

Munmyong kaehwa* and English Education: Emerging Nationalism and English Ideologies in Late 19th Century Korea

In Chull Jang
(OISE, University of Toronto)

Jang, In Chull. (2012). *Munmyong Kaehwa* and English education: Emerging nationalism and English ideologies in late 19th century Korea. *Foreign Language Education Research*, 15, 43-62.

This study explores ideologies of English that came into play when two different schools, *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* and *Paichai* School, were established in Korea in the late 19th century, a period in which a modern kind of English education was initially demanded and formed in the history of modern Korea. Drawing upon language ideology from linguistic anthropology as a theoretical framework, this study analyzes primary and secondary sources of relevant historical documents. This paper argues that the discursive condition that led to the necessity of English education in late 19th Korea was concerned with *Munmyong kaehwa*, a discourse that the cultural elite called the *Kaehwa* party introduced and supported to create a modern type of nationalism in Korea. Perceiving English as a language for civilization and enlightenment, this elite group contributed to building the two schools. On the other hand, common Koreans tried to enter these schools simply to learn English, believing that English would serve their individual success. This narrative shows that although the two ideologies of English, that is English for civilization and English for success, were coexisting in the late 19th century, the social discourse of *Munmyong Kaehwa* was not fully indexed with the ideologies of English.

Key Words: history of English education, language ideology, nationalism, *Yugyŏng kongwŏn*, *Paichai* School

I . INTRODUCTION: WHY ENGLISH IN LATE 19TH CENTURY KOREA?

In May 1885, following the decree of Kojong, the king of Chosŏn, an English language school named *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* (Royal English School) was established in Seoul. In the same year, H. G. Appenzeller (1858-1902), a Methodist missionary, founded a school, later named *Paichai* School by Kojong, and began to teach English to Koreans. These two events have been considered important in the history of English education in Korea because the two schools attempted to offer a systematic and modern

* I would like to thank Sunho Ko in the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto for his helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article. I also appreciate three anonymous reviewers' comments on this draft. All errors are my sole responsibility.

English teaching (Kwon & Kim, 2010). In late 19th century Korea, indeed, English was gaining importance as a language for trade and foreign affairs as Chosŏn signed treaties with Western countries. In addition, Chosŏn intellectuals needed to learn English because they had made efforts into introducing Western technologies and institutions to enhance prosperity and defense in Chosŏn. For these reasons, Korean scholars have argued that due to these social changes, the demand for English education was inevitable (Kim, 2011; Kwon & Kim, 2010; Park, C.-S., 2007; Park, G.-Y., 2008). However, the gap identified in previous studies is that they tend to pay less attention to discursive aspects related to nationalism and modernity that were being formed in late 19th century Korea.

In the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, Chosŏn had not been politically or militarily colonized by English-speaking countries such as the U.S. or the U.K. This means that an external political force was not exerted on English learning and use in Chosŏn. Then, how can we understand and explain such passion for English in late 19th century Chosŏn? Was the motivation to learn English produced by a kind of cultural imperialism? Or was it a manifestation of linguistic instrumentalism within a certain form of capitalist modernity? However these questions are addressed, one important fact is that Chosŏn was eager to learn English in the period when certain groups of Korean people believed that Chosŏn was in the middle of the transition from pre-modern to modern society. Given that a national language has played crucial roles in constructing nationalism and building a nation-state (Anderson, 2006 [1983]; Hobsbawm, 1990), therefore, the desire to learn English in Chosŏn should be understood with its emerging nationalism of a modern type. This paper will explore the relations between the advent of nationalism in Korea and ideologies of English.

This paper consists of four parts. First, I will discuss language ideology as a theoretical framework and historical documentary analysis as a methodological approach. Second, I will describe geopolitical contexts surrounding Chosŏn in the 19th century, and argue that the construction of nationalism in the Korean Peninsula was connected to the political independence from China. Third, I will show that in order to construct nationalism, Chosŏn mobilized discourses on civilization and enlightenment by looking at Japan and the U.S. Following this, it will be discussed how English was indexed with symbolic meanings related to civilization. Finally, I will examine the roles of the two schools, *Yūgyōng kongwŏn* (governmental school) and *Paichai* School (missionary school), in constructing another ideology of English, that is, English as a tool for success.

II. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

1. Theoretical Framework: Language Ideology in Linguistic Anthropology

Over the past thirty years, the framework of language ideology has been developed and been sophisticated in linguistic anthropology. Woolard (1998) defines language ideology as “representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world” (p. 3). Namely, it is a set of beliefs about language structures and language varieties. Kroskrity (2004), on the other hand, sees language ideology as including not only beliefs but also feelings in language use in that speakers have moral or aesthetic tastes of being “good” or “bad”, “superior” or “inferior”, or “beautiful” or “ugly” towards language practices.

Language ideology as representation mediates language uses and sociocultural realities. Folk perceptions of language uses of a certain social group are constructed through/in language ideology, which can be seen, for example, in Ebonics or gay/lesbian languages. In this sense, language mirrors, and in effect, reinforces social structures. This does not mean, however, that social conditions determine and essentialize language uses of a social group. Rather, the mediating role of language ideology stresses the process of what Bucholtz and Hall (2004) call *indexicality*; a language form is initially attached with a social meaning as a social group uses it in a particular context, and in turn, this indexicality is cemented as a language ideology as repeated over time.

Furthermore, language ideology affects a range of practices in language contacts and acquisition. As Eagleton (1991) points out, ideology as representation has a material existence on social institutions and practices more than it is a misrecognition or false consciousness. Thus language ideology can exert a performative force over language choices within political or educational institutions. For example, language ideologies such as purism or linguistic nationalism have had overt or covert effects on language standardization (Woolard, 1998).

Language ideology as representation and practice is not neutral in nature; rather, it may be mobilized for one’s interest. The analysis of language ideology necessarily entails tackling questions of how, why and by whom language ideology is constructed. For this reason, Irvine and Gal (2000) illustrate three semiotic processes to rationalize linguistic differentiation: *iconization*, *fractal recursivity*, and *erasure*. Iconization refers to the process that historical, conventional, or contingent causes allow a linguistic feature to be linked with a social value. In turn, this semiotic connection is projected onto other social levels, so that the ideological effects may be reproduced and strengthened. The fractal recursivity serves to “provide actors with the discursive or cultural resources to

claim and thus attempt to create shifting communities, identities, selves, and roles” (p. 38). Erasure points to the process of leaving out a social actor, a practice, or a resource that are concurrent but unfit with a dominant ideology. This selective ignorance of alternatives is complicit with maintaining hegemonic ideologies. These three semiotic processes of language ideology reveal that, as Kroskrity (2004) emphasizes, language ideology is a place of power where multiple ideologies are contesting to become legitimate.

The framework of language ideology has been adopted to address various issues related to linguistic practices such as language use and structure, policy, literacy and orthography, and historical studies (Woolard, 1998). In Western academia, in particular, historical studies of language ideology have tried to uncover colonial aspects of an empire language (e.g., English or French) in ‘the age of empire’. The project of the expansion of colonial linguistic capital was invariably associated with the discourse of civilization (Fabian, 1986; Stroud, 2007).

This paper may represent the strand of historical studies of language ideology in that it aims to investigate ideological terrains of historical events concerning English education in late 19th century Korea. This period may be characterized as a historical space where the discourses of modernity, nationalism, and colonialism emerged and interacted as discussed later in more details.

2. Methodological Framework: Historical and Documentary Analysis

Historical research involves locating, synthesizing and interpreting evidence to draw a robust conclusion about past events (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This research approach inevitably poses challenges to researchers in terms of data collection and the reconstruction of the data. Given that historical analysis may be considered part of qualitative research, the processes of how to collect and interpret data should be reflective. In other words, researchers need to understand ontological and epistemological stances of the research questions that they raise and then make decisions on research practices (Mason, 2002).

The goal of this paper is not so much the excavation of new historical “facts” or events as the (re)interpretation of existing documents. To this end, I tried to collect documents from primary and secondary sources, but the analysis relied more on secondary sources. Although, as Best (1970) argues, the greater use of secondary sources may undermine the reliability of research due to the possibility of bias and errors in the sources, I made the decision for practical reasons. As Moon (2005) points out, the number of primary sources about English education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is relatively small. Moreover, some documentary sources are located in

different genres and types of documents such as personal narratives and the government's reports, the main contents of which are often less concerned with English education itself. Because of such limitations of primary sources, I first selected books that extensively collect facts and issues of English education in the period that this study set (e.g., Kim, 2011; Kwon & Kim, 2011). Based on these books, I traced relevant primary sources.

3. Significance and Position of this Study in Foreign Language Education Research

The significance of historical research lies in the fact that it would provide a new perspective on current or future trends (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Moon, 2005). By paying attention to the past of English education, we may capture the trajectory of ideologies and practices of English learning and teaching. In a series of social changes, some ideologies and practices would be repeated, whereas others would show a difference. Through the repetitions and differences, we can reflect upon where we now stand and, if possible, find a solution to problems with contemporary South Korean English education (Kim-Rivera, 2001).

Historical, if not critical, approaches to English education are scarce in the field of foreign language education research in South Korea. Some researchers, however, have published significant works on the history of English education (e.g., Moon, 2005; Mun, 1976; Kim [Kim-Rivera], 2001, 2002, 2011; Kwon & Kim, 2011). When it comes to English education in late 19th century Korea, several studies have been conducted. Mun (1976) sought to examine the initial stage of English education in Korea. Kim-Rivera (2001) chronologically illustrates how English education was introduced, formed and developed from late Chosŏn dynasty to the end of Japanese colonization with special focus on the role of the government in policy making. Kwon and Kim (2010) did an extensive study on the history of English education with its topics categorized as curriculum, materials, and testing. Their work also contains the analysis of English education in the eras of late Chosŏn and Japanese colonization. Even if these books are not scholarly works, Kim (2006) and Kim (2011) also offer vivid descriptions of the inchoate stage of English education in Korea. The present study builds upon these valuable efforts to establish the history of English education in Korea.

III. GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXTS IN 19TH CENTURY KOREA

Chosŏn in the 19th century was described as “the hermit nation” (Griffis, 1894) or “the land of the morning calm” (Lowell, 1886) by Western writers, which implies that, as

located in the “Far East” of the Eurasian continent, it remained little salient to Western colonial power. Since the late 18th century, however, Western ships sporadically but continually had appeared on Chosŏn’s costal lines for reasons of cartography, discovery, wreck, and later trade. As opposed to Japan, which had already signed treaties with the West and introduced its technologies and institutions in the 17th century, the Chosŏn court took an isolationist strategy, only leaning on the relationship with the Qing, a relationship maintained for more than 400 years. The following part of the diary written by an English sailor shows this tendency:

August 9. We finally had the pleasure to see the royal commissioner come on board He stated that he was sent by the treasurer, and after some introductory remarks said: “To receive your letter and presents is illegal; we ought to ascribe the mistake to the great age of the two mandarins whom you charged with this business; but as an illegal business, we cannot represent your affairs to his majesty, and accordingly returned all to you. Our kingdom is a dependent state of China; we can do nothing without the imperial decree; this is our law. Hitherto we have had no intercourse with foreigners; how could we venture to commence it now?” (Gutzlaff, 1833, pp. 281-282)

The court’s efforts to keep the status quo could not be internally and externally sustained as East Asia had been equally entrenched by the globally expanding regime of capitalist modernity. Whenever Chosŏn took military actions against Western trade or martial ships to evict them from its territory, the Western states requested for the compensation for their damages caused by the military attack. Also, their insistence was based on international laws of which Chosŏn had little understanding, and they constantly coerced Chosŏn to open the door for commerce.

Another crucial external change in the geopolitics surrounding Chosŏn was the failing power of the Qing regime in East Asia. The Qing had increasingly been controlled by Western power, in particular Britain. As seen in the fact that China handed over Hong Kong to Britain as a result of the Opium Wars, it had lost its political and economic influence, which had been replaced with Western colonial power. The Chosŏn court and its dominant class called *yangban*, who believed that China was the “Middle Kingdom”, were not willing to accept what had happened to the Qing. The demise of the Qing, however, led some of *yangban* and officials in the Chosŏn government to rethinking the relationship between Chosŏn and Qing, and the group who most actively tried to do so was later called the *Kaehwa* party.

Even though the Chosŏn court refused to trade with other countries than Qing, it is

not the case that Western ideas and instruments were totally controlled. Envoys who travelled to Qing to pay tributes encountered westerners, listened to Western ideas, acquired Western books translated into Chinese, and bought Western products in markets. When they returned to Chosŏn, those experiences and ideas were circulated and diffused.

In some sense, those changes that had occurred at global, regional, and local levels were unavoidable to Chosŏn. In other words, these geopolitical conditions called for a new national project for Chosŏn to handle the challenges. Under such circumstances, nationalism of a modern kind was initially constructed and imagined in Chosŏn in the late 19th century.

IV. EMERGING NATIONALISM AND *MUNMYONG KAEHWA*: ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE FOR CIVILIZATION

1. Nationalism as Civilization and Enlightenment¹

The emergence of Korean nationalism in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries should be understood with Chosŏn's position "between two empires": China and Japan (Schmid, 2002). Given that Chosŏn had kept the tributary tie with China for more than 400 years, what Chosŏn could imagine as an ideological module to constitute a nation-state was closely linked to the independence from the Qing in political and cultural senses. The project of constructing a new political and ideological model, however, necessitated existing or emerging symbolic resources or semiotic representations that could be mobilized. The gaze of Chosŏn intellectuals that had turned away from Qing arrived at Japan. In some sense, it was inevitable because, aside from China, Japan was the closest country to Chosŏn and, more importantly, it looked highly developed in the eyes of Chosŏn intellectuals.

More precisely, however, what Chosŏn observed through the developed society of Japan was not Japan *per se* but rather its civilization transposed from the West. When Korean officials were dispatched to observe how much Japanese society was developing, they realized that Japan simply "imitated Western civilization."² Thus, Chosŏn

¹ The following narrative of the formation of Korean nationalism is based on Schmid (2002). In his book, he explores the genealogy of Korean nationalism with the aim of disposing it in the framework of capitalistic modernity by analyzing cultural representations and narratives in Korean newspapers in the early 20th century.

² Kil-chun Yu, a member of delegation to Japan, wrote of his understandings of the development of Japanese society as follows:

When I went to observe Japan in Spring, *Simsa* year [1881], the 18th year after the accession of the

intellectuals became interested in discourses and practices of civilization and enlightenment in Western terms, and naturally the emerging nationalism emphasized the ideology of *Munmyong kaehwa*, a Korean term meaning “civilization and enlightenment.”

Munmyong kaehwa indicated that in order to ensure an independent sovereignty, Chosŏn must have political, economic, and cultural power, which could be made possible by active adoptions of advanced technological skills and civilized culture. This ideological logic might reflect a perspective of cultural imperialism to the extent that Chosŏn intellectuals began to internalize the hierarchy of cultural and symbolic values privileging the West as civilized and advanced. What needs to be noted here, however, is that Chosŏn, which was not politically colonized by Western countries, incorporated the belief system to construct a self-defining concept of nationalism. This unique outset of Korean nationalism made Chosŏn intellectuals think that learning Western languages and cultures, particularly English and American ones, was not contrary to the construction of Korean nation-state at least until the annexation to Japan in 1910. As Schmid (2002) argues, in late 19th century Chosŏn, globalization and nationalism were not in conflict with each other in the sense that taking the foreign and ensuring the national were being pursued under the same ideology—*Munmyong kaehwa*.

2. The Formation of Power Elite: The *Kaehwa* Party

One of the conditions for the formation of nationalism, as Hobsbawm (1990) argues, includes the advent of social actors who support and expand nationalism. In Western Europe, cultural elites and economic bourgeoisies took on those roles in the eighteenth century when nationalism had been burgeoning (Anderson, 2006 [1983]; Hobsbawm, 1990). More precisely, they made nationalism happen, exploited it in their interest, and ‘invented’ it to accomplish their goals.

As the Korean Peninsula began to be integrated into the world capitalist system in the late 19th century, powerful and cultural elites originated from a particular group of the dominant class, *yangban*, who actively adopted *Munmyong kaehwa*. In the beginning, they encountered Western or civilized ideas via China, whose inflows were made through trips as an envoy to China or contacts with westerners or the Chinese on the border between Chosŏn and Qing. They heard contemporary geopolitical shifts in East

King, Japanese diligent lives and various kinds of things that I observed were different from what I had thought [in Chosŏn] by myself. While talking with the Japanese who had broad and profound knowledge, listening to their opinions, and encountering curious books, I tried to search for a truth behind what I observed and came to learn that most of their institutions and laws were the imitation of the western culture (Kil-Chun Yu, 2004 [1895], pp. 17-18, my translation).

Asia and encountered Western political concepts such as sovereignty, liberty, equality and natural right, as well as a range of innovative social institutions and natural sciences. As more officials agreed on the necessity for the reform of Chosŏn, they naturally formed a group of political force called the *Kaehwa* party.

In the late 19th century, the *Kaehwa* party constantly urged Kojong, the king of Chosŏn, to introduce advanced technologies and social systems from abroad and implement reformative social policies and institutions such as the opening of a new postal system and the ordinance of prohibiting topknots. Politically, they argued that Chosŏn should be independent from the Qing, which provoked a backlash from conventional pro-Qing political groups. In 1884, the radical *Kaehwa* party plotted a coup d'état (i.e., the *Kapsin* coup) to force Kojong to push through reforms, but failed in three days due to the intervention of the Qing military. Some of them complicit in the coup d'état were arrested and sentenced to death while the others fled to Japan or the U.S.³

3. English as a Language for Civilization

Ideas formulated from one culture are necessarily mediated by a language or languages to be introduced into another culture. In this sense, languages play a crucial role in cultural contacts and acceptances. What is more important in this process, however, is the question of whose or which languages are supposed to be used—what may be referred to as the politics of language choice (Heller, 1995). This is important because the language chosen will have a symbolic value in favor of dominant ideologies and, in turn, play out a symbolic power in a specific linguistic condition.

In late 19th century Korea, the language that the *Kaehwa* party newly chose along with Japanese was English.⁴ While espousing the idea of *Munmyong kaehwa*, the *Kaehwa* party recognized the necessity of knowing a Western language to learn advanced Western civilization. In his book on experiences and observations in Japan and the U.S., Kil-Chun Yu, a member of the *Kaehwa* party, demonstrated the need for English:

³ Subsequent to the *Kabo* reform in 1894, some of the *Kaehwa* party who had fled to Japan and the U.S. returned to Korea. They were employed in reformative institutes or taught English in foreign language schools.

⁴ In this paper, I do not presume which language (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Russian or English) was the most dominant in 19th century Korea. What this paper focuses on is why and how English came to be perceived as one of those dominant languages. I think that this issue has been ignored in the scholarly discussion of the relationship between languages and modernity in Korean historical contexts including the Japanese colonial period (See Lee, 2007). More detailed and extensive research needs to be conducted on the position of English in the period (e.g., Kang, 2007).

It is impossible to understand things and cultures of a country if we do not know an alphabet of the country, and to know the alphabet, we cannot but learn the language. I visited Morse, a distinguished scholar of the state of Massachusetts, to ask to teach [me English] (Kil-Chun Yu, 2004 [1895], p. 22, my translation).

The scholar mentioned in the above quote is Edward Morse, a professor and zoologist at Harvard University, who was staying as a visiting scholar at Tokyo Imperial University when Kil-chun Yu visited Japan (Lee, 2008).⁵ This quote implies that in Korea and Japan in the late 19th century the West was represented as the U.S. and the language of the West was ‘iconized’ as English (Irvine & Gal, 2000).

In geopolitical terms, this iconization was made possible by the expanding colonial power of the U.S. over East Asia. The U.S. was the first Western state with which both Japan and Korea concluded the treaties of commerce and navigation (Japan in 1898, Korea in 1882), which all contained unequal clauses against Japan and Korea. Although Japan began to trade with the Netherlands in the 17th century, the treaty contributed to increasing the number and quality of exchanges between Japan and the U.S. and to strengthening the relationship.⁶ Even though the treaty between Chosŏn and the U.S. was mediated by the Qing to block Russia and Japan from expanding their influences over Chosŏn, the treaty functioned as a model for subsequent treaties with other Western countries such as the U.K., France, Germany and Italy. In particular, the treaties with non-English speaking countries included the clause that when a dispute regarding the interpretation of a treaty clause occurred, it ought to be translated into English to address the misunderstandings. In Chosŏn, English had a status of the language for commerce and diplomacy.

The more direct cause that allowed the *Kaehwa* party to index English as civilization was concerned with their experiences of visits to Japan and the U.S. In 1881, despite the strong objection from established and Confucian dominant groups, Kojong sent a group of officials, most of which were young reformists, to Japan to observe and experience “civilized” aspects of the society. In 1882, a team of special envoys which was mostly comprised of the *Kaehwa* party departed for Japan again, and their mission was to

⁵ Afterwards, Kil-Chun Yu was sent to the U.S. as a member of delegation and became the first Korean who studied in the U.S. Morse aided him in studying abroad.

⁶ When Japan negotiated the treaty of commerce and navigation with Chosŏn in 1876, Japan employed what it had learned from the process of the treaty conclusion between Japan and the U.S. Japan demanded the conclusion of the treaty including unequal clauses against Chosŏn. This shows the ways in which Japan accepted institutions and cultures of the U.S.

resolve political tensions between Chosŏn and Japan caused by the *Imo* military riot. However, what they actually attempted to do in Japan was to find ways for self-reliance and civilization of Chosŏn by meeting with diplomats from Western countries. This experience made them aware of the importance of English as a tool for civilization and enlightenment. In 1883, by virtue of the treaty between Chosŏn and the U.S., Chosŏn dispatched a special delegation to the U.S. As similar to the previous envoy teams, it was made up of the *Kaehwa* party. In the U.S., they had a meeting with President C. A. Arthur and presented a credential of Kojong. Moreover, the itinerary of the mission included visits to a textile factory, a theater, New York hospital, a railroad company, the Office of Education to name a few. Although it is documented that they had little proficiency of English, it seems to be the case that through the visit to the U.S. the *Kaehwa* party internalized “civilized” landscapes that they observed. Their admiration for Western civilization, particularly for the U.S., provoked a desire for learning English. When the delegation returned to Chosŏn and reported their mission to Kojong, they proposed to build an English language school in cooperation with the U.S. Their ideology of English as a language for civilization is neatly demonstrated in the following quote:

King: We visited the country [the U.S.] for the first time. Would you tell me any notable point that we deserve exploiting?

Delegation: Upon the arrival, we simply looked around and heard [about their institutions and technologies] but could not understand them well because their language was incommunicable [with us] and their alphabets were too different [from ours]. However, we recognized that machinery work, ship, car, post and electricity all were the most urgent necessities for any countries. Above all, of the most importance is education, and if we model after the U.S. educational system, there would be no difficulty with nurturing and employing the talented. We must emulate the relevant laws [education systems] of the U.S. (Kim, 2011, p. 307, my translation).

The political and diplomatic relations with the U.S. and the observations of Western culture in Japan and the U.S. served as pivotal causes that made Korean cultural elite iconize English as a language for civilization. In Bourdieu’s (1991) term, they began to perceive English as symbolic capital. However, this does not mean that other Koreans equally understood the value of English in that way. In addition, in the 19th century, as the publications of newspapers and books were simply burgeoning, the idea of *Munmyong kaehwa* could not spread down up to people as much as the *Kaehwa* party had shown. As a result, it was possible that another ideology of English was produced on

another domain—that is, schools.

V. ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY: ENGLISH AS A RESOURCE FOR SUCCESS

1. *Yugyǒng Kongwǒn* (Royal English School)

As Kojong approved to establish an English school, *Yugyǒng kongwǒn*, in April, 1884, some members of the *Kaehwa* party asked the U.S. to select and send English teachers to Chosǒn. Three young elite missionaries⁷ arrived at Seoul in May, 1886. With Korean officials, the three native English teachers created school regulations regarding the purpose, organization, student selection, and administration of the school. At *Yugyǒng kongwǒn*, they taught not only English but also agriculture, science, geography, astronomy, machinery, zoology and botany. Given these subjects taught, *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* was not simply a language school, but rather an educational institute for acquiring Western civilization. This purpose was what the *Kaehwa* party kept in mind when they emphasized the importance of English learning.⁸

The three teachers had little knowledge of Korean language. They employed the Direct Method, a teaching method whereby a target language is only used in a language classroom.⁹ Even if English was unfamiliar and new to students, they did not complain about the use of English as a medium language. Even the three teachers did not raise the issue of language choice between Korean and English although they began to learn Korean from their students.¹⁰ This might be because they were officially recruited by the

⁷ The three missionaries were H. B. Hulbert, H. E. Bourne, and G. W. Gilmore. Gilmore graduated from Princeton University. Bourne and Hulbert were studying at Union Theological Seminary.

⁸ There are disputes over the educational purpose of *Yugyǒng kongwǒn*. Some historians argue that as *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* was established to train diplomats for their English proficiency, it should be considered an English education institute. Others attend to the fact that *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* is not the first English teaching institute in Chosǒn. In 1883, P. G. von Moellendorff, who was hired by the Chosǒn court, established *Tongmunhak* and taught English to produce customs officials. Three years later, Chosǒn closed *Tongmunhak* and opened *Yugyǒng kongwǒn*. Considering the major role of the *Kaehwa* party in establishing *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* and the subjects taught at it, Lee (1963) and Ryu (1992) insist that *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* was more than a language institute. Similarly, Kwon and Kim (2010) point out that English teaching at *Tongmunhak* may be seen as English for Specific Purpose (ESP) whereas *Yugyǒng kongwǒn*'s approach to English teaching may be more general on the basis of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

⁹ Relating to this fact, Kwon and Kim (2010) argue that *Yugyǒng kongwǒn* is the first to implement an immersion program in Korea.

¹⁰ This fact is comparable with the issue of language choice among missionaries in colonized Africa. For example, Fabian (1986) describes the ways in which language choices for missionary work were at stake and in complicit

Chosŏn government for English teaching rather than for missionary work.

According to the school regulations, students were selected from two groups: current governmental officers and sons of the dominant class, *yangban*. They were respectively assigned to separate departments called *chwawŏn* (the left department) and *uwŏn* (the right department). In particular, sons of the middle- or low- classes of *yangban* were admitted into *uwŏn* (Kim, 2010). Students were not necessarily oriented towards *Munmyong kaehwa*. Rather, the common goal of students in both departments was externally motivated. By acquiring a higher English ability, they wanted to have chances of promotion or employment in governmental services. This utilitarian motivation of English learning caused a tension in administrating *Yugyŏng kongwŏn*. Because students in *chwawŏn* already had a rank in public services, they were keen to lose their interests in learning English. On the other hand, students in *uwŏn* did not study English any more once they obtained a government position. Gilmore, one of the three teachers, often complained about the career-oriented motivation of English learning:

The work [studying English] was too hard, they thought, and the scholars who were officials were influential enough to secure this favor from His Majesty. Soon we found these same scholars missing days at school on the pretense of “business at the palace,” and this in the face of the fact that for three months not a day’s absence had marred the record of any scholar. The president and vice-president of the school were nice, easy-going fellows who were easily imposed upon, and they readily listened to excuses in reply to our complaints. Finally but few of the “rank men” or scholars with official position attended. They had a smattering of English, could talk a little, and were too indolent to work since they could get along without it (Gilmore, 1892, pp. 231-232).

As the teachers were disappointed at students’ behaviors, Gilmore and Hulbert returned to the U.S. in 1889 and in 1891, respectively. In 1895, *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* whose role and operation were in decline was merged into Royal Foreign Language School, which was newly established as a result of the *Kabo* reform in 1895.

2. Paichai School

The mission of Christianity cannot be separated from the colonial will to civilize non-Western regions. In particular, medicine and education were the institutions and

discourses that missionaries employed to justify their religious work for less civilized people. In the late 19th century, Chosŏn prohibited the mission of Western Christians, and those who believed in Christianity were condemned to death. However, missionaries found a possibility of doing a mission in Chosŏn in teaching English and doing medical services because interests in Western civilization had been growing in Chosŏn. For this purpose, missionaries who were staying in Japan often met with members of the *Kaehwa* party to ask for entering Chosŏn. The *Kaehwa* party asked Kojong to approve the medical and educational business of American missionaries because they thought that it would help Chosŏn society to be enlightened and civilized. In 1885, the first modern hospital, *Kwanghyewŏn* (Widespread Relief House), was established by H. N. Allen, a medical doctor and missionary of the Presbyterian Church. In 1885, H. D. Appenzeller started his educational mission by teaching English to three Korean students, and established a missionary school in Seoul as Kojong allowed for it. In 1887, Kojong granted the school the name, *Paichai* School, meaning “rearing useful men”, since he was touched by its educational outcomes of teaching English. It is with the purpose of English education that the first missionary school in Korea was built.

While *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* selected as its students sons of the dominant class, *Paichai* School admitted any children regardless of class. Before long, the number of students was increasing, and as it was known for English education, even sons of the officials entered this school and learned English. When *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* was closed, the Chosŏn court commissioned English education for officials to *Paichai* School.

As in *Yugyŏng kongwŏn*, *Paichai* School taught not only English but also other subjects relating to Western sciences and technologies such as geography, mathematics, and chemistry (Ryu, 1998). All teachers were native English speakers and the Direct Method was used. The motivation of studying in *Paichai* School was also primarily instrumental; students of *Paichai* School learned English to be recruited as an official in the Chosŏn government. This fact made Appenzeller skeptical of his work of English teaching because his ultimate goal was to confer Christian thoughts to Koreans. In his diary, he lamented:

The enthusiasm for the study of English has always been great among the Koreans. A little knowledge of the new tongue was and still is a stepping stone to something higher. Ask a Korean ‘why do you wish to study English?’ and his invariable answer will be ‘to get rank’ (Quoted from Kim, 2011, p. 344).

In 1902, the school undertook educational reforms that put less emphasis on English education to pursue the missionary goal. For example, students were taught in Korean,

the allotted time for English as a subject was reduced, and the fee for the department of English was increased. Because of these changes, students left the school and an insufficient number of students entered the school. Five years later, the school could only restore English education to attract more students. English education was a kind of double edged sword for *Paichai* School.

3. English as a Resource for Success

The two stories of the schools which taught English in Chosŏn in the late 19th century show that Koreans who wanted to learn English thought of the language as a resource for success. They believed that English would help them to obtain an official position in governmental offices. In fact, this perception was not a fallacy. Many students of the two schools were actually hired by service offices of customs, foreign affairs, mine, electricity, survey, etc., which all required English ability to learn new technologies and skills imported from Western countries. Moreover, students who graduated from *Yugyŏng kongwŏn* were often promoted to high-ranking officials or were moved to the positions close to the King's power.

The Chosŏn society in the late 19th century was undergoing a collapse of the status system that had been maintained for more than 400 years. As the idea that all people were equal, whether it began to be formed internally or externally, was spread over the entire peninsula, a number of riots erupted. This crisis of the social class system, at the same time, was meant to be an opportunity for social mobility. In such social changes, English was seen as an attractive resource that was worth mobilizing to move up to a higher social status. Consequently, the English schools functioned as a key site that provided linguistic capital.

This role of the English schools was somewhat opposed to what the *Kaehwa* party initially intended; they expected that these schools could enlighten Koreans by enabling them to encounter developed Western civilization. Although it cannot be argued that this goal totally failed to be achieved, it seems to be evident that the two ideologies of English, that is, English for civilization and English for success, were coexisting but conflicting. While the introduction of discourses on civilization into Korean society opened up a room for social mobility and individual success, Koreans did not correspondingly perceive English as a language of civilization in uniform or monolithic ways. According to their location in changing Chosŏn society and their own understandings of the society, Koreans sought to form a distinct amalgam of ideologies of English that had multidimensional elements. In this sense, it may be argued that the ideology of *Munmyong kaehwa* that was being socially constructed and dominated by the *Kaehwa* Party was not fully indexed with the ideologies of English.

As historical research (e.g., Gal, 1993; Tai, 1999) shows, an emerging discourse on the social domain may not be simultaneously linked to language ideologies; a dominant discourse generates locally situated knowledge and language practices rather than exerts a top-down influence upon the ideology of languages. To combine socially dominant ideologies to language ideologies, another tactics and technologies entailing negotiations between social actors and ideologies are required. The negotiation between the two distinct ideologies of English was initiated in early 20th century Chosŏn although this issue is beyond the scope of this paper.

VI. AFTERWARDS: MODERNITY AT WORK AND COMPLICATED LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES

I have explored what ideologies of English emerged in Korea in the late 19th century and what social and ideological elements had effects on the construction. The *Kaehwa* party, who sought to construct a modern nation-state, demanded English to enlighten and civilize Chosŏn society. For them, the desire for knowing English coexisted with the project of nationalism. On the other hand, non-*Kaehwa* party or common Koreans found opportunities for individual success in English learning. English was a kind of useful tool for economic gains, and English schools provided them with a path for this benefit.

For future research, I would like to give social and discursive shifts that occurred in the early 20th century. The description may offer building blocks to understand how the ideologies of English were negotiated, contested, and finally reconstructed.

First, *Munmyong kaehwa* was spread to common Koreans through the publication of newspapers. A greater number of newspapers were issued and circulated by the *Kaehwa* party to “educate” Koreans. The newspapers contained a variety of representations and narratives on modernity, which were inculcated into Koreans’ mentality. In particular, within the framework of the dichotomy of civilization/uncivilization, discourses on modernity began to discipline Koreans’ practices and sentiments (Schmid, 2002). In this sense, common Koreans would index English as a language for civilization as the *Kaehwa* party previously did (Kang, 2007).

Second, following the *Kabo* reform in 1894, the former system of the social status was officially eliminated, universal education was initiated, and the equal opportunity to choose a job was legally guaranteed. When social mobility was dramatically increasing throughout Chosŏn society, the group that took high-ranking positions in the government and held a power in political arenas was those who supported *Munmyong kaehwa*. The idea of *Munmyong kaehwa* would be viewed not only as a symbolic power but also as social and cultural capital transformable to economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Third, most importantly, *Munmyong kaehwa* began to reveal a contradiction as Japan

tried to colonize Chosŏn (Schmid, 2002). The underlying assumption of *Munmyong kaehwa* was that as civilization resulted from social evolution, it was justifiable that the more civilized dominated the less civilized. This meant that it would be logical that Japan should colonize Chosŏn. Thus Korean nationalism based on *Munmyong kaehwa* should find another way to resolve this impasse and to claim Korean sovereignty against Japanese colonization. Chosŏn intellectuals increasingly invented new symbols such as flag, alternative ways of historiography highlighting the origin and uniqueness of Korean nation, and the categorization of languages such as *kugŏ* (national language) or *Kuk'anmun honyongch'e* (mixed use of Korean and Chinese characters). With the annexation to Japan in 1910, the linguistic landscapes became more complicated as the concepts of *Chosŏnŏ* (Chosŏn language), *Kokuko* (Japanese national language), and *Ilbonŏ* (Japanese language) were introduced by Japanese colonialism.

It is quite unclear how English was differentiated from other languages in the early 20th century. Given the first and the second points, however, one possible ideology of English might be this—the combination of English as civilization and success under the discourse of modernity. Of course, a close historical analysis of this aspect of English ideology needs to be attempted.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, B. (2006 [1983]). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Rev. ed.). New York: Verso.
- Best, J. W. (1970). *Research in education*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power* (J. B. Thompson, Ed.; G. Raymond & M. Adamson, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2004). Language and identity. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A companion to linguistic anthropology* (pp. 369-394). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Eagleton, T. (1991). *Ideology: An introduction*. London: Verso.
- Fabian, J. (1986). *Language and colonial power*. Berkeley, LA: University of California Press.
- Gal, S. (1993). Diversity and contestation in linguistic ideologies: German speakers in Hungary. *Language in Society*, 22(3), 337-359.

- Gilmore, G. W. (1892). *Korea from its capital: With a chapter on missions*. Retrieved March 9, 2012 from <http://www.archive.org/stream/koreafromitscap00gilmgoog>
- Griffis, W. E. (1894). *Corea: the hermit nation*. New York: Scribner's Sons.
- Gutzlaff, C. (1833). *The journal of two voyages along the coast of China, in 1831, & 1832: the first in a Chinese junk, the second in the British ship Lord Amherst: with notices of Siam, Corea, and the Loo-Choo Islands, and remarks on the policy, religion, etc., of China* (Google eBook). Retrieved March 7, 2012 from <http://books.google.ca/books?id=ciILAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA282#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- Heller, M. (1995). Language choice, social institutions, and symbolic domination. *Language in Society*, 24(3), 373-405.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Irvine, J. T., & Gal, S. (2000). Language ideology and linguistic differentiation. In P. V. Kroskrity (Ed.), *Regimes of language: Ideologies, politics, and identities* (pp. 35-84). Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.
- Kang, N. (2007). Singminjisidae yŏngŏkyoyuk kwa yŏngŏ ui Sahoejŏk wisang. In J.-K. Yoon (Ed.), *Yŏngŏ, nae maŭm ui singminjuŭi* [English, colonialism in my mind] (pp.67-104). Seoul: Dangdae.
- Kim, G. Y. (2010). Yugyŏng kongwŏn illok yŏn'gu [A study on the daily record of the Royal Academy in late Chosen Dynasty]. *Kyoyuk sahak yŏn'gu* [History or Education], 20(2), 25-82.
- Kim, M.-B. (2006). *Kaehwagi ŭi Yŏngŏ iyagi* [Narratives on English in the time of enlightenment]. Seoul: IGSE Press.
- Kim, Y.-C. (2011). *Yŏngŏ, Chosŏnŭl kkaeuda* [English woke up Chosŏn]. Seoul: Ali.
- Kim-Rivera, E.-G. (2001). *The government's role in the early development of English language education in Korea (1883-1945)*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Texas, Austin, Texas.
- Kim-Rivera, E.-G. (2002). English language education in Korea under Japanese colonial rule. *Language Policy*, 1(3), 261-281.
- Kim, E.-G. (2011). English educational policies of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea from 1945 to 1948 and their effects on the development of English language teaching in Korea. *Language Policy*, 10(3), 193-220.
- Kroskrity, P. (2004). Language ideologies. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A companion to linguistic anthropology* (pp. 496-517). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Kwon, O., & Kim, J. (2010). *Han 'gukyŏngŏkyoyuksa* [History of English education in Korea]. Seoul: Hankookmunhwasa.
- Lee, E. (2008). Yu Kil-chum ui Sŏyugyŏnmun ui kyoyuk kyoyungnon kusang chŏnsa:

- Miguk yuhak ūl chungsim ūro [The prehistory of educational idea in Yu Kil-Chun's Soyukyonmun: Focus on study in U.S.A]. *Kyoyuk sahak yŏn'gu* [History or Education], 18(2), 87-111.
- Lee, H. (2007). Ŏnŏ=neisyŏn, kŭcheyupŏpŭ kinpakkwa sŏngch'al sai [Language=Nation, between reflecting on and being binded tight by the synecdoche]. *Sanghur hakpo* [The Leaned Society of Sanghur's Literature], 19(2), 243-278.
- Lee, K. (1963). Yugyŏng kongwŏn ui sŏlch'i wa kŭ pyŏnch'ŏn e pyŏnch'ŏn [Articles: The Royal English School]. *Tongbanghakchi* [Korea Journal], 6, 101-129.
- Lowell, P. (1886). *Chosŏn, the land of the morning calm: A sketch of Korea*. Boston: Ticknor and Company (Google eDook). Retrieved March 12, 2012 from <http://books.google.ca/books?id=zc0NAAAAIAAJ&pg=PR1#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Moon, E.-K. (2005). Historical research on English textbooks in the formation stage of the contemporary educational system in Korea. *Foreign Language Education*, 12(3), 245-269.
- Mun, Y. (1976). Kuhanmarui yongo kyokyukko [English language education during the late Choson dynasty]. *Yŏngŏ Kyoyuk* [English Teaching], 12, 1-12.
- Park, C.-S. (2007). Han'guk esŏ yŏngŏ ui suyong kwa chŏn'gae. In J.-K. Yoon (Ed.), *Yŏngŏ, nae maŭm ui singminjuŭi* [English, colonialism in my mind] (pp. 45-66). Seoul: Dangdae.
- Park, G.-Y. (2008). Yŏngŏ sinhwa ui ŏje wa onŭl [The past and the present of English myth]. *Naeil ūl yŏnŭn yŏksa* [History for tomorrow], 32, 77-88.
- Ryu, B. (1992). Yugyŏng kongwŏn sogo [Study on Yugyŏng kongwŏn]. *Kyoyuk sahak yŏn'gu* [History or Education], 4, 121-136
- Ryu, B. (1998). Kaehwagi Paejae haktang ui kyoyuk kwajŏng kyoyuk kwajŏng [Curriculum of Baejae School in the Enlightenment Period]. *Kyoyuk sahak yŏn'gu* [History or Education], 8, 161-200.
- Schmid, A. (2002). *Korea between empires, 1895-1919*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Stroud, C. (2007). Bilingualism: Colonialism and post-colonialism. In M. Heller (Ed.), *Bilingualism: A social approach* (pp. 25-49). London: Palgrave.
- Tai, E. (1999). Kokugo and colonial education in Taiwan. *Positions*, 7(2), 503-540.
- Woolard, K. A. (1998). Introduction: Language ideology as a field of inquiry. In P. V. Kroskrity, B. B. Schieffelin, & K. A. Woolard (Eds.), *Language ideologies: Practice and theory* (pp. 3-47). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Yu, K.-C. (2004 [1895]). *Sŏyugyŏnmun* [Experiences in the journey to the West]. Seoul: Seohaemunjip.

Jang, In Chull

Second Language Education Program

Dept. of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the University of Toronto

252 Bloor Street West, Room 10-257

Toronto, Ontario M5S 1R5 Canada

H.P.: +1-647-389-4649

Email: inchull.jang@mail.utoronto.ca

Received on July 30, 2012

Reviewed on October 11, 2012

Revised version received on November 22, 2012

Accepted on December 5, 2012