Korea's Language Policy Responses to Globalization

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This study aimed to investigate that the language policies of Korea have been changed to meet the needs of the globalized world. The purpose of this research was to examine how English language textbooks reflected the goals of the language policies of Korea for promoting the competences of Korea's young generation to participate in a global competition. As for the research methodology, English language textbook analysis was adopted because English language textbooks approved by the Korean government show the essential elements of Korea's globalization policies, as found in the contents of the English textbooks. The nine middle school textbooks published in 2015 and 2017 (one textbook in grade7,8,9 from 3 different publishing companies) were analyzed, focusing on the topical construction and cultural contents. The results of the textbook analysis showed that the topics of the textbooks were diverse and the cultural contents of English textbooks were varied so that the cultural awareness of Korean students could be expanded. So the language policies of Korea can be evaluated as appropriate for cultivating the young Korean generation's capabilities so as to participate in the globalized world.

Keywords: language policy, globalization, textbook analysis, topics, cultural contents

1 Introduction

The word "Global" has become a symbol of the modern world, meaning the process of interacting with one another in every aspect of society, and the process of globalization has been promoted and reinforced by the worldwide spread of English (Murata & Jenkins, 2009). In the globalized world, the competence of English language has become an essential capability for individuals and for nations (Graddol, 2001; Gray, 2002; Parmenter, 2000; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). More agreement is being reached on the idea that English has become the language of international communication and understanding, alongside the integration process of knowledge and economy. At the same time, English education is a non-political tool for international and economic development in non-English-speaking countries. But in this

process, the question of English leadership is still a controversial part. Globalization is characterized by technical and English skills. These two skills are defined as literacy in the global era (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007, p.1). Each country is committed to improving its two capabilities to overcome the challenges of the global era.

Therefore, Korea's education policy has been changed to focus on developing the global capabilities of Korean students in order to meet the challenges of the globalized world and to play a leading role in international affairs (Kwon, 2000; Yim, 2007). This study aimed to show that Korea's language policies have been changed to meet the needs of the globalized world, and the results were successful.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Language policy and English language curriculum in Korea

According to Chang (1996), the English education in Korea began in the late 19th century as part of modernized education. This period was established by modern educational institutions such as Dongmunhak, Yookyoung Park, and the official foreign language school and during this period. Christian private schools (the Ewha School, Baejae School, etc.) aimed at spreading Christianity. This period is called the beginning of Korean English education. After that, Korea's English education took a step backward because of Japanese colonization. Since the official curriculum was established in Korea, the English language contents of elementary, middle and high schools were decided according to the atmosphere and needs of the society from the first to the seventh period of the curriculum. In particular, as the 1986 Asian Games and 1988 Olympic Games were held in Korea, English language curriculum contents were changed from grammar-focused teaching methods to communication-oriented methods. In the 6th curriculum, as Korea joined the OECD, the development of English proficiency in the era of globalization was clearly marked as the goal of English education. As such, around the 1990s, all national policies were implemented to foster national competitiveness in globalization, among which English was being emphasized as a tool for communication in the global age (Kramsch, 2014).

South Korea has also made strenuous efforts to improve the nation's competitiveness for globalization. In 1995, during the Kim Young-sam administration, the government declared the "globalization era" as its goal of national policy to foster national competitiveness in response to the globalization era, and among other things, it set the purpose of the nation's education. In the era of the 6th curriculum (1992-1997) and 7th curriculum (1997-2006), Korea's economic growth restored confidence and emphasized the need for the era of globalization and the international community for

education (Chang, 1999, 2001). To achieve the goal of English education in response to the needs of this era, the contents of the English curriculum were much transformed from the 6th national curriculum, including introduction of communication-centered teaching subjects, reclassification of language functions, level curriculum, and conversion to student-oriented curricula. Since the 1990s, the goal of English education has been to foster talented people to meet the globalization era, so that elementary schools have designated English subjects, the education policies of Korean government decided to directly hire native English teachers, and to introduce English listening ability tests (Chang, 2009). The brief history of English education in Korea could be summarized by the following three phases (Chang & Han, 2016).

2.1.1 The first phase: the $1^{st} \sim 5^{th}$ curriculum (1954 – 1992)

This phase could be summarized as the period when Korea's first educational law was promulgated and the first educational process was established. And the changes in various aspects of Korean society were reflected in the curriculum, and they went through the process of change almost every 10 years. The specific focuses of the English language curriculum of the first phase are as follows:

- ·Focus on developing basic skills in grammar, the ability to understand each other's culture
- ·High emphasis on introducing Korean culture through foreign languages
- ·Promoting English education courses that emphasize communication skills by enhancing the basic skills of English

2.1.2 The second phase: the 6th and the 7th curriculum (1992 – 2007)

During this phase, Korea's economic growth helped Koreans to regain confidence and Korea joined OECD and the demand for an era of globalization grew stronger. The Korean government highly emphasized the national development and contributions to the international community.

- ① The 6th curriculum (1992- 1997)
- ·Reviewing student needs
- ·High emphasis on human development process
- ·Introduction of English subjects centered on communication
- ·Introduction of methods and contents of priority for practical availability
- ·Reclassification of language functions
- ② The 7th curriculum (1997- 2006)
- ·Introduction of constructivism in the English language curriculum

- High emphasis on students' own learning skills rather than the form of education based on the structural education philosophy
- ·Highlight communication skills and language skills
- ·Recommending the education courses by level
- ·High emphasis on performing activities through various learning
- ·Students-oriented curriculum
- ·New awareness of our culture by understanding foreign culture and promoting proper values

2.1.3 The third phase (revised curriculum; 2009 - present)

This phase could be summarized as the English language curriculum emphasized on cultivating the creative and talented global capabilities of young Korean learners.

- 2009 revised curriculum
- ·Emphasis on a student-centered curriculum
- ·Focus on making the contents of the curriculum appropriate and strengthening the connectivity between each curriculum
- Strengthening English education to improve practical English skills
- Dividing the curriculum into common courses and selective courses
- (2) 2015 revised curriculum
- ·Fostering learners' autonomous academic skills by reducing the learning burden
- Operating integrated education courses
- ·Introduction of free semester system for middle school
- ·Emphasis on developing the software classes
- ·Reducing and simplifying the number of subject areas to 10 subjects

The brief developmental history of English language policies of Korea could be sketched through the above three phases. The first phase was meaningful in that Korea's first educational law was set up and the first educational process was established. The second phase could be evaluated to highly emphasize the national development and contributions to the globalized world. Now Korea reached the third phase of Korea's English education history, and the third phase focuses on cultivating the creative talents and global capabilities of young Korean learners. These three phases of English education development show that Korea has set the purposes of English education and adapted the contents of English curriculum and textbooks considering the various factors of the social, economic, and political situations confronting Korea at that time.

2.2 Theoretical background

According to the definition of Wikipedia, the concept of globalization can be summarized as follows: 'Globalization is the process of interaction and integration between people, companies, and governments worldwide. Globalization has grown due to advance in transportation and communication technology. With increased global interactions comes the growth of international trade, ideas, and culture. The term globalization derives from the world globalize, which refers to be emergence of an international network of economic systems. The term 'globalization' had been used in its economic sense at least as early as 1981, and in other senses since at least as early as 1944 (Wikipedia: https://en/ wikipeda.org/wiki/globalization)'. Global has become a symbol of the modern world, meaning the process of interacting with one another in every aspect of society, and the process of globalization has been promoted and reinforced by the worldwide spread of English (Crystal, 2003; Kramsch & Vinall, 2014; McCarty, 2010).

After going through the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympic Games, Korea was exposed to the international community in the 1980s, and the strong internationalization craze in the 1990s made English more important in Korean society. With new technological advances, globalization has led to significant changes both domestically and nationally in all areas of political, economic and social culture. As Brown and Lauder (1997) pointed out, the education system is also part of the economic identity of society. It has become an important educational agenda for many countries, including Korea, which raised a question of how to respond to the challenges caused by globalization. One of the many challenges facing South Korea was how to teach students skills that could make them internationally capable: foreign language skills, mathematical logic, scientific thinking, and computer skills. The most important of these abilities is English ability, as English serves as an important medium of communication as a lingua Franca when communicating through the Internet. It is true that English has become a survival skill of the 21st century, both personally and nationally (Graddol, 2001; Gray, 2002; Parmenter, 2000).

Korea has made much effort to educate people about how to bring the world's culture to Korea and also to respect other cultures (Kim. M. H., 2001). The challenge is to develop Korean students into people who can play a leading role in international business in response to the challenges of the globalized world. In order to achieve this goal, Korea's main task is to develop students who are proficient in English skills. At the same time, it is important for students to strongly recognize Korea's national identity, because Korean students must have the ability to introduce Korean traditions and ethnic homogeneity to the world in English.

In order to provide appropriate language education in the era of globalization, there have been active studies of language policy and culture in

the field of education since the 2000s. Yim (2007) analyzed English textbooks in order to prove the suitability of the Korean government's education policy to achieve the goal of fostering the talented young people suitable for the global era. His study analyzed the composition and cultural contents of each textbook by subject, selecting English textbooks for middle schools, which were written on the basis of the curriculum revised in 1995 and have been used in each school since 2001. The analysis has shown that the English education policy of Korea has emphasized to develop the English language skills that could embrace both national and international responsibility for the sake of the globalization strategy to make Korea a stronger, more developed and more influential country in the world. In addition, the English textbooks compiled to achieve these educational goals played a very positive role in improving English skills, introducing a variety of world cultures to Korea and introducing Korean values and traditions to the world, while improving national self- esteem.

English textbooks have been revised in accordance with the internationalization policy set by the government. Textbooks are a good beginning for studying the impact of globalization on national identity, because an important element of internationalization policy is clearly reflected in the contents of English textbooks. There have been important studies on the relationship between English language policies and textbooks in the 21st century. Tsui & Tolefson (2007) stressed the importance of the nation's cultural identity and language policy in the global era, and emphasized the importance of the role and the status of English language in Asian countries. Tolefson (2013) discussed the importance of language policy in education area, and emphasized the relationship between language policy and ideology. The relationship between language policy and ideology has become very crucial point in the study for multiculturalism and plays an important role in controlling social and political conflicts. Ping (2014) analyzed the English policies reflected in Chinese elementary school English textbooks. It analyzed the linguistic data expressed by various Chinese cultures, and investigated how these cultural displays were implemented in the relationship between China and the global community. This study pointed out that current English textbooks are organized so that Chinese learners have a good sense of their own culture.

The Korean government started revising English textbooks from the 6th national curriculum to achieve the goals implemented by such globalization policies, designating English as a compulsory subject from the third grade of elementary school from the 7th national curriculum (Chang, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of the study is to demonstrate how textbooks adopted by the reform of education policy respond to the national globalization strategy, Korea's national identity and the process of raising self-esteem in Korea.

3 Research Methodology

The research method was to analyze the topical construction of the reading texts in each lesson from 9 middle school textbooks (one book in grades 7, 8, 9 from 3 different publishing companies: the textbooks of grade 7 were published in 2017, the textbooks of grades 8, 9 were published in 2015). The author of this research analyzed the topics of each reading texts and categorized the topics into 4 groups: personal life, personal welfare, social matters, and cultural exchanges. Also the author narrowed down the scope of textbook analysis into the textbooks from 3 different publishing companies. In this research, total 87 lessons (grade 7: 24 lessons, grade 8: 32 lessons, grade 9: 31 lessons; total 87 lessons) were analyzed according to three criteria:

- 3.1 What was the topic composition of each textbook? Were the topics constructed in order to improve the Korean students' ability to understand language and culture through various experiences? Could the topical construction reflect the cultural diversity enough to provide the wide perspective for understanding the multiculturalism of the globalized era?
- 3.2 Was the topical composition of the subject matter different for each school year? Or were the topical constructions made up of the same proportion from the 7th grade to the 9th grade textbooks?
- 3.3 Were there any differences in the topical construction between the English textbooks published on the 7th national curriculum and those published on the revised national curriculum in 2009? For this question, this study compared the results of analyzing the topical construction of the English textbooks by Yim (2007) and the results of this research paper.

4 Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of analyzing the middle school English textbooks were summarized according to the topical construction of English textbooks, the distribution of topical categories in each grade of English textbooks, and the comparison of the topical construction between English textbook on the 7th national curriculum and those on the revised national curriculum.

4.1 The topical construction of English textbooks

The topical construction of English textbooks based on the revised curriculum showed that English textbooks consisted of 19 topics, which signified that the topics were various enough to provide an extensive perspective for the world to young Korean learners.

The most frequently presented topics in this textbook analysis included the topics of art, literature (related with creativity, imagination: 11.4%), the topics of manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility, etc. (10.3%), and the topics of animals, plants, seasons, and weather (related with natural phenomenon: 9.1%). As seen in Table 1, the researcher divided these 19 topics into 4 categories (personal life (topics $\textcircled{1}\sim\textcircled{6}$), personal welfare (topics $\textcircled{7}\sim\textcircled{0}$), social matters (topics $\textcircled{1}\sim\textcircled{3}$), and cultural exchange (topics $\textcircled{4}\sim\textcircled{2}$)) according to the common characteristics of the topics.

Table 1. Topical Analysis of Middle School English Textbooks

Category	Topics	No	%
	① Personal life	5	5.7
	② Family life & food, clothing and shelter	5	5.7
D 1	3 School life & friendship	5	5.7
Personal Life	4 Social life & personal relationship	2	2.2
	⑤ Good use of leisure (hobbies, travel, sports, etc.)	7	8
	6 Animals, plants, seasons, weather (related natural phenomenon)	8	9.1
	7 Communication styles in English culture		
Cultural	® Daily life of English speaking people	3	3.4
Exchange	Observation of cultural and linguistic differences	5	5.7
	10 Introduction of Korean culture to the world	6	6.8
	① Manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility, etc.	9	10.3
Personal Welfare	② Art, literature (related with creativity, imagination)	10	11.4
	(3) Career, job, work (related with one's welfare)	5	5.7

	social science, natural science, art) 87 100
	(1) Academic knowledge related with humanity, 1 1.1
Social Matters	history, geography, etc.)
	18 Liberal arts (politics, science, math, economy, 6 6.8
	D Patriotism, peace, security, unification
	democratic awareness, world citizen awareness)
	etiquette, the equality of the sexes (related with 5 5.7
	16 Human rights, democratic citizenship, global
	changes)
	multicultural society (related with society 1 1.1
	(5) Population problem, teenager problems,
	preservation)
	① Environmental matters (related with environment 4 4.5

The most frequently presented topics could be ranked as follows:

- 1) Art, literature (related with creativity, imagination): 11.4%
- 2) Manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility etc.:10.3%
- 3) Animals, plants, seasons, weather (related with natural phenomenon): 9.1%
- 4) Good use of leisure (hobbies, travel, sports, etc.): 8%
- 5) Introduction of Korean culture to the world: 6.8%

Also the frequency of topical categories could be ranked as personal life (36.7%), personal welfare (27.5%), social matters (19.5%), and cultural exchange (16%), and this result can be seen in Figure 1. This signified that the topical categories were appropriately constructed and were not concentrated on one or two specific topical category.

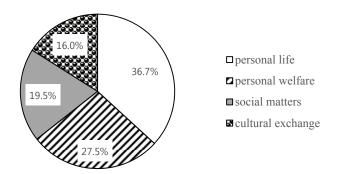


Figure 1. The ranking of topical categories of English textbooks

4.2 The distribution of topical categories in each grade of English textbooks

This study analyzed the distribution of the topical categories in each grade. The results of this analysis showed that the portions of topical categories were different in each grade and were appropriately presented according to the grade. The distribution of topical categories in each grade could be summarized in Figure 2.

- 1) Grade 7: Personal Life (50%) > Personal Welfare (25%) > Cultural Exchange (12.5%) > Social Matters (12.5%)
- 2) Grade 8: Personal Life (40.6%) > Personal Welfare (37.5%) > Cultural Exchange (12.5%) > Social Matters (9.3%)
- 3) Grade 9: Social Matters (35.4%) > Cultural Exchange (22.5%)

□ personal life ☑ personal welfare ☒ cultural exchage ☒ social matters

> Personal Life (22.5%) > Personal Welfare (19.3%)

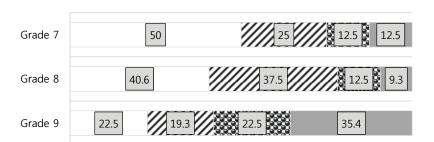


Figure 2. The distribution of topical categories in each grade

As we could see in Figure 2, in the textbooks for grade 7, 8, the topics belonging to personal life and personal welfare were more frequently presented than those of grade 9. But the textbooks for grade 9 emphasized the categories of social matters and cultural exchange more than personal life and personal welfare. This implied that the topical categories of English textbooks were well distributed according to the students' grade. This distribution could be evaluated as meaning that the educational polices of English language textbooks reflected the educational philosophy that as the learners became older, they might be more concerned about social matters and cultural exchanges than the younger learners.

4.3 The comparison of the topical construction between English textbooks on the 7th national curriculum and those on the revised national curriculum

This study compared the results of topical construction analysis between English textbooks based on the 7th national curriculum (Yim, 2007:44-47) and those based on the revised curriculum (2009). As seen in Table 2, there were some differences among the ranks of topics presented in the English textbooks. The most frequently presented topic in the English textbooks published based on the 7th national curriculum were "Life in foreign countries" and "Life in Korea", but English textbooks published based on the revised curriculum emphasized "art, leisure (related with creativity, imagination)", "manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility etc." more than other topics. This result implied that the English education policies of the 7th national curriculum started to emphasize the life in the globalized world and the introduction of Korean cultures into the world, which were closely related with the fact that the topics of English textbooks were concentrated in "Life in foreign countries" and "Life in Korea".

Chang (2009) explained that in 1995, during the Kim Young-sam administration, the Korean government declared the "globalization era" as its goal of national policy to foster national competitiveness in response to the globalization era, and among other things, it set the purpose of the nation's education. So the English textbooks published during the 7th national curriculum reflected the hot fever of the globalization era, and this atmosphere was reflected in the topic constructions of English textbooks.

But the topical construction of English textbooks published based on the revised curriculum (2009) was a little different from this trend. The topics were so diverse and expanded that they included various topics related with general cultures, and emphasized the importance of personal life and welfare, and natural phenomenon. This trend could be evaluated as being related with the educational goals for diversifying cultural topics and contents in English teaching in the 21st century.

Table	2.	The	Comparison	of	Topical	Constructions	between	English
Textbo	oks	Base	d on the 7 th and	d the	e Revised	Curriculum		

Topics	English textbooks based on the 7th national curriculum	English textbooks based on the revised curriculum
1	Life in foreign countries (17%)	Art, leisure (related with creativity, imagination) (11.4%)
2	Life in Korea (12.3%)	Manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility, etc. (10.3%)
3	Science (8.1%)	Animals, plants, seasons, weather (related with natural phenomenon) (9.1%)
4	Environmental Issues (6.2%)	Good use of leisure (hobbies, travel, sports, etc.) (8%)
5	Korea in the world (5.7%)	Introduction of Korean culture to the world (6.8%)

Table 2 shows that the frequency ranks of topical construction of English textbooks based on the 7th national curriculum are a little different from those of English textbooks based on the revised curriculum. In the textbooks based on the 7th national curriculum of Korea, the topics for "Life in foreign countries", "Life in Korea" were the most frequently introduced because during the period of the 7th national curriculum, the globalization was the hot issue in the whole world, so the topics related with foreign countries and Korea were frequently introduced and debated in English textbooks. In the textbooks based on the revised curriculum of 2015, the topical construction changed from the issues about globalization to the issues related with the personal life (art, leisure, etc.), and the personal welfare (manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility, etc.). This result can be evaluated with the fact that English education policy of Korea reflects the demand of the 21st century, which focuses on the importance of personal life and welfare in order to prepare Korean young learners appropriate leaders in the 4th industrial revolution period.

5 Conclusions

Based on the results of English textbooks in this study, some summaries could be reached as conclusions. First, English textbooks based on the revised curriculum (2009) were constructed on 19 topics which were various so that they could provide the extensive perspective about the globalized world to young Korean learners. The most common topics included the topics of art, literature (related with creativity, imagination: 11.4%), the topics of

manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility, etc. (10.3%), and the topics of animals, plants, seasons, and weather (related with natural phenomenon: 9.1%).

Second, the ranking of categorizing showed the results as follows: personal life (36.7%), personal welfare (27.5%), social matters (19.5%) and cultural exchange (16%). This result implied that the topical categories were well balanced and were not concentrated on a specific area.

Third, the distribution of each category was well established according to the grade. English textbooks for grade 7, 8 focused on personal life and personal welfare rather than social matters and cultural exchange, but the English textbooks of grade 9 focused on social matters and cultural exchanges rather than on personal life.

Last, there were some differences among the ranks of topics presented in the English textbooks based on the 7th curriculum and the textbooks based on the revised textbooks. The most frequently presented topic in the English textbooks published based on the 7th national curriculum were "Life in foreign countries" and "Life in Korea", but English textbooks published based on the revised curriculum emphasized "art, leisure (related with creativity, imagination)", "manners, public order, cooperation, voluntary work, responsibility etc." more than other topics. This result signified that the English education policies of the 7th national curriculum emphasized life in the globalized world and the introduction of Korean culture into the world. This result was closely related with the fact that the 7th national curriculum were applied during 1997-2006, when "the globalization fever" was the hot issue in Korea, so the English textbooks published at that time reflected the social atmosphere. But 10 years later, after the English curriculum in Korea was revised in 2009, English language policy changed to focus on more general themes and the topics related with the personal life and the happiness of human beings in the globalized world. This phenomenon could be seen as meaning that the language policies of Korea are in harmony with the social atmosphere in the second decade of the 21st century.

Therefore, this study showed that Korea's English language policy reforms in accordance with the globalized education purposes focused on introducing diverse cultural and historical facts of foreign countries to young Korean learners. Based on the findings of the study, Korea's English language policies could be evaluated to be in accordance with the globalized education purposes through introducing various cultures of the world into Korea and constructing the historical Korean identity by promoting Korean culture and tradition in the world.

In the future, English language policies of Korea need to aim to construct a new Korean national identity that embraces both national goals and global diversity so that Korea can play a role in the 21st century globalized world.

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