

Multi-layered Aspects of Language Policy: Implementing English Education at Elementary Schools in Korea

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English education was introduced from the third to sixth grade at elementary schools in Korea in 1997 as a compulsory subject. Since the implementation of this language policy, the Ministry of Education continues to face several issues such as updating current textbooks, revising curriculum, and providing supportive teaching materials and sufficient teacher training. The present paper takes the first step in approaching these issues by analyzing the initial stages of the language policy. Language planning will be analyzed in two phases in this paper: a) to situate the current language policy in the history of education reforms in Korea and b) to examine the actors and their roles in the language policy.

Introduction

As we are in the midst of globalization, it is necessary for us to acquire cross-cultural understanding and leadership qualities.... Also communicative ability in international language is required for every citizen in order to become a member in the global society. To achieve this end, all the citizens are expected to be able to communicate in at least one foreign language. Therefore, more emphasis has been placed on foreign language education (Korean Ministry of education 1997:73)¹.

The excerpt above is drawn from the abstract of *English Education Policies in Elementary Schools* published by the Ministry of Education in Korea (hereafter Ministry of Education) in 1997. The policy summarized by this excerpt indicates that the Korean government recognized the need for globalization and believed that one way to meet this need was through language education with special emphasis on communicative competence. With these grand goals in mind, the gov-

¹This is directly quoted from the abstract of *English Education Policies in Elementary Schools* published by the Korean Ministry of Education in 1997, which is written in English originally. However, other quotes are translated by the author unless indicated.

ernment introduced English education to elementary school students from the third grade to the sixth grade as a compulsory subject under the Seventh Curriculum Reform in 1997. Since the implementation of this language policy, the Ministry of Education continues to face several issues such as updating current textbooks, revising curriculum, and providing supportive teaching materials and sufficient teacher training. The present paper is an analysis of the initial stages of the implementation of the new Korean language policy with a special focus on actors in language planning and policy.

The purpose of this paper is a) to situate this language policy in the historical context of Korean educational reforms and b) to examine the policy based on frameworks proposed by Hornberger (1994) and Ricento and Hornberger (1996) which are particularly constructive in examining the multi-layered nature of language policy and planning.

Before analyzing the language policy in Korea, I will briefly explain the framework I adopted to analyze language policy and planning.

Dimensions of Language Planning

Theoretical Framework

Policy frameworks provide valuable tools for dissecting and analyzing language policy. In particular, they offer a common vocabulary for describing language policy and planning. Hornberger (1994) presents an integrative synthesis of the major language planning and policy (LPP) frameworks. Presenting six dimensions of LPP, she explains several approaches to language planning: the goals of LPP, and the types of LPP such as status, acquisition, and corpus planning. Her framework is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Hornberger's framework provides a guideline so that language planning may be examined from several perspectives. For instance, language planning can be corpus planning with elements of standardization or modernization. In another situation, an instance of language planning may be related to graphization only; however, while on the surface it may seem that a particular policy is related to graphization only or is presented by policymakers as a certain type of policy, we can possibly discover other features related to corpus planning. That is, Hornberger's framework encompasses various possible features of any given language policy. It is also useful for examining national language policy as well as foreign language policy as shown in Table 1. Moreover, the framework allows us to recognize that LPP can span multiple dimensions. In other words, although a language policy may be planned and implemented as acquisition planning, it may still show features of status planning and corpus planning. Analyzing the Korean case, I will explore the over-arching and multi-dimensional characteristics of LPP more deeply.

Table 1
Six Dimensions of LPP

Approaches	
Type	Policy planning (on forms) Goals
Status planning	Cultivation planning (on functions) Goals
Acquisition planning	Standardization status Officialization Nationalization Proscription
Corpus planning	Revival Maintenance Interlingual communication International Intranational Spread
	Group Education/School Literature Mass media Work
	Reacquisition Maintenance Foreign/Second language Shift
	Standardization Corpus Auxiliary code Graphization
	Modernization Lexical Stylistic Renovation Purification Reform Stylistic simplification Terminology unification

(Adopted from Hornberger 1994)

Actors in Language Planning

Introducing LPP frameworks, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:28) pose the question 'who does what to whom?', which summarizes what features of LPP language policy analysts study. In asking this question, we can tell that there are actors, actions, objects, and finally beneficiaries of the LPP. The focus of the present paper is on actors, who strongly influence planning and implementation of policy and who represent an important part of the LPP framework.

Ricento and Hornberger (1996) point out that multiple actors are involved in the process of language planning and its implementation. Actors may be states, institutions, and/or classroom practitioners. Ricento and Hornberger explain that although state-level actors are not directly involved in the process of language planning, they are the people who can make decisions about language planning, with considerable authority. Referring to the language planning led by high-level authori-

ties as top-down language planning, Kaplan states that actors rarely consult classroom practitioners or the eventual language users. In other words, these high-level authority actors are policy makers, government officers, and so forth.

The next level of actors Ricento and Hornberger (1996) present is the institution. Examples in this category include "schools, organized religion, media, civic and other private and publicly subsidized organizations, and the business community" (Ricento & Hornberger 1996: 415). In reproducing belief systems and opinions, institutions also play an important role in language planning.

The final actors in LPP are classroom practitioners. According to Ricento and Hornberger (1996), classroom teachers often represent a terminal level of actors. As grass-roots level actors, they are directly attached to the ultimate language users: the students. Their attitudes and actualization of LPP can influence students' language learning.

The present paper will discuss who serve as high-level authority, institutional, and classroom practitioner actors in the Korean setting and examine their roles in planning and implementing the LPP.

The History of Curricular Reforms in Korea

In addition to addressing current political and economic conditions, Korean language policy also reflects a reaction to Korea's language curriculum history. This section provides a brief overview of the major curricular reforms in Korea. Throughout the major curricular reforms, English education in Korea has oscillated between grammar-centered curricula and communication-oriented curricula. It is also notable that most of the curricular reforms co-occurred with political events such as the advent of a new government and/or new presidency.

The first major reform was undertaken in 1953 after the end of the Korean War. During the war, the Korean government was largely supported by the U.S. government economically as well as militarily. This dependence brought an interest in and a necessity for learning American English. Because of the influence of the US, learning and communicating in American English were considered powerful tools. Taking this situation into consideration, the Ministry of Education recommended teaching American English at schools as the "Standard English." In addition, the 1st curriculum emphasized grammar translation and understanding the structure of English (S. Kim, personal communication, December 29, 2003).²

Under the second curriculum reform, which occurred between 1963 and 1974, speaking and listening were emphasized. Kim, who is currently an English education specialist at the Ministry of Education, also

²Sangjae Kim is one of the educational consultants at the Ministry of Education in Korea. His specialization at the Ministry of Education is educational policy and curriculum development.

explains that too much emphasis on the grammar-centered curriculum in the previous language education policy influenced the decision to implement a communication-oriented curriculum in the second reform.

Both the second and third curriculum reforms were implemented under the military government with the third reform lasting until 1981. The military government intended the third curriculum to strengthen the dictatorship of the president by adding the values of austerity and loyalty to education. Language education was also affected by the propaganda of the military government. For instance, the emphasis on learning the structure of English through grammar and sentence pattern exercises was re-instituted, placing emphasis on learning rules and structures rather than being creative with language or experimenting with new language skills.

In 1981, a new government was established after yet another military coup d'état. When the new government was instituted, it reformed the curriculum again. This curriculum lasted until 1987. The fourth reform encouraged interest in English education at the elementary school level. Under the 1981 educational reform, some elementary school students had an opportunity to learn English as an extracurricular subject, depending on the principal's or parents association's decision. During this time, the Ministry of Education put equal weight on the four skills of language learning.

In 1988, for the first time in Korean history, a president was elected through a democratic procedure. Upon being elected, President No Tae-woo decided to reform the curriculum. He viewed the education system and curriculum as remnants of the military government of the previous era and wanted a new curriculum which reflected his vision and goals for the new government. This was the fifth curriculum reform, this time with an emphasis on advertising the democratic characteristics of his government. As a result, spoken language was emphasized over written language.

However, the fifth curriculum reform did not last long and the sixth curriculum reform came into effect in 1995. Under the sixth curriculum reform, each elementary school had more autonomy to teach English to fifth and sixth graders. Kim (1998) states that the sixth curriculum started to emphasize the importance of foreign language education and was a cornerstone of the English language education policy at elementary schools under the seventh curriculum reform.

Finally, following the presidential election in 1995, the seventh curriculum was introduced in 1997. Although the previous president was elected democratically, he started his political career as a member of the military coup d'état of 1981. In contrast, the president elected in 1995, Kim Young-Sam, had been a leader of the opposition party and his new government differentiated themselves from the previous administrations. They promoted the significance of individualism and human

rights. They also wanted to provide opportunities for people who were blocked from developing their potential under military based governments. They believed that one way to open opportunities to those who had previously been denied access was to provide more equal opportunities in education. Thus, the Korean government considered education reform as one way to solve the problems from the previous era as well as an inventive way to cope with new trends in globalization (Ministry of Education 1997). In addition, Bae (1995) points out that the Korean government began to understand the importance of language education at early ages. When Korea developed an open international relationship in the 1980s, and new information and technologies were imported, people argued that language skill was crucially important in order to fully understand and utilize the new information technologies (Bae 1995: 152).

Korean Research Perspectives on Language Learning

The curricular reforms were mainly motivated by the advent of new governments or political agendas, but they were also highly influenced by research and scholarship in Korea. In this section, some of the representative research will be briefly explained.

Efforts to implement English education had been continuous from the 1980s onward. Furthermore, the pros and cons of introducing English education at the elementary school level had been debated since the 1970s. Influenced by the Critical Period Hypothesis for language acquisition, some Korean scholars claimed that teaching language earlier is better. For instance, Park (1971) advocated promoting English education as early as possible. Referencing Cummins's (1978) theory of a "common underlying proficiency," Bae (1988) emphasized that teaching and learning a foreign or second language would help improve competence in a student's first language and vice versa. Stressing the advantage of learning other languages at a young age in terms of affective issues, Jung (1989) stated that younger learners are less prejudiced against outside cultures and for their own culture. Presenting the results of an experimental study, Kim (1988) emphasized findings that showed a positive relationship between learning English in elementary school and achieving greater language proficiency in the upper grades. The author also recognized a positive relationship between learning English in elementary school and increased interest in learning foreign languages and other cultures.

In contrast to the above researchers' claims, there was strong opposition against introducing English in elementary schools. This opposition can be characterized as (a) political opposition, and (b) opposition related to pedagogical problems. Language education specialists in the 1980s pointed out several problems concerning early introduction of English education. The first problem was the limited number of teachers who

specialized in English. Since elementary school teachers are supposed to teach all the subjects in practice, they all learn the basics of all subjects at teachers' colleges. At the same time, each teacher also chooses a major in a specialized field. However, since Seoul National University of Primary Education did not offer an English major until 1991, few teachers had been able to specialize in English. The second problem was a great need for teacher training. Teachers had not learned how to teach English to elementary school students, and English education was not nationwide at the elementary school level. Furthermore, there was little teacher training offered by the Ministry of Education or the education board offices of each district. The third problem was a scarcity of school equipment to teach English. Since it was not a compulsory subject, the Ministry of Education offered meager financial support for English education in individual schools.

Bae (1995) expands on the three practical problems discussed above and offers eight reasons for opposing English at the elementary school level. These eight reasons are as follows: (1) the potential threat to national identity, (2) a lack of necessary conditions such as proficient teachers, (3) a lack of school equipment, (4) young students' inability to retain new language skills, (5) an educational burden to parents, (6) the belief that English should not be a core subject, (7) potential complications to secondary English education; and finally, (8) a weak guarantee of any positive correlation between age and successful language acquisition. Despite all the opposition and concerns, the Kim Young-Sam government decided to introduce English language education at elementary schools.

The Seventh Curriculum Reformation

Actors and Procedures

As mentioned above, several actors may be involved in LPP. This section is dedicated to presenting the actors involved in the new policy in Korea with particular attention to who played the role of each actor, following Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) distinctions: state, institution, and classroom practitioner.

Analysis of LPP in Korea shows that there were three layers of actors: governmental bodies, academia, and elementary school teachers. In this case, the actor holding the highest level authority was the Ministry of Education and governmental bodies, all of whom played the most significant role. They initially responded to the request of the new presidency. At the same time, they were the main force behind planning and administering the new policy. Along the way, those high-level authority actors called for assistance, ideas, and feedback from institutions and classroom practitioners, but their involvement was limited both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Despite opposition from scholars, in 1997, the Ministry of Education

declared the introduction of English education beginning in the third grade; by the year 2000, third through sixth graders would be expected to learn English. This act was quite distinct from the hesitation or delay in implementing English education policy in previous eras. One of the reasons that this LPP was pushed forward was the strong support from the new presidency.

In February 1995, a "Globalization Steering Committee," a preparatory team, submitted proposals concerning reformation of all aspects of the government including the education system. Kang (1998) indicates that this was the beginning of the second phase of reform under President Kim Young-Sam's administration and in this second phase of reform, the administration emphasized improving quality of life to equal that of more developed countries. Along those lines, they also wanted to reform the current matriculation examination as well as the educational curriculum in general. The goal in language education was to focus on developing communicative competence (Ministry of Education 1997). The Globalization Steering Committee stressed globalization and suggested that the command of any foreign language was an essential way for Koreans to take active roles as members of the global community in the 21st century (Ministry of Education 1997). These concerns are reflected in the English Education Policies in Elementary Schools published by the Ministry of Education in 1997.

...public opinion has raised the issue to revise English education policies and to change English teaching methods. Even though people have studied English more than 10 years in school, in reality, they still have difficulties communicating in English. (Ministry of Education 1997: 73)³

As indicated in the documents of the Ministry of Education and as the committee pointed out, the problems that existing English education had were recognized not only by the Ministry of Education but also by teachers, scholars, parents, and even students. Educators and education specialists expressed their concerns about education in general as well as the ineffectiveness of language education in particular. More than 30 articles concerning these issues were published in Chosun Ilbo (Chosun daily newspaper), which is one of the major newspapers in Korea, during the period from 1995 until 1997. Education specialists particularly noted the "fever" of learning English among young students.

The Presidential Commission on Education Reform, which was organized in 1995, also drew attention to the problems in education. Their first concern was that students would lose their creativity because the matriculation examination for college only emphasized memorization. That is to say, before the seventh curriculum, testing items on the nation-

³This excerpt was originally written in English.

wide college entrance examination were only focused on formulas, history, grammar, etc. Due to washback effects, lessons at school also focused on rote memorization which hindered students from developing interpretative skills. Their second concern was that educational policy was a top-down process and regulation-centered. Historically, Korea had been ruled by a monarchy and then by a Japanese colonial government. People became familiar with Sangmyung habok, which means "high rank orders and low rank follows." In initiating educational reform, the government discovered that they would miss out on some good ideas and opportunities to enhance education in Korea if they ignored what teachers, parents, and students thought and needed. Finally, they were truly concerned about the financial burden on parents to provide private education for their children.⁴

After the report was submitted by the Globalization Steering Committee in February 1995, the Ministry of Education also handed in a pilot plan in which they specified ways and areas in which they would carry out an educational reformation. In May 1995, the Presidential Commission on Education Reform, an advising team to the president, publicized a new educational curriculum that included English education as a compulsory subject at the elementary school level. The team emphasized equal educational opportunity, highlighting information technology, and helping young students become familiar with globalization. In order to accomplish these goals, the commission proposed three primary reforms to and/or enhancements of the existing curriculum: (1) an increase in globalization education that entails computer education, student exchange programs, and government-funded study abroad opportunities, (2) inclusion of communicative-competence-centered questions instead of grammar-translation questions in the English language portion of the matriculation examination; and, (3) an increase in opportunities to learn foreign languages. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education charged researchers at the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) and professors of the English Language and Literature Department at Sogang University with the development of the details of a new curriculum as well as the responsibility to perform foundational studies for the new language policy. They also held several panel discussions to which scholars, researchers, officials from the Ministry of Education, and teachers were invited.

The Ministry of Education then developed a pilot curriculum for English education and started four pilot schools in Seoul, Incheon, Busan,

⁴Usually, private education is an equivalent term for tutoring in the Korean context. According to Kim (1997), all of the education done outside of school is considered as tutoring and a great portion of it is dedicated to preparation for college entrance examinations. A report done by Seoul National University in 1997 shows that 59.4% of elementary through high school students participated in some form of private education. It is also noted that more than 42% of private education was dedicated to English education for elementary school students and that situation was worse in the higher grades (Kang 1998).

and Andong between 1995 and 1997. These locations are respectively the three major cities in Korea and a small city which is traditionally known for its strong educational orientation. It appears that schools voluntarily participated in the pilot study and presented their feedback and ideas about the new language planning policy. At these schools, the Ministry of Education tried a pilot curriculum that focused on speaking and listening while teaching situational English. Furthermore, the schools received new equipment such as classroom TVs, language labs, and multimedia facilities. Finally, special teacher training for the teachers at those pilot schools was offered. After trying the new curriculum, the pilot schools submitted reports specifying the advantages of and possible obstacles to the new curricula.

In addition to its pilot programs, the government implemented its reforms in language education in other ways. Haugen (1983) defines implementation as the activities of spreading certain language or language forms at institutional as well as individual levels. He adds that institutional-level activities might include publishing text materials such as books, newspapers, pamphlets, and textbooks. In November 1995, the Ministry of Education began development of textbooks for the third grade and advertised that they were seeking new textbooks that conformed to a set of detailed criteria. In July 1996, 33 publishers with 45 newly developed English textbooks applied for official approval. The Ministry of Education consulted researchers from KEDI, professors at universities, and teachers to evaluate the textbooks. 50 people participated in the process and the teacher to scholar ratio was three to two. Through four rounds of review by researchers and elementary school and middle school teachers, four textbooks developed by three publishers received governmental approval. After the Ministry of Education reviewed and selected four different textbooks for the third grade, they let each elementary school choose its textbooks.

Unlike the rest of elementary subjects where there are single nationally compiled textbooks, each school can choose from several English textbooks. The adopted textbooks include a set of textbooks, audio tapes, teacher's manual, and video tapes. (Ministry of Education 1997: 74)

The Ministry of Education also prepared teacher training plans. Since English had been taught as an extracurricular subject since 1982, the Ministry of Education was confident in its ability to supply proficient language teachers. Moreover, they planned to provide teacher training for 120 hours in 1996. They also offered specialized training to those who had already completed regular training. The Ministry of Education also implemented its policy in several phases.

Three months after the implementation of elementary English, Media

Research Inc. conducted a public opinion poll of 1000 third grade teachers and 2000 parents throughout the country. The results showed that the respondents were highly positive toward the government policies. The teachers had built confidence in the teaching methodologies. The parents were satisfied with the English classes and favored a ban on private tutoring. (Ministry of Education 1997: 76)⁵

In order to solicit feedback, the Ministry of Education not only conducted the survey cited above, but during the months of April and May 1997 invited parents and education specialists to English classes in order to get feedback to show the effectiveness of and to instill confidence in the new language policy.

The expected effect of the monitoring system is to provide a bottom-up procedure which reflects the needs of learners and educators. The procedure is a democratic and rational way to introduce a new education policy rather than a top-down procedure. Moreover, it will lead parents to become more interested in English education and participate in education more actively. It will also play a role as a bridge between school and home. This system will continue until 2000 (Ministry of Education 1997: 47).

In this monitoring system, the Ministry of Education played the role of manager in this large political project. As noted, the Ministry of Education and other presidential advisory teams mainly led the LPP as state level actors. Academic and language education scholars participated in the process of selecting textbooks and refining the curriculum as institutional-level actors. Finally, elementary school teachers were invited to evaluate and select the textbooks. The English language policy at elementary schools in Korea was based on the participation of multiple layers of actors through various steps (Ricento & Hornberger 1996). The previous discussion of the 1997 government's political ideal, a grass-roots democracy, suggests that the Ministry of Education tried to incorporate bottom-up feedback and to lessen authoritative top-down policies. Compared to the tactics of military governments of the previous era, the efforts of the government bodies were meaningful for the future of Korean education. Moreover, the ideas and feedback from education specialists, scholars, teachers, and parents were requested and incorporated by high-level authorities. However, future LPP in Korea would benefit from greater involvement from actors at the institutional and classroom levels.

Aspects of Acquisition, Status, and Corpus Planning

In this section, the language planning situation described thus far is analyzed based on the integrative framework of Hornberger (1994) pre-

⁵This document was originally written in English.

sented earlier as the theoretical framework for this paper. As noted, Hornberger's six dimensions of types and goals of language planning are widely applicable and can be used to analyze national language planning as well as foreign language planning. Her framework is particularly appropriate for the analysis of language planning in Korea. Table 2 is

Table 2
Six Dimensions of English Education Policy in Korea

Approaches	
Type	Policy planning (on forms) Goals
Status planning	Cultivation planning (on functions) Goals
Acquisition planning	International - Manifested in Globalization Steering Committee's proposal Foreign/ second language - Korea is in the Expanded Circle - EFL context Education/school - Reformation concerning school education - Local schools have autonomy Mass media - EDUNET - Korea Multimedia Education Center Corpus 3 rd 80-120 words 4 th 80-120 words 5 th 90-130 words 6 th 90-130 words Length of sentence: 3-4 th 7 words 5-6 th 9 words

modified from the original framework presented in Table 1 to provide a visual representation of the initial stages of implementation of language policy and planning in Korea.

As shown, status, acquisition, and corpus planning are all included in the recent Korean initiatives, though there is a particularly strong focus on aspects of acquisition planning. Analysis using this framework clearly shows the multi-layered aspects of LPP in Korea. Furthermore, the Korean case shows that analyses of a language policy can have complex and multiple dimensions. In this section, each of the three dimensions of language planning types will be analyzed in detail.

Acquisition Planning

Hornberger (1994) indicates that education sectors and schools play important roles in acquisition planning. Korea's new policy is a national policy and was developed to be actualized in school settings. It requires teaching English two hours per week in the third through sixth grades. The Ministry of Education is also building EDUNET⁶, a web-based educational information network to assist teachers by providing examples of lesson plans and teaching materials. However, English is not only being taught in educational settings. In addition to schools, English is comple-

Table 3
Examples of Programs for Elementary School English

Program	Day	Time	Duration
Hello English English for 3 rd grade elementary school teacher training	Friday,	10:05 - 10:15	10 minutes
	Saturday	10:35 - 10:50	15 minutes
	Wednesday,	11:15 - 11:40	25 minutes
	Thursday		
TV	Friday,		
	Saturday		
	Mon, Tues,	15:20 - 15:30	10 minutes
	Wednesday	12:45 - 13:00	15 minutes
Radio	Monday -		
	Saturday		
	School teacher		
	training		

mentarily taught through the media. Table 3 shows a schedule of TV and radio programming provided by EBS (Educational Broadcasting System) in Korea.

According to the Ministry of Education (1997), providing programs related to English education on EBS satisfies students' desire to have more opportunities to learn English. They also hope that this extrascholastic English medium will lessen the financial burden to parents who had previously paid for English tutoring.

On the surface Korean language planning for English seems to fall in the category of acquisition planning for a foreign language; however, further analysis reveals elements of other kinds of planning. Korea is one of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language, what Kachru (1992) calls the Expanding Circle of English environments. Elementary school students are expected to develop communicative competence that

⁶ <http://www.edunet4u.net/edunetWebApp/jsp/english/introduction.jsp>

will be crucial for them to be active members in the international community as well as to appreciate and utilize information transmitted in English.

Status Planning

As shown in Table 2, the new language policy has features of status planning as well. One feature of this new language policy is explained by Stewart (1968):

Status planning of international language of wider communication takes place in connection with determining what foreign languages will be taught in the schools. (Stewart 1968 cited in Cooper 1989: 106)

The decision to introduce English at the elementary school level reflects an emphasis on globalization by introducing English to elementary school students as an international language.

Taking Ruiz's (1984) language orientation model to describe English teaching and learning in Korean, English LPP is definitely grounded in a language-as-resource orientation.

... introducing English education at the elementary school level is based on the discussion that communicative competence is an essential condition in order to exchange ideas and information with foreigners. In order to satisfy this goal, English should be taught at young ages for the long-term effectiveness of language learning. (Ministry of Education 1997: 2)

More examples of the language-as-resource orientation are evident in the following quote:

Not only is more than 80% of information on the internet either written or transmitted in English but also most international conferences, sports, and business related to import and export necessitate English. Moreover, communicative competence in English is one of the significant factors in hiring or promoting people in business sectors in Korea. (Ministry of Education 1997: 5)

As noted in the above excerpts, the Ministry of Education believes that English education beginning at a young age will benefit young generations who are exposed to the great wave of globalization as well as surging information in English.

The Ministry of Education strongly recommends that the medium of instruction of English should be English in order to increase the amount of input students receive. As indicated, since Korea is an EFL situation, students have limited opportunities to take in target language input outside of the classroom. Many LPP scholars such as Stewart (1968) point

out that the decision of the medium of instruction is one of the most frequently made determinations in status planning.

One of the status planning aspects of the new language policy is indicated in the following comments made by the Minister of Education in 1997:

The English education we pursue should harm neither national identity nor Korean language education. It is only meant to enhance individual development as well as national interests under globalization. (Ministry of Education 1997: 2)

Even if the Ministry of Education acknowledges the significant role of English in the era of globalization, it also emphasizes the importance of retaining Korean language and national identity. Furthermore, this awareness also reflects the concerns that educational specialists have had since the 1970s, which are explained in the earlier section describing the history of curricular reform in Korea.

Corpus Planning

The new language policy also shows characteristics of corpus planning. As indicated in Table 2, the Ministry of Education set criteria to control the corpus of language input. They first set requirements for the number of words that should be taught in each grade level. For instance, third grade students are supposed to learn 80 to 120 new words throughout the year and 80 to 120 new words will be introduced in the fourth grade. Fifth and sixth grade students are expected to learn 90 to 130 new words in each grade respectively. The language education specialist Sangjae Kim (personnal communication, December 29, 2003), from the Ministry of Education, mentioned that the number of new words proposed by the Ministry of Education is just a minimal recommendation. Depending on a principal's and/or classroom teacher's decision, more new words can be introduced in language learning. The Ministry of Education recommended this minimum requirement of new vocabulary to guarantee the equity of the learning experience among elementary school students. Second, the criteria for how long each English sentence should be and what words students need to learn are also clearly stated in the policy. Sangjae Kim pointed out that the length of sentences was set by the Ministry of Education under the third, sixth, and seventh curricular reforms. Other curricular reforms did not specify the length of sentences, and because there was no recommendation on sentence length, some over-eager teachers tried to teach lengthy, non-target-like sentences to secondary school students. Under the seventh curricular reform, third and fourth graders learn seven-word sentences and nine-word sentences are introduced in fifth and sixth grades. However, there was no restriction on sentence length for upper-level students.

Cooper (1989: 122-123) makes the following comment: "In corpus planning...form follows function in the sense that the corpus planner designs or selects structures on the assumption that a given function, overt or covert, can be served by a modification or treatment of the corpus." By controlling the forms of the input of the target language in elementary school settings, language education served to develop students' interests in learning other language and cultures. The lexical and syntactic constraints placed on English language learning by the Ministry of Education serve the "non-communicative function" identified by Cooper concerning corpus planning.

Conclusion

The introduction of English language education from the third to sixth grades at elementary school settings in Korea has primarily been led by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry has tried different language policies in different decades at several different levels. Examples of policies include introducing English as an extracurricular subject or leaving it to the decision of each school board. With the advent of a new presidency in 1995, English education attracted great attention as a means of facilitating globalization and the new government's propaganda, including its desire to provide more opportunities for education. Analysis of the new policy clearly shows that the main actor in LPP was the Ministry of Education and other high-level authorities such as presidential advisors. Although the amount and quality of participation from institutional actors and classroom practitioners was not enough, we can still see the multi-layered aspects of LPP in this case. That is, language education specialists and classroom practitioners had opportunities to contribute their ideas on the process of developing a textbook and curriculum under the framework proposed by the governmental bodies. Hornberger's (1994) framework pictorially represents the multi-layered aspects of the Korean policy, a policy which includes acquisition planning of foreign language with features of status and corpus planning also involved.

After seven years of implementing a language policy which was highly motivated by a high-level authority, unsolved problems remain. As mentioned in the earlier section, the analyses in the present paper are the first to seek to understand the new policy in Korea from a perspective that recognizes the integrated and multi-layered nature of LPP. In future studies, we may focus on several other issues such as updating current textbooks, revising curriculum, and providing supportive teaching materials and sufficient teacher training.

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