

Joseonhakgyo, Learning under North Korean Leadership: Transitioning from 1970 to Present*

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This paper analyzes English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks used during North Korea's three leaderships: 1970s, 1990s and present. The textbooks have been used at Korean ethnic schools, Joseonhakgyo (朝鮮学校), which are managed by the Chongryon (總聯) organization in Japan. The organization is affiliated with North Korea despite its South Korean origins. Given North Korea's changing influence over Chongryon's education system, this study investigates how Chongryon Koreans' view on themselves has undergone a transition. The textbooks' content that have been used in junior high school classrooms (students aged between thirteen and fifteen years) are analyzed. Selected texts from these textbooks are analyzed critically to delineate the changing views of Chongryon Koreans. The findings demonstrate that Chongryon Koreans have changed their perspective from focusing on their ties to North Korea (1970s) to focusing on surviving as a minority group (1990s) to finally recognising that they reside permanently in Japan (present).

Keywords: EFL textbooks, Korean ethnic school, minority education, North Koreans in Japan, North Korean leadership

* Acknowledgments: The author would like to acknowledge the generous and thoughtful support of the staff at Hagusobang (Chongryon publishing company), including Mr Nam In Ryang, Ms Kyong Suk Kim and Ms Mi Ja Moon; Ms Malryo Jang, an English teacher at Joseonhakgyo; and Mr Seong Bok Kang at Joseon University in Tokyo. They have consistently provided primary resource materials, such as Chongryon EFL textbooks, which made this research project possible. Furthermore, they have significantly contributed to this research through their sharing of life stories and experiences as Chongryon Koreans, which allowed the author to develop a rich understanding of life within the community and of their historical struggles that made them who they are today.

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I. Introduction

Japan is currently the third most common country for Korean expats, accounting for 11.01% of Koreans residing outside of South Korea. Specifically, in 2019, 824,977 Koreans resided in Japan, out of a total of 7,493,587 foreign-residing Koreans.¹ This is not a new trend – large numbers of Korean people have been living in Japan over a period of at least 100 years, such that fourth- and fifth-generation Koreans now make up a significant portion of the Korean community in Japan, making it Japan’s second-largest minority group.² In total, 19.7 % of Japan’s minority communities are Koreans, out of the total of 2,471,458 foreigners registered in Japan.³

Within the Korean minority group in Japan, there exists a division. This separation reflects the present division between the opposing nations, South Korea and North Korea, as seen in much recent media reporting (e.g., the inter-Korean summit on 27 April, 2018). South and North Korea serve as a unique example of a divided country, and highlight the difficulties and need to develop peaceful relations. In Japan, the division of the Korean Peninsula is reflected in two distinct groups, the Mindan organization (民團)⁴ aligning with South Korea and the Chongryon organization (總聯)⁵ aligning with

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- 1 This is a biennial report provided by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - 2 Min Hye Cho, “Multilingual ability of Koreans living in Japan: Focusing on Korean and English textbooks,” proceedings of the *Australian Symposium on Korean Language Learning and Teaching*, <ISBN 978-1-922046-21-5> (2017), pp. 135-144.
 - 3 Hawon Jang, “The special permanent residents in Japan: Zainichi Korean,” *The Yale Review of International Studies*, 2019, <<http://yris.yira.org/comments/2873>> (date accessed June 15, 2019).
 - 4 This organization is a Korean Residents’ Union in Japan that was established in 1946 and has ties to South Korea.
 - 5 For this term, this study follows the spelling used by the Chongryon organization. It is sometimes spelled as “Chongryun” or “Ch’ongnyŏn” in Korean (總聯), and “ChōsenSōren” (朝鮮総連) in Japanese. The English translation is “The General Association of Korean Residents.” This term is also applied to individuals of Korean ancestry who support North Korean ideologies.

North Korea.⁶ Considering that the majority of first generation Chongryon Koreans originated from South Korea,⁷ their division is not only political, but also ideological, and these differences in belief can be seen in the two expatriate communities as well.

Ultimately, the importance of analysing textbooks originates from the notion that textbooks act as a tool for implementing education practices from which the values of individuals or groups are expressed to students.⁸ It is from the analysis that one may better understand the dominant ideas and values of such individuals or groups along with their social setting.

This study focuses on the contents of foreign language textbooks from one of these organizations, known as the Chongryon, a pro-North Korean organization in Japan. Chongryon has established its own schools (from pre-school to university), named Joseonhakgyo⁹ and has managed them independently from the Japanese government.¹⁰ Joseonhakgyo were established in 1946 and follow teaching curricula independent of the Japanese education system.¹¹ Younger Chongryon Korean generations have been educated in this school system where, in order to promote a Korean ethnic identity, most lessons are delivered in the Korean language to Japanese-speaking students.

Since many historical events (e.g., World War II and the Korean War) have strongly affected many Koreans in Japan, this study aims to

6 Sonia Ryang, *North Koreans in Japan: Language, ideology and identity* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997).

7 Cho, *Multilingual ability of Koreans*, pp. 135-144.

8 Eli Hinkel, *Culture in second language teaching and learning* (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2005), p. 135.

9 Korean ethnic schools (Joseonhakgyo, 朝鮮学校 / Chōsengakkō /), also known as “Minjok (ethnic) hakgyo (school),” meaning “Korean ethnic schools” in Japan.

10 Cho, “A comparative study of the construction of culture and ideology seen in secondary English textbooks published by Chongryon during the 1970s, 1990s and the present day,” (PhD dissertation, The University of Queensland, 2019).

11 Korean International Network, *A story of Chosŏnhakkyo (Chosŏnhakkyo iyagi)* (Seoul: Sunin Press, 2014) <ISBN 978-89-5933-757-6 03300>.

show Chongryon's changing perspective in regards to their own living in context of their Japanese environment over the last sixty years. The findings of this study supports the concept that Chongryon Koreans' sense of belonging has transformed from identifying closely with North Korea to acknowledging their permanent residence in Japan, all the while continuously educating their students to maintain their ethnicity.

II. Theoretical background

1. Chongryon Koreans in Japan

In the last hundred years, the Korean population has grown in Japan, becoming Japan's second-largest minority group as mentioned earlier. While Korean residents once constituted the largest minority group in Japan, now, Chinese residents are Japan's largest minority population since 2007, making up 28.2% of all registered foreign residents.¹² In June 2015, the Ministry of Justice released the Statistics of Foreign Residents, which outlined that 497,707 Koreans were living in Japan, amongst a total of 2.17 million foreign residents.¹³

During the colonial era (1910-1945), many Koreans were relocated to Japan by the Japanese government to boost Japan's shortage of low-wage labour. In addition, as many as 990,000 Korean men and women were sent to serve in the Japanese army during World War II.¹⁴ Many Koreans who were relocated encountered discrimination in the

12 Kazuko Suzuki, "The state, race and immigrant adaption: A comparative analysis of the Korean diaspora in Japan and the United States," *Regions and Cohesion*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2012), pp. 49-74.

13 Haruka Morooka, "Ethnic and National Identity of Third Generation Koreans in Japan," (Master's dissertation, The City University of New York, 2016), p. 2.

14 David Chapman, "Discourses of multicultural coexistence (tabunka kyōsei) and the 'old-comer' Korean residents of Japan," *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2006), pp. 89-102.

workplace, being exploited in regards to their wages and working hours. The majority of Korean labourers at Japanese companies had unstable work (such as holding temporary minor positions) and earned lower wages than their Japanese colleagues.¹⁵

Although the Koreans' relocation had been involuntary, around 650,000 of the 2.4 million Koreans in Japan remained in Japan after World War II.¹⁶ One reason was due to the conflict between two mutually antagonistic ideologies in Korea, communism and capitalism.¹⁷ According to Jin,¹⁸ Japan's first Korean organization, Joryeon¹⁹ was founded in 1945, aiming to help Koreans to protect themselves against Japanese society. Ryang²⁰ claims that Joryeon did not represent North Korea, but sought only to encourage Koreans to repatriate to what they believed would be a unified Korea. However, Joryeon was disbanded by General Headquarters, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ) in 1949 because of its aggressive protests and the Japanese Communist Party's influence over the organization's political ideology.²¹

After Joryeon's closure, Minjeon was formed in 1951, and existed until 1955. Minjeon was the first organization to promote North Korean

15 Naoki Mizuno and Gyongsu Mun, *Zainichi Chosenjin: Reskishi to genzai (Zainichi: History and the present day)* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, Publishers, 2015).

16 Ryang, "The North Korean homeland of Koreans in Japan," in *Koreans in Japan: Critical voices from the Margin*, ed. Sonia Ryang (Oxon: Routledge, 2000), p. 33.

17 Kyung Hee Ha, "Between ethnic minority and diaspora: Zainichi Koreans in the era of global war on terror," (PhD dissertation, University of California, 2015).

18 Huigwan Jin, "The study on relations of Chongryun and North Korea," in *The Institute for Peace Affairs* (Seoul: Kyobo Book Centre, 1999).

19 Short form of the name "Jaeil joseonin yeonmaeng" in Korean. They are known in Japanese as "Zainichi chōsenjin renmei," and in English as the "League of Koreans in Japan" (Ryang, 2016).

20 Ryang, "The rise and fall of Chongryun- From Chōsenjin to Zainichi and beyond," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, vol. 14, no. 15 (2016), pp. 1-16.

21 Dong Bae Lee, "Chongryon identity as represented in Chongryon Korean language textbooks," *Humanity and Social Sciences Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2017), pp. 247-266.

ideology in Japan through rallies, despite conflicts between members. Ryang²² states that Minjeon went through a period of restructuring with the signing of the Korean War truce agreement in 1953. Two years later, Minjeon came to be known as the Chongryon organization, which sought to support North Korea's interests. A loyalist, Han Deok Su, headed the Chongryon organization with the support of Kim Il Sung,²³ demonstrating the country's interests in the organization. Such support from North Korea, coupled with a lack of support from South Korea, explains the apparent paradox – that even though the majority of Chongryon Koreans originated from the southern Korean Peninsula, many affiliated themselves with North Korea. Mindan seemed like Chongryon's rival, due to opposing ideologies. However, many Koreans were unsure whom to support, and some Koreans even paid a membership fee to both organizations. Overall, it can be difficult to distinguish between pro-Chongryon and anti-Chongryon Koreans through legal processes or choice of nationality. Reasons may be because many students attending Joseonhakgyo have parents of South Korean nationality (despite the schools' aligning with North Korean ideals) and some high-ranking Chongryon officers have South Korean nationality due to their parents' official choice.²⁴

The beginning of repatriation to North Korea (in 1959) was a success for Chongryon. Chongryon newspapers reflected the positive impressions of repatriates, with headings such as "Our Glorious Fatherland Calls Compatriots."²⁵ By the early 1980s, over 93,000 individuals (about 87,000 Koreans and 6,500 Japanese) had moved to North Korea.²⁶ Morris-Suzuki²⁷ claims that many groups worked

22 Ryang, *The rise and fall of Chongryun*, pp. 1-16.

23 Lee, *Chongryon identity as represented*, pp. 247-266.

24 Ryang, *North Koreans in Japan*, p. 5.

25 Ryang, *The North Korean homeland*, p. 37.

26 Markus Bell, "Patriotic revolutionaries and imperial sympathizers: Identity and selfhood of Korean-Japanese migrants from Japan to North Korea," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2018), p. 242.

27 Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Exodus to North Korea* (Lanham: Md. Rowman and

together to initiate the repatriation movement such as the Japanese and North Korean governments, Red Cross Societies (Japan and North Korea), Chongryon, Japanese opposition parties, Japanese media, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Soviet Union government, and the United States government. In addition, those Koreans who repatriated donated most of their assets to North Korea and Chongryon, believing Kim Il Sung's promise of housing, food, jobs and education. However, the number of repatriates decreased after the 1965 Normalization Treaty was signed. Thanks to this treaty, Chongryon Koreans were able to apply for South Korean nationality where many only chose to take South Korean nationality for convenience.²⁸ Although Koreans in Japan can relocate to North Korea, most Koreans travel there only to visit their repatriated family members.²⁹ According to Kim,³⁰ due to the 1965 Normalization Treaty, Chongryon's influence over its members has decreased, whereas that of the Mindan organization has grown. It is estimated that approximately 500,000 people have registered for Mindan membership, while only between 30,000 and 40,000 members have sought to join Chongryon.

2. Overview of Education at Joseonhakgyo

During the colonial era, Koreans living in Japan founded a number of Korean ethnic schools throughout the country because of their plan to one day return to their homeland. The slogan of the schools was "wisdom, money and power, contribute with what each one has."³¹ Providing Korean-centred autonomous education has always been a top priority for Zainichi Korean communities, especially for Chongryon Koreans.³² Choi³³ claims that, despite their poor standard of living,

Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007), p. 248.

28 Han Jo Kim, *Zainich Koreans whom we disregarded* (Seoul: Foxbook Press, 2019), p. 70.

29 Cho, *A comparative study of the construction*, pp. 12-13.

30 H. J. Kim, *Zainich Koreans*, p. 70.

31 Korean International Network, *A story of Chosŏnhakkyo*.

32 Ha, *Between ethnic minority and diaspora*, p. 6.

33 Young Ho Choi, "The past and present of ethnic education managed by Chongryon.

Koreans in Japan were able to educate their younger generations to form a Korean ethnicity and to maintain their Korean identity.

Based on their education goals, Korean ethnic schools, known as Joseonhakgyo, were established in 1946 across Japan (the Chongryon organization had yet to be established). The schools implemented curricula that were independent from the Japanese education system. Considering that most young Chongryon Korean students speak Japanese every day,³⁴ Joseonhakgyo have sought to promote learning about North Korean ideologies and Korean ethnic identity by delivering lessons in Korean. Even before Korea's independence, Koreans in Japan had focused on teaching Korean language and history to their younger generations. After independence, Chongryon came to operate more Joseonhakgyo, owing to the JPY 28 billion of funding (approximately USD 260 million) that came from Kim Il Sung in 1957.³⁵ Surprisingly, North Korea still funds the Chongryon education system, despite having decreased the amount over time. This funding is used to pay teachers' salaries, to purchase teaching materials and to pay tuition on behalf of parents.³⁶

On the other hand, according to Jin,³⁷ the funds that North Korea provided to Chongryon as education funding had potentially originated from Chongryon members' personal donations to North Korea. This exchange of money between the two entities operates under the title "business for loving nation," an indicator of the strong connection between North Korea and Chongryon.

In Hwabghae Report," *Saeul Foundation of Culture*, vol. 47, no. Summer (2005), p. 249.

34 Korean International Network, *A story of Chosŏnhakkyo*.

35 Chan Jung Kim, *One hundred year history of Zainichi* (Trans. Park, Sung Tae and Seo, Tae Soon) (Seoul: J&C Book Publishing Company, 2010) <ISBN 978-89-5668-786-5 93830>.

36 Min Hye Cho and Dong Bae Lee, "Critical analysis of Chongryon secondary English textbooks published between 1968 and 1974," *The review of Korean Studies*, vol. 22, no. 2 (2019), pp. 177-204.

37 Jin, *The study on relations of Chongryun*, pp. 139-141.

While Joseonhakgyo have been sponsored by North Korea, the Japanese government has provided little support. In 2010, the Japanese government began providing free education to high school students as part of the "Tuition Waiver Program." This program covered foreign high schools that were accredited by their respective countries. However, ten high schools in Japan were excluded from the government's funding; all of them were Joseonhakgyo. Due to this program, the Japanese government was sued by five high schools (founded in Osaka, Hiroshima, Tokyo, Aichi and Fukuoka) in January 2013, and the schools achieved different legal outcomes.³⁸ According to Yim³⁹, Joseonhakgyo high schools in Hiroshima and Tokyo lost their case in 2017, contrary to the Osaka school, which won its case.

Today, Joseon University⁴⁰ in Tokyo provides higher education to future teachers for Joseonhakgyo. All Joseonhakgyo use a set of textbooks that are written by Chongryon teachers and printed by the Chongryon publishing company, Hagusobang,⁴¹ which also publishes other school-related materials and study aids.⁴² These textbooks are distributed freely to Chongryon students. Considering that degrees from Joseonhakgyo are not accredited, the Japanese Ministry of Education cannot interfere with the production or use of textbooks or with classroom teaching.⁴³ There are currently 64 separate Joseonhakgyo institutions throughout Japan's prefectures. These institutions vary in the extent of the education provided to students, where some institutions only provide primary schooling while other institutions go up to high school. Up until now, the Joseonhakgyo consist of 54 primary

38 Korean International Network, *A story of Chosŏnhakkyo*.

39 Youngeon Yim, "A study on the Chosun school ethnic education movement and free high school education bill of Japanese-Korean," *The Journal of Localitology*, vol. 19, no. 4 (2018), p. 48, <doi: 10.15299/tjl.2018.04.19.39>.

40 Founded in Tokyo, Japan, in 1956 by the Chongryon, it is called "Korea University in Tokyo" in English, to distinguish it from Korea University in Seoul.

41 Hagusobang (学友書房) is Chongryon's privately-owned publishing company. This study follows the spelling used by the organization.

42 Cho, *Multilingual ability of Koreans*, pp. 135-144.

43 Ryang, *The North Korean homeland*, p. 36.

schools, 33 middle schools, ten high schools and one university, with a total of approximately 8,500 students attending.⁴⁴ While all textbooks are published by Hagusobang, journals and other books are published by Joseonchongnyonsa, another of Chongryon's publishers. The editing process is supervised by Chongryon's Education Department, unlike Japanese school textbooks, which are published under supervision by Japan's Ministry of Education.⁴⁵

3. Overview of EFL education at Joseonhakgyo

In 1946, Joseonhakgyo began to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to their students.⁴⁶ Simple Korean-translated short stories were selected by teachers for secondary classes, as there were no official textbooks at the time.⁴⁷ In the beginning years of providing this EFL education, Joseonhakgyo used the Soviet Union's EFL textbooks in their Tokyo schools.⁴⁸ Chongryon lacked the resources to publish their own English textbooks, and North Korea (considered to be the homeland by Chongryon members) was greatly influenced by the Soviet Union. However, these textbooks were regarded by Joseonhakgyo as being unsuitable for Chongryon students' education. According to Cho,⁴⁹ the learning content and grammar items were not tailored for Korean speakers and this was a problem due to the different linguistic structures between Russian and Korean.

44 Ha, *Between ethnic minority and diaspora*, p. 7.

45 Teruhisa Horio, *Educational thought and ideology in modern Japan* (Trans. Platzer, S.) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1988), pp. 172-180.

46 Malryo Jang is an English teacher at a secondary Joseonhakgyo located in Yokohama and was granted a Master of Philosophy in Linguistics at Kim Il Sung University, North Korea, in 2017. Due to restricted public access, the thesis was collected via email correspondence on 8 December, 2017 in order to maintain privacy.

47 Nam In Ryang was responsible for publishing the first EFL textbooks at Hagusobang between 1965 and 2003. Because of Chongryon's restricted public access, email correspondence on 9 January, 2019 was used to maintain privacy.

48 Cho, and Lee, *Critical analysis of Chongryon*, pp. 177-204.

49 Cho, *A comparative study of the construction*, p. 27.

Consequently, Chongryon worked on publishing the first of their own EFL textbooks in 1965.

In 1959, when Chongryon Korean repatriation began, parents had begun to develop more interest in EFL education on the assumption that speaking English would benefit their children's futures in North Korea (as foreign language ability would improve one's marketability in the workforce). Therefore, some parents had asked Joseonhakgyo to teach their children English, assuming that English was an important language.⁵⁰ However, at that time, Chongryon Koreans' attitudes toward English was contradictory. During the 1960s, Chongryon students had the option to study either English or Russian and, interestingly, the top-ranking students predominantly chose Russian. This choice was made in line with Chongryon Koreans' belief that English was the language of Korea's enemy, America.⁵¹ However, Cho and Lee⁵² claim that the Chongryon organization had no choice but to submit to the will of the younger Korean generations, who demanded participation in Japanese society (such as by entering Japanese universities rather than Joseon University). Therefore, over the years, Chongryon EFL textbooks have been revised to update itself with Japanese school textbooks. Furthermore, since 2017, Joseonhakgyo have begun to teach English to Grade 5 and 6 primary students using their own materials, such as speaking and listening-focused textbooks so that students would be able to strengthen their communicative skills.⁵³

50 Nam In Ryang was responsible for publishing the first EFL textbooks at Hagusobang between 1965 and 2003. Because of Chongryon's restricted public access, email correspondence on 9 January, 2019 was used to maintain privacy.

51 Kyong Suk Kim was responsible for publishing EFL textbooks at Hagusobang between 1976 and 2004. Due to restricted public access, the information was collected via email correspondence on 12 May, 2018 to maintain privacy.

52 Cho and Lee, *Critical analysis of Chongryon*, p. 181.

53 Mi Ja Moon is currently responsible for EFL teaching publications at Hagusobang. Due to restricted public access, the information was collected via email correspondence on 12 May and 21 December, 2018 to maintain privacy.

The revision process of the Chongryon EFL textbooks indicates Chongryon's changing interest in English – from using English as a tool to promote North Korean ideology, to using English as communicative device in a global economy. This change signifies Chongryon Koreans' increasing hope to better integrate themselves into Japanese society.

III. Approach

1. Data

In this study, nine EFL textbooks are analyzed: three for every grade from one to three (where students are aged between thirteen and fifteen). The textbooks were published in 1970, 1994 and 2014 respectively and have been used at Joseonhakgyo during different North Korean leaderships (Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un). These textbooks have been published by and collected from Hagosobang, the name of Chongryon's publishing company, and this is known to be the first official collection.

The lesson titles from each grade textbook published at different time period are displayed below.⁵⁴

54 Any errors found in the Tables are that of the original copies.

<Table 1> Lesson Titles from Grade 1 Publications

| Lesson no. | 1970 | 1994 | 2014 |
|------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | This is a pen | My name is Yong Ho | My name is Su Chol |
| 2 | Is this a pen? | This is my friend | Are you a soccer fan? |
| 3 | What is this? | Cindy's country | This is my school |
| 4 | I am a pupil | It's not a classroom | I have a present for you |
| 5 | Who is he? | My school uniform | Alice and Humpty Dumpty |
| 6 | This is my cap | Are you a soccer fan? | My father makes computer programs |
| 7 | I have a ball | What's this? | Can you ski in August? |
| 8 | This is my face | A school bazaar | E-mail from Australia |
| 9 | What have you in your hand? | You speak Korean | Yong Sil's diary |
| 10 | There is a desk in your room | Ted's cousin in England | |
| 11 | Where is Korea? | My family's hobbies | |
| 12 | We are friends | Alice and Humpty | |
| 13 | What flowers are these? | What time is it? | |
| 14 | We learn English | The Earth and the Moon | |
| 15 | Our family | Macro Polo | |
| 16 | What are you doing? | | |
| 17 | Marshal Kim Il Sung loves us | | |
| 18 | What time is it? | | |
| 19 | I get up at seven | | |
| 20 | How old are you? | | |
| 21 | I can speak English | | |
| 22 | There are seven days in a week | | |
| 23 | The twelve months | | |
| 24 | What a beautiful place Mangyongdae is! | | |

<Table 2> Lesson Titles from Grade 2 Publications

| Lesson no. | 1970 | 1994 | 2014 |
|------------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | The birthday of Marshal Kim Il Sung | The new school term | Spring vacation |
| 2 | Ok Sun is a Korean girl | Diary in English | Student activities |
| 3 | Next month will be May | Holidays in May | Thailand |
| 4 | We shall go to the zoo | Communication | Korean schools in Japan |
| 5 | I helped mother | Dolphins | The United Kingdom |
| 6 | Unity | Who “Discovered” America? | Homestay in Canada |
| 7 | One spring morning | An Australian teacher | My dream |
| 8 | Chun Sik and In Ho | The Maori in New Zealand | Cooking is fun |
| 9 | He fought to the last | Speech – “My dream” | Black-faced spoonbills |
| 10 | The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea | Cooking | |
| 11 | To study | The United Kingdom | |
| 12 | A letter from Pyongyang | City life and Country life | |
| 13 | Dong Su and his family | | |
| 14 | Chun Sik has written his letter | | |
| 15 | You have once lived in Pyongyang | | |
| 16 | Uncle’s travel | | |
| 17 | Pyongyang | | |
| 18 | Mt. Kenmgang | | |
| 19 | Korean is spoken in Korea | | |
| 20 | The history of printing | | |
| 21 | In the classroom | | |
| 22 | The boyhood of Marshal Kim Il Sung | | |

<Table 3> Lesson Titles from Grade 3 Publications

| Lesson no. | 1970 | 1994 | 2014 |
|------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Spring | Spring | Power of air |
| 2 | On Sunday | Interview | Communication |
| 3 | The football match | Learning the Korean language | John's letter from London |
| 4 | Our life and nature | School trip to Hiroshima | School trip to Hiroshima |
| 5 | The 102 Children's Tomb | Good Health | How can we stay healthy? |
| 6 | The ninth of September | Ted's letter from London | The Harvest festival |
| 7 | Ok Sun is a girl whom everybody loves | Why did Dodos disappear? | Electronic dictionaries- For or Against |
| 8 | Camping | For Civil rights | I have a dream |
| 9 | In the bosom of Marshal Kim Il Sung | Southeast Asian countries | |
| 10 | How I lived before the Liberation? | | |
| 11 | Blue is the sky | | |
| 12 | How to write a diary | | |
| 13 | Ok Sun's diary | | |
| 14 | A greedy merchant and a wood-cutter | | |
| 15 | I must fight to the last | | |

As recognized from the Tables above, there is no topic of foreign countries in 1970. Instead, the publications focus on North Korea and its leader, Kim Il Sung. However, 1994 publications include content on foreign countries (such as the U.K. and New Zealand) who have their own minority communities, which as a result, is reflective of the status of Koreans in Japan as a minority group. At the same time, content on North Korea and Kim Il Sung is lessened. In addition, topics on foreign countries in 2014 publications appear to be diverse by introducing foreign culture itself (e.g., "Can you ski in August?" in Grade 1). These publications include no topic on North Korea and its leadership at all.

It is necessary to select examples of texts to study, owing to the large number of texts present in the textbooks. Those texts, which cover the most frequently occurring topics of foreign countries (i.e. outside of Japan), are selected and analyzed critically in context of history, politics and culture, as the repetition of specific ideas highlights the particular focal points of Chongryon's dominant ideology and cultural beliefs from which the messages are communicated.

The selected texts, which are italicised in this paper, contain some unintentional grammatical errors and misspellings in their original form, which are reproduced in this investigation.

2. Analysis

a. Under Kim Il Sung's leadership: published in 1970

The 1970 textbooks outline a close relationship between the Chongryon organization and North Korea, where North Korea's description as being Chongryon member's homeland is emphasized. During the 1970s, Chongryon Koreans were most exposed to North Korean ideologies, thereby encouraging strong ties between the two people. Here, the textbooks portray good Chongryon Koreans as being loyal to North Korea.

Lesson 6: The ninth of September (Grade 3)

1. *Under the wise guidance of Marshal Kim Il Sung, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded on September 9, 1948.*
2. *The founding of D.P.R.K. was a great event.*
3. *... opened a new era in the history of our country.*
4. *... brought a great change in the life of the Koreans in Japan, too.*
5. *Today the D.P.R.K. is one of the most developed socialist countries.*
6. *... is a powerful socialist country.*
7. *Peoples in the world call it "Heroic Korea" or "Chollima Korea."*

(Excerpt 1)

In Excerpt 1, the adjectives “new” (Line 3) and “powerful” (Line 6) repeat the idea of North Korea’s supremacy. The passive voice (“was founded” in Line 1) reduces the emphasis on Kim Il Sung as the actor of “the founding.” Instead readers are focused more on the merit of Kim Il Sung’s actions than on Kim Il Sung himself. The final paragraph in the excerpt describes the present condition of North Korea as being “one of the most developed socialist countries” (Line 5). This evokes Kim Il Sung’s great leadership, since it was the Marshal’s “wise guidance” that brought this about.

In the last sentence, “people[s] in the world” does not specify any cultural group. The exclusion of words that would categorize race, religion, culture or social class implies a breaking down of social barriers. As such, North Korea’s description as “heroic” and “Chollima”⁵⁵ is evoked as a global agreement that is undisputed.

Overall, Excerpt 1 portrayed North Korea as beautiful and as a highly evolved country that had succeeded in overcoming great hardships (such as the Korean War).

Lesson 17: Pyongyang (Grade 2)

1. *Pyongyang is the capital of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.*
2. *... one of the oldest cities in the world.*
3. *... has grown along the Daedong River.*
4. *After the War, the city has greatly changed.*
5. *... Korean people have built it up at Chollima speed.*

(Excerpt 2)

The superlative adjective “oldest” and the adverb “greatly” emphasize Pyongyang’s environment in the context of North Korea. The phrase “one of the oldest cities in the world” (Line 2) signifies that Pyongyang has a long and eventful history. As such, the writer encouraged discussion about Pyongyang. The city’s change (Line 4)

55 “Chollima” is the name given to a mythical flying horse that is strong and fast.

leads students to believe that Pyongyang has economically evolved to positively benefit its citizens. Consequently, the readers develop a positive mindset regarding North Korea as a country that has overcome great obstacles. In the text, the present perfect tense expresses the development of Pyongyang, which "...has grown." The present perfect indicates an action that occurred over a period of time, which highlights the continuing development of Pyongyang. Although the writer never mentions South Korea in this passage, there is an implicit suggestion that North Korea has progressed faster than South Korea. According to Kim's study,⁵⁶ the Chollima Movement promoted North Korea's achievement in rebuilding their economy during the 1950s. The magnitude of this achievement was highlighted against the obstacles that impeded North Korea's economic growth. Such obstacles included splits and conflicts inside the North Korean political structures, interference and pressures from older and more powerful socialist countries, and North Korea's contest with South Korea.

In Excerpt 2, the phrase "one of the oldest cities" (Line 2) conveys an indefinite fact, which does not require empirical evidence. Consequently, this may lead some readers to question the accuracy of the information presented in the text. Overall, the producer communicated the success of North Korea's growth in the aftermath of the Korean War by presenting evidence of Pyongyang's growth.

b. Under Kim Jong Il's leadership: published in 1994

In the 1994 textbooks, lessons include discussions pertaining to foreign countries outside of Japan and opinions in regards to Chongryon Koreans' life in Japan. Lessons about foreign countries facilitate discussion about minority culture and language and reflect Chongryon's own situation as a minority group in Japan. As such, the lessons encourage students to recognize a similarity between them and other foreign cultural groups.

56 Jin Hwan Kim, "Chollima Movement: The myth of construction and the politics of reconstruction," *North Korean Studies Bulletin*, vol. 20, no. 2 (2016), pp. 31-62.

Lesson 8: The Maori in New Zealand (Grade 2)

1. ... there are several different ethnic groups.
2. The Maori is one of them.
3. Years ago all the Maori people spoke the Maori language.
4. Today only one fifth of the 350,000 Maori speak it.
5. Why...?
6. Because the majority of the people are not Maori, and the main language is English.

(Excerpt 3)

There was little diplomatic relationship between North Korea and New Zealand until 2001, forty years after New Zealand had established relations with South Korea.⁵⁷ Therefore, the decision to include this lesson highlights Chongryon's desire to use the country's language and cultural issues to encourage Chongryon students to preserve their ethnic language, rather than to teach about foreign cultures.

New Zealand's indigenous population was described in order to be reflective of Chongryon Koreans in Japan. According to de Bres,⁵⁸ who analyzed New Zealand's language ideologies, there exists a hierarchy of minority languages in New Zealand, with the Maori language being the most commonly used. In the excerpt, the writer states that New Zealand has "different ethnic groups" (Line 1), evoking a resemblance between Chongryon Koreans and New Zealand's ethnic groups. The simple past tense verb "spoke" evokes a discontinued action, where readers gather that not all Maori people speak their language now. Additionally, the adverb "only" (Line 4) emphasizes the inadequate number of speakers. The lesson posits that the problem the Maori people faced was their dying language, due to "the main language [being] English" (Line 6).

57 Paul Bellamy, "A gradual de-thawing: Paul Bellamy reviews the establishment of New Zealand-North Korea diplomatic relations," *New Zealand International Review*, vol. 38, no. 4 (2013), pp. 6-9.

58 Julia De Bres, "The hierarchy of minority languages in New Zealand," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol. 36, no. 7 (2015), pp. 677-693, <doi: 10.1080/01434632.2015.1009465>.

This situation reflected the Chongryon Koreans' problem. Chongryon Koreans, being a minority in Japan, are immersed more in Japanese than in Korean, and the diminishment of Korean within the Chongryon community is an issue common to many minority groups. Therefore, Excerpts 3 highlighted the importance of acting to preserve a minority language, culture and identity within a dominant society.

Lesson 11: The United Kingdom (Grade 2)

1. ... *is made up of four countries: England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.*
2. *England is the largest of the four.*
3. *Which is larger, Scotland or Wales? Scotland is.*
4. *The differences among the four are not merely in size.*
5. *Each country has its own culture.*
6. ... *the Welsh people have their own language: Welsh.*

(Excerpt 4)

While Excerpt 4 is about the U.K., the main message communicates the differences in the countries despite their geographical similarities, a reflection of Chongryon's position in Japan. The writer posed a question comparing two countries, "Which is larger, Scotland or Wales?" (Line 3). While stating that "Scotland" is larger, the producer ascribed value to Wales as a country with its "own language," regardless of size. The adverb "merely" (Line 4) points out that the differences between the countries go beyond geographical size. The determiner "each" and the adjective "own" emphasize the individuality of all four countries to outline each country's unique merit, such as Wales's national language, Welsh. Overall, Excerpt 4 underlined the importance of cultural identity by describing some of the distinct cultures within the U.K. Therefore, readers would appreciate the need to maintain Korean, because the language added value to the Chongryon culture.

c. Under Kim Jong Un's leadership: published in 2014

In the 2014 textbooks, the lessons provide a more educational outlook on the world. Unlike 1990s, where lessons encouraged students to self-reflect, 2014 textbooks focus on the geographical and cultural characteristics of foreign countries, without identifying similarities with Chongryon's own environment.

Lesson 3: John's letter from London (Grade 3)

1. ... *Here's a letter from John to Su Chol.*
2. ... *I like my school very much. The teachers and the students are kind and friendly.*
3. ... *London is an exciting city.*
4. ... *many interesting places to visit – museums, theaters, parks and gardens. I've already visited the British Museum.*
5. *It is huge, ... need at least one week to see everything...*
6. *Dad's going to take me to London Eye this weekend.*
7. *I can't wait to go...*
8. *P.S. I'm enclosing a photo of me. ... the largest park in London.*

(Excerpt 5)

Excerpt 5 is presented as a letter written by John to Su Chol. In the letter, John introduces major landmarks to Su Chol, such as "the British Museum" and the "London Eye." Adjectives such as "kind," "friendly" and "exciting" highlight John's positive impression and experience of being in London. The adverb "many" (Line 4) takes into account the multitude and diversity of London's environment, such as its "museums, theaters, parks and gardens." As a result, John enjoys his school life "very much" in this "exciting" city. In Lines 3 to 7, a large number of places to visit in London are presented and evoke readers' desire to travel, such as the "British Museum," "London Eye" and "Hyde Park." In Lines 5 to 7, the writer provides a more emotive description of London, so as to better describe the "many interesting places to visit." John states that "[London] is huge" and that "... need at

least one week to see everything” (Line 5), thereby highlighting the degree of glamour that is often associated with capital cities. The phrase “I can’t wait” (Line 7) evokes a tone of impatience in the speaker.

Prior lesson material about the U.K. highlighted its diversity both culturally and linguistically. In this lesson, the description of the U.K. is extrapolated to discuss its landmark features. Consequently, the writer is expressing interest in both the country and the culture of the U.K. The lack of U.K.’s negative description could reflect the positive relationship between North Korea and the U.K. In 2003, North Korea opened an embassy in London, two years after the U.K. opened their own embassy in Pyongyang. Relations between North Korea and the U.K. are now maintained through the provision of English language and human rights education by the U.K. to North Korean officials.⁵⁹

Lesson 7: Can you ski in August? (Grade 1)

1. *Yong Sil: How beautiful! The leaves are all red and yellow.*
2. *Su Chol: ... the air is so fresh.*
3. *Mr. Kim: John, you are a good hiker.*
4. *John: ... My father often takes me on hikes... walks in summer and skies in winter.*
5. *Su Chol: Can you ski, John?*
6. *John: ... I can. I ski a lot.*
7. *Yong Sil: When do you ski?*
8. *John: I usually ski in August...*

(Excerpt 6)

The theme of nature and life is presented in a discussion between Yong Sil, Su Chol, Mr Kim and John. In Excerpt 6, the four characters are hiking, denoted by Mr Kim stating that John is “a good hiker.” In Lines 1 and 2, Yong Sil and Su Chol make remarks about nature. The leaves’ colors are “red” and “yellow,” which Yong Sil associates with being

⁵⁹ Adam Cathcart and Steven Denne, “North Korea’s cultural diplomacy in the early Kim Jong-Un era,” *North Korean Review*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2013), pp. 29-42.

“beautiful.” Additionally, Su Chol describes the air as being “fresh,” with the adverb “so” creating additional emphasis. In contrast to the 1970 textbooks, where the image of beauty was associated with Pyongyang in Excerpt 1 and 2, “beautiful” is associated with a natural environment away from urban life.

The discussion shifts to hiking (Line 4). Here, it is Mr Kim and John who are speaking. Mr Kim compliments John’s hiking with the adjective “good” (Line 3). John is then prompted to explain to Mr Kim how he is a good hiker, stating that his father takes him on hikes. The adverb “often” reveals that John has hiked many times in the past, thereby revealing himself as an experienced hiker. John concludes by stating that his father “skies (sic) in winter,” which draws Su Chol and Yong Sil into the conversation.

Lines 5 to 8 are focused on skiing. Su Chol is drawn into the conversation and enquires whether John “can” ski. The modal verb “can” outlines Su Chol’s interest in knowing if John is able to ski. “Can” could also be used to enquire about John’s opportunity to ski. John is an Australian, which gives rise to the question of the possibility of skiing in Australia. However, John points out that he “can” ski and that he skis “a lot” (Line 6). In Line 8, John challenges the stereotype of Australia being hot, when he says that he “usually ski[s] in August.” However, while the misconception is challenged, another stereotype of Australians is evoked. The discussion about skiing and hiking revolves around John and his family. The readers learn that John is fond of sports, a common Australian stereotype, while Australia is one of the most obese nations, with over nine million adults being overweight or obese in 2008.⁶⁰

In this excerpt, Chongryon readers learn to identify nature as a beautiful phenomenon, at the same time as they learn about Australian culture, where one can ski in August, unlike in Japan where December is the more common time to ski. Consequently, readers are exposed to

60 Simon Stewart, Gabriella Tikellis, Melina Carrington, Karen Walker, and Kerin O’Dea, *Australia’s future ‘fat bomb’* (Baker Heart and Diabetes Research Institute: Victoria: Australia, 2008).

global contemporary trends about the preservation of natural resources.

IV. Conclusion

Under Kim Il Sung's leadership (during the 1970s), Chongryon EFL textbooks delivered lessons about North Korean ideology and patriotism to educate students about North Korea. Considering that Chongryon students were immersed in North Korean ideas in many subject areas, the repetition of North Korea as the students' homeland, and of Kim Il Sung as their father figure reduced time for the teaching of practical skills, such as the English language. Furthermore, the repetition of North Korean ideology in multiple subject areas conditioned students to believe in a single system.

The 1994 publications used during Kim Jong Il's era also differed in that students were no longer taught that North Korea was 'home' – the texts now assumed that their readers were living in Japan. The 1994 textbooks aimed to educate Chongryon students to view their culture as important and relevant within modern society, thereby encouraging students to take pride in their unique heritage, despite their residency in Japan.

The latest textbooks (2014) used under Kim Jong Un's leadership lack content on North Korea and Kim Il Sung, in marked contrast with the earlier publications. In the 2014 publications, foreign characters are introduced and form relationships with Chongryon Korean characters. This change in relationships between the Chongryon community and other foreign countries expresses Chongryon's acknowledgement of living in a globalized world.

This study seeks to reveal a side of the Chongryon Koreans who have overcome many obstacles since leaving the Korean Peninsula and settling Japan. The findings show that the learning focus of Joseonhakgyo has evolved to fulfil students' demands, thereby ensuring textbooks remain up-to-date, which has resulted in there being a

reduction in content related to North Korea. Therefore, while Chongryon Koreans are still somewhat connected to North Korea, as evident by the members' transition from North Korean-centric ideas to being more engaged with global issues, this study suggests the following: Joseonhakgyo should be regarded as Korean ethnic schools and be provided with more opportunities to interact with other groups and societies in order to facilitate a peaceful relationship between North and South Korea.

One option for further study is to investigate other language textbooks, such as Korean and Japanese, and how the Joseonhakgyo textbooks changes over time in order to better understand Chongryon's unique learning environment.

■ Article Received: 4/22 ■ Reviewed: 5/27 ■ Revised: 6/4 ■ Accepted: 6/4

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