

***Munhwaŏ*: The ‘Cultured Language’ and Language
Branding in North Korea, 1964-1984**

by

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Abstract

Branding is the process of giving a product a life of its own—a sort of personification of the business world. In language branding, the marketing principles of branding are applied to language. Since Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’ in 1964 and 1966, North Korea has maintained a consistent language policy and method of language branding of their newly ‘branded’ language of *Munhwaŏ*. Throughout the process of language branding, North Korea’s popular language planning journal, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* ‘Cultured Language Learning’, communicates *Munhwaŏ*—with the North Korean government’s pre-packaged identity—to rank-and-file North Koreans.

In accordance with Olin and Kotler’s claims that corporation branding techniques are applicable to other disciplines, this thesis examines publications of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* to discuss the rebranding of the North Korean variety of the Korean language as *Munhwaŏ*. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* first repackages this new language through *maldadŭmgi* ‘vocabulary refinement’, instructions on proper writing and proper speech, and promoting concepts of language primordialism. Second, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* separates the newly defined language of *Munhwaŏ* from its sister language in South Korea by focusing on the ideopolitical and linguistic differences between the two, particularly criticizing the influx of English, Japanese, and Sino-Korean loanwords into the South Korean variety. The distinction between the two nation’s languages, however, is limited, as can be seen from North Korean attempts to prevent *Munhwaŏ* from straying too far from South Korea’s *Han’gugŏ*. Finally, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* compares *Munhwaŏ* to the languages of the rest of the world, heavily promoting the *ususŏng* (*usu*-nature or superiority) of *Munhwaŏ*—and, by extension, the North Korea—through articles focusing on script nationalism, aural aesthetics, abundance of expression, and politeness.

Whether a conscious decision by the North Korean government or not, the evidence provided in this thesis overwhelmingly suggests that the marketing principles of branding—giving the brand a story, a name, and a symbol, asserting differences in image with a rival brand, and, above all, promoting the uniqueness of the brand—were systematically and consistently applied to *Munhwaŏ* on the pages of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp*.

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1. Introduction

In business, the bridge between a company and its product is marketing. It is through marketing that a company brings the awareness of its product to the consumer; likewise, it is through marketing that a company receives feedback from its customers regarding its product. This delicate balance between companies and their customers hinges on marketing, and the role of a marketing expert is to produce a wanted commodity that the customer will identify with. The most successful types of marketing are done by means of product branding.

Branding is the process of giving a product a life of its own—a sort of personification of the business world. Successfully branded products escape from being referred to by generic terms like car, computer, and search engine, and become instead a Mercedes, a Macbook, and Google. Moilanen and Rainisto define a brand as follows:

“A brand is an impression perceived in a client’s mind of a product or a service. It is the sum of all tangible and intangible elements, which makes the selection unique. A brand is not only a symbol that separates one product from others, but it is all the attributes that come to the consumer’s mind when he or she thinks about the brand” (6).

In short, branding represents everything that the product is to the consumer.

Branding, however, applies to much more than just products, consumers, and businesses. Olin shows how most of the principles of marketing can be applied to a type of ‘nation branding’ (24). France’s change from the France of the Bourbons, to the France of the Revolution, to the France of Napoleon, and the ensuing cyclic transformations of France from a republic to an empire and vice-versa are all examples of national branding (Olin 18-19). According to Olin, terms such as national identity and image are all an intellectual’s terms for the concept that business people refer to as branding (22). While differences between national branding and company branding exist, Olin claims that “many of the techniques are similar” simply because the target audience is the same (24).

National branding in North Korea follows patterns of national branding seen throughout the world. The official declaration of the formation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1948 fits with the renaming of Ceylon to Sri Lanka, Southern Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, and Belgian Congo to Congo, then Zaire, before changing back to Congo once again (Olins 22). The official declaration of their brand of the Korean language as *Munhwaŏ*, or the 'Cultured Language', in 1966 (King "North and South Korea" 213) happened in other nations as well; the People's Republic of China similarly renamed their language of *guoyu* 'national language' to *putonghua* 'common language' in the early 1950s (Chen 145). Postcolonial countries traditionally undergo a process similar to this as it throws off the shackles of colonialism through "uncover[ing], discover[ing], or invent[ing] a precolonial heritage" (Olin 22). Postcolonial North Korea not only uncovered its heritage, but also reinvented—or branded—a new nation.

Branding a nation entails many subsets. Philip Kotler, professor of international marketing at Northwestern University, states that the principles of marketing and branding are "a universal process that can be applied to developing and promoting many entities, including products, services, experiences, places, persons, properties, ideas, causes, and information" (viii). Dominic Lieven describes the rebranding of Germany in the late 18th century as laying "heavy stress on ethnicity, and above all language, as the essential defining elements in community identity" (qtd. in Olins 20). North Korean policy mimics the ideology of German Romantics that "language mirrors the soul of the nation" (Suleiman 28), as Kim Il Sung notoriously promotes *Munhwaŏ* as an ethnosymbol for the Korean people.

Three main concepts make up the concept of branding: identity, image and communication (Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride 7). Identity encapsulates the message the company is trying to send to the consumer; likewise, the image refers to the impression that the consumer has of the product and its company. The product is marketed to the consumer through various forms of communication.

In the North Korean situation, the company—the North Korean government—is branding its language of *Munhwaǎ*. Kim Il Sung and his followers conceptualize and promote an image of *Munhwaǎ*'s unique qualities and inseparability from the Korean people. As the consumers, the North Korean people form an opinion about both *Munhwaǎ* and the North Korean regime. Throughout the process of language branding, North Korea's popular language planning journal, *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* 'Cultured Language Learning', 'communicates' the product with the North Korean government's pre-packaged 'identity' to everyday North Koreans.

In accordance with Olin and Kotler's claims that corporation branding techniques are applicable to other disciplines, this thesis examines publications of *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* to discuss the rebranding of the North Korean variety of the Korean language as *Munhwaǎ*. *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* first repackages this new language through *maldadŭmgi* 'vocabulary refinement'. Second, *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* separates the newly defined language of *Munhwaǎ* from its sister language in South Korea by focusing on the ideopolitical and linguistic differences between the two. The distinction between the two nation's languages, however, is limited, as can be seen from North Korean attempts to prevent *Munhwaǎ* from straying too far from South Korea's *Han'gugǎ*. Finally, *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* compares *Munhwaǎ* to the languages of the rest of the world, heavily promoting the *ususǎng* (*usu*-nature or superiority)¹ of *Munhwaǎ* and, by extension, the North Korea.

¹ *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp* uses three terms (*ususǎng*, *usuhan*, and *uwǎrhan*) to denote *Munhwaǎ*'s superiority. This thesis will use *ususǎng*, the most common of the three in *Munhwaǎ Haksŭp*.

2. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*: Background

2.1 History

Mal kwa Kŭl ‘Language and Writing’, the precursor to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, ran from 1958-1962. As the first popular linguistic journal in North Korea, *Mal kwa Kŭl* dabbled in linguistic issues without truly making any radical linguistic reforms (King “Language, Politics, and Ideology” 127).

Language branding in North Korea first hit its stride after Kim Il Sung’s ‘talks with linguists’ in 1964 and 1966. These two published speeches have been the “basis of all North Korean language policy since 1966” (King “Language, Politics, and Ideology” 129). Indeed, Sohn suggests that the only things guiding linguistic policy in North Korea are these teachings by Kim Il Sung’s (96). In the 1964 ‘talk’, three main points are discussed. First, Kim addresses the reasoning behind a recent government rejection of a proposal to radically reform Korean orthography on the grounds that sudden graphic reform would immediately render the entire population illiterate and thereby hinder scientific development (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 2-3). Kim himself admits that the Korean spelling has “certain shortcomings”—syllable-block orthography (as opposed to linear orthography) being explicitly named—but argues that any major language reform concerning spelling must wait until after reunification (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 4).

Second, Kim Il Sung discusses the inundation of Sino-Korean words into the Korean lexicon. While advocating that certain Sino-Korean words that have been “fully assimilated” should continue to be used, Kim maintains that Sino-Korean words should not replace native Korean words, especially in the case of newly created words regarding science and technology (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 6-7). The third point Kim Il Sung discusses is the screening of

loanwords (“Selected” 8). Criticizing the Seoul dialect as both adulterated and corrupted by Japanese and English influences, Kim directs the North Korean Institute of Linguistics to oversee the coining of new words in order to preserve the Korean language (“Selected” 8-12). Furthermore, Kim plants the seed for *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* by challenging linguists with the task of promoting and ensuring correct language usage through “ideological mobilization and mass campaign” (“Selected” 12). Subsequently, mass dissemination of correct usage of the North Korean brand of language was carried out by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

The 1966 ‘talk with linguists’ was directed more towards standardization and is called by Kumatani a “language-policy guide ordered by Kim Il-Sung in the form of a ‘dialogue’” (88). Kim Il Sung rejects the Seoul dialect as a basis for the standard language due to its increasing inundation with foreignisms and declares that North Korea will base its standard around Pyongyang speech (Kim Il Sung “Works” 288-289). This North Korean standard is branded with the new name *Munhwaŏ* ‘cultured language’. The 1973 *Dictionary of Munhwaŏ* defines *Munhwaŏ* specifically as “the richly developed national language that is formed centering around the revolutionary capital under the leadership of the proletarian party that holds sovereignty during the period of socialist construction, and that all people hold as a standard, because it has been refined revolutionarily and polished culturally to fit the proletariat’s goals and lifestyle” (Sohn 99). Cho et al. states that *Munhwaŏ* is claimed to be “the language that protects the purity of the [Korean] ethnic language while maintaining roots in the historical traditions of the past” (93).

These two ‘talks with linguists’ have formed the foundation of North Korean language policy since 1964, with the first ‘talk’ laying the foundations and the second one expanding upon these (Sohn 98). Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* consistently quote portions of these two speeches so as to align the articles with the teachings of Kim Il Sung. In fact, the first publication of the

1966 ‘talk with linguists’ was in a 1969 issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* (Kumatani 88; 1969.3 1).² Kim Il Sung’s two published speeches are brief (no more than thirty pages combined) but are expanded into thousands of pages through the contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. Repeating portions of Kim Il Sung’s ‘talks with linguists’ thousands of times proves that, above all, the language policies of *Munhwaŏ* are consistent and coherent—two of the criteria for successful branding (Olins 20).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp was first published in early 1968 as a quarterly journal. Building on the foundation of *Mal kwa Kŭl*, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* featured articles on Kim Il Sung’s ‘instructions’, as well as more popular articles, and regular features like ‘telephone conversations’, ‘question and answer’ sections, and reviews of ‘newly published books’. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* is complemented by *Chosŏn Ŏmun* ‘Korean Language and Literature’, which first appeared in 1956 (King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 109).³ *Chosŏn Ŏmun* contains academic articles intended for an audience of scholars and researchers in the fields of language, linguistics, and literature.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp, with its popular articles, is directed towards rank-and-file North Koreans. As such, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*—and not *Chosŏn Ŏmun*—is primarily responsible for the promotion and integration of *Munhwaŏ*. Indeed, Ch’oe Yonggi calls *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* “one of North Korea’s dissemination policies of *Munhwaŏ*” (203). Though it is impossible to know the amount of true integration of *Munhwaŏ* that *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* has achieved, the full range of the North Korean’s strategic marketing plan is clear; through linguistic articles directed towards parents, educators, students, and media personalities (broadcasters, announcers, and

² The 1964 ‘talk’ was also published in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* in 1968 (1968.2 1-7).

³ *Chosŏn Ŏmun* was first published in 1956, split in 1962 into *Chosŏn Ŏhak* ‘Korean Linguistics and *Chosŏn Munhak* ‘Korean Literature’, and recombined in 1966 to form *Ŏmun Yŏn’gu* ‘Research on Linguistics and Literature’, only to be discontinued in 1968. The journal reappeared in 1986 under the name *Chosŏn Ŏmun* (Ko 407).

newsreaders), the North Korean brand of language, *Munhwaŏ*, is intended to infiltrate the home, school, and all public media.

2.2 A Typical Issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp*

Munhwaŏ Haksŏp slowly evolved during the first twenty years of its existence. The typical length of an issue increased from forty-eight to sixty-six pages in 1981. The covers began to be adorned in 1977 with fancy illustrations of the scenic beauty of North Korea or of North Korean comrades emulating the principles of *chuch'e* ‘self-reliance’ (1981.3; 1980.2). The inside cover features either a prominent quote from Kim Il Sung regarding language, communism, and national pride (1968.1), a song (1981.3) or a poem (1975.1) that conveys the same themes. The material on the covers of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* is rather predictable.

The organization of the contents, however, can be quite variable. While *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* has recurring features, these features are hardly constant, sometimes disappearing for years at a time before appearing again. As such, it is difficult to describe a typical issue by means of reoccurring features. Thus, this thesis will give a basic thematic outline of the *types* of articles that one might see in a typical issue below.

1. Articles dedicated to the veneration of Kim Il Sung

Kim Il Sung’s cult of personality, as modeled after the cult of personality of Josef Stalin (Lankov “Crisis” 27), has a strong presence in North Korea. Contrary to common belief, no divine powers have been attributed to Kim Il Sung; the intense cult of personality, however, does lead to museums that feature chairs that he has sat in (Myers 13). Myers claims that the cult of personality in North Korea emphasizes Kim Il Sung’s role not as the patriarch of society—as is commonly claimed by analysts—but as a “maternal authority figure” that guides her children, the people (48). As such, *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* commonly refers to him by the androgynous title of ‘*ŏbŏi suryŏng*’ ‘Parent Leader’.

The first couple articles in each issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* are dedicated to Kim Il Sung (Ch'oe Yonggi 203). Articles tout his “great love and trust” (1976.2 9) and his “warm love” in leading the people (1977.1 31). The second issue in 1977 commemorates Kim Il Sung’s 65th birthday and is full of articles such as “The Great Leader Kim Il Sung, a Genius of Thought and Theory, has Systemized the Linguistic Theory of *Chuch’e* for the First Time in History” (1977.2 5), “The Great Leader has Opened a New Chapter of *Chuch’e* Advancement of Our Language and is the Sun of Our People who Provides Noble Historical Roots” (1977.2 8), and “The Great Leader—Our Benevolent Parent who Guides Our Authors and Artists to use Our Language Correctly” (1977.2 11). His central role in personally creating and branding *Munhwaŏ* is seen through articles such as “Let’s Advance our Language and Script According to *Chuch’e* by Following Comrade Kim Il Sung’s Teachings ” (1969.2 1). Reoccurring features such as ‘In the Warm Care of the Great Parent (1977.3 7) and ‘Lets Follow the Great Leader’s Revolutionary Literary Style’ (1977.3 9) portray Kim Il Sung as a type of demigod for the average North Korean to venerate.

2. Articles dedicated to the veneration of *Munhwaŏ*

As the personal creation of Kim Il Sung, *Munhwaŏ* is venerated throughout the issues of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* almost as much (but not quite) as Kim Il Sung himself. Articles praise the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* (“The Great Leader Kim Il Sung’s Teachings on the *Ususŏng* of Our Language” 1974.2 2) with its advanced system of *t’o* ‘grammatical particles’ (“Helping *T’o*—Richly Developed in the Korean Language” 1971.1 27) and aural aesthetics (“Our Language—Pleasing to the Ear” 1969.4 5). In a reoccurring feature titled ‘Our Language’s Abundance of Expressions’, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* explores variable usages of the Korean root words for “Clothing” (1980.3 30), “Mother” (1980.4 45), “Morning” (1981.1 36), and “Stars” (1979.2 42). The veneration of *Munhwaŏ* is offset by articles lambasting English, Japanese, and the bastardization of the Seoul dialect (“American Crimes—Trampling our Language by

Proclaiming English an Official Language” 1973.4 48; “South Korea—Rotten to the Core” 1977.1 47).

3. *Maldadŭmgi* ‘vocabulary refinement’

As one of the main focuses of Kim Il Sung’s ‘talks with linguists’ and thus North Korea’s language policy, *maldadŭmgi* has a strong presence in every issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. Kim Il Sung’s leadership in this large undertaking to remove foreignisms and promote native Korean is clearly expressed through article titles extolling his role in personally refining the word “*Pyŏngari*”⁴ (1977.1 24), “*Sangnyŏnjong*”⁵ (1980.2 9), “*Tchakt’ae*”⁶ (1974.2 11), and “Personally Prescribing the Meaning of Vocabulary” (1978.3 10). In accordance with Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’, Sino-Korean vocabulary is being phased out (“[The word] *Sŏngmyŏng* [‘name’] Needs to be Replaced by *Irŭm*” 1972.3 34) along with Chinese characters (“Leader who Directs Newspapers to Not Use Chinese Characters ” 1974.2 7; “Place Names in our Native Tongue” 1981.3 9) and the Koreanization of country names are aligned with the original pronunciation of that country’s language and not the Chinese or Japanese pronunciation; Trinidad and Tobago changes from *Tŭrinidadŭ tobago* to *Tŭrinidaedŭ Ttobago* and Dominica is changed from *Tominik’a* to *Tominikka* (“Newly Refined Names of World Nations and Capitols” 1972.1 30). Passionate articles such as “Explanations of Comrade Kim Il Sung’s Teachings Concerning Gradually Fixing [Our Language] through Strategies to Eliminate Sino-Korean Words and Loanwords” (1970.3 8) and “Let’s Drive Out Foreignisms” (1981.2 64) strictly follow Kim Il Sung’s counsel to purify *Munhwaŏ* by removing non-native elements.

⁴ The article relates an experience when Kim Il Sung, visiting a Pyongyang poultry farm, overhears a worker refer to a chick as *yuch’uri* and promptly instructed him to use *pyŏngari* instead.

⁵ *Sangnyŏnjong* is a new crop variety named after Kim Sangnyŏn, the scientist who brought it to Kim Il Sung’s attention.

⁶ In a visit to a fishery in Chŏngjin, Kim Il Sung personally renames the fish *kangmyŏngt’ae* as *tchakt’ae*.

The other half of *maldadŭmgi* articles explores the rich, descriptive vocabulary of *Munhwaŏ*. ‘The Vocabulary Notebook’, a regular feature that elaborates upon native Korean vocabulary through exploring possible compound words or phrases, includes articles that discuss “Eyes” (1980.1 46), “Names of Fish” (1979.1 48), and “Birds and Chirping” (1979.2 37). “Words Used to Express *Mandŭlda* [‘make’]” exhorts North Koreans to use situation-specific expressions like *pap ŭl chinnŭnda* ‘cook rice’, *kuk ŭl kkŭrinda* ‘cook soup’ (lit. ‘boil soup’), and *mandu rŭl pinnŭnda* ‘make dumplings’ instead of the generic verb *mandŭlda* (1968.1 23). “Words with Same or Similar Meanings: *Tongji, Tongmu, Pŏt*” (all mean ‘friend’ or ‘comrade’) uses definitions laid down by Kim Il Sung to instruct their readers in the nuances between the newly tweaked vocabulary’s different meanings (1975.1 28). The feature ‘Let’s Use this Word Extensively’ highlights one word for readers to learn and incorporate in their everyday speech (“*Nunmat*”⁷ 1977.1 18; “*Sŏngmi ka pulch’ok katta*”⁸ 1980.4 42; “*Pyŏnduri*”⁹ 1979.1 34). Expanding one’s range of language to include *soktam* ‘proverbs’ is also encouraged through *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* (“*Soktam* to Know” 1972.3 21; “*Soktam* Explanations” 1979.4 21).

4. Proper Speech Etiquette

Sections on politeness instruct North Koreans in how to use *Munhwaŏ* properly in various social situations. The section ‘Maintaining Proper Etiquette’ delves into differing degrees of politeness used “In the Park” (1981.3 47), “At the Office” (1981.1 56), “At School” (1981.4 50), “In the Theater” (1982.1 46), “At Home” (1982.2 55), and “On the Train” (1983.3 50). Instructions for maintaining proper etiquette while writing scripts (“Movies Scripts and Language Etiquette” 1980.2 41) and making phone calls (“Manners that Must be Observed

⁷ Similar to *immat* (lit., mouth taste) and *kwimat* (lit., ear taste), *nunmat* (lit., eye taste) is the sensation that accompanies the act of looking at something.

⁸ Originating from the description of a meticulous explosives specialist in the popular novel *Ch’ŏngch’un* who had worked for decades without making a single mistake, *sŏngmi ka pulch’ok katta* (lit. temperament like a fire’s tongue) describes a person that is sharp and perceptive.

⁹ *Pyŏnduri* is a replacement for the fully Sino-Korean noun *chubyŏn* meaning ‘surroundings’.

When Making a Phone Call” 1969.2 30) reflect Kim Il Sung’s teachings on using *Munhwaŏ* correctly.

5. Education

Educators are instructed by articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* how to properly teach their students *Munhwaŏ* (“*Munhwaŏ* Education in Schools” 1970.4 27). These pedagogical articles range from instructions for teaching young kids (“Striving to Correctly Teach Our Language’s Pronunciation to Preschool Students” 1972.1 18; “Word Games are an Exciting Method of Language Education at the Preschool Level” 1977.3 15) to guides for instructing adolescents (“How to Teach Vocabulary in High Schools and Middle Schools” 1981.1 48; “Ensuring Middle and High School Students Write Letters Clearly” 1977.4 26). Educators are explicitly instructed to teach their students about the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* (“This is How [I] Taught Students the *Ususŏng* of Our Language” 1970.1 25).

6. The How-Tos of Writing

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp regularly includes articles on composition (“How to Write Compositions” 1969.2 31). The feature ‘Writing’ gives short tutorials on how to write different types of material and includes articles such as “Lyrical Poetry” (1981.3 25), “Responses” (1971.2 35), “Manifestos” (1977.1 36), “Propaganda” (1974.4 32), “Accounts of Marching” (1974.2 25), “Fables” (1980.3 19), “Song Lyrics” (1980.4 34), “Personal Essays” (1981.1 34), “Letters of Request” (1976.4 24), and “Observation Logs” (1977.3 38).

7. Grammatical Issues

In accordance with instructions from Kim Il Sung’s ‘talks with linguists’ standardize grammar, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* includes articles with grammatical instruction on spelling (“Commonly Misspelled Words” 1969.3 48), spacing (“Common Errors in Spacing” 1974.1 49), sentence construction (“Several Ways to Connect a Sentence” 1974.3 32), punctuation (“Writing Our Language’s Sentence Punctuation Marks Correctly” 1969.4 41), parts of speech

(“*Kwanhyōngsa* [adnominalizers], *Pusa* [adverbs]” 1969.4 38), sentence format (“Types of Sentences” 1972.4 30) and syntax (“Order of Sentence Parts” 1971.3 38).

8. The Arts

Following the common belief that a language is only as good as its literary arts, *Munhwaō Haksūp* strongly promotes the *ususōng* of *Munhwaō* by demonstrating its sophisticated ability to create short stories (“A Wall Novel: Penitence” 1979.1 39), essays (“Personal Essay: *Munhwaō* Blooms like a Radiant Flower” 1976.2 20), lyrics (“Lyrics Loved by the People” 1978.3 16), movie scripts (“Artistic Movies: Scripts from *Abyōn’gong tūl*” 1975.1 40), and poems (“Oh, Earth! Into Your Bosom” 1980.4 1).

The art of public speaking, *hwasul*, is particularly prized in *Munhwaō Haksūp* (“Pride for Broadcasting in *Munhwaō*” 1971.4 36). Guides for achieving correct *hwasul* ensue (“What is *Hwasul*?” 1981.3 45; “The Stage of *Hwasul*: Word Breaks and Intonation” 1976.4 26).

9. Pronunciation

Munhwaō Haksūp pronunciation articles discuss common pronunciation problems (“A Few Incorrect Pronunciations Witnessed Among Students” 1976.4 39) in addition to problems revolving around *patch’im*, or syllable-final consonants (“In Order to Pronounce Confusing *Patch’im* Sounds Properly” 1973.4 32; “How to Pronounce Vowels After a *Patch’im*” 1972.4 28).

10. Miscellaneous

Munhwaō Haksūp includes other popular types of articles that assert correct usage of the government-branded *Munhwaō*. The question-and-answer sections address letters from readers regarding easily made mistakes in spelling, pronunciation, and usage of newly coined terms (“Question and Answer” 1968.1 46; “Ask Anything at All” 1981.3 63). Sample phone conversations demonstrate proper phone etiquette while also discussing common linguistic issues (“Conversing by Phone” 1979.1 20). ‘Spread open the Map of the Homeland’ explores different

destinations in North Korea (“*Pidansöm*” 1977.1 35; “*Söhūngho*” 1979.3 40; “*Kūmgangsan*” 1981.2 52; “*Ŭnp’aho*” 1979.2 35).

2.3 Similar Linguistic Journals in Other Countries

Other languages have had linguistic journals similar to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* dedicated to them. Japan published *Kokugo Mondai* ‘Problems of the National Language’ that later became *Gengo Seikatsu* ‘Linguistic Life’ (Boswell 17; Neustupny 263). *Gengo Seikatsu* (1951-1991) was published by the National Language Research Institute as a popular science journal that “addressed a non-academic readership, shedding light on language use in everyday life” (Heinrich 105; Neustupny 263). The lack of *-gaku*, the Sino-Japanese suffix for science or learning, from the title of *Gengo Seikatsu* predetermined the publication to have a “popular scientific flavour” (Heinrich 105). Dhorne claims that 70% of *Gengo Seikatsu*’s readers “have no special relationship with linguistics” (qtd. in Heinrich 105-106). In discussing common themes in *Gengo Seikatsu*, Heinrich observes the following:

“The journal paid attention to such various issues as language and media in essays on radio and language acquisition (no. 2), language and sports broadcasts (no. 2), the vocabulary of newspapers (no. 3) and magazines (no. 9), language and television (no. 6). It also contained guides to speaking well (no. 1) or to listening well (no. 2) and regularly included personal reports such as foreigners’ views of the Japanese language (no. 7), criticism of middle school students on the language of adults (no. 8), mothers’ opinions on the language of their children (no. 8). The journal, in brief words, was more oriented towards life than language, a tendency which is maybe best manifested in a special issue titled “Language and *sake*” (no. 421 [1987]) (Heinrich 106).

Gengo Seikatsu also covered popular topics such as “dialectology, the study of honorifics, [and] the use of Chinese characters” (Heinrich 112).

Gengo seikatsu as a linguistic concept is defined in the *Kokugogaku Jiten 1955* ‘Encyclopedia of Japanese National Language’ by making a list of related language problems (Neustupny 264). The following list of language issues is covered by the publication *Gengo Seikatsu*.

1. General
 - a. Language acts in general, types of language acts
2. Linguistic life and spoken language
 - a. Speaking in general; About monologue; About dialogue; Listening life; Language product and language play; Linguistic life and instruments; Film, theatre, stage entertainment; Society and language; Language, customs, and beliefs
3. Linguistic life and written language
 - a. Writing in general; Means and methods of writing; Types of written works; Calligraphy; Reading in general; Philology; Books; Printing, publishing (*Kokugogaku Jiten* 1955 pg 15-18, qtd. in Neustupny 264).

2.4 Periodization

Yi Sanghyōk, in his chapter on “Pukhan ūi ōnō chōngch’aeksa” (The History of North Korea’s Language Policies) divides the linguistic history of North Korea into three main periods. The ‘third period’ (1966-1987) is divided into two parts: a) 1966-1975: “period of the *Munhwaō* movement based on *chuch’e* thought” and b) “period of deepening and theoretical fixing of *chuch’e* thought” (21).

Chuch’e, the defining characteristic of this ‘third period’, was ‘politically reinvented’ by Kim Il Sung in his speech “About the Elimination of Formalism and Dogmatism in the Ideological Work and Establishing *Chuch’e*” in 1955 (Lankov “Crisis” 40). The new ideology came to represent “an idiosyncratic Communist state: thoroughly controlled, extremely militarized, devoted to a fanatical personality cult and a particular type of ideology, and far removed from ‘orthodox’ Marxism-Leninism” (Lankov “From Stalin” 193). Lankov claims that the incorporation of *chuch’e*—an ideology with “stress on nationalism and Korean superiority”—relieved Kim Il Sung of the necessity to politically depend on the foreign ideologies of Marxism and Chinese and Soviet influences (“From Stalin” 67). Leonid Petrov claims that *chuch’e* takes “the upper hand in the struggle against the internationalist Marxist-Leninist academic tradition” during this period of North Korean linguistic history (231).

This thesis will focus on the first two decades after Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’—the period in which *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* emerged as North Korea’s primary language planning journal—as it correlates with Yi Sanghyŏk’s ‘third period’.

3. *Munhwaǒ*: The North Korean Brand of Language

3.1 Introduction

During the third period of North Korean linguistic history (according to Yi Sanghyōk's periodization), North Korea underwent, whether intentionally or not, massive amounts of language branding. By branding their language, North Korea was bringing together their people, their culture, and their traditions and stamping them with the North Korean seal. The government was asserting, to its own people and to the world, unique North Korean qualities through the mode of *Munhwaǒ*.

Han Myōnghūng, a journalist for *Munhwaǒ Haksūp*, states that “language is one of the most essential characteristics that distinguishes a people” (1976.3 8). Heavily believing in and asserting this dictum, the North Korean government undertook great measures to assert *Munhwaǒ*'s uniqueness. Renaming the supposedly Pyongyang dialect-based *Munhwaǒ*¹⁰ in 1966 was merely the beginning of official North Korean language branding. Articles in *Munhwaǒ Haksūp*, a main method of dispersing North Korean language policy, widely publicizes the North Korean brand to the everyday North Korean citizen. The articles in *Munhwaǒ Haksūp* do this by giving the language a history and then asserting new language standards through the means of *maldadūmgi*, speech patterns, and writing instruction.

¹⁰ The ‘Pyongyang dialect’ is a myth as Pyongyang speech is merely a watered-down version of the P’yōngan-do dialect. Kumatani states that while many papers have purported the ‘Pyongyang dialect myth’, this claim does not make sense ideologically as Pyongyang claimed that it had “revolutionists and intellectuals from all over the world, as well as from South Korea” (95). However, due to Kim Il Sung’s immense amount of personal control of the language, partnered with the grandiosity of his cult of personality and constant inclusion of P’yōngan-do and Hamgyōng-do dialects (dialects spoken by the Great Leader himself that represent his birthplace and major guerrilla activities in Manchuria; Armstrong 28) into standardized *Munhwaǒ* (King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 122), claims could be made that *Munhwaǒ* is based on Kim Il Sung’s idiolect more than the elusive ‘Pyongyang dialect’ (Kumatani 105-106).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp first does this by reinforcing the history of *Munhwaŏ* and making it appear inseparable from the history of the people of *Chosŏn*. This language primordialism makes *Munhwaŏ* more than just a language; it gives the language a story and an emotional connection to the people.

Maldadŭmgi, the North Korean process of refining vocabulary, consists of removing foreignisms and promoting native Korean words in their stead. While similar to practices of language purification in other countries, *maldadŭmgi* also creates new lexical items as well as redefining others, using the dictionary as a ‘weapon of language’ in active language prescriptivism. This practice in particular has been flagged as the main cause of language divergence with South Korea—in effect making it the most prominent expression of North Korea’s language branding.

Articles on writing skills train North Korean workers to compose different genres of composition. In general, articles focus on how to write more simply. This directive is to ensure that *Munhwaŏ* composition is firmly rooted in the language of the common people and not that of the educated bourgeoisie. Speech instruction in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* comes in two categories: articles dealing with pronunciation emphasize correct pronunciation as based on Pyongyang speech and not Seoul speech; other articles center on using proper cadence and *hwasul* skills.

3.2 Language Primordialism

Every good brand needs a good story. Peterson states that “branding...is the application of a story to a product or a service. It is the story that makes one identify or desire a brand, more so than the product or service itself” (744). In national branding, countries do this by contorting the national history to match the national identity that the government is promoting; indeed, the ‘invented traditions’ that nations create are usually attempting to “establish continuity with a suitable historic past,” even though the “continuity with it is largely factitious” (Hobsbawm 1-2).

Long-reaching histories establish “antiquity and continuity” in a nation, thereby elevating its “claims to territory and authenticity” above more recently created nations (Suny “Constructing Primordialism” 886).

National primordialism, the belief that nations and their people are “biologically determined,” has shaped and continues to shape national identities across the globe (Suny “Constructing Primordialism” 867). Suny claims that in the case of Armenia, more than tradition and culture, being *biologically* Armenian is at the center of the national identity (889). The claims of a country’s primordialism must be backed up with a history to distinguish them from other nations and stake claim to their territory (869). These claims are often “fabricated histories held sacred as sources of primordial allegiance” that are more intent on branding a nation and a people than adhering to academic standards (Suny “Reversing Cultural Truth” 1496). Like Afrikaans and its ontogenetic myth, the myths surrounding the history of languages “accommodate a measure of internal contradiction, factual error, and scientific implausibility” (Roberge 49). According to Roberge, this does not matter, however, because the stories behind the languages are “so general that [they are] not vulnerable to empirical disconfirmation” (37). In addition, Anderson claims that “no one can give the date for the birth of any language,” rendering the scientific side of historical linguistics unable to combat the emotional power attached to the scientifically-flawed concepts of language primordality (qtd. in Suleiman 28). In North Korea as well, the emotional power of historical myths overrides the lack of historical or scientific backing.¹¹

¹¹ The same could also be said for the myth building behind Kim Il Sung’s character. Armstrong states that “there is very little documentation on Kim Il Sung before 1945 that can be verified as genuine” besides Japanese police records and Chinese Communist Party records (27). The grandiose stories in Kim Il Sung’s biography (called a ‘mythobiography’ in Myers 94), ubiquitous in North Korean popular literature, are based on the same principles of language primordialism—attaching an incredulous story to a newly branded product that the consumer finds emotionally appealing.

North Korean national primordialism goes beyond creating a unified history of people culture, and tradition, and focuses on the peoples' inseparable history with their language. North Korea's language primordialism is expressed through articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* that reiterate the precept of one people, one nation, one language, and one history. Similar to the Armenian case researched by Suny, North Korean primordialism uses language, more than culture and race, to create "clear markers of boundaries, inclusion, and exclusion" ("Constructing Primordialism 895). Just as Afrikaans to nationalists is "the hallmark of their Afrikanerism," *Munhwaŏ* is made to represent the hallmark of North Koreanism (Barnouw as qtd. in Roberge 31).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims that the Korean language has been a critical ethnosymbolic marker of the Korean people since the beginning of time. Kim Il Sung describes the Korean people's relationship with their language in the following manner:

"Our people have lived in one territory as one ethnic group for thousands of years. Our people have collectively inherited the same traditions of history and culture through having one language and script" (1971.4 28).

Ryu Ryŏl, contributor to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* that writes the reoccurring feature 'The Path of Our Language's History' states that "from the beginning, our people have been one ethnic group with the same language and bloodline" (1982.3 54). Ryu similarly claims later that since *chosŏn yet ryuhyŏng saram* 'Stone or Bronze Age person of Korea', the language, customs, and bloodline of the people on the peninsula have been unified (1983.2 59).

In the article "Our People have had Their Own Writing System Since Ancient Days," Ryu claims that the first Korean script, predating both *ridu* and *hunmin chŏngŭm*, is a script called *sinji* (1982.1 55). This script is reported as being contained in the book *Sinji Pisa* 'secret history' that contains types of prophetic writings concerning Kojosŏn. Ryu reports that this script, written linearly like Sanskrit, has also been discovered on tombs near Pyongyang that are allegedly from the time of Tanggun (1982.1 55). An unnamed source cited by Ryu claims that *sinji* consists of sixteen characters that, prior to erosion, could be found on the sides of canyon

walls (1982.1 56). Ryu claims in his article in the next issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* that the *sinji* writing system continued into the Three Kingdoms Period—proving uniformity of the Korean language back to antiquity (1982.2 49).

Scholarship on the Three Kingdoms period has claimed both that the three nations of Paekche, Silla, and Koguryŏ all spoke separate languages and that what eventually became the Korean language of today is a derivative of the Ural- Altaic language family. Ryu attacks these claims by ‘bourgeoisie reactionaries’ and remains adamant throughout his reoccurring column that Paekche, Silla, and Koguryŏ not only spoke the same language but that the Korean language of today has been spoken by the Korean people since antiquity (1982.3 55). In addition, Ryu counters the popular belief that the language spoken in Silla is what has become the Korean language of today by claiming that the true root of the Korean language of today was passed from Koguryŏ to Koryŏ, thereby sidestepping Silla in general (1982.3 55). This assertion by Ryu not only removes Silla—characteristically associated with Seoul and South Korea—from the linguistic progression that culminates in *Munhwaŏ*, but also emphasizes the north half of the peninsula as the center of cultural and intellectual progress.

In his article “The Korean Language has been the Single Ethnic Language of Our People Since the Beginning,” Ryu claims that the Korean language has been a distinct characteristic of the Korean people since their ontogenesis (1981.4 41). For Ryu, linguistic features present in the *Samguk sagi* and *Samguk yusa* prove that the Korean Language was distinct and that the different states of the Three Kingdoms Period all shared the same language. Ryu claims that the emergence of the ‘*ch*’ sound and *patch’im* began in Paekche, Silla, and Koguryŏ at the same time (1981.4 41). Ryu claims that although the Korea people were separated into different governing bodies, the linguistic interdependence of the three states proves their linguistic unity.

Ryu also claims that research on *ridu* materials from the Three Kingdoms Period shows that Paekche, Silla, and Koguryŏ used similar vocabulary. Studies have shown 150 *idu* words in

both Koguryō and Silla, with 100 *ridu* words being found in Paekche writings (1981.4 42). Sixty percent of these words are similar across the three states, the correlation between Koguryō and Silla being particularly pronounced. Place names such as *Sabo*, *Sabi*, and *Sobi* for the Paekche capital of Sabi, items such as *kosi* and *kusi* for *koji* ‘point, spur’, *komo* and *kumu* for *kom* ‘bear’, and *sa* ‘mountain pass; ridge’ were consistent across the three states. These similarities show that the “languages of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla were all one ‘Language of Chosŏn’” (1981.4 42).¹²

Apart from vocabulary, studies on *idu* materials prove the consistency of the three state’s language—simply that they all used *ridu* in the same way. Studies have shown that the positioning of *ridu* grammatical markers is uniform throughout the three states’ records. Ryu claims that the Korean grammatical elements represented by *ridu*, both their existence and the invariability of their positioning across the three states’ writing, prove that the grammar—and thus the language—was quite homologous throughout the three states (1981.4 42).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp states that the manner in which the three states refer to each other also proves a common ancestry. Koguryō is referred to as *pukpanggye* ‘descendents of the north’, while Silla and Paekche are referred to as *nambanggye* ‘descendents of the south’ (1981.4 42). Though no claims are made in this article directly linking the three states to the ancient Korean state of Kojosŏn, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* insists that this terminology proves that the separate states are actually from one continuous bloodline.

In later issues, Ryu claims that among the three, Koguryō was the true linguistic leader on the Korean peninsula (1982.3 54). Koguryō is attributed with developing *ridu* and spreading it

¹² Ryu claims that the lack of overlap between the remaining forty percent does not, by any means, show that the languages were different; instead, it shows that the separate states needed to use some state-specific words to refer to their own people, cities, etc. (1981.4 42). In later articles, Ryu claims that the *ridu* used in Paekche, Silla, and Koguryō were *wanjŏnhi kat’atta* ‘exactly the same’ and then continues to give numerous examples of uniformity throughout the three kingdoms (1982.2 50).

to Paekche and Silla. In addition, Ryu claims that the language spoken by the people of Koguryō was passed on to the later state of Chosŏn and is the foundation of today's *Munhwaŏ* (1982.3 54). He claims as well that Koryō was the first nation to unify the peninsula (1983.4 56), another 'first' characteristically given to Silla (Kim Chin-wu "Pluricentric" 240). In general, this feature by Ryu aims to justify the primordialism of the Korean language and 'northern' Korea's leading role in developing and protecting it.

The Korean language is vital to the North Korean's sense of identity as a people. Even in times when the Korean people have been divided into separate governing bodies, the language has always unified them and protected their common culture (1976.3 8). To speak a different language, to the North Koreans, is to be different peoples; Han Myōnghong asserts that "even with a common bloodline and living in the same territory, they cannot be called the same people if their language is different" (1976.3 8).

National primordialism leads one to believe that one is not born into a nation so much as the nation is born into the individual; indeed, national primordialism teaches that "nation is not a choice, but a given" (Sunny "Constructing Primordialism" 867). Language primordialism expands this theory to include language as an intrinsic part of an individual's genetic makeup. North Korean language branding utilizes language primordialism not only to emphasize the unity of the people of Chosŏn throughout the ages, but to stress *Munhwaŏ* as the crux of what it means to *be* Korean.

3.3 *Maldadŭmgi*

3.3.1 Background

Like all features of language prescriptivism, *maldadŭmgi* stems from a refusal to "leave your language alone" (Cameron 9). This type of 'verbal hygiene' is based in the belief that there is "some legitimate authority in language." As such, the expropriation of linguistic authority by

a national government leads to “attempts to promote an elite standard variety, to retard linguistic change or to purify a language of ‘foreign’ elements” (Cameron 9). The compelling sense of obligation to remove foreignisms from *Munhwaŏ* is the underpinnings of North Korea’s aggressive *maldadŭmgi* policies.

Most of the purification-based, vocabulary-refining policies of North Korea are similarly manifested in many other language planning policies across the world. Germany pursued a linguistic purification process; this began as an “internally liberating enterprise” but soon was manipulated into a vehicle for asserting the “superiority of German over other languages and to defend it against ‘contamination’ from other, ‘inferior’ languages” (Stevenson 20). East Germany later underwent phases of “language cultivation” that aimed at “eradicating fascist elements in language use and...promoting *Literatursprache* (standard variety)” (Stevenson 30). Similar purification language reforms have taken place in Sweden, Hungary, Finland, and Albania (Lewis 2).

Language reforms in Turkey have tried to eliminate the once prominent Arabic and Persian loanwords from the Turkish lexicon. These purification movements have rendered the Turkish people of today unable to read Turkish books published a few decades earlier. Mustafa Kemal’s thirty-six hour speech given in 1927 had to be translated into “present day language” in the 1960s (Lewis 2-3). While the language and script remain unchanged, the Arabic and Persian-based vocabulary used in the books of yesteryear is unintelligible to the generations of today that is only familiar with neologized Turkish words.

A similar situation is happening in North Korean language branding. The North Korean government claims they must stop the invasion of loanwords in order to preserve the ‘purity’ and ‘*ususŏng*’ of *Munhwaŏ*. Kim Il Sung stated the following concerning purifying the vocabulary of *Munhwaŏ*:

“First of all, we must revise our vocabulary to some extent. It is important that we do so at this stage” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 11).¹³

“We should replace the words adopted from Chinese ideographs and borrowed words with our correct ones and develop our language systematically” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 284; 1976.2 14).

Accordingly, North Korea adopted an aggressive *maldadŭmgi* policy that becomes a distinguishing characteristic of Yi Sanghyŏk’s third period of North Korean linguistic history. Kumatani summarizes North Korea’s five main groups of loanwords targeted by *maldadŭmgi* policies as follows (97-98):

1. Words of foreign origin among technical and scientific terms
2. Words of foreign origin which can be replaced by pure Korean without change of meaning
3. Loan words which are not yet fully adapted to Korean
4. Obsolete words which are no longer needed in North Korean society
5. Sino-Korean homonyms

Kim Il Sung specifically defines the type of loanwords targeted by *maldadŭmgi* in his 1964 ‘talk with linguists’. In this talk he says:

“In short, when you have two words that mean the same thing, one being our own and the other borrowed from Chinese ideographs, you should choose the former whenever possible; and, if you have to use a certain number of words adopted from Chinese ideographs, you should be selective in this, using only those which have already become thoroughly assimilated into our own language; you should further enrich and develop our language using indigenous root words as much as possible, instead of coining new words from Chinese ideographs thoughtlessly” (Kim Il Sung 7-8).

“We who are building socialism must take the central role in developing the Korean language, basing ourselves wholly on the pure native words of our country” (Kim Il Sung 11).

According to Kim Il Sung, words used commonly by everyday people do not need to be purified from *Munhwaŏ*. In this category are native Korean words like *ŏmŏni* ‘mother’, *adŭl* ‘son’, *hae* ‘sun’, *ttang* ‘earth’, *non* ‘field’, *namu* ‘tree’, *kogi* ‘meat’, *mŏkta* ‘eat’, *poda* ‘see’, and *salda*

¹³ Note that all quotes taken from Kim Il Sung’s 1964 and 1966 ‘talks with linguists’ will be quoted directly from North Korea’s own English translations of the two speeches, with the 1964 ‘talk’ being quoted from *The Selected Works of Kim Il Sung* and the 1966 ‘talk’ from *Kim Il Sung Works*.

‘live’, Sino-Korean words that are widely accepted as Korean words such as *hakkyo* ‘school’, *kisul* ‘skill’, *kwahak* ‘science’, *kongŏp* ‘industry’, *kigye* ‘machine’, and *hyŏngmyŏng* ‘revolution’, loanwords that are commonly used in North Korea such as *komu* ‘gum, rubber’ and *ing’k’ŭ* ‘ink’, and loanwords used internationally such as *p’illŭm* ‘film’, *rok’et* ‘rocket’, and *p’ŭrot’on* ‘proton’ (1969.2 15; Cho et al. 118). As such, the loanwords targeted by *maldadŭmgi* are specialized loanwords that are difficult for the public to understand.

Kumatani states that *maldadŭmgi* policies were implemented through “discarding of words, pure Koreanization, and adaptation” (98). This thesis will examine the three ways (Koreanization being by far the most prominent) described by Kumatani for implemented policies of *maldadŭmgi* through the medium of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

3.3.2 Discarding Words

Kim Il Sung’s 1966 ‘talk with linguists’ marks the beginning of a new phase called “Control Dictionary” (*t’ongje sajŏn*) in North Korean lexicography (King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 114). In this phase, prescriptive North Korean language policies eliminate from the dictionary specific definitions or entire words that oppose the ideopolitical policies of Kim Il Sung (Kumatani 105). Kim Il Sung states the following concerning word elimination in his 1964 ‘talk with linguists’:

“It would be advisable to investigate which of the words borrowed from Chinese ideographs we will have to continue to use, which of them we can discard, and boldly cross out from the dictionary what we can do just as well without” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 11).

In his 1966 ‘talk’ Kim Il Sung laments that the Korean dictionary looks more like an *okp’yŏn* ‘Chinese character dictionary’ than a Korean dictionary. This promotes the compilation of the *Hyŏndae Chosŏnmal Sajŏn* (Dictionary of Modern Korean) in 1968, wherewith Sino-Korean

words and loanwords that have been replaced in the process of *maldadŭmgi* are weeded out (Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 253).

Chŏng Sun’gi and Ri Kiwŏn make the following bold statement concerning North Korean prescriptivism as seen in dictionaries:

“Like any other norm or regulation, linguistic norms are obligatory for members of society. All linguistic norms reflected in the normative dictionary of our language demand that members of society use them just as they appear in the normative dictionary whenever speaking or writing. Obligatoriness is one of the important elements and features of the law... That is to say, the dictionary has characteristics similar to the law” (qtd. in King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 115).

Language, reported as obstinate to change and a hindrance to social reform, is controlled in North Korea in order to accelerate the government’s policies. According to Cho et al., North Korean policy asserts that any antiquated or reactionary ideas remaining in the language that oppose the ideals upheld by the North Korean government must be eliminated (117). In clearing linguistic vestiges of the old ruling class from the conscious of the people, North Korea reportedly pursues an aggressive policy of liquidating “all language concepts of superstition, religion, and language that are connected to the feudalist ruling class” of the past (Cho et al. 117). As such, King notes that the *Hyŏndae Chosŏnmal Sajŏn* 2nd Ed., of 1981 does not list words characteristic of Seoul speech or antiquated forms of Korean and also promotes new political definitions more than previous dictionaries (“Dialects and Dictionaries” 115).

Examples of this are difficult to find in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* simply due to the nature of the process; in eliminating the word from the dictionary, the term is now obsolete and unable to be used in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. In addition, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* does not print lists of words to be phased out as much as it prints lists of words to be ‘phased in’. As such, articles dealing with *maldadŭmgi* generally focus on the new words to be used and many times do not include the words being removed.

3.3.3 Koreanization of Terms

Koreanization of terms, the second method of *maldadŭmgi* according to Kumatani, led to native Korean words replacing their loanword counterparts, calquing of new words with native Korean elements, and the invention of new, pure Korean words.

The sheer enormity of the number of loanwords in the Korean lexicon makes *maldadŭmgi* daunting. Though Chinese characters had been abolished in North Korea in 1949 (King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 109), Sino-Korean vocabulary, along with foreignisms from Japanese, English, and Russian abounded in *Munhwaŏ* prior to *maldadŭmgi*. Journalists in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* acknowledge that foreignisms imbedded centuries ago in the Korean language cannot all be removed in a single day (1976.2 14). Kim Chin-wu reports that the six volumes of the *K’ŭn Sajŏn* ‘Comprehensive Dictionary of Korean’ is 52% Sino-Korean and relates the formidable task of removing Sino-Korean words from Korean to the removal of all Romance words from English (“Divergence” 246).

In order to remove Sino-Korean terms slowly but steadily, North Korea periodically released lists of *maldadŭmgi* words. *Maldadŭmgi* word lists were disseminated through newspapers, television and radio broadcasts, and *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* to the general public. After confirming sufficient integration of the newly coined words, the government would compile a new list (1976.2 14).

By 1968, the *kugŏ sajŏng wiwŏnhoe* ‘National Language Decision Committee’, had published four volumes of *Tadŭmŭn mal (p’yojunhal ch’ogo)* ‘Refined Vocabulary (The First Draft of a Standard Language)’ (1976.2 14; Kumatani 99). These four volumes, containing 36,000 words, were supplemented with a fifth volume of 14,000 words in 1976, totaling in all some 50,000 words that were officially tapped for *maldadŭmgi* during the ten years since Kim Il Sung’s 1966 ‘talk’ (1976.2 14; Kumatani 99).

The North Korean government uses *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* to bring the contents of *Tadŭmŭn mal* (*p'yojunhal ch'ogo*) to the attention of the people. Ch'oe Yonggi claims that the publication of the first issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* in 1968 marks the “earnest unfurling of the *maldadŭmgi* movement” to the North Korean commoner (202).

Kim Il Sung's 1966 ‘talk with linguists’ explicitly mentions the lack of native vocabulary to refer to apples and regional areas (1969.3 3). In accordance, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* presents a list of native Korean names for apples (*chosaengjŏk* became *noŭl* [lit., sunset], *toip* became *pulgŭn p'arwŏl* [lit., red August]), pears (*sabaengmok* became *pyŏksŏng*, *pureigosŭ* became *olbyŏngbae*), and rice (*chungsaengŭnbangju* became *p'yŏngnamjong*, *eguk-20-ho* became *chedo-1-ho*), etc. (1972.1 35).

Kim Il Sung was personally involved in the *maldadŭmgi* process. Numerous articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* tout his accomplishments in personally creating or redefining a word. (1977.1 24; 1980.2 9; 1974.2 11; 1978.3 10) Words created by Kim Il Sung became *Munhwaŏ* “with no restraints” (Kumatani 105). The 1973 dictionary included direct quotations from Kim Il Sung as definitions of words; the 1981 dictionary expresses in the foreword its aim to include all word and phrases from Kim Il Sung's speeches (Kumatani 106). For example, the term *tongji* was personally redefined by Kim Il Sung from its previous meaning, similar to *pŏt* ‘friend’, to an ideopoliticized term representing the equality of Communism. Kim Il Sung defines *tongji* as “a person with the same thoughts who is fighting for the same cause” (1975.1 28).

A full-page of new animal terminology refined by the National Language Decision Committee is published in 1982 (1982.1 62). This list includes *pulgŭn k'o wŏnsungi* ‘red-nosed monkey’ for *mandŭril wŏnsungi*, *pakchwi* ‘bat’ for *ch'amsŏe pakchwi*, *hŭin turumi* ‘white crane’ for *paek turumi*, *sadasae* ‘pelican’ for *p'ellik'an*, *pulgŭn hak* ‘flamingo’ for *hong hak*, *pada ori* ‘murre’ for *hoguni*, and *p'alsaek sae* ‘fairy pitta; lit., blue bird’ for *p'alsaek cho* (1982.1 62).

Another *maldadŭmgi* list published in 1984 attempts to replace a single Sino-Korean element in

a word with a native element. *Kŭn* ‘near’ is changed to *kakkaun* in words like *kakkaun kōri* ‘close distance’, *kakkaun kap* ‘near price’, and *kakkaun kot* ‘nearby location’ (originally *kŭn kōri*, *kŭn kap*, and *kŭn kot*); *kan* ‘interval, gap’ is changed to *sai* in words like *sai pyōk* ‘partition wall’, *sai saek* ‘intermediate color’, and *sai ch’ŭng* ‘interlayer’ (originally *kan pyōk*, *kan saek*, and *kan ch’ŭng*) (1984.2 31). These lists even phased out common Sino-Korean such as *kaok* ‘house’, *kogaek* ‘customer’, *chōnhu* ‘before and after’, *chōnsin* ‘entire body’, *sanmaek* ‘mountain range’, *suro* ‘canal’, and *subun* ‘moisture’, replacing them with their equally common pure Korean counterparts of *chip*, *sonnim*, *aptwi*, *onmom*, *sanjulgi*, *mulgil*, and *mulkki* (1969.2 16).¹⁴

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp shows that technical vocabulary was a main target of Kim Il Sung’s *maldadŭmgi* policies. This reaches back to two talks give by Kim Il Sung in 1946 (‘Culture and the Arts Must Be for the People’ and ‘The Duty of Youth in the Construction of Democratic Korea’) in which he claims that the general public does not understand technical vocabulary and encourages government workers to speak simpler (King “Language, Politics, and Ideology” 117). As such, one of *maldadŭmgi*’s main goals is to simplify speech and writing to the point that a worker who can barely read will be able to understand ‘technical’ material (Ch’oe Yonggi 195).

A letter written by Ri Yōngnan discusses the high level of technical vocabulary used in silk factories prior to *maldadŭmgi* (1969.3 47). As a trade learned from China, the process of silk production, up to this point, had been described using only Sino-Korean words. Even though pure Korean words existed, Sino-Korean words describing the process of silk collection (*chosahanda* ‘spin’; *haesahanda* ‘unravel’) were habitually used instead of their Korean counterparts (*sil ūl k’yōnda*, *sil ūl p’unda*). Ri states the technicality of silk factory jargon was

¹⁴ For a more elaborate list of words affected by *maldadŭmgi* policies, refer to Yi Hyōnbok’s 83-page comparison of nouns used in North and South Korea (3-86).

unintelligible to anybody unfamiliar with the trade—even people trained in Chinese. These technical Sino-Korean terms were selected to be changed as part of Kim Il Sung’s *maldadŭmgi* policy.

Ri relates that the workers were soon inundated with the new native Korean words through company newspapers and broadcasts, causing the new terms to quickly become second nature. Ri even describes a situation where the workers gathered together to collaborate on appropriate Korean replacements for the Sino-Korean words. *Koch’ich’ŭng* ‘silkworm cocoon layers’ are described as *oech’ŭng* ‘outside layer’, *chungch’ŭng* ‘middle layer’, and *naech’ŭng* ‘inside layer’ based on their position in the cocoon. Ri relates that while everyone agreed to change *chungch’ŭng* to *kaundaech’ŭng*, and *naech’ŭng* to *anch’ŭng*, there was disagreement over whether *oech’ŭng* should become *pakkatch’ŭng* or *kõtch’ŭng* (1969.3 47). These new words are still not pure Korean words, but instead are calques using one pure Korean root and one Sino-Korean root.¹⁵

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp also publishes letters expressing readers’ frustrations when the principles of *maldadŭmgi* are not followed. One reader encourages applying the principles of *maldadŭmgi* to the signage at the railroad station in order to follow Kim Il Sung’s counsel and make it easier for the everyday Korean (1969.3 47).

Another letter discusses the *ususŏng* of newspapers written in pure Korean as compared to those written using Sino-Korean (1969.3 47). Kim Hyŏnsun claims that articles with titles in pure Korean such as “*Chŏngch’i saŏp ŭl apsewŏ pyŏmo rŭl naenŭn on tŭlp’an i ch’ungsŏng kŏ rinda*” (Move the Political Work Forward and the Entire Field is Loyal in Sprouting Rice), “*Monaegi rŭl chaech’ŏl e kkŭnnaegi wihayŏ ilson ŭl tagŭch’igo itta*” (Pressing the Worker to Finish Planting Rice at the Steel Mill), and “*Kimmaegi ro tŭlkkŭnnŭnbŏp*” (The Way to Amass

¹⁵ This types of half Korean, half Sino-Korean words, though not pure Korean, are still given priority over pure Sino-Korean words.

Cooperation through Weeding) are easier to read. Kim insists that an article with a title in refined *Munhwaŏ* should follow the policies of *maldadŭmgi* throughout the entire article. The aforementioned articles, for example, use *meju* ‘malt’ and *nuruk* for *kokcha*, *mejubang* ‘malt room’ for *kokchasil*, *chipchimsŭng uri* ‘stable’ (lit. domestic animal pen) for *ch’uksa*, *mŏngnŭn mul* ‘beverage’ (lit. eating water) and *masinŭn mul* (lit. drinking water) for *ŭmnyosu*, and *noraehada* ‘sing’ for *kugahada* (1969.3 47).

The writer is disappointed, however, with the deceptive nature of some articles that restrict the use of refined *Munhwaŏ* to only the title. In one article entitled “*Sŏhae esŏ ŭi pada nongsa* (Ocean Farming in the Western Sea), the author didn’t use the word *pada nongsa* anywhere in the article besides the title; instead it was constantly referred to as *ch’ŏnhaeyangsiksaŏp*—the Sino-Korean term for ocean farming (1969.3 47). Kim encourages journalists to be more consistent in using proper *maldadŭmgi* throughout their articles.

While some foreignisms could simply be replaced by native Korean, not all loanwords had a comparable native Korean counterpart. Many loanwords of modernity, particularly those regarding science and technology, were introduced and propagated solely as loanword terminology without ever creating a Korean complement. As such, many new words were created as a result of North Korea’s *maldadŭmgi* policies. Stating that “just as a gem shines only after being polished, new words must be used in order to shine,” Ri Kwanghyŏn advocates using the new words with a mindset of advancing the ideals of *chuch’e* and with thoughts of the next generation (1981.2 10).

Ch’oe Hoch’ŏl states three rules to follow when creating new vocabulary. First, words should be kept short, with an average of four to five syllables (213). Second, new words should have smooth pronunciations. For example, *rodae* ‘balcony’ should be changed to *pakkattae* instead of *pakktae* based on ease of pronunciation. Third, the newly created words should be distinguishable from previously established words. For example, *choyak tari* (a type of physical

training) should be changed to *kurŭnŭn tari* (lit., ‘stamping legs’) instead of *kurŭm tari*, which originally means ‘pedestrian overpass’ (213).

Kim Chin-wu points out that Kim Il Sung’s aggressive *maldadŭmgi* policies went as far as to “resurrect extinct words” such as *tungguri* ‘peeled log’, and *minch’umhada* ‘foolish and immature’ (“Divergence” 252). Kim also claims that new words were created based on the patterns of previously established words; *karangp’a* ‘thing green onion’ was modeled after *karangbi* ‘light rain’. Even the names of the individual letters of the Korean script were changed in North Korea’s *maldadŭmgi* policies. *Kiyŏk* became *kiŭk*, *tigŭt* became *tiŭt*, *siot* became *siŭt*, and all doubles letters (*ssang piŭp*, *ssang chiŭt*) were changed to reflect pure roots (*toen piŭp*, *toen chiŭt*) (Yu 62).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp offers a space for everyday North Koreans to hold a public forum on the creation of new words. Kim Il Sung advocated in his 1966 ‘talk’ that there be regular *chisang t’oron* ‘paper discussions’ on *maldadŭmgi* that are carried through the print media to the people (1969.3 5). Letters from readers give readers’ opinions for replacements for loanwords. In one such letter, Ri Chunhŭi agrees that *aisŭ k’ŭrim* ‘ice cream’ should be changed to *ŏrŭm kkul* because the word looks good, sounds good, and the syllables fit together well (1974.3 45).¹⁶ Another reader suggests that *k’at’en* ‘curtain’ should be changed to *ch’angmunjang* even though the majority of people support *ch’angmunbo* (1974.3 45).¹⁷

¹⁶ In 1981, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* encourages readers to refer to ice cream as *ŏrŭm posungi*; in 1986 the name was official changed to *ŏrŭm posungi* in *Tadŭmŭn mal* ‘Refined Words’ (1981.3 28). Ch’oe Yonggi, however, reports that *ŏrŭm posungi* was never used by the people and subsequently was changed back to *aisŭ k’ŭrim* in the 1992 *Chosŏnmal taesajŏn* ‘Unabridged Dictionary of the Korean Language’ (208; Cho 118).

¹⁷ Even though both these replacements are Sino-Korean, Sino-Korean presumably still ranks higher than English as a loanword source.

3.3.4 Adaptation of Pronunciation

According to Kumatani's analysis of North Korean *maldadŭmgi*, the third way loanwords are refined is by changing fully integrated words to more closely match the word's original pronunciation. Kim Il Sung addresses this point directly in his 1964 'talk with linguists' when he states the following:

“As for a foreign country's proper nouns, we would do well to follow the way they are pronounced in that country instead of pronouncing them in the Japanese or Chinese way. The name of a country should be written the way it is pronounced in that country” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 9; 1972.1 30).

In accordance with Kim Il Sung's directives, a document entitled “World Country and Capital Names” was released to the public in 1965 correcting the old-fashioned Chinese and Japanese pronunciations. This list included changes such as *pukkyōng* ‘Beijing’ to *peijing* and *ch'ekk'osŭllobak'ia* ‘Czechoslovakia’ to *ch'ekk'osŭllobensŭkko* (Ch'oe Yonggi 197).

In 1972 *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* printed a list of country and capital names as a supplement to the 1965 list. In this list, the European nations of the Vatican, Monaco, and Malta are changed from *Pat'ik'an* to *Pattikkano*, *Monak'o* to *Monakko*, and *Malt'a* to *Malтта* respectively (1972.1 30). Islands in the Caribbean such as Haiti, Jamaica, and Barbados are corrected from *Hait'i* to *Aitti*, *Jyamaik'a* to *Jyōmeik'ō*, and *Parŭbadosŭ* to *Pabeidojŭ*. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* states that the country names of *Nep'al* ‘Nepal’, *Lebanon* ‘Lebanon’, *Yorŭdan* ‘Jordan’, *Pŭrajil* ‘Brazil’ will stay constant.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp lists twenty-five capital names that have been changed. Some changes are slight: *Lisŭbon* to *Lisŭbong* ‘Lisbon’, *Angk'ira* to *Angkkira* ‘Ankara’. Other changes are more exaggerated; Jerusalem is changed from *Yerŭsallem* to *Kkudŭsŭ*, Valletta from *Raballera* to *Walletta* (1972.1 30).

3.3.5 Promoting Native Korean

While most *maldadŭmgi* focuses on removing foreignisms from *Munhwaŏ*, an interesting flipside to *maldadŭmgi* is the actual promotion of lesser-used Korean terms. Articles of word lists published in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* encourage Koreans to use the diverse vocabulary of *Munhwaŏ*. One list details various ways to describe taste (1978.4 26); another list delves into lesser-known names for colors (1979.4 36); yet another list describes ways to express different types of heat and sweat (1979.3 31).

An article in the debut issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* laments that the native word *mandŭl* ‘make’ is displacing various native Korean words. In this article, Pak Hongjun instructs readers on how to use the situation-specific verbs *cis*-¹⁸ (cook [rice], write [a poem], make [a name], create [a group], sew [a blanket], make [a sigh]), *cca*- (make [a bookcase], knit [socks], weave [a straw bag], plan [a strategy], organize [a team]), *mwus*- (construct [a raft], make [a partner], found [a union]), *yekk*- (weave [a bamboo fence], compile [a book]), *kyel*- (weave [a reed mat], *kkwumi*- (sew [overalls], draw up [a strategy], write up [a report]), *kkwuli*- (make [a new school]), *ssah*- (build [a wall]), *ttu*- (knit [wool gloves]), *noh*- (build [a bridge], create [a pattern]), *takk*- (build [a road]), *seywu*- (establish [a plan], erect [a statue]), *ilwukha*- (achieve [a socialist earthly paradise]), *nah*- (spin [cotton], bring about [a miracle]), *kwuw*- (fire [roof tiles]), *pic*- (make [dumplings]), *nayo*- (form [a new department]), *ha*- (sew [a suit out of good fabric], make [a weird face]), *nay*- (cause [an injury], produce [a new record]), *may*- (fashion [a writing brush]), *pyeli*- (sharpen [an axe]), and *thu-l*- (build [a nest]) instead of overusing *mantu-l*- (1968.1 24).¹⁹

The use of regional dialectal words is also encouraged by articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* because they are claimed to promote the ethnic characteristics of the Korean people and increase

¹⁸ Examples in this paragraph are all transcribed into Yale romanization.

¹⁹ Definitions and examples are all pulled directly from the article “Words used to Express *Mandŭlta* [make]” by Park Hongjun (1968.1 24).

the amount and diversity of *Munhwaŏ* vocabulary (1981.4 33-34). Kim Il Sung himself stated in his ‘talk with linguists’ that “we must also trace good words in our dialects and use them...If we make a careful survey of our dialects, we shall find excellent words of our own which can be accepted even now” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 285; King “Dialects and Dictionaries” 118). *Sasse* states that “up to 1977, some 3,100 [dialectal] words have been found and incorporated into the standard North Korean language” (qtd. in Kumatani 104). Cho et al. claims that the majority of these are from Kangwŏn-do, P’yongan-do, and Hamgyŏng-do (96). King notes that dialectal words are promoted by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as being “tinged with romantic and nationalist fervor” (“Dialects and Dictionaries” 119).²⁰

3.3.6 Summary

A summary printed in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* of the progress made in the first ten years after the 1966 ‘print discussions’ on *maldadŭmgi* shows the advancements made in *Munhwaŏ* (1976.2 14). The article reports “our speech and writing have truly changed during this span; both Sino-Korean and other foreign words are gradually disappearing, making room for our native words” (1976.2 14). North Korean parents began abandoning the Chinese concept of *tollimja* ‘generational naming’ and began replacing the ‘*cha*’ character from the final position of girl’s names—a vestige of Japanese language imperialism—with ‘*hŭi*’ and ‘*ok*’ (Kumatani 100).²¹ Names built with Korean roots such as *Ŏkse*, *Ch’amsun*, *Sech’an*, *Kangsoe*, *Pyŏri*, *Pomi* are also reportedly gaining popularity in North Korea (1976.2 13).

In addition to replacing Sino-Korean names, these native Korean names are being stamped with the North Korean language brand through explicit elucidation of their meaning.

²⁰ While *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* promotes the use of approved dialectal words, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* does not approve of the use of *sat’uri* ‘dialectal variations of spoken language’ as is seen in articles like “Avoiding Using *Sat’uri*” (1982.1 61), “To Not Let *Sat’uri* Survive” (1983.4 10), and “Why *Sat’uri* Must Not be Used” (1982.3 32).

²¹ Again, though both replacements are Sino-Korean, they represent the lesser of two evils when compared to Japanese vestiges of imperialism.

Saenal ‘new day’ is reported to have the meaning ‘as full of hope as a bright new day’, *Poram* ‘worth’ the meaning ‘living one’s entire life for one’s country and people’, and *Songi* ‘bunch [of flowers]’ the meaning ‘blooming like a flower as a faithful revolutionary soldier’ (1973.1 37).

The report continues that North Korean administrative district names, previously Sino-Korean words, have been changed personally by Kim Il Sung; these names include *sae maül-dong*, *pulgŭn kŏri-dong*, *kin maül-dong*, *kkot p’in-dong*, and *seumul-ri* (1976.2 13). Kim Il Sung’s systematic renaming of regional areas is an “act of power, a means of asserting and exercising control” (Stevenson 49). Even in East and West Germany where the Germany lexicon stayed relatively constant across the porous political border, “East German streets, schools, and other public institutions, even towns and cities” were renamed upon collapse of the Berlin Wall (49). According to Stevenson, the symbolism of naming practices is “one of the most potent linguistic devices in the arsenal of political and ideological opponents” (49). This ‘potent linguistic device’ is harnessed by Kim Il Sung to stamp North Korean political ideologies—the North Korean brand—onto the Korean nation, people, and language.

Language change is a lengthy process, even when expedited by official government intervention policies. The common theory that language suddenly changes along with social upheaval has “little substance...and [is] deplorable” (Stevenson 43). However, there is no question that the area of language that is most vulnerable to language change is vocabulary. Through manipulating vocabulary to reflect the political ideologies asserted by Kim Il Sung, North Korea rebrands *Munhwaŏ* as the *pure* Korean language .

3.4 Language Branding in Writing

Brands are only as potent as the symbols that represent them. Berthon, Pitt, and Campbell claim that successful branding requires the company to decide on an identity and appropriate “words, phrases, and symbols” that will represent the product (356). These visual

aspects of a brand are not only important because they flood the eyes of consumers, but are a concrete marker for the brand that the consumer can easily visualize.

In North Korea, the ‘words, phrases, and symbols’ that represent *Munhwaŏ* are the script and writing patterns. The Korean alphabet, the tangible embodiment of *Munhwaŏ*, is taught to students from a young age, with cultivation of the skills of writing emphasized throughout life through media such as *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. The phrase seen on nearly every page of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*—‘the Great Leader Kim Il Sung instructed as follows’—along with the distinct boxy typography of North Korean printing, are but a few examples among many of the way North Korea has branded its language through writing. These, however, are characteristics that we, as outsiders, interpret as North Korean language branding.

Many different characteristics of proper writing are promoted in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. Contributors provide lists of commonly misspelled words along with tips for educating students on proper *Munhwaŏ* orthography. Proper handwriting is also specifically taught; also discussed is the syllabic block structure of Korean orthography—one of the openly admitted shortcomings of the language. However, the main characteristic of North Korean branding seen in writing, heavily promoted throughout *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, is creating writing that is easy to understand.

3.4.1 Writing Simply

Kim Il Sung said “it can only be called good writing if it is written so anybody can understand it” (1979.4 9). Creating simple writing includes following the aforementioned principles of *maldadŭmgi*, as well as using principles of simple sentence construction.

Accordingly, the primary step in writing simply is to use native Korean words. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* asserts that the “purpose of writing is not to flaunt one’s learning but to help the masses understand and be enlightened” (1971.3 31).

Literally calling out to the *abŏji* ‘fathers’, *ŏmŏni* ‘mothers’, *hyŏngnim* and *oppa* ‘brothers’, and *nuna* and *ŏnni* ‘sisters’ of North Korea to use more simple language, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* encourages North Korean families to use ‘simpler’ words (1971.3 31). Korean numerals, for example, are claimed to be simpler to use than Sino-Korean numerals. As such, readers are encouraged to use the Korean phrase *sŭmultasŏt sal* ‘twenty-five years-old’ in place of Sino-Korean *isibo se* when expressing age.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp insists that signs of information, direction, and warning need to be written clearly and simply so that all the general public, regardless of rank or class, can understand them. *Ch’agul ro taniji mal kŏt* (no tunnel access) should not be written as *t’ŏnnelt’onggwa kŭmji*; likewise, *ch’a rŭl seuji mal kŏt* (no parking) must not be written as *t’onghaeng kŭmji* (1979.4 9). Ri Sinhae instructs that signs should be short and concise in order to be read and understood in a moment’s glance, for they are “not read while sitting in a library or bedroom while figuring out each and every Chinese character” (1979.4 9). Accordingly, Ri directs that signs reading *onŭl ŭn silsa rŭl haji ttaemune p’anmae haji mot hamnida* (we are not doing business today because we have an inspection), *10 si put’ŏ mun ŭl yŏmnida* (we open the door starting at 10 o’clock), and *onŭl ŭn swinŭn nal imnida* (today is a day off) should be written as *silsa nal* (inspection day), *mun yŏnŭn sigan: 10 si* (opening time: 10), and *swinŭn nal* (day off) (1979.4 9).

Kumatani comments on the unique nature of ‘vocabulary elevation’ in North Korea. He states the following:

“Many colloquial words have been elevated to written words. Spoken speech is chiefly made up of pure Korean which generally has sentimentally and emotionally rich connotations and is never used by intellectuals, but rather by the general public. Stylistic promotion of words from spoken speech to written speech was carried forward because of the political consideration that ease, popularity, and clarity should be enhanced in order to organize and mobilize the people” (103).

With pride for the average worker and scorn for the bourgeoisie, North Korean ideology promotes the use of everyday words as literary language.

Instruction on writing in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, however, involves much more than following *maldadŭmgi* policies in writing. Articles teach readers, step-by-step, how to create specific pieces of writing, through adhering to rules specific to each genre and good sentence construction.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp painstakingly elaborates on how to compose different genres of writing through guides that typically consist of detailed instructions of necessary elements specific to that genre, sample pieces of the genre, and accompanying analysis of these samples. Mun Chaehong, for example, consistently followed this pattern in his reoccurring section on writing letters. His articles in the column include “Letters of Request” (1976.4 24), “Letters of Notification” (1976.2 39), “Letters of Inquiry” (1975.4 22), “Letters of Regards” (1975.3 41), “Letters of Congratulations” (1975.2 35), and general “Letter” instruction (1975.1 32).

Mun’s article on letters of request instructs writers to focus on the request by keeping the greeting concise. In writing the request, the writer must 1) clearly express the request, 2) inform the reader of time or place constraints, 3) convey the request’s genuineness in order to bring the reader to action, 4) not overstep boundaries by requesting too much, 5) use proper speech etiquette, 6) avoid lengthy explanations by keeping the message concise and on track, and 7) use language that is easy, appropriate, and friendly (1976.4 24-25). He quotes a sample letter from a young man in the army that misses his father and requests that his father send his picture. Mun then analyzes the letter in terms of the aforementioned rules—particularly regarding proper etiquette when making a request to an elder.

Though the detailed instructions differ for each type of letter, the foundational instructions are the same. Mun consistently tells his readers to follow proper etiquette, apply characteristics of *immal* ‘spoken language’, and construct short, concise sentences. These

precepts originate in Kim Il Sung's contestations that 'educated writing' does not need to be complex. Kim Il Sung claims that "papers must not be too long; instead, they must be written concisely while still being rich in contents" (1978.4 25).

The title of the article, as well, should be kept short yet descriptive. As the 'face' of the article, the title should give an accurate description of its contents. Kim Il Sung teaches that "there is no need for a long title; the best title is simple and easy to understand" (1975.1 16).

3.4.2 The Visual Aspects of Writing

Munhwaŏ Haksŏp gives instruction on the more cosmetic side of writing through addressing spelling and penmanship—the visual aspects of writing. Kim Il Sung addresses the importance of adhering to current standards of orthography in the following quote from his 1966 'talk':

"In spelling too, [elderly people] are used to the old system and so make mistakes. Therefore in order to popularize our own words easily we must begin in the schools. Here the teaching of the revise Korean words should begin with the first-grade pupils of the primary school" (Kim Il Sung "Works" 291; 1969.3 6; 1974.1 38).

Ri Yunok states that teachers and parents must instruct their students that, due to sound changes, the way things are written and the way things are spoken are different (1974.1 38). Students who use regional dialects must specifically be instructed on the divergence between pronunciation and standard orthography (1974.1 39). Lists of commonly misspelled words instruct readers to spell *il/tchig/i* 'early' as *il/tchi/gi*, *yudalli* 'particularly' as *ryudalli*, and *yuwŏl* 'June' as *ryuwŏl*—all deviating from South Korean standards of orthography (1969.3 48).²²

An article by Kang Tŏgyŏng titled "So Our Students can Write Correctly," he claims that the most critical part of writing graphically correct Korean is matching up the sizes of the different characters (1981.2 33). Kang asserts that the most basic rule is creating a box-shaped

²² These also deviate from *spoken* Korean in the north as the initial *r-* is artificial (King "Dialect, Orthography and Regional Identity") though official North Korean language policy dictates writing *and* pronouncing the syllable-initial *r* (Cho 209).

syllable with a height to width ratio of 1:1. According to Kang, this process needs to be explicitly taught to students due to the large number of complications; for example consonants in syllable blocks with horizontal vowels should be written at three-fourths the height of their vertical counterparts in order to maintain the same sized ‘blocks’ when written next to each other.

Kang mathematically breaks down different guidelines to matching up character sizes. First, syllable blocks without *patch'im* ‘syllable-final consonants’ should be written with a height to width ratio of 2:1 (1981.2 34). Second, syllable blocks with *patch'im* should be written so the consonant and vowel pair atop the *patch'im* take up two-thirds of the length of the entire character; accordingly, the *patch'im* fills in the bottom one-third of the 1:1 syllable box. In order to increase the visual aesthetic of the character block, consonants on top with diagonal strokes should be elongated and the shape of the *patch'im* should be adjusted to fit into the space remaining. *Patch'im* should also line up its farthest right stroke with the long vertical stroke in vertical vowels; in the case of horizontal vowels, the leading consonant, vertical vowel, and *patch'im* should all be centered vertically.

Regardless of *patch'im*, syllable blocks consisting of vertical vowels should be slightly elongated vertically according to Kang; likewise, blocks using vowels of a horizontal nature should be slightly longer horizontally (1981.2 34). As such, all consonants will have two basic shapes—one stretched vertically and one stretched horizontally. In the case of a complex vowel, Kang instructs that a writer must match up all the left elements of the consonant, vowel, and possible *patch'im* and use the horizontally-stretched consonant shape.

The complexities of character shapes lead Kwŏn Chongsŏng to declare the boxy nature of *Munhwaŏ* a shortcoming. The syllable blocking system results in *k* (ㄱ) being a slightly different shape depending on its position and syllable composition in the following five examples: *ka* (ㄱㅏ),

ku (ㄱ), *kwi* (ㅋ), *kuk* (ㄱ), and *talk* (ㄱ) (1978.3 33). Kim Il Sung also discusses the difficulties of the block system:

“Our present letters are square-shaped, which causes some difficulty in writing. Being mostly syllabic, they are easy to pronounce. But the form of words is not fixed. It is, therefore, a little difficult to read them, and the slightest slip in writing is taboo. Our letters are not suitable for printing mechanization and they are also difficult to type” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 294;1978.3 33).

Kwŏn also acknowledges that while the block system causes a little discomfort when written by hand, these shape alterations cause big complications in printing.^{23 24}

A possible solution for syllable blocks that has been discussed by both Chu Sigyŏng and Kim Il Sung was *p’urŏssŭgi* ‘writing linearly’. The idea of *p’urŏssŭgi* has been bounced around in both North and South Korea ever since it was first mooted in missionary circles in the first decade of the 20th century (King “Western Protestant Missionaries” 23).²⁵

The syllable block system of *Munhwaŏ* is also blamed as one of the reasons for spelling difficulties in North Korea. The Korean system of stacking individual letters into syllable blocks was questioned by Kim Il Sung in his 1964 ‘talk with linguists’. He states the following:

“The form of words will be fixed only when the syllabics are broken down and written sideways, like European words. Since the form of our words is not fixed, their spelling is also difficult” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 10).

Kwŏn agrees that switching to *p’urŏssŭgi* would alleviate problems in spelling, claiming that errors based on placement (*palg/ŭ/ni* vs. *pal/gŭ/ni* vs. *palg/ŭn/i* vs. *pal/gŭn/i*) would become obsolete (1978.3 34).

²³ An issue brought up by Yi Man’gyu in a 1958 issue of *Mal kwa Kŭl* wherein he criticizes the Korean syllable system for being unaccommodating for mechanized type, cursive script, and fast reading (King “Politics, Language, and Ideology” 125).

²⁴ Gottlieb states that the issues regarding difficulty typing a non-roman script might have become obsolete since the invention and widespread promotion of the word processor (Gottlieb and Chen 19).

²⁵ The idea of *p’urŏssŭgi* is generally accredited to Chu Sigyŏng (1876-1914) in both North and South Korean scholarship even though the first printed mention of it by a missionary under the pseudonym of ‘Argos’ predates Chu Sigyŏng’s first printed mention of it by nine years (King “Western Protestant Missionaries” 23).

In addition to complicating spelling, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that syllable blocks hinder reading comprehension.²⁶ Even after reforms in writing that horizontalized Korean writing and added spaces, Kim Il Sung is disappointed with *Munhwaŏ*'s lack of graphic representation of vocabulary terms as a cohesive unit. In his 1964 'talk', Kim Il Sung declared the following about *Munhwaŏ*'s graphic shortcomings:

“In our writing now each word does not have a fixed form. Therefore our writing looks like an unbroken string of syllables. So, at a glance, it is less appealing to the eye than Chinese or European writing” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 10; 1978.3 33).

Along with Kim Il Sung, Kwŏn Chongsŏng claims that writing in syllable blocks prevents the reader from comprehending the entire vocabulary word in a quick glance. He claims that the word *ch'aeksang* 'desk' will be processed by a reader through its syllables of *ch'aek* 'book' and *sang* 'table' before being combined as *ch'aeksang* (1978.3 33).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp's discourse on the shortcomings of Korean orthography, however, does not by any means oppose their claims to the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ*. Just as *maldadŭmgi* is applied as a tool to improve the language, graphic reforms to overcome the shortcomings of Korean syllable blocks are seen as an instrument for 'advancing' the language. Kim Il Sung hints that the natural development of the script demands reform but that the “question of fixing the form of words will have to be settled after the reunification of north and south” (Kim Il Sung 10). Hence, while the idea of *p'urŏssŭgi* has gained notable praise from Kim Il Sung and North Korean linguists, North Korea is waiting until after reunification to make graphic reforms (Kim Il Sung 10; Kumatani 94; 1973.3 34).

²⁶ Interestingly enough, the South Koreans have gone to a lot of trouble to demonstrate that writing in syllable blocks (*moa ssŭgi*) is actually really good for reading. See, for example, Yi Iksŏp (1992) *Kugŏ p'yogibŏp yŏn'gu*.

3.5 Language Branding in Speech

Contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* hail *Munhwaŏ* for its superiority in sound amalgamation, along with its beautiful harmonization of pronunciation and intonation. *Munhwaŏ* is celebrated for the “cadence, rhythm, pauses, speed, tone, and sentence accents” that are inherent to the language (1979.4 19). These traits are lauded by Kim Il Sung and North Korean linguists as signs of *Munhwaŏ’s ususŏng*.

Two main categories of article in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* focus on speech patterns. Pronunciation guides instruct North Koreans on common mistakes in speech while also reassuring them of the *ususŏng* of their language. Guides on *hwasul* instruct readers how to speak like professional actors, whether television, stage, or radio, through pauses, intonation, and speaking more authoritatively. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* emphasizes these unique qualities of *Munhwaŏ*, contributing to the branding of North Korean language as unique.

3.5.1 Standard Pronunciation

The standard for speech was set by Kim Il Sung himself, beginning with assertions of Pyongyang speech over Seoul speech in 1964 and solidified as the official basis of *Munhwaŏ* in 1966.

“In developing our language, we should not copy from the language of any other country—much less take the Seoul dialect, corrupted by English and Japanese, as the standard. We who are building socialism must take the central role in developing the Korean language...” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 11).

”We should preserve and develop the national characteristics of our language with Pyongyang as the centre and the speech of Pyongyang as the standard” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 288;1969.3 4-5).

Kim Il Sung later states that the term *p’yojunŏ* should be avoided since it could easily be mistaken as Seoul speech (1981.4 30).

Pak Suyŏng claims that “*Munhwaŏ* is a superior, beautiful language resulting from placing the basis of the standard on Pyongyang speech” (1981.4 30). In listing the specific

qualities of Pyongyang-based *Munhwaǒ*—in essence, the unique characteristics of the North Korean brand—Pak praises Pyongyang speech for being a symbol of the people, the revolution, and the Workers’ Party and being simple enough for all Koreans to understand (1981.4 31). In addition, Pak lauds Pyongyang speech for being thoroughly standardized and being able to express the merits of communism through speech patterns of politeness. The official pronunciation of the supposedly Pyongyang speech-based *Munhwaǒ* is prescribed in *Chosǒn mal kyubǒm chip* ‘Collection of Korean Language Norms’ published in 1966. Articles in *Munhwaǒ Haksǔp* elucidate the official rules of pronunciation for *Munhwaǒ* for families, educators, and students.

Young students, in particular, have problems with *Munhwaǒ* pronunciation. Ryu Myǒngǔn stresses the importance of finding out why students are making these errors, as opposed to correcting each individual mistake (1976.4 39). Some common errors he mentions are: enunciating every syllable separately (*kuphida* ‘bend’ as *kup/hi/ta*), and reading words the way they are written (*kyesida* ‘stay’ as *kyesida* instead of simplifying it to *kesida*). Students who have lived outside of Pyongyang for long periods of time confuse certain vowels (*ae* and *e*, *u* and *ũ*, *ǒ* and *i*), mispronounce certain consonant sound changes (*ka/ũl/gǒt/i* ‘harvest’ as *kaũlgǒdi* instead of *kaũlgǒji*), and violate proper conjugation rules (*ch’upta* ‘cold’ + *asǒ/ǒsǒ* as *ch’ubǒsǒ* instead of *ch’uwǒsǒ*) (1967.4 39-40). Lack of vocabulary knowledge leads students to pronounce *chaaeropta* ‘benevolent’, a word frequently used as one of the descriptors for Kim Il Sung, as *chayeropta* or *chahaeropta*—both incorrect.

Another cause of confusion is *patch’im* and the *patch’im* sounds. This stems from twenty-seven possible written *patch’ims* but only seven possible pronounced *patch’im* sounds (1973.4 32). Double *patch’ims* cause the most confusion. Students make mistakes as they attempt to read aloud the word based on its spelling without considering proper pronunciation (*talk* ‘chicken’ as *talk* instead of *tak*) (1967.4 39).

Exceptions to the rules cause further confusion. *Palp* ‘step on’ + *ko* should be pronounced *papko* according to standard pronunciation rules, but can also be pronounced *palkko*; *yödölp* ‘eight’ breaks the rules by always being pronounced as *yödöl* (1973.4 32). Some common mistakes include pronouncing *mogyoil* ‘Thursday’ as *mongnyoil*, *chöryak* ‘conserve’ as *chöllyak*, and *kömyöl* ‘censorship’ as *kömnööl* (1973.4 32). Failure to pronounce *patch’im* sounds correctly leaves the sentence “rough, awkward, and unable to deeply inspire the listener” (1972.4 28). Though sometimes confusing, authors in *Munhwaö Haksŭp* give sound changes as an example of the *ususöng* of *Munhwaö* (1971.3 43).

3.5.2 *Hwasul*

The art of public speaking, or *hwasul*, is highly prized in *Munhwaö Haksŭp*. Ri Kŭmbok defines *hwasul* as the “ability to express thoughts, emotions, and the words one is trying to say vividly and clearly” (1981.3 45). This ability is not a natural talent, but reportedly a skill that one must cultivate. Articles in *Munhwaö Haksŭp* instruct readers how to cultivate this specific brand of applauded speech.

Actors, whether television, stage, or radio, are responsible for mastering the skill of *hwasul* and correctly demonstrating it to the people. These actors, referred to as “artists of language,” become a symbol for the North Korean brand of language (1981.3 45). According to Ri Kŭmbok, instructor of *hwasul* at the Film College, an actor’s greatest tool is his command of *Munhwaö*; no matter how well an actor can act, her delivery will fall flat without proper *hwasul*. Ri states “it is difficult to fully express thoughts and feelings without language... Though one’s facial expression, gait, body language, and hand gestures can express a lot, *hwasul* makes these more complete expressions” (1981.3 45). Thus, according to articles in the government-published *Munhwaö Haksŭp*, the crux of the entire entertainment industry is none other than *Munhwaö*—further elevating the status of the nationally branded language.

Even though *hwasul* articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* appear to be meant for actors, the general public are not excluded from the envisioned readership. *Hwasul* articles, cleverly disguised as how-to guides for aspiring actors, are actually guides to instruct everyday citizens how to use *Munhwaŏ* more eloquently. Hence, the instructions given to ‘aspiring actors’ in *hwasul* articles can be understood as passive aggressive assertions of spoken language ideals by the contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

In the article “A Few Problems Concerning *Hwasul* Intonation of Film Actors,” Cho Ch’angjong highlights two common mistakes that become a detriment to *hwasul* (1979.4 19). The first one is *kkŭnk’i* ‘pauses’. Logically, pauses are needed to avoid running out of breath; on the other hand, too many pauses fragment sentences. Cho claims, however, that the primary purpose of pauses is to convey emotion. Phrases such as *ŏmŏni ka...ŏmŏni ka tora kasyŏsso* ‘Mother...mother passed away’ mean nothing when said in one breath—a common amateur’s mistake (1979.4 20). According to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, long pauses must follow each word in order to convey the grief-stricken actor’s pain.

Pauses emote more than pain. Cho lists eight different types of emotions that pauses can evoke. These pauses include 1) long pauses to emote turmoil, 2) emphatic pauses, 3) pauses to raise expressive efficacy, 4) pauses accompanying deep thought, 5) frequent pauses used to express excitement, 6) pauses to effectively leave a lingering image or grab the listener’s attention, 7) pauses for regaining one’s composure, and 8) pauses of hesitation (1979.4 20). One must master the genuine use of these types of pauses if one is to master *hwasul*.

The second problem illuminated by Cho in his article “A Few Problems Concerning *Hwasul* Intonation of Film Actors” revolves around intonation and cadence (1979.4 19). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that the expressive nature of *Munhwaŏ* allows for the same words and sentence to be interpreted differently depending on the accompanying intonation. Accents on individual words in *Munhwaŏ* allow for differentiation in length, pitch, and stress, whether it be

syllable-initial, syllable-final, or in the middle of the syllable (Chŏn Sut'ae “*Hwasul* Research” 280). Sentence endings are also heavily effected by intonation; some sentences end with the intonation going up; others end going down. Yet others stay the same, get cut off, or go down before going back up again (1979.4 21). As such, the use of incorrect intonation, or the absence of any intonation at all, can be confusing. Cho claims that the listener is left wondering whether the sentence was a question, a command, a sarcastic remark, a statement, an enticement, a warning, or even a boast or brag (1979.4 20-21). Though Cho directs his remarks to aspiring actors, the inclusion of these types of articles in the popular journal *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* promotes these qualities as speech patterns that the rank-and-file North Korean should strive to emulate.

Even *hwasul* articles, however, do not escape the branding of North Korean communism. After elaborating on the superiority of *hwasul* as it compares to *immal* ‘spoken language’, Ri Ch’unmyŏng educates his readership on five steps to upgrade their own *immal* into *hwasul*. The first step, brimming with North Korean ideopolitics, is to “raise one’s level of understanding of political theory” (1981.4 39). The article defends this as the first step by asserting that without an understanding of political theory, an individual is unable to grasp the policies promoted by the Workers’ Party, resulting in hesitation and difficulty when engaging in discussion with others. It also claims that a deficit in political theory knowledge renders one unable to “properly discuss the topic with animated intonation” (1981.4 40). Most importantly, an individual would be unable to adequately discuss Kim Il Sung’s teachings, true revolution, or the people.²⁷ Cho observes that the linguistic demeanor of announcers completely changes when discussing political ideologies; the vocal tone is altered, words are strongly pronounced, and differences in length, pitch, and stress accent important words (209).

²⁷ The other four steps, much less ideopolitically charged, are to 1) accumulate knowledge and life experiences, 2) master the gift of speaking and various groups’ types of speaking, 3) cultivate presentation skills, and 4) refine skills of expression (1981.4 40).

3.5.3 Vocal Timbre and *Soesori* ‘Authoritative Speech’

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp also includes articles that teach readers the type of voice that they should speak in. Kim Il Sung instructs that broadcasts must be done in the voice of the people (1978.4 20). This not only refers to speaking simply enough for one’s comrades to understand, but also means that the intonation of the broadcaster should match intonation from real life situations. Ri Sangbyŏk teaches that this is done by “speaking in a happy voice when delivering welcomed news, and broadcasting with strong emotions, as if truly overcome with rage to punish the enemy when delivering sorrowful news about South Korea” (1978.4 20). Chŏn Miyŏng claims that the topic at hand determines the tone, speed, and type of expressions utilized in *hwasul* to portray a particular emotion. For example, Chŏn reports that announcers discussing Kim Il Sung should 1) speak quickly in order to avoid confusion with reading a poem, 2) make a short pause after each sentence, 3) speak in a higher tone of voice while avoiding the up and down oscillations of the voice, and 4) speak in a solemn voice while smiling only slightly (24)²⁸

Ri Sangbyŏk, in another article titled “*Pangsong sŏnjŏn i soesori ka nadorok*” ‘So as to Make Broadcast Propaganda Sound Authoritative’, instructs announcers to use words that “elevate the spirit of the people and make their energy explode” in order to make speech more revolutionary (1977.3 25). He defines speaking authoritatively (*soesori*, lit.: ‘the sound of steel’) as speaking in a voice that is emphatic, energetic, has a sense of appeal, and rings in the ears of the listeners. He declares that speaking more authoritatively will help bring North Koreans to action (1977.3 25). In order to help everyday North Korean citizens meet these demands to speaker a higher, newer brand of *Munhwaŏ*, Ri gives three guidelines for speaking in an authoritative voice.

²⁸ For the full table on proper *hwasul* when discussing topics such as Kim Il Sung, socialism, enemies to the working class, and feelings of indignation, refer to table in Chŏn Miyŏng (24).

First, speech must resemble *immal* with common everyday words and concise sentences. Familiar words like *kkwak turöch'ada* (jam-packed), *p'al ül ködö ollida* (roll up sleeves), *kölssö taehada* (treat negligently), *umultchumuhada* (dilly-dally), and *irök'ungjörök'ung* (say this and that) should be used (1977.3 25). Ri teaches that sentences should succinctly express 'who', 'what', and 'what happened'.

Second, rhetoric must be employed. Ri claims that repetition can change the average phrase "only struggle can bring victory" to the powerful statement "struggle upon struggle—only struggle can bring victory" (1977.3 25). Rhetorical questions can strengthen a sentence's appeal; for example "Do we not have talents? Do we not have capital? We do. We have plenty" (1977.3 25). Ri asserts that these rhetorical skills increase the persuasiveness of the argument.

Lastly, pronunciation, voice, and inflections in the flow of speech should be used to strengthen speech. Ri states that a person's speech naturally changes when excited; voices rise, syllables are emphasized, and the flow of speech becomes increasingly unbridled (1977.3 26). Similarly, an unexcited individual's voice lowers and becomes tranquil as the pronunciation becomes less emphasized. Ri advocates speaking more excitedly. He invites North Korean citizens to strive to speak so that the first syllable in words becomes more pronounced, the standard tone of one's voice is raised, the rise and fall of speech becomes more distinct, accents become more combative, and vital words are stressed (1977.3 27).²⁹

The skills of *hwasul*, promoted heavily in *Munhwaö Haksüp*, along with guidelines on 'correct' pronunciation (whether actually followed by the people or not as seen in the case of syllable-initial *r*) and instructions for vocal timbre give *Munhwaö* its distinct sound. This sound allows listeners, whether able to understand Korean or not, to be able to identify the language being spoken as *Munhwaö*, the language of North Korea. This recognizability—a necessary

²⁹ For more on the combative sound of North Korean speech, see Lee Hyun Bok (1990).

criteria for successful branding—raises *Munhwaŏ* from the crowds of ‘generic’ language and firmly stamps it as a language distinct and unique.

3.6 Conclusion

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp, an extension of the North Korean government, propagated *Munhwaŏ*, the North Korean brand of Korean language, to North Koreans of all walks of life. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* has enlightened teachers, parents, and students about the long, irreplaceable history *Munhwaŏ* has shared with the Korean people. It has attempted to replace individual’s idiolects with the national brand of language through explicit instruction not only on how to speak properly but also on how to take pride in speaking *Munhwaŏ*. The written material of everyday citizens was stamped with the brand of *Munhwaŏ* as articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* trained them to incorporate the political ideologies of Kim Il Sung’s regime through composing on a level that made everybody equal. Government-sponsored language branding was brought inside the homes of the North Korean people through wide dispersal of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

The quintessential example of language branding in North Korea is *maldadŭmgi*. North Korean linguists have poured massive amounts of time, energy, and money into removing foreign elements from their language in order to protect their language from the perceived attack on its purity from infringing foreign languages. Within ten years of Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’ that laid the foundation for North Korea’s aggressive policies of language branding, five volumes containing a total of 50,000 words to be changed were published. North Korean politicians, linguists, and authors in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* were determined to create a new brand of language that was distinct from Seoul speech and rid of the “flunkeyism of their ancestors” (Kumatani 100).

4. *Munhwaǒ*: Brand Image as Contrasted to South Korea

4.1 Introduction

The Korean people were united together politically from the absorption of Koguryō and Paekche into Silla in the late 7th century until the line of demarcation along the 38th parallel was drawn in 1945. Articles in *Munhwaǒ Haksŭp* even claim that the people shared a common language, culture, and customs for centuries before that. The relatively short period when the two nations have been sequestered from each other is hardly enough time for the two groups to significantly diverge naturally in terms of genetics, customs, or language. A perceived bifurcation of the two groups, however, is absolutely necessary if North Korea is to successfully promote its language brand.

Peterson, in discussing nation branding, elucidates the importance of brand distinction between Coca-Cola and Pepsi. The key to successful branding of these two supranational companies is in differentiating themselves from each other. Peterson states the following:

“Coca-Cola may be the most valuable brand in the world, but it must protect its brand at all times against Pepsi. The difference between them is not the product but the image” (745).

While Coca-Cola and Pepsi both offer extremely similar products, they must vigilantly assert the differences between the images of the two products. In the battle to brand *Munhwaǒ*, North Korea must distinguish its image from that of South Korea.

Similar linguistic jousting was seen between West Germany and East Germany. The “emblematic function” of the language was used to claim the “cultural inheritance of the pre-fascist period” (Stevenson 31). The *Rheinische Post* on October 27th, 1948 declared the following:

“Do we Germans, divided as we are into four zones, still speak the same language? The inhabitants of the western zones will answer this question in the affirmative, as far as they themselves are concerned. But in the Soviet zone words and expressions are being used that we in West Germany do not know and barely understand. They are all the more indicative of the present lifestyle of people in that part of Germany under Russian occupation” (qtd. in Stevenson 30).

The question of *Sprachspaltung* ‘language division’ was, for the most part, discredited by linguists in both East and West Germany, even though public opinion gradually shifted towards acceptance of two separate political states (Stevenson 37). By the 1980s, most German linguistics accepted the view of *plurizentrische Sprachkultur* ‘pluricentric language culture’ as presented by Heinz Kloss and Michael Clyne (Stevenson 41).

Similar to the perceived language disjuncture in post-war Germany, the Koreans—particularly North Korea—more frequently than not, make a point of differentiating between the two in terms of language. Cho et al. claims that North Korea used the South Korean *p’yojunŏ* ‘standard language’ for a time after division, but “needed something to establish the claims to the regime’s legitimacy,” leading the North Korean government to utilize language change between the two nations as a political weapon (96). Han claims that even the naming of the North Korean language as *Munhwaŏ* was to “psychologically discourage North Korean residents from having any sense of ties with or nostalgia for the traditional culture of Korea remaining in the Seoul dialect which had and still has enjoyed prestige over any other dialects in Korea” (qtd. in Kumatani 95).

The strategies of language management between the two nations, with their accompanying political ideologies, are responsible for the linguistic division between the two varieties of Korean. Kumatani notes that “the execution of language policy in North Korea shows a fundamental difference from that in South Korea in that the language policy is conducted on the basis of a centralist, top-down national policy” (Kumatani 97). Sohn declares that North Korea pursues a “*chuch’e*-oriented purification” policy, while South Korea has a more

“laissez-faire policy towards loanwords” (Sohn 101). Another difference heavily marketed by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* is the envisioned speakers for both language variations. While *Munhwaŏ* has been specifically crafted, or rather branded, to be a language for the common worker and the meagre peasant, Seoul speech is reported to be a language suited for the wealthy bourgeoisie and bureaucrats (1974.2 48).

This dissimilarity between the two variants due to loanword management has led Kim Il Sung to declare that “Pyongyang speech of today is, without comparison, superior to Seoul speech” (1971.3 24). Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* lambaste South Korea for allowing foreign languages, particularly English, Japanese, and Chinese, to take over the South Korean lexicon. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* even features articles blaming the bastardization of their language on South Korean president Park Chung Hee. After discussing these types of articles, this thesis will touch briefly articles specifically showing South Korean citizens’ contempt for the loss of their language’s purity, as well as discuss the political double-edged sword of *Munhwaŏ* as North Korea tries to distinguish its language from *Han’gugŏ* while still claiming to pursue peninsular reunification.

4.2 Influx of Loanwords

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp, quoting bits from a broadcaster in Seoul, declares now as the “Age of the Flood of Loanwords” (*oeraeŏ hongsu sidae*) in South Korea—a time when foreign languages are depriving the people of their right to use their own language (1976.4 48). One contributor for *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* declares that South Korea, tainted with foreign languages and thus foreign culture, has become *nam i sanŭn nae nara* ‘my country that someone else lives in’ (1971.3 48). These claims of cultural warfare against South Korea through linguistic bombardment are not made without good reason. As both sources in North Korea and South Korea alike comment—though the authenticity of the South Korean perspective could be questioned since it is all

reported through the politically skewed perspective of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*—this time period marks South Korea’s second cultural colonization (1971.3 48).

The large amount of both foreign words and foreign scripts present in everyday signage throughout South Korea are claimed to disadvantage monolingual speakers of Korean as they walk through the streets of Seoul. Myŏngdong was reported as having 77% of its signage using vocabulary from other languages, and over half of the signs contained writing in either Latin or Japanese script (1974.2 48). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* recounts another report from a Seoul broadcast station two years later that counted 764 signs written in foreign scripts visible in Seoul’s downtown sector and another 304 in Myŏngdong, resulting in 44.3% of the signage accounted for being written in a foreign script (1976.4 48). This broadcast also reports that hardly any pure Korean words were visible on the signage on the streets; instead, almost everything was expressed through some type of loanword. The broadcaster describes in detail the experience of walking down these streets in Seoul.

“Walking around the streets actually causes you to imagine you are traveling to countries all over the world. Signs of places named after foreign cities line the streets, as unintelligible signs of mumbo jumbo cause you to question whether you are in Korea or abroad” (1976.4 48).

The same broadcaster also compared the streets of Seoul to a museum exhibit on foreign words. North Korean journalists in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claim that South Korean president Park Chung Hee is to blame for South Korea’s rampant foreignisms for his petitions inviting the “rotten culture of capitalism and reactionism” into the country (1976.4 48).

Many articles upset with the abolition of Korean words and the Korean script from the public view mention a foreigner who visits Korea and genuinely asks if Korea has its own language (1972.4 46; 1974.2 48; 1969.3 17). This particular example, however, is never accompanied by a citation of the original source and never includes any detail, leading to the

assumption that it is most likely a piece of anecdotal evidence that Korean purists continue to pass along.

As articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* point out, the invasion of loanwords into Korean life does not stop with the view seen on the streets. The majority of items purchased, whether at a small neighborhood store or a larger department store, use loanwords on their packaging. Articles claim that 100% of cigarettes sold in South Korea, for example, contain foreign words on the package and 98% of medicine is called by a foreign name (1974.2 48). Even young children are being bombarded by foreign words as 99% of junk food, particularly children's candies, are not only given a name based on a foreign word, but the packaging is covered in foreign script as well (1974.2 48; 1976.4 48). The unfamiliarity with these foreign-named sweets is reported as causing communication difficulties between parents and their children as the parents do not understand what snack their children are requesting (1974.2 48).

The threat from foreign languages is also being felt in the print and broadcast media. Newspapers, magazines, radio and television programs are all mentioned in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as having fallen victim to the loanword trend (1976.4 48). A normal daily newspaper in South Korea contains an average of 750-1000 foreign words (1974.2 48). The amount of foreign vocabulary used in newspapers stays approximately the same with 830 words per newspaper when reported again in 1976 (1976.4 48). Though most likely not quite as concentrated as a daily newspaper, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that a South Korean weekly newspaper contains an average of 2,538 loanwords made up of 7,614 foreign characters (1976.4 48).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims that broadcast programs in South Korea are also plagued with loanwords—from the titles of the programs to the actual speech of the particular broadcast's announcer (1976.4 48). Two articles report similar statistics regarding the prominence of loanwords in the titles of broadcast programs. The first article, in 1974, reports that 40% of program titles use foreign words and gives 'The Hot Parade Good Morning Show' (*Hŏt p' ŏreidŭ*

kũt moning syo), ‘Debut Stage’ (*Tebwi sũt’ eiji*), ‘Sunday Disk’ (*Sõndei Tisũk’ ũ*), and ‘Concert’ (*K’onsõit’ ũ*) as examples (1974.2 48). The second report, given in 1976 by a Seoul broadcaster, announces that 36.8% of program titles are derived from foreign words, including examples such as ‘Star Show’ (*Sũt’ aa syo*), ‘Champion Scout’ (*Ch’aemp’ iõn sũk’ aut’ ũ*), ‘Quiz’ (*Kwijũ*), ‘New Drama’ (*Sae Tũrama*), ‘Program’ (*P’ũrogũraem*), ‘Hit Parade’ (*Hit’ ũ p’ũreidũ*), and ‘Concert Hall’ (*K’onsõit’ ũ hol*) (1976.4 48). The use of loanwords by the print and broadcast media brings loanwords into direct contact with the people of South Korea, quickly making them a part of the spoken and written language of the people—a sign of the bastardization of Seoul speech to the North Korean audience of *Munhwaõ Haksũp*.

Loanwords truly do make up a large portion of South Korea’s everyday lexicon. A Seoul broadcaster summarizes the linguistic situation in South Korea by stating that a total of “twenty-five languages, with English and Japanese being the most prominent, contribute to our loanwords—a group that occupies 40% of everyday language” (1976.4 48). *Munhwaõ Haksũp* claims that “publications, broadcasts, street names, and even the words people say everyday are almost all spoken or written in Japanese and English” (1971.3 48). Since language is representative of history, culture, tradition, the people, and the nation, North Korea interprets this as full-fledged cultural warfare against the Korean people. One writer in *Munhwaõ Haksũp* surmises that “the reality of the situation in South Korea today is that everything that belongs to our people, including our language, is being trampled on and hence disappearing” (1972.4 46). The attack on the South Korean language and culture is explicitly blamed on three languages and one person.

4.3 The Main Culprits

According to accounts in *Munhwaõ Haksũp*, North Korea watched as South Korea sold out its language to other nations. In particular, *Munhwaõ Haksũp* mentions the removal of

Munhwaŏ from everyday life with the replacement of English, Japanese, and Chinese. Kim Il

Sung states the linguistic shift in South Korea as follows:

“Newspapers now published in south Korea, for instance, use not only words adopted from English and Japanese but also words of Chinese origin at random which even the Chinese themselves do not use. In fact the situation is such that if the words of Chinese, Japanese, and English origin were eliminated from the language used in south Korea, there would be nothing left of our own language except such grammatical particles as *-ŭl* and *-rŭl*. Language is a major indication of national character, and now the speech in south Korea has been bastardized by Western, Japanese and Chinese words to such a degree that it does not sound like our mother tongue and the national characteristics of our language are gradually disappearing. This is a really dangerous situation. If it is left unchecked, our national language will be threatened with the danger of extinction” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 283-284;1972.4 46).

“On top of that, our native language, over half of which has now been replaced with English, Japanese and Sino-Korean, has become contaminated, rendering us unable to understand what is being said” (1974.2 48).

Kim Il Sung is not the only person incited by South Korea selling out its language along with its history and tradition. Many incensed North Koreans also write about the rapid deconstruction of *Munhwaŏ* as it is replaced by English, Japanese, and Chinese.³⁰ Jŏng Yongho states that “the peoples’ healthy linguistic conscious has been paralyzed and instead, usage of English, Japanese and Chinese is considered a sign of sophistication and enlightenment” (1973.4 49). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that these three languages have invaded South Korea through the duplicity of the ‘traitor’ Park Chung Hee. As such, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* elaborates on the main culprits in South Korea’s linguistic bastardization—English, Japanese, Sino-Korean, and Park Chung Hee himself. This thesis will discuss each of these separately.

4.3.1 English

North Korean reports accuse South Korea of fostering political ties with America that have led to a generation that associates English with worldwide culture and status. The influence

³⁰ Kim Il Sung also mentions in his 1966 ‘talk’ the influx of Russian after liberation. He states, however, that this influx was successfully ‘checked’ and as such is not heavily addressed in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

of English in South Korea became pronounced with the involvement of America in post-World War II relations in Korea. According to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, soon after the demarcation of the Korean peninsula, America proclaimed English as the common language³¹ and began informing South Koreans of their language's inferiority (1976.4 48). This claim, continually referred to in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as America's attempt to eradicate the Korean language, is based on a decree made by General MacArthur that stated "for all purposes during the military control, English will be the official language, and in the event of any ambiguity or diversity of interpretation or definition between any English and Korean or Japanese text, the English text shall prevail" (qtd. in King "Language, Politics, and Ideology" 112). Although North Korea claims that this was an attempt to obliterate the Korean language, King states that for all intents and purposes, Korean was still the official language.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp uses anecdotal evidence to demonstrate how English and, more importantly, the assumed status of sophistication attached to it, has changed the younger generation's way of thinking. One story, originally published in *Ch'ŏngmaek* in 1966 introduces a twenty-year-old girl who studied abroad for three years and then returned to Korea claiming that she had completely forgotten Korean (1972.4 46). The article describes how she insisted on speaking in English, including a specific situation where she argues in English with an airport employee. Kim Punghwan comments that not even a complete idiot could forget her own language in three years; the girl is simply feigning ignorance in order to have an excuse to associate herself with the status of English (1972.4 46). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims the new social ranking associated with English education in South Korea is encouraging the younger generation

³¹ The push to add English as an official language in South Korea is still present today. In an extreme case, Pok Koil, a South Korean novelist, claimed in 1998 that the Korean language should be placed in museum and English, with its strong international business abilities, should be named the sole official language of South Korea (Yim 41).

to forgo their language and heritage—a stark difference from North Koreans who are striving to preserve and promote *Munhwa*ǒ.

In a similar situation, two students were seen greeting each other in English at Kimp’o airport. One yelled out ‘Mister Lee’ while the other one responded ‘Maria Lee!’ and the two continued to chat in English (1974.2 48). The absence of any Korean language from their speech prompted onlookers to question if the two were even Korean. *Munhwa*ǒ *Haksŭp* defines these types of people as *oerae*ǒ *mōtchaengi* ‘trendy loanword users’ who think speaking in foreign languages is vogue, cool, and sophisticated (1974.2 48). These types of people insist on using *hello* ‘hello’, *misŭt’ō* ‘mister’, and *t’aengk’yu* ‘thank you’ in place of their Korean counterparts. Kim Punghwan even claims that Park Chung Hee’s puppet regime and the bourgeoisie are pressuring people to use *ppai* ‘bye’, *moning* ‘morning’, and *misŭt’ō* ‘mister’ as greetings.

As English loanwords began invading South Korea, so did English calques. *Munhwa*ǒ *Haksŭp* reports that oppressive governmental organizations named after their Western counterparts began using English acronyms; among these are *emp’i* ‘M.P.’, *ssiassi* ‘C.I.C.’, and *ssiaidi* ‘C.I.D.’ (1972.4 46). More commonly seen in everyday speech are English words that are transcribed into Korean and then adorned with *hada* ‘do’, such as *k’omik’ŭhan* ‘comical’ instead of *usŭpkangsŭrōun* and *p’aradoksik’arhan* ‘paradoxical’ in place of *yōksōlchōgin* (1972.4 46; 1969.3 17).

*Munhwa*ǒ *Haksŭp* reports that English vocabulary has begun replacing traditional *Munhwa*ǒ words. Even with its “ability to freely express tens of thousands of colors,” *Munhwa*ǒ color words like *punhongsae*k ‘pink’, *p’ulsaek* ‘green’, *hanŭlsaek* ‘blue’, and *chinhan hanŭlsaek* ‘dark blue’ began to be replaced by English color words like *p’ing’ŭ*, *kŭrin*, *pullyu*, and *rak’ŭ* *pullyu* (1972.4 47). Expressions for clothing began to become more Americanized as *t’ong chobŭn paji* (lit., narrow-legged pants) and *tchalbŭn ch’ima* (lit., short skirt) were replaced with ‘slacks’ (*sŭllaeksŭ*) and ‘mini skirt’ (*mini sŭk’adŭ*) respectfully. North Koreans, who are very

proud of the natural ‘abundance of expressions’ of the Korean language, express their distaste with South Korea’s adulterations of the language in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp informs its readers that new expressions are not limited to speech, but can be seen throughout South Korean streets, villages, stores, and restaurants (1972.4 47). The amount of English displayed throughout the city makes it difficult for non-English speakers to walk the streets (1973.4 49). One author expresses that the streets of Seoul are like “some back alleyway in Chicago” (1974.2 48). This is heightened by the fact that stores, theaters, schools, and the merchandise therein are named in English (1969.3 17). This almost systematic removal of Korean from the public sphere in South Korea provokes the *Munhwaŏ* vigilantes, inciting more passionately written articles.

Many of the articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* that discuss the degeneracy of English claim that America is converting the people of South Korea into their ‘colonial slaves’ (1972.4 47; 1973.4 48). The most representative feature of this colonial imprisonment is the destruction of *Munhwaŏ* through the steady influx of English (1972.4 47). With English increasingly becoming a political, social, and economic commodity, it is reportedly becoming more difficult to survive in South Korea without buying into this system. By 1973, there are reports that English has become a prerequisite for most jobs, making it “nearly impossible to find employment without a knowledge of English” (1973.4 49).

Phillipson calls English the “Tyrannosaurus Rex” of languages—a language that “gobbles up others and eliminates local cultural practices...and flourishes on the graveyard of other peoples’ languages” (qtd. in Yim 42-43). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* describes a situation in South Korea where English is destroying the essence of the Korean people and their traditions by destroying the Korean language. Authors in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claim that the South Korean brand of language is being contaminated in every aspect—a stark contrast to the image of *Munhwaŏ*’s ‘purity’.

4.3.2 Japanese

The invasion of English and American culture into South Korea opened the doors for Japanese and Japanese culture to do the same. Though relations with Japan were severed with the expulsion of the Japanese at the end of World War II, South Korea normalized diplomatic relations with Japan again in the 1960s after much urging by the United States (Oda 35; Mobius 244). Japanese imperialism, this time through the medium of culture, regained its foothold in South Korea. A North Korean author recounts the more recent attack by Japan and the United States' shameful role in further desecrating the Korean Language as follows:

“The Japanese military bastards, revived by the American imperial bastards—the leader of imperial nations and enemy who has spilt the blood of our people—are now running amuck trying to realize their former dream of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere; they are now, more than any other time, strengthening their cultural, military, economical, and political attacks on South Korea” (1971.3 47).

After expelling the Japanese at the close of WWII, South Korea opened its borders up again to the invasion of the Japanese—this time by means of language, culture, and economy—with the signing of the Korea-Japan Treaty on Basic Relations (*hanil kibon choyak*) (1972.4 47).³² Kim Punghwan claims that through overloading South Korea with its influence, Japan is “repeating the crimes of its past” (1972.4 47).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp reports that vestiges of Japanese language and culture from the colonial period are experiencing a revival in South Korea. Bureaucratic officials who refer to each other as *kin sang* ‘Mr. Kim’, *pok sang* ‘Mr. Pak’, and *sai sang* ‘Mr. Ch’oe’ are called “pro-Japanese mutts” by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* for not only using the Japanese term *sang* ‘mister’ instead of Korean *ssi* but also for following the Japanese pronunciation of common Korean surnames (1972.4 47; 1971.3 48). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that Japanese versions of Buddhism, such as Tenri-kyo and Soka Gakkai have become mainstream. Reports say that South Koreans now

³² Mobius notes, however, the extreme opposition that many South Koreans also had in regards to the signing of this treaty and the normalization of diplomatic relations with Japan (241).

venerate Kamidana, a typical Shinto shrine, bow towards Japan in the East, and memorize sutras in Japanese (1971.3 48).

In addition to the still surviving remains of Japanese language and culture in Korea, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims the South Korean government is pumping money and energy into repopularizing Japanese language education. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that Park Chung Hee established Japanese language schools around the country after legalizing and regularizing Japanese language education (1972.4 47). In 1971, a prominent sign was erected in Seoul that declared that at least twenty Japanese language academies exist in Seoul alone (1971.3 47). That number reportedly increased to 350 by 1974 (1974.2 48). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* insists that not only private institutions were promoting Japanese language education. Articles claim that universities started developing Japanese language curriculums and pressuring students to enroll (1971.3 47). The Japanese Foreign Minister was even quoted as saying that it is “regretful” that there are Koreans who cannot speak Japanese (1971.3 47); according to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, these efforts to promote Japanese language education continued to infect Seoul speech with Japanese characteristics.

Contemporary research shows that Japanese language education “disappeared without a trace” from South Korea after liberation until the creation of a Japanese Language Department at *Han’guk oedaeŏ taehak* ‘Hankuk University of Foreign Studies’ in 1961 (Hong 245). Twelve years later a Japanese Language Education Department was established at *Kyemyŏng taehak* ‘Keimyung University’ and Japanese was introduced as a second language in high schools (Hong 245). The high school curriculum was centered around one government designated Japanese language textbook until 1982 when the government expanded to produce five separate textbooks for teaching Japanese in high schools (Im 441). According to Im, these textbooks contained lessons with basic vocabulary, as well as many literary features such as poems (such as Japanese-style Haiku), stories, proverbs, and personal essays. These lessons do not seem to be heavily

pro-Japanese as Im even quotes a (Japanese-style) poem about the *taegŭkki* ‘Korean flag’ (445-446). These examples of Japanese language education, however, are interpreted as treason and betrayal of the Korean people by authors in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

Japanese language education aside, the cultural invasion of Japan is claimed to be felt on the streets of Seoul. Another author claims that walking along the streets of Seoul causes one to mistakenly believe that one is walking through the city streets of Japan since the “signs and advertisements on every street and alley almost all use Japanese loanwords or are mixed with the Japanese script” (1974.2 48; 1971.3 47). Kim Punghwan’s claims that, apart from the signs, the streets are crowded with Koreans following Japanese fashion trends and social customs (1972.4 47). Passersby are seen communicating to one another in Japanese and popular Japanese music is heard in the streets (1971.3 48).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp shows how food words like *nambiguksu* ‘lit., pot noodles’ *kimbap* ‘sushi rolls’, and *saengsŏnhoe* ‘sashimi’ are being replaced by the Japanese words *nabeudong*, *makkisŭsi*, and *sasimi* respectively (1972.4 47). Likewise, *sonmok sigye* ‘wrist watch’ and *kudusul* ‘shoehorn’ are now commonly referred to by Japanese terms—*udemakki* and *kutchŭhaera*. Books and brand names of foods are now easily found in Japanese (1971.3 48). *Pakkuŏt’ada* ‘change trains’ has become *norigaehada* and *ch’a rŭl ttara apsŏnda* ‘pass up a car’ is now *oikkosihada* (1972.4 47). The amount of Sino-Japanese words adopted into Korea, like *taemaech’ul* ‘great sale’ and *ripkyŏnsŏk* ‘standing-room’ has increased dramatically (1969.3 17). When discussing the infiltration of Japanese influence into Seoul speech and culture, contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* reaffirm the purity of *Munhwaŏ*—a language, they claim, that is quite unlike the ‘hodgepodge language’ of the south.

The following incidents demonstrate the disdain with which *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*’s contributors view the pro-Japanese policies of South Korea. In one story, originally published in *Ch’ŏngmaek* in 1966, a young girl approaches a stranger’s house and explains, in Japanese, that

she has some extra make-up for sale. She says she is Korean-Japanese but claims to not speak any Korean. Enraged to hear this this, the tenants began hitting the girl, to which the girl replies, in fluent Korean, “You could have just not bought it; why are you hitting me” (1972.4 47).

Other anecdotes describing the disparity of the linguistic situations in Korea focus on the actions of South Korean prime ministers when visiting Japan. At the 1973 Korea-Japan Ministerial Meeting, Chung Il Kwon, the previous prime minister of South Korea, reportedly addressed the joint governments in Korean for only one minute before switching over to Japanese (1974.2 48). On November 2nd, 1973, Kim Jong Pil, then the Prime Minister of South Korea, met with Kakuei Tanaka, the Japanese prime minister, and allegedly spoke only Japanese the entire time (1974.2 48). These incidents are reminiscent of an account in the *Koryōsa* ‘The History of Koryō’ where the Korean prime minister converses with the Mongol envoy without his translator, much to the disapproval of the Korean people (Yi Minhong 110). *Munhwaō Haksūp* author Kim Punghwan expresses that hearing of this type of flunkeyism at the expense of one’s own language and people makes his “blood shoot backwards” (1974.2 48).

Tempers flared as well when Japanese restaurants in Seoul, originally titled as *waesik ryori*, were suddenly changed to say *ilbonsik ryori*³³ the day before Eisaku Sato, the Prime Minister of Japan, came to visit (1971.3 47). Commenting that even just the fact that there were Japanese restaurants on Seoul is offensive enough, a writer for *Munhwaō Haksūp* expresses his anger that these restaurants are used as a means to impress the Japanese official. Furthermore, the impetus behind this movement was none other than Park Chung Hee; *Munhwaō Haksūp* reports that the South Korean dictator sent out his police forces to enforce the alteration of all these signs before Prime Minister Sato arrived (1971.3 47).

³³ Though both words literally mean ‘Japanese cooking’, the phrase *ilbon* is much more complimentary towards Japan, while *wae* is more disparaging.

Vehemently opposed to the idea of normalizing relations with Japan, North Korea expresses its disgust with the current state of language and culture in South Korea through articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. To North Korea, the colonial period represents thirty-six years of Japan's most heinous and unforgettable crimes, among which were attempts to exterminate the Korean language and the Korean identity (1971.3 48). After expelling the Japanese language from the Korean peninsula after WWII, South Korea's decision to readily invite the Japanese, their language, and their culture back into the country, represents a considerable dissimilarity between the two countries—and thus the image of the two brands of language—that is heavily asserted by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

4.3.3 Sino-Korean

Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* maintain that, although Sino-Korean has always had a strong presence in Korea, the influx of both English and Japanese promoted a resurgence of Sino-Korean in South Korea. Kim Punghwan claims that the anti-Korean language policies promoted by both the United States and Japan “advocate Sino-Korean while detesting Korean” (1972.4 48). Kim names Sino-Korean as the third biggest foreign influence polluting Seoul speech after English and Japanese (1972.4 48).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims that one of the main causes of increased usage of Chinese-based words is the fallacious belief that the use of Sino-Korean words is a sign of sophistication. Furthermore, the ability to use Sino-Korean words that other people do not know is reportedly highly prized in South Korea, leading speakers to strive to speak more ostentatiously—an appalling characteristic North Korean language policy has focused on removing from *Munhwaŏ* (1972.4 48). South Koreans have taken their knowledge of Chinese characters and created their own new lexical items, many of which are unfamiliar and thus unintelligible to North Korea. The meanings of Sino-Korean phrases such as *wijanghyŏng kajok* (胃腸型家族; lit., ‘stomach

family’) and *chidang kyosu* (至當教授; lit., ‘quite right professor’) are lost on Ch’oe Wanho (1969.3 17), and indeed, cannot be identified in the South Korean *Pyojunŏ tae sajŏn* (Unabridged Standard Dictionary) either. Other new applications for Chinese characters in South Korea include their calquing with English. New lexical items such as OLF外資 (OLF *oeja*; ‘OLF foreign funds’) and KBS盃 (KBS *bae*; ‘the KBS Cup’) are reported as part of the new language of South Korea (1969.3 17).

Much of the Sino-Korean used in South Korea, notes Kim Punghwan, isn’t even used in China today;³⁴ the Sino-Korean terms are either remnants of ancient Chinese or terms that have been created by the Japanese or South Koreans themselves (1972.4 48). He points out *sŏllyang* (elected member of the National Assembly), *kongch’ŏng* (candidate nominated by political party or organization), *chŏngch’i p’ungt’o* (political climate), *3-segungmin* (third generation citizen),³⁵ and *che-2-kyŏngje* (second economy)³⁶ as some of these words whimsically made and promoted by South Koreans (1972.4 48). Other words include *ŭmho* (secretly cover up wrongdoings) and *ryunhwa* (flower run over by a car wheel) (1969.3 17).

North Korean linguists disapprove of the lack of governmental control over Sino-Korean; indeed, the manner in which anybody in South Korea can create Sino-Korean words is recognized as an imperfection in the South Korean system (1969.3 17). In addition to these words, Kim Punghwan attacks South Korea for using Sino-Korean words in situations where perfectly good native Korean words would do just as well: *pulmisŭrŏpta* ‘ugly’ for *arŭmdapchi*

³⁴ This argument, however, is irrelevant. First, many of these terms originated in Japan and *have never* been used in China. Second, though North Korea considers all linguistic elements with any connection to China to be alien and otherized, this is not the point; indeed, Chinese root, more than providing something ‘Chinese’, simply provide useful word formation components (Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 255).

³⁵ Defined in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as *sae sedae* ‘new generation’.

³⁶ Defined in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as *inmindŭl ŭi chŏngshinjŏk myŏnmo* ‘spiritual aspect of the people’).

mot hada, rogosŭrŏpta ‘hard and laborious’ for *himdŭlgo koerŏpta, roeu* ‘thunderstorm’ for *uroe wa pi, kogaek* ‘customer’ for *sonnim* (1972.4 48).

In his 1966 ‘talk’ Kim Il Sung blames the toadyism of the feudalist period for the massive influx of Sino-Korean vocabulary (1972.4 48). He also states in his 1964 ‘talk’ that a fair amount of loanwords that have entered *Munhwaŏ* will be tolerated (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 7-8). However, the appropriation of one’s language, culture, and traditions at the hands of Chinese, Japanese, and English—such as has happened in South Korea according to articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*—is not to be tolerated in North Korea. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* brands *Munhwaŏ* as the Korean language’s last sanctuary of purity, a sharp contrast to the rapidly deteriorating variation of Korean promoted in the south.

4.3.4 Park Chung Hee

Park Chung Hee is commonly blamed in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* for allowing the South Korean language to be adulterated with foreign influences. Through pro-American and pro-Japanese policies, Park Chung Hee has opened South Korea up to a foreign invasion of culture and language.

In the pages of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, Park Chung Hee³⁷ is set up as a foil to Kim Il Sung. The notorious cult of personality amassed by Kim Il Sung in North Korea is quite evident in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. Myers claims the origin of Kim Il Sung’s cult of personality in the following manner:

“A personality cult comes into being when a one-man dictatorship presents itself as a democracy. The goal is to convey the impression that due to the ruler’s unique qualifications and the unanimity of the people’s love for him, his rule constitutes the perfect fulfillment of democratic ideals...the North Korean cult derives Kim’s [greatness]

³⁷ As the President of South Korea from 1961-1979, Park Chung Hee was the representative figure of South Korea and, by default, Seoul speech during the development of North Korea’s language policies (1964 and 1966 ‘talks’) and for most of the time period focused on in this thesis.

from his embodiment of ethnic virtues: he is the most naïve, spontaneous, loving, and pure Korean—the most Korean Korean—who ever lived” (98).

As such, nearly every mention of his name requires some type of adulatory lead-in phrase that enumerates his accomplishments. Phrases such as “the mastermind of the revolution and great theorist” (1975.1 4), “the Parent who worries about advancing the *chuch’e* of our language” (1975.4 5), and “the Parent who guides us by the hand and warmly looks after us with love like that of our own parent” (1977.2 11) are all used to introduce Kim Il sung before mentioning his name or specific titles such as ‘the Great Leader’ or ‘the Parent Leader’. These types of phrases tout Kim Il Sung’s accomplishments and demigod-like personal characteristics, setting him up as the exemplar hero of the Korean people. Park Chung Hee, on the other hand, is fashioned as the archetypal villain.

Just as Kim Il Sung’s name is adorned with accolades, the mention of Park Chung Hee in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* is always prefaced with a recounting of his crimes. He is described as a “traitor” (1976.4 48), the man who “recklessly brings in the culture of reactionary capitalism” (1976.4 48), a man “accustomed to wielding a sword” (1969.3 18), and a man who “pulls the wool over people’s eyes through falsehoods and deception” (1976.4 47). One article details the loathing the people have for the traitor Park Chung Hee (1971.3 48). Yet another article describes him as “the scum of the earth and a lunatic” (1977.1 47).

Park Chung Hee’s pro-American policies seed distrust and vexation among the contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*. One article calls him the “Americans’ dog” (1969.3 17), while another article refers to him as the “Americans’ faithful lackey” who has lead his group of puppets to idolize America (1972.4 46). He is a co-conspirator in a plan with the United States and Japan, according to one article in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, to eradicate the Korean language (1974.2 48). Park Chung Hee’s relationship with the United States is interpreted by authors in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as selling out Korean culture, history, and the Korean people. One author even

accuses him of “rationalizing the right-wing policy of colonial enslavement” and encouraging the Korean people to abandon their customs and language in order to avoid war (1969.3 18).

Park Chung Hee is also attacked by North Korean journalists due to his relations with Japan. He is accused of actively inviting Japanese people, Japanese culture, and Japanese language into Korea through the signing of the *Hanil kibon choyak* ‘Korea-Japan Treaty on Basic Relations’ (1971.3 48; 1972.4 47) One article describes him as both a “hunting dog trained by the Japanese” and a “disheveled dog” (1971.3 47-48) while another article calls him the “faithful dog to the Japanese” (1971.3 47). He is recorded as actively assisting the Japanese in spreading the Japanese language across South Korea (1971.3 47). His efforts to promote the reintroduction of the Japanese language into the South Korean curriculum incite reports claiming his policies are anti-Korean (1972.4 47). He is described as always promoting the “brotherly relationship” between the two “allied nations” of South Korea and Japan while scorning North Korea (1971.3 47). His actions to enforce more Japanese-friendly signage at Japanese restaurants are regarded by critics in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as an “unforgivable crime against his own people” (1971.3 47).

One new expression in South Korean is even blamed on Park Chung Hee. According to sources, the time-old salutation of *annyŏnghasimnikka* ‘hello’ (lit., ‘Are you at peace?’) has recently been replaced in South Korea with the expression *pyŏlgo ŏpsŭsyŏssŭmnikka* (lit., ‘Have you been free of big mishaps?’) (1978.3 48). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* reports that the phrase has changed to match the political climate of the day. The instability of South Korea under Park Chung Hee has made the people apprehensive, for “people you met yesterday are arrested today and people you met this morning go missing that night” (1978.3 48). The author blames the dangerous climate of South Korea, along with the fear-driven creation of this new salutation, on Park Chung Hee and his puppet regime.

Just as Kim Il Sung and the Korean alphabet are used as symbols of *Munhwaŏ*, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* capitalizes on Park Chung Hee’s perceived anti-Korean policies and constructs him as an

enemy of the Korean people and *Munhwaŏ*. Through *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, he becomes the face of everything that is wrong about South Korea, with particular emphasis on his active role in overthrowing the Korean language.

4.4 South Koreans Speak Out

As *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* is quick to point out, not all South Koreans are tricked by the deceptions of Park Chung Hee. The commoners in South Korea, like that in North Korea, value the purity of the Korean language and denounce Park Chung Hee, his puppet regime, and the bourgeoisie for polluting their language with English, Japanese, and Sino-Korean.

Article in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* report on various emotions that South Koreans have at the loss of their language, the ones highlighted here being remorse, distrust, and resentment towards Park Chung Hee and his government. These South Koreans are outraged with the desecration of their language and demand for action to be taken to cultivate a language more representative of the Korean people. In short, South Koreans are searching for a language like *Munhwaŏ*.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp summarizes an article that was originally printed in *Ch'ŏngmaek* in 1964 that sums up the remorse that South Koreans feel at the loss of their own culture and language—their distinguishing trait as a people (1969.3 18). One writer claims that “it has been a long time since we have had anything that is truly ours...our government, our economy, our culture, our art...” Another South Korean reports that his country had become a country where “you have to know how to pass on bits of English vocabulary in order to be cultured” (1969.3 18). The report further relates that due to linguistic change, South Korea has deteriorated from “my country that I live in” to “my country that others live in.” Still another South Korean referred to in this article expresses similar frustration when stating the following:

“This land is [our] land, but why does it feel like it belongs to a stranger? Is the language we use truly our native tongue? In this place swarming with English, French, and other foreign languages, our language is becoming somewhat unfamiliar” (1969.3 18).

Echoing the statements of remorse by others, yet another South Korean claims that they cannot “stand to watch as their language as the spirit of our people is crushed by loanwords” (1974.2 48). Indeed, these articles are dripping with remorse for the loss of something that brands Koreans as unique.

Excerpts in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* from a Seoul broadcast showcase another emotion that some South Koreans have in common with North Korea—distrust towards the South Korean government. This broadcast attacks the government’s feigned attempts at promoting Korean through the *kugŏ sunhwa undong* ‘Korean language purification campaigns’ while still allowing English and Japanese to infiltrate all aspects of South Korean life (1976.4 47). According to the report, this is an insult to the citizens of Korea. The report relates that the South Korean government claims to be purifying the language but still insists on holding all international meetings in either Japanese or English; the government claims to be promoting usage of the Korean language but is still pleased that English and Japanese are used in South Koreans’ everyday life (1976.4 47). The announcer in the Seoul broadcast uses this information to ascertain that “the people are not included in Park Chung Hee’s party’s plan for language purification (1976.4 48). Distrust in the South Korean government causes another contributor to assume that the sick state of language in South Korea reveals Park Chung Hee’s strong pro-American, pro-Japanese policies (1974.2 48).

South Korean citizens are also reported as expressing resentment towards those seen responsible for the contamination of the Korean language. One newspaper challenges the popular belief that American cultural is superior by saying that “American society, with its death and corruption, its gold and gangs, is a society of delinquency” (1969.3 18). Another writer insists that the only way to reclaim the language is to “drive out the American invaders and overthrow the traitor Park Chung Hee and his regime” (1976.4 48). The following snippet from a

South Korean newspaper shows some of the resentful sentiments of South Koreans towards the influx of foreign languages:

“Why are you selling our language? Our language is easy to speak and our script is easy to write, so why use a foreign language that we don’t understand? The people, unable to read the newspaper or understand broadcasts, are frustrated beyond measure” (1974.2 48).

Another incited Seoul citizen expresses frustration that foreign scripts are overtaking the Korean script in the public sphere. He argues that there is “no reason to use difficult Chinese characters—the script of someone else—instead of our own simple script” (1969.3 18).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp demonstrates that the South Korean people oppose the linguistic policies of Park Chung Hee, the bureaucrats, and the bourgeoisie for the simple reason that the common person struggles to understand their own nation’s print and broadcast media.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims that feelings of remorse, distrust, and resentment have compelled some South Koreans to take action. Individuals, school groups, and journalists are reported as taking a stand against the government policies of promoting foreign languages at the expense of their own ethnic language. *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that the calls from the South Korean people to throw off English, Japanese, and Chinese has been growing stronger day by day (1974.2 48). A broadcast in Seoul states that they, as a nation, needed to “get rid of these dizzying loanwords and regain their own language” (1976.4 48).

This message of linguistic insurgence aroused some South Korean students to take action. Students in Cheju University reacted to Park Chung Hee’s ‘declaration of Japanese as a second language’³⁸ by stating that they cannot learn Japanese and refusing to attend Japanese language classes (1974.2 48). Students in one high school in Seoul took a stand against state-sponsored, pro-foreign language policies by committing to use their own language as much as possible

³⁸ South Korea never declared Japanese as an official second language. These claims could be an exaggeration of the reintroduction of Japanese language education as a second language in high schools in 1973 (Hong 245).

(1973.4 37). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* reports that their efforts received much support from other schools and organizations in Seoul. Even young students are reportedly protesting against the branding of snacks in foreign languages by refusing to buy or eat snacks with foreign branding (1974.2 48).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp portrays the ideals of an average South Korean citizen as not too different from that of North Koreans. In fact, one collaborator for *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* states that “the majority of people in South Korea, excluding landowners, comprador capitalists, and reactionary bureaucrats, love the people and their homeland and hold feelings of patriotism” (1971.3 48). As such, South Koreans are pitted against Park Chung Hee for the damage he has done to their language and their people. They are reported to hold in high regard the strict, purification policies enforced in North Korea. In short, articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* portray an image of the South Korean people desperately wanting a language like *Munhwaŏ*.

4.5 Reunification

While lambasting Park Chung Hee and differentiating between the two countries’ images in order to promote the North Korean brand of language, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* still manages to vocalize North Korea’s hopes for reunification. Kim Il Sung indirectly addresses reunification in his 1964 ‘talk with linguists’ when defending his reasons for refusing to make orthographic reforms part and parcel of *Munhwaŏ*, stating that “the question of fixing the form of words will have to be settled after the reunification of north and south” (Kim Il Sung “Selecte” 10).³⁹

Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* also set their sights on reunification.

³⁹ Kim Il Sung’s ‘talks’, however, does not condone the linguistic trends of the South. Stating that “even if it is only North Korean,” the language must go through language reforms “before it gets too late” (Ch’oe Yonggi 201). In effect, North Korea promotes advancing *Munhwaŏ* while still keeping an eye on the linguistic trends of South Korea in order to avoid complete divergence.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp frequently blames the political division of Korea on foreign nations and equates quick reunification with the expulsion of these foreign influences. Kim Il Sung claims removal of Japanese influences will expedite reunification when he states the following.

“In the people of South Korea’s battle for ethnic independence and unification of our country, it is necessary to crush the invasive influence of the Japanese militarist” (1971.3 48).

Similarly, Kim Punghwan claims that the quick way to reunification lies in “expelling the Americans and saving our language—a language, in South Korea, that is quickly becoming jumbled” (1972.4 48). Ch’oe Wanho insists that in order to reunify, South Korea must first drive out the Americans and then follow the linguistic policies embodied in *Munhwaŏ* (1969.3 18). He also underlines the role of *Munhwaŏ* in reunification and states “our *Munhwaŏ*, centered on Pyongyang speech and developed through principles of *chuch’e*, is the only capital we have for advancing the reunification of Korea” (1969.3 18).

Kim Chin-wu claims that while North Korea established both anti-South Korean military and political strategies, they never created anti-South Korean language policies (“Linguistics and Language Policies” 165). Major linguistic reforms were rejected and Chinese characters were taught in order to maintain relative linguistic consistency across the peninsula (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 10; Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 254).⁴⁰

Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* elaborate on measures the two nations can take to achieve greater linguistic uniformity prior to reunification. Though these articles mainly focus on ‘elevating’ the South Korean variety to the standards of *Munhwaŏ*, the goal of reunification is still clear. Ryu Ryŏl claims that linguistic collaboration and exchange of linguistic research will help save South Korea from its deplorable linguistic situation (1981.1 7). Ryu advocates setting

⁴⁰ Kim Chin-wu notes that North Korea’s inclusion of Chinese character education in their official policy—all-be-it ‘reluctant’—along with the justification to include English education for the same reasons, could be “an admission and excuse for the failure of the policy of exclusive use of the Korean script” in North Korea (“Divergence” 254).

new language standards to bridge the gap made by political division, including provisions on pronunciation, spelling, and spacing (1981.1 7). He also promotes collectively pursuing the removal of Chinese characters and producing a new, unified dictionary and grammar books. Ch'oe Chŏnghu advocates modeling proper *Munhwaŏ* to the south in order to motivate South Korea to drive out foreign influences and take control of their language (1974.1 46).

Cho et al. states that one of the formidable obstacles blocking reunification is the reflection of political ideas in the language (106). Words that have been used uniformly for centuries have been changed by the influences of communism, socialism, democracy, and capitalism to represent separate things. Words such as *kyosi* (from 'teaching' to 'teaching by the Great Leader Kim Il Sung concerning revolution and construction') and *tongmu* (from 'friend' to 'person fighting together in the ranks of the revolution in order to accomplish the revolutionary achievements of the working class') have been redefined based on the socialist ideologies of North Korea (Cho et al. 106). Yi Uyŏng claims that subtle alterations of basic phrases cause communication difficulties between the two nations. For example, the phrase *il ŏpta* 'no need' has a negative meaning in South Korea but a positive meaning in North Korea (2).

North Korea's claims at working towards linguistic unification, however, contain some contradictions. Ch'oe Yonggi states that "while expressing longing for the future unified ethnic nation [of Korea], they establish *Munhwaŏ*—a language standard only for North Korea—and attempt to assert the linguistic divergence between North and South Korea" (210).

Munhwaŏ Haksŏp voices viewpoints from North Korean writers that both mock the macaronic language that is becoming rampant in South Korea and express a sincere desire for national and linguistic reunification. The linguistic variations between the two languages, causing both sides anxiety already, is bound to be an obstacle come reunification. The complex topic of reunification will be revisited again in the conclusion of this thesis.

4.6 Conclusion

Kim Il Sung's 'talks with linguists' laid the foundation of North Korea's language branding. In the 1964 'talk', Kim Il Sung demands that the North Korean brand of language be distinct from all others—especially from the type of Korean represented by Seoul speech. *Munhwaŏ*'s claims the status of pure(r) Korean became one of North Korea's most heavily used marketing angles.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp consistently relates to its readership that South Korea has succumbed to the foreign influences of three countries: the United States, Japan, and China. While mostly promoted in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as invasions by English, Japanese, and Sino-Korean wordage, the foreign influences from these three countries are shown as infringing upon all facets of South Korean life. From signage to snack food packaging, popular songs to intensified foreign language instruction, South Korea's native language is reportedly being boxed out of the public sphere.

Some South Koreans lament the contamination of their language; others express distrust and resentment towards Park Chung Hee, America, and Japan. Steps toward reunifying the two nations—or steps toward reuniting the South Korean common working masses with their *true* native language, *Munhwaŏ*—are outlined in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as beginning with linguistic collaboration between the two nations. Articles lambasting Park Chung Hee and praising Kim Il Sung lay the foundation for an archetypal good-versus-evil linguistic battle on the Korean peninsula.

Like Coke and Pepsi, the two linguistic products of North and South Korea are relatively similar. However, in order to promote the brand equity of *Munhwaŏ*, North Korea asserted two very separate linguistic images—North Korea as the last bastion of unadulterated, pure Korean and South Korea as a linguistic hodgepodge overrun by foreign influences. This image of

Munhwaŏ is not only used by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* to distinguish between the two varieties, but to prove the *ususŏng*, both linguistically and otherwise, of *Munhwaŏ*.

5. *Munhwaŏ*: The Superior Language

5.1 Introduction

Successfully branding a product is more than just convincing the consumer that the product is good—it is convincing the consumer that the product is the *best* of its kind. Morgan and Pritchard state the following:

“Brand advantage is secured through communication which highlights the specific benefits of a product, culminating in an overall impression of a superior brand. The image the product creates in the consumer’s mind, how it is *positioned*, however, is of more importance to its ultimate success than its actual characteristics” (12).

North Korea uses *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as a tool to ‘position’ the place of *Munhwaŏ* in the minds of rank-and-file North Koreans. In addition to differentiating between the variety of Korean spoken in Seoul and promoted in South Korea, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* asserts *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng* in comparison to all other languages in the world.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp contains three types of articles that declare *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng* as compared to other languages. The first type come from a small but reoccurring feature called *Kukche sosik* ‘International Updates’ that gives tidbits of linguistic news from around the world. These tidbits mainly discuss literacy movements in underdeveloped countries, but also contain other interesting snippets of news touting the excellence of both Kim Il Sung and *Munhwaŏ*. As the International Updates feature slowly fades out near the end of the 1970s, a new feature titled *Segye ŏnŏ chisik* ‘Knowledge of World Languages’ emerges. This feature tackles one basic linguistic question at a time, such as the origin of language, or discusses characteristics of languages used in a particular region and uses the information to demonstrate the *usu*-nature of *Munhwaŏ* as compared to other languages.

The last type of feature is based on a crucial quote from Kim Il Sung stating the reasons why *Munhwaŏ* is a ‘good language’. Portions of this quote show up in every issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, accompanied by another writer’s interpretation on how a specific trait demonstrates

Munhwaŏ's superiority. Even though another nation, language, or people might not always be mentioned explicitly in these types of articles, the natural pragmatic function of this *ususŏng* discourse demands that there is something or someone to be compared to. Hence, when the writers of these articles declare, explicitly, the *ususŏng* and excellence of *Munhwaŏ*, they are, implicitly, diminishing another group or groups' status at the same time. All three of these types of articles promote the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ*, thereby promoting the North Korea-branded version of the Korean language as 'the best' in the world.

5.2 'International Updates'

The feature 'International Updates' reports frequently on the movement to eradicate illiteracy in underdeveloped nations. Throughout the years, the feature details the literacy movement in Laos and Algeria (1974.2 32), Ethiopia and Somalia (1977.1 44), Rwanda, Kuwait, and Iraq (1977.3 48), India and Vietnam (1977.4 44), Mozambique and India (1978.3 45), and Sierra Leone, Libya, Tanzania, and Senegal (1980.1 45), generally including statistics as to how many people are illiterate and how many have 'escaped illiteracy' due to recent efforts by the local government.⁴¹ Series of updates for the same country show progress; Tanzania, who was reported as merely holding a *chŏn'guk t'oronhoe* 'nation-wide forum' that decided to strengthen the use of Swahili (1977.1 44) was later reported as establishing 200 night school literacy centers in Zanzibar (1980.1 45). India's reports of creating a ten-year plan to eradicate literacy (1977.4 44) were elaborated on in later reports as being accelerated to a five-year plan and receiving two billion rupees from the department of education a year (1978.3 45). Another snippet reports that one in four adults in the world are illiterate, but that 140 million people, or roughly five percent of the world's adult population, have become literate during the last ten years (1981.1 33).

⁴¹ Many of these literacy movements worldwide were sparked by the 1956 UNESCO Conference on the Eradication of Illiteracy, which promoted "indigenization of language use in the public sphere" and created a World Literacy Program (Blommaert 201).

These updates about literacy movements from around the world follow strings of articles such as “Recollecting our Proud History Completely Eradicating Illiteracy in Asia for the First Time Under the Warm Care of the Great Leader” (1971.3 9) and “Leading Us to a Country Free of Illiteracy” (1974.2 5) that claim that illiteracy has already been eradicated from North Korea. Though an estimated 2.3 million North Koreans were illiterate in at the time of liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945 (roughly a quarter of the population), two waves of *munmaeng t’oech’i tolgyŏk chugan* ‘Eradication of Illiteracy Assault Weeks’ carried out soon after liberation brought North Korea to claim that they had successfully eradicated illiteracy by 1949 (Kumatani 91; Song 141; King “Language, Politics, and Ideology” 117; Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 252). Kumatani and Song state that this is quite an accomplishment, considering that South Korea still had 3.1 million illiterates (one tenth of the population) in 1954 (Song 142; Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 252) and an 8.3% illiteracy rate as late as 1958 (Kumatani 91).

In *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, Ŏm Pyŏngsŏp claims that Kim Il Sung was personally involved in setting up the 8,000 adult schools that facilitated basic education for some 559,000 North Koreans (1971.3 9). According to Ŏm, in the years following liberation, Kim Il Sung visited various literacy groups scattered across North Korea, instructing them that “all Korean people must learn how to read our script” (11). The culmination of these efforts was reportedly reached on March 31st, 1949 (the end date of the second ‘assault’ movement) when North Korea officially declared the eradication of illiteracy from among its population, a token that *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* touts as the first such success in Asia (1971.3 9; 1974.2 6). Indeed, the literacy movements are alleged to have been so successful that Ko Hyŏn claims that the new generation no longer knows the meaning of the word *munmaeng* ‘illiteracy’ (1974.2 5).

Kumatani states that North Korea’s aggressive plans to eradicate illiteracy were more about acquiring tighter political control over the people than being concerned about the people’s welfare, as the “eradication of illiteracy was an essential prerequisite to enable the party and the

government to spread their policies among the people” (91). Cooper claims “if the rate of literacy could be increased, the regime would be better able to exert control over the population” (qtd. in Song 141). As such, the eradication of illiteracy not only promoted the North Korean brand of language, but also facilitated “diffusion of communism and of the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung’s personality cult” (Song 141).

These brief ‘International Updates’ in *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* portray North Korea as a developed, literate nation, as contrasted to both underdeveloped nations that are only now beginning to promote literacy, and deplorable, bourgeoisie-led imperial nations that fail to educate the common people. In one brief news update, *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* reports on the deplorable situation of illiteracy in the United States (1978.4 37). Claiming that even students attending schools are still illiterate, this article slams the United States for its ‘reactionary’ education system. The article reports that adults “cannot read the train schedule” and “cannot fill out forms” (1978.4 37). A survey shows that half of unemployed adolescents from 16-21 years of age are illiterate. According to this *Munhwaŏ* journalist, American schools are not schools of learning as much as they are “slave factories” (1978.3 37).

Other snippet from ‘International Updates’ compare the developed national language of *Munhwaŏ* to other nations that are just now reclaiming and strengthening their national languages. While North Korea has an undisputed national and ethnic language, Djibouti only declared Arabic its national language in 1978 (1978.3 45). Updates from Somalia in 1974 report that classes are beginning to be held in the mother tongue and that classroom materials are being published in the mother tongue for the first time (1974.2 32); updates from Togo describe how the Togo government has passed a law requiring that babies must be named in the native Togo language and not in French (1977.3 48)—two types of linguistic reform that had previously been carried out in North Korea.

One ‘International Update’ reports that the government of Burma is taking steps to strengthen Burmese by establishing the Burma Language Research Academy in 1976, publishing grammar books and dictionaries, and shaking off the “vestiges of colonial period by reversing street names from English to Burmese” (1976.2 45). North Korean *maldadŭmgi* policies similarly removed vestiges of the colonial period and historical toadyism through the systematic removal of a great number of lexical features from Japanese, Chinese and English. By highlighting these overdue campaigns for linguistic advancement in other countries, updates like these draw the reader’s attention to the progress that North Korea has made as a language, a nation, and as a people.

One report in 1973, entitled “Korean—the Most Superior Language in the World,” claims that *Munhwaŏ* has begun to be taught in one high school in Japan (1973.3 43). The title of the article is supposedly a line repeated in unison by the thirty-seven high school seniors enrolled in the course who have been studying *Munhwaŏ* at least two hours every week. Osaka Foreign Language University, along with another unnamed university, is also reported as teaching *Munhwaŏ* classes.

In one odd piece of news in the ‘International Update’ section, the Mozambique government reports that it is to rename one of the main thoroughfares in the capital city of Maputo after Kim Il Sung. ‘International Update’ notes this as an example of the “undying admiration and respect” that the people of Mozambique have for Kim Il Sung (1976.4 44). This report of the Mozambique government’s homage to Kim Il Sung promotes the ideology that North Korea is admired by the world as a world leader. As such, North Koreans can have greater pride in their country, their people, and their language, thus giving them motivation to embrace the national branding asserted through *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*.

In creating a successful brand, the company must convey the distinct image of the product to the consumer. Peterson states the following

“A brand requires distinctiveness, but the trick lies in how to make it distinctive, and to make it stand out in the consumer’s mind. In the end, it is not the producer that decides whether or not its brand is distinctive. It is only distinctive if the consumer perceives and believes that it truly is” (743-744).

In the case of North Korea, the distinction of *Munhwaŏ* as a unique, world-class language is promoted in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* through articles that elaborate on belated language advancements of other nations while emphasizing the advanced status of *Munhwaŏ*. Like successful branding, the goal of these articles is not to define North Korean regime’s official policy; instead, articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* aim to ‘sell the product’ by convincing the people of *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng*.

5.3 ‘Knowledge of World Languages’

Near the end of the 1970s, ‘Knowledge of World Languages’, a more elaborate, two-paged feature, replaced the small snippets of news in ‘International Updates’. Written exclusively by Ri Kapchae, this reoccurring feature originates in the answers to basic linguistic questions (“What is the Origin of Language” 1979.3 47; “How many Languages are there in the World?” 1979.4 43) and then undertakes a systematic analysis of world languages by continent (“The Languages of Asia” 1982.1 57; “The Languages of Oceania” 1983.3 60).⁴² This section promotes the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ*, Kim Il Sung, and communism, while pointing out limitations in other languages, their leaders, and their political history. Three main points in ‘Knowledge of World Languages’ that demonstrate the manner in which *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* asserts *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng* are script nationalism, monolingualism, and worldwide political and linguistic history as a result of imperialism.

In “What Types of Script Exist in the World?” Ri ignores spoken language and exclusively discusses the Korean script as compared to other scripts found around the world (1980.3 41). This type of script centrism is common in North East Asian countries, of which

⁴² Though many obscure languages and nations are discussed and analyzed by Ri Kapchae in ‘Knowledge of World Languages’, neither South Korea nor *Han ’gugŏ* are explicitly mentioned.

Ping reports “all [display] a similar tendency to attach more importance to writing than to speaking properly, which partially accounts for their generally higher interest in written language than in spoken language” (Gottlieb and Chen 6). Furthermore, the “relatively high degree of linguistic homogeneity” in Korea removes the focus from dialectal issues and places more emphasis on written language (Gottlieb and Chen 6).

The title ‘What Types of Script Exist in the World?’, however, is a bit misleading and would perhaps be better named ‘Criteria for a Superior Script’. The article raises two main criteria for script *ususōng*: 1) does the language use its own script and 2) what type of character system does it employ. Exploring the first question, Ri shows that there is not a one-to-one ratio of scripts to languages; instead, almost 30% of the world’s languages are written in the Latin script (1980.3 41). Since the borrowed script was not designed expressly for these languages, diacritical markings are used to accommodate for linguistic elements originally absent in the script. In Romance languages that have borrowed the Latin script, for example, it is common to see multiple diacritics, such as the accent mark seen in Spanish and French. The unmentioned counterexample for these languages borrowing a script, of course, is *Munhwaō*.

The second question—what type of character system does it employ—leads to a discussion about the progression of scripts from pictographs to logographs to phonetic writing. Ri describes this progression of script as a sort of linguistic evolution that culminates in the invention of the phonetic system. However, according to Ri, not all phonetic scripts are equal. Japanese with its syllabic system and Arabic with its lack of definite vowels in the script are not fully developed due to these “set limitations and weaknesses” (1980.3 42). These types of incomplete scripts, therefore, are substandard.

The final criterion for a superior script is that the characters and their phonetic counterparts have a one-to-one correlation. English, German, Greek, and Russian are all pointed out as examples of phonetic systems where the number of letters does not match the number of

sounds in the language, resulting in “either one letter producing various pronunciations or one pronunciation being represented by different letters” (1980.3 42). According to Ri, the Korean script is superior, with the forty characters matching “almost perfectly” with pronunciation (1980.3 42). Other articles claim that the uniqueness of the Korean script lies in its ability to transcribe sounds that originally do not exist in *Munhwaŏ* (1969.4 14). This exceptional trait prompts Kim Il Sung to declare that *Munhwaŏ* can graphically represent the pronunciation of any Western or Eastern language easily and accurately (1974.2 2). Chang Sŏnil claims that in order for a language to be able to truly transcribe sound from another language, it must have both free expression of sound and a script that can illustrate that sound accurately—both superior qualities that, according to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, *Munhwaŏ* possesses (1969.4 13).

In closing, Ri declares the Korean script the “most advanced” in the world and invites Koreans to be proud of their script (1980.3 42). This type of script nationalism is also common in government-propagated and popular material in South Korea. In October 2009, ‘The First World Alphabet Olympics’ (*che-1-ch’a segye munja ollimp’ik*), held in Seoul and sponsored by the Korean Language Society (*Han’gŭl hakhoe*) and hosted by the Global University of Theology (*Kŭllobŏl sindaehagwŏn taehak*), declared *han’gŭl*⁴³ the gold medal winner and the most superior script in the world (Ch’oe Chŏnggil n. pag.). This event, the outcome of which was practically decided before the sham competition had begun, was engineered to show the world the *ususŏng* of *han’gŭl* and encourage third-world countries without their own script to use *han’gŭl*.

King claims that this type of ‘script nationalism’, a common sociolinguistic phenomenon in Asia, results from the conflation of script and language; among South Koreans the term *han’gŭl* has become ‘synonymous’ with the Korean language. Popular opinion in both North

⁴³ It should be noted that North Korea does not refer to the Korean script as *han’gŭl* ‘script of Han’ but simply as *kŭl* ‘writing’, *uri kŭl* ‘our writing’, or *chosŏn munja* ‘script of Chosŏn’ (Ko 407). This thesis only uses *han’gŭl* to refer to the writing system of South Korea.

and South Korea is that “the Korean script is superior to all others” (“North and South Korea” 221). Ri’s article on script nationalism not only attempts to convince North Koreans of the greatness of their script, but also of their script’s *ususŏng* over any other script in the world. Once again, articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* utilize language to solidify the concept of the superiority of ‘us’ over ‘them’.

In another article titled “How Many Languages are there in the World?”, Ri contrasts the ‘proper’ linguistic situation of North Korea of one nation, one people, and one language with examples of multilingualism around the world. In contrast to North Korea’s one-to-one correlation between country and language, countries such as China and Switzerland have too many languages: China with Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian, among many others; Switzerland with German, French, Italian, and Romansh (1979.4 43).

Using ‘one nation, one language’ claim to promote North Korean linguistic prowess, Ri also demonstrates that North Korea has a strong ‘one people=one language’ correlation, stating that “of course the people of Han speak just one language” (1979.4. 43). In addition, *Munhwaŏ* is “not used by any other group besides the Korean people” (1979.4 43). In juxtaposition to *Munhwaŏ*’s use by only one people, Spanish and Portuguese, two languages spoken by a broad range of ethnic groups, are spread extensively throughout South America.

In another article, Europe is criticized by Ri as consisting almost entirely of multilingual nations; he states that it is “difficult to find a pure, racially homogenous nation like ours in Europe” (1983.1 61). Ri reports that Czechoslovakia consists of 65% Czech and 29% Slovakian—both with their own languages—and Monaco, a country only 1.8 square kilometers with only 30,000 people (as of 1979), consists of only 3,000 speakers of the indigenous Monégasque language—the other 90% of the population mainly speaking French and Italian (1983.1 61). The complications arising from five hundred different tribes speaking over one hundred different languages in Sudan or problems managing thirty languages of publication and

seventeen languages of broadcast in Nigeria, are avoided in North Korea due to the simplicity—and *ususŏng*—of *Munhwaŏ*'s monolingualism in North Korea (1982.3 61).

In an interesting side note, Ri also asserts the validity of *Munhwaŏ* even though its international usage is quite limited. Ri states that the caliber of a language is based on neither the number of speakers nor the degree of worldwide dispersal; Ri claims that while millions speak Mandarin, the language of Yagnobi, spoken by a mere few thousand in Iran, is also a valid language (1979.4 43). Likewise, lingua francas such as English, French, and Spanish, which are spoken on multiple continents, are not innately better languages merely based on their wide range of dispersal. Ri decidedly affirms that “no matter how small the population of speakers and how limited the range of dispersal, any language can be considered to be as independent as any of the widely-dispersed languages with hundreds of millions of speakers if it is distinguishable and has the characteristics of an independent language” (1979.4 43). These claims, of course, have far-reaching undertones, as Ri is trying to prove that *Munhwaŏ*, a language spoken by only a few million people in one small corner of the world, is not only equal but *superior* to these internationally widespread languages.

One people, one nation, one language exists in North Korea because of its one history (1979.4 43). Kim Il Sung said, “The people of Chosŏn are one people. They possess one language and one script. They have inherited the common traditions of culture and history” (1979.4 44). According to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, the Korean language began in the days of Tanggun (1983.1 59; 1982.1 55), was further developed by Koguryŏ (1982.3 54), was supplemented through the invention of the Korean script (1984.1 47),⁴⁴ and “resolutely survived” Japanese linguistic imperialism thanks to Kim Il Sung (1979.4 44). Ri briefly hints at a possible next step

⁴⁴ Interestingly enough, this article, titled “Our Superior Ethnic Script—*Hunmin chŏngŭm*,” discusses details of the invention of the Korean script without a single mention of King Sejong. King claims that North Korea, in stark contrast to the south, is “much less lionizing in its treatment of King Sejong (true adulation being reserved for Kim Il Sung)” (“North and South Korea” 222).

for *Munhwaŏ* as a world language. Stating that “it is natural that people will separate and live in ethnic groupings and will continue to use their own language until the entire world converts to communism,” Ri hints that global communism would require ethnic groups to leave their mother tongue and speak a common language (1979.4 44).⁴⁵ Considering Ri’s adamant campaigning of *Munhwaŏ*’s linguistic *ususŏng*, it would not be a surprise to learn that he imagines *Munhwaŏ* as this global language.

The last type of articles featured in the ‘Knowledge of World Languages’ section by Ri assess the world’s languages by continent. In stark contrast to the other articles that discuss linguistic features of different world languages, these articles mainly discuss the negative effects that political actions—primarily imperialism—have had on language. Ri calls the linguistic complexities in the Philippines ‘intense’ due to the dozens of indigenous languages now tainted with English and Spanish from years of imperial rule (1982.1 58). Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Burma, Cyprus, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives (1982.1 58), Algeria, Niger, Tanzania, Benin, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, and Somalia (1982.3 62), Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Bolivia (1982.4 62), various First Nations tribes in North America (1983.2 62), and Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Tasmania (1983.3 60) are all reported to have similarly suffered linguistic damage due to imperialism.

Imperialism, reportedly accompanied by racial discrimination, is claimed to have destroyed languages and cultures across the world. Ri claims that the rich cultures of the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas were all but destroyed when the imperial nations of Spain and Portugal erased their languages, and with them, their traditions (1982.4 61). The slave trade transplanted thousands of Africans from their home country to South America, further complicating the

⁴⁵ Kim Il Sung also stated this in his 1966 ‘talk with linguists’ when he said, “until the whole world turns communist people will live divided into nations, and Koreans will live in Korea and continue to speak Korean” (Kim Il Sung “Works” 292). This theory is reminiscent of Soviet language policies promoted by Nikolai Marr and Josef Stalin.

linguistic situation (1982.4 62). The demographic breakdown of Canada, beginning with the indigenous First Nations in Canada who were persecuted by the imperial nations of both France and England and then invaded by major waves of immigrants from Ireland, Ukraine, and Italy, bring Ri to report that many people refer to Canada as “one nation that isn’t one nation” (1983.2 62).

Morgan and Pritchard state that the “key is to develop a strong brand which holds some *unique* associations for the consumer” (12). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, with its analysis of world languages, highlights the uniqueness of *Munhwaŏ* as a language spoken by one people, a language with a superior script, and a language that has survived imperialism. These ‘unique associations’ between the ‘consumer’ and their language solidify the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* in the minds of the North Korean people.

5.4 Articles Based on Kim Il Sung’s Quote

In discussing the basic principles of branding, Berthon, Pitt, and Campbell claim that “early conceptualization of successful brand management revolve around operationalizing a selected brand meaning and reinforcing that meaning over time” (356-357). ‘Early conceptualizations’ of North Korea’s *Munhwaŏ*, found in Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’, laid the foundations for North Korean linguistic policy by naming the new brand *Munhwaŏ* and defining its main marketing points. In his 1964 talk with linguists, Kim Il Sung made the following statement concerning *Munhwaŏ*’s defining characteristics:

“As a matter of fact, Korean is a very good language. Our language flows easily, with rising and falling inflections and long and short sounds; it has good intonation, as well, and sounds very beautiful to the ear. Our language is so rich that it is capable of expressing any complex thought or delicate feeling well, can stir people, make them laugh or cry. Our language is also highly effective in educating people in communist morality, because it can express matters of courtesy with precision. Our national language is so rich in pronunciation that in it we can pronounce almost freely the sounds of any other language of the Eastern or Western countries” (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 5; 1974.2 2).

This quote, pieces of which are ‘reinforced’ in every issue of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, has been broken down into three main justifications for *Munhwaŏ*’s superiority; indeed, this quote is interpreted as a “formalized scientific” explanation of *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng* (1971.4 20). The three justifications are 1) the aural aesthetic of the language, 2) the abundance of expressions, and 3) the ability to articulate politeness. Though this specific quote by Kim Il Sung refers to *Munhwaŏ* a *aju choŭn mal* ‘a very good language’, contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* always refer to the *ususŏng*, *usuhan*, or *uwŏrhan* ‘superiorty’ of *Munhwaŏ* as compared to other languages.

5.4.1 Aural Aesthetics

Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claim that the aural aesthetic of *Munhwaŏ* is superior to other languages. Noticing that other languages are jumbled with *swiswi sori* (hushing/hissing sounds) and *k’o makhin sori* (congested/nasal sounds; lit., sounds of a blocked nose) or that *mal i kkŏkkŏk makhyŏ* (‘words get stuck in your throat’) *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* declares other languages as unappealing to listen to (1969.4 1). Even Seoul speech is criticized as being polluted with *k’omaengmaengi sori* (nasal voice, twang) when the girl’s try to charm boys (1974.2 48). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that *Munhwaŏ* avoids sounding ‘stuck in the throat’ by having seven consonants that can end a syllable; four of them (*n, m, l/r, ng*) are voiced consonants (sonorants) that “reverberate well and sound good” and the remaining three (*k, p, t*) can easily transform into voiced consonants (sonorants) depending on the first consonant in the following syllable (1969.4 6). *Munhwaŏ* includes other sound changes such as phoneme addition (*sori kkiugi*), phoneme elimination (*sori ppajigi*), vowel harmony (*moŭm chohwa*), and liaison (*iŏnaegi*) that are claimed to make speech more fluid, natural, and beautiful (1981.3 38). Shin Chŏnga claims that failure to follow these rules in speech results in lackluster language that fails to convey the depth of emotion innate to *Munhwaŏ* (1972.4 28).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims that languages without *patch'im* ‘syllable-final consonants’ are too “light and lifeless” while languages with too many *patch'im* are “rigid and unnatural” to the ear (1969.4 2). On the other hand, *Munhwaŏ*, with its rule of at least one vowel per syllable and an even dispersal of *patch'im*, sounds powerful and smooth at the same time (1969.4 2). Wŏn Yongguk attempts to prove this point by explaining that the vowel, the center of the syllable, cannot be preceded or followed by more than one consonant (1969.4 6). Though this rule is broken quite often in *Munhwaŏ* by double-*patch'im* words, this is not mentioned here. Other articles, however, demonstrate that even with double *patch'im*, the correct pronunciation is to only articulate one of these consonants unless it is followed in the next syllable by a vowel (1976.4 39; 1972.4 29).

Contributors to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* report that the superior design of *Munhwaŏ* phonetics originates from the roughly equal number of vowels and consonants (21 vowels, 19 consonants), totaling 40 different sounds (1969.4 13; 1971.4 20). Kwŏn Sŭngmo claims that most other languages not only have less sounds—“usually 20-30”—but that the ratio of vowels to consonants is highly skewed, leading to unbalanced and thus aurally unpleasant language (1971.4 20). With its forty phonetic sounds and its capacity to build syllables with *patch'im*, *Munhwaŏ* is reported to have more phonetic options than other languages (1971.4 20). Ch'oe Chunyŏng claims that while most languages have less than 2,000 possible syllables, *Munhwaŏ* is able to combine its individual sounds into 3,192 different distinct syllables (1980.3 34). According to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, this makes *Munhwaŏ* a great tool for capturing the sounds of animals and nature (1969.4 14); it also makes *Munhwaŏ* adept at reproducing the sounds of other languages (1974.2 2). Thus, the excellent phonetic system of *Munhwaŏ* is claimed to make adjusting to another system of pronunciation easier when learning another language (1969.4 14).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp claims the highly specialized and developed phonetics of *Munhwaŏ* includes *sunhan sori* ‘natural sounds’, *toen sori* ‘tense, unaspirated sounds’, and *kŏsen sori*

‘aspirated sounds’. Kwŏn Sŭngmo reports that though these sounds are difficult for exchange students in North Korea to understand, the ability to differentiate between these sounds is absolutely necessary in order to master the superior language (1971.4 20). Yang Hasŏk teaches the readers of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* that each type of consonant carries a different emotion with it when saying the following:

“If *sunhan sori* express something more soft, gentle, and smooth than *toen sori* and *kŏsen sori*, then *toen sori*, in comparison to *sunhan sori*, express something more robust, hard, and powerful; and *kŏsen sori*, in comparison to *sunhan sori*, express something more violent and magnificent” (1980.2 31).

Yang Hasŏk attempts to show this with the semantic distinctions between *pandŭlbandŭl*, *ppandŭlppandŭl*, and *p’andŭlp’andŭl* (1980.2 31). While all three of these mimetic adverbs mean ‘smooth and glossy’, *ppandŭlppandŭl* has a stronger, harder connotation while *p’andŭlp’andŭl* has a more violent and magnificent connotation.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp contends that the three types of consonants can also express comparative and superlative aspects. For example, in *pinggŭrŭrŭ*, *ppinggŭrŭrŭ*, and *p’inggŭrŭrŭ* (all mimetic adverbs for ‘turn, revolve’), *sunhan sori* is the slowest, *toen sori* is faster than the *sunhan sori* equivalent, and *kŏsen sori* represents the fastest of them all (1980.2 31). Vowels in *Munhwaŏ* also have special expressive capabilities as light vowels (*a*, *o*, *ae*) and dark vowels (*ŏ*, *u*, *e*). Yang Hasŏk teaches that light vowels have a sense of being “cute, light, small, and loveable” and dark vowels hold a feeling of being “dark, deep, big, and thick” (1980.2 31; Kim Kong-On 69; Ch’ae 121). One example given by Yang is *panggŭlbyggŭl* and *pŏnggŭlbŏnggŭl*; both adverbs for smiling, *panggŭlbyggŭl* expresses a ‘gentle smile’ while *pŏnggŭlbŏnggŭl* expresses a ‘broad smile’. Ko Tonghyŏk encourages authors to use *Munhwaŏ*’s vowel harmony when creating character names so the reader can discern if the character is a hero or a villain by the character’s name, which taps into a long tradition of aligning protagonists’

names with their characters and/or preordained fates in traditional Chinese and Korean fiction (1980.1 33).

Chang Sönil claims that *Munhwaö* only contains sounds found in the natural world (1969.4 13). The organic nature of the sounds with the tonal quality of speech reportedly gives it a “sense of musicality” (1969.4 6). *Munhwaö Haksŭp* claims that the rise and falls/cadences of the language not only give rise to greater beauty in hearing the language, but also allow greater expression of *sasang* ‘thoughts’, *kamjöng* ‘feelings’, and *chöngsö* ‘sentiments’” (1969.4 6).

Munhwaö Haksŭp asserts aural aesthetics as a distinguishing characteristic of *Munhwaö* that not only make it a ‘good language’, but make it a superior language. This message, consistent since Kim Il Sung’s 1964 ‘talk’, is a key point of the North Korean language brand of *Munhwaö* that has been heavily promoted through *Munhwaö Haksŭp*.

5.4.2 Abundance of Expressions

Munhwaö Haksŭp emphasizes the *ususöng* of *Munhwaö* due to its abundance of diverse expressions. Through a combination of both a cornucopia of rich vocabulary and expressive *t’o*, *Munhwaö Haksŭp* asserts that *Munhwaö* is able to accurately and sophisticatedly communicate ideas from one person to another.

Munhwaö Haksŭp claims that the foundation of abundant expression is simply having a plethora of descriptive words to choose from. Each situation demands a word that can communicate both the appropriate meaning and emotion for the idea being vocalized. *Munhwaö Haksŭp* tells us that “in order to express complex ideas, there needs to be the vocabulary capable of expressing complex ideas; expressing subtle emotion requires vocabulary capable of expressing that subtle emotion” (1969.4 2). Indeed, *Munhwaö* has a broad lexicon for describing things such as color and laughter because each different word has a different emotional

connotation (1969.4 2). Kwŏn Sŭngmo claims that it is the combination of rich vocabulary and the “diverse depth of meaning” that makes *Munhwaŏ* truly unique (1971.4 20).

In an article titled “*Usŭm*” ‘Laughter’, Pak Sŭnghŭi details the basics of Korean expressions for laughter. Pak claims that words depicting laughter in writing in *Munhwaŏ* include information concerning gender, age, and also the “psychological state” behind the laughter (1979.3 23). *Hŏhŏ*, for example, is used to represent laughter of the elderly, *hoho* represents laughter of women, and *hihi* represents laughter of children (1979.3 23). On top of that, *hŏhŏ* is reportedly a type of laughter that accompanies an unexpected event, while *hihi* is used when one is very pleased. Pak asserts that the number of *Munhwaŏ* phonomimes for laughing is small compared to the amount of phonomime words for laughing (1979.3 23). Pak then lists seventy different ways to express the action of laughing. Ri Kiwŏn claims that these descriptive words allow the listener or reader to make a conjecture about the physical appearance of the laugher (1969.4 9).

Reportedly highly developed in multiple ways of making compound words—*ŏgŭn hapsŏngbŏp* (lit., root compounding rules) *chŏnsabŏp* (lit., transcription rules), *sori pakkumbŏp* (lit., sound change rules), *p’umsabŏp* (lit., part of speech rules), *toep’uribŏp* (lit., reduplication rules), *ryagŏbbŏp* (lit., abbreviation rules)—*Munhwaŏ* expands upon its already rich lexicon to create new lexical items (1969.4 9). Ri Kiwŏn includes a list of some compound words from *nun* ‘eye’ created through *ŏgŭn hapsŏngbŏp*.

Terms fashioned by Kim Il Sung such as *chuch’e*, *ch’ŏllima* (lit., horse who runs 1,000 li in one day; concept of promoting the socialist economy at an accelerated rate), *ch’ŏngsalli chŏngsin* (lit., spirit of *Ch’ŏngsalli* [green mountain village]; concept of faithfully serving the people and accepting responsibility for society’s problems), *ch’ŏngsalli pangbŏp* (lit., method of *Ch’ŏngsalli* [green mountain village]; all people and groups, regardless of class and rank, working together to solve a problem), *taean ũi saŏp ch’egye* (lit., alternative business system; the

economic administration of a society following the principles of communism and groupism), *charyŏk kaengsaeng* (lit., rehabilitation/regeneration through one's own efforts; to escape trouble and start a new life due to one's own efforts), *ildangbaek* (lit., one taking one hundred; a courageous, hard-working person who takes on the work of many men; North Korean equivalent of Stakhanovite), *hyŏngmyŏnghwa* (lit., revolutionization) and *rodonggyeguphwa* (lit., working classization) are reported to have been translated and used in foreign countries (1971.4 20). *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claims that this again demonstrates the linguistic prowess of both Kim Il Sung and *Munhwaŏ*.

According to *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, the second component comprising the rich expressive capacities of *Munhwaŏ* is an extensive repertoire of agglutinative grammatical markers or *t'o*. Kim T'aesŏp claims that the *t'o* of *Munhwaŏ* are an "invaluable linguistic treasure" capable of expressing the sentiments of the Korean people (1979.1 16). Kwŏn Sŭngmo claims that *t'o* can alter a word so that just one word carries a meaning that is only expressible through multiple grammatical words and context in other languages (1971.4 21). In addition, Kwŏn asserts that *t'o* have the ability to express the "speakers attitude and perspective."

Kim Sŏnggŭn demonstrates the necessity for *t'o* in Korean by relating the following 'sentence': "*changgunnim, chŏ, yugyŏktae, nŏh(ta), chu(ta)*" (lit., general, I, guerilla unit, put, give) (1970.2 26). While all lexical items in this utterance are words with individual meaning, without *t'o* the sentence's meaning is garbled (1970.2 26). Only when the *t'o* is added does the sentence make sense; "*Changgunnim! Chŏ to yugyŏktae eda nŏhŏ chusipsio*" (General! Please put me in the guerilla unit as well). Through the use of *t'o*, the meanings of utterances can change even though the content words remain unaltered (1969.4 2). For example, replacing '*chŏ to*' in the previous example with '*chŏ rŭl*' simply expresses the individual's desire to be placed in the guerilla unit. However, the original sentence with '*chŏ to*' tells the reader that the

individual's *tongmu* 'comrades' are already being sent to the guerilla unit and the individual wishes to accompany them (1970.2 26).

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp instructs its readership on the proper way to use *t'o* ("Using Connecting *T'o* Correctly" 1970.3 26) as well as providing the public with extensive lists of *t'o*. Ri Kiwŏn gives a list of *ilhta* 'read' with forty-plus different *t'o* attached to it. This, however, is only a small sampling compared to the over four hundred different *t'o* that Ch'oe Unhak claims *Munhwaŏ* contains (1980.3 37).⁴⁶

These four hundred *t'o* however, are used by different speech communities in difference scenarios; *-se yo*, *-cha yo*, *-ra yo*, and *-llae yo* are reportedly used by children or young women, *-se*, *-te*, *-ke*, and *-sŭpte* are reportedly used by middle-aged men, and *-nora*, *-yŏ*, *-lsonya*, *-rya*, and *-toda* are used either in poetry or persuasive writing (1980.3 37). In addition, some *t'o* are more characteristic of *immal* (spoken language: *-hant'e*, *-tŏrŏ*, *-rang*, *-killae*, *-yeyo*, *-chakkuna*, *-supchiyo*) while other forms are more characteristic of written language (*-nba*, *-mŭro*, *-(ŭ) rossŏ*, *-nmank'ŭm*, *-kojŏ*) (1980.3 37).

In an article entitled "Reviving the *T'o* of *Immals*," Kim Tongch'an uses specific quotes by Kim Il Sung to demonstrate how the *t'o* traditionally characteristic of *immal* should be used in formal situations in place of more pretentious and bookish-sounding *t'o* (1976.3 5). Kim Tongch'an quotes speeches by Kim Il Sung that include the *immal t'os* of *-rira* and *-nŭrago*, encouraging the Korean people to use them more frequently. Kim Tongch'an also claims that while *t'o* used in writing like *-tŭsi* and *-mŭro* sound "formalized and stiff," their *immal* counterparts, *-ch'ŏrŏm* and *-n'gŏt mank'ŭm* are "soft and honest" (1976.3 6). This push to use *t'o* characteristic of *immal* can be seen as an extension of Kim Il Sung's *maldadŭmgi* policies into the realm of *t'o*.

⁴⁶ Out of these four hundred listed, Ch'oe Unhak claims that only approximately fifty of them are used regularly (1980.3 37).

Articles in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* claim that the vast lexicon and unique *t'o* repertoire of *Munhwaŏ* add depth to the language and elevate the status of *Munhwaŏ*, its nation, and its people. The message of the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* and the inferiority of other nations is usually finely crafted and subtle. Other times, however, the message is blatantly obvious that the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* should be used ‘as a weapon’. The next example shows how ‘abundance of expression’ in *Munhwaŏ* should be used to promote North Korea and express abhorrence towards rival nations.

“Our language can wonderfully and intactly express the delicate movements of the human emotions of joy and sadness, pleasure and anger, love and hate, etc., including emotions of burning hatred for the imperialist bastards of America—leader of all the imperial bastards and mainstay capitalist systems—as well as express endless love for one’s own *tongji*, people, ethnic group, and homeland” (1969.4 8).

In this quote, *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* contributor Ri Kiwŏn shows that the beauty of expression of *Munhwaŏ* should be used to express a full range of emotions, but above all, it should be used to express love towards one’s own people and detestation towards rival nations.

The concept of using the ‘abundance of expression’ of *Munhwaŏ* to demarcate the North Korean people from other groups of people is also seen in the article titled “*mije rŭl hodoege ttaerinŭn kŭl ŭl ssŭgi wihayŏ*” ‘Creating Writing that Harshly Criticizes American Imperialists’ (1974.3 47). In this article, a quote by Kim Il Sung instructing all correspondents to aspire to become a model of anti-Americanism is expanded into a call to all the people of North Korea to express their anti-American sentiments through writing. The author of the article, Kim Chŏnghwi, states that the proper way to write anti-American material is to reduce the amount of Sino-Korean words and increase the amount of native *Munhwaŏ* words (1974.3 48). Even Kim Il Sung addresses the flawed logic held by many that the use of Sino-Korean vocabulary is a sign of education:

Some people think that using a great many words borrowed from Chinese ideographs that are incomprehensible to others is a mark of learning, but such people are really nothing

but ignoramuses. We must let them know that it is wiser and nobler to speak and write comprehensibly (Kim Il Sung “Selected” 12; 1970.1 4).

Inaccurately perceived as a sign of sophistication, the use of Sino-Korean words in anti-American writings allegedly causes the message to become ambiguous (1974.3 48). *Munhwaǒ Haksǔp*, however, claims that the use of native *Munhwaǒ* words and expressions adds depth of feeling while also being persuasively logical.

Some examples of anti-American articles written with an emphasis on native *Munhwaǒ*, the superior mode of expressing emotion, are *saram ũi kajuk ũl twijibǒ ssŭn tubal kajin chimsŭng ũi muri* ‘A group of two-footed beasts covering themselves in human hides’, *p’i inun i toeyǒ nal ttwinŭn chŏnjaeng mich’ igwangi* ‘War lunatics running amuck with bloodshot eyes’, *p’i rŭl ppara mǒkko sal tchyǒn* ‘Fattened up through sucking blood’, *saramjabi rŭl norŭmgŏri ro samnŭn* ‘Making hurting people a plaything’ (1974.3 47). These examples show how the ‘abundance of expression’ of native *Munhwaǒ*, a point hailed by Kim Il Sung and writers in *Munhwaǒ Haksǔp* as a sign of *Munhwaǒ*’s *ususǒng*, is used as a weapon against another group of people—further supporting Kim Il Sung’s claims that all emotions can be expressed through the nationally branded language of *Munhwaǒ*.

5.4.3 Ability to Articulate Politeness

Kim Il Sung points out the ability of *Munhwaǒ* to express politeness as one of its superior features. The communistic principles behind ideology in North Korea admonish “respect[ing] one’s superiors, cherish[ing] one’s *tongji*, and lov[ing] one’s juniors”—a view that parallels the traditional Confucian thought of *samgang* ‘the three bonds’ (1969.4 3). *Munhwaǒ Haksǔp* claims that the *ususǒng* of *Munhwaǒ* lies in its ability to grammatically express appropriate

levels of politeness for these different groups. In this way, *Munhwaŏ* “not only expresses the conscious thought of people but also expresses aspects of human morality” (1969.4 11).⁴⁷

Kim Inho counts the various greetings for different times of the day, ways of introducing people to one another, and expressing congratulations and condolences as parts of the complex yet ‘superior’ system of politeness in *Munhwaŏ* (1969.4 11). Titles of respect and polite levels of speech are also listed as evidence of *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng* (1971.4 21). According to Ŭn Chongsŏp, a fourth-year student at Kim Il Sung University, speech levels in North Korea have changed since liberation with the expansion of the usage of *hao*⁴⁸ and the decrease of usage of *hage* and also the elevation of *hae yo* to *chondaemal* ‘polite speech’—making *Munhwaŏ* notably more unique (1971.4 22-24).

In the reoccurring feature ‘Let’s follow the rules of etiquette correctly’, various writers instruct the rank-and-file North Korean on maintaining proper etiquette in various social situations. In “At the Theater,” Ch’oe Wanho describes a scene of happy North Koreans being guided graciously to their seats by pleasant movie theater employees. In a confusion of seat numbers, the author was approached by a young man and asked, “*chŏ, mianhajiman sonnim hoksi chari pŏnho rŭl sŏkkalliji anŭsyŏnnŭnji...*” (‘Umm, I’m sorry, but are you sure you haven’t confused your seat number by chance’) (1982.1 46). Ch’oe Wanho praises the young man for using correct etiquette in asking this difficult question, instead of simply saying “*sonnim kŭ chari ka mannayo?*” (‘Are you sure that’s your seat?’). After relating another exchange between the young man and an elderly lady, the author comes to the realization that polite language is not only used when requesting a favor of somebody, but must also be used by the person doing the favor (1982.1 46).

⁴⁷ It is interesting to note the obvious contradiction between the classless communist society of North Korea and a society that still needs honorifics *and* argues that they are useful precisely to index different kinds of hierarchy.

⁴⁸ Note that this is the opposite of South Korean linguistic trends of the time, wherein the *hao* form’s range of use became increasingly limited.

In an article elaborating on manners to be observed “At Home,” Ko Sinsuk warns parents that their children mirror their words and actions. As such, ‘the most polite words’ such as *sonsu* ‘personally’, *pudi* ‘please’, *samga* ‘respectfully’, *momso* ‘personally’, and *ch’inhi* ‘personally’, along with respectful verbs such as *urõrũda* ‘respect, look up to’, *widaehada* ‘great’, *kõrukhada* ‘sacred’, *chon’gwhada* ‘high and noble’, *ollida* ‘raise; give up to’, *tũrida* ‘give up to’, *kyesida* ‘exist’, *malssũmhada* ‘speak’, and *poeopta* ‘see’ should be used profusely (1982.2 55). Ko instructs parents to use the most respectful language possible when referring to Kim Il Sung at home by steering away from phrases like *nara ũi wang* ‘king of the country’ (1982.2 56). Instead, a system of honorifics that reportedly was created specifically for Kim Il Sung and his family should be used (Song 144). Explicit instruction on proper speech etiquette towards Kim Il Sung is taught in school; “19 out of 40 chapters in the fourth grade Korean language textbook (1984-) are concerned with the praise or idolization of Kim Il Sung or his family” (Song 144). Ko Sinsuk instructs parents to use politeness markers such as the honorific *-si* suffix and the honorific suffix *-nim* when discussing elders in the home in order to reinforce the teachings concerning politeness that students are receiving at school.

Munhwaõ Haksũp announces in 1983 the release of a four-volume series called *Chosõn mal ryejõlbõp* ‘Rules of Etiquette in the Korean Language’ by Kim Tongsu (1983.3 52). The four volumes, written to cover proper etiquette in all aspects of North Korean society, are separately titled *Õnõ ũi sahoejõk kinũng kwa õnõ ryejõl* ‘Language’s social function and language etiquette’, *Chosõnõ ũi ryejõl kwan’gye p’yohyõn subõp* ‘Means of expressing polite relationships in the Korean Language’, *Chuch’ehyõng ũi kongsanjuũi hyõngmyõngga tũl i chik’yõ ya hal õnõ ryejõl ũi kũnbon munje* ‘Fundamental questions of language etiquette that *chuch’e*-style communist revolutionaries must observe’ and *Ilsang sahoe saenghwal ũi õnõ ryejõl* ‘Language etiquette for every day life in society’.

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp hails *Munhwaŏ* as an excellent and superior language that has the ability to articulate politeness. In discussing the importance of proper speech etiquette, Kim Il Sung stated that “even though maintaining etiquette seems like a small thing, it holds great significance in developing close relationships with others” (1983.3 50). The ‘small thing’ of observing proper etiquette is extensively covered on the pages of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* as authors elaborate on how to ‘correctly’ follow the rules of language etiquette in various social situations. This intense training aims to unify the speech habits regarding politeness among the North Korean people—a necessary requirement for imprinting a complete image of the national brand of language in the minds of North Korean citizens.

5.5 Conclusion

Munhwaŏ Haksŭp goes to great lengths to assert the *ususŏng* of the North Korean brand of language. Snippets from ‘International Updates’ inform readers of the progress North Korea has made in respects to literacy and gaining international recognition as compared to other countries. ‘Knowledge of World Languages’ enlightens readers on the *ususŏng* of the Korean script, the one-to-one correlation in North Korea between people and language, and North Korea’s success in escaping from the chains of imperialism with the North Korean language and culture still intact.

Kim Il Sung’s ‘talk with linguists’—the foundation of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* authors’ claims to *Munhwaŏ*’s *ususŏng*—discusses several points that make *Munhwaŏ* a ‘good language’. Authors in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, aiming to prove that *Munhwaŏ* is “a good language that has an excellent foundation in every respect and in every aspect,” write articles adulating the aural aesthetic, vast range of expression, and ability to express proper speech etiquette in *Munhwaŏ* (1969.4 3). These articles all promote the branding and marketing of *Munhwaŏ*’s superiority.

According to the principles of marketing, claims for *Munhwaŏ*'s *ususŏng* are made to distinguish *Munhwaŏ* from the brand-less, common, and thereby inferior languages of the world.

O'Barr states the following:

“Branding removes any idea of the generic... Even today, advertisers judge an ad to be a failure when the consumer remembers that it was for bread or cigarettes rather than for a specific brand” (n. pag.).

North Korea attempts to remove any notions of ‘generic language’ from the image held in the minds of the readers of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp*. By not only comparing, but proving point by point the *ususŏng* of *Munhwaŏ* to the languages of the world, *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp* is declaring *Munhwaŏ* to be the best, most superior language in the world.

6. Conclusions

Peterson states that “branding is not just limited to the commercial world... the same factors in establishing and maintaining a brand apply to other sectors beyond the commercial world” (Peterson 744). Recent decades have seen the expansion of branding from consumerism to cultural values and beliefs, particularly by schools, churches, museums, hospitals, and in politics (744). Though virtually undocumented in academic circles, the expansion of branding has also reached languages. While the practice of branding of language is not new, the concept of linguistic branding as an academic discipline is.

Did North Korea truly set out to brand its language? Whether a conscious decision by the North Korean government or not, the evidence provided in this thesis overwhelmingly suggests that the marketing principles of branding—giving the brand a story, a name, and a symbol, asserting differences in image with a rival brand, and, above all, promoting the uniqueness of the brand—were systematically and consistently applied to *Munhwaŏ* on the pages of *Munhwaŏ Haksŏp*.

The next question, then, is whether North Korean branding of *Munhwaŏ* was merely applying a new sticker to an old product or whether the aggressive language policies of North Korea (along with the more laid-back, but still present language policies of South Korea) created substantial language divergence. Whether or not the language variations have sufficiently diverged enough to be called separate languages, the *image* of the Korean language has definitely become one of a split, pluricentric one (Kim Chin-wu. “Pluricentric” 239), with North Korean linguists criticizing the ‘macaronic mess’ that the South Korean language is becoming, while South Korean scholars mock the sometimes absurd lengths North Korea goes to in order to avoid using loanwords (King “Language, Politics, and Ideology” 143; Kim Chin-wu “Divergence” 253).

A case could be made, as well, for language branding, although belatedly, in South Korea. The South Korean government has recently organized a committee on national branding that reports directly to the Blue House, and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism that has recently launched a 'Han style' campaign to promote the Sino-Korean element *han* 'Korea' as seen in *han'gŭl* 'Korean script', *hansik* 'Korean food', *hanbok* 'traditional Korean clothes', *hanok* 'traditional Korean-style house', *hanji* 'Korean traditional paper' and *han'gŭk ūmak* 'traditional Korean music' (Hanstyle n. pag.).

It is no coincidence that South Korea is pursuing language branding, as North Korea has had a consistent language policy focused on language branding since 1964. Though South Koreans occasionally feign disinterest in language policies of the north, the deep impression of *Munhwaŏ* on South Korea is witnessed by the fact that every South Korean adult can tell you, when asked, that the North Korean term for 'ice cream' is *ŏrŭm posungi*. Kim Taehun, in an article for *The Hankyoreh*, claims that the word, which never caught on in North Korea, might be mentioned more frequently in South Korea than in North Korea (n. pag.) Even though the answer is often spat out in a derisive manner, the fact remains that South Koreans are quite conscious of the language branding taking place in North Korea. The *questione della lingua* for the future of a united Korea is how the nascent language policies of South Korea will incorporate, if at all, the firmly established brand of *Munhwaŏ*.

Scholars are quick to compare the Korean situation with that of divided Germany. In reality, the two cases are, linguistically, quite different. While Germany was divided for forty years, the cultural exchange between the two nations was never blocked. Magazines, newspapers, television and radio shows all moved easily through the culturally porous border, resulting in little cultural shock at reunification.

North Korea, however, for all the years of division, has successfully all but sealed itself away from both South Korea and the world in general. Not until the 1990s did some type of

cultural exchange take place between the two Koreas (Chŏn Sut'ae "Segyehwa" 93). In effect, three generations have passed since division with minimal contact between the two nations. Whatever the normal rate of language change might be for a sixty-year period of linguistic isolation, the rate of divergence is increased in the Korean case by aggressive language policies of the North and the *laissez-faire* language policies of the South—policies that while not aggressive, have consistently moved the South Korean variety of language further away from that of the north.

In addition, Germany had undergone massive amounts of language cultivation and standardization prior to the 1945 separation (King "Language, Politics, and Ideology" 142). In contrast, Korea has never had an official, peninsula-wide Korean language policy, as language standardization efforts in Korea did not get underway until the Japanese occupation period. So while Germany had more of a communication problem (based primarily on vocabulary differences) than a language problem, Korea is bound to have *significantly* more language divergence than Germany ever did.

Chŏn Sut'ae claims that Germany's path towards reunification was smoothed by collaborative efforts by East and West Germany on a comprehensive German dictionary. Though grammar and spelling were relatively consistent across the two nations, ideopolitical differences in language policies caused a rift in vocabulary. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, two publishing companies joined forces to compile a new German dictionary, aiming at creating a 'dictionary of reunification'. Hence, when two separate definitions presented themselves, both were included, avoiding the contentious debates over whether East or West terminology was correct. The dictionary strove not to *control* words but to *explain* them. In particular, vocabulary that had sprung up as a result of the ideologies of communism and capitalism were explained in the new dictionary (Chŏn Sut'ae "Segyehwa" 93).

Chŏn claims that in order to facilitate reunification of North and South Korea, scholars from both sides need to come together and decide on a unified Korean language. This unified Korean language is broken down into six points: 1) unified orthography, 2) unified standard language, 3) unified terminology of scholarly and technical terms, 4) unified orthography of loanwords, 5) unified standards of grammar, and 6) compilation of a unified North and South dictionary (Chŏn Sut'ae "Segyehwa" 106).

Linguistic cooperation in terms of compiling a unified dictionary for North and South Korea would—at least ideologically—greatly smooth the path towards reunification. In order to begin linguistic cooperation, however, politicians and scholars of both North and South Korea need to reevaluate the manner in which they esteem both scholarship and linguistic policies on the opposite side of the border. Both sides still take a prescriptive approach to language—in effect, both sides are convinced that their variety of Korean is 'correct' and that the other is somehow inherently 'wrong'. As such, linguistic scholarship and political discussions of today are often focused on defending one's own position while tearing down the other, instead of working towards linguistic collaboration.

Political banter and linguistic research aside, the perception on the street in both North and South Korea is that the two variations are rather different. Popular surveys in Korea show that South Koreans envision a dialectal boundary between the north and south—a boundary that was not there before division (Long and Yim 255). This perceived linguistic divergence has potentially great consequences for both governments—after all, politically speaking, perception *is* reality. The Korean language has been marketed, in both the north and the south, as a symbol of the Korean people. As such, the day that the two variations are realized as two separate languages would, ideologically, be the day that Korean people no longer acknowledge themselves as a uniform group. This would spell doom for reunification.

This thesis has only begun to discuss the language branding techniques implemented in North Korean language policy. While linguists are quick to pull out strictly linguistic data from *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*, solid discourse analysis research of *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* is severely lacking. Unfortunately, we have no idea, in the absence of in situ ethnographic and sociolinguistic fieldwork conducted in north Korea itself, as to what North Koreans really do in their speech behaviours. In addition, more research is needed applying the linguistic principles advocated by *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp* to the East Asian political arena. Questions such as ‘How has North Korean language policy (as evidenced in *Munhwaŏ Haksŭp*) been altered as the regime has shifted from Kim Il Sung to Kim Jung Il?’ and ‘What effect did early Soviet practices have on modern North Korean language policy’ remain virtually untouched.

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