

Article

# Critical Analysis of Chongryon Secondary English Textbooks Published between 1968 and 1974\*

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## Introduction

The inter-Korean summit held on 27 April 2018, indicated the potential for two opposing nations, North Korea and South Korea, to develop peaceful relations. These two nations serve as a unique example of divided countries. Their division is not only political but also ideological, and these differences in belief can be seen in expatriate communities as well.

Within Korean minorities in Japan, there are two distinct groups, reflecting that division—the Chongryon<sup>1</sup> organisation, aligning with North Korea, and the Mindan organisation, aligning with South Korea (Ryang 1997). This study focuses on the Chongryon organisation, which is a pro-North Korean organisation in Japan, established in 1955.

Chongryon Koreans' unique situation has inspired research into their identity and political beliefs. This study will reveal how their textbooks influenced the formation of identity and political ideology in Chongryon students. It is important to investigate school textbooks because they present both collective identity and political ideologies (Lee 2000).

North Korea and South Korea have been in conflict since the end of World War II, and this has continued despite the ending of the Cold War some decades ago. This conflict arose after the end of the Japanese occupation, and political differences originated from the presence of the US in South Korea and of the Soviet Union in North Korea. The Korean peninsula's division also impacted the lives of Koreans living in Japan. Ironically, approximately 95% of the 600,000 Koreans who remained in Japan had come from the southern part

of the peninsula (Jin 1999, 581). However, the choice of nationality made by these Koreans did not always reflect their birthplace. The Chongryon Koreans, for example, decided to align themselves with North Korea.

Their commitment to North Korea was at least partly due to the content of school textbooks. Playing roles as both cultural artifact and surrogate curriculum (Venezky 1992), textbooks contain social conventions and cultural ideologies (Curdts-Christiansen 2017) and present the “collective identity” of the citizenry and the ideologies of the ruling class (Lee 2000). Chongryon Koreans developed a close relationship with North Korea, and this relationship led to financial support from North Korea—Chongryon textbooks began to be published in 1968 with financial aid from North Korea. Consequently, Joseonhakgyo were able to remain independent from Japanese influence. This study will investigate the political ideologies and ethnic identities expressed in the Chongryon EFL textbooks, and seek to determine in whose interests this occurred.

## *Ethnic Koreans in Japan*

There have been significant numbers of Koreans living in Japan for over 100 years. Fourth- and fifth-generation Koreans now make up a significant portion of the Korean minority, which is the second-largest in Japan (Cho 2017). During the colonial era, many Koreans were relocated to Japan in order to cover Japan's shortage of low-wage manpower, and around 990,000 Koreans (men and women) were sent to join the Japanese army during World War II (Chapman 2006, 90). Although their relocation was involuntary, around 650,000 of the 2.4 million Koreans who had settled in Japan decided to remain in the country after the war (Ryang 2000). One reason for only a small minority of Koreans returning was that they were allowed to take only ¥1,000 in cash with them, the value of only a few cartons of cigarettes in Korea (Motani 2002, 228), and 250 pounds (about 133 kilograms) of luggage. This imposed limitation made Koreans unsure about restarting their new lives in Korea. In other words, Koreans' individual decisions to remain in Japan were not necessarily made voluntarily. According to Jin (1999), an organisation, Joryeon, was founded in 1945, in order for those Koreans who remained in Japan to protect themselves. Joryeon was disbanded by GHQ (General Headquarters, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) in

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1. Although this study basically follows the Revised Korean Romanisation System (RR) to Romanise Korean words excluding well-known names of places and persons, this study follows the spelling system used by the Chongryon organisation. For instance, Chongryon is sometimes spelled as “Chongryun” or “Ch'ongnyŏn” in Korean 總聯, and “Chōsen Sōren” 朝鮮総連 in Japanese. The English translation is the “General Association of Korean Residents.” This term is also applied to individuals of Korean ancestry who support North Korean ideologies.

1949—because the organisation’s political ideology had been influenced by the Japanese Communist Party, and because of the organisation’s aggressive protests (Lee 2017). After Joryeon, Minjeon was formed in 1951, and existed until 1955. Minjeon was the first organisation to promote North Korean ideology through their rallies. In 1955, members remade their organisation into the Chongryon organisation, which advocated for the interests of the North Korean government. Kim Il Sung supported the election of Han Deok Su, a loyalist, to lead the Chongryon (Lee 2017), demonstrating North Korea’s keen interest in the organisation. It was North Korea’s leader, Kim Il Sung, who initiated Chongryon’s association with North Korea as their homeland. Kim Il Sung officially proclaimed Chongryon Koreans in Japan as “Overseas Nationals of North Korea” and donated ¥42 billion between 1957 and 1995 to fund Chongryon education (Ryang 1997). With North Korea’s financial support, the Chongryon established their school system (from pre-school to university) across Japan, thereby remaining independent from the Japanese government. This independence is reflected in their school curricula and textbook content. For instance, the 1973 curricular reforms incorporated teachings about Kim Il Sung, and reflected Chongryon’s idolisation of Kim Il Sung (Ryang 1997). Surprisingly, North Korea’s funding of Chongryon education has continued until today. According to Kim Kyong Suk, who used to be responsible for publishing the EFL textbooks at Hagusobang between 1976 and 2004, financial aid from North Korea allowed Chongryon to manage their schools by paying for teachers’ wages and purchasing teaching materials. However, over the years, there has been a decrease in funding, and North Korea now provides approximately ¥200 million per year, despite Joseonhakgyo being excluded from receiving financial assistance from the Japanese local government (personal communication with Kim, 12 May, 2018; hereafter, addressed as “Kim, 12 May, 2018”).

However, according to Jin (1999), any educational funding provided by North Korea is likely to come from the funds that Chongryon have provided to North Korea. This exchange of money operates under its title “business for loving nation.” This “smuggling” relationship between North Korea and Chongryon was facilitated by the repatriations that occurred. What is more, North Korea used these repatriations to boast the superiority of its regime.

The repatriation of Koreans from Japan to North Korea, which began in 1959, impacted significantly on the Chongryon 1968-1974 EFL textbooks. In

1959, during the first month of the repatriation, 2,942 people moved to North Korea (Ryang 2000). By the early 1980s, more than 93,000 individuals (about 87,000 Koreans and 6,500 Japanese) had moved to North Korea (Bell 2018, 5). Jin has proposed reasons for such large numbers moving to North Korea, for instance, discrimination against Koreans in Japan and financial support from North Korea, which encouraged Koreans to view North Korea more positively. The Japanese media also supported repatriation because of the financial burden that 90,000 Koreans imposed on the Japanese government (Jin 1999, 598-601).

### *Prior Studies on Chongryon Textbooks*

Despite the importance of textbooks’ role in education, studies on Chongryon Koreans and Joseonhakgyo have not focused so far on their textbooks. Due to the limited access that those outside Chongryon communities have to those textbooks, few studies on the Chongryon’s teaching methods have been conducted.

Previously, the Soviet Union’s EFL textbooks had been used at Joseonhakgyo, but these became unsuitable as their content followed the Soviet Union’s educational goals. Therefore, in 1968, Chongryon began publishing textbooks through Hagusobang (Kim, 12 May, 2018). When the Chongryon began publishing their own textbooks, their content was inspired by North Korean textbooks (ibid.). However, changes in ideology resulted in changes in educational goals. Today, the Joseonhakgyo curriculum no longer ignores educational trends in Japanese schools because younger Korean generations demand participation in Japanese society. For example, most Chongryon students wish to attend Japanese universities rather than Joseon University in Tokyo (“Korea University” in English) which was founded by the Chongryon in Tokyo in 1956. Therefore, Chongryon EFL textbooks have been revised to keep up-to-date with textbooks used in Japanese schools. Since Joseonhakgyo are not accredited by the Japanese government, this revision process was also necessary to allow Chongryon students to successfully take exams to qualify for Japanese university entrance examinations (ibid.). As a result, today’s Japanese EFL textbooks greatly influence the Chongryon EFL textbooks (Cho 2017). Joseonhakgyo textbooks are published by Hagusobang, a subsidiary of Chongryon (Ryang 1997). Moon Mi Ja (personal communication with Moon,

12 May, 2018), who is currently responsible for Chongryon EFL teaching publications at Hagusobang, has advised that Hagusobang publishes 122 school textbooks per year and 340 other materials, such as workbooks and student magazines.

Some studies have investigated the ideologies embedded within the Joseonhakgyo textbooks. In a study by Song (2011), Chongryon Korean language textbooks were compared between 1993 and 2003. Song claimed that the promotion of socialism, Juche (self-reliance) ideology (the personality cult of Kim Il Sung, which was developed aggressively in the mid-1950s), and anti-American sentiments had decreased over time. However, in a critical study by Lee (2017), Chongryon's 2015 Korean language textbooks still displayed a strong attachment to North Korea. Additionally, the texts revealed Chongryon Koreans' beliefs—identifying students as North Koreans and encouraging them to remain loyal to Chongryon and to volunteer for North Korea. However, no scholars have looked into the EFL textbooks, specifically those published between 1968 and 1974, when Chongryon Koreans associated themselves strongly with North Korea.

### Data

It is significant to analyse the EFL textbook from 1968-1974 as they were the first textbooks to be published using North Korea's educational grants. Moreover, during this time, Chongryon and North Korea had a close relationship. Notably, during the 1960s and 1970s, Japan's Korean communities, Chongryon and Mindan, expressed their political support explicitly. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the embedded interests of the dominant classes, ruling ideologies, and ethnicities presented within Chongryon EFL textbooks, which will answer the following research questions:

1. What political ideologies and beliefs are presented in the EFL textbooks?
2. What identity is depicted in the EFL textbooks?
3. Whose interests are embedded in the EFL textbooks?

Considering that the Chongryon's English education was not then provided in primary school, this study analyses EFL textbooks from only the first

three grades of secondary school, when students began to learn English. This study examines five 1968-1974 secondary EFL textbooks collected mainly from Hagusobang. During this time, Chongryon was learning to produce their own publications. Hence, they provided multiple publications of the same textbooks between 1968 and 1974, showing only minor revisions. Although this study looks into three different years, 1968, 1970, and 1974, the textbooks are distinct between each year only through the minor revisions that were made. Therefore, this study focuses predominantly on 1970 publications.

A total of five EFL textbooks are critically analysed: two for Grade 1 published in 1970 (first edition) and 1974 (second edition), collected from the Korean National Library in South Korea; one for Grade 2 published in 1970; and two for Grade 3, one of which was published in 1968 (first edition) and collected from Japan's Institute of Developing Economies Japan External Trade Organisation (IDE-JETRO) and the other published in 1970 (second edition). All of the revised textbooks include additional images, different page layouts and different lesson titles. Unlike Grade 1 and 3, only one Grade 2 textbook was found. Therefore, it is unknown whether the Grade 2 textbook is a first or second edition textbook. Lesson titles (and their main idea) from each grade textbook are displayed below.

**Table 1.** Lesson Titles from Grade 1 Publication

| Lesson No. | Title of Each Lesson          | Topic  |
|------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1          | This is a pen.                | Simple statement form  |
| 2          | Is this a pen?                | Question and answer using "be-verbs"                                     |
| 3          | What is this?                 | Question and answer using interrogatives                                 |
| 4          | I am a pupil.                 | Introducing one's identification   |
| 5          | Who is he?                    | Question and answer to express one's identification using interrogatives |
| 6          | This is my cap.               | Expressions of belonging and relationships                               |
| 7          | I have a ball.                | Expressions of possession  |
| 8          | This is my face.              | Expressions of human body parts  |
| 9          | What have you in your hand?   | Question and answer to express possession                                |
| 10         | There is a desk in your room. | Expressions of things' locations   |
| 11         | Where is Korea?               | Expressions of possession and location                                   |
| 12         | We are friends.               | Friendships between Korean and Japanese                                  |

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 13 | What flowers are these?                | Colours of flowers and fruits                                       |
| 14 | We learn English.                      | English expressions in classroom                                    |
| 15 | Our family.                            | Introducing family members  |
| 16 | What are you doing?                    | Expression of current actions                                       |
| 17 | Marshal Kim Il Sung loves us.          | Kim Il Sung's caring for children                                   |
| 18 | What time is it?                       | Time expressions  |
| 19 | I get up at seven.                     | Students' daily activities  |
| 20 | How old are you?                       | Comparison of ages, between Pyongyang and other cities in the world |
| 21 | I can speak English.                   | Languages a student can speak                                       |
| 22 | There are seven days in a week.        | Seven days in a week  |
| 23 | The twelve months.                     | Twelve months in a year   |
| 24 | What a beautiful place Mangyongdae is! | The beauty of Mangyongdae   |

Table 2. Lesson Titled from Grade 2 Publication

| Lesson No. | Title of Each lesson                       | Topic   |
|------------|--|---|
| 1          | The birthday of Marshal Kim Il Sung.       | Celebration of Kim Il Sung's birthday                     |
| 2          | Ok Sun is a Korean girl.                   | Ok Sun speaks Korean, Japanese, and English               |
| 3          | Next month will be May.                    | Workers' day in May                                       |
| 4          | We shall go to the zoo.                    | Visiting the zoo  |
| 5          | I helped mother.                           | Helping mother on Saturday                                |
| 6          | Unity.                                     | Importance of being united to protect themselves          |
| 7          | One spring morning.                        | Making paper flowers for Children's Day                   |
| 8          | Chun Sik and In Ho.                        | A book introducing Mun Kil, a brave revolutionary pioneer |
| 9          | He fought to the last.                     | Mun Kil who was loyal to Kim Il Sung                      |
| 10         | The Democratic People's Republic of Korea. | The Foundation of North Korea                             |
| 11         | To study.                                  | Reasons to study hard                                     |
| 12         | A letter from Pyongyang.                   | School life in Pyongyang                                  |
| 13         | Dong Su and his family.                    | Hopeless life in South Korea due to the US                |
| 14         | Chun Sik has written his letter.           | Writing letters to friends living in North Korea          |
| 15         | You have once lived in Pyongyang.          | Mother's living experience of Pyongyang                   |
| 16         | Uncle's travel.                            | Travel experiences of Ok Sun's uncle                      |
| 17         | Pyongyang.                                 | Capital of North Korea                                    |

|    |                                     |                            |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 18 | Mt. Keumgang.                       | A beauty of Mt. Keumgang   |
| 19 | Korean is spoken in Korea.          | Korean language usage      |
| 20 | The history of printing.            | Invention of block letters |
| 21 | In the classroom.                   | Decorating the classroom   |
| 22 | The boyhood of Marshal Kim Il Sung. | Childhood of Kim Il Sung   |

Table 3. Lesson Titles from Grade 3 Publication

| Lesson No. | Title of Each lesson                   | Topic   |
|------------|--|---|
| 1          | Spring.                                | Comparison of spring between North Korean South Korea                                   |
| 2          | On Sunday.                             | How to travel to the stadium to watch school football match                             |
| 3          | The football match.                    | Winning the football match  |
| 4          | Our life and nature.                   | Integration between nature and human  |
| 5          | The 102 Children's Tomb.               | The Shinchun Massacre that occurred during the Korean War                               |
| 6          | The ninth of September.                | The Foundation Day of North Korea   |
| 7          | Ok Sun is a girl whom everybody loves. | A school girl with her father working for Chongryon and a ship to travel to North Korea |
| 8          | Camping.                               | School camping in summer  |
| 9          | In the bosom of Marshal Kim Il Sung.   | Repatriation to North Korea and life under Kim Il Sung's rule                           |
| 10         | How I lived before the Liberation?     | Life under Japan's ruling and the liberation from Japan                                 |
| 11         | Blue is the sky.                       | Happiness under Kim Il Sung's care  |
| 12         | How to write a diary.                  | How to improve writing skill  |
| 13         | Ok Sun's diary.                        | Ok Sun's daily life   |
| 14         | A greedy merchant and a wood-cutter.   | The wood-cutter's reaction to the merchant's greed                                      |
| 15         | I must fight to the last.              | Being loyal to the commander  |

Since Grade 1 used to be the first school grade to learn English, the textbook includes basic grammar items with short sentence examples rather than reading passages for comprehension. Across the three grades, the lessons in the Grade 2 textbook include more discussions about North Korea and Kim Il Sung than any other grade. Consequently, the Grade 2 textbook is seen to focus its content on the interests of Chongryon's political idealism when educating students.



There are some differences between the two Grade 3 textbooks. For instance, the 1968 textbook is composed of 16 lessons, whereas the 1970 textbook is composed of 15 lessons, having excluded a lesson about Great Britain.

It is important to note that titles of lessons do not necessarily match with their content. Consequently, textual analysis must be conducted in order to reveal the embedded learning content. Thus, this study looks into the content of each lesson in depth, and categorises each lesson into three major themes, based on its main reading passage.

Table 4 shows the major themes represented within the EFL textbooks for each school grade.

**Table 4.** Number of Lessons that Convey Major Themes within EFL Textbooks

|         | Total Number of Lessons | Glorifying North Korea & Kim Il Sung | Representation of Koreans Residing in Japan | Anti-Americanism & Negative Descriptions of South Korea | Other |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------|
| Grade 1 | 24                      | 7                                    | 7   | 0   | 10    |
| Grade 2 | 22                      | 10                                   | 5   | 3   | 4     |
| Grade 3 | 15                      | 6                                    | 3   | 2   | 4     |
| Total   | 62                      | 23                                   | 15  | 5   | 18    |

Note: Total number of lessons does not necessarily match with the number of themes, since lessons may include more than one topic.

The first theme, “Glorifying North Korea and Kim Il Sung,” is dedicated to positive references to North Korea and Kim Il Sung’s rule. This is especially relevant when discussion takes place about Koreans needing to return to North Korea in order to live happily. The second theme, “Representation of Koreans Residing in Japan,” presents the lives of Chongryon Koreans who live in Japan and their need to negotiate with Japanese society. The third theme, “Anti-Americanism & Negative Descriptions of South Korea,” describes the US as the enemy of South and North Korea, and makes the US the object of blame for South Korea’s misery. “Other” includes topics such as writing a diary and playing football. From Lessons 1 to 9, major themes are not obvious within the Grade 1 textbook. Rather, the content focuses on teaching basic English grammar points, like be-v sentence structure.

In order to concentrate on the most meaningful topics for this analysis, a

number of texts have been carefully selected from the most frequently occurring themes that represent major concepts of learning in Joseonhakgyo classrooms. For instance, in the Grade 1 textbook, seven of the 24 lessons have the theme “Glorifying North Korea and Kim Il Sung.” In contrast, in the Grade 2 textbook, ten of the 22 lessons include this theme, as do six of the 15 lessons in the Grade 3 textbook. Therefore, it seems that, as students matured, the proportion of their textbooks dedicated to glorifying North Korea and Kim Il Sung increased.

In order to answer the research questions, critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been used to uncover the dominant ideological messages and cultural values prevalent within the textbooks. Fairclough (2010) suggested that analysing linguistic elements by using CDA discovers the hidden relationship between language, power, and ideologies. Furthermore, CDA reveals the reason for producing texts, in whose interest these texts are produced, and the “taken-for-grantedness of dominant ideological input” (Lee 2017). Therefore, this study will refer to lexical, grammatical, and intertextual analysis, and to the textbooks’ contextual situation to uncover the thematic elements that subtly permeate the texts. In particular, this study looks into the texts considering the historical context of Chongryon. The textbooks included some unintentional grammatical errors and misspellings which are ignored during the investigation of this research.

## Analysis

### *Theme One: Glorifying North Korea as a Desirable Homeland and Perceiving Kim Il Sung as a Father*

The selected texts which indicate that Chongryon students were frequently exposed to North Korean beliefs, such as the importance of being loyal to North Korea and Kim Il Sung, are critically analysed.

*Lesson 20: How Old Are You? (Grade 1)*

1. *Where is Korea?*
2. *It is in Asia.*
3. *What is its capital?*

4. *It is Pyongyang. Pyongyang is the capital of the revolution.*
5. *Which is more beautiful, Pyongyang or Seoul?*
6. *Pyongyang is.*
7. *It is the most beautiful city in the world.*

(Excerpt 1)

The question “What is its [North Korea’s] capital?” is posed so as to open discussion regarding North Korea. The answer, “Pyongyang” in Line 6, is the key indicator that this excerpt focuses its discussion on North Korean ideology. The theme developed is the beauty of North Korea—the writer claims Pyongyang as “the most beautiful city in the world” in Line 7. This statement regarding Pyongyang demonstrates the writer’s support for the North Korean regime. In Line 4, Pyongyang is described as “the capital of the revolution.” In North Korea, talk of the revolution included Kim Il Sung’s portrayal as a central figure in the revolutionary state propaganda that promoted anti-Japanese thinking. The mythologising of anti-Japanese war efforts served to develop North Korea as an independent communist nation (Lim 2015, 51-53). Therefore, the writer implies that Pyongyang sits at the epicentre of North Korean communist ideology.

Notably, by repeating “Pyongyang” four times, the writer encourages the readers to retain the idea that Pyongyang is beautiful. In Lines 5 to 7, “Pyongyang” and “Seoul” are compared. The use of the comparative form places Pyongyang as a superior capital city to Seoul (“Pyongyang is more beautiful than Seoul”), thereby indicating the writer’s preference for North Korea. The writer then uses the superlative form—“Pyongyang is the most beautiful city in the world.” Consequently, North Korea is presented as being a better country than South Korea—the best country in the world.

Chongryon students grew into their identity as “Overseas Nationals of North Korea” (Ryang 1997, 7) in part by being exposed to the positive traits of North Korea, as found in Joseonhakgyo textbooks.

*Lesson 17: Marshal Kim Il Sung Loves Us (Grade 1)*

1. *...Sun Eui is writing her name in the notebook.*
2. *What is Marshal Kim Il Sung doing?*
3. *He is looking at Sun Eui’s name.*
4. *He loves them and they are happy.*

(Excerpt 2)

“Marshal Kim Il Sung” is referred to twice as “he” in this excerpt, thereby placing focus on Kim Il Sung as the dominant character. The English word “Marshal” is *wonsu* in Korean, meaning a leader of a country. As Chongryon students live in Japan, Kim Il Sung’s influence is defined as being limitless (“he” can see “them,” even in Japan). In Line 4, Kim Il Sung is described as loving (“He loves them”). The pronouns “them” and “they” refer to two girls: Sun Eui and Ji Sun. The two girls represent Chongryon Koreans, as readers associate themselves with the girls. Additionally, the present continuous tense describes actions or events that last over time, for example, “What is Marshal Kim Il Sung doing?” However, verbs in present simple form (as in Line 4) make information believable. Rather than being possible or probable, the writer states a “categorical truth” by using present simple (Fairclough 2013, 107-08). Use of the present simple tense communicates the love of Kim Il Sung as an enduring condition that has no foreseeable end. As such, the textbook is used both for learning English and to connect Chongryon students to North Korean ideology. Through the text, the students learn about the caring nature of Kim Il Sung and the security and happiness of living under his leadership. Song (2011) claimed that during the 1970s, Joseonhakgyo textbooks heavily promoted the Juche ideologies of North Korea and the ideas of the Korean Workers’ Party.

Texts appeal to readers’ rationality and deliver messages. The text in Excerpt 2 is in question and answer form, evoking a classroom discourse. The text emphasises positive outcomes from working under the supervision of the “Marshal.” The text outlines that “Sun Eui is writing her name” and that Kim Il Sung is “looking at Sun Eui’s name.” Consequently, the theme of Kim Il Sung’s glory is addressed as the Marshal Kim Il Sung who oversees his children. Another story depicting Marshal Kim Il Sung’s love of workers is analysed below.

*Lesson 9: In the Bosom of Marshal Kim Il Sung (Grade 3)*

1. *On February 23, 1963, I received warm words from our most beloved leader, Marshal Kim Il Sung.*
2. *...Marshal Kim Il Sung visited our factory and talked with us for about three hours.*
3. *...he took the hand of each of us and...*
4. *His voice was like that of a father who was talking to his son.*
5. *...he kindly asked me about my life: “How was your life in Japan?”*
6. *And how is it at present?...*

7. *I had lived in Japan for twenty years, and who had ever taken care of my life and my family?*
8. *And now!*
9. *What a happy man I am!*
10. *What won't I do for such a great leader and this fatherland!...*
11. *He said that we must drive out the Yankees from South Korea, and all the Korean people must live happily together.*
12. *...I made up my mind to work harder for the fatherland.*
13. *In the evening when I returned home,...*
14. *...“How happy we are in the bosom of Marshal Kim Il Sung!”*
15. *We want to share this happiness with our friends in Japan and our uncles in South Korea.*

(Excerpt 3)

This excerpt presents the lives of Chongryon Koreans who repatriated to North Korea. According to Ryang (2000, 34), the North Korean premier, Kim Il Sung, stated in 1959 that repatriation was the “sacred right and humanitarian need” of Chongryon Koreans—“to come back to the bosom of their own fatherland...” In 1958, a group of Chongryon Koreans in Kawasaki sent a letter to the North Korean government, requesting repatriation to North Korea. Japanese communists and other sympathisers supported this repatriation. Consequently, there began a campaign that demanded Koreans in Japan be repatriated to North Korea (ibid.). The repatriation of Koreans in Japan to North Korea began in 1959, and by 1967, a total of 88,611 Koreans had returned. However, the lives of repatriates were regulated by North Korean officials, prohibiting repatriated Koreans from reuniting with their families and friends in Japan. Koreans who stayed in Japan received little information about their repatriated family members. The only information that was gathered about North Korea was from Chongryon publications (which provided the “official” portrayal of North Korea) and brief letters that repatriated Koreans sent to Japan (ibid. 38-39).

The title of Lesson 9 includes the noun “bosom.” The caring nature in which Koreans are embraced by Kim Il Sung (for they are “in [his] bosom”) demonstrates Kim Il Sung’s motherly nature. Kim Il Sung’s guidance and strength as a leader highlight his fatherly characteristics. The text begins by specifying the date of Kim Il Sung’s visit to a North Korean factory. The excerpt is structured as a diary, where the speaker writes about his personal thoughts.

Since the inclusive and collective pronoun “we” is used to refer to the speaker and his in-group (Fitzgibbon 2013), “our” in Line 1 refers to those Koreans who view North Korea as their homeland. In contrast, the pronouns “our” in Line 1 and “us” in Line 2 make reference to the factory workers (the speaker is also a factory worker) who meet Kim Il Sung. Specifically, Kim Il Sung’s love and care are shown in the expressions “talked with us for about three hours” and “took the hand of each of us” (Lines 1 and 2). Line 4 portrays Kim Il Sung as a father, as if he “[were] talking to his son.” According to Kim’s (2006) study on Korean textbooks used in North Korea, Kim Il Sung is presented as a truly warm-hearted father who cares about his people in North Korea. As such, North Korean ideology is tailor-made for younger students who seek to have guidance throughout their lives. Lines 5 and 6 show that he talked with workers. In Lines 7 to 10, the speaker outlines that his “happy” life in North Korea is a result of Kim Il Sung’s care. The writer’s key point is shown in Line 10—being loyal to Kim Il Sung and North Korea. By using first person pronoun “I,” the writer encourages readers to identify themselves as the character in the text (Lee 2006, 425). Through the portrayal of a Chongryon worker, Chongryon students are given a specific goal that would encourage them to work towards following North Korea’s ideology. In Line 11, South Koreans’ unhappiness is blamed on America. The first person plural pronoun “we” refers to the people in North Korea as well as to Kim Il Sung and Chongryon Koreans. The text states that they “must” save South Koreans from the “Yankees.”

The modality system allows people to construe possibility, certainty, normality, seriousness, necessity, and obligation, along with attitudinal vocabulary, enabling people to construe stance, judgment, and evaluation (Fang & Schleppegrell 2010, 592). For example, the modal verb “must” is repeated twice in Line 11, stressing the importance of saving South Koreans and signaling the speaker’s decision “to work harder” in Line 12. Line 12 indicates how the words of Kim Il Sung inspire the actions of his followers. In Line 15, the phrase “our friends in Japan” refers to Koreans in Japan, and “our uncles in South Korea” refers to South Koreans. Being placed in the “bosom of Kim Il Sung” is presented as the way to achieve true happiness. Consequently, Koreans in Japan are encouraged to repatriate to North Korea, as shown in Lines 9 and 14. In addition, the removal of “Yankees” (Line 11) from South Korea is another mechanism for producing the happiness that can be shared between Koreans in Japan and Koreans in South Korea.



Overall, in order to encourage a greater number of Koreans to repatriate from Japan to North Korea, this lesson evokes positive traits about North Korean life and identifies Kim Il Sung as a glorious figure for both North Koreans and Chongryon Koreans. The following section investigates themes in which texts explore anti-Americanism and negative descriptions of South Korea.

### ***Theme Two: Anti-Americanism and Negative Descriptions of South Korea***

The texts selected in this theme represent the conflict and tension between the US and North Korea resulted in the US as being depicted as Chongryon's enemy in Chongryon EFL textbooks. Moreover, these textbooks depict South Koreans as victims of America's tyranny who need to be saved by North Korea, specifically, its leader Kim Il Sung.

#### *Lesson 13: Dong Su and his Family (Grade 2)*

1. *It was winter...*
2. *...many boys came out on the street...*
3. *All of them had very dirty clothes on...*
4. *...began to run and cry in a loud voice, "Morning newspaper!..."*
5. *The boy's name is Dong Su and he is only twelve years old...*
6. *...his father left their home...*
7. *His mother does not work. She is ill in bed.*
8. *His younger sisters..., "We are hungry..."*
9. *Dong Su must get money to buy some food for his mother and two sisters.*
10. *He has to work instead of his parents.*
11. *At first, he did not know how to get money.*
12. *...did his best to find a job...*
13. *But...not enough to get food for his family.*
14. *Why are they unhappy?*
15. *They are unhappy, because the Yankees oppress the people in South Korea.*
16. *The South Korean people are fighting against the Yankees.*
17. *They shout, "Yankees, get out of South Korea!"*
18. *They believe that Marshal Kim Il Sung will liberate them at last.*

(Excerpt 4)

The text is structured as a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end. In Lines 1 to 3, the text sets the scene of the story, where "it was winter"

and boys "...had very dirty clothes." Line 4 is the turning point that leads to the main action, where a boy begins to "...cry in a loud voice, 'Morning newspaper!'" Line 5 introduces the main character of the story, Dong Su, a South Korean boy. In Lines 6 to 13, Dong Su's problem is explored. The writer outlines Dong Su's obstacles—"his father left their home," "his mother does not work," and his "younger sisters...are hungry." Therefore, Dong Su is forced to "work instead of his parents." The ending of the story is contained in Lines 14 to 18. However, the writer does not resolve the story at the end. Readers must draw their own conclusions about the unhappiness of South Koreans, such as Dong Su.

The text highlights the issue of sacrifice and injustice for Dong Su. The importance of family is repeated, with reference to "his mother" and "two sisters," and to them being "his family." The prepositions "for" and "instead of" indicate his sacrifice and selflessness, evoking the injustice against Dong Su. Especially, "he is only twelve years old" (Line 5), presents Dong Su as a victim who is forced to live like an adult. In Line 9, the modal verb "must" expresses a strong obligation. Use of simple tenses, such as in "he is," implies facts. Additionally, in Line 11, the simple past tense "he did not know" illustrates a single passing action, which means Dong Su has matured and lost his childish innocence over time. The text's short sentences evoke a simplicity well-suited to young students. The need for the twelve-year-old boy, Dong Su, to work suggests that he is separated from his family and from the comforts of home. As such, the story leads readers to sympathise with Dong Su. The word "Yankees" (Line 15) refers to the US military forces that are based in South Korea. The character, Dong Su, is apparently unhappy as a result of the Yankees oppressing South Koreans.

Despite there being movements for democracy in South Korea during the 1970s and 1980s (Lee 2014), the story describes those protests as if they were solely aimed at resisting the US presence in South Korea. Therefore, the writer's prejudice towards Americans is clearly influenced by North Korean politics. An anti-American movement did rise in South Korea. However, despite there being both US supporters and US opponents in the Korean peninsula, Excerpt 4 states only that South Koreans are unhappy because of the US military presence.

The present continuous tense in Line 16 indicates present action. This tense leads readers to believe that the immediate goings-on in South Korea are chaotic. As a result, children like Dong Su are presented to humanise the

suffering in South Korea. Consequently, Chongryon students are encouraged to feel secure and thankful for living under Kim Il Sung's rule. The repeated pronoun "they" throughout the excerpt refers to the "people in South Korea." As a result of Chongryon students becoming observers of the events in South Korea via this story, they re-examine their lives in contrast to those of South Korean students and understand their good fortune. Therefore, the students' loyalty to North Korea is strengthened as they learn the negative outcomes of not living under Kim Il Sung's rule. The modal verb "will" in Line 18 expresses both the future tense and the intention of the subject. Therefore, the text indicates the likelihood of South Koreans being liberated from the "Yankees" by "Marshal Kim Il Sung." The modal verb expresses the promise that "Marshal Kim Il Sung" is the hope that South Koreans need in order to be free from their "unhappy" lives. "At last" adds a tone of relief to the speaker's voice in response to the belief that the "Marshal" is South Korea's salvation. Consequently, the phrase evokes a need for Kim Il Sung to help South Koreans against the Americans. The necessity of the Marshal's intervention highlights his reputation as Korea's leader—the one who holds the power to liberate South Koreans.

This lesson argues that the US presence in South Korea is having severe consequences for South Korea. In the Grade 3 textbook, specific examples show the belief that America is an enemy to both the South and North Korean people. Interestingly, in EFL education in South Korea during this time period, the education goal was to lead students to be able to understand the life and culture of English-speaking countries (inner-circle countries). Also, use of the US English style (e.g., spelling and pronunciation) was encouraged by the South Korean government as a language of its allied nation (Lee 2009). In other words, students in South Korea were taught to perceive the US favourably, while Chongryon students were taught to perceive the US as an enemy of all Koreans. The following section introduces Koreans in Japan who suffered rejection and discrimination from Japanese society, in areas such as employment and education.

### ***Theme Three: Representation of Chongryon Koreans Residing in Japan***

Some lessons in the textbooks indicate the internal conflict that occurred within Chongryon Koreans with following North Korean beliefs while

residing in Japan. Although Chongryon Koreans maintained their anti-Japanese perspectives, they were obliged also to build good relations with the Japanese to maintain a stable life for themselves as presented in the following excerpts.

#### *Lesson 21: I can speak English (Grade 1)*

1. *I can speak Korean.*
2. *I can speak, read, and write Korean...*
3. *I can speak Korean, Japanese, and English...*
4. *Which can you speak better, Korean or Japanese?*
5. *Of course, I can speak Korean better.*

(Excerpt 5)

The title of Excerpt 5 reveals the lesson's topic, learning the English language. However, the words "English" and "Japanese" appear only twice each, while the word "Korean" appears five times. Additionally, the passage's opening statement, "I can speak Korean," reveals the writer's real focus to be Korean, not English. In Line 2, the speaker's Korean proficiency is highlighted—"I can speak, read, and write Korean." So far, the narrator is still concerned only with Korean, despite the title stating "English." The language functions—speak, read, and write—demonstrate that the speaker has mastered the Korean language. The speaker uses the modal verb "can" to stress his ability. Consequently, readers are encouraged to view Korean as a standard language to learn. According to Kim (12 May, 2018), English was a less popular language to learn than Russian among Chongryon students—English was labelled the "language of the enemy" due to the Chongryon's unfavourable view of America during the 1970s. The speaker, in Line 3, mentions the Korean language first, as if to highlight the language's importance. Consequently, the writer makes clear the importance for Chongryon students to learn Korean. In Line 4, the interrogative form "Which can you speak better...?" compares the character's speaking ability in Korean and Japanese. In Line 5, the speaker states that he can speak Korean better, with use of the phrase "of course" to imply that Korean is the obvious and only possible answer.

Overall, the text suggests that it is crucial for younger generations to speak Korean as their first language. During Japan's colonisation, speaking Korean was

forbidden, even within schools in Korea. This inspired Koreans to encourage their younger generations to speak Korean, for fear that young people would favour speaking Japanese.

In the Grade 1 textbook, the importance of Chongryon Koreans maintaining respect and peace with their Japanese neighbours is developed. However, in the Grade 2 textbook, the idea of remaining closely unified against outside influences is outlined.

*Lesson 12: We are Friends (Grade 1)*

1. *I am a Korean boy.*
2. *You are a Japanese boy...*
3. *We are good friends...*
4. *Our country is Korea, and your country is Japan.*

(Excerpt 6)

In this excerpt, Japanese and Koreans are presented as being “friends,” disregarding the two nations’ history of conflict. The pronoun “I,” according to Bramley (2001, 32), transposes the writer’s voice to communicate closely with readers. Consequently, the pronoun “I” encourages students to be placed within the writer’s perspective. Line 1 encourages readers to identify themselves as Chongryon Koreans. Introducing a Japanese boy in Lines 2 and 4, the textbook portrays characters who have different identities, “our country is Korea” and “your country is Japan.” Yet the text highlights the positive friendship between the boys, stating in Line 3 that they are “good friends.” By using the homogenising pronoun, “we,” the writers of the textbooks encourage readers to live in harmony and solidarity as residents of Japan. Overall, readers were encouraged to have two sets of beliefs—to develop friendships with Japanese while remaining unified within the Chongryon community in order to stay safe from oppressors, as shown below.

*Lesson 6: Unity (Grade 2)*

1. *... They were a cow, a horse, a sheep, and a hen.*
2. *They were all good friends.*
3. *They always worked together in the field.*
4. *One day a wolf came there.*
5. *He took away their rice, fruit, and other food...*
6. *“We must unite and kill him.”*

7. *“You are right. Let’s unite and kill him!”...*
8. *The bad wolf came out...*
9. *All animals attacked him bravely...*
10. *They tied him up with a rope and threw him into the river.*

(Excerpt 7)

Binary opposition is evoked in Excerpt 7. The cow, horse, sheep, and hen, as “good” animals, could represent Chongryon Koreans who worked in Japanese society. The wolf, as the bad animal, could represent the oppressor, either a Japanese or an American. The writer stresses unity by using repetition, such as “all” in Line 2, “together” in Line 9, the homogenising pronouns “we” and “us”, and the verb “unite” in Lines 6 and 7. The modal verb “must” in Line 6 denotes an obligation to unify and kill the wolf. The use of transitivity reveals the participants of a given action (Machin & Mayr 2015). In the expression “All animals attacked him bravely” in Line 9, the participants, “doers” of actions, are the four animals, while the wolf is the participant whom the action is “done-to.” The main agent of the verb “attacked” is the four animals, with their action depicted as “bravely.” Therefore, the textbook encourages basal readers to follow the animals’ brave action of unison when readers feel threatened.

Anthropomorphism applies human attributes to non-human representations, such as animals, and has long been used in children’s media (Geerds, Van De Walle & LoBue 2016). According to Burke, Copenhaver, and Carpenter (2004), anthropomorphism conveys messages to young readers who would otherwise struggle to grasp complicated concepts. Consequently, anthropomorphic stories are used to “organize our predictions to increase our potential to recognize what is of most importance to us” (ibid. 207). Here, the writers depict human actions such as “talked” and “stood up” while using animal characters. In other words, these four animals represent oppressed or marginable people in Japan. The wolf represents a human character who oppresses powerless people, seen in the wolf’s actions of taking “rice, fruit, and other food,” thereby evoking oppression and probably discrimination by taking away the basic necessities for survival. Additionally, listing “rice, fruit, and other food” reflect the diverse areas that Chongryon Koreans have been oppressed, e.g., education and employment. The writer uses verb classification (“unite” and “attack”) in a logical order to encourage students to unite and overcome oppression, implying

aggressive resistance against hardship. Their desire to overcome hardship results from severe discrimination against Chongryon Koreans within Japanese society during the late 1960s and 1970s.

## Conclusion

This paper analysed the major themes presented in the 1968-1974 Chongryon EFL textbooks, in order to answer the three research questions selected for this study mentioned above.

Firstly, the textbooks expressed North Korean ideologies. The analysis of the textbooks demonstrates an intense focus on Kim Il Sung's personality cult. Reference to him is both positive and relatable for children readers, as his description of his great leadership, kindness, and fatherly love inspire Chongryon students to form an association between him and their own fathers. Consequently, the textbooks imply that all Koreans (both South Koreans and ethnic Koreans in Japan) should follow Kim Il Sung's leadership, just as a child would follow and respect his father's teachings.

Moreover, the depiction of Pyongyang as the legitimate communist capital of the whole Korean peninsula, promotes North Korea's dominant power and right to rule, inspiring both awe and respect in readers. A clear comparison is made, whereby North Korea is presented as a paradise, a stark contrast to the descriptions of South Korea's suffering under America's oppression (Excerpts 3 and 4). As such, the textbooks take what appears to be a self-righteous stance in advocating for South Korea's liberation by Kim Il Sung, a position that encourages readers to feel positively about their new political knowledge.

In relation to the second question, regardless that a majority of first-generation Chongryon Koreans originated from the southern part of the peninsula, Chongryon textbooks educated students to align with North Korea's political identity, even while residing in Japan. Ruled by Kim Il Sung, North Korea is depicted as Chongryon Koreans' homeland, thereby encouraging students to maintain their ethnic identities and cultural traditions (such as the Korean language) instead of conforming with Japanese culture. The implication would be that maintenance of identity would encourage Chongryon readers to be more open to following North Korea's ideology, thereby enabling North Korea's influence to remain unchallenged in the organisation. Overall,

North Korea is presented as an ideal homeland for Chongryon Koreans, and repatriation was promoted—another North Korean-centred identity that was taught to students.

To answer the final question, this study's analysis uncovered the interests of dominant groups, such as North Korea's political leader and Chongryon's leading elites. For this, textbooks stressed the glory of North Korea's regime and the inferior quality of life in South Korea and Japan, and promoted uniting to fight against societal oppression and resisting being absorbed into mainstream Japanese society. In short, the 1968-1974 Chongryon EFL textbooks carried North Korean political ideologies, reflected North Korean identity, and advocated the interests of Chongryon leadership.

The injection of North Korean ideologies into the Chongryon EFL textbooks detracted from the practical skills to be taught, such as speaking English. Unlike EFL textbooks used in expanding circle countries such as South Korea, which promoted inner-circle countries' ideologies and dominant ideologies of those states, the Chongryon EFL textbooks are unique in promoting primarily North Korean ideology.

The major limitation of this study would be the lack of references for previous research into Chongryon textbooks, including EFL textbooks. Additionally, this study investigates only the first publications of the EFL textbooks, thereby limiting the scope and dynamics of Chongryon Korean society over a longer period. Therefore, for further research, updated editions of Chongryon EFL textbooks would need to be analysed, in order to map changes in Chongryon's values. Moreover, interviews with students who have learned with these textbooks would be ideal, in order to uncover Chongryon's learning outcomes and assess the successfulness of the material.

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## Abstract

This article investigates the Chongryon (a pro-North Korean organisation in Japan) English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks published for Japanese-speaking ethnic Koreans between 1968 and 1974 by using critical discourse analysis (CDA). The Chongryon established Korean ethnic schools, known as Joseonhakgyo, in Japan using educational grants from North Korea. The study's findings show that a significant proportion of the textbooks were influenced by North Korean ideology. The textbooks encouraged students to identify themselves as North Koreans, to perceive North Korea as their homeland, to admire Kim Il Sung as their real leader, and to live harmoniously as a unified single community in Japan. The textbooks promoted the belief that South Koreans "suffering" under the US occupation could be liberated by Kim Il Sung, who was described as a saviour for all Koreans. Such findings demonstrate that Joseonhakgyo EFL education was employed as a tool to lead Chongryon students to follow North Korea's rule and Chongryon ideology. This implies that today's Chongryon community has had a complex history with North Korea, and demonstrates the scope of change that has occurred within the organisation's education and social system.

**Keywords:** Chongryon organisation, EFL education, Korean minority in Japan, ideology, North Korea

