

Analysis of the 2022 Revised Second Foreign Language Curriculum of Korea

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This study was conducted to examine the characteristics of the 2022 revised curriculum, with a particular focus on the second foreign language curriculum for middle and high schools. Unlike the 2015 revision, a variety of education stakeholders were involved in this revision process. While there were only minor changes to the human ideal and core competencies pursued, the content system underwent a significant restructuring. And the 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum was examined in five parts: characters and goals, content system, achievement standards, instruction and assessment guidelines, and basic vocabularies and communicative expressions, which were compared by language for detailed analysis. The 2022 revised curriculum differs from the existing curriculum revisions in multiple aspects, and it also has some limitations. In this study, two suggestions are made to address these limitations. First, it is important to develop courses that align with the characteristics and circumstances of each foreign language. Second, there is a need to create opportunities for students to access foreign languages from middle school to encourage them to take interest in various foreign languages, it is also important to provide an adequate number of teachers and class hours to promote interschool joint foreign language learning opportunities.

Keywords: *2022 revised curriculum, 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum, the content system of curriculum*

Introduction

The goal set for the 2022 revision of Korean national curriculum was cultivating individuals that are self-directed, broad-minded, and creative and able to meet the demands and challenge of the future society, reflecting the national and social demands for proactive adaptation to the changes in the educational environment. Within this framework, the following curriculum revision guidelines were established: (1) Developing competencies required by the future society; (2) Supporting learners' life and growth; (3) Expanding local school curriculum autonomy and implementing responsible education; (4) Establishing an instruction and assessment system tailored to the digital and artificial intelligence (AI) education environment (Ministry of Education, 2021). The 2022 revised curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing learners' ability and aptitude to respond proactively to the increasing uncertainty of our society's future arising from ongoing digital transformation, climate change, and ecosystem changes. The finalized version of 2022 revised curriculum that reflects this focus was approved and announced on December 22, 2022.

The 2012 revised second foreign language curriculum also aimed to determine the core competencies that can empower students to make valuable contributions to personal, national, and societal development through education. The curriculum plan was carefully crafted to integrate the fundamental principles and revision guidelines outlined in its introduction into the characters, objectives, and achievement standards of the second foreign language curriculum in diverse and meaningful ways (Lee et al., 2022a).

Annex 16 contains the curriculum for the second foreign language, which offers eight language options: German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic, and Vietnamese. The living foreign language is one of the elective subjects available in middle school, along with other courses such as Chinese characters, environment, public health, and career and occupation. Each elective course requires 170 hours to complete. The second foreign languages are also offered as elective courses in high school (Ministry of Education, 2022a).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the characteristics of the 2022 revised curriculum, with a particular focus on the second foreign language curriculum for middle and high schools. To this end, we will identify the changes and notable features in the 2022 revised curriculum by comparing it with the 2015 revised curriculum and compare the curricula of the eight foreign languages to analyze their similarities and differences. Additionally, we will examine the limitations of the second foreign language curriculum that arose during the revision process and provide relevant suggestions to address them.

Characteristics of the 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum

This section analyzes the important changes and notable features introduced in the 2022 revised curriculum by comparing it with the 2015 revision. One notable shift from the previous revision is that the 2022 revision pursued a “curriculum with the people.” Making a clean departure from the tradition approach to curriculum development, the 2022 revision expanded the participants from curriculum experts to all education stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and experts from relevant social

areas, and sought to enhance public awareness of education and shift the paradigm of curriculum development by institutionalizing public participation through collaboration with pertinent organizations such as the National Education Council and the National Association of Provincial and Provincial Superintendents of Education (Ministry of Education, 2021). During the revision process, public opinions were collected through the public participation communication channel (educhannel.edunet.net) and incorporated into the final draft of the curriculum.

Table 1 compares the features of human ideal and core competencies pursued by the 2015 and 2022 revised curriculum.

Table 1. Comparison of the traits of human ideal and core competencies pursued by the 2015 and 2022 revised curricula

Human ideal		Core competencies	
2015 revised curriculum	2022 revised curriculum	2015 revised curriculum	2022 revised curriculum
- Autonomy	- Self-directedness	- Self-management	- Self-management
- Creativity	- Creativity	- Information literacy	- Information literacy
- Academic achievement	- Academic achievement	- Creative thinking	- Creative thinking
- Community orientation	- Community orientation	- Aesthetic sensibility	- Aesthetic sensibility
		- Communication	- Collaborative Communication
		- Community engagement	- Community engagement

The table indicates that the human ideal and core competencies pursued by both curricula have not changed except for two items: from “autonomous” to “self-directed” ideal character and from “communication” to “collaborative communication” competency.

A closer examination of the curricular content reveals that the most substantial difference between the 2022 and 2015 revisions is the change regarding the content system, which is the largest classification system and the smallest component of a curriculum. Whereas the 2015 revised curriculum’s content system comprises areas, core concepts, generalized knowledge, content elements, and functions, the 2022 curriculum is composed of areas, core ideas, and content elements. A core idea is a concise statement that encapsulates the

essence of a subject matter that can be generalized to all relevant areas through further learning. It differs from 2015's core concept(core element). Furthermore, while the 2015 content elements described the essential learning contents to be covered in each grade without any special distinction, the 2020 core elements classified them into three categories of knowledge/understanding, process/function, and value/attitude with the aim of fostering problem-solving ability in dealing with various and complex problems that may be encountered in life by applying an integrative approach to the curricular aspects of knowledge, function, value, and attitude. (Lee et al, 2022a).

The differences between the 2022 and 2015 second foreign language curriculum revisions can be boiled down to three key aspects: high school subjects, content system, and scope of basic vocabulary and communicative expression. The most remarkable change is the restructuring of subjects. While there is no change in the middle school course in that both revisions provide only one subject of living foreign language, a large-scale change has been made in the high school second foreign language subjects in the 2020 revision. In 2015, there were two subjects in the “general studies” category (foreign language I and foreign language II) and six subjects in the foreign language and international studies under the “specialized subjects I” category (specialized basic foreign language, foreign language reading and writing I, foreign language reading and writing II, foreign language conversation I, foreign language conversation II and foreign language zone culture). In 2022, with the abolition of foreign language high schools planned, some subjects in the specialized subject I were restructured as general subjects. Table 2 outlines the structure of the second foreign language curriculum.

Table 2. Structure of the second foreign language curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2022b)

Mandatory (middle school)	Elective (high school)			
	General	Specialized (career-specific)		Convergent
Living German	German	German conv.	Adv. German	Germanophone culture
Living French	French	French conv.	Adv. French	Francophone culture
Living Spanish	Spanish	Spanish conv.	Adv. Spanish	Hispanophone culture
Living Chinese	Chinese	Chinese conv.	Adv. Chinese	Chinese culture
Living Japanese	Japanese	Japanese conv.	Adv. Japanese	Japanese culture
Living Russian	Russian	Russian conv.	Adv. Russian	Russian culture
Living Arabic	Arabic	Arabic conv.	Adv. Arabic	Arabic culture
Living Vietnamese	Vietnamese	Vietnamese conv.	Adv. Vietnamese	Vietnamese culture

(conv. = conversation, adv. = advanced)

The 2022 revision of the second foreign language curriculum also includes changes to the curricular content system. Unlike the content system of 2015 revision, which presented individual areas simply as linguistic content (including pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and conversation) and cultural content (culture), the content elements of the 2022 revision are presented in three categories: knowledge/understanding, process/function, and value/attitude. The knowledge/understanding category is further divided into phonetic/phonological, syntactic, and communicative aspects. The syntactic aspects were hierarchically arranged according to the degree of difficulty and length, using descriptors commonly used in foreign language learning settings, such as “simple and easy,” “simple,” “short and easy,” and “somewhat long.” The hierarchy of communicative aspects was established by including or excluding categorized items of basic communicative expressions. The hierarchy of cultural aspects was established by diversifying or deepening the cultural topics. In the categories of process/function and value/attitude, varying levels of difficulty were established based on differences in perceptions or thoughts. The process/function category presents the learning process for understanding and applying knowledge of foreign language and the concrete outcomes in terms of competencies acquired by students during the learning process. The category of value/attitude describes the four functions of language and attitudes associated with cultural topics explored in the course, along with the values and attitudes that learners can assimilate through learning in the relevant domain.

The number of basic words and communicative expressions in the eight foreign language curriculum languages also changed in the 2022 revision compared to the 2015 revision. Existing basic words were deleted or new words were added in the process of consulting vocabulary standards officially recognized in the country or origin, corpus analysis, and expert review. The number of basic words increased in seven foreign languages except Chinese. The basic communicative expressions, which were presented in various categories ranging from 5 to 20 in each foreign language in the 2015 revision, have been reorganized into 4 to 5 categories (Lee et al., 2022b).

In summary, for the 2022 revised curriculum, a variety of education stakeholders were involved in the revision process. Compared to the 2015 revision, while there were only minor changes to the human ideal and core competencies pursued, the content system underwent a significant restructuring. The content elements of each second foreign language subject in the 2022 revised curriculum are presented in five concrete learning areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture, reflecting the hierarchy and interconnectedness of the courses provided. Furthermore, the basic words and communicative expressions were modified to align with the core competencies of the 2022 revision and the demands of the contemporary world.

Comparative analysis of the second foreign language curriculum

The 2022 revision of the second foreign language curriculum presents the second foreign language competencies in the competency areas of communication, mutual cultural understanding, and digital literacy in accordance with the core competencies established in its introduction. The overall goal of each subject is to understand the languages and cultures of various regions of the world from an intercultural perspective and to promote the ability to communicate cooperatively on various topics that may be encountered in life. It was also intended to include cross-curricular learning topics, such as environmentally sustainable development and ecological transformation, and a broad-minded perspective towards diverse cultures and a cooperative community awareness in the curriculum content system (Ministry of Education, 2022b). In alignment with these subject competencies and overall goals, concrete objectives and content system were established for each of the eight foreign language curricula. This section presents the 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum in five parts: characters and goals, content system, achievement standards, instruction and assessment guidelines, and basic vocabularies and communicative expressions, and compares them by language for detailed analysis.

The first part, “characters and goals,” emphasizes the necessity and significance of foreign language education in preparing students for the demands and challenges of social changes (e.g., digital innovation), across the eight foreign languages, and presents the characteristics of each language and the expected learning outcomes in two categories: overall goals and concrete objectives. While the eight foreign language curricula share similarities in their general goals, such as acquiring foreign language communication skills, understanding

other cultures from an intercultural perspective, and utilizing various media or materials on language-specific topics, a closer examination reveals differences in concrete topics. For example, the Chinese curriculum includes ecological transformation in the instruction and assessment guidelines while sustainable development and ecological transformation are reflected in the character category as a cross-curricular learning topic. It is also worth noting that the Chinese and Vietnamese curricula put a particular emphasis on presenting Korea as a multicultural society where people from diverse ethnic backgrounds live together as family and neighbors, given that there are a significant number of marriage migrants, workers, and international students coming from China and Vietnam.

The second part, “content system,” presents learning activities in five areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture across the eight foreign languages, as well as rules and difficulty levels of linguistic components of the content system, i.e., pronunciation and spelling (letters), vocabulary, grammar, and communicative expressions. While the content system for the four functions of language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) bears similarities in the general structure across the eight foreign languages, there are language-specific differences in the category of knowledge/understanding in the cultural domain. Table 3 presents examples of the topics pertaining to the knowledge/understanding category of the cultural domain of the subject “foreign language” across the eight foreign languages.

Table 3. The cultural domain knowledge/understanding category of the subject “foreign language”

German	French	Spanish	Chinese
- Language and culture (greetings, proverbs, sayings, idioms)	- Life-culture (food, clothing, shelter, daily life)	- Life-culture (food, clothing, shelter, etiquette, customs, leisure, environment)	- Basic facts about China (national flag, language, ethnic minorities, population, administrative districts, political system)
- Life-culture (food, clothing, shelter, leisure activities, hobbies, anniversaries, digital media)	- Social culture (social system, education)	- Traditional culture (festivals, customs, games)	- Language-culture (greetings, titles, numbers, language etiquette, Korean pronunciation of Chinese characters)
- Social culture (people, art, geography, environment, cultural heritage, holidays, festivals)	- Traditional culture (festivals, anniversaries)	- Verbal/nonverbal culture (greetings, addressing, proverbs, sayings, idioms, hand gesture)	- Life-culture (daily routine, school life, digital media, apps, meals, hobbies, transportation, travel, family, health, festivals, anniversaries)
	- Verbal/nonverbal culture (greetings, addressing, proverbs, sayings, idioms, hand gesture)	- Arts-culture (music, art, dance, idioms, hand gesture)	- Popular culture (music, art, film, literature, Hallyu, sports)
	- Arts-culture (music, art, literature, architecture)	- Language and culture (language habits, regional differences in vocabulary and expression)	- Traditional culture (holidays, Beijing Opera, traditional lifestyle play, crafts, arts)
- Geo-culture (nature, geography, tourism)	* Geography, nature, environment, history, monuments, sports, architecture, and people can be added.	* Geography, nature, environment, history, monuments, sports, architecture, and people can be added.	

Japanese	Russian	Arabic	Vietnamese
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language-culture (request method, acceptance/rejection, honorific system, addressing, expressive features) - Nonverbal culture (hand gestures, body language) - Basic facts about Japan (administrative units, geography, population, climate) - Life-culture (family life, school life, social life, transportation, communication, food/ clothing /shelter, annual events, sports, matsuri, wishes and prayers, environment) - Popular culture (songs, cartoons, animations, dramas, movies) - Others (tourist attractions, celebrities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language-culture (names, proverbs) - Life-culture (food, festivals, anniversaries, souvenirs, currency) - Arts-culture (literature, music, art, film, performing arts) - Traditional culture (customs, rituals, food, clothing, shelter, religion) - Others (history, geography, nature, science, sports, environment, climate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language-culture (greetings, proverbs, sayings, nonverbal expressions) - Life-culture (clothing, food, housing, naming, anniversaries) - Regional/national culture (geography, history, cultural heritage) - Traditional culture (holidays, festivals, customs) - Religious culture (5 Pillars and 6 Articles of Faith, sects, Sharia) - Arts-culture (dance, song, literature, calligraphy, film) - Others (people, nature) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Others (people, geography, cultural heritage, environment, climate, S&T) - Basic facts about Vietnam (ethnicity, language, population, climate, major cities) - Life-culture (school, home, social life, food, clothing, shelter, transportation, digital media, leisure activities, etiquette) - Language and culture (titles, language habits, proverbs/sayings) - Traditional culture (festivals, customs, holidays) - Arts-culture (art, architecture, film, music, performance, literature) - Others (people, nature, geography, tourist attractions)

As shown in Table 3, while the areas of language-culture, life-culture, and (traditional) arts-culture bear general similarities across the eight foreign languages, other areas show differences to a greater or lesser extent. For example, French and Japanese courses cover nonverbal culture, because hand gestures and body language have important meanings in addition to verbal expressions in these countries. Popular culture is covered in Chinese and Japanese courses due to their active cultural exchange with Korea, and tourism (tourist attractions) in French, Japanese, and Vietnamese courses, given that they are popular destinations among Koreans. Arabic is the only language that covers regional culture (due to its widespread usage across multiple countries and regions) and religious culture (due to its close association with Islam). In addition, Chinese and Russian cover science (technology), which is important to motivate students to learn, given that China and Russia are countries with advanced science and technology (S&T) such as aerospace science, drones, and AI.

The third part, “achievement standards,” describes the expected learning outcomes or targeted learning objectives that students should be able to or are expected to reach through

learning in all eight foreign languages. Considering the interconnectedness with content elements, achievement standards are presented by combining two or more out of three categories: knowledge/understanding, process/function, and value/attitude (Lee Mi-young et al., 2022b). Table 4 presents the number of achievement standards for each course offered in the second foreign language curriculum.

Table 4. Numbers of achievement standards by course of each second foreign language

Subject	Course	No. of achievement standards	Subject	Course	No. of achievement standards
German	Living German	16	Japanese	Living Japanese	18
	German	19		Japanese	22
	Advanced German	19		Advanced Japanese	22
	German conversation	10		Japanese conversation	11
	Germanophone culture	7		Japanese culture	8
French	Living French	16	Russian	Living Russian	15
	French	19		Russian	19
	Advanced French	20		Advanced Russian	19
	French conversation	11		Russian conversation	10
	Francophone culture	7		Russian culture	7
Spanish	Living Spanish	18	Arabic	Living Arabic	16
	Spanish	22		Arabic	20
	Advanced Spanish	21		Advanced Arabic	25
	Spanish conversation	10		Arabic conversation	13
	Hispanophone culture	7		Arabic culture	8
Chinese	Living Chinese	17	Vietnamese	Living Vietnamese	18
	Chinese	21		Vietnamese	21
	Advanced Chinese	22		Advanced Vietnamese	20
	Chinese conversation	11		Vietnamese conversation	10
	Chinese culture	7		Vietnamese culture	7

The number of achievement standards presented in Table 4 represents the sum of the number of achievement standards for each second foreign language course, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Since conversation and culture are single-area courses, the number of achievement standards is smaller compared to other courses. The numbers of achievement standards for individual courses are maintained within a similar range across the eight foreign languages, with a few significant differences between languages. For example, the difference between the lowest and highest numbers of achievement standards for advanced-level foreign language is 6: 19 for German and 25 for

Arabic.

The fourth part, “instruction and assessment guidelines,” presents specific teaching, learning, and assessment methods to promote students to achieve subject competencies in all eight foreign languages. The instruction guidelines present principles and priorities that align with the course objectives, such as classes tailored to learners’ needs, self-directed learning, and digital-based learning, taking into account learner diversity. Instruction methods that can be used in the second foreign language courses were presented and guided according to these principles and priorities, taking a broad perspective to ensure they do not infringe on the autonomy of individual school settings (Lee et al, 2022b). The instruction guidelines were proposed to establish instruction methods by interconnectedly combining the four functions of language common to all eight foreign languages. It is noteworthy that a particular emphasis was placed on cultural understanding associated with each language from an intercultural perspective as well as on self-directed learning tailored to learners’ knowledge level to ensure that they attain the minimum achievement level in preparation for the high school credit system.

The instruction guidelines and methods are generally similar across the eight foreign language curricula, with some differences from language to language. For example, French and Vietnamese provide students with creative activities that allow them to express their thoughts and ideas, while Chinese provides instruction designs tailored to various topics to promote learning linked to daily living and ecological transformation. The Japanese instruction methods include intonated pronunciation exercises using voice software, as well as verbal and nonverbal cultural understanding to learn expressions based on proper understanding of cultural contexts. Russian instruction designs include information (data) literacy.

The assessment guidelines present principles and priorities that reflect crucial aspects for achieving the expected learning outcomes, including process-centered assessment, performance assessment, descriptive/essay-style assessment, reinforcement through customized feedback, assessment tailored to the learner's level and type, and e-learning assessment. A wide range of assessment methods, which reflect the unique features of individual courses based on the aforementioned assessment principles and priorities, are comprehensively presented, along with related precautions and assessment methods that utilize digital tools (Lee et al., 2022b). What is also noteworthy is the recent emphasis on combining online and offline classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This trend has also been reflected in the assessment guidelines and methods, which were designed to prepare for online classes and assessments, including the use of synchronous interactive online platforms or apps in all eight foreign language curricula.

The assessment guidelines and methods are generally similar across the eight foreign language courses, with some variations in content from language to language. For example, in Chinese, the primary purpose of assessment is not to rate students' performance, but rather to foster their growth through learning process, with a focus on assessments that serves as opportunities for growth. The rationale behind this assessment method is to prevent students from losing their interest through a competitive assessment aimed at rating itself to determine the raking of performance level among students, which may even dissipate the remaining motivations for learning among lower-percentile students. By adopting this assessment method, the Chinese curriculum places emphasis on assessments that are linked to daily living and provides occasions for growth with the aim of sustaining students' interest in Chinese and motivating them towards further learning.

In the fifth part, "basic vocabularies and expressions," the number of basic words increased has increased in seven foreign languages except Chinese compared to the 2015 revision, as previously mentioned. This increase occurred as a result of the process of establishing the basic vocabulary lists by adding or deleting words that can be also be used in elective and convergent courses. However, the number of Chinese words decreased because the deleted words outnumber the added words (Lee et al., 2022b). Table 5 presents the numbers of basic words for each language.

Table 5. Number of words for second foreign language subjects (Lee et al., 2022b)

Language	German	French	Spanish	Chinese	Japanese	Russian	Arabic	Vietnamese
No. of words	941	911	998	865	994	887	876	855

Table 5 shows a significant difference in the number of basic words for each foreign language, which range from 855 to 998. This variation is due to the numbers of words covered in the advanced courses of individual foreign languages. German, French, Spanish, Japanese, and Russian have around 900 basic words, and Chinese, Arabic, and Vietnamese around 800. In general, the number of basic words covered in each second



foreign language courses is considered excessive for high school students who are at a beginner level. Therefore, it seems necessary to reduce it in the next curriculum revision to optimize the learning load to help students maintain their interest and motivation to learn a second foreign language.

In the 2022 revision, the categories of basic communicative expressions are more consistent across all foreign languages compared to the 2015 revision, which showed significant discrepancies. Table 6 gives an overview of the categories and items of basic communicative expressions across the eight foreign languages.

Table 6. Categories and items of basic expressions in the second foreign language curriculum

Sub ject	Category	Items
	Greetings/Introductio ns	Greeting, introduction
	Descriptions and Opi nions	People, objects, housing, thoughts and positions, permission, help, prohibition, adv ice, suggestion
Ger man	Emotions and Health	Emotions, interests, preferences and likes, thanks, excuses, apologies, regrets, sugg estions, invitations, promises
	Requesting/Providing Information	Location, transportation, time, lodging, environment/climate
	Daily Living	Hobbies and leisure activities, body/health, ordering and paying for food, purchasi ng products, use of media
	Greetings/Introductio ns	Greetings, regards, introduction
	Emotions	Symbol, admiration, joy, regret, worry
	Fre nch	Expressions
Daily Life Expressio ns		Invitations and offers, appointments, reservations, purchases, meals, media- based communication
	Social Relationship E xpressions	People and objects, health, environment/climate, time, date, location
	Providing Informatio n and Expressing De mands	Greetings, regards, introduction, thanks, apology, welcome, congratulations, wishe s, encouragement, phone calls, video communication, letters
Spa nish	Descriptions and Opi nions	Personal Information, object, location, movement, purchase, time, day, date, point i n time, frequency, period, routine, weather
	Expressions of Taste and Emotion	Person, thing, situation, fact, experience, opinion, agreement/disagreement, duty, c onviction, possibility.
	Suggestions/Request	Taste, preference, interest, mood, state, admiration, desire, hope, grievance
	Greetings/Introductio ns	Order, command, request, plan, suggestion, advice, acceptance/permission, refusal, notice
Chi nes e	Greetings/Introductio ns	Encounter, personal information, celebration/prayer, parting
	Feelings and Express ions	Gratitude, apology, joy/pleasure, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, agreement/disagreem ent, praise/admiration, encouragement/concern, rebuke, surprise/shock
	Facts and Informatio n	Description, description, experience, comparison, choice, guess, condition



	Requests and Consents	Command/ban, request, proposal/promise, approval/rejection
	Daily Life Expressions	Time, date/day, weather, purchase, meal, health, communication, hobbies, place/transportation, school life, digital media, environment
	Greetings/Introductions	Meeting/parting, going out/returning, visiting, meal, end of year, new year, celebration, self-introduction, introduction of others, introduction of family
Japanese	Consideration and Communication	Gratitude, apology, praise, encouragement/consolation, rejection/reservation, humility, regret, grievance, consent/agreement, hope/will, purpose, presentation of opinions, correction/denial
	Information Exchange	Existence/place, time/time, selection, comparison, method/reason, state, hobby/interest, ability/possibility, experience, confirmation, guidance, guess, message, situation explanation
	Demands for Action	Request/direction, prohibition, solicitation, advice/suggestion, permission, warning
	Conversation Skills	Hesitation, nodding/agreeing, exclaiming, retorting, asking clarifying questions, developing/changing topics
	Introduction	Greeting, introduction
	Expression	Invitation, celebration, wish, wish, praise, encouragement, request, request, consent, permit, refusal, caution, prohibition, recommendation, suggestion, agreement, objection, thanks and response, apology, response
Russian	Expressing Thoughts and Feelings	Like or dislike, joy, admiration, regret, dissatisfaction, hope, expectation, guess, certainty
	Daily Life Expressions	Expressing time, routine, appointment, shopping for goods, talking on the phone, writing letters
	Description and Explanation	Place, destination, wayfinding, means of transportation, weather, health, asking and answering reasons, asking/ answering opinions, character description, state and characteristics of objects
	Greetings/Introductions	Greeting, introduction
	Expressing Feelings and Opinions	Feelings, opinions and wishes
Arabic	Description and Explanatory Expression	Description, description
	Expression of Needs	Requests and concessions, orders, prohibitions
	Other Daily Life Expressions	Weather, daily routine, phone calls, invitations and appointments, health, celebrations, meals, shopping, asking directions, travel, letters/e-mails
Vietnamese	Greetings/Introductions	Greetings, regards, introduction, personal information
	Expression of Requesting and Providing Information	People, things, time, date, day of the week, routine, hobby, weather, season, location, venue, notice



Feelings and Expressions, apology, proposal, invitation, acceptance, rejection, solicitation, request, inquiries, inquiry, demand, guess, order, prohibition, congratulation, wishes

Daily Life Expressions, Purchase, exchange, refund, meal, health, movement, learning, travel, reservation, currency exchange, communication

As shown in Table 6, the second foreign language curriculum presents four or five categories of basic communicative expressions across the eight foreign languages, with similar topics) to each category, such as greetings and introductions, emotions and opinions, descriptions and statements, requesting/providing information, as well as expressions used in daily life. It is worth noting that newly added items include the use of media/ and media-based communication in German and French, respectively, and digital media in Chinese, which reflects changes in the contemporary world such as digital transformation. The inclusion of these items is significant in that it is aligned with the 2022 revision's emphasis on information (data) literacy as a core competency. Likewise, the addition of "environment/climate" (German, French) and "environment" (Chinese) is aligned with the 2022 revision's emphasis on strengthening students' capacity to proactively cope with environmental changes such as the climate crisis. In differentiation from the other seven second foreign languages, Japanese has a category called "conversation skills" with the items such as hesitating, nodding/agreeing, asking clarifying questions, and developing/changing topics. This reflects the Japanese communication habits and culture.

Limitations and suggestions regarding the 2022 revised second foreign language

The 2022 revised curriculum has garnered significant attention, especially in terms of subject areas, due to its planned implementation in 2025, which coincides with the first year of the high school credit system. As a researcher who was involved in the curriculum revision process, I would like to offer some suggestions based on the limitations and areas for improvement that I observed during the process.

Firstly, the 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum is its uniform arrangement across all eight languages, without considering the unique characteristics of each language or the different educational settings among schools, for the sole reason that they belong to the same subject group. Therefore, following the finalization of the subject arrangement, there were opinions expressed among the expert groups centered around teachers and civil participation platforms that the subject should be reviewed and modified. The main concern raised by those who opposed the 2022 revision of the second foreign language curriculum is that it includes subjects, such as advanced foreign language, that are too difficult to arouse students' interest and thus fail to motivate them to choose the second foreign language subject as an elective subject. This is a reasonable concern for teachers of the second foreign language, who are already facing difficulty securing the necessary number of hours since the second foreign language not a mandatory subject.

To encourage students to be interested in a second foreign language and take it as an elective subject even after the implementation of the high school credit system, it is necessary to develop courses that are aligned with the characteristics and circumstances of each language. For example, considering that Vietnam is a popular tourist destination among Koreans, it may be advantageous to offer a “Trip to Vietnam” course. Similarly, since Korea has significant trade and cultural content exchanges with China and Japan, it may be worth considering basic business Chinese or Japanese course.

During the initial phase of the revision process, the imminent abolition of foreign language high schools was a compelling reason to introduce a hierarchically stratified course arrangement that could meet the needs of students for advanced-level foreign language courses compared to general high schools. However, now that the abolition has been implemented, there is a need for courses that are tailored to the level and needs of general high school students.

Secondly, in order for the high school credit system to function effectively, it is important to ensure that students can freely choose the subjects they want. However, there are concerns that limited resources within school settings may make it difficult to offer all the desired subjects to students. To address this problem, there is a demand for joint courses to be operated and shared among schools at the local education office level based on school-to-school collaboration and institutionalizing joint online courses. (Lee et al., 2022b). However, learning a foreign language in an online/offline hybrid course inevitably has its limitations. To cultivate our students into valuable global citizens, it is important to motivate them to take interest in various other foreign languages beyond the current English-centered foreign language education. This can be achieved by creating opportunities for students to be exposed to various foreign languages starting from middle school, and by providing an adequate number of teachers and learning resources for interschool foreign language education.

Currently, only Chinese and Japanese are taught as elective living language courses in middle school among the eight available foreign language subjects. It is unlikely that many students will suddenly develop an interest in a foreign language they have never been exposed to before after entering high school. To address this issue, it is important to offer a variety of foreign languages in middle school so that students can develop an interest in different languages. Additionally, it is crucial to tailor the high school foreign language courses to the unique characteristics of each language to ensure continued learning and to make the courses engaging and interesting.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine the characteristics of the 2022 revised curriculum, with a particular focus on the second foreign language curriculum for middle and high schools. Unlike the 2015 revision, a variety of education stakeholders were involved in

this revision process. While there were only minor changes to the human ideal and core competencies pursued, the content system underwent a significant restructuring. The content elements of each second foreign language subject in the 2022 revised curriculum are presented in five concrete learning areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture, reflecting the hierarchy and interconnectedness of the courses provided. Furthermore, the basic words and communicative expressions were modified to align with the core competencies of the 2022 revision and the demands of the contemporary world.

The 2022 revised second foreign language curriculum was examined in five parts: characters and goals, content system, achievement standards, instruction and assessment guidelines, and basic vocabularies and communicative expressions, which were compared by language for detailed analysis. First, while characters and goals generally similar across the eight foreign languages, some notable differences were found in Chinese and Vietnamese. Second, while the content system was similar across the eight foreign languages, there were some variations in the knowledge/understanding category of the cultural domain. Third, the number of achievement standards slightly varied among the languages. Fourth, the instruction and assessment guidelines for course contents were generally similar, with some variations found in French, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. Fifth, basic vocabularies and communicative expressions, the number of basic words increased in seven languages compared to 2015, with that of Chinese decreased as an exception, and the difference in number among the languages amounting to around 100. The categories of basic communicative expressions were general similar among the languages, with items on environmental changes added in German, French, and Chinese, and a new category added to Japanese reflecting its unique culture.

The 2022 revised curriculum differs from the existing curriculum revisions in multiple aspects, and it also has some limitations. In this study, two suggestions are made to address these limitations. First, it is important to develop courses that align with the characteristics and circumstances of each foreign language, which would allow students to choose elective courses based on their interests even after the implementation of the high school credit system. Second, there is a need to create opportunities for students to access foreign languages from middle school to encourage them to take interest in various foreign languages, moving away from English-centered foreign language education. It is also important to provide an adequate number of teachers and class hours to promote interschool joint foreign language learning opportunities.

Despite the increasing use and accuracy of AI-driven automatic interpretation and translation, foreign language education remains important. Not only does learning a foreign language mean acquiring knowledge of the language and culture, but it also involves developing practical communication skills through direct contact and experience. To achieve this, it is crucial to overcome the limitations of the current curriculum and create an environment conducive to normalizing and revitalizing foreign



language education. It is also important to explore and implement instruction and assessment methods that align with students' daily lives, moving away from the current practice of choosing a second foreign language as an elective subject based solely on the advantages and disadvantages regarding the entrance exam, which is also in line with the intended goal of the high school credit system.

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