

The Sociology of English as an Additional Language of Wider Communication: A Case Study

Byun Myung-sup

I

Linguistics, as Hudson puts it, is concerned only with the structure of language, to the exclusion of the social contexts in which it is learned and used. Sociolinguistics is the study of language in its social context. The task of linguists is to work out the rules of language X, language Y, etc.; on the other hand, sociolinguists are involved at any points where such rules of language X, language Y make contact with society.¹⁾

The field of sociolinguistics or the sociology of language was born in the summer of 1964 during the Bloomington Seminar at Indiana University, which was sponsored by the Committee on Sociolinguistics of the American Social Science Research Council. Since then, there had been a disagreement on the two notions of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. Generally speaking, however, when we view sociolinguistics through the eyes of linguists—that is, when we put more emphasis on the study of language in relation to society, we deal with linguistically-oriented sociolinguistics, such as pidgin and creole languages, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, studies of language-in-contact, bilingualism, and so on. When we are more interested in the study of society in relation to language, we deal with what we could call the sociology of language, such as the dynamic and descriptive sociology of language, domain analysis, language maintenance and language shift, personal bilingualism vs. social diglossia, language disuse and death, the phenomenon of the semi-speaker, and so forth. Sociolinguistics has also developed into an applied sociology of language. On the macro-level, the sociology of language involves language planning and engineering, choosing a

人文大學 專任講師

1) Hudson, R. A., *Sociolinguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1980), pp. 3-5.

national language, script reform, literacy campaigns, and so on. On the micro-level, researchers investigate such areas as the acquisition of second languages, applications in discourse or text analysis, the notion of communicative competence, and the notional-functional syllabus, to name a few.

In some disciplines, there is an area of overlap between the two properties of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. However, in this paper, the notion of the sociology of language implies what is called 'macro' sociology of language, dealing in particular with the changing influences of Russian and English in North Korea.

II

Through a long history of a four thousand years, the Korean language has often been subject to the influences of foreign languages, mostly in lexicon: Chinese at first and then Japanese, followed by Western languages. Nowadays, under such circumstances, the first generation in a Korean family is familiar with Chinese classics, the second generation has a communicative ability in Japanese, and the third generation has a good knowledge of one of Western languages.

A few earliest literary sources give us a scanty idea that ancient Korea devised a kind of writing system of its own, but in practice the Korean people adopted Chinese ideographs as a medium of writing around the fourth century. In its geographical location, the Korean peninsula lies between the two powers of China and the Soviet Union to the north, and Japan to the south. Through subsequent dynasties, China was the first major ally of Korea; consequently, Chinese political and cultural domination had a great effect upon almost all sectors of Korean society. In the process of political and cultural interaction between Korea and China, the influences of the Chinese language on Korean were significant and pervasive. The Chinese writing system maintained the function of H in all domains for about twenty centuries until the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. Chinese characters were used in the civil service examination, personal and official correspondence, and official literature. Even after the promulgation of the Korean alphabet system in 1446, Chinese ideographs continued to be H in the domains of administration and education, whereas the Korean script was regarded as an L form of writing and the use of it was limited to the lower working class of society, mostly to write works of vernacular literature. As a result, at present, Chinese derivatives in the Korean language constitute over fifty percent of all Korean vocabulary, as shown in a dictionary published in the Republic of Korea.

III

Of the world's 4.8 billion population, over two billion people speak natively one of the ten most widely spoken languages: Mandarin Chinese(750 million), English(345 million), Spanish(200 million), Russian(190 million), Hindi (180 million), Bengali(120 million), Arabic (115 million), Japanese(100 million), German(100 million), and Portuguese(100 million).²⁾

On the whole, the English language is used world-wide as a native language, a second language, or a foreign language. English is spoken natively by about 345 million people in twelve nations, such as Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Canada (except Quebec), Grenada, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

In thirty-three nations and Puerto Rico³⁾, most of which once were an American or British colony before World War II, English is regarded as a second or semi-official language, often used for administration, business and education: e.g., Bangladesh, Botswana, Burma, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, India, Israel, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Uganda, Western Samoa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In these countries, which are generally characterized by bilingualism or multilingualism, English is a lingua franca of many different mother tongues or dialects. Under the circumstances, it is common for people to use English (a High language) on formal occasions, mainly in domains of government, business, education, and high culture, but to use their mother tongue (a Low language) at home or in the lower work sphere.

English is also widely learned as a foreign language at least in fifty-six additional countries: e.g., Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, East Germany, Egypt, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Guinea, Honduras, Hong Kong, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Luxemburg, Lybia, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Nepal, Netherlands, North Yemen, Norway, Portugal, Rumania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Soviet Union, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Venezuela, Zaire, and Korea.⁴⁾ In countries where English is a foreign language, English is the medium of exchange in diplomacy, science, technology, military know-how, international business, tourism, and pop culture.

2) Godby, Carol J. et al., eds., *Language Files* (Department of Linguistics, The Ohio State University, 1982), pp. 4.1-4.5.

3) *U. S. News & World Report*, February 18, 1985, pp. 50-51.

4) *Ibid.*, p. 51.

The first European visitor to Korea was Gregorio de Cespedes, a missionary of the Spanish Jesuits, who came to Korea in 1593 to minister to the Japanese Christian soldiers under the invading General Konshi. His contacts with Koreans were limited to the prisoners of war who were sent captive to Japan. He stayed in Korea one year and a half. Around the year 1627, John Wetterre, a Dutchman, was captured alive, when his ship *Ouderkress* was driven into the coast of Korea. In 1653, another Dutch vessel *Sparrowhawk* was driven into the coast of Quelpaert (Cheju Island). Hendrick Hamel was one of seven survivors who escaped to Japan. In 1797, Captain Broughton's HMS *Providence* touched the west coast of Korea. In 1816, Captain Basil Hall's *Lyra* and *Alceste* landed on the southwest coast of Korea and surveyed that area. In 1831 and 1832, the British East India Company's vessel *Lord Amherst* attempted an opening on the southern coast, and in 1845 HMS *Samarang* visited the same area.⁵⁾

The Western nations, particularly after the China treaties, made commercial adventures to the remaining Far East. In 1845, Zedoc Pratt, an American Congressman, proposed that the United States send diplomatic and commercial agents to Korea and Japan: "...the American people will be able to rejoice in the knowledge that the 'star spangled banner' is recognized as ample passport and protection for all who, of our enterprising countrymen, may be engaged in extending American commerce..."⁶⁾ In 1854, the U. S. concluded a treaty with Japan; and in 1866, in Japan, the Meichi Yushin period started with its open-door policy. Western civilization slowly seeped into Japan. On the contrary, Korea still had remained unknown to the West, except that Christianity spread secretly with the active aid of French missionaries from the Jesuits in Peking. Persecution continued in the years that followed. In the end, the news of the death of the missionaries brought the French fleet to Korea. The Hermit Kingdom offered hostilities to invading Western fleets rather than compromise for trade agreements. In 1866, the French fleet was repulsed after the battle on Kangwha Island, as were the U. S. fleets in 1866 and in 1871.

However, the traditional view of the Kingdom of Korea regarding the United States was reviewed in 1880 by *Chosun Chaekryak* (The Strategy in Korea), a book written by a Chinese. In the book the author described the United States as politeness-oriented, uninterested in encroachment upon the territory of another country, rich in natural resources, and willing to assist small countries. At the same time, he recommended that Korea take advantage of the United States in order to counterbalance the ever-increasing political and military adventurism of Russia, as well as to promote national developments with the open-door policy (The Dong-A Ilbo, August 16, 1985). On the other hand, it was inevitable that Korea establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries because of political manuevers of Western

5) Nelson, M. F., *Korea and the Older Orders in Eastern Asia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1945), pp. 109-110.

6) Ibid., p. 111.

powers for hegemony in the Korean peninsula. Korea first concluded the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Japan in 1876, with the United States in 1882, with Germany and Great Britain in 1883, with Russia in 1884, and with France in 1886.⁷⁾

It was not until the late 1800's that the Korean people came into direct contact with foreign languages and thus felt a need of learning them. When the Treaty of Amity and Commerce was being negotiated between Korea and the United States, there was no Korean interpreter available who could speak English on the part of Korea and so a Chinese interpreter of English was employed. The commitment of the Kingdom of Korea to English first took place the following year in 1883 after the treaty with the United States. Dongmunhak was the first official English language school which was opened by P. G. von Moellendorf and J. E. Halifax in 1883. This English language school was closed in 1884. In its place, the Yukyounghakwon was established on September 23, 1886 as a public English language school for the children of the court nobility. In 1894, however, this royal English language school changed its name to English Language School under the auspices of W. du F. Hutchison, an Englishman who had taught English at a naval academy in the Kingdom of Korea. In 1895, the government issued Decree Number 88 and made it possible to establish a national English language school, which remained open until the year 1911. This English language school was intended for interpreters, diplomats, government officials, and other practical purposes. Instructors were all native speakers of English, the medium of instruction was English, and textbooks or other teaching materials were brought from abroad with the instructors.⁸⁾

In the meantime, foreign Christian missionaries made great contributions to the educational development in Korea, primarily for their religious mission. They also opened a number of mission schools in Korea and introduced both English and Christianity to Korean people. In 1885, Rev. H. D. Appenzeller, a Methodist, established Pai Chai School in Seoul, and the following year M. F. Scranton established a girls' mission school named Ewha School. In 1886, H. G. Underwood opened Oshin School in Seoul. In addition, numerous other schools were established by various American missionary organizations: Kwangsong School in Pyongyang and Sungduk School at Youngbyon in 1894, Chungjin Primary School in Pyongyang and Kongok Primary School in Seoul in 1896, Union Christian School in Pyongyang in 1897, and Baewha School in 1899.⁹⁾

In such mission schools, English was the major subject and later some other subjects, such as the Bible, geography, biology, mathematics, astronomy, Chinese literature, and so on, were included in the school curriculum. Initially, instructors were native speakers of English, the

7) Han Jae-yung, "Modern Education in Korea," *Korea Journal* 2, 1962, p. 6.

8) *Ibid.*, p. 7.

9) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

medium of instruction in the classroom was also English, and in the later years some Korean teachers took part in the pioneering of new education.

The changing influence of China, Japan, the United States, and Russia over Korea was also reflected in the number of the foreign language schools at that time. Foreign language schools opened one after another. As shown in Table 1, which indicates the number of students enrolled at all the foreign language institutions during the period of 1901 and 1906, English was the most popular, with the enrollment of seventy students in 1901 and one hundred twenty-seven students in 1906, followed by Japanese, French, Chinese, and German in that order.¹⁰⁾

Table 1. Number of Enrollments at Foreign Language Institutions

Foreign languages	1901	1906
English language schools	70	127
Japanese language schools	57	88
French language schools	37	44
Chinese language schools	25	54
German language schools	32	20

Source: Moon Yong, "A Historical Review of the Teaching of English in Korea", *Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Seoul National University, 1976, p. 2098 [in Korean].

Around this period, English publications appeared in books; for instance, John Ross published *Corean Primer* in 1877 and H. G. Underwood published *An Introduction to the Korean Spoken Language* in 1889 and *A Concise Dictionary of the Korean Language in Two Parts, Korean-English and English-Korean* in 1890. The bilingual newspaper *The Independent* published English sections on pages three and four and Korean sections on pages one and two in 1896. *The Boy*, a monthly magazine, included English and Japanese sections in it.¹¹⁾

10) Moon Yong. "A Historical Review of the Teaching of English in Korea", *Applied Linguistics* (2), 1976, pp. 209 [in Korea].

11) *Ibid.*, p. 212.

However, the continual rise and fall of competing foreign languages in the process of emergence came to a close when the Japanese language disposed of its rivals in Korea after the Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese Wars in 1895 and 1905, respectively. Under the Japanese rule (1910–45), Japanese was dominant in the school curriculum and in Korean society, ultimately replacing Korean. During the period of Japanese rule of Korea, education was administered on the basis of the Chosen (Korea) education ordinances issued by the Japanese authorities. There were a series of the educational ordinances issued, first in 1911, 1922, 1938, 1941, and 1943.

The Chosen Education Ordinance of 1911 provided a school system of three- to four-year ordinary school, four-year higher ordinary school, two- to three-year trade school, and three- to four-year college. English was taught from higher ordinary schools, but it was done on a limited basis, depending on the availability of English-language teachers, while private mission schools provided two to four hours of English a week.¹²⁾

As a result of the 1922 amendment, one foreign language course of English, German, French, or Chinese was required at higher ordinary schools, while English or French was made optional or dropped at girls' higher ordinary schools. In addition, the Japanese authorities established Kyongsong (Seoul) Imperial University, where one department of English was set up. English was a required subject for admission to the University. Professors of all subjects were mostly Japanese and they employed a grammar-translation method in teaching English. In the 1930's, another English department was established at Ewha Girls' Higher School. At private schools, including Ewha Girls' Higher School, teachers of English were Christian missionaries, who also took charge of various English language programs and other campus activities, such as English dramas, English speech contests, writing short stories in English, English language newspapers, English typewriting, and so forth.

In 1938, the Japanese authorities issued another educational ordinance: Korean was made optional while Japanese was compulsory, in line with the de-Koreanization policy. In the 1941 educational ordinance, Korean was dropped from the school curriculum. Henceforth, Japanese was forced to be used in all domains. Japanese (H) was used mostly in connection with matters of government, education, and higher culture whereas Korean (L) was utilized in conjunction with everyday pursuits at home and at work, resulting in unstable diglossic settings without bilingualism (i. e. +diglossia, –bilingualism).

12) Han (1962), op. cit., pp. 7–8.

IV

When Japanese rule was brought to an end after World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided into two halves by the cold war powers of the Soviet Union and the United States: the Communist North and the anti-Communist South. The establishment of the U. S. Military Government (1945-48) in the south provided Koreans with a chance to make person-to-person contact with English culture while the influence of the Soviet Union was predominant in North Korea. Thus, in terms of a foreign language, English was to South Korea what Russian was to North Korea.

On the whole, in North Korea, Russian was dominant until the mid-1960's, followed by the period of the coexistence of Russian and English for the next ten years, and finally by the dominance of English. After the division, in North Korea, Soviet influences were apparent in politics, the military, the economy, culture, and education, whereas Chinese and Japanese languages and culture were purged from the school curriculum and society. The Russian language was required from secondary school on, and the study of Russian was encouraged among the North Korean leaders. "Learn from the Soviet Union" was a slogan, and schools were encouraged to promote broad study of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the use of English words was discouraged: a math teacher was accused of being pro-American when she used the word 'Pythagoras' in math class.¹³⁾

According to the 1962 school curriculum, three-year middle school students were required to take three credit hours of Russian per semester (306 hours or 9.80%), two-year technical school students were required to take two credit hours of Russian per semester (140 hours or 4.64%), and two-year higher technical high school students were required to take two credit hours of Russian per semester (210 hours or 6.54%)¹⁴⁾ (see Table 2).

During the academic year of 1966-67, the college and university curriculum was divided into two semesters, with classroom attendance of 38 to 40 hours per week. At Kim Il Sung University, during the four-year period of college education, students spent 5,300 to 5,500 hours in class. Of these hours, 1,200 hours were allotted to military training: the remaining hours were divided among some 22 to 25 subjects. Political subjects (730 hours) and Russian (320 hours) were required. In North Korea, however, priority is given to practical subjects relevant to economic development to produce trained workers. Russian-language instruction

13) Kim Hyung-Chan, "Ideology and Indoctrination in the Development of North Korean Education", *Asian Survey* 9, 1969, pp. 831-841.

14) Kim Min-su, "The Language Policy in North Korea". *The Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15, 1972, pp. 1-53 [in Korean].

was, therefore, directed toward familiarity with Russian technical terminologies rather than linguistically-oriented language learning.

Table 2. Number of Semester Credit Hours in Secondary School, North Korea: The 1959—1960 Academic Year

School year								
Semester	1	2	1	2	1	2		
Korean	3	3	3	3	2	2		272
Literature	5	5	4	4	4	3		424
Russian	3	3	3	3	3	3		306
Mathematicw	7	7	2	2				306
Algebra			2	2	4	4		204
Geometry			2	2	2	2		136
Korean History	2	2	2	1	2	2		186
World History			1	2	1	1		96
Natural Geography	3	3						102
Korean Geography					2	2		68
Botany	2	2	2	2				136
World Geography			3	3				102
Zoology					3	3		102
Physics			2	2	3	3		170
Chemistry					2	3		86
Physical Educatin	2	2	2	2	2/1	2/1		204
Drawing	1	1	1	1				68
Drafting					1	1		34
Music	1	1	1	1				68
On-the-job Training	2	2	2	2	2	2		204
Housekeeping and Sewing					1	1		34
Sanitation	1	1	1	1	1	1		102
Total	32	32	33	33	34	34		3,369

Source : *Pukan Chongnam*(North Korea Annals), Seoul, Pukhan Yonguso(North Korea Research Institute), 1983, p. 1,312.

V

Meanwhile, in 1968, three credit hours of Russian in secondary school were reduced to one credit hour of Russian, with the addition of one credit hour of Chinese characters and one credit hour of English.¹⁵⁾

The underlying motivation for the shift in policies of foreign languages in North Korea is two-fold: political and economic. Politically, the Soviet Union was in a position of authority over North Korea, mostly in the early period of North Korea's political history, before the Soviet-North Korean clash. In view of Soviet-North Korean relations, it was unlikely that North Korea would be faithful only to Russian, the dominance or influence of which happens to be minimal in international markets and diplomacy as compared with English. English is widespread even in Communist countries. In the Soviet Union, over half of the secondary-school students study English. In China, children get their first English lessons in primary schools, and English has become a compulsory part of the college entrance examinations. During the Cultural Revolution, learning another foreign language was denounced for 'worshiping things foreign', but, today, Chinese leaders view English as a tool to absorb Western know-how, particularly after China's commitment to modernization (Newsweek, February 5, 1979, p. 53; November 15, 1982, p. 98; U. S. News & World Report, February 10, 1985, p. 52).

The influence of Chinese ideographs is also linguistically significant in such countries as Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. As far as the Korean language is concerned, the impact of Chinese characters should not be underestimated: over half of the Korean vocabulary are Sino-Korean words. In this respect, North Korea may have interpreted the role of Chinese characters in a different context from that of Russian.

Initially, North Korea's English-language instruction was limited to those anticipating careers in the fields of diplomatic affairs and overseas information activity, as well as sciences and technology. Due to the small number of those needing foreign language instruction, North Korea was able to depend on foreign countries for language instruction purposes. Only a very limited number of pure Communist students went abroad for the study of foreign languages. Students were sent to the Soviet Union, East Germany, Rumania, Hungary, and other Communist countries. However, quite a few students who studied abroad, partly influenced by the 1956 revolt of Hungary, criticized North Korean society and sought to defect. Subsequently, North Korea discouraged sending students to foreign countries, in line with the policy of autonomy which began in 1966 after the clash between North Korea

15) Kim (1972). op. cit., p. 16.

and the Soviet Union.^{16), 17)}

In order to meet the increasing demand for foreign languages, North Korea began to establish foreign language institutions. In 1949, Pyongyang Foreign Language College was established. Originally, it opened with three departments of Chinese, English, and Russian. Graduates in the Russian language department were mostly employed as teachers of Russian in secondary schools and English-language majors were engaged in international relations. In 1955, however, this college was consolidated with Kim Il Sung University until it became an independent college again in 1964. Currently, there are twelve foreign language departments at this college: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Latin, Mongolian, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.¹⁸⁾

After Pyongyang Foreign Language College was consolidated with Kim Il Sung University, there was no professional institution for foreign languages. On July 21, 1958, North Korea issued Cabined Decision Number 68 and established an eleven-year foreign language school. Children who had an aptitude for a foreign language were assigned to this foreign language school, at the age of seven after kindergarten. Graduates of this foreign language school were transferred to the four-year College of International Relations, which was established on September 1, 1960. Those who graduated from the College of International Relations were assigned to work as diplomats. At this college, there are departments of Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, trade, and foreign relations. The eleven-year foreign language school was reorganized into a seven-year foreign language school in the 1972 educational reform. Students who have completed a primary education are now eligible for admission to the seven-year foreign language school.^{19), 20)}

In North Korea, war-bereaved families are specially honored, benefited, and thus given priority in every high-level sector. The eleven-year revolutionary war-bereaved school was founded in September 1958 for those students from war-bereaved families. There are four different kinds of educational institutions within the revolutionary war-bereaved school, one of which is the seven-year Pyongyang Foreign Language Revolutionary School, with the enrollments of 700 students. Children from war-bereaved families or families of war heroes are eligible for admission after kindergarten.²¹⁾

In 1964, departments of English, French, and Russian were established at Pyongyang Teachers' College in order to meet the pressing needs for secondary-school teachers of

16) *Pukhan* [North Korea], No. 82, 1978, pp. 139-141 [in Korean].

17) *Pukhan Chongnam* [North Korea Annals] (Seoul: Pukhan Yonguso [North Korea Research Institute], 1983), p. 1, 337 [in Korean].

18) *Naewoe Tongsin* [Naewoe Press], 10, 1979, pp. 323-326 [in Korean].

19) *Ibid.*

20) *Pukhan Chongnam* (1983), op. cit. pp. 1,337-1,339.

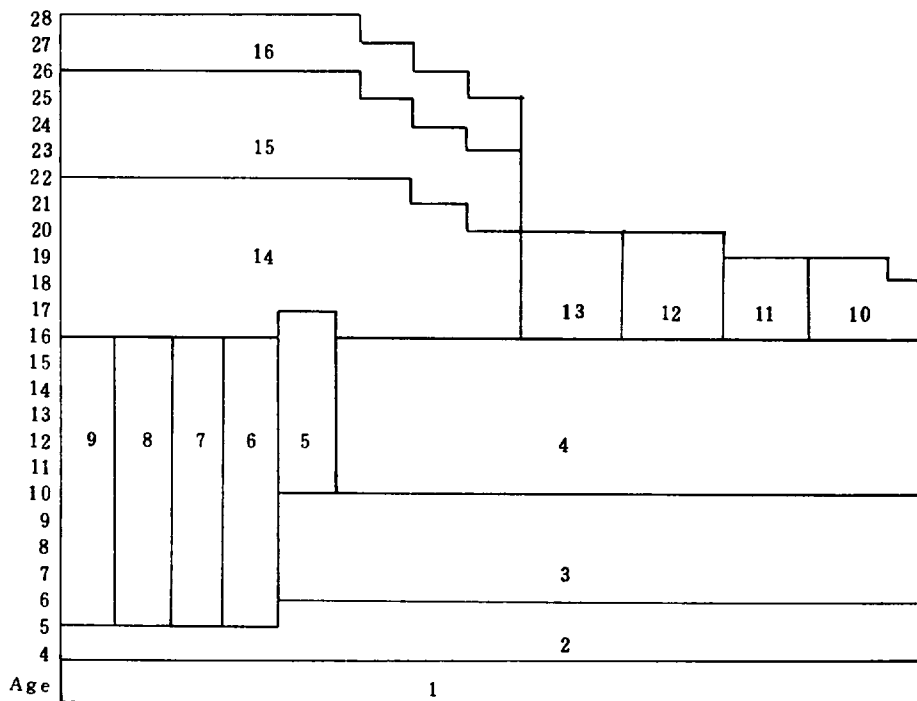
21) *Ibid.*, p. 1,294.

foreign languages. Again, in 1965, three departments of English, French, and Russian were added to Pyongyang Teachers' College.²²⁾

On September 1, 1970, another foreign language institution, Pyongyang Foreign Language Teachers' College was newly established, with departments of English, French, German, Japanese, Latin, and Russian. In addition, in North Korea, there are twenty-four four-year teachers' colleges. These teacher-training institutions, which have increased in number since the year 1947, also have language departments, such as Chinese characters, English, and Russian.²³⁾

Foreign languages are also taught at Kim Il Sung University. There are thirteen different colleges in the University and the following language and literature courses are available in the college of foreign languages and literature: Chinese, Chinese characters, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish²⁴⁾ (see Tables 3, 4, 5).

Table 3. The Educational System in North Korea, 1982



Source: *Pukhan Chongnam* (North Korea Annals). Seoul, Pukhan Yonguso (North Korea Research Institute), 1982, pp. 1271-1272[in Korean].

22) *Naewoe Tongsin*(1970), op. cit., p. 325.

23) Ibid.

24) *Pukhan Chongnam*(1983), op. cit., p. 1,287.

Notes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Nursery | 9. Art school (11 years) |
| 2. Kindergarten | 10. Higher junior college (2-3 years) |
| 3. People's school (4 years) | 11. Educational college (3 years) |
| 4. Higher middle school (6 years): Lower class (4 years) | 12. Technological college (4 years) |
| Upper class (2 years) | 13. Physical education college (4 years) |
| 5. Foreign language school (7 years) | 14. College or university (4-6 years) |
| 6. Revolutionary war-bereaved school (11 years) | 15. Research institute (3-4 years) |
| 7. Music school (11 years) | 16. Doctoral graduate school (2 years) |
| 8. Dancing school (11 years) | |

Table 4. Educational Institutions Teaching Foreign Languages in North Korea, 1982.

Schools	Foreign languages/departments
Higher middle school (6 years)	Required: English(3-4 hours a week) Elective: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian (1 hour a week)
Junior college (2-3 years). College of university (4-6 years)	Required: English (5 hours a week) Elective: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian
Pyongyang Foreign Language College (5 years)	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Latin, Mongolian, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese
Chungjin Foreign Language College	?
College of International Relations (4 years)	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish
Pyongyang Foreign Language Teachers' College (4 years)	English, French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian
Regular teachers colleges (23 in all, other than Pyongyang Foreign Language Teachers' College) (4 years)	Chinese characters, English, Russian
Kim Il Sung University (5 years)	Chinese, Chinese characters, English, French, German, Russian, Spanish
Foreign Language School (7 years)	?
Pyongyang Foreign Language Revolutionary School (7 years)	?

Source: *Pukhan Chongnam* (North Korea Annals), Seoul, Pukhan Yonguso (North Korea Research Institute), 1982, p. 1, 138 [in Korean]. [Adapted.]

Table 5. Number of Foreign Language Departments (in Four-Year Colleges and Above) in North and South Korea, 1982.

Languages	Number	
	*North Korea	South Korea
Arabic	2	3
Chinese	3	40
Chinese characters	24	8
Dutch	0	1
English	27	117
French	4	63
German	3	63
Hindi	0	1
Indonesian	1	3
Italian	0	1
Japanese	2	38
Latin	2	0
Mongolian	1	0
Persian	0	1
Portuguese	0	2
Russian	27	3
Spanish	3	8
Swahili	0	1
Swedish	0	1
Thai	0	1
Turkish	0	1
Vietnamese	1	1

*Estimate from available sources

In retrospect, it was almost criminal for North Korea to be associated with the West, Westerners, or English. This condition was a result of the rigid political system and obstacles to travel abroad. Nevertheless, the isolation of North Korea in international politics, as well as the deteriorating economic situation forced North Korea to search for wider international contacts.

Entering the 1970's, North Korea emphasized the importance of foreign languages, giving priority to English over Russian. On February 3, 1971, Kim Il Sung defined the purpose of the study of foreign languages as follows: "...We should be ready to fight against the imperialists of the United States and Japan. For this purpose, I recommend that every North Korean youngman, in preparation for the possibility of taking prisoners of war in the future, have some if not competent knowledge of English and Japanese. Every youngman should be able to speak simple military terms in English and Japanese, such as 'Raise your hands' and

'I won't fire you if you surrender with your hands on your head'..."²⁵⁾ ²⁶⁾

Accordingly, the instruction of foreign languages, especially English, was reinforced at all levels of society, including the military and the general populace. On February 15, 1977, Kim Il Sung elaborated the importance of foreign languages and pointed out: "...We do not have a sufficient number of people who are competent enough in foreign languages, and so the systematic study of foreign languages is to be carried out in higher middle schools (junior and senior high schools) in order that every student can be fluent at least one foreign language. Eligible teachers of foreign languages are in great demand and language teaching materials, such as good textbooks, foreign language dictionaries, and conversation books, are to be developed..."²⁷⁾

In 1977, Russian, along with Chinese, French, German, and Japanese, was made optional in higher middle schools, whereas English became a required subject. Beginning in 1978, a thirty-minute English-language program was broadcasted three times a day, in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening. In the same year, Korean-English dictionaries were distributed to the students in higher middle school. In 1979, two to three credit hours of English were extended to three to four credit hours of English per week in higher middle school, whereas elective foreign language courses were allotted one hour per week. Elective foreign language instruction is done only during the extra-curricula class, however. In addition, three credit hours of English were also extended to five credit hours of English per week in the tertiary-level schools. At present, English is a compulsory subject in colleges as part of general studies courses while Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Russian are offered as electives. In 1980, various foreign language contests such as English vocabulary memorizing were held in higher middle schools.²⁸⁾

In a series of directives in 1978 and 1979, Kim Il Sung emphasized the improvement of teaching methodologies, as well as the need of foreign language experts. In the 1970's, unlike the past, North Korea began to send students to non-Communist countries, such as Norway, Sweden, Finland, and other Third World countries. In 1978, North Korea sent twenty-one students to Guyana for English-language training and again eighty students to the same country in 1979 for the same purpose²⁹⁾ (see Table 6).

25) Ibid.

26) *Naewoe Tongsin* (1979), op. cit., p. 324.

27) *Pukhan Chongnam* (1983), op. cit., p. 1.338

28) Ibid.

29) *Pukhan* (1978), op. cit., pp. 140-141.

Table 6. Number of North Korean Students Studying Abroad: 1946—1979.

Destination	Number	Fields of study
Soviet Union	249	Russian, medicine, mathematics, military, biology, physics
China	?	English, medicine, military
Egypt	6	Arabic
Iraq	10	English
Algeria	10	Arabic, French
Cuba	5	Spanish
Sweden	7	Swedish
Finland	2	Finish
Norway	2	Norwegian
East Germany	2	German
Iran	2	Persian
Syria	8	?
Yugoslavia	8	English (4), French (4)
Guyana	101	English

Source: *Pukhan Chongnam* (North Korea Annals), Seoul, Pukhan Younguso (North Korea Research Institute), 1982, p. 1, 337 [in Korean]. *Pukhan* (North Korea), No. 82, (October 1978), p. 141 [in Korean].

As for the improvement of foreign language teaching, it can be achieved in part through direct interaction with native speakers of foreign languages. In view of North Korea's xenophobic policy, however, the involvement of native speakers of English in English instruction is predicted to be insignificant.

As far as North Korea is concerned, the justification of foreign language instruction is interpreted in ideological and militaristic contexts. When interviewed by a south Korean TV reporter during the Red Cross Talks visit in Pyongyang in September 1985, a north Korean student responded promptly to the question of the reason for learning English: "We learn English because we need it in dealing with war captives..."

The composition of English-language textbooks used in North Korea further illustrates the use of English for purposes of ideology. For instance, the textbooks for second and third grade middle school students are composed of: praise of Kim Il Sung (20%–30%), anti-Americanism (10%–13%), praise of North Korea (16%–20%), national pride (15%), the revolutionary war (10%) anti-Japanese (7%), and others (21%–25%). These types of textbooks remind one of propaganda publications, rather than linguistically-oriented language textbooks.³⁰⁾

30) *Pukhan Chongnam*(1983), op. cit., p. 1,309.

English textbooks used by pro-North Korea residents in Japan contain Russian personal names and street names. In contrast, the image of the United States is distorted by the presentation of the dark side of American society. Strangely enough, however, the textbooks stick to the norm of American pronunciation, rather than use the British. For example:

Black Jimmy

1

Jimmy is a black boy. Jimmy lives in America. He lives in the South. He has two brothers and four sisters. Jimmy's father and mother are workers. They work very hard but they get very little money.

The family lives in Negro town. In the South Negroes do not live in the same houses... (The Dong-A Ilbo, June 27, 1984)

Whatever the reason for the study of English in North Korea, in terms of Western culture, it is unlikely that English culture will be introduced into North Korean society on a large scale unless North Korea pursues the same course as China does in relation to its economy and militarization. The description of North Korea provided in existing literature tends towards one general conclusion: a society in the process of cultural resistance, allowing for no pluralism of any sort. As a result, any sizeable contact of the majority of people with other types of culture is negligible in North Korea society. An interesting hint of linguistic trends to come, as reported by south Korean delegates to the recent Red Cross Talks, was the labeling on common beverage containers in the north: 'Cola' and 'coffee with milk' (The Dong-A Ilbo, September 7, 1985).

One other factor in the Korean linguistic situation is the long-term effect of the geographic separation on homogeneity. In every sense, it is evident that the degree of cultural diffusion or acculturation in the north is not at the same level as the south. The cultural rift between the north and the south in terms of the degree of contact with other cultures is likely to be one factor responsible for continuing cultural and linguistic disparities between the two Koreas. ***

Table 7. The Shift in Influences of Foreign Languages in North Korea.

Year	C	J	R	E	Political or other events
Before 1919	5	2	2		China is a major ally of Korea; World powers maneuver in the Ko- rean peninsula
1919	2	5	1	3	Japan rules Korea
1945	1	1	5	1	Japan loses World War II; the Soviet Union occupies the northern half of Korea
1949	1	1	5	1	The use of Chinese characters is banned; Pyongyang Foreign Lan- guage College is established
1956	1	1	5-	1	The Sino-Soviet split emerges; North Korea purges Chinese and Russian culture after a clash with the Soviet Union
1958	1	1	5-	1	Pyongyang Foreign Language Re- volutionary School is set up
1959	2	2	5-	2	Foreign Language School is estab- lished
1960	2	2	5-	2	College of International Relations is established
1961	2	2	5-	2	Teachers' colleges are established
1964	2	2	5-	2	Pyongyang Foreign Language Col- lege is established
1965	2	2	5-	3	Departments of English, French, and Russian are set up at Pyongyang Teachers' College
1968	3	2	4	4	Russian is downgraded; English and Chinese characters are added up to the school curriculum
1970	3	2	4	4	Pyongyang Foreign Language Teachers' College is established
1971	3	3	3	5	English becomes required; Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Rus- sian are made optional in secondary schools
1978	3	3	3	5	English-language broadcasts begin
1979	3	3	3	5	Two to three credit hours of English are increased to three to four hours of English in secondary schools; three credit hours of English are in- creased to five hours of English in colleges
1980	3	3	3	5	Regional and nation-wide English language contests are held

Notes: Foreign languages C: Chinese
J: Japanese
R: Russian
E: English

Influences 5: Very strong
4: Strong
3: Neutral
2: Weak
1: Very weak

<국문초록>

한반도에서의 영어정책

邊 明 變

한반도는 지정학적인 위치에서 중국, 일본, 소련, 미국등의 정치적, 문화적 영향을 직접, 간접으로 받아왔다. 그 결과, 외국어로서는 중국어, 일어, 노어, 영어 등의 영향을 받아, 그에 대한 서로 다른 외국어 정책이 있어왔다.

분단후, 북한에서는 노어가, 남한에서는 영어가 제1외국어(the first foreign language)로 채택되었다. 특히 북한에서는 노어이외의 외국어에 대하여서는 극소수의 특수계층만이 접하고 배울 수 있었던, 외교와 대외 선전활동 분야의 영역이었다. 노어에 대한 정책은 60년대 중반까지 계속되었고, 60년대 중반이후 70년대 중반까지는 노어와 영어의 병행교육 정책을 펴왔었다. 그러나, 70년대 중반부터는 영어가 제1외국어로 채택되었고, 노어는 제2외국어(the second foreign language)로, 그 우세의 위치가 바뀌게 되었다. 이는 영어가 국제적 위치에서 누리는 역할을 고려한 점도 있다고 볼 수 있겠으며, 한편으로는, 그간의 노어정책이 정치적 엽음을 암시하기도 한다. 그러나, 영어채택의 정당성은 전쟁수행 목적의 한 수단으로 정의되고 있으며, 순수한 언어학적인 의미에서의 언어교육이 무시되고 있다. 이 연구에서는 북한에서의 이러한 외국어 정책에 대한 역사, 그 변화요인, 현재의 외국어들의 위치 및 역할들에 대하여 분석, 설명하였다.