-Korean students. However, both institutions provide a more flexible and comprehensive educational approach (Oh et al., 2015). However, this study overlooks the reality that the majority of Southeast Asian students attend public middle schools and fails to address how multicultural education is currently implemented in these mainstream educational settings. Within South Korean educational institutions, the degree and methods of multicultural education vary, even with the different types of institutions.

Curriculum Adaptation for Teachers

Effective curriculum adaptation strategies are vital in achieving desired goals and outcomes in the dynamic landscape of the Korean public education system. Developing comprehensive guidelines and frameworks for inclusive education is essential to guarantee that all students have access to equal educational opportunities. Andini et al. (2020) stresses the significance of understanding inclusion for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Teachers, as facilitators of learning, are responsible for adapting the curriculum to cater to the needs of a variety

of students and should demonstrate the willingness to adapt the curriculum and employ various instructional strategies to foster student learning (Andini et al., 2020).

Cho (2019) observes a gap between curriculum documents at the level of the provincial office of education and the unique characteristics of individual classes. Cho stresses the necessity of reflecting class-specific characteristics and modifying curriculum content by adding, removing, substituting, or integrating elements as needed (Cho, 2019). Meidl and Meidl's study (2011) delve into teachers' beliefs on curriculum adaptation, specifically in relation to linguistically and culturally diverse students. Teachers who recognize the importance of cultural relevance experience reduced dissonance between their personal beliefs about teaching and learning, the mandated curriculum, and their willingness to actively engage in curriculum adaptation (Meidl & Meidl, 2011). However, this overlooks the changes in demographics, like the increase of Southeast Asian students, which could have a greater impact on adjusting the curriculum than teachers' individual beliefs. Miqawati's (2022) article proposes different strategies for adjusting the curriculum in English language classrooms, emphasizing the importance of analyzing materials to identify crucial content knowledge and academic skills. This procedure enables teachers to develop unit lesson plans tailored to improve students' prior knowledge, thus promoting multicultural education (Miqawati, 2022).

Last, Tisher (1973) underscores the importance of structured training programs for driving curriculum change. These programs help address challenges in customizing and differentiating content and delivery methods to cater to diverse teacher backgrounds, grade levels, and subject areas. Given the constraints of time and collaboration among teachers, it becomes imperative for educators, especially those teaching culturally diverse student cohorts, to take ownership of curriculum development to meet the unique needs of their pupils. In light of the intricate nature of

curriculum adaptation methods within the Korean public education system, focusing on broader guidelines can streamline the process and facilitate effective adaptation efforts.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs culturally sustaining pedagogies as the theoretical framework. This theory initially conceptualized and developed by Django Paris, posits an explicit goal of supporting multilingualism and multiculturalism from the perspectives of both students and teachers (Paris & Alim, 2014). It also aims to perpetuate and foster linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling, as a needed response to demographic social change (Paris & Alim, 2014). Built upon asset pedagogies, this theory shifts towards explicitly pluralist outcomes by regarding the linguistic, literate, and cultural practices of students of color as assets to be explored and extended (Paris & Alim, 2014).

Embedded within this theory lies its relevance to the objectives of my study, particularly its focus on multiculturalism. Initially, I aim to identify weaknesses and challenges in the current Korean curriculum at middle schools, serving as a foundation for considering curriculum readaptation. While culturally sustaining pedagogies predominantly address African American students as students of color in the literature, I aim to apply these principles to the Korean context, particularly focusing on students from Southeast Asian backgrounds. Thus, this theoretical framework serves as the guiding principle for my master's thesis, assisting my understanding of how the current ESL textbook and teacher's guide includes culturally sustaining pedagogy in terms of diversity and inclusion.

Methodology

Research Design

For this study, I employed a qualitative content analysis utilizing constructivist grounded theory, as this approach is most appropriate for the diversity of cultures and values being considered. Constructivism allows us to recognize and evaluate the existence of multiple realities and interpretations of given events as valid, and thus credible data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study aims to acknowledge and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds, values, and perspectives within the educational context being examined by embracing this viewpoint. In addition, grounded theory assumes an “inductive stance” that derives meaning from said collected data, identifying key themes and concepts that result in a substantive theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Throughout this approach, it provides a framework to analyze and interpret the key themes of diversity and inclusion by examining documents in detail.

Data Selection

The analysis for this study focuses on four primary documents: *The 2022 Revised Curriculum*, *The General Middle School English Curriculum in Incheon*, *the English textbook published by Cheonjae Education*, and *the Teacher’s Guided Curriculum*. The Korean Ministry of Education's 2022 Revised Curriculum, expected to encompass the first grade of middle school by 2025, represents a significant shift in English language education. First, this new curriculum moves away from the traditional four functional categories—speaking, listening, writing, and reading—toward a greater emphasis on comprehension and expression. Additionally, it introduces elective subjects such as "Media English," "World Culture and English," and "English Presentation and Discussion." Given Korea's hierarchical educational system, strict adherence to the Ministry's guidelines is essential, making this document a critical component of the analysis.

Similarly, The General Middle School Curriculum in Incheon proposed by the Incheon Metropolitan City Office of Education, requires detailed examination. Incheon, with its substantial Southeast Asian population, must integrate multicultural education to effectively address the needs of its diverse student body. This analysis seeks to identify potential weaknesses and propose curriculum modifications tailored to Incheon's unique demographics. Furthermore, middle school English instruction in Korean public schools predominantly relies on two textbooks, both published by Cheonjae and authored by different individuals. Following a brief review of both textbooks, I selected the one authored by Jae-Yong Lee, as the absence of cultural content in the other textbook fails to provide students with the necessary cultural diversity and inclusion.

Data Analysis

My research comprised two stages of data analysis. The first entailed an exhaustive examination of both the national and local curricula, while the second focused on analyzing Lesson 6 from the English 1 textbook along with its teacher's guide.

First, I identified both the themes of "diversity" and "inclusion" embedded within both the national and local curricula of Incheon City. While the national curriculum delineates general objectives, the local curriculum is divided again into two distinct components: the general objectives of the middle school curriculum in Incheon and the specific objectives of the English middle school curriculum. From this framework, I discerned significant dichotomies, particularly those related to diversity and inclusion within the broader context of culture.

Employing Saldaña theming the data methodology, I initiated the first cycle of analysis. This involved identifying themes pertaining to diversity and inclusion separately, intending to uncover commonalities, and establishing an extended thematic statement (Saldaña, 2016). In the subsequent cycle of analysis, I refined the initial themes by formulating sub-themes that could be

logically grouped under broader thematic categories. This iterative process enhanced the depth and granularity of the analysis, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the data.

For the second phase of my data analysis, I applied the same methods to analyze the English textbook and teacher's guide. Conducting two cycles of thematic analysis, I subjected the representation of diversity and inclusion across these materials to meticulous examination, examining discernible disparities in content, utilized materials, and specified learning objectives, particularly within Lesson 6. After compiling two phases of data thematic analysis, I compared and cross-checked data from the national curriculum, local curriculum, textbook, and teacher's guide to see if they aligned closely in terms of diversity and inclusion.

Findings

Identifying Contexts for Diversity and Inclusion

Understanding the nuanced definitions of “diversity” and “inclusion” in the context of Korean public middle schools is crucial. By examining the national and local curricula provided by the Ministry of Education in South Korea, one can gain valuable insights into the overarching educational framework for middle schools, particularly concerning the definitions and objectives related to diversity and inclusion. An in-depth analysis of the specific objectives within the English curriculum at the local level further elucidates how these concepts are incorporated into English language classes. Such an examination helps to identify both the strengths and areas needing improvement in fostering diversity and inclusion. This analysis is crucial for determining whether these documents effectively address diversity and inclusion, making it a vital aspect of the thesis.

Understanding General Objectives in National Perspectives

The 2022 National Curriculum incorporates both the concepts of diversity and inclusion equally. Within the context of middle school education, inclusion is frequently highlighted,

whereas diversity is addressed within a broader framework while also adding details, particularly within the context of English language classes. The curriculum broadly defines diversity, without explicitly associating it with middle school settings. Instead, it underscores the importance of students engaging with diverse social issues to prepare them as community members who embrace the “diverse members” of society (See Appendix A, Figure 1).

The term "diversity" has newly emerged in this document, reflecting social changes and background. With the increasing complexity of society and rising diversity, this term has begun to appear in the curriculum in a broader context, but not in a narrower, more specific one compared to inclusion. The term "diverse members of society" lacks explicit criteria such as gender, age, ethnicity, race, and religion, indicating a deficiency in intersectionality (See Appendix A, Figure 1).

Despite its prominence in middle school objectives, the concept of inclusion lacks updated definitions that adequately reflect current demographic realities. The national curriculum underscores the sense of community as a fundamental value essential for achieving sustainable development, a principle strongly advocated by the organization UNESCO. While this might offer a valuable reference for both middle school students and educators, exclusive reliance on UNESCO results in a limited interpretation of inclusion. It is crucial to explore broader contexts and establish more comprehensive goals within the Korean educational framework.

Furthermore, the curriculum places significant emphasis on fostering students' individual personal growth and learning, highlighting a student-centered approach. This emphasis extends beyond the mere acquisition of academic knowledge to encompass the development of personal understanding and empathy, which are essential aspects of inclusion. Additionally, it emphasizes the cultivation of qualities necessary for becoming democratic citizens. However, it is imperative

to succinctly outline key aspects that middle school students should achieve to progress along this trajectory.

Moreover, collaborative group learning, particularly evident in language classes through various learning modalities, reinforces the concept of both "diversity" and "inclusion". The utilization of multi-modal learning approaches and group activities yields favorable outcomes in student learning. These methods also establish robust foundations for enhancing interactions among groups of students from diverse multicultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the incorporation of cultural and societal contexts within language classes offers invaluable guidance. However, not all collaborative group learning is effective, especially if the groups consist solely of students from various multi-ethnic backgrounds. Limited experiences of Korean students with non-Korean students within their educational settings, coupled with biases and social stereotypes, could hinder efforts to promote diversity and inclusion. Additionally, the inclusion of societal and cultural context might pose challenges, as some students may hold well-established preconceptions about Southeast Asian students, inadvertently leading to cultural conflicts between student groups.

Understanding General Objectives in Local Perspectives

Within the local curriculum framework of Incheon, middle school objectives align closely with the national curriculum, distributing emphasis evenly between "diversity" and "inclusion." Notably, objectives such as community building at local, national, and global scales underscore the imperative of acknowledging and embracing diversity within broader societal contexts. Simultaneously, the curriculum emphasizes student-centered and collaborative learning environments, demonstrating a collaborative effort to promote inclusion within educational settings, which holds particular significance for South-East Asian students.

Furthermore, the local curriculum delineates a narrower definition of inclusion, with a specific focus on reducing educational disparities to facilitate equitable access to quality education and resources for Southeast Asian students. Collaboration between communities and educational institutions is instrumental in fostering greater social cohesion and integration within the expansive Southeast Asian community residing in Incheon.

In addition, the curriculum exhibits flexibility in addressing a range of subject matters, including but not limited to multicultural education and democratic citizenship education. Implementation of these is a pragmatic approach to cultivating both diversity and inclusion within education. Crucially, the curriculum explicitly identifies students from multicultural backgrounds as distinct objectives. By articulating a commitment to inclusion regardless of gender, socio-economic status, race, religion, or ethnicity, the curriculum tackles potential prejudices regarding race and ethnicity. Moreover, providing supplementary educational resources and information for these students underscores a comprehensive approach to enriching their learning experiences, epitomizing a holistic conception of inclusion.

Last, the curriculum introduces specialized Korean language classes tailored to students with limited Korean proficiency, recognizing prevalent language barriers encountered by students from multicultural backgrounds attending Korean public middle schools. While this initiative addresses a crucial aspect of students' needs, such an approach may oversimplify the diverse learning challenges encountered by this demographic.

Understanding English Subject Objectives in Local Perspectives

The primary objectives of the English subject in the middle school curriculum encompass both diversity and inclusion, as illustrated in Figure 3 in the Appendix. The continuous emphasis on cultural and linguistic diversity facilitates the development of empathy, tolerance, and inclusion

among students through interactive and communicative activities in language classes. However, several critical issues arise when examining the curriculum in detail, particularly in terms of its focus and scope.

One significant concern is the curriculum's narrow focus on the "East Asian" context, which neglects the rich tapestry of cultural backgrounds represented among the student population, especially those from "Southeast Asian" backgrounds. This narrow emphasis poses a significant risk by potentially resulting in educational materials that fail to resonate with a considerable portion of the students, thereby impeding their engagement with and understanding of global citizenship concepts, as their cultures and experiences are not adequately reflected in the material.

Furthermore, the curriculum's emphasis on daily and familiar common topics limits middle school students' exposure to diversity and inclusion. In the Korean educational setting, these themes are not typically considered "familiar," which limits the curriculum's ability to introduce students to a broader range of cultural and social perspectives. This approach can be particularly challenging for Southeast Asian students, who might find it difficult to relate to the class periods predominantly based on common daily life themes familiar to Korean students.

Another critical issue in the local curriculum is the disproportionate representation of diversity and inclusion in the sub-categories of the English curriculum—reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The concepts of diversity and inclusion are not evenly distributed across these areas. Diversity is implicitly addressed primarily in writing objectives, while inclusion is implicitly addressed in speaking objectives. The writing objectives, which aim to introduce the culture and history of Incheon, promote an appreciation for the diversity of cultures within Korea. This objective allows students to develop an understanding of cultural diversity, but it may not fully resonate with non-Korean students who lack familiarity with these specific surroundings.

Consequently, the appreciation for diversity is limited to the context of Korean culture, which may not adequately encompass the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds. In a similar context, the speaking objectives focus on sharing personal perspectives and opinions on current issues prevalent in Incheon and the broader East Asian region. While this can foster a sense of inclusion among students from these regions, it may lead to ambivalent feelings among students who are not from East Asia. Those from different cultural backgrounds might feel excluded or find it challenging to contribute meaningfully to discussions centered on experiences and issues that do not pertain to them.

Exploration in English 1: Lesson 6 From Culture to Culture

In this paper, culture is defined as a collection of 'recipes' perceived as guides for behavior and learning within different ethnic or cultural groups. These 'recipes' serve as metaphors for the diverse body of knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, and practices shared by members of a particular cultural group (Boyle-Baise, 1999). Lesson 6, "From Culture to Culture," stands out as the only lesson in the English 1 textbook that explicitly addresses multiculturalism. Despite the broader title focusing on culture, this lesson primarily engages students in cultural exploration through various modalities such as speaking, reading, and writing. The chapter consists of 10 periods, each allotted for 45 minutes. While the central theme revolves around culture, not all periods incorporate activities or learning materials related to diversity and inclusion. Specifically, Periods 2 and 8 which mainly instruct students on essential grammar and communication using a given sentence structure, exhibit a lesser emphasis on cultural content. However, the remaining periods include the components of culture, albeit with variances in degrees and extent of inclusion.

Disparities in Diversity and Inclusion Discourse

Table 1 below reveals a disparity in the treatment of “diversity” and “inclusion” throughout Lesson 6. Although the concept of diversity is prevalent, encapsulating various cultural components, its alignment with personal, national, and local definitions of diversity is not uniform. Notably, while the lesson fosters an attitude of understanding and empathy towards diverse cultures, it primarily focuses on cultural diversity rather than explicitly addressing racial diversity. Conversely, at the local level, the content of Period 6 appears incongruent with the objectives of nurturing responsible citizenship by overlooking prevalent issues specific to East Asia. The table presented below illustrates its exclusive focus on "Korea" in Periods 4 and 5, thereby emphasizing a monolithic cultural perspective in language education, diverging from the principles of genuine multicultural education.

Table 1

Summary of Lesson 6 Periods and Content Allocation

Period	Contents	Components of culture	Cultural Diversity	Inclusion
1 st	Plan, Warm up	Food, Tourist attractions	Yes	Yes
2 nd	Communicate about school life	No	No	No
3 rd	My Speaking Portfolio: Gift	Cultural Artifacts	Yes	Yes
4 th	Introducing Korean culture (1)	Every element	Yes	Yes
5 th	Introducing Korean culture (2)	Every element	Yes	No
6 th	Introducing Korean culture (3)	Every element	Yes	No

7 th	Celebrations around the world	Cultural Celebrations	Yes	Yes
8 th	Grammar: should/to infinitives	No	No	No
9 th	Bingo Game: Origin of Items	Cultural artifacts	Yes	Yes
10 th	Wrap up	No	No	No

Moreover, given the targeted demographic of Southeast Asian students, it is imperative to scrutinize the efficacy of these periods in cultivating diversity and inclusion. While Period 6 effectively introduces a spectrum of cultural facets, encompassing artifacts, foods, performances, and landmarks, the adequate integration of diversity themes within the chapter becomes apparent. However, the broader notion of inclusion, which extends beyond mere representation, appears relatively underemphasized, despite the inherent interconnection between diversity and inclusion. For instance, while Periods 5 and 6 explicitly incorporate the concept of diversity, the aspect of inclusion is notably lacking. This anomaly proves further investigation to ascertain the specific factors contributing to the perceived exclusion of students, especially when diversity is appropriately addressed.

This observation underscores the necessity for a more comprehensive approach to multicultural education, one that not only acknowledges diversity in all its complexity but also actively promotes inclusion within curricula. Moreover, considering the targeted demographic of Southeast Asian students, it becomes imperative to ensure that the curriculum authentically portrays their cultural perspectives and experiences. The next section presents a meticulous examination of diversity and inclusion themes, specifically addressing the distinct needs and cultural backgrounds of South-East Asian students.

Representations of Cultural Diversity

This finding reveals how the concept of diversity is portrayed within the curriculum and textbook. Lesson 6 largely presents instances of interactions and collaboration between peers that assist students' understanding. Additionally, the concept of diversity is incorporated through different modalities. Finally, this lesson illustrates that diversity starts from recognizing and sharing Korean cultures.

Both curriculum and textbook emphasize the importance of promoting diversity through increased interaction and research among peers. Positive inter-cultural relations are linked to, more positive self-concepts, better cultural understanding, democratic, negotiating, leadership, and problem-solving skills (Tsang, 2022). Both textbooks and structured curricula facilitate informal peer discussions, enabling the exploration of cultural topics and the exchange of perspectives on intercultural learning, thereby enriching the cognitive understanding of diversity. Although these activities are not mandated within the structured curriculum, they allow for pedagogical flexibility.

Additionally, textbooks feature a range of formal activities in comparison to informal activities, notably observed in Period 7 and Period 9. In Period 7, students are encouraged to engage in collaborative group work to research any famous celebrations around the world emphasizing historical context and key ceremonial practices. Similarly, Period 9 prompts students to investigate the origins of twelve distinct items, fostering research skills and cultural awareness simultaneously. The promotion of a harmonious heterogeneous classroom is the significant realization of an all-important goal in education nowadays (Tsang, 2022).

However, the representation of South-East Asian cultures within both formal and informal activities is found to be wanting. Despite the increasing presence of South-East Asian students

within educational settings, activities fail to reflect this demographic reality. Instead, they tend to oversimplify cultural diversity, dichotomizing it into superficial categories such as “Korean cultures” and “non-Korean cultures,” thereby neglecting the nuanced richness inherent in Southeast Asian tapestries. This oversight underscores the need for more inclusive and nuanced representations of cultural diversity within educational materials.

Furthermore, across multiple modalities—namely audio, reading, speaking, visual, and written representation—noticeable discrepancies emerge. In a broader context, the concept of diversity is portrayed mainly through visuals and audio. The visuals are mostly portrayed through the visual cards of tourist attractions and through traveling blogs, pictures of cultural performances held at school, and real-life examples of Saint Patrick’s Day. The audio is mostly about a one-way script discussing students’ thoughts about Mexican food and their preference in selecting cultural performances. While visual and audio representation exhibit a higher level of interactive communication potentially fostering inclusion and diversity awareness, other modalities exhibit deficiencies. Specifically, reading and writing are both very minimal in both textbooks and curriculum, focusing primarily on delivering content to improve literacy in language, with bare emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

This incongruity raises significant concerns, not only regarding the degrees of representation across modalities, but also regarding the scant portrayal of Southeast Asia overall within audio scripts, reading passages, visual depictions, and written exercises. Indeed, many examples predominantly focus on cultures in the Western World. For instance, in Period 7, which introduces celebrations around the world, a striking example arises. In the Step 1 activity, where students are required to read, the textbook delves into the background information of Saint Patrick’s Day, accompanied by visual imagery depicting white individuals participating in parades

of traditional Irish dancers and children wearing green costumes. Step 2 activity prompts students to choose and research any festivals worldwide selectively. While the activity presents an opportunity for Southeast Asian students to explore their cultural celebrations, the idea bank next to the activity suggests festivals primarily originating from “White countries,” such as Thanksgiving, Halloween, Pi Day, and Earth Day. This inadvertently hampers Southeast Asian students’ ability to freely present and share their cultural heritage, perpetuating a white-centric societal perspective.

Moreover, within an Asian context, Period 6 solely depicts “East Asia,” including South Korea, Japan, and China. Although the depiction of the latter two is minimal, it still reinforces the idea of a lack of diversity even within an Asian context. For instance, Period 1 provides visual cards depicting the Great Wall of China with a man practicing *kung-fu* with a panda and a Japanese woman wearing a *kimono* (traditional Japanese garment) while eating *sushi* with chopsticks under *sakura* (cherry blossom). Additionally, the curriculum from Periods 4 to 6 focuses solely on introducing Korean culture to foreigners through reading, fill-in-the-blank, speaking, and short writing activities, targeting the objectives of fostering an understanding of “current phenomena prevalent in East Asia.”

Last, both the curriculum and the textbook emphasize the concept of “diversity” primarily by focusing on Korean culture and the experiences of foreigners within Korea, presented in two distinct manners. In Period 4, the curriculum’s main learning objectives encourage students to understand texts about Korean culture from the perspective of their own home countries. Specifically, this Period involves students reading and discussing the experiences of foreigners in Korea, such as a Filipino student’s account of engaging with Korean traditional sports like Taekwondo, presented through a teen blog. Afterward, students participate in a fill-in-the-blank

activity to enhance their literacy skills. This approach helps students gain knowledge about cultural diversity by incorporating the perspectives of non-Koreans engaging with Korean culture. However, because the educational setting centers on Korea, this method does not fully enable students to recognize and appreciate the diversity of cultures beyond the Korean context. While it broadens students' cultural horizons within Korea, it may sufficiently foster a deep recognition of the multi-faceted nature of global diversity. Additionally, both the curriculum and textbook highlight the importance of encouraging both Korean and non-Korean students to expand their preconceived notions of Korean culture and share their knowledge with foreigners. For instance, Period 3 involves students selecting traditional Korean gifts for friends from foreign countries. This activity, similar to the previous one, does not truly allow students to learn about Southeast Asian cultures. Instead, it focuses on depending on their understanding of the historical context of these traditional Korean gifts. By doing so, it further expands their cultural knowledge and promotes an appreciation of Korean heritage in a global context.

Limited Representation of Inclusion

This finding reveals how the concept of inclusion is portrayed within the curriculum and textbook. Lesson 6 reveals a rather pessimistic and limited perspective on inclusion. It largely restricts diverse cultural references by predominantly suggesting white-dominant or Korean-based cultures. Additionally, regional stereotypes may exacerbate negative learning environments. Finally, there is a strict adherence to standard English devoid of cultural contexts.

The examination of overlapping themes with inclusion reveals a notable area for improvement within both textbooks and curriculum. To initiate the incorporation of diverse cultural elements, both the curriculum and textbook endeavor to foster student inclusion. This integration encompasses aspects such as Mexican cuisine, global tourist attractions, cultural

performances, and famous souvenirs, thereby stimulating student interest. Notably, this approach affords non-Korean students the opportunity to select topics of personal familiarity, fostering a sense of comfort and inclusion in sharing newfound knowledge with their Korean peers.

However, a discernible deficiency emerges upon scrutiny of the geographical representation within the materials. Despite the commendable inclusion of cultural elements, there exists a notable dearth of references to South-East Asian regions. Predominantly, the materials lean towards showcasing "Western culture," with limited representation from Southeast Asia. For instance, in the guidance provided for Period 7's group research activity on global celebrations, the examples predominantly stem from Western origins by guiding research about Pi Day, Earth Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. This all neglects the diverse experiences of South-East Asian students and their cultural festivities.

Furthermore, the depiction of cultural exchange within the curriculum, such as in Periods 4 and 5, while ostensibly fostering inclusion, may inadvertently reinforce biases towards Korean culture. Notably, one activity has been added, focusing on introducing a Sri Lankan woman who appreciates tea, followed by a task where students select appropriate Korean gifts. Such an approach may not resonate as culturally relevant with all South-East Asian middle school students. The depiction of a stereotypical image of a woman from a tea-producing country may inadvertently perpetuate inaccurate perceptions of Sinhalese culture.

Also, it is imperative that students are exposed to diverse cultures in a nuanced and comprehensive manner, avoiding bias and oversimplification. Periods 4 and 5 exemplify a particular concern, as they predominantly focus on foreigners' enthusiastic experiences with Korean culture in their respective home countries. The story encompasses various aspects such as

Korean cuisine, K-pop, K-dramas, traditional artifacts, vases, and paintings, all portrayed through the lens of fervent admiration. While the intention may be to foster inclusion by showcasing diverse perspectives from students hailing from Manila, Chicago, Moscow, and London, the approach falls short of achieving cultural relevance. Rather than facilitating a well-rounded understanding of global diversity, the approach risks perpetuating a sense of cultural hierarchy. Students whose cultural backgrounds are less predominantly featured in the curriculum and textbook may perceive their heritage as inferior or marginalized, potentially leading to feelings of exclusion and diminishing the overall learning experience.

Last, Lesson 6 strictly adheres to the English language and grammar without incorporating cultural context. For instance, Period 8 focuses entirely on teaching students to use the “to” infinitive working as a noun and the modal verb “should”. However, none of the example sentences involving these grammatical structures include any cultural components, which is inconsistent with the chapter’s title, “From Culture to Culture.” The significant goals of teaching foreign languages extend beyond imparting knowledge and skills; they also aim to foster a friendly and tolerant attitude towards the values of other cultures, to motivate students to improve their foreign language proficiency and to use the language as a means of acquiring information (Stroganova et al., 2019). Without integrating cultural elements into language instruction, students may feel disengaged and perceive that their cultural identities are undervalued in the learning environment.

Discussion

Upon critically examining the themes of "diversity" and "inclusion" in the national curriculum, local curriculum, ESL textbook, and teacher’s guide, significant discrepancies become apparent. Although both concepts are proportionately included in the national and local curricula, Lesson 6 of the English 1 textbook and the accompanying teacher’s guide fail to adequately

represent them. While the national and local curricula include both diversity and inclusion, the specific emphasis and extent may differ. However, Lesson 6 and the teacher's guide often lack the concept of inclusion entirely.

It is imperative to highlight the urgent issue of unequal representation between the themes of diversity and inclusion, as well as the portrayal of cultural diversity in both Lesson 6 and the teacher's guides. While some themes may overlap between diversity and inclusion, the national curriculum emphasizes inclusion more specifically, whereas Lesson 6 textbooks and teacher's guides tend to focus more on diversity. This discrepancy exacerbates the problem for students from multicultural backgrounds, who may feel isolated in educational settings despite the presence of various cultural components scattered throughout Lesson 6.

In a narrower context, the disproportionate representation of cultural diversity in Lesson 6 and the teacher's guides becomes even more apparent. The imbalanced perspective that primarily encompasses Korean culture over non-Korean cultures fails to provide a truly multicultural education. Moreover, the scant portrayal of the Southeast Asian region, with a predominant focus on Korea or East Asian regions, oversimplifies cultural diversity and can perpetuate biases and stereotypes between different cultural groups. This disparity contradicts the themes of the national curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of students embracing diverse members of society and cultivating democratic qualities. Through culturally sustaining pedagogy, students are not only given cultural and linguistic flexibility within all communities, but they also gain the skills, knowledge, and ways of being needed for success in the present and future (Paris & Alim, 2014).

While the curriculum of Incheon City aligns more closely with Lesson 6 and the teacher's guide, it does not effectively mirror the broader national curriculum, underscoring the urgent need to adapt the curriculum with greater flexibility. However, despite these discrepancies, there are common themes shared by all these documents. They all emphasize student-focused learning and highlight how informal and formal interactions and collaborations enhance student engagement, fostering the development of cultural diversity and inclusion. Various multi-modal learning approaches can further this objective, allowing students to confidently represent themselves and their cultures, as noted in the national curriculum. Nevertheless, the issue of unequal representation in multi-modal learning persists, often limiting diversity to visual aids such as cards. By integrating culturally sustaining pedagogy, educators can create a more flexible curriculum that embraces multiple language varieties and cultural ways of believing and interacting (Paris & Alim, 2014). This approach encourages the use of diverse activities in classes, ensuring that students are exposed to a wide range of cultural perspectives and are equipped with the skills necessary to navigate and appreciate this diversity (Paris & Alim, 2014).

It's crucial to cultivate a balanced perspective that encompasses both Korean culture and non-Korean culture through a critical examination of multiculturalism. Thus, this would create cultural diversity and students feeling inclusion simultaneously. This approach allows students to develop tolerance by fostering an understanding of cultural diversity, thereby mitigating the potential for entrenched ethnocentrism (Kim, 2008). However, there is the potential for curriculum modifications to address Southeast Asian cultures and enhance inclusion in education. The example of Korea, which explicitly incorporates multi-ethnic perspectives through cultural and historical context in teaching materials and textbooks, demonstrates a commitment to fostering respect for diversity (Kim & Chang, 2021). Consequently, it is imperative to critically evaluate the

portrayal of culturally relevant learning materials and activities related to Southeast Asian cultures within current textbooks and guidelines.

Notwithstanding this, it is essential to acknowledge the significant strides made in the domain of multicultural education following the 2015 national curriculum. The introduction of the concept of “inclusion” represents a notable advancement, characterized as “an attitude and knowledge centered on fostering individual educational growth and cultivating a fair and sustainable society through the promotion of mutual understanding and respect for differences and diversity among members of society (김정원, 2022). The incorporation of “inclusion” signifies a pivotal juncture wherein the educational framework of Korea ostensibly begins to acknowledge and embrace diversity more prominently.

Recognizing the interconnectedness between diversity and inclusion, especially within the language curriculum, underscores the necessity of revising and integrating more cultural elements into the curriculum. A crucial starting point towards achieving proper multicultural education involves expanding the scope beyond the conventional portrayal of “white-dominant speaking countries” in textbooks and curricula. Instead, educators should broaden the cultural components to include linguistic and cultural differences between Southeast Asia and Korea without resorting to direct dichotomization or categorization of explicit cultural disparities. This nuanced approach fosters a more inclusive educational environment that celebrates and respects cultural diversity while avoiding oversimplification or reductionism.

Implications

Introducing the concept of diversity serves as a foundational step in mitigating social exclusion experienced by Southeast Asian students in English classrooms. I aim to propose a

method for modifying current English language education curricula in Korean public middle schools to enhance diversity and inclusion.

First and foremost, educators must intertwine these concepts intricately to ensure both academic and social inclusion for students from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, incorporating Southeast Asian students into language instruction may encounter challenges. Many Korean students perceive Southeast Asia through a lens of cultural inferiority, associating it with poverty, conflict, colonization, and other inaccurate stereotypes perpetuated by mass media and familial influences (김학희, 2010).

To address this, educators possess the opportunity to actively challenge these perceptions by facilitating more cultural interactions with Southeast Asian students and Korean students. As these students are highly susceptible to the influences of their learning environment and do not yet have much knowledge about a specific race, country, or culture, deliberate efforts must be made to avoid degrading the cultures of non-English speaking countries and cultures (Kim, 2008). Instead, educators can take proactive steps such as purposefully grouping racially diverse groups. This intentional approach fosters organic cultural exchange and collaboration, providing Korean students with first-hand experiences to reshape their perceptions of Southeast Asian cultures.

Furthermore, educators can also include additional examples and provide guidelines for incorporating Southeast Asian culture into the curriculum. For instance, when students are tasked with writing about celebrations around the world in period 7, teachers can proactively prompt them to extend their focus beyond predominantly Western festivals. Rather, educators can actively direct students to research famous celebrations in Southeast Asia, such as Songkran in Thailand, Holi in Malaysia, or Light Festivals in Myanmar. This proactive approach empowers students to engage

deeply with these cultural phenomena, thereby cultivating a heightened appreciation for the intricate and diverse fabric of Southeast Asian cultures.

The limited representation of intercultural respect and cultural sensitivity underscores the severity of the unstable learning environment perceived by Southeast Asian students. It is imperative for Southeast Asian students to feel engaged and respected while Korean students increase their understanding of Southeast Asian cultures. This process can be facilitated if teachers possess more professional knowledge about Southeast Asian cultures. Considering the demographics of Southeast Asian students, teachers can conduct brief research on each student's nation prior to class, tailoring cultural themes accordingly. For example, if students are tasked with researching the origins of various items around the world, teachers can share personal experiences of visiting Thailand and purchasing Thai silk, incorporating various cultural elements.

Limitations

This study has three primary limitations. First, evaluating diversity and inclusion specifically for South-East Asian students proved to be challenging. Despite the increasing presence of South-East Asian students from South-East Asia, both the textbook and curriculum offer minimal representation of this demographic. Instead, the findings predominantly address diversity and inclusion within a broader context, primarily focusing on the needs of “non-Korean students.” Secondly, the transcription of materials from Korean to English presented significant challenges. Ensuring accurate translation without altering the original concepts and meaning was particularly difficult. Last, my perspective as a Korean researcher may inadvertently privilege the nuances of Korean culture, potentially impeding a comprehensive evaluation of multicultural education and its trajectory. Given the dominance of Asian cultural frameworks in my upbringing and education, there exists a risk of overlooking the diverse experiences and needs of minority

cultural and ethnic groups. This limitation underscores the challenge of offering an unbiased analysis of multicultural education.

Conclusion

The South Korean education system, despite the curriculum being revised every 5-6 years, remains traditional and presents one-dimensional approaches, especially in its curriculum. This inflexibility is more apparent in multicultural education, as the integration of Southeast Asian students into public schools is relatively new. Given these circumstances, educators must prioritize promoting inclusion and diversity within the curriculum. By explicitly and implicitly integrating these values into academic subjects, educators can facilitate the development of South Korean and Southeast Asian students alike. Addressing this topic in educational institutions is undeniably a complicated and time-consuming endeavor. Yet, even incremental steps toward success integration and diversity can yield significant progress. Every minor effort helps build the essential groundwork for more extensive change. As such, this thesis suggests incremental changes to the English language curriculum in public middle schools in Incheon, South Korea, to promote multiculturalism and inclusion in the educational environment.

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Appendix A

Figure 1

Interpretations of Diversity and Inclusion in 2022 National Curriculum

- I. THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM BOTH EQUALLY INCORPORATES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**
 - A. DIVERSITY DEFINED IN A BROADER CONTEXT
 - a. NOT SPECIFIC TO MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM
 - b. LIMITED FOCUS ON INTERSECTIONALITY
 - B. INCLUSION FEATURED IN THE VISION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL OBJECTIVES
 - a. TRADITIONAL AND NARROW DEFINITIONS OF INCLUSION
 - b. NEED FOR BROADER CONTEXTS AND GOALS IN KOREAN CONTEXT
 - c. RELIANCE SOLELY ON UNESCO'S PRINCIPLES
- II. THE CURRICULUM REFLECTS SOCIETAL TRENDS AND SOCIETY**
 - A. COMPLEXITY OF SOCIETY AND RISING DIVERSITY
 - B. EMPHASIS ON STUDENTS FOSTERING MUTUAL RESPECT AND COMMUNITY BUILDING
- III. EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON STUDENTS' INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL GROWTH AND LEARNING**
 - A. CULTIVATION OF PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY
 - B. PROMOTION OF THE QUALITY AND STATUS OF INDIVIDUAL DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP
- IV. GROUP LEARNING AND DIVERSE LEARNERS ARE CONSIDERED, ESPECIALLY IN LANGUAGE CLASSES**
 - A. UTILIZATION OF MULTI-MODAL LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION METHODS
 - B. EMPHASIS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERACY SKILLS
 - C. INCLUSION OF CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL CONTEXTS
 - D. COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Note. Figure 1 illustrates the themes generated through thematic analysis of the 2022 National Curriculum.

Figure 2*Interpretations of Diversity and Inclusion in Local Curriculum (General)*

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| <p>I. SOME OBJECTIVES ARE ALIGNED WITH THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM</p> <p>A. COMMUNITY BUILDING AT LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL LEVELS</p> <p>B. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP WITH MUTUAL RESPECT</p> <p>C. STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING</p> <p>D. COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>II. THE LOCAL CURRICULUM ADOPTS A NARROWER DEFINITION OF INCLUSION</p> <p>A. TACKLING SPECIFIC LOCAL CHALLENGES</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. REDUCING EDUCATIONAL DISPARITIES BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS WITHIN INCHEON</p> <p>B. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS</p> <p>III. IT ALSO GUIDES THE INCORPORATION OF DIVERSE SUBJECT MATTERS IN GENERAL EDUCATION</p> <p>A. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION</p> <p>B. DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION</p> <p>IV. ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVE AIMED FOR STUDENTS FROM MULTICULTURAL BACKGROUND ARE ADDRESSED</p> <p>A. EXPLICIT MENTION OF POSSIBLE PREJUDICE RELATED TO “RACE” AND “ETHNICITY</p> <p>B. ENSURE ENRICHING LEARNING EXPERIENCES</p> <p>C. FOCUS ON LIMITED KOREAN PROFICIENCY</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. FLEXIBILITY TO CONDUCT SPECIALIZED KOREAN SPECIAL CLASSES</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. OVERSIMPLIFICATION OF STUDENTS’ LEARNING DIFFICULTIES</p> |
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Note. Figure 2 illustrates the local curriculum of Incheon city in South Korea with an emphasis on the general objectives of the middle school curriculum.

Figure 3

Interpretations of Diversity and in Local Curriculum (English subject focused)

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| <p>I. THE ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM ENCOMPASS BOTH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION</p> <p>A. FOCUS ON CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY</p> <p>B. EMPATHY, TOLERANCE, INCLUSION THROUGH INTERPERSONAL SKILLS</p> <p>II. THE PREDOMINANT FOCUS ON THE EAST ASIAN REGION LACKS A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING</p> <p>A. EMPHASIS ON PREVAILING ISSUES IN EAST ASIA</p> <p>B. INACCURATE DEFINITIONS OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP</p> <p>III. THE OBJECTIVES COMMONLY ADDRESS EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE AND FAMILIAR COMMON THEMES</p> <p>A. LIMITATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS' EXPOSURE TO MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION</p> <p>B. SOUTH-EAST ASIAN STUDENTS' DIFFICULTY RELATING TO LESSONS</p> <p>IV. THE CONCEPT OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IS DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED</p> <p>A. THE CONCEPT OF DIVERSITY IS IMPLICITLY EMBEDDED IN THE OBJECTIVES OF WRITING</p> <p>a. WRITING ABOUT INTRODUCING THE CULTURE, AND HISTORY OF INCHEON FORMULATES A NARROW PERCEPTION</p> <p>B. THE CONCEPT OF INCLUSION IS IMPLICITLY EMBEDDED IN THE OBJECTIVES OF SPEAKING</p> <p>a. AMBIVALENT FEELINGS ABOUT SHARING OPINIONS ON CURRENT ISSUES IN INCHEON AND EAST ASIA</p> <p>b. FEELINGS OF ISOLATION BY STUDENTS NOT FROM THE REGION</p> |
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Note. Figure 3 illustrates the local curriculum of Incheon City in South Korea, focusing on both the general objectives and specific objectives of the middle school English curriculum.

Figure 4*Understandings of Cultural Diversity in the Textbook and the Curriculum*

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| <p>I. INTERACTIONS AND RESEARCH BETWEEN PEERS ASSIST STUDENT'S UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSITY</p> <p>A. INFORMAL VERBAL INTERACTION WITH PEERS</p> <p>a. DISCUSSING OWN CULTURES</p> <p>B. FORMAL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND PRESENTATIONS IN THE TEXTBOOK</p> <p>a. CELEBRATIONS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES</p> <p>b. ORIGINS OF FAMOUS ITEMS AROUND THE WORLD</p> <p>II. INCORPORATING THE CONCEPT THROUGH DIFFERENT MODALITIES</p> <p>A. VISUALS</p> <p>a. VISUAL CARDS OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS</p> <p>b. CULTURAL PERFORMANCES IN SCHOOL FESTIVALS</p> <p>c. TOURIST ATTRACTIONS THROUGH TRAVELING BLOGS</p> <p>d. REAL-LIFE PICTURES OF SAINT PATRICK'S DAY</p> <p>B. AUDIOS</p> <p>a. STUDENTS' DISCUSSIONS ABOUT MEXICAN FOOD</p> <p>b. STUDENTS TALK ABOUT SELECTING THEIR CULTURAL PERFORMANCES</p> <p>III. THE DIVERSITY STARTS FROM RECOGNIZING AND SHARING KOREAN CULTURES</p> <p>A. FOREIGNERS' PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH KOREAN CULTURE</p> <p>a. SECOND-HAND EXPERIENCE OF KOREAN CULTURE IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES</p> <p>b. FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE WITH KOREAN CULTURE IN KOREA</p> <p>B. BOTH KOREANS/NON-KOREAN STUDENTS EXPANDING THE INFORMATION OF KOREAN CULTURE TO FOREIGNERS</p> <p>a. SELECTING TRADITIONAL KOREAN GIFTS FOR FOREIGN FRIENDS</p> <p>b. EXCHANGING IDEAS AND PICTURES OF UNIQUE KOREAN CULTURES</p> |
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Figure 5*Understandings of Inclusion in Textbook and Curriculum*

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| <p>I. INCORPORATING DIVERSE CULTURAL ELEMENTS FOSTERS STUDENT INCLUSION</p> <p>A. MEXICAN CUISINE</p> <p>B. GLOBAL TOURIST ATTRACTIONS</p> <p>C. CULTURAL PERFORMANCE DURING SHOW-AND-TELL</p> <p>D. FAMOUS SOUVENIRS FROM AROUND THE WORLD</p> <p>II. LIMITING CULTURAL REFERENCES TO A SPECIFIC REGION EXCLUDES DIVERSE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES</p> <p>A. ENCOURAGING RESEARCH ONLY INTO WHITE-DOMINANT CELEBRATIONS</p> <p>III. REGIONAL STEREOTYPES EXACERBATE NEGATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS</p> <p>A. THE PORTRAYAL OF SRI LANKA WOMEN LIKING TEA</p> <p>B. PRESENTING SOLELY POSITIVE EXPERIENCES OF KOREAN CULTURE</p> <p>IV. STRICT ADHERENCE TO STANDARD ENGLISH WITHOUT CULTURAL CONTEXTS LACKS INCLUSION</p> <p>A. HEAVY EMPHASIS ON GRAMMAR RULES LIKE "TO-INFINITIVES" AND "SHOULD"</p> <p>B. PRIORITY LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION NEGLECTING CULTURAL CONTEXT</p> |
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