

Korean Community Schools in the UK: Key Issues and Recommendations

Andrew Finch
(Kyungpook National University)

Abstract

This paper describes the current situation of Korean 'Saturday' schools in the UK, based on observations and interviews with a selection of head teachers, teachers, parents and students. Various issues came to the fore during the research period and these are examined here along with suggestions and recommendations for future development. Korean schools in the UK contain students with a wide range of ages, reasons for learning Korean and plans for the future. However, they can be broadly divided into those who intend to return to Korea, and those who want to live in the UK while learning the language and culture of their ancestors. Korean Saturday schools thus have to include acquisition and maintenance of the Korean language as well as Heritage Language learning in their curricula. Issues identified as requiring attention included the need for professional support for the teachers, financial and administrative support for the schools, and expert academic support in curriculum design and the provision of appropriate learning materials and resources. The diversity of learning needs and characteristics evident in the students also called for skilled attention to their particular socio-cultural and psycho-linguistic needs on the part of the teachers.

앤드류 핀치. 2009 재영한글학교: 주요 쟁점들과 발전 방향.

『한국어 교육, 20/3, 205-234』 이 논문은 재영한글학교의 현황을 살펴보고, 재영한글학교의 발전을 위한 8가지 쟁점들을 검토하고 앞으로의 방향을 모색하는 데 목적이 있다. 이를 위해 영국 소재 9개 한글학교를 대상으로 수업참관, 학교장, 교사, 학부모, 그리고 학생들과의 개별 및 집단 면담을 바탕으로 하였다. 이 논문에서 다루게 되는 학생 집단의 특성은 다음 두 가지이다. 첫째, 재영한글학교 학생들 간에는 연령, 한국어를 배우는 이유, 미래 계획에 있어 다양한 분포를 보이고 있다. 둘째, 특히 학생들의 특성으로는 장차 한국으로 귀국할 집단과 영국에서 영주하면서 조상들의 언어와 문화를 배우기를 원하는

집단으로 대별된다. 따라서 토요일에 운영되는 한글학교들은 한국인 2세, 즉 헤리티지 언어교육뿐만 아니라, 한국어 습득과 유지를 위한 교육과정, 교재, 교육방법 등이 시급히 고려되어야 한다. 이 논문에서는 이 측면에 초점을 맞추어 재영한글학교 및 한국인 2세의 한국어 교육에 대한 효율성을 추구하기 위해서 다음 두 가지 사항을 제안하였다. 첫째, 한글학교 교사들에 대한 전문성 개발, 학교의 재정 및 행정적 지원, 적절한 교육과정 개발, 교육자료 및 자재 제공의 지원이 필요함을 밝혔다. 둘째, 학생들의 학습 요구사항 충족과 교사의 학습자에 대한 사회 문화적, 심리 언어적 요구사항 및 이해 측면의 숙달이 필요함을 논의하였다. (경북대학교)

Keywords: Heritage Language Learning(헤리티지 언어교육), Korean schools(한글학교), teacher training(교사교육), bilingualism(이중언어사용)

1. Introduction

Korean Community Schools (KCSs) in the UK have a short history, the first such school having been founded in London in the 1970s (Yeon-June Jung 2006:20). The increasing number of Korean citizens working, studying or residing in the UK and the consequent emergence of English-speaking generations of children born in the UK to Korean parents indicates, however, that these schools will become more important in the near future, satisfying a dual need for Korean Heritage Language Learning (KHLL) for children who intend to stay in the UK, and Korean as a Foreign Language (KFL) for those who wish to live and work in Korea. In this climate of growth and expansion, a number of issues have arisen for these schools, from teacher training and curriculum design to appropriate teaching materials and financial support. This paper investigates key issues and makes recommendations for future action, based on the research literature, classroom observations, responses to questionnaires (in Korean and English) and interviews (mostly in Korean) with students, parents, teachers and head teachers in those schools.

2. Korean Community Schools in the UK

In contrast with the 1,000 or so Korean Schools in the U.S. (Shin 2005), there were only 20 KCSs in the UK at the time of the research study - two in the capital,

London, and others in various parts of England, Scotland and Wales. These are non-profit, 'Saturday schools' (Chinen & Tucker 2005) (though one of them opens on Sundays), set up by parents, and often held in Christian churches (cf. Shin 2005). Curricula tend to focus on the Korean language, but often include mathematics (taught in Korean), exploration of Korean culture and history as learning content for the Korean lessons and, in some cases, music and art. The number of students is variable from semester to semester and can range from 20 in some regional cities to c. 200 in the largest school, in London. Students range from kindergarten to high school age and can exhibit widely differing learning profiles.

Given the voluntary nature of these schools, head teachers often give lessons and teachers are often parents of the children. These teachers, who voluntarily give up their Saturday mornings in order to offer this service to the local Korean community, in some cases have experience of teaching in Korea, but have rarely been prepared for the special learning needs encountered in KCSs. The teacher-student ratio is usually very good, allowing for small group learning and individual attention, though there tends to be a wide range of levels and abilities, even in these small groups. Recreation time is considered important, since it provides an opportunity for socialization and enjoyment. Thus, Yeon-June Jung (2006:43) states that "friendship is the most important point of attending the school, for pupils." Student motivation can be both integrative (wishing to become members of the worldwide Korean community) and extrinsic (preparing to return to Korea and enter Korean state education), and assessment is usually for review or diagnosis.

A particular feature of KCSs is the diversity of ages, proficiency levels, parental backgrounds, length of residence in the UK, reasons for learning Korean, and expectations for achievement, making it extremely difficult for teachers accustomed to the homogeneity of the Korean culture and the Korean education system to offer appropriate learning content to each and every student. One major difference between student types lies between those who are preparing to return to Korea and re-enter the Korean education system (section 2.1, below) and those who intend to live in the UK, at least until they graduate from university (section 2.2).

2.1 Short-term students

The following characteristics were identified in the study, regarding the children of parents who are visiting the host country for a short time: i) Parents tend to be international students, visiting academics, workers in overseas branches of 'home' companies, or public servants working abroad (diplomats,

embassy staff, etc.); ii) The length of stay can be anything from a few months to a few years; iii) The children are often very young, knowing little of the 'mother tongue' (Korean) and not having been educated in the home country; iv) Bilingual acquisition of English and the HL (Korean) is common; v) Families intend to return to Korea sooner rather than later; vi) Children of secondary school age wish to maintain and develop their Korean (and math) skills on a par with their peers in Korea, so that they can re-enter the education system there.

The majority of short-term students were not born in the UK and a significant number of them, being the children of young parents visiting, studying in, or working in the UK, are of kindergarten age. Such children have little or no knowledge of the host language and attend KCSs to learn the language of their parents (Korean) and to meet friends. For them, issues of language shift, codeswitching, and ethnic identity arise only when they begin to attend elementary school.

2.2 Long-term students

The second group of students, who intend to stay in the UK for a long time, or even for life, consists largely of children who were born in the host country and for whom the first language (L1) is English: i) Children in this generation often speak a different L1 to their parents, with resulting identity issues and communication problems; ii) They wish to learn the culture and social heritage of their ancestors through the HL, to establish their own identity in a multicultural world; iii) They often intend to stay in the host country, at least until graduation from university; iv) They are learning a second language (e.g. French, German, and Spanish) at state school, and are becoming multilingual as well as multicultural.

As yet, there are few Korean grandparents in the UK, and generational language shift (Fishman 1989), though it has only occurred over two concurrent generations, is already significantly noticeable in this second group of students. As Lee & Shin (2008) point out, "an increasing number of language-minority communities are undergoing a complete language shift within two generations with no intervening bilingual generation. This accelerated shift creates major communication problems, as parents and children living the same household do not understand each other" (2008:7). Such a rapid shift means that, unlike their parents, new generations of HL learners in the UK speak English as their L1 and wish to learn the language and cultural mores of their forebears (Korean). In this shift from English Language Learning (ELL) to Heritage Language Learning (HLL), the 'mother tongue' represents the social structures and beliefs of the 'home' community (Shin 2005), and can open the door to appreciation of the

culture-specific values and ideas of their ancestors.

A number of children in this second group expect to return to Korea after completing their college education in the UK and therefore have two reasons for learning Korean. On the one hand they wish to learn the language and culture of their ancestors (HLL), and on the other, they wish to become fluent in Korean in order to live and work in that country at some point in the future (KFL). Lee & Shin (2008) point out that "This social phenomenon is likely to change the characteristics of the growing pool of Korean heritage language speakers" (2008:2) - a further indication of the constantly changing situation, in which KCSs have to function both as KFL and KHL institutions. Student A illustrates this duality of purpose.

I'm gonna finish all my studies here. And I would like to go back to Korea and just experience everything, like being a Korean person. When people ask what's it's like to be in Korea, I can't really answer them. So I'd like to answer them properly. (Interview, student A, 2008)

Very little research into KCSs in the UK has been attempted to date, as a consequence of which, the literature review in the following section includes findings from research into Korean Schools in the US, where early experiences and problems were similar to those currently being experienced by KCSs in the UK.

3. HLL and Korean Schools: Literature Review

Although HLL did not begin until the 1980s (Kondo-Brown & Brown 2008:ix), and despite the fact that the learners tend to be extremely diverse in their characteristics and learning needs, there have already been a number of attempts at defining HL and HL learners. Chinen & Tucker (2005:27) define 'heritage language' as "a language other than English that is associated with an individual's ethnic or cultural background" and a 'heritage speaker' as "someone who speaks or understands a language (other than English) that was spoken at home" (2005:27). Chevalier (2004:1) also stresses that HL learners are born into households where a language other than English is spoken and makes the point that they are bilingual to varying degrees, along with about two-thirds of the world's population (Baker & Jones 1998).

HLL and HL instruction are especially significant because they recognize a new context for language learning, one in which learners are studying the language of their 'home' culture as a means of reconnecting to their heritage and

defining their ethnic and cultural identity (Kondo-Brown 2003; Chevalier 2004:1). HL instruction, while aiming to develop biliteracy (Chevalier 2004:4), must acknowledge important affective and sociocultural needs in the learners (Chinen & Tucker 2005:39) and therefore functions well in an holistic (concerned with education of the whole person), psycholinguistic (giving learners a sense of identity), sociolinguistic (developing cooperation, understanding and social meaning), and sociocultural (enabling learners to appreciate their root culture) setting, including an investigation of the values, beliefs and ideas of the learners' parents, grandparents, and their society.

When HL instruction was first recognized, in the 1980s, the learners were mostly children of foreign-born parents who had newly arrived in the USA or Canada. The first-learned language of these children was gradually becoming secondary to the dominant language of the country in which they were living, and the purpose of HL instruction was to preserve and maintain the use of the mother tongue (UCLA Steering Committee, 2000; Valdés 1995). This early view of HLL was based upon the assumption that the parents were immigrants and intended to settle down in the USA or Canada.

The term 'heritage speaker' first appeared in official form in ACTFL's Standards for Foreign Language Learning in 1996 (Sweley 2006:20), and is further defined by Kondo-Brown & Brown (2008:3), as "any learners who have acquired their cultural and linguistic competence in a nondominant language primarily through contact at home with foreign-born parents and/or other family members" (cf. The UCLA Steering Committee, 2000; Valdés 1995). Lee & Shin (2008) qualify this definition in the Korean context, "we define Korean heritage language learners as those who have an ethnolinguistic affiliation to the Korean heritage, but may have a broad range of proficiency from high to none in Korean oral or literacy skills" (2008:2). As these authors point out, the number of KHL learners is continually increasing and their reasons for studying are becoming more and more various, with many individuals having little or no direct access to daily interactions in Korean. Any definition must, therefore, be able to include a variety of life circumstances, histories, and language learning motivations (Lee & Shin 2008:2).

Intergenerational language shift has been identified as a significant issue in the US (Fishman 1989; Chevalier 2004:3; Lee & Shin 2008:7) and generally leads to a lack of familiarity with the full range of stylistic registers, partly resulting from the HL learners' access to more than one language, and partly due to the fact that the ability to switch languages allows bilinguals to codeswitch, in order to satisfy the need for more expressive language (Gal 1979:95). As student B (from this study) observes:

Well, at home I speak Korean, but at times with my brother it sort of mixes. Our vocabulary's not that great in Korean, so we sort of mix around, me and my brother. (Interview, student B, 2008)

Such language shift is normally accompanied by a gradual progression of language attrition that begins as soon as immigrant students enter kindergarten (Wong Fillmore 1991, 2000; Shin 2002), though the steepest decline is observed in early adolescence, when identity issues can cause rejection of the home language, embarrassment, frustration over the widening cultural gap with parents, and cultural isolation (Tse 2001). According to Lee & Shin (2008), "the rate of heritage language attrition among second generation Koreans is one of the highest among Asian Americans" (2008:8).

As already mentioned, KHL learners vary in age, (previous) education level, language learning goals, family background, parent's profession, and religion. Despite these differences, Chevalier (2004) identifies two common characteristics of HL learners: i) they use two language systems to varying extents; and ii) "they perceive that their skills in the language of the host country are stronger than those in their heritage language" (2004:1). These characteristics mean that their language-learning needs are different from L2 learners (Kondo-Brown 2003), but it is also important to recognize that their social and psychological needs are also different from those studying KFL (Peyton, Ranard, & McGinnis 2001; Wiley 2001; Kondo-Brown 2003; Lee & Shin 2008:2). KCSs have the task of catering to these needs, and "can be seen as ideal places to contribute to HL development, not only because they teach the language but also because they offer an opportunity for ethnic group membership" (Chinen & Tucker 2005:29). Shibata (2000) concludes that Saturday schools are one of the most effective ways to teach children a HL (Chinen & Tucker 2005:29).

According to the 2000 U.S. census (Hyon-B Shin & Bruno 2003), the number of US residents aged five and older speaking a non-English language at home grew by 47% during the 1990s, to 18% of the population (Peyton *et al.* 2001). This sharp increase has meant not only that intergenerational gaps are becoming more marked, but also that language teaching professionals are encountering increasing numbers of heritage learners (Chevalier 2004:1), eager to study the language of their origin.

Studies in the USA (Shibata 2000; Chinen & Tucker 2005; Shin 2005; Lee & Shin 2008) show that HL schools play an important role in the development of positive attitudes toward the language and its culture, along with deepened ethnic identification and opportunities for socialization. In the UK, Yeon-June Jung (2006) found that KCSs "play significant roles in ethnic identity maintenance and heritage language retention for their pupils in the UK" (2006:2). Exposure to the

language in the company of ethnic peers, along with instruction in the HL, helps learners to show greater appreciation of the language, to have confidence in using it, to enjoy doing schoolwork, and to want to continue learning it. These benefits are further enhanced if: i) the learners see the HL as useful; ii) they are members of a peer group that values the language; iii) they have contact with institutions that value the language and iv) their parents speak the HL and encourage its development.

Issues identified by previous research into HL schools include the need for community support, teacher-training, and assistance in curriculum and materials development from university professionals with expertise (Kondo-Brown 2008:33). In terms of HL instruction, Hye-Young Jo (2001, cited in Kondo-Brown 2008) notes that university KHL learners "have great difficulty in learning the complex Korean honorifics, and suffer from discrepancies between 'standard/academic' versus 'marginalized/parental' varieties of Korean pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar" (2008:27). Lee & Kim (2008) also analyzed KHL learners, finding that: i) they saw little value in speaking Korean in the US; ii) motivations to learn Korean were tied to identity, family and ethnic community; iii) learners felt a need for more formalized and innovative teaching approaches; and iv) their motivation was affected by low self-efficacy due to the pressure they felt to acquire native-like proficiency (Lee & Kim 2008:180).

4. The Study: Issues and Findings

On-site data collection for this research took place in six KCSs in the UK (Manchester, Cardiff, Bridgend, Nottingham, Sheffield, and Birmingham). Data was collected through classroom observation and semi- and un-structured interviews with head teachers, teachers, parents and students, from whom consent was obtained to publish the research results. Questionnaires (written jointly in Korean and English) comprising both closed and open questions (Appendix A) were also given to participants and mailed to other schools interested in contributing to the research (Edinburgh, Bristol and New Malden, in London). The questionnaires were originally offered online, but these English-only versions considered too difficult and time-consuming by many participants. Because of this, the hard-copy versions (Appendix A) were used instead. Responses were received from teachers (n=56), parents (n=52) and children (n=175).

Before investigating the issues identified by the participants, a number of significant details from the closed questions in the questionnaire are offered in Tables 1, 2 and 3 (below).

TABLE 1: Teacher Profiles

Q1. Why did you come to the UK?	Study	41	Work	10	Other	5	n=56
Q8. How long have you been teaching Korean?	<1~3 yrs	28	4~9 yrs	16	>10 yrs	6	n=50
Q10. Are your children studying in the UK?	Yes	41	No	15			n=56
Q22. How many students are there in your class?	1~10	26	11~20	8	>20	7	n=41
How old are they?	3~5 yrs	9	6~9 yrs	20	10~12 yrs	23	n=56

TABLE 2: Parent Profiles

Q1. Why did you come to the UK?	Study	32	Work	12	Other	4	n=48
Q2. How long have you been in the UK?	1~3 yrs	20	4~9 yrs	18	>10 yrs	1 3	n=51
Q3. Do you intend to leave the UK?	Yes	28	No	10	Not sure	1 1	n=49
Q9. How old are your children?	1~5 yrs	22	6~9 yrs	19	10~16 yrs	2 2	n=63
Q16. Why are they learning Korean?	Maintain Korean	16	HLL	16	Return to Korea	1 0	n=52

TABLE 3: Student Profiles

Q4. Do you consider yourself Korean or English?	Korean	150	English	8	Kor & Eng	13	n=171
Q6. What language do you speak at home?	Korean	87	Mostly English	10	Kor & Eng	73	n=170
Q7. How long do you expect to stay in the UK?	<1 year	16	1~5 years	62	>5 years	49	n=127
Q15. Do you like studying Korean?	Yes	86	Yes & No	51	No	30	n=167
Q18. What do you find MOST DIFFICULT?	Writing	43	Nothing	20	Reading	16	n=171

As this brief overview of responses shows, parents and teachers were mostly in the UK for study and more than 50% of them intended to return to Korea. Many of the students (most of whom were below 10 years old) also stated that they expected to return within 5 years or so. Interestingly, these students overwhelmingly saw themselves as Korean and spoke in Korean, or in a mixture of Korean and English, at home. These results can be expected to change rapidly and significantly in the coming years, as the Korean community become more settled, as the number of students intending to stay until they graduate from university in the UK increases, and as the proportion of students born in the UK increases.

Having established current situational details (however transient) by means of the questionnaire, the remainder of the study was essentially qualitative in nature, in that the perceptions, opinions and concerns of the Korean community school stakeholders were considered valid and meaningful. These schools represent a special case of language learning in an ethnic community and the issues involved are largely sociocultural, affective and psycholinguistic - areas which produce deep qualitative data.

Comments made in conversations, interviews and open-question sections of the questionnaire were analyzed and classified using the software, NVivo8. A number of issues were identified as a result of this analysis, in addition to conclusions reached from classroom observations and review of the research literature. These issues are summarized in the following sections.

4.1 Curriculum

At present, KCSs in the UK are quite young, and learners receive tuition in small groups, with individual teacher-student interaction. However, the growing importance of KHL in the UK and around the world, along with the ever-changing sociocultural scene, suggests that more parents will want to send their children to these schools in the future and that well-managed expansion and restructuring of the KCS system is urgently needed. A number of head teachers in schools visited by the researcher drew attention to the need for a 'KCS curriculum,' which would give them much-needed advice and guidance on the difficult task of providing suitable learning opportunities for all the different ages and types of learners in their schools. They suggested that design of such a curriculum could be sponsored by The Korean Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), in collaboration with the Korean Embassy, and that professors of Korean language education in Korean universities could be invited

to work with education experts in the UK to design a curriculum appropriate to the needs of children living and studying in the UK. This curriculum would help those children to integrate with their host community, as well as transmitting their ancestral culture and (in the case of children intending to return to Korea in the near future) preparing them for re-entry into Korean society and the Korean educational system. Kondo-Brown (2008) makes a similar suggestion.

A good model, where university professionals and community resources persons actively assist in community-based HL schools' curriculum development and teacher training, seems to be urgently needed. Without such coordinated community support, many HL schools may remain ineffective in providing instruction for HL learners. (Kondo-Brown 2008:33)

Lee & Kim (2008:180) propose a framework of curriculum development based on content-based instruction. They suggest that the HL could be learned through a theme-based or project-based approach, using the heritage culture as a natural focus or organizing principle for the curriculum. Such a core curriculum would be a welcome development for teachers in KCSs, but would not be an easy task for the designers, who would need to consider how to provide student-specific content learning for a wide range of unique learning needs and differing proficiencies, and how to ensure formative revision and improvement in line with the changing needs and characteristics of the learners. Kondo-Brown & Brown (2008) suggest a number of important questions for HL curriculum designers. These questions have been adapted to the findings of the current research study.

- 1) *Curriculum*: a) What are the linguistic and situational learning needs of KHL students?; b) To what extent can the curriculum meet these needs?; c) How do the learners' language learning needs change?
- 2) *Goals and objectives*: a) What are the goals and objectives (cultural, affective, social, and linguistic) of the curriculum?; b) How well can these objectives match the perceived needs of the HL learners?; c) How can these objectives be formulated, sequenced across levels and integrated across the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills?
- 3) *Assessment*: How well can diagnostic, progress, and achievement tests provide feedback on the learners' abilities to perform the objectives at various points of time?
- 4) *Textbooks*: How well can textbooks and teaching materials match the objectives and the curriculum as a whole?
- 5) *Teacher-training*: a) What teacher training opportunities and support policies

are in place?; b) What further opportunities are needed?

- 6) *Formative planning*: How can the entire curriculum be revised and improved?
- 7) *Support*: What sort of support (financial and otherwise) is needed from the 'home' Embassy, the 'home' government, the host government, the parents, and the local community? (Adapted and expanded from Kondo-Brown & Brown 2008:7-8)

4.2 Textbooks

A second important issue identified by teachers and parents during the investigation was the lack of texts specifically written for KHL learners. The textbooks currently in use were written for Koreans studying abroad and were developed and donated by the Korean Embassy. While being much appreciated as a teaching resource, these books are for young children and are not suitable for middle/high school students. Authentic Korean school textbooks can also be found in KCSs in the UK. While being useful, these are often too challenging for Korean language-maintenance students intending to return to Korea. They are also well above the level of KHL learners of the intended age group and can be demotivating. Finally, the approach to language learning in both types of textbooks is often conservative, grammar-translation-based and outdated, having little relevance to the learning styles and communicative needs of the KHL children. A contemporary set of communicative, age-appropriate, theme-based or task-based learning materials would be greatly appreciated by teachers and learners alike, and this issue is currently being investigated (in the USA) by the National Association for Korean Schools (<http://www.naks.org/>).

4.3 Teacher development

This third issue was referred to constantly during the research study by head teachers and teachers alike. Shin's (2005) excellent description of the situation in the USA also encapsulates the conditions found in the UK, and her words are therefore reproduced here in full:

Due to limited resources, teachers are usually paid minimally and receive little adequate professional training. Many programs suffer from a high teacher turnover rate, which adds to the problem of staff development and training. Most teachers in Korean HL schools have been educated in Korea and teach in the way in which they have been taught - a great deal

of instructional time is spent on rote learning, drills and memorization. As a result, most heritage learners, who are accustomed to an instructional method that encourages student participation and creative thinking, find much of the instruction in Korean schools tedious and unproductive. ... Few teachers are familiar with techniques for eliciting student input and organizing and supervising group activities, which are especially important in language classrooms. Teachers may also feel threatened by students who ask too many questions. (Shin 2005:157)

Teacher-availability and professional development are extremely important for KCSs, which currently rely on voluntary help from professionals who happen to be living, studying or working in the area. If such teachers are to receive professional support however, and if the students are to be taught according to sound language teaching theories and practices appropriate to their situations and needs (cf. Yu 2008), then it follows that official support from governmental agencies in the UK and in Korea is needed, in order to upgrade the teaching quality, the teaching conditions, and the teaching resources.

4.4 Financial support

Whatever the philanthropic actions and attitudes of teachers and head teachers, KCSs cannot exist without the financial support needed to provide suitable classroom locations, textbooks, and teaching resources. Head teachers interviewed in this study were keen to stress their appreciation for the funding given to each school from the Korean Embassy. This support, which goes some way to paying for the hire of classrooms or church halls, was usually supplemented by charging for the lessons, so that teachers could be given nominal recompense for their time and energy. However, as Shin (2005) states, and as interviewees continually pointed out in this study, this funding is insufficient for the continually increasing cost of room hire, and head teachers are finding it more and more difficult to acquire suitable locations.

The Korean Embassy and government provide nearly £1,000 per year in the second half of the year. It's very helpful. But it's not enough. So we are organizing some fund raising concerts or barbeque parties to raise money. (Interview, head teacher A, 2008)

In view of this situation, it would be worthwhile for the Korean Government to increase its financial support for the KHL schools in the UK as well as make

provision for teacher and resource development.

4.5 Socialization

Many teachers and parents expressed the view that KCSs perform important roles apart from language development and instruction in mathematics. They also help children become responsible members of their community, through language socialization activities (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986). Linguistic interaction with teachers and caregivers produces an internal dialogue ('inner speech') which determines how children perceive and interpret the world around them (Vygotsky 1978) and helps them develop values and morals (Tappan 1997). Language socialization also transfers cultural values and language to the next generation, so that Korean school classrooms can be important sites, in which children learn how to become competent members of the Korean community and culture.

We have *teuk-byeol-hwal-dong*, special time. Usually we do some Korean cultural activities, like learning Korean traditional instruments, ...and sometimes we do *tal-chum*, and Korean traditional games, *pak-ju*, *peng-ee*, *jeo-gi*. Children like *teuk-byeol-hwal-dong*. They also like *gan-shik*. (Interview, head teacher B, 2008)

4.6 Identity

Identity is an important aspect of KHL learning, since the students are often confused about their linguistic, cultural and social roots, and can "form and transform their senses of ethnicity through their participation in Korean language classes" (Hye-Young Jo 2001:26). However, many students, while considering themselves Korean (Table 3), also see themselves as members of non-Korean local peer-groups, and because of this, they often resent attending KCSs on Saturdays.

They don't like coming on Saturday. Some students are involved in birthday parties or other special events, and I heard that most of them complain - 'Why do we have to study on Saturday?' (Interview, head teacher C, 2008)

The reaction from girls and boys is quite different. Boys are 'Do I have to do it? I wanna play football on Saturday.' Girls do ballet and horse riding.

They have their own social life here. They have their friends as well. Boys are quite different. They have football training and football games on Saturdays. (Interview, head teacher C, 2008)

Western and Oriental cultures have different approaches to individual identity, and this can be disconcerting for KHL students. Brown (1996) states that in the East, the self "is said to be relational, interpersonal, or collective whereas the self in the West is individualistic and autonomous" (1996:39). When speaking Korean, social identity is expressed in relation to others (hierarchy), and failure to use appropriate styles and linguistic forms can be seen as rude or ignorant. It follows that knowledge of the cultural concept of self is essential when learning Korean. This knowledge has been traditionally transferred by adults to their children, but in minority ethnic communities there can be a problem when the children's L1 is not the same as that of their parents.

4.7 Intergenerational transmission

Studies have found that the HL proficiency of children has a direct relationship with their relationship with their grandparents (Sridhar 1988) and grandparents are great resources for children, helping them to acquire, maintain, and develop their HL proficiency and knowledge of heritage culture. In immigrant families in the USA, grandparents are often the main reason for using the HL in the home, since parents use the HL with their own parents (the children's grandparents) (Shin 2005) and they want their children to do the same. Grandparents are also influential in passing on respect-based concepts of filial piety and linguistic rules of courtesy, providing children with opportunities to practice hierarchical language forms.

In the case of the UK, grandparents are rarely present and are unable to perform this role directly. For this reason, it was not possible to research this aspect directly. However, this is an important issue and a number of parents in the study pointed out that regular visits to Korea are advisable if the family does not intend to return to the 'home' country, or if the stay in the UK is a lengthy one. On the other hand (and if the grandparents are computer-literate) regular e-mailing or contact through voicemail and videomail could be a practical alternative (cf. www.Skype.com).

4.8 Parents

Many parents are supportive of KCSs and recognize their important socializing

role. However, there was also evidence of misunderstandings about bilingualism and immersion during the interviews in this study. The researcher was told that parents visiting the UK for 1 or 2 years often want to give their children a total immersion experience in the English language and consequently do not send them to KCSs. As a result the children's Korean proficiency often suffers, while their fluency in English rapidly disappears upon return to Korea. In addition, children who learn English in this way often discover that it is of little use to them when taking tests such as the College Scholastic Achievement Test (CSAT) or the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) in Korea.

We find a big difference after 1 or 2 years, between studying and not studying in Korean schools. Some parents really regret when they go back to Korea. They want to catch English first. But they [children] rapidly forget our language. (Interview, head teacher A, 2008)

When they come here [UK], usually they learn English more than 6 months. After one year, they like it. When they go back [Korea], usually after 6 months they can't speak English. After one year, they totally forget. (Interview, head teacher A, 2008)

In general, Korean parents visiting the UK expect their children to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. However, this is not as simple as it sounds. Parents need to become actively involved in their children's HL education, helping with literacy activities and literacy development and promoting positive attitudes toward HL study (and homework) (cf. Section 5.1).

Most families came [to the UK] for study, which means 3 years, or 1 year usually. English in Korea is very important, so the parents think this is chance to improve the children's English. They don't realize the importance of keeping Korean. One day, when it's time to go back, they realize they missed this chance. They try to catch up, but it's very difficult. (Interview, head teacher A, 2008)

The parents feel they will lose English if they send their children to Korean school. But most of them, when they go back to Korea, they say 'Oh, I'm sorry [not] to listen to your advice and put my children into the Korean school.' (Interview, head teacher C, 2008)

5. Recommendations

Various recommendations for the improvement of KCSs in the UK and for effective acquisition and maintenance of the Korean language were extrapolated from the observations and interviews which took place in this study. These recommendations (voiced by the interviewees, and based upon their own experiences) are summarized below.

5.1 Suggestions for parents

In addition to the advice already offered in sections 4.7 and 4.8, parents interviewed in the study stressed the need to become more active in passing on the HL (Korean) to their children. They suggested that this can be done in a number of ways: i) Speak the HL at home and insist that children respond in that language; ii) Encourage children to speak the HL and do not criticize incorrect grammar or pronunciation; iii) Teach older children to encourage younger siblings' attempts to speak the HL and to not ridicule incorrect productions; iv) Emphasize the value of learning the HL and encourage pride in the HL and culture; v) Acquire age-appropriate HL reading materials and watch HL TV programs that are interesting and comprehensible to children; vi) Read often to children in the HL; vii) Teach children how to read and write the HL; viii) Send children to HL schools and be actively involved in children's HL education; ix) Provide opportunities for children to use the HL in meaningful contexts with peers who value the HL; x) Take children on trips to the country of origin and make regular contact (using the HL) with grandparents. (Adapted from Shin 2005)

5.2 Suggestions for program designers and policy-makers

General suggestions have already been made (Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4) regarding courses of action that could be taken by governments and program designers in terms of improving KCSs. In addition to these suggestions, this section looks at more specific considerations.

Firstly, KHL Programs need to use effective teaching methods, based on recent second language acquisition theories. This would involve the following policy decisions and subsequent actions: i) Provide cognitively challenging instruction that encourages active language use (Cummins 1996); ii) Create comfortable learning environments where students are given opportunities to use the HL in

situations they consider useful (Tse 2001); iii) Avoid overemphasis on the grammatical accuracy of student speech or writing; iv) Provide continuous professional development for teachers and staff to give HL teachers a sense of their professional identity and importance; v) Form partnerships between HL teachers and regular teachers (Feuerverger 2007); vi) Form partnerships with parents and the local community; vii) Teach the heritage cultures along with the HL (Feuerverger 2007); viii) Educate teachers about the facts and myths of bilingualism and bilingual education.

Secondly, suggestions were offered by the interviewees, in terms of liaising with the local community. It has been found that successful HL maintenance programs in the US usually have a close partnership with parents and the local community (Christian & Genesee 2001). This partnership can be established and then enhanced by: i) Educating parents and teachers about the facts and myths of bilingualism and bilingual education; ii) Explaining the difficulties experienced in raising children bilingually in a monolingual society; iii) Warning parents about the effects of loss of the mother tongue in their children; iv) Showing parents that English immersion does not necessarily make children acquire English more quickly and that premature mainstreaming can have negative effects; v) Teaching parents how to read to children in the HL to increase comprehension; vi) Showing parents how to find reading materials in Korean; vii) Making the HL more desirable in the local community; viii) Showing the school- and community-based benefits of HL maintenance.

Finally, teacher-training and support was identified as the most urgent consideration for KCSs. Therefore, based on the evidence collected, and on the concerns and wishes voiced by teachers and parents, this paper suggests that the Korean government might consider the following courses of actions in regard to this issue: i) The Korean government (in liaison with the UK government) might consider sponsoring qualified teachers in Korea to go to the UK for a year or two while following UK teacher-training courses or studying for an M.Ed or PhD in Education in UK universities; ii) Students of Korean Education Departments in Teachers' Colleges in Korea might be sponsored (by the government) to spend a year (or a semester) in the UK, as part of their teaching practicum; iii) Expert teacher trainers from Korea might be paid by the Korean government to give intensive workshops in the UK each summer (e.g. for a week or a fortnight); iv) UK Universities with Departments of East Asian Studies (e.g. Sheffield, Leeds, Cambridge) might offer incentives to their students to become involved with KCSs.

6. Conclusion

KHL education is becoming more important in the global community, where multilingualism and multi-ethnicity is a modern fact of life. While English shows signs of becoming a universal language of communication, it is important to realize that the majority of speakers of English are not native speakers. These speakers of English possess a wealth of cultural information and linguistic knowledge which is contained in their Heritage Languages, is often expressed in their own regional versions of English, and has given rise to the study of Regional Englishes (World Englishes).

Fluency in more than one language (bilingualism, multilingualism, and plurilingualism) is a valuable skill, benefiting the individual and the community. KHL programs encourage this skill, and by doing so, enhance the local community as well as the 'home' and international communities. KHL schools are also instrumental in educating the whole person, since they include linguistic, cognitive, social and educational factors contributing to the development of two or more languages. For these reasons, this paper suggests that KCSs in the UK need to be given expert support in terms of pedagogically sound curricula, teacher training, parental involvement, institutional support, and support from the local community.

Heritage languages have not received the support that they need and deserve (Fishman 2001) from host countries, and this has resulted in a harmful language shift, in which children lose their HL and their ancestral culture, with harmful effects on them (identity crises) and their family (lack of communication). If we are to slow down and even prevent the language shift process, we need to provide heritage learners with learning environments in which the values and ideas of heritage culture can be respected and practiced. Educators and policy makers in the host country and the 'home' country need to recognize the vital importance of KCSs and take steps to develop HLs and cultures, with a view to constructing a true multilingual and multicultural society.

Raising children bilingually is hard work but the hope of seeing them develop into confident, competent multicultural citizens who are proud of their heritage and are respectful of other cultures and peoples is what makes every language maintenance effort worthwhile. (Shin 2005:163)

This paper has examined the current situation of KCSs in the UK and has made a number of suggestions regarding curriculum design, textbooks, teacher development, and financial support, in particular. In consequence, it is suggested that increased support by the Korean government and by the UK government, in terms of supporting KCSs and Korean Heritage Language Learners in the UK, will not only be beneficial for the students themselves, but will also promote

academic, economic and cultural liaison between both countries.

REFERENCES

- Baker, C., & Jones, S. P.(1998), *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education*, Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Brown, R.(1996), "The Language of Social Relationship," in D. I. Slobin, J. Gerhardt, A. Kyratzis, & J. Guo, eds., *Social Interaction, Social Context and Language: Essays in Honour of Susan Ervin-Tripp*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Chevalier, J. F.(2004), "Heritage Language Literacy: Theory and Practice," *The Heritage Language Journal* 2(1), 1-19.
- Chinen, K., & Tucker, I. G. R.(2005), "Heritage Language Development: Understanding the Roles of Ethnic Identity and Saturday School Participation," *Heritage Language Journal* 3(1), 27-59.
- Christian, D., Genesee, F., & Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages(2001), *Bilingual Education*, Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Cummins, J.(1996), *Negotiating Identities: Education for Empowerment in a Diverse Society* (Revised and expanded version of Empowering Minority Students: California Association for Bilingual Education, 1989. ed.).
- Feuerverger, G.(2007), *Teaching, Learning, and Other Miracles*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Fishman, J. A.(1989), *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective*, Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Fishman, J. A.(2001), *Can Threatened Languages be Saved?: Reversing Language Shift, Revisited - a 21st Century Perspective*, Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Gal, S.(1979), *Language Shift: Social Determinants of Linguistic Change in Bilingual Austria*, New York: Academic Press.
- Graddol, D.(2006), *English Next*, British Council. Retrieved July 22, 2009, from: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-research-english-next.pdf>.
- Jo, Hye-Young(2001), "'Heritage' Language Learning and Ethnic Identity: Korean Americans' Struggle with Language Authorities," *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 14(1), 26-41.
- Jung, Yeon-June(2006), *Heritage Language Retention and Ethnic Identity Maintenance: In the Context of Korean Complementary Schools*, Unpublished MA Dissertation: University of Birmingham, UK.
- Kondo-Brown, K.(2008), "Issues and Future Agendas for Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Heritage Students," in K. Kondo-Brown & J. D. Brown, eds., *Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Heritage Language Students: Curriculum Needs, Materials, and Assessment*, New York & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 17-43.
- Kondo-Brown, K., & Brown, J. D.(Eds.)(2008), *Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Heritage Language Students: Curriculum Needs, Materials, and Assessment*, New York & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lambert, W. E.(1977), "The Effects of Bilingualism on the Individual: Cognitive and Sociocultural Consequences," in P. A. Hornby, ed., *Bilingualism: Psychological, Social, and Educational Implications*, New York: Academic Press, 15-27.
- Lee, Jin-Sook & Kim, H-Y.(2008), "Heritage Language Learners' Attitudes, Motivations, and

- Instructional Needs: The Case of Postsecondary Korean Language Learners," in K. Kondo-Brown & J. D. Brown, eds., *Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Heritage Language Students: Curriculum Needs, Materials, and Assessment*, New York & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 159-185.
- Lee, Jin-Sook & Shin, S. J.(2008), "Korean Heritage Language Education in the United States: The Current State, Opportunities, and Possibilities," *Heritage Language Journal* 6(2), 1-20.
- Peyton, J. K., Ranard, D. A., & McGinnis, S.(Eds.)(2001), *Heritage Languages in America: Preserving a National Resource*, Washington, DC: CAL, ERIC: Delta Systems Co., Inc.
- Romaine, S.(1995), *Bilingualism* (2nd ed.), Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Schieffelin, B. B., & Ochs, E.(1986). *Language Socialization Across Cultures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shibata, S.(2000), "Opening a Japanese Saturday School in a Small Town in the United States: Community Collaboration to Teach Japanese as a Heritage Language," *Bilingual Research Journal* 24(4), 465-474.
- Shin, Hyon-B., & Bruno, R.(2003), *Language Use and English-Speaking Ability: 2000. Census 2000 Brief*, Retrieved July 22, 2009 from: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-29.pdf>.
- Shin, S. J.(2002), "Birth Order and the Language Experience of Bilingual Children," *TESOL Quarterly* 36(1), 103-113.
- Shin, S. J.(2005), *Developing in Two Languages: Korean Children in America*, Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. & Phillipson, R. (1989). 'Mother Tongue': The Theoretical and Sociopolitical Construction of a Concept. In U. Ammon (Ed.) *Status and Function of Languages and Language Variety*. New York: W. de Gruyter.
- Sridhar, S. N.(1988), *Cognition and Sentence Production: A Cross-Linguistic Study*, New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Sweley, M. H.(2006), "Heritage Language: Where We Stand Today," *The Language Educator*, April 2006. Retrieved July 22, 2009 from:http://www.actfl.org/files/members/TLEApril_article.pdf.
- The UCLA Steering Committee (2000), "Heritage Language Research Priorities Conference Report," *Bilingual Research Journal* 24, 333-346. Retrieved January 2005, from: <http://brj.asu.edu/>.
- Tse, L.(2001), *Why Don't They Speak English?*, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Valdés, G.(1995), "The Teaching of Minority Languages as Academic Subjects: Pedagogical and Theoretical Challenges," *The Modern Language Journal* 79, 299-328.
- Vygotsky, L. S.(1978), *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Cambridge [Mass.] & London: Harvard University Press.
- Wiley, T. G.(2001), "On Defining Heritage Languages and Their Speakers," in J. K. Peyton, D. A. Ranard, & S. McGinnis, eds., *Heritage Languages in America: Preserving a National Resource*, McHenry, IL & Washington, DC: Delta Systems/Center for Applied Linguistics, 29-36.
- Wong Fillmore, L.(1991), "When Learning a Second Language Means Losing the First," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 6, 323-346.
- Wong Fillmore, L.(2000), "Loss of Family Languages: Should Educators be Concerned?," *Theory into Practice* 39(4), 203-210.
- Yu, W. H.(2008), "Developing a 'Compromise Curriculum' for Korean Heritage and Nonheritage

Learners," in K. Kondo-Brown & J. D. Brown, eds., *Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Heritage Language Students: Curriculum Needs, Materials, and Assessment*, New York & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 187-209.

APPENDIX A: Questionnaire: Teachers' Version

Section 1: General details

1. Why did you come to the UK?
2. How long have you been in the UK?
3. Do you intend to leave the UK (e.g. in order to return to Korea?)
If 'Yes', when do you intend to leave?
4. Are you a Korean citizen?
5. Were you educated in Korea?
6. What language do you speak at home?
7. What are your teaching qualifications?
8. How long have you been teaching Korean?
9. Do you like teaching Korean in the UK?
10. Are you also parents of students studying in the UK?

Section 2: Details of the children

11. How often does the Korean school give lessons?
12. How many hours of Korean lessons do the students receive each week?
13. How many weeks is the Korean school open during the year?
14. How many students are there in the Korean school?
15. How many classes are there in the Korean school?
16. What subjects are taught in the Korean school?
17. What is the natural language of the children?
18. How many students were born and educated in Korea?
19. How many students were born or raised in the UK?
20. What is the range of ability of the students?

Section 3: Korean studies

21. How many hours do you teach the children each Saturday?
22. How many students are there in your class and how old are they?
23. Do you teach the same children the whole time?
24. Are your classes mixed-ability classes?
25. Why are the children learning Korean?
to maintain their Korean skills to prepare for going to Korea
to learn the language of their heritage other reasons
26. What is the range of ability of Korean READING skills of the children?
advanced intermediate basic

