

Teaching Korean to Speakers of Other Languages*

- A Quest for New Directions -

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1. Introduction

Korean has been taught to speakers of other languages on a fairly large scale over the last five decades or so both at home and abroad. We have programs in Korean for speakers of other languages at a number of Korean institutions as well as universities in the United States, Japan, China, and the Confederation of Independent States. Tertiary-level programs in Korean as a foreign language are also available in such other countries as Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Malaysia, Poland, Thailand, and the United Kingdom.

Although they have been expanding at a steady pace over the last two decades or so, these Korean-language programs for speakers of other languages appear to be suffering from a plethora of extremely serious problems. This is apparently the case with the Korean-language programs offered not just by universities in Korea but by those outside Korea. For one thing, it appears that few, if any, of these programs have had the benefit of a regular and systematic evaluation process, either internal or external.

The absence of such an evaluation mechanism has arguably blocked these Korean-language programs, especially those based abroad, from reaching as high a standard of professional competence and educational productivity as they ideally could and should. This may arguably help explain why the vast majority of these Korean-language programs abroad do not appear to be as

* This research was supported by a Korea Research Foundation grant for the Academic Year 1997-1998. I owe a profound debt of gratitude to those of my colleagues in Korean-language teaching who so graciously responded to my questionnaire/interview survey.

healthy as or to fare as well as, say, their Chinese- or Japanese-language counterparts.

The present study is aimed (1) at examining this and other problems with reference to foreign-based programs of Korean for speakers of other languages, and (2) at working out a set of directions or guidelines for designing a better undergraduate program for Korean as a foreign language that hopefully can steer clear of those problems. It is to be hoped that this study can thus play some role or other in eventually helping enhance the competitiveness and productivity of undergraduate Korean-language programs abroad in general.

In an attempt to find out what detracts from the performance standards of these current tertiary-level Korean-language programs for speakers of other languages, I will be drawing on a questionnaire/interview survey as well as my own experience as a former teacher of Korean as a Foreign Language. Based on this investigation and on the currently available expertise on foreign-language education, I will propose a set of directions or guidelines for the design of a qualitatively superior program in Korean for speakers of other languages.

The questionnaire used for the present study, a copy of which is appended at the end of this paper, was responded to by Korean-language teachers from nine major U. S. universities. They are from Columbia University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, Stanford University, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Missouri, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Washington, and Washington University.

Instead of subjecting this questionnaire survey to a numerical/statistical analysis, I will give it a highly subjective interpretation. This is mainly because the number of respondents is too limited to lend itself to a reliable numerical/statistical treatment. However, this apparent inadequacy of the present questionnaire survey will be made up for by an informal interview survey consisting largely of questions building or elaborating on some of the questionnaire items and adding thereto.

2. Some Problems

We will now proceed to a discussion of a number of problems that have been brought to light in the course of our questionnaire/interview survey.

Our discussion of the problems here will focus on five major topics, which are (1) the philosophy of (foreign-)language teaching, (2) the faculty variable, (3) the student variable, (4) program architecture, and (5) evaluation.

2.1. The Philosophy of Language Teaching

2.1.1. Linguistic Competence vs. Communicative Competence

In most of the Korean-language programs surveyed for the present research, linguistics appears to clearly outweigh language use itself in the sense that linguistic competence is valued far more highly than communicative competence. This is quite evident, for one thing, from the kind of drills favored by the majority of the Korean-language faculty as well as by the majority of textbook writers. As a general rule, drills focus on a highly mechanical manipulation of the linguistic structure of Korean, giving excessively short shrift to meaningful communication in real-life or realistic situations.

It may also be noted in this connection that many teachers I have talked to indicated that their Korean-language programs could be improved upon by incorporating more linguistically-oriented courses. In fact, some of them even went so far as to lament the absence of undergraduate courses in Korean linguistics from their current Korean-language programs. This may be taken as indicating that these teachers would like their programs to contain an even more potent dosage of linguistics or linguistic competence than they currently do, even on the undergraduate level.

Probably it is a corollary of this "lopsided" emphasis upon linguistics or linguistic competence that most Korean-language programs surveyed here attach far more importance to form than to meaning. In fact, not a few of the interviewees appear to think that formal breaches should normally be treated as far more serious than semantic/pragmatic breaches. Given this general attitude, it is no wonder that formal accuracy takes precedence over communicative fluency in virtually all of the programs surveyed here. Grammatical and phonological accuracy seems to be obsessively stressed at the expense of communicative fluency in the majority of the programs under discussion here.

Admittedly, it is a "tribute" to this obsession with formal accuracy that most students in the Korean-language programs under discussion here end up with a reasonably good command of Korean grammar and pronunciation. It is the dysfunction of this obsession, however, that their communicative

fluency is normally at a dismally low level. We need to address this problem quite seriously if the programs in question are to be more successful in producing really good speakers/users of Korean.

Also stemming from the obsession with formal accuracy is the phenomenon of component parts of Korean-language expressions getting far more attention than whole bunches thereof. For one thing, isolated individual sound segments apparently tend to get much more attention than combinations thereof, as used in an actual flow of speech. For another, isolated individual lexical items often seem to get much more attention than phrasal combinations that they make up. For still another, isolated individual sentences are often emphasized far more than, say, higher-level discourse units such as a dialogue or an essay.

Thus a linguistic expression is almost always examined and interpreted in terms of the component parts into which it is analyzable. It is seldom accepted as an integral whole functioning as a significant unit of actual communication. Since communication involves whole chunks of language, rather than isolated parts thereof, the discrete-point approach favored by most Korean-language programs surveyed here are arguably not very conducive to the teaching and/or learning of practical communication skills in Korean. Thus the discrete-point approach here should give way an integrative approach that lays much more stress on whole chunks of language than on minute parts thereof.

2.1.2. Production vs. Reception

In most of the Korean-language programs surveyed for the present research, the production skills of speaking and writing seem to take precedence over the reception skills of listening and reading. This phenomenon apparently stems from the erroneous thinking that speaking and writing are the pivotal linguistic skills, listening and reading being skills of only subsidiary or peripheral significance.

This conception is evidently quite mistaken and groundless in consideration of the following two observations. In the first place, in all normal language acquisition and learning, listening by far precedes speaking, both temporally and logically, just as reading does writing. Under no circumstances may this order of language acquisition and learning be reversed. Note in this connection that a newborn child normally spends at least a year just listening to people around him or her before he or she begins to utter a word or two and that a child reads a great deal before he can

really begin to write. In the second place, listening and reading far outweigh speaking and writing in the real world in that we do far more listening and reading than we do speaking and writing respectively in our daily use of language, seldom the other way around.

Thus the reception skills are not only prerequisites for the production skills; the former also have far more surrender value than the latter. Therefore, the reception skills should take precedence over their production counterparts in any normal language-teaching/learning program, be the target language native or non-native. The problem with the Korean-language programs under discussion here is that they are not in compliance with this precedence requirement for normal language acquisition/learning.

2.1.3. Spoken Language vs. Written Language

Most Korean-language programs under discussion here attach far more importance to spoken Korean than to written Korean. The underlying assumption here seems to be that speech is prior to writing phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically, so that the former is superior to the latter. Given the fact that they lay far more emphasis on the production skills than on the reception skills as a matter of principle, as already pointed out, most of these programs naturally accord far greater weight to the speaking skill than to the other spoken-language skill, i.e. the listening skill.

It may not be philosophically correct, however, to lay such disproportionate emphasis on spoken language at the expense of written language for three reasons at least. For one thing, traditionally, economical foreign-language teaching/learning depends a great deal more on written language than on spoken language. For another, the written-Korean skills of reading and writing are arguably more important for those learners of Korean extraction who already have a fairly good command of spoken Korean. For still another, the surrender value of written Korean may be greater than or at least equal to that of spoken Korean for a high percentage of non-native learners of Korean, especially those who plan to go into Korean studies.

Thus we should probably reconsider the widespread preference of spoken language over written language that seems to characterize most of the current Korean-language programs for speakers of other languages. At this point, we may suggest that emphasis be distributed roughly as follows, between spoken and written Korean. More weight should be given to spoken language than to written language at an elementary level of instruction. About the same weight should be given to written as to spoken

language at an intermediate level of instruction. Greater weight should be accorded to written language than to spoken language at an advanced or higher level of instruction.

We may also make the point that written language should especially be emphasized for those students who plan to go into Korean history, Korean literature, and other such areas of Korean studies. For access to information of value to them would be difficult or next to impossible without a solid knowledge of written Korean with a heavy infusion of Chinese characters. It may be noted in this connection that an advanced reading knowledge of Chinese characters would especially be useful for those who plan to specialize in Korean history and culture.

2.1.4. Language-Centered vs. Content-based Language Teaching

Most, if not all, of the Korean-language programs surveyed here are grounded much more deeply in language than in content. That is to say, Korean is generally taught as a language for its own sake, only rarely as a tool for a content area such as history, politics, music, art, or literature. This being the case, Korean is taught purely as a language in isolation from the meaningful substance it is supposed to represent, not as a key to a rich mine of information of concern and value to learners, especially those with intellectual curiosity.

As a result, most of these Korean-language programs are apparently almost completely barren of intellectual fascination for the majority of the learners, except possibly for those students who are very strongly motivated. This may cause numerous actual or would-be learners of Korean to lose interest in the programs, thereby eventually driving many of them away therefrom. If this is in fact the case, which is not too unlikely, then we need to correct the situation under discussion here in one way or another.

We may point out in this connection that the Korean-language programs under discussion here can overcome this problem by teaching the Korean language as a means of approaching various aspects of Korean society, culture, and history. In such content-based Korean-language programs, students may be encouraged and taught to learn Korean as a tool that can afford them ready access to such things as the customs, music, art, martial arts, and folklore of Korea.

2.2. The Faculty Variable

2.2.1. Faculty Composition by Specialization

Of those teaching in the Korean-language programs surveyed here, by far the largest number are linguistics and literature specialists, especially theoretical linguists. The next largest group comprises teachers from such diverse fields as art history, music, economics, political science, and anthropology. It is interesting to note here that, in spite of these surface indications to the contrary, all the teachers covered by the present survey appear to be under the evidently mistaken impression that they are highly qualified Korean-language teaching specialists.

However, the truth of the matter is that few of the teachers here appear to have really specialized in Korean-language teaching per se. Precious few of these teachers have any substantive professional credentials in (foreign-) language teaching, to say nothing of Korean-language teaching. Thus it may not be too much to say that the programs under discussion here are in the hands of mere amateur teachers of Korean as a foreign language. Needless to say, this situation is far from desirable or productive in view of the fact that we can probably easily enhance program quality quite considerably by simply replacing these amateur teachers with much more competent professionals.

2.2.2. Teacher Training

As already pointed out, virtually all Korean-language teachers covered by the present survey are from fields outside Korean-language teaching or foreign-language teaching per se. Their professional training, both pre-service and in-service, has been in such fields as theoretical linguistics, literature, art history, music, economics, political science, and anthropology. This kind of training is obviously of little or no direct relevance to what these teachers are supposed to do, i.e. teach Korean to speakers of other languages.

It appears that few of the teachers in question here have ever received in-service training of any sort in the teaching of the Korean language to speakers of other languages. Even in-house Korean-language teaching workshops and/or seminars seem to be few and far between with the result that most of the teachers have had little or no access to even informal in-service teacher training.

If we are to improve the quality of these teachers, we apparently need to

build into the programs under discussion here a solid teacher-training mechanism. First of all, we may consider instituting a short-term pre-service training program, say, a four-week affair, which every teacher is required to go through prior to employment. This pre-service training could ideally be complemented by regular in-service training in the form of, say, two-week summer/winter workshops, to help teachers further hone their teaching skills/techniques and keep them abreast of the latest developments in the field of foreign-language teaching. Either type of training could be operated either jointly by a number of programs or individually by each of the programs.

2.2.3. Academic/Professional Activities

The academic and professional activities of the Korean-language teachers under discussion here are confined primarily to their fields of specialization, which, as we have already seen, generally have little or no immediate relevance to Korean-language teaching itself. They conduct an impressive amount of research, except that most of it is in such areas as linguistics, literature, history, and economics. They often attend academic conferences to make presentations about their research in these fields, which are often published in the conference proceedings or other learned publications such as journals.

High-caliber as they may, such academic and professional activities have hardly any direct bearing on Korean-language teaching per se, with the result that they are largely irrelevant to their jobs as Korean-language teachers. It goes without saying that this is quite problematic in that such academic/professional activities do not apparently contribute to the improvement of their Korean-language programs. In order to help solve this problem, we may consider building into the Korean-language programs in question here the requirement that the faculty accumulate a given amount of training, both pre- and in-service, in the teaching of Korean to speakers of other languages.

2.2.4. Career Goals

Almost all Korean-language teachers surveyed here teach Korean merely as a means of working their way through graduate school. Most of these teachers plan on pursuing a career in linguistics or literature at a university, preferably back in Korea. Most of the rest think of pursuing careers in such diverse fields as music, art history, anthropology, political

sciences, and economics. Thus these teachers regard their Korean-language teaching job as a mere temporary stint on their way to their ultimate career in some other more “dignified” field.

As can be gathered from this discrepancy between their current job as Korean-language teachers and their ultimate career goal, most of these teachers are evidently not quite as profoundly committed to Korean-language teaching as they should ideally be. Their loyalties are split, so to speak, between Korean-language teaching and their ultimate career in some other field with the latter normally claiming a far greater share thereof. It goes without saying that this situation is anything but desirable because such teachers are not likely to devote themselves as wholeheartedly as they should to the business of teaching the Korean language.

2.2.5. Competence in Korean and in Classroom Teaching

Born, raised, and educated in Korea, all the teachers covered by the present survey are native speakers of Korean so that they are thoroughly familiar with both the language and culture of Korean. However, some of them are speakers of non-standard Korean in that they speak the language with a more or less pronounced provincial accent. This arguably poses something of a problem since the goal of a Korean-language program should normally be to teach standard Korean, not one of the provincial dialects.

As already suggested here and there in the course of our discussion, the teachers in question here have been conditioned to attach far more value to theory and academicism than to the practicum of classroom (Korean-language) teaching. Furthermore, few of them have had any teacher training to speak of, either pre-service or in-service. Given these facts, it is only natural that, excellent theoreticians and academicians as they may be, they tend to be clumsy classroom teachers of the Korean language. No wonder, they generally devote much of their classroom instruction to theoretical discourse on Korean linguistics, rather than to the teaching and learning of practical Korean language skills.

The majority of the teachers under discussion here seem to be under the illusion that they are well qualified to teach Korean merely because they are native speakers of the language. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It should be borne in mind that communicative competence in Korean is only one of the many ingredients that go into the making of a good Korean-language teacher. Just as important for a Korean-language teacher as communicative competence in Korean are his or her personality, his or

her professional commitment to Korean-language teaching, and his or her array of classroom teaching/management techniques.

2.2.6. Ethnic Distribution

The Korean-language teachers surveyed for the present research are all apparently of Korean ethnic/national origin. Few of them are Korean-Americans with the vast majority being Korean nationals planning to eventually relocate to Korea as soon as decent jobs such as college teaching positions become available in Korea. This means, among other things, that all the Korean-language programs under discussion here may be suffering from a serious lack of long-term faculty stability. For most of the teachers are psychologically ready to quit their positions at any time when they are offered a respectable position in Korea, say, a college appointment.

This problem of faculty instability may be resolved if and when the faculty consists mostly of indigenous teachers, i.e. teachers who are from the host country. These indigenous teachers, be they Korean or non-Korean in ethnic origin, should be able to stay on the faculty on a more permanent basis, adding that much to faculty stability and thus to the long-term effectiveness of the Korean-language program in question.

2.3. The Student Variable

2.3.1. Ethnic Distribution

Most students enrolled in the Korean-language programs under discussion here are of Korean ethnic origin, mostly first- or second-generation Korean-Americans. Frequently with a fair-to-good command of basic colloquial Korean, they take Korean to acquire some measure of competency in written Korean, to raise their level of oral-aural proficiency in Korean, or to do both. It is often the desire of these students to so improve their proficiency in Korean as to be able to better communicate with their relatives as well as to eventually better cherish, understand and conserve their Korean heritage.

The Korean-language programs under discussion here draw some students from non-Korean ethnic groups as well with most of them coming from Asian and Caucasian ethnic backgrounds. They appear to be attracted to Korean-language courses for two main reasons. Some take Korean in order to be better able to communicate with their friends and/or

loved ones of Korean origin, whereas others take it purely for academic or professional purposes. All Korean-language programs should try and attract as many of these non-Korean ethnic students as possible. For a healthy degree of ethnic diversity is likely to foster a more stable development of the programs in question.

Regardless of their ethnic origins, a limited number of students take Korean in preparation for their eventual specialization in such areas of Korean studies as Korean linguistics, Korean literature, Korean history, and Korean business. Although small in number, these would-be Korean-studies specialists tend to bring to their study of Korean a much greater seriousness of purpose and a much higher degree of academic commitment. Incidentally, as already noted, these prospective Korean-studies specialists need to focus on Korean for academic purposes, which necessarily includes a generous portion of Chinese characters as well as of formal written Korean.

What we have just said regarding the ethnic make-up of the student body is relevant to the classification of courses or classes in the Korean-language programs under consideration here. At the very least, there should be two tracks: one for the Korean ethnic group and the other for the non-Korean ethnic group. In addition, we may also think of offering a third track of courses, i.e. one for the intersection of the two groups that comprises those students who plan to specialize in Korean studies.

2.3.2. Pre-entry Exposure to the Korean Language

Naturally enough, ethnic Korean students have had considerable pre-entry exposure to informal spoken Korean, mostly as their home and peer-group language. Seldom have they been exposed to Korean as a medium of instruction in the formal school environment, however. Thus they generally have a fair degree of familiarity with informal colloquial Korean, as opposed to their zero or near-zero familiarity with formal written Korean. This has an implication for the courses/classes to be offered for them: they need courses/classes that can build on their already considerable grasp of informal spoken Korean and complement it with sufficient attention to formal written Korean.

On the other hand, most students of non-Korean ancestry have had no pre-entry exposure to Korean whatsoever, either informal or formal. This means that courses/classes for these students need to strike a balance between informal spoken and formal written Korean with the former getting

somewhat greater weight than the latter in the elementary stages at least. It also means that the initial courses/classes for these students need to be on the absolutely elementary level, whereas those for ethnic Korean students may be on a far less elementary level, especially with regard to informal spoken Korean.

2.3.3. Proficiency at Entry and at Exit

It appears that most students are distributed at entry between two levels of proficiency, i.e. elementary and intermediate. For a large number of ethnic Korean students, elementary here is not really elementary in that they already have a fairly good command of survival Korean at the very least. Thus they should probably be classified as (1) elementary in written Korean and (2) high-elementary or low intermediate in spoken Korean. Intermediate students here, comprised mostly of ethnic Korean students, are intermediate in spoken Korean, but not necessarily in written Korean, especially in writing. These intermediate students are often just barely literate in that they are not that quick even at such simple things as phoneme-to-grapheme transference.

By the time they complete their Korean-language study, most students apparently reach the intermediate level in spoken Korean, but not necessarily in written Korean, especially in writing. A limited number graduate at the advanced level of proficiency, again in spoken Korean, but not necessarily in written Korean. This has diagnostic implications for the programs in question here: in order for the intermediate and advanced courses of the programs to be genuinely true to their level designations they need to pay a great deal more attention to written Korean than they have hitherto done.

Alternatively, what we have just observed about general proficiency levels at entry and exit may have implications for student placement in the Korean-language programs under discussion here. It appears highly desirable, except at a really elementary level, to make skill-specific level distinctions. The point here is that students should probably be assigned to levels such as elementary, intermediate, and advanced according to specific language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In such a scheme of things, we should assign students to such classes as *Elementary*, *Intermediate Listening*, *Advanced Listening*, *Intermediate Speaking*, *Advanced Speaking*, *Intermediate Reading*, *Advanced Reading*, *Intermediate Writing*, and *Advanced Writing*.

2.3.4. Seriousness of Purpose

Most students appear to be fairly or very well motivated to study Korean. A little more than a third of them, mostly ethnic Korean students, do not seem to be too well motivated, however. Being already familiar with the basics of the language, they apparently take Korean mainly because it is an easy subject for them to get good grades in. It often happens that they are overqualified for the Korean-language courses they take; they should not have been allowed in those courses in the first place. Admittedly, however, it is anything but easy to effectively screen or block them out, for they frequently pretend to know very little Korean.

As a general rule, those students who major in Korean studies or plan on doing so are said to be far better motivated to learn the Korean language than those who do not. Those who value things Korean such as Korean martial arts appear to be far better motivated than those who do not. These differences in learner motivation have not apparently been taken into sufficient account in making placement decisions with the result that students in one and the same class range in motivation from weak to so-so to strong. Needless to say, this situation is far from desirable because it is not conducive to creating a learning-friendly classroom environment at all. Managing a class of students with such a wide range of motivation is anything but easy even for the most experienced language teacher.

2.3.5. Surrender Value of Korean-language Skills

The surrender value of Korean-language skills may differ from student to student, depending largely upon what he or she plans to do after graduation. For prospective Korea specialists, for example, all four skills would seem to be of crucial importance although they may need the written language skills of reading and writing more than they do the spoken language skills of listening and speaking. For those who study Korean for business purposes, however, the spoken skills would probably be of greater value than their written counterparts. For both groups of learners, the reception skills of listening and reading may be of greater immediate surrender value than the productive skills of speaking and writing respectively.

The surrender value of Chinese characters would be much greater for (prospective) Korean-studies specialists, especially Korean history/culture specialists, than for others such as those who study the language for business or travel purposes. Familiarity with a few hundred basic Chinese characters would be of great surrender value to every learner of Korean,

regardless of their ultimate career goals, especially because it would help them immensely in expanding and consolidating their Korean vocabulary. This is because Sino-Korean words account for over two thirds of all Korean words. Of relevance to our assertion here is the fact that Sino-Korean word-formation processes are far more productive than purely Korean word-formation processes with the result that most new coinages in the language are Sino-Korean, rather than purely Korean.

Based on our discussion up to this point, we may emphasize here the need for text materials catering to Korean for specific purposes, especially from the intermediate level on. This would mean that we would need at least two tiers in the system of text materials we use for our Korean-language programs. The first tier would comprise the common-core elementary level, at which level text materials will cater to Korean for overall or general purposes. The second tier would comprise the intermediate and higher levels, at which levels text materials are devoted to Korean for specific or limited purposes.

2.3.6. Number of Students

The average Korean-language class at the nine major U.S. universities surveyed here comprises approximately 50 students at the elementary level, 30 at the intermediate level, and 15 at the advanced level. Thus the Korean-language programs under consideration here seem to have a minimally adequate number of students per class-level for them to survive and grow. Furthermore, it apparently bodes well for the programs that they are bottom-heavy in that they have considerably more students at a lower level than at a higher one. For the programs would not normally be viable if they had considerably more students at a higher level than at a lower level. This is because under normal circumstances students are supposed to graduate from a lower level to a higher one, not all of them managing to do so.

It is to be noted here, however, that the average numbers of students here are only minimally adequate. In order for the programs to be more stable, larger average numbers of students seem highly desirable. As things now stand, advanced-level classes may have to be scrapped altogether at any moment. Suppose for the sake of argument that for some reason or other the intermediate level gets reduced to just 15 students per class. Then it may soon happen that not enough students, say, only five of them, graduate to the advanced level. Operating a class of just five students may

not be administratively acceptable or desirable, mainly for obvious financial reasons.

2.3.7. Reasons for Taking Korean

As already pointed out, some students of Korean heritage apparently take Korean for the simple reason that it is an easy subject for them. However, a much larger number of them take Korean for far more serious purposes, academic, professional, or otherwise. By far the largest number of these ethnic Korean students take Korean as a key to their ancestral culture and to a closer rapport with their parents and other relatives through better communication.

It is interesting to note in this connection that a few students of non-Korean heritage take Korean for the purpose of learning the language of their closest friends, often their girl friends or boy friends. Other students of non-Korean heritage take Korean because of their fascination with the Korean people and their culture. They often plan on specializing in Korean studies and eventually pursuing a career in academic and professional areas related to Korea. Still other students have a much more pragmatic purpose in mind. They plan on working in business or trade between Korea and the United States or finding permanent or on semi-permanent employment in Korea.

No matter what primarily motivates their study of Korean, almost all students under discussion here take Korean in partial fulfillment of the requirements for their undergraduate degrees. Were their credits in the Korean language not counted toward their degrees, probably not many of them would be taking Korean. It would seem then that these credits outweigh most other things when students consider taking Korean in the first place.

2.4. Program Content

2.4.1. Text Materials

Textbooks apparently account for virtually all of the text materials used by the Korean-language programs surveyed here. Unfortunately, most textbooks in current use seem to be problematic at least on three counts. Firstly, they have been developed independently of the curriculum in question with the result that the former generally do not neatly dovetail with the latter. Secondly, being structurally/linguistically oriented, most of

the textbooks cater to the teaching/learning of linguistic competence, rather than to that of communicative competence. Thirdly, most of the textbooks are general-purpose textbooks so that they leave little or no room for Korean for specific or limited purposes such as *Korean for Academic Purposes*.

Students appear to have little or no access to such things as workbooks, self-study guides, dictionaries, and other references. In the absence of a workbook, home assignments are often hastily made by the teacher with the result that they are not infrequently of run-of-the-mill quality. Few self-study guides are available on tape, either audio or video, which can be instrumental, among other things, in enabling students to study things like pronunciation outside the classroom. In the absence of dependable, easy-to-use bilingual dictionaries to turn to, students are often left with no choice but to rely exclusively on the Korean-English glossaries appended to their textbooks. These glossaries are not infrequently shoddy and inadequate in that not a few of the English glosses are missing, inappropriate or downright erroneous.

2.4.2. Journalistic Materials

None of the Korean-language programs surveyed for the present research seems to make sufficient use of such journalistic extracurricular materials as cartoons, newspapers, magazines, TV/radio programs, or the internet. In view of the great learning-inducive qualities intrinsic to most of these potential extracurricular materials, except perhaps for the elementary level, it is highly regrettable that they are not fully utilized in the Korean-language programs in question here.

Comic strips and newspaper advertisements, for one, may be assigned to intermediate and/or advanced students for extracurricular reading. Magazine or newspaper articles, for another, may be assigned to advanced students for extracurricular reading or classroom discussion. TV and/or radio programs of various kinds, for still another, may be used for in-class discussion or for review/summary writing for advanced students. Movies may also be used in many different ways in teaching spoken English, especially advanced listening comprehension, as well as in teaching various aspects of Korean culture.

Pithy TV/radio commercials and popular movie theme songs may be used for recitation and singing respectively by intermediate-to-advanced students. E-mail and the internet may also be used for various advanced-level home

assignments such as report writing. By thus putting much of the learning experience in a variety of fascinating real-life or realistic contexts, extracurricular assignments such as these can effectively serve to greatly enliven and enrich the environment in which the Korean language is taught and learned.

2.4.3. Live Materials

None of the Korean-language programs under discussion here seems to have recourse to live extracurricular materials or activities. This situation is very unfortunate in the light of the fact that such extracurricular materials or activities can be extremely instrumental in livening up the teaching-learning environment, thereby dramatically raising the effectiveness with which the language is taught and learned.

Live extracurricular materials that we may consider using here include presentations of Korean performing arts such as traditional Korean music and dance, Korean/Chinese calligraphy and traditional Korean painting as well as demonstrations of Korean martial arts and Korean cooking. In addition to watching such presentations and demonstrations, students can be made to actively participate in the activities involved therein, such as singing, dancing, brush writing, brush painting, and cooking.

We may also include in the live extracurricular activities here visits to Korean grocery stores, Korean pubs, Korean *karaoke* places, Korean restaurants, Korean homes, Korean Buddhist temples, Korean churches, and Korean diplomatic/consular missions in the local community. Here again students should not be mere passive participants; they should be encouraged to take an active part, say, by buying grocery items, ordering drinks, singing songs, and asking questions.

2.4.4. Teaching Aids

The Korean-language programs under discussion here do not appear to make sufficient use of teaching aids, even those which are quite economical and readily available. This is unfortunate in view of the fact that teaching aids of various kinds can be quite instrumental in considerably heightening the effectiveness of these programs by breathing more life and vigor into their operation than would otherwise be possible.

Such simple teaching aids as pictures, magazine cutouts, (road) maps, flash cards and transparencies can be used to great effect, especially in the beginning and intermediate stages of language teaching and learning. Just

as effective or even more effective would be more sophisticated teaching aids such as movies and books on tape, especially in the more advanced stages of Korean-language teaching and learning.

Computers can serve as an especially powerful teaching tool in virtually all aspects of foreign-language teaching. Computer assisted language instruction programs of various sorts, especially interactive ones, may be used to great effect for self-study purposes for all four language skills at all levels of proficiency. Interactive instruction programs can be especially useful as self-study guides for a variety of purposes. Computer adaptive tests can also be used for all types of testing from diagnostic and placement tests to achievement tests to proficiency tests. Computers may also be used as convenient dictionaries and all-purpose references. Internet and game functions of the computer may also be used for the teaching and learning of various aspects of Korean as a foreign language.

What is particularly noteworthy about the computer here is that it can free a Korean-language teacher from numerous painstaking chores if he or she takes advantage of it in ways such as those suggested above. Often the computer can actually outperform a first-class live teacher in doing these chores, rendering the instruction far more productive and cost-efficient than would otherwise be possible. Thus we can see that the programs under discussion here could reach a far higher level of productivity if they took advantage of computer-assisted language teaching in one way or another.

2.4.5. Program Development

It appears that the Korean-language programs surveyed here has been paying woefully inadequate attention to internal program development. Neither does there appear to be any serious long-term external program development effort to which the programs can turn to. It would probably be no exaggeration to say that program development is left almost completely to chance or, at best, given extremely short shrift to. As cases in point, we may point to program design and teacher development, to which none of the programs appears to attach any significance as major components of overall program development. This general lack of serious effort at program development arguably blocks the programs in question here from becoming as successful as they could and should ideally be.

An essentially identical situation prevails in materials development. Most currently available textbooks, for one thing, are developed and distributed by

sources outside the Korean-language programs under discussion here. Hardly any of these externally developed textbooks pays anything like sufficient heed to the needs of any particular Korean language program or programs, which is especially the case from the point of view of the students. Under these circumstances, as suggested earlier, these textbooks generally do not quite fit the specific curricular objectives of the individual Korean-language program or programs. It goes without saying that this lack of fit between textbooks and curricular objectives may in no small measure be responsible for the relatively high degree of frustration experienced by teachers and students alike with most of the programs in question.

It may be noted at this point that program development may be considered as falling into two categories in terms of expenditure, i.e. the high-cost category and the low-cost category. The high-cost category would comprise such things as textbook development, computer assisted language instruction, and teacher development. The low-cost category would include such things as the acquisition of pictures, maps, flash cards, transparencies and audio-video tapes as well as needs analysis and program design.

The items in the high-cost category are such that it would be far from cost-effective for each and every Korean-language program to develop them internally, i.e. individually. The low-cost category items, on the other hand, are such that most Korean-language programs would find their internal/individual development quite feasible and affordable.

Based on these observations, we may make the following suggestion regarding program (research-and-)development. That is, that the high-cost items here be developed jointly by a number of Korean-language programs, say, jointly by the nine institutions covered by the current survey, and that the low cost items be developed either separately or jointly by the same nine institutions. We may further point out that joint development of both the high- and low-cost items here makes a great deal of sense in that not only would it be economical but also "two heads are better than one" and "many hands make light work."

Should the decision be made against individual program development in favor of joint program development, the Korean-language programs in question here should find it easier to get funding from, say, the Korea Research Foundation or the Korea Foundation. For from the point of view of a foundation a joint project would normally look more attractive and thus

worthier of funding than an individual one. This is all the more reason why joint program development makes a great deal of sense.

2.5. Program Architecture

2.5.1. Korean as a Heritage Language vs. Korean as a Foreign Language

Korean is the home language for more than half of the students currently enrolled in the Korean-language programs surveyed here, so that they are already quite familiar with the basic essentials of the language. Korean for such students may be referred to as a heritage language, a kind of second language that helps maintain the students' emotional links to their family and ancestral culture. In contrast, Korean is a foreign language for the remainder of the students, most of whom are of non-Korean extraction.

These two groups of students are currently often lumped together in one and the same class(room) in almost all of the programs under consideration here. *Under no circumstances should this practice be allowed to continue*, however, for the simple reason that it is extremely counterproductive. For one and the same curriculum proceeding at one and the same pace for the two widely disparate groups of learners is bound to run afoul of the gaping divergence in proficiency and motivation that separates the two groups.

2.5.2. Korean for Specific Purposes

None of the Korean-language programs surveyed here offers at present Korean for specific or limited purposes such as *Korean for Academic Purposes*, *Korean for Korean Studies*, *Korean for Business*, *Korean for Tourism and Hotel Management*, and *Korean for the Life Sciences*. In order to be more learner-friendly/relevant, however, these Korean-language programs should immediately consider offering Korean for such specific purposes. For the majority of the students take Korean so as to be able to eventually use it for some specific purpose or other.

As suggested earlier, it is desirable that Korean for specific purposes be introduced from the intermediate level on or at the advanced level only, with the absolute elementary level being devoted entirely to the basic essentials of common-core Korean (for general purposes). It appears to be highly advisable to build something like this two-tier system into all the Korean-language programs in question here. For most students take Korean with something like Korean for specific purposes in mind, and Korean for specific purposes can be built only on a solid foundation of the basic

essentials of common-core Korean (for general purposes).

Speaking of Korean for specific purposes, we may suggest that Chinese characters be introduced primarily in *Korean for Academic Purposes* and *Korean for Korean Studies*. This is not to say that a limited number of Chinese characters may not be included in elementary Korean. We may also make a case here for teaching reading and writing to a much greater extent in *Korean for Academic Purposes* or *Korean for Korean Studies* than in, say, *Korean for Business* or *Korean for Tourism and Hotel Management*.

2.5.3. Course Classification

A holistic classification of course levels is practiced by virtually all of the Korean-language programs surveyed here. Thus most of these programs offer, for example, such holistically classified courses as *Beginning Korean*, *Intermediate Korean*, and *Advanced Korean*. Administratively simple and economically sensible though it may be, this kind of holistic course classification completely fails to do justice to clearly discernible skill-specific divergences that we normally come across in any group of students taking Korean or, for that matter, any other foreign language. As matters now stand, class/course levels are arguably grossly underdifferentiated not just in holistic terms but from the skill-specific point of view as well.

With the possible exception of the absolute elementary course, it may be advisable to use a skill-specific system of course classification. We may, for example, classify Korean-language classes into such classes as (1) *Elementary*, (2) *Intermediate Speaking*, (3) *Advanced Speaking*, (4) *Intermediate Reading*, (5) *Advanced Reading*, (6) *Intermediate Writing*, and (7) *Advanced Writing*.

It may be noted at this point that a much finer degree of proficiency variation is normally encountered among students than is allowed for by the three-way course classification of *elementary-intermediate-advanced* adopted by most of the Korean-language programs under discussion here. Hence, the seven-way skill-specific classification that we have just referred to in the immediately preceding paragraph. We may in fact need an even finer course classification than this seven-way affair. For example, *Intermediate* may be further subclassified into *Low Intermediate* and *High Intermediate*, and *Advanced* into *Low Advanced* and *High Advanced*.

The seven-way classification suggested two paragraphs ago may thus be replaced by a the thirteen-way classification comprising (1) *Elementary*, (2) *Low Intermediate Speaking*, (3) *High Intermediate Speaking*, (4) *Low*

Advanced Speaking, (5) High Advanced Speaking, (6) Low Intermediate Reading, (7) High Intermediate Reading, (8) Low Advanced Reading, (9) High Advanced Reading, (10) Low Intermediate Writing, (11) High Intermediate Writing, (12) Low Advanced Writing, (13) High Advanced Writing. A course classification of this complexity may be a bit cumbersome administratively but would definitely be more student-friendly and educationally desirable.

Interestingly enough, most of our respondents feel that their Korean-language course/class levels are underdifferentiated although a few of them believe that they are quite adequately differentiated. Thus there seems to be something of a consensus, albeit rather a weak one, about the need for a finer course/class distinction than is available in the currently widespread three-way holistic classification of *elementary-intermediate-advanced*.

2.5.4. Class Size

The average class for the Korean-language programs under consideration here comprises slightly upwards of twenty students. Although arguably manageable and acceptable for the teaching of the reception skills of listening and reading, this class size may be a bit too large for the instruction of the production skills of speaking and writing. For the teacher needs to pay far more individual attention to each and every student in the teaching of speaking and writing than in that of listening and reading.

The general contemporary practice in foreign-language teaching seems to be that a listening or reading class comprises some twenty students with a speaking or writing class not exceeding twelve students at the most. Incidentally, some classes may comprise any number of students, say, fifty or more students. That would be the case for computer-assisted Korean instruction, movie viewing, martial arts demonstrations or traditional Korean music performances, to name just a few. The important thing to remember here is that class size should be flexibly keyed to the nature of the instruction, demonstration or presentation in question

2.5.5. Medium of Instruction

All the Korean-language programs surveyed here apparently use both Korean and English as the media of classroom communication with a division of labor between the two languages. English appears to be used most of the time to explain major points of grammar and vocabulary with Korean reserved for mechanical drills and simple teacher-to-student

exchanges only. At any rate, far more in-class communication appears to be conducted via English than via Korean. Thus the predominant medium of instruction seems to be English with Korean playing only a subordinate or even subservient role.

This state of affairs is far from optimal or student-friendly for two reasons at least. In the first place, students do not get as much in-class practice in learning to communicate in Korean as is possible or desirable. Secondly, students are deprived of the opportunity to get to use Korean frequently enough for them to be able to shed their inhibition or Korean-shyness or Korean-phobia, if you will.

This situation may be considerably ameliorated by making Korean the predominant medium of in-class communication with English relegated to something of a subordinate role. The point being made here is that Korean should be used most of the time in the Korean-language classroom with English confined to a minor role in explaining only the most abstruse of points. This will definitely help improve the general level of proficiency among students by helping them overcome Korean-shyness and giving them more structured practice in spoken Korean.

2.5.6. Teacher-centered vs. Student-centered Korean-language Teaching

Most respondents to our survey say that their Korean-language programs are based on a needs analysis of some kind or other. These responses notwithstanding, there seem to be plenty of indications to the contrary. The Korean-language programs under discussion here frequently fail to take full account of the students' real needs and hence are far from student-centered. On the contrary, they are highly teacher-centered in that they are mostly so designed as to primarily serve the conveniences and/or needs of the teachers, often at the expense of those of their students.

For one thing, textbooks are by and large teacher-centered in that they place inordinate emphasis on the structure of Korean. This is probably a natural consequence of the vast majority of the teachers being linguistics specialists, for whom language is fundamentally structure. Individual lessons in these textbooks normally center around major points of grammatical structure covered in the main text or the drills that follow. This practice turns a blind eye to the fact that the students, most of whom are fed up with grammar, want to acquire a working command of practical Korean, i.e. a reasonable level of communicative proficiency in the language.

Most respondents to our survey have also indicated that they place more

emphasis on accuracy than on fluency, which may also be reflective of the teacher-centeredness of the programs under examination here. As theoretically oriented linguists, most of the teachers are evidently obsessed with the formal accuracy of linguistic description, which may arguably be why they set so much store by formal accuracy in their Korean language teaching, often at the sacrifice of fluency. From the student's perspective, however, accuracy may not be quite as important as fluency because their main goal is to be able to use Korean to communicate at normal speed under the constraints of real time.

We may also note in this connection that the teachers may be using English as the predominant medium of in-class communication for their own sakes, not really for their students'. Most of the teachers have their sights set on teaching English back in Korea; virtually all of them will be using English as the major medium of academic/professional communication for the rest of their lives. Thus they arguably have a vested interest in zealously maintaining and improving their English proficiency, and using as much English as possible certainly helps them do so. In contrast, their students take Korean in order to be able to use Korean as a tool of communication, not in order to improve their English, with the result that there is no reason why they should be interested in using English so much in their Korean-language classes.

2.5.7. Single-Resource vs. Multiple-resource Korean Language Teaching

Most current Korean-language programs under discussion here apparently subscribe to single-resource Korean language teaching in the sense it relies entirely on the main curricular resource only. As already suggested in 2.4.2. and 2.4.3., however, extracurricular resources of various kinds can supplement and/or complement the main curricular resource in several substantive ways.

For one thing, comic strips, newspapers, and magazines may be used to vastly enrich the reading experience of the learner. For another, movies, video tapes, as well as radio and television programs may be used to provide plenty of fascinating listening/viewing material. For still another, the computer may effectively take the place of a live tutor in teaching extra sessions covering the entire spectrum of Korean-language instruction.

The Korean-language programs surveyed here also subscribe to single-resource Korean language teaching in that all instruction is conducted by regular faculty only. However, plenty of quality instruction can also be

provided by the potential teaching resource represented by native speakers of Korean, especially senior citizens, from the local Korean community. These native speakers can participate in the Korean-language programs in question here as volunteer teacher's aids. Many of them are eminently qualified to do so; they already have graduate degrees and/or teaching certificates. They can work with the students as reading/writing teachers or as conversation partners, for example. Korean students studying at the institutions where the programs are offered may also be utilized for similar purposes, especially as informal, happy-hour conversation partners or as invited speakers on topics of relevance to Korea.

In this day and age of the information superhighway, we may even consider using teleconferencing and communication/correspondence via E-mail and the internet as a means of supplementing and complementing the regular classroom encounter with the Korean language. We can use these techniques to enable Korean-language students at an American university to engage in discussions, debates, and other live exchanges with their Korean counterparts. Thus the information highway can take the place of a traditional classroom with the tele-communications technology involved playing the role of the teacher, so to speak.

We can also think of organizing summer Korean-language camps/houses, where the Korean language is the only medium of communication. At these camps/houses, students are expected to swim in a sea of Korean language and culture around the clock, eating Korean food, playing Korean games, singing Korean songs, watching Korean movies, watching Korean TV, learning Korean martial arts, and so on. Such camps/houses can represent still another productive resource that can supplement and/or complement the in-class teaching and learning of the Korean language.

2.5.8. Context-free vs. Context-sensitive Korean-language Teaching

Most Korean-language programs under consideration here may be characterized as context-free in that they leave out of consideration much of the contextual environment in which the language is normally acquired/learned and used. For one thing, none of the programs appears to have been designed and/or developed on the basis of a genuine, in-depth needs analysis. For example, they often fail to take sufficient account of the underlying needs, in the context of which the students come to study Korean. With the exception of just one of the nine programs surveyed here, for instance, students of Korean heritage and those of non-Korean heritage

are lumped into one and the same class in spite of the fact that the two groups diverge widely from each other in terms of their needs.

For another, most of the programs fail to pay adequate attention to the pragmatics of actual language use, generally presenting texts of Korean out of context, that is, in complete isolation from the meaningful situational context of actual language use. Not infrequently are the textbooks riddled with artificially devised and highly unrealistic dialogues that would be completely out of place in any real or realistic communication situation. Most of the drills, which focus on mechanical points of grammatical structure, comprise similarly unrealistic, isolated sentences without any conceivable link to actual, meaningful communication situations.

For still another, most of the textbooks in current use appear to be extremely barren of cultural content so that they arguably present language texts in very much of a cultural vacuum. Thus the programs under discussion here may be said to be conducted in isolation from the cultural matrix in which the language they presume to teach is supposed to function and thrive. Such culture-free language programs are bound to be dull and thus not quite productive educationally.

It may also be noted in this connection that in most of the programs surveyed here Korean-language material is generally presented in the form of isolated elements such as words and sentences, seldom in the context of whole chunks of which they are mere constituents. This may result in many students finding themselves utterly unable to communicate in spite of their excellent vocabulary and grammar. For communication more often than not involves whole chunks of meaningful language material, not isolated bits thereof.

2.5.9. Cooperation with Other Programs

There seem to be hardly any ties of formal cooperation between two or more of the Korean-language programs surveyed here. This is unfortunate in consideration of the fact that such cooperative ties would be mutually beneficial in many ways. There is indeed a great deal to be gained from such cooperation, including avoidance of duplication of effort and expenditure in teacher training and materials development.

There seems to be little or no cooperation, either, between the Korean-language programs and other academic programs at the same institutions. The Korean-language program at a given institution can have fruitful cooperative ties with programs of history, music, economics, and political

science at the same institution. The Korean-language program at a particular university can also operate an in-house teacher training program in conjunction with other language programs at the same university, such as the Chinese-language program. As is the case with cooperation with Korean-language programs at other universities, this institution-internal cooperation can also help steer clear of needless duplication of effort and expenditure, in addition to deepening and broadening the content of the program.

At this point, we may raise the possibility of taking advantage of institution-internal cooperation with other language programs to help students reinforce their command of the Korean lexicon through symbiosis with other “related” languages. It is well-known that words of Chinese origin account for more than two thirds of Korean words as well as of Japanese words with the result that the three languages share huge numbers of cognate words. With this in mind, we may think of offering courses so designed as to familiarize Korean-language students with these cognates and thus help them further consolidate their Korean vocabulary. In view of the fact that thousands of English loan words are used in Korean today, we may also consider offering a similar course in collaboration with the Department of ESL or English to help students enrich and consolidate their Korean vocabulary through symbiosis with the English language.

2.5.10. The Junior Year in Korea

None of the Korean-language programs under discussion here has anything like a Junior-Year-in-Korea program. Such a program is highly desirable, especially for advanced students of Korean, as it would afford them a unique opportunity to live and experience the Korean culture in the matrix of which they can learn far more Korean than would otherwise be possible. In addition to sharpening their Korean-language skills, participants in the Junior-Year-in-Korea program may take a number of courses at a Korean university, thereby earning course credits and simultaneously improving their skills in *Korean for Academic Purposes*.

Supposing that this Junior-Year-in-Korea program becomes a reality, program participants may be required to either room with a Korean student or stay with a Korean host family. This is to help make sure that they get completely immersed in Korean, maximizing their Korean-language interaction with native speakers of the language. They may also be required to learn to sing a number of popular Korean songs, both traditional and

contemporary, and to learn to recite a number of given Korean poems. They may further be required to visit a certain number of sites of major historical interest in Korea and submit written Korean-language reports on these visits.

Should a Junior-Year-in-Korea program turn out to be infeasible for some reason or other, we may consider the alternative of something like a Summer-in-the-Korean-House/Camp program based in the local community. This Korean House/Camp would be a Korean-style residence hall/camp for Korean-language students, in which everybody is required to do everything in Korean around the clock. Not only the decor but also the food is typically Korean here. Not only the menu but also all other bits of information, written or recorded, is in Korean only. Even the in-house/in-camp *karaoke* is for songs in Korean only. Books and periodicals as well as TV and radio programs are available in Korean only. Being monolingual speakers of Korean, neither the cook nor the custodian nor the manager speaks a word of English. The whole idea here is to force the participants to swim or sink in a sea of Korean.

A Summer-in-the-Korean-House/Camp program should be much more economical than a Junior-Year-in-Korea program and should thus be affordable for a larger number of students. Incidentally, it may make a great deal of economic sense for a number of institutions in the same general area to pool their resources and jointly operate such a Korean house/camp. Located in the same metropolitan Los Angeles area, for example, UCLA, USC, and Pepperdine University may consider such a joint Korean house in the name of a low-cost, higher-quality Korean-language program.

2.5.11. Program Administration

The Korean-language programs under consideration here seem to suffer from three main problems bearing on program administration. In the first place, sources of program funding are severely limited. It appears that all the programs surveyed here are overly dependent on outside funding, especially funding from sources in Korea. The current economic crisis, popularly dubbed the "IMF" crisis, has proved beyond any shadow of a doubt how dangerous it could be to be so excessively dependent on outside funding.

Not a few of the programs have had to considerably reduce or even totally shed their offerings as funding from the Korean government has

suddenly dwindled or even dried up over the last several months. Some of the programs have had to cope with the situation by going through an unplanned/unexpected reduction in force. Some have had to do without Korean scholars in residence sponsored by the Korean Research Foundation. Some have had to scale back their plans for various aspects of program development for the years ahead.

The second administrative problem involves coordination and cooperation between faculty and administration. The problem here may be characterized as lack or even absence of coordination and cooperation between the two in the entire spectrum of program planning and management. This problem may, in no small measure, be due to the underrepresentation of the Korean program in question in the process of administrative decision-making. It may be noted here that this underrepresentation may be inevitable given that the Korean-language program is operated under the umbrella of an already existing Oriental or Asian-Pacific languages and literatures department, whose primary area of emphasis is, say, Chinese and/or Japanese.

This brings us to the third administrative problem confronting the Korean-language programs under discussion here, i.e. the problem of program autonomy. As already suggested in the immediately preceding paragraph, the Korean-language programs surveyed for the present research are not completely autonomous in that they are not separate academic departments. They are typically subordinate to larger languages and literatures departments, mostly Asia-Pacific or Oriental languages and literatures departments such as Japanese and/or Chinese languages and literatures departments.

Generally dependent on their big-brother programs for everything, the Korean-language programs under discussion here are normally not able to make any independent decisions/choices, administrative, curricular, or otherwise. In fact, it often turns out that administrative/curricular decisions/choices are made, more often than not, by and for these big-brother departments at the cost of the Korean-language programs. If this observation is grounded in fact, which I suspect it is, then we may be justified in calling for (greater) autonomy for the Korean-language programs.

2.6. Evaluation

Most Korean-language programs under discussion here seem to get rather low marks on overall program evaluation. None of them seems to be

regularly and formally evaluated on the macro level, either internally or externally. Furthermore, it is by no means clear whether they were subjected to a rigorous accreditation procedure in the first place. In the absence of any such macro-level evaluation procedure, there is apparently no effective means whatsoever of controlling and maintaining the general overall quality of these programs on a reliable and permanent basis.

An equally poor rating is applicable to micro-level program evaluation as well. For one thing, program administration does not seem to get evaluated at all with the result that there is no way of telling whether the program is administered and managed cost-effectively at all. Neither does it seem possible to determine whether program planning, short- or long-term, is solid and farsighted enough to guarantee sustained development for the program.

The faculty also goes largely unevaluated in most of the programs in question here. Neither the competency nor the performance of the faculty is sufficiently evaluated, except perhaps through the semesterly student evaluation. There appears to be little, if any, room for systematic peer evaluation of the faculty, either. Furthermore, with no formal standard system of teacher certification in place, there is no way to objectively measure and evaluate the professional credentials of the faculty.

Virtually all the programs under discussion here apparently get low marks on materials evaluation, to which they seem to pay only perfunctory attention. It seems that few of the programs ever use self-developed materials. It may also be pointed out in this connection that none of the programs has even made a serious attempt to put together parts of various externally developed teaching materials to come up with an eclectic set of materials best suited to their curriculum. This may help explain at least in part why there is usually such a huge gap between the curriculum and the materials selected for its implementation in virtually all of the programs.

Of all the possible forms of micro-level evaluation, perhaps the one that is best established in all the Korean-language programs surveyed here is the evaluation of student performance. Achievement tests are administered quite frequently in all the programs at the average rate of more than five tests a term, quarter, or semester. Placement tests are also used in all the programs. One gets the impression, however, that being hastily developed by the individual programs with little or no professional input from testing experts, these tests, especially the placement tests, may not be quite up to par in not just validity but also reliability.

Proficiency testing is in even worse shape. In spite of assertions to the contrary, it appears that as of this writing we do not seem to have any Korean-language proficiency testing instrument that is sufficiently valid and reliable. In other words, there does not appear to be a truly worthy Korean-language equivalent of the TOEFL for the English language. As a result, there are no standardized tests in current use, on the basis of which proficiency in Korean may authoritatively be evaluated and certified.

3. Directions for Program Design and Development

Based upon the research reported thus far, we may suggest the following set of rough directions or guidelines for program design/development for a more productive Korean-language teaching in the years ahead.

3.1. Philosophy of Language Teaching

- (1) Communicative competence takes precedence over linguistic competence.
- (2) Meaning takes precedence over form.
- (3) Fluency takes precedence over over accuracy.
- (4) Reception takes precedence over production.
- (5) Other things being equal, spoken language takes precedence over written language.
- (6) Teaching/learning is content-based, rather than purely language-based.
- (7) Expressions are presented and learned in chunks, rather than in component parts thereof.
- (8) Language is presented and learned in maximally real(istic) pragmatic, cultural contexts.

3.2. The Faculty Variable

- (1) The majority of the teachers should have bona fide professional credentials in Korean-language teaching. Korean-language teaching specialists, rather than linguistics or literature specialists, should be put in charge of the Korean-language programs.
- (2) Most teacher training, both pre-service and in-service, should be in

Korean-language teaching proper, not in linguistics or literature.

- (3) Most faculty publications and paper presentations should be in Korean-language teaching proper, not in linguistics or literature.
- (4) Most teachers should be those with a profound professional commitment to a career in Korean-language teaching, rather than to a career in some other field such as linguistics or literature.
- (5) Teachers should ideally be sufficiently experienced in and thoroughly familiar with various foreign-language teaching methods and techniques.
- (6) There should be more indigenous teachers, either of Korean or non-Korean heritage, for the sake of enhanced faculty stability.

3.3. The Student Variable

- (1) Efforts should be made to attract a larger percentage of students of non-Korean heritage for the sake of enhanced program stability, especially at lower class levels.
- (2) Pre-entry exposure to Korean, skill-specific proficiency in Korean and motivational factors should be considered in making placement decisions for the sake of enhanced class homogeneity.
- (3) The student population should ideally be bottom-heavy. A class level should preferably comprise twice as many students as does the immediately higher class level.
- (4) The surrender value of Korean should be considered skill-specifically in designing course content for the entire program.
- (5) Efforts should be made to motivate students by increasing the usefulness of Korean for areas of specialization, employment opportunities, and partial fulfillment of graduation requirements.

3.4. Program content

- (1) Curricular text materials should go beyond basic textbooks to include workbooks and self-study guides at the very least.
- (2) Extracurricular text materials such as cartoons, newspapers, magazines, novels, radio and TV programs as well as videos and movies should be used to further enrich and enliven the student's learning experience.
- (3) Program content can also be further enriched and enlivened with the inclusion of live extracurricular materials/activities such as calligraphy

classes, traditional art classes, musical performances, martial arts demonstrations, cultural presentations, and visits to homes, markets and/or churches in the local Korean community

- (4) Audiovisual teaching aids that can also help enrich and enliven program content are the OHP, the computer, cassette recorders, and tape recorders. The computer can be an especially powerful weapon in language teaching if it is utilized to its fullest potential in all aspects of computer-assisted language instruction and computer adaptive language testing.
- (5) Research and development, directed at sustained program content development, should persistently be given top priority.

3.5. Program Architecture

- (1) It is recommended that, with the possible exception of the advanced level, courses be divided into two tracks: one for *Korean as a Heritage Language* and the other for *Korean as a Foreign Language*. The written language skills should be stressed more than their spoken language counterparts in the heritage track especially at elementary levels, and the other way around in non-heritage track.
- (2) Except at the elementary level, students may be assigned to classes according to the purposes for which they take Korean. In addition to elementary classes for common-core Korean (for general-purposes), for example, there should be specific-purpose classes such as *Advanced Korean for Academic Purposes* and *Intermediate Korean for Occupational Purposes*.
- (3) Classes should be adequately differentiated, preferably in such skill-specific tracks as the reading track and the writing track from the intermediate level up.
- (4) Class size should be geared to the skill(s) to be focused on. For example, a ceiling of 12 students may be imposed on a speaking or writing class, as opposed to a ceiling of, say, 25 on a listening or reading class.
- (5) Korean should ideally be the near exclusive medium of classroom communication for all phases of Korean-language instruction with the proviso that, if need be, English may be used sparingly in explaining unusually difficult points of grammar or meaning.
- (6) Programs should shed most of their their current teacher-centered/

friendly practices in favor of a far more student-centered/friendly Korean-language teaching. Programs should be maximally relevant to the career goals, (prospective) specializations, and other practical needs of the students, far more than to those of the teachers.

- (7) Programs should shift its focus away from the current single-resource Korean-language teaching to a multiple-resource Korean-language teaching. For one thing, qualified native speakers of Korean from the local community should be utilized as tutors or teacher's aides. For another, programs such as a Junior-Year-in-Korea or a Summer-in-the-Korean-House/Camp may also be used in complementation of formal in-class Korean-language learning.
- (8) Programs should shift its focus away from the largely context-free Korean-language teaching to a far more context-sensitive Korean-language teaching. Among other things, programs must become more needs-sensitive, more culture-sensitive, and more experience-based than they are today.
- (9) There should be maximum cooperation and coordination between programs in all aspects and phases of program development, especially in such high-cost projects as materials development and teacher training.
- (10) Program administration is in need of drastic repairs in more than one way. First of all, funding needs to be put on a more stable footing with more of it coming from host institutions and other host-country sources than from outside sources such as the Korean government. In the second place, administration-faculty coordination and cooperation needs to be drastically upgraded in all aspects of program planning and management so as to ensure sustained program development. In the third place, programs should attain a greater degree of autonomy so as to make the administrative decision-making process maximally program-friendly.

3.6. Evaluation

- (1) Programs should be subjected to a rigorous accreditation procedure. They should also be subjected to a tough evaluation process, internal or external or both, focusing on program validity and reliability. Program administration should specifically be evaluated periodically with reference to the cost-effectiveness of program management as well as the propriety and farsightedness of program planning.

- (2) Faculty screening should be based on a thorough examination of professional credentials and demonstrated competence in Korean-language teaching. Faculty performance should be evaluated on a regular basis by students as well as by peer faculty.
- (3) Student performance should be evaluated by means of placement, diagnostic, and achievement, and proficiency tests. If they are to be truly valid and reliable, these tests, with the possible exception of achievement tests, should ideally be developed by a consortium of several Korean-language programs in cooperation with foreign-language testing specialists.
- (4) Materials evaluation and selection should not be confined to textbooks only. It should also extend to such teaching/learning aids as self-study guides, audio/video tapes, and computer-assisted language instruction materials. The main yardstick here should be compliance with curricular needs, which should in turn agree with student needs in general.

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE: Teaching of Korean to Speakers of Other Languages (YOU MAY RESPOND IN EITHER KOREAN OR ENGLISH.)

This questionnaire is part of a research project designed to explore ways to help design a better curriculum for the Teaching of Korean to Speakers of Other Languages. Information gathered through this questionnaire will be held strictly confidential. However, the researcher would appreciate your providing the following information about yourself for possible future communication.

Institution: _____
 Length of Affiliation: _____ years Title: _____

Should the need arise for communication with the researcher, you are welcome to contact him at the following address.

Mr. Nahm-Sheik Park, Professor
 Department of English, College of the Humanities
 Seoul National University
 Shinrim-dong, Kwanak-ku
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I. Overall Questions

1. Rank in order of emphasis, in your KL(*Korean Language*) program.
 Listening Speaking Reading Writing
2. Rank in order of emphasis, in your KL program.
 Accuracy Fluency
3. Rank in order of emphasis as the focal point of KL learning, in your KL program.
 Form Meaning
4. Rank in order of emphasis, in your KL program.
 Communication Analysis and interpretation
5. The medium of instruction for your KL program. (Check one.)
 Korean Host language, eg. English
 Korean and the host language, e.g. English
6. The primary basis for your KL curriculum. (Check one.)
 Needs analysis Linguistics
 Theory of foreign-language teaching
7. Rate your KL textbooks and other teaching materials by checking the appropriate blank.
 - a. Authenticity of material: fair good very good
 - b. contextualization: fair good very good
 - c. intrinsic interest: fair good: very good
 - d. gradation: fair good very good
 - e. curricular relevance: fair good very good
8. Rate the testing instruments used for your KL program.
 - a. placement: poor fair good very good
 - b. achievement: poor fair good very good
9. Method of evaluation for your KL program.
 - a. Internally evaluated on a regular basis: Yes No

- b. Externally evaluated on a regular basis: ____Yes ____No
- c. Nationally accredited: ____Yes ____No
10. The number of courses offered by level.
 ____elementary ____intermediate ____advanced
 ____other (Specify: _____)
11. The number of semester hours per course: ____ hours.
12. Average class size: Approximately ____ students per class
13. The approximate number of your KL students by level.
 ____beginning ____intermediate ____advanced
14. The number of your KL teachers.
 ____regular faculty ____assistants ____other
15. Regular in-house KL faculty seminars/workshops.
 Yes: ____ No: ____
16. Rate student satisfaction with your KL program.
 ____poor ____fair ____good ____very good
17. Rate faculty satisfaction with your KL program.
 ____poor ____fair ____good ____very good
18. Rate the backwash effect by checking the appropriate blank.
- a. College entrance: ____poor ____fair ____good ____very good
- b. Credit toward graduation from college: ____poor ____fair
 ____good ____very good
- c. Employment Opportunity: ____poor ____fair ____good
 ____very good
19. Rate the general popularity of your KL program.
 ____poor ____fair ____good: ____very good
20. Rate prospects for future development of your KL program.
 ____poor ____fair ____good: ____very good
21. The status of your KL program.
 ____KL as a separate academic program
 ____KL as part of an Oriental languages/cultures program
 ____KL as an interdisciplinary program
22. Rate your KLT(Korean-Language Teaching) cooperation with other KLT(-relevant) bodies by checking the appropriate blank.
- a. with other departments/programs in host institution
 ____poor ____fair ____good ____very good
- b. with institutions in host country, e.g. USA, in Korea, and elsewhere
 ____poor ____fair ____good ____very good

II. Student Variable

23. The approximate number of your KL students by ancestry/ethnicity.
 Korean Asian Caucasian Black Hispanic
24. The approximate number of your KL students by country of citizenship
 US Japan Korea Other (Specify: _____)
25. The approximate number of your KL students by pre-entry exposure to Korean, both at home and at school.
 None 1 to 2 years 2 to 3 years 3 years or more
26. The approximate number of your KL students by desired proficiency level at entry.
 elementary intermediate advanced
27. The approximate number of your KL students by desired proficiency level at exit.
 elementary intermediate advanced super-advanced
28. The approximate number of your KL students by learner motivation
 strong medium weak
29. The approximate number of your KL students by area of specialization.
 humanities social sciences natural sciences
 engineering law business medicine
 other (Specify: _____)
30. The approximate number of your KL students by career goal.
 KLT Korean linguistics/literature Korean studies
 Asian languages/literatures Asian studies
 Other (Specify: _____)
31. Your students' exposure to KL mass media such as Korean TV and newspapers.
 poor fair good very good

III. Faculty Variable

32. The approximate number of your KL faculty by race/ancestry.
 Korean Asian Caucasian Black
33. The approximate number of your KL faculty by length of KLT experience.
 1 year or less 2 years or less 3 years or more
34. The approximate number of your KL faculty by length of teacher

training, both pre-service and in-service.

- ____ One year or less ____ one to two years ____ more than two years
35. The approximate number of your KL faculty by specialization.
 ____ KLT ____ Korean linguistics/literature ____ Korean studies
 ____ Linguistics ____ Other (Specify: _____)
36. The approximate number of your KL faculty by first/native language.
 ____ Korean ____ English ____ Other (Specify: _____)
37. The approximate number of your KL faculty by ultimate career goal.
 ____ KLT ____ Korean linguistics ____ Korean literature
 ____ Korean studies ____ Linguistics ____ Other (Specify: _____)
38. The familiarity of your KL faculty with Korean society, culture, and history
 ____ fair ____ good ____ very good ____ excellent
39. The professional activity of your KL faculty in terms of participation in professional KLT groups and publications in learned KL/KLT journals.
 ____ fair ____ good ____ very good ____ excellent

IV. Support for the KL Program

40. Rate financial assistance by checking the appropriate blank.
- a. KL student scholarship assistance: ____ poor ____ fair ____ good
 ____ very good
- b. KL teacher conference/research/training grant: ____ poor ____ fair
 ____ good ____ very good
- c. KL/KLT materials acquisition grant: ____ poor ____ fair
 ____ good ____ very good
41. Rate sources of support in order of importance.
 ____ local Korean community ____ host government
 ____ Korean government

V. Please list complaints, if any, about your KL program.

42. Students' complaints:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

43. Faculty complaints:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

44. Administrators' complaints:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION

ABSTRACT

Teaching Korean to Speakers of Other Languages

- A Quest for New Directions -

Nahm-Sheik Park

The present study is primarily an attempt to identify major problem areas in foreign-based undergraduate programs of Korean for speakers of other languages. It also aims to come up with a set of suggestions to help these undergraduate Korean-language programs abroad to steer clear of the problem areas thus identified. The present study draws on a questionnaire/interview survey as well as the experience of the researcher as a former teacher of Korean to speakers of other languages.