

# **A Renewed Understanding of Literary History Education: Addressing Curricular Problems in Literary History Education**

**Eun Jin Park\***

*Seoul National University*

## **Abstract**

This study aims to achieve a renewed understanding of the issues of literary history education within the official curriculum. Of all the current areas comprising literature education, that of literary history is the most problematic. In this study, I focus on the observation that literary history education is closely linked to the broader system of literature education, which leads us to pursue a new understanding of the difficulties of literary history education within the official curriculum. I explore the changes that literary history education has undergone, centering on the shifts in literary perspectives – arguably the core of literature education. While approaching the question of literary history education in terms of the interaction between instruction on literature education and literary history. I examine how views governing literature education changed throughout three phases. I point out that as the dominant discourse on literature education shifted its emphasis from transmitting culture to cultivating literary abilities, the fundamental aspects of literary history education continued to be omitted. I found that a failure to fill these gaps has led to the present problems in literary history education. This prompts us to question the appropriateness of continuing the current unilateral relationship, whereby literary history education is reorganized according to the logic of literature education.

---

\* Corresponding author (kinye84@naver.com)

*Keywords: literature history education, literary perspectives, broader system of literature education, curricular problems, literature education*

## **I. Background to the discussion**

Literary history education is one of the most problematic areas among many currently being addressed in the field of literature education. Literary history has been regarded as a major educational subject since the establishment of literature education. However, education in the field of literary history cannot be said to have been at all times effective. Discussions around this issue have concluded that “literary history is important and worth an educational effort, but its practice is very poor.” Thus, despite agreement on the significance of literary history in literature education, and its status as an important part of curricula, it has not enjoyed sufficient attention in the field. To resolve this issue, it is essential to delineate the problem and determine its cause.

Previous studies have found that practice in literary history education has traditionally been unsatisfactory due to a lack of participation of students taught by an instructional method that emphasizes the delivery of knowledge. To resolve this problem, activities that recast knowledge of literary history have been suggested, based on such research.<sup>1</sup> Thus, much of the discussion about literary history education has taken a methodological approach, and discussions on recasting literary history activities have been a major topic in recent studies.

However, good examples of the application of such activities remain few in the field of literary education, including in textbooks.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kim (1999) and Seo (2000) which treats literary history as historical practice, Yim (2000), ‘Literature history as self-identity forming process’ are included these kind of researches. These studies pointed that literary history is a reconstructed system and made exercises to build up the history.

Thus, there appears to be a gap between theories of literary history and reality. Some discussion has attempted to address this issue, but in no case has an appropriate methodology or theory been sought. As a result, current literary history education still has not gone beyond the problems identified within a methodological framework.

Criticism may be leveled from various angles with regard to this situation. One obvious problem is that it is essential to consider the level of the learners, as activities that exceed their range of knowledge and skill may not be useful. Nevertheless, this may not be the essence of the problem. Activities like recasting and rewriting history are often used in history education, which has much in common with literary history education, and so the issue of setting the level of difficulty for activities appropriately to suit the learners cannot be simply be dismissed as an oversight.

The difference between history education and literary history education is that history education has created an environment in which recasting historical knowledge is appropriate, as a large part of historical education practice is centered on knowledge delivery, whereas this is not the case in literary history education. In this respect, the criticism that “it didn’t consider the reality in literature education these days that mainly consists of acceptance and creation of individual work” may be more fundamental. The problems in literary history education may be due to the failure to identify appropriate means to convey ideas.

In this article, I aim to highlight the influence of perspective in literature education<sup>2</sup> as a significant factor that has an impact on the issues set out above. Specifically, I consider critically the impact of perspective in literature education on the formation of ideas in literary

---

<sup>2</sup> Perspective in literature education means the viewpoint or standpoint about what literature is. Ideology of literature education or paradigm of literature education can be a similar meaning of that. In this paper, perspective in literature education means discourse on literature education which was made by research area or curriculum practice. Literature perspective can be divided perspective of teachers and perspective of students. But in this paper the perspective of literature concept is treated general meaning which contains both of them.

history education as reflected in textbooks, educational curricula, and studies of literary history education. Considering the problems in literary history education from the perspective of the relationship between literary history education and literature education throughout, a number of factors emerge that should be considered in determining the future direction of literary history education.

The reason why perspective in literature education should be emphasized is that I believe it is essential to not only regard the problem in literary history education as reflecting a lack of methodology but also to understand the system of the educational curricula within a deeper dimension. Research and discussions on literary history education thus far show that simply accommodating learners in the current situation or suggesting certain teaching methodologies will not solve the problem. However, such conclusions also emphasize the need to consider the problem from all angles and in relation to all the factors that affect literary history education and its context. Identifying the impact of perspective in literature education on literary history education, and determining the optimal direction of literary history education within such a relationship, may allow further access to the problem in literary history education.

The discussion of the relationship between literature education and literary history thus far is reflected by No (1998), Ryo (1999) and Yi (2000), amongst others. In these discussions, the meaning and role of literary history education in literature education and the relationship between the two were determined. The status of literary history education was determined as being perched at the top level within literature education. Thus, previous studies have focused on how to make the best use of literary history education within literature education, and on where the former may stand in relation to the latter. This article shares the perspective of such previous studies on the close relationship between literary history education and literature itself.

A relatively recent study conducted by Yun (2014) focuses on the change in status of literary history education due to changes made in the process of addressing the problems in literature education and literary history education. The study showed that, as literature education became more learner-centered, combining function with attitude was

suggested as a goal of literary history education. Yun (2014) mentioned the significance of this approach, as it opened the door to narrating multi-literary-histories constituted by learners rather than a single-literary-history pursued by national literary history.

Such a description of the phenomenon seems reasonable, but two further aspects deserve attention. First, previous studies have not investigated changes in literary history education with a focus on the relationship between literary history education and literature education. Second, such studies were limited in the sense that they did not address actual aspects of the realization of literary history education, such as the proper timing of each part of the educational curriculum.

Against this background, this article focuses on the relationship between literature education and literary history education, examining the influence of perspective in literature education in the positioning of literary history education as a subfield. Rather than exploring the place of literary history education within literature education from a theoretical point of view, I aim to determine which parts of literary history education have stood out, changed, or been reduced in its relationship with literature education. Furthermore, I examine whether such changes were appropriate in forming the relationship between the two fields.

Thus, the discussion here does not suggest a specific methodology for teaching and learning, as it does not consider these aspects. It will also be clear that understanding how ideas in literary history education have been defined will not solve the practical problems it faces. However, if a new understanding of the problems in literary history education in relation to perspective in literature education can be formed, clarifying the central issues requiring attention, it will contribute to laying the groundwork for renewed practical discussion.

## **II. Hypothesis about the relationship between literature education and literary history**

This article is based on the premise of a close connection between perspective in literature education and literary history education. Thus, it is necessary to begin by examining this premise. The feasibility of the hypothesis about the relationship between the two will determine the clarity of and the contribution made by the discussion of the effect of one on the other.

In terms of categories commonly used in the field of Korean literature studies, the relationship between literature education and literary history education differs from that between literature and literary history. Literary history is regarded as a category with the same status as literature, although it may form only a part of literature, and the two are not closely related in terms of purpose and methodology. Within the field of literature, literary theory, literary criticism, and literary history are each situated individually. As literature itself is established as a category on ontological grounds with literary history as a field within it that deals with its history, it is unnecessary to explain the establishment of categories or the relationships between categories.

On the other hand, the relationship between Korean literature education and literary history requires a close connection to be established. Unlike the context of Korean literature education, the systems and categories within education theory are based on teleology. Each category within Korean language education, including literature education, aims at developing certain abilities among learners. Furthermore, Korean language education aspires to systemization with a hierarchy of categories that promotes efficient development of such abilities. Thus, each category in the context of the education curriculum has its own goals and its part to play, and it is essential to ensure a close connection between such goals, as a lack of connection may negatively affect the continuity of learning outcomes.

In terms of the relationship between higher level categories and subcategories in the educational curriculum, the goals of a subcategory must contribute to and accord with those of its higher level category. The fact that literary history education falls within the category of

literature education reflects their close connection in principle. Thus, it is likely that the principles and characteristics of literary history education will be set in logical accordance with those of its higher level category, namely literature education. For example, if parts of literary history education are to be realized, these will be selected and emphasized in accordance with the standards of literature education.

The question arises as to whether such selection will function to adequately realize the essence and meaning of literary history education. Furthermore, note that the subcategories within literature education were not established as distinct phenomena, but came into existence as literary history, literary criticism, literary theory, etc. were absorbed into the field of education as related study areas. This creates confusion, because literary history education contrasts sharply in terms of its objectives and methods with literary theory and literary criticism, which objectify literary works.

In addition, the logic of literature education in categorizing literary history education is still in the process of being accepted within Korean language education, causing a conflict between categories. This is why the simple positioning of literary history education at the top of the literature education hierarchy is unlikely to realize its purpose. To effectively settle the position of literary history education within literature education, a way must be found to embody the essence of each and to relate them in harmony, rather than forcing the logic of literature education onto literary history education.

To establish the characteristics and status of literary history education within Korean language education, its inner principles need to be determined through mutual negotiation with literature education. This requires prior inspection and assessment of how aspects of literary history education change according to changes in literature education.

The changes in literature education signify a change in perspective in terms of its goals and ways to realize these. With a focus on such changes, the following section will explore how perspective in literature education relates to literary history education.

### III. Trends in literary history education due to changes in perspectives in literature education

In examining aspects of literary history education in terms of changes of perspective in literature education, one must begin by deciding how to grasp such changes. In the discussion related to literary history education above, the focus has been on overall changes in literature education, mostly reflected in textbooks that explain the changes in perspective, with changes in the curriculum as a major factor.<sup>3</sup> Between the period from September 1946 to July 1995 and the recently reformed curriculum, there were many revisions by which literature education underwent many changes. In this discussion, the period is divided into several sections at points of noticeable change, and aspects of literary history education following from changes in curriculum will be examined.

In terms of the goals of literature curricula across the time since 1946, the most considerable changes occurred between the fourth and fifth curricula, when the functional areas and literary areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing began to split. In this period, Korean language education emphasized the division between linguistic functions, literature, and grammar as separate areas. This was an important point of change, as literature education started to set its own goals in relation to Korean language education, detaching itself from Korean language education. In addition, the seventh curriculum signified remarkable changes in literature education by its emphasis on media, culture, and context. Against this background, the discussion below will focus on the following three periods:

- First period: Syllabus period (September 1, 1946) to fourth curriculum (December 31, 1981 to March 1988)

---

<sup>3</sup> This part related studies as follows. Choi (2006), literature curriculum, Yeocklak; Yun et al. (2007), Korean education history I, Seoul national university press; Nam (2007), On the History of Literary Education's Aims, Korean Literature education, The Korean Society of Literary Education.

- Second period: 2.1 Fifth curriculum (March 31, 1988) and sixth curriculum (October 30, 1992 to December 1977); 2.2 Seventh curriculum (December 30, 1997) to the 2007 curriculum reform

The data considered here comprise Korean language textbooks from the syllabus period to the 2011 curriculum reform. The first period is considered relevant here as it was the formative period of literature education, during which Korean language and literature were not divided. Thus, contents appear that are not included in the current curriculum.

**A. A first perspective: Culture-delivery focus in knowledge-centric literary history education (syllabus period to fourth curriculum)**

As literary history is a fruit of modern times, literary history education is too. Within modern times, many literary histories have been written<sup>4</sup>, and as Korean language and literature were studied in every school, literary history became an educational objective. However, in this period, literary history education was implemented based on the perception that the importance of Korean literature entailed that its history was also important, rather than in the sense of it being an important subcategory of literature education or Korean language education. As the value of literary history itself was appreciated during this period, Korean literary history education remained at the forefront and was actively taught and learnt. The details of this period are discussed below.

In the time from the syllabus period of early modern times to the fourth curriculum of 1981 to 1987, literature education did not detach itself from Korean language education, and many literary works were used as materials for reading and writing activities. Such literary works

---

<sup>4</sup> Literature histories which are written after modern age are recorded in ToJi Cultural Foundation (2003), *How to write Korean literature history*, Hangisa, (p.63-83).

were treated as important materials in this period as Korean literary works enjoyed a high profile as part of the cultural heritage that should be passed on through generations. Naturally, as classics and modern works were not treated equally, a feature of this period is that classics made up the larger portion of literature materials. In this sense, it can be said that literature education in this period focused on the delivery of culture and values. Under the influence of this emphasis on the classics, classics was established as a separate subject and implemented through textbooks such as *Our Classics* and *Classics*.

In this period when classics were highly valued, literary history education was implemented actively across textbooks. Indeed, it appears that knowledge of literary history was essential in this period to understand classics. This is evident from the syllabus period and the first curriculum. In the subject classification standards of this syllabus, along with reading, speaking, listening, writing, and grammar, Korean literary history comprised a subcategory. A clause related to Korean literary history from the syllabus states as follows:

Korean literary history: by presenting the characteristics of the nation and the origin of the native culture, and introducing a summary of historical development in Korean literary history, explain the status and value of our classics in cultural ideology.

Subsequently, the Korean literary history textbook written by Cho Yun Je and Gu Ja Kyon, which presented a summarized introduction to Korean literary history, was published and used to teach. Specifically, rather than presenting materials and learning activities, this book briefly explained the course of Korean literary history from ancient to modern times. Two noticeable points feature at the beginning of the book, namely the importance of Korean literary history and the target audience of the book, being the higher grades of high school students and lower grades of college students.

Korean literary history education appears to take the initiative the Korean language textbook rather than the classics textbook. The classics textbook aims at education about classics, and enumerates classical works in each period and suggests learning activities based on these. Works are presented in chronological order or the reverse. Each chapter is similar in structure to current literature textbooks in

encouraging appreciation for and understanding of the classics, briefly explaining the relevant era and suggesting relevant works and learning activities.

Nevertheless, literary-history-related content is seldom found in such activities, as they generally require understanding of or appreciation for the work. This classics textbook appears to have concentrated on content dealing with understanding and perception, as Korean literary history textbooks existed separately, and Korean language textbooks also presented content related to Korean literary history.

In Korean language textbooks of this period, the educational content related to Korean literary history are prominent in comparison to the classics textbook. Early textbooks such as *Our old words*, *Korean Language 1, 2, 3*, etc. present articles explaining the course of Korean literature according to division into chapters such as *Understanding of classic literature* and *The flow of Korean literature*. In the textbooks up until the fourth curriculum, the prominent materials related to literary history are as follows:

( Korean Language I 1968 )

X. Understanding of classic literature

**1. The flow of classic literature (Park Sung ui)**

2. Dongmyungilgy
3. Tokki-hwasang
4. Gosijo

(Korean Language II 1968 )

IX. Ruminaton on ancient propose

1. Hong Gildong on a journey
2. Jochimmun

**3. Regarding classic novels (Sohn Nak Beom)**

(Korean Language III )

**II. The tradition in Korean literature**

<p>1. <i>Appreciating sijo</i> (Yi Hee seong)  2. <i>Gasiri pyungseol</i> (Yang Ju Dong)  3. <i>Subtle and persistent</i> (Cho Yun Je)</p>
<p>(Korean Language 1 1975)  Development of Korean literature (1)  24. <b><u>Development of Korean literature (1) (Cho Yun Je)</u></b>  25. <i>Images of Old songs</i>  26. <i>Howon</i></p> <p>(Korean Language 2 1975)  Development of Korean literature (2)  22. <b><u>Development of Korean literature (2) (Cho Yun Je)</u></b>  23. <i>Movement</i> 24. <i>Yongjaechonghwa</i></p> <p>(Korean Language 3 1975)  22. <b><u>Development of Korean literature (3) (Cho Yeon Hyeon)</u></b>  23. <i>The silence of my love</i> and commentary  24. <i>The poor wife</i></p>
<p>(Korean language 1 1983)  15. Understanding of Korean literature  <b><u>History of classic literature (Cho Yun Je)(1)</u></b>  (2) <b><u>Oral literature and written literature (Jang Deock Sun)</u></b></p> <p>(Korean language 2 1986)  8. Understanding of Korean literature_  <b><u>History of classic literature(2) (Cho Yun Je)</u></b>  (2) <b><u>Ideological background of Korean literature (Jung Beong Uk)</u></b></p> <p>(Korean literature 3 1986)  (1) <b><u>History of modern literature (Shin Dong Uk)</u></b>  (2) <b><u>Continuity of Korean literature (Kin Yun Shik)</u></b></p>

As is clear from the above textbook content, the Korean language textbooks published between the syllabus period and the fourth

curriculum consistently included chapters on literary history and articles narrating the history of literature as teaching and learning materials. These materials related to literary history changed as studies on literary history progressed.

Textbook chapters such as those listed above aimed to develop learners' understanding of literary history itself. Activities in each chapter confirm correct understanding, such as summarizing or explaining the contents of literary history materials, or finding and reading literature in a similar genre. The textbook pursues connectivity with the literature and with literary history by requiring activities such as finding "several representative pieces of literature that belong to 'Koryo-gayo' explained in the text." However, such an activity requires the recognition of the existence of literature in a certain period of literary history in terms of knowledge, rather than understanding of the content of a piece of literature or appreciation of the literature in relation to literary history.

Thus, literary history education as reflected by the textbooks from the early period of literature education differs from that in current times in terms of the materials described. Literary history education was prominent because literature was regarded as important in terms of spiritual heritage that should be passed through generations. The importance of literary history made it important to acquire knowledge about it.

With regard to the high value placed on knowledge related to literature and its history during this period, a number of issues are worthy of note. For example, the emphasis in this period was on certain features that were unique to Korean national literature and its history, rather than on the universality of literature. The content of the textbooks also suggest materials that explain aspects of literary history, as described above. Typical examples include the chapter on the "Tradition of Korean literature" and that titled "Subtle and persistent" by Cho Yun Je.

In terms of individual works, the textbook material of *Chunhyangjeon* in *Korean Language II* confirms its position in Korean literary history, requiring propositional knowledge rather than grasping its historical connection. The activity in which learners' understanding

of *Chunhyangjeon* is questioned, by which they must “inquire about its position in Korean literary history,” reflects the most general pattern.

As explained above, in the curricula preceding the fifth curriculum, it was understood that learners’ acquisition of knowledge regarding literary history was the key aim of literature education and literary history education. Thus, literature education focused on enlightening students about literary history itself. Since the fifth curriculum, however, the value placed on Korean literature has decreased, and literary history education has reconsidered its goals and characteristics as a subcategory of literature education. After such curriculum reforms, this knowledge-focused aspect of literary history education changed.

#### **B. A second perspective: Focus on literary competence and activities (fifth to seventh curricula)**

Starting with the fifth curriculum in 1988, the direction of Korean language education changed, and thus the characteristics of literature education changed significantly. The importance of verbal competence, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing became emphasized in Korean language education, and the concept of “literary competence” in terms of literature education also arose as an ability that can be developed through the medium of literature. Furthermore, in terms of teaching and learning methods, Constructionism began to be encouraged, emphasizing learner activities and knowledge construction rather than the simple delivery of knowledge.

This change affected the methodological side of literature education, as reflected by changes in expressions in literature curricula, such as “understanding” and “knowing” being replaced by “experiencing” and “being able to”. The period of the fifth and sixth curricula is described below, during which the focus of literature education fell on reception and creation, before the cultural context was emphasized.

### **1. Literature education with a focus on understanding and creation: Literary history education contributing to insight formation**

The fundamental question of what Korean language education is has been asked since the fifth curriculum. As an answer was sought from the perspective of the acquisition of linguistic functions, the position and characteristics of literature education in Korean language education became an issue. In this period, there was an attempt to solve the problem of how to relate Korean language education to literature education by defining literature as a linguistic structure through which emotional and imaginary experience is available that cannot be provided by functional areas.

In this regard, as experience through literature became an important matter, the processes of experiencing and appreciating literature became more highly valued than the cultural heritage or psychological aspects pursued during the previous period. Literature education was newly conceptualized as a way of developing literary competence, enabling learners to experience and appreciate, to understand and create.

As a reflection of this change, Korean language and literature became divided in textbooks, and chapters and materials related to literary history began to be excluded. The ability to understand and create literature, at which literature education aimed during this period, is a universal capability applicable to literature in general, rather than being limited to Korean literature. Thus, much material related to national literature and the distinct characteristics of Korean literature has been excluded, and nonliterary texts inserted instead. In the case of *Chunhyangjeon*, which is still listed in Korean language textbooks, it is presented with a focus on its colloquial aspects as *pansori*, rather than focusing on its position in literary history, as was the case with the materials used in the “Songs and life” chapter.

In this period, the materials excluded from Korean language textbooks were seldom incorporated into literature textbooks, as literature textbooks also began to focus on the understanding and creation of literature, as methods to these ends had been receiving much attention. The sequence of explaining a period and then presenting

corresponding literature remained, leading to a kind of early classics textbook padded with modern literature. However, only a few literature textbooks applied this pattern, and although the importance of Korean literature and its uniqueness remained highly valued, few cases remained of a related content. A reason for this was related to the difficulty of explaining concepts regarded as unique to Korean literature in terms of each piece of literature.

Once content related to knowledge of literary history and the uniqueness of Korean literature were excluded, the contribution of literature education and literary history education to literary competence became unclear. This led to attention to the formation of insight in literary history. Unlike the previous period, the literature curriculum of this period contains content aimed at “not only understanding and appreciating literature but also developing insight into literary history.” The question remains whether such content related to insight formation materialized. As materials related to understanding and creating literature dominated literature textbooks, there was little room for content related to insight formation. Whether insight formation is possible through understanding various pieces of literature presented in each period remains debatable, but the textbooks were not organized in such a way as to encourage such insight into literary history, which is unlikely to develop through activities of studying literature and the relation between genres from a historical perspective.

In response to this lack of literary history education, activities that learners could carry out in relation to literary history were considered as an alternative. In this process, literary history education that focused on delivery of knowledge was regarded as an obstacle to be overcome, as it went against the nature of literature, discouraging learners and delivering knowledge divorced from understanding and appreciation. Thus, literary history education studies concentrated on developing alternatives to prevent literary history education from becoming the “simple delivery of knowledge.”

Literary history exists in a form of systematized knowledge, making the approach of knowledge delivery in education seem natural. However, as there is no place for knowledge of literary history in the

logic of literary history education focused on learners' knowledge acquisition through engagement in activity, the question of how to overcome the gap between knowledge and activity becomes a major issue. This is why the issue of how to realize the dynamism of literary history in literary history education became important.

Studies of literary history education and related activities failed to lead to a solution as to the position of literary history within literature education. Indeed, the gap between theoretical studies and educational reality became wider.

As mentioned above, literary history studies thus far represent efforts to acknowledge literary history education by defining the characteristics of literary history knowledge under the premise of literature education with a focus on learner activities through which such knowledge can be attained. Such possibilities are sought with a view to restructure literary history education in accordance with the logic of educational.

However, in the absence of introspection on learner-centered, activity-focused literature education, and with the emphasis on the objectivity and validity of interpretation, the discussion on recent literary history education is heading in a different direction. Unlike previous discussions, which intended to restructure literary history in accordance with the logic of literature education, with its emphasis on activities, there is now a tendency to admit the possibility that knowledge of literary history is meaningful. Moreover, there is a renewal of the understanding of literary knowledge from a wider point of view. Thus, there have been efforts to redefine the characteristics and the category of literary knowledge as something like knowledge of literary history, as activity-focused literature education regresses.

## **2. The cultural-competence-centric perspective in literature education: From the seventh curriculum to the 2007 curriculum reform**

Since the seventh curriculum, literature education has emphasized the cultural aspect of literature, considering literary phenomena as the target of literature education. Efforts have been made to establish its

contrast from functional areas of language while reinforcing its identity as a category within Korean language education. In this process, the meaning of literary competence, as an ability enabling learners to understand and create literature, has expanded to include the ability to enjoy culture through literature and to create culture.

The changes mentioned above were possible due to the emphasis on sociocultural communication through literature and the acceptance of media-related materials as educational contents. If Korean language education is about extending learners' possibilities for communication through texts, literature education is about extending the possibilities of aesthetic social communication through literature. Along with the development of media, as the actualization of literature became more diverse, literature education adopted such diversity. Thus, literature education is increasingly approached from a cultural perspective, reflecting these changes.

Within the cultural perspective on literature education, understanding and creating literature are perceived as literary phenomena. A range of such literary phenomena are currently embraced in the area of literature education.

Along with such changes in perspective in literature education, studies that adopted a cultural perspective in literary history education began to appear. Discussions such as those of Oh (2010) and Woo (2011) are typical examples. Oh stated that, as literary history can function as background knowledge in developing literature when a cultural perspective is adopted in literary history education, this helps to overcome propositional-knowledge-focused literary history education. In contrast, Woo sought to narrate literary history for educational purposes in order to contribute to an understanding of literature from a cultural perspective, in the same vein as Oh.

Such approaches were aimed at adopting literary history education into literature education. However, literary history cannot easily be confined to background knowledge for the understanding of literature, as it is rather an aggressive means to actualize the essence of literary history education. In this regard, there is the matter of choosing either to adopt the logic of literature education, implicitly giving up on the essence of literary history education, or to seek another possibility to

relate the two without violating the value or significance of literary history education. Thus, an effort is required to seek other possibilities of relating literature education and literary history education from a cultural perspective.

#### **IV. Conclusion: Redefining the problems in literary history education**

The changes in literary history education discussed above show the process by which literary history as an object of study was absorbed into literature education. In contrast to the early period of literature education, during which literary history was treated as the essence of national culture, the shift in Korean language education to functional issues relegated literature education to a mere category, and changed the curriculum to focus on the development of certain abilities through literature as a linguistic structure. As a result, many materials and activities presented as knowledge in relation to literary history in previous curricula were omitted. Thus, the content related to literary history lost its position in literature education, where the focus fell on each individual piece of literature. Consequently, the essence of literary history education was lost in the process of literary history changing in accordance with changing perspectives in literature education.

One resulting problem concerns the lack of discernment-forming education and knowledge in literary history. The importance of discernment was emphasized in early approaches to literature competence, but related content was later omitted from actual textbooks. The same applied to content related to the uniqueness of national literature. Due to the tendency for literature education to focus on understanding and creating literature with preference for universality, such early content is seldom found, despite it being emphasized in the curriculum. Several activities, such as looking for a common sentiment between pieces of literature like *Gasir* and *Azalea*, were related to the uniqueness of Korean national literature.

The reason for the diminishing of literary history education in the process of it settling inside literature education is that emphasis on

literary history as knowledge and on the uniqueness of Korean literature does not fall within an approach to literature that focuses on universal aspects and learner activities. When the logic of literature education collided with the attributes of literary history education, the former was regarded as more important. As a result, literary history education, despite being considered important in the curriculum, was seldom actualized in the field. This implies that problems related to the balance between knowledge, activities, uniqueness, and universality in literature remain with regard to the realization of literary history education within literature education.

Careful consideration is required regarding the maintenance of the one-sided relationship, in which literary history education falls under the logic of literature education. Further discussion on the ways in which the two relate is required.

On the basis of the present discussion, the fact that literary history education has been defined within the logic of literature education is not a positive sign. Three stances are possible with regard to this situation. First, it may be regarded as inevitable to accept literary history education as a category within literature education. In this case, the problem can be solved by determining the position within the previous literature-focused education upon which literary history can settle.

Second, it may be that the relationship should be defined by maintaining the essence of literary history education rather than fully accepting the logic of literature education. In this case, the aim would be to find points within literary history education acceptable to literature education. Emphasis on the goals of literature education may draw attention to content related to central aspects of literary history education, such as discernment and the uniqueness of national literature, which can then be dealt with in terms of systemized knowledge.

Third, the cultural perspective in literature education is remarkable in that it may be said to extend the goal of literature education to its maximum, namely literary competence. In this case, literary history education, as a category within but at the top of literature education, may contribute to the development of such literary competence. At this point, the development of literary history would obtain its value as cultural knowledge, as it entails intellectual history actualized through

aesthetic linguistic activities. The extension of the goal and view of literature from this perspective provides a basis for activities related to literary history knowledge and discernment-forming education to be included in textbooks.

To achieve literary competence or literacy in literature through literary history implies achieving the ability to understand human lives and to create them linguistically through a variety of literal devices, which can pave the way to solving a range of problems related to literary history, such as the issues around knowledge and activity, universality and particularity, etc. Moreover, more detailed discussion is required regarding the position that literary history education can secure through the expansion of a cultural perspective.

This paper aimed to emphasize the issues regarding literary history education through an understanding of the influence and outcomes of changing perspectives in literature education, and how these are reflected by changes in the educational curriculum. It was shown that essential aspects of literary history education have been consistently neglected in the shift from a culture-delivery-focused perspective to a literary-competence-focused perspective in literature education. It was also shown that the problems of literary history education have not been sufficiently addressed. Possible directions for literary history education within literature education in the future were briefly explored.

Regarding the question of which is more important, the enhancement of learners' knowledge of literary features or literature, the dominant answer is the former. However, the logic that literature and literary history should be taught on the basis of literary features remains valid. The idea that emphasis on learner activities leads to their improvement or to the unconditional exclusion of knowledge is also erroneous. Under the logic of literature education, fundamental and unbiased reflection on the various phenomena is required, as discussions on literary history are likely to proceed with separation between theory and practice, to the extent that the status of literary history education, and the position of activities and knowledge, remain unclear.

## References

- Kim, S. J. (1999). Literary history education as a knowledge education - A study of development of argument concerning national literature under United States Military Government (In Korean), *Korean Education*, 100, 83-112.
- Choi, J. H. (2006). Literature curriculum, Yeocklak press (In Korean).
- Nam, M. W. (2007). On the history of literary education's aims (In Korean), *Research of Korean literature education*, 22, 119-152.
- No, J. H. (1998). A study on signification of literary history in literature education (In Korean), *Korean Education*, 97, 45-66.
- Oh, M. S. (2010). The education on the history of literature and the literature as a culture phenomenon - Focused on Choi, Nam-Sun (In Korean), *International Korean studies*, 83-112.
- Seo, Y. K. (2000). Literature history as historical practice (In Korean), *SunJungumun*, 519-532.
- ToJi Cultural Foundation. (2003). *How to write Korean literature history* (In Korean), Hangisa.
- Woo, S. Y. (2011). Essay on description of educative literature history through cultural historical approach, *Research of spiritual culture* (In Korean), *Academy of Korean Studies*, 101-126.
- Yi, M. K. (2001). On the level and role of the education of literary history in the education of literal lecture (In Korean), *Korean education*, 104, 323-345.
- Yim, K. S. (2000). Literature history as self-identity forming process (In Korean), *SunJungumun*, 389-405.
- Yun, D. S. (2014). The problem of literary history in korean literature education (In Korean), *Research of national history of literature*, 107-129.
- Min, H. S., Yun, Y. T., Kim, J. C., Shin, H. S., & Seo, H. (2007), *Korean education history I* (In Korean), Seoul National University Press.

Received: 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

Reviewed: 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2015

Revised version accepted: 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2015