Identifying a Paremiological Minimum in English and Korean: A Task-based methodology that uses proverbs for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

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Abstract

By the time Korean students graduate from high school, most of them will have received 10 years of English instruction, but still be unable to speak English with any degree of fluency. It is argued in this thesis that this is mainly due to the failure by the teachers and students themselves to recognize how Korean culture and character affect the way they learn English communication.

This thesis tests two hypotheses: that commonly used English and Korean proverbs are useful and effective tools in the teaching of culture in the Korean EFL class; and that a task-based pedagogical approach to EFL teaching in Korea particularly suits the Korean character, and contributes to better communicative competence.

The aim of this research, therefore, is to first establish an English and Korean paremiological minimum based on the examination of a large English and Korean corpus, and to introduce a task-based teaching methodology that uses these proverbs to teach English culture in a Korean tertiary ELF communication class.

The English and Korean paremiological minimums were decided by the frequency of the appearance of proverbs in two large corpuses. And the effectiveness of using them as the main material in the/an EFL class was determined by classroom observation of 20 Korean students majoring in English at a Korean university. My conclusion is that using proverbs as catalysts for discussion is effective, and that when Korean students are encouraged, through task-based exercises, to take responsibility for their own learning, then there is a significant improvement in their performance.
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

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Introduction

In this chapter I describe the background of this study and the initial concerns which led to my research. Next I explain the purpose of the research and introduce two hypotheses and two specific research questions that I seek to test and answer through this research. Following on from this various issues related to these hypotheses and research questions are discussed. Lastly, the social context in which the research was conducted, and the overall structure of the research are explained.

1.1 Why my research is about developing a task-based methodology that uses proverbs as material to teach culture in an intermediate communication class at a tertiary institution in Korea.

There are a large number of Korean people today studying English as a foreign language. However, English conversation is not usually taught until university level. This means that students in higher education will have had few, if any opportunities to speak in English. In Korea, English is neither an official nor second language. However, by the time Korean students graduate from high school, they have all
received a minimum of 10 years of English instruction. Despite many years of English instruction, recent data shows that in the iBT exam, Korea is 111 out of 147 countries (Kim, 2008). This weakness in English is reflected in my university EFL communication classes, where I meet every year a large number of students who are unable to speak English to any degree of fluency even though they have studied English for such a long time.

No one has been able to definitively pin point the reason for the relative inability of Korean public English education to produce students who are able to speak English, but this researcher argues that one important reason is the failure to recognize the Korean character and cultural circumstances of the Korean EFL classroom. Differences between Korean culture and western culture, and also between the western and Korean character in relation to learning strategies can, and often do, cause problems for the Korean students when they try to study English communication.

Scollon and Scollon (1995:7) have shown that cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings in discourse, and they argue that the more aware the EFL learner is of cultural similarities and differences between his/her own culture and the culture of the target language, then the quicker language acquisition can be attained. In other words, language learning may be facilitated through the consideration of the similarities and differences between languages and cultures.

Hirsch (1987) argued that people from the same culture necessarily have, or should have, a shared common knowledge of the language. He called this common knowledge “cultural literacy”:

True literacy depends on a knowledge of the specific information that is taken for granted in our public discourse.... (and that) Reading and writing are not simply acts of decoding and encoding but rather acts of communication. The literal words we speak, read, and write are just the tip of the iceberg in communication. An active

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1 4 years of English in elementary school starting from the third grade, 3 years of English in middle school, and 3 years of English in high school. A small number of students drop out of school and English is not compulsory in vocational high schools past the first year.
understanding of the written word requires far more than the ability to call out words from a page or the possession of the basic vocabulary, syntax, grammar, and inferencing techniques. We have learned that successful reading also requires a knowledge of shared, taken-for-granted information that is not set down on the page (1987 p xii).

Hirsch wanted to make sure that American children have a knowledge of "taken-for-granted information" in order to aid their reading ability. He proposed that children should be deliberately taught a basic level of common knowledge. I agree with Hirsch, but argue that non-native English speakers also need to know this basic knowledge, not only to help them improve their English reading skills, but also to help them improve their English speaking skills.

This study arose from the desire I had as a teacher myself, to develop an intermediate English communication class that was designed specifically for the Korean university students at the school I am teaching at, taking into consideration the 10 years of English instruction that they have already had. The task I was faced with was to encourage the students to use the language that they in fact already know, and also teach them culture. The idea for the thesis itself came from an observation I had that Korean students enjoyed talking about proverbs, and that a knowledge of commonly used proverbs is one criterion of cultural literacy.

Several scholars (Permiakov, 1971, 1973, & 1989; Mieder (1995): Charteris-Black (1999), have argued for the need to establish a paremiological minimum, i.e. a central stock of commonly used English and Korean proverbs which most native speakers know, and which are therefore necessary for cultural literacy, but it will be shown in this thesis that proverbs are also very good material for classroom discussions due to the fact that they cover the whole range of human experience and relate to topics that Korean students appear to be interested in. Because of this, I decided to create a language course that uses the proverbs in an English and Korean paremiological minimum not only to act as catalysts for classroom discussions, but also to teach culture. The name "paremiological minimum" itself suggests that the proverbs in it are in current use and well known. However, when I researched further about the
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extent of the paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs I found that the largest paremiological minimum for English proverbs to date was introduced by Charteris-Black (1999), and only identified 73 proverbs, and that a paremiological minimum for Korean proverbs did not exist in either the Korean or the English language. Although the English paremiological minimum of 73 proverbs is a substantial number, a more thorough examination of these proverbs revealed that there are many commonly used proverbs that were not included in the paremiological minimum (see section 1.5). Because of this, I decided to establish a larger paremiological minimum for both English and Korean proverbs, and use these proverbs to teach culture in an intermediate English communication course.

Personal observations, and discussions with my Korean students over the years concerning their English language learning experience until university, enabled me to recognize that their English education at school until the university level had been entirely teacher-centered in the true sense of the word. In a Korean high school English class, more often than not, the teacher asks and answers the questions him/herself. The result of this kind of class is that I often have to teach students who are extremely passive, and not used to having to do any work in a classroom setting. It is because of this, that this thesis introduces a task-based pedagogy (see section 1.4) which requires the students to become more responsible for their own learning.

This kind of study is important because, as yet, there are few books or theses in English written about Korean proverbs. There is no work to date supported by corpus based evidence, which identifies a large paremiological minimum for either English or Korean proverbs. There is also no work which explores the cultural meaning or information contained within many of these proverbs. There is also no one who has suggested using proverbs as the center of a task-based intermediate EFL communication class.

The use of proverbs in the language classroom, it is argued, will allow the teacher to introduce culture naturally, and because the subject matter is directly related to the student's life and experiences, it will also help to stimulate motivation and increase
communicative interaction. It will be shown that all of these things contribute to better communicative competence.

This work is important for Korean students studying English, but it is also important for scholars studying Korea, and native speaker teachers of English in Korea. The introduction and explanations of both English and Korean proverbs will help them to understand English/Korean culture more deeply.

I hope that my research will make a small contribution to existing knowledge and encourage further research on English and Korean paremiology, and the suitability of using a task-based pedagogy to teach English communication in Korea at the university level.

1.2 Research aims

In this section, I present the aims of the research and introduce two hypotheses and two specific research questions that this research seeks to test and answer.

The purpose of this thesis is to first identify a paremiological minimum of English and Korean proverbs based on a corpus, and then introduce a task-based teaching methodology that uses these proverbs as materials for discussion to introduce English culture for Korean tertiary EFL students. It is founded upon two hypotheses and two specific research questions.

(1) Hypothesis One: Commonly used English and Korean proverbs are useful and effective tools in the teaching of culture in a Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication classroom, and a knowledge of commonly used English proverbs will contribute to increasing the cultural literacy of the Korean EFL student.

(2) Hypothesis Two: A task-based pedagogical approach that uses proverbs as the core material for classroom discussions for a Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication class is an effective way to increase student participation and interest.
(3) **Research Question One:** Can we identify a paremiological minimum based on the examination of an English, and a Korean corpus?

(4) **Research Question Two:** How effective is a task-based approach that uses proverbs as EFL material in terms of student satisfaction and classroom participation with regards to Korean university students?

1.3 Culture and foreign language acquisition

The underlying idea in this thesis is founded upon a belief that we should teach culture in the EFL class. When we teach a foreign language, we should necessarily try to introduce the culture the foreign language reflects. The goal of any foreign language program should therefore be to help the students achieve better cultural competence which it is argued will contribute to better communicative competence. Just how much culture and the type of culture we can teach with a language as international as English is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Discussions about the relationship between the lexicon and culture have been going on for a long time. Sapir (1921) suggested that the lexicon is a storehouse of cultural data, and that language represents and conceptualizes reality in a culturally specific way. This idea of linguistic relativity was developed by Whorf (1956), who also claimed that a person's view of reality and the way he conceptualizes the world, is shaped by, and is predisposed by the language he or she speaks.

For a long time the theory of linguistic relativity was challenged by many linguists and psychologists who argued that a speaker whose language does not make certain distinctions e.g. to use a Korean example as to the different types of Kimchi\(^2\) is still

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\(^2\) The number of specific *kimchi* types can not be easily counted. However, the Korean Food Academy has categorized over 100 different types. Among these, baechu kimchi (cabbage kimchi) is the most popular. The other kinds include kkakdugi (cubed radish kimchi), chonggak kimchi (pony-tail kimchi), baek kimchi (white kimchi), nabak kimchi (watery radish kimchi), dongchimi (watery winter kimchi), bossam kimchi (wrapped-up kimchi), oisobagi kimchi (hotpickled cucumber kimchi), pa kimchi (young green onion kimchi), as well as many others. Each type of kimchi has its own unique taste. Baek kimchi does not use red peppers, and so is the favorite for those who don't like spicy food.
able to make those distinctions if required. However, with the increasing interest in

cognitive linguistics, a weak version of the theory of linguistic relativity is gaining

limited support again.\(^3\) For example, Russian linguists Teliya et al. (1998) maintain

that:

In the anthropocentric paradigm, the notion of linguistic relativity can be reformulated

as linguistic-cultural relativity: language is the means of representing and reproducing

culture. In other words culture is assumed to be implemented, one way or another, on

the content plane of linguistic expressions, reproduced in an act of denomination, and

transmitted from generation to generation through linguistic and cultural norms of

usage. Thus, language can be looked upon as a crucial mechanism contributing to the

formation of a collective cultural identity. Culture being thus implemented through

language, cultural norms are not only reproduced in language but are made mandatory

for speakers of that language through the linguistic structures they use. (1998:56)

If culture influences the language we speak, this has important ramifications for L2

acquisition. We know that learning a language to any degree of competency, requires

at least a limited understanding of the culture. Because of this, Willis (1996) claims

that in more recent years, the goal of language education has taken a more holistic

approach to L2 education as it tries to encompass both teaching the basic language

skills, and also the culture of the target language. Today most cognitive linguists

understand that native-like proficiency in a language is determined by how well one

knows a stock of prefabricated units of the target language. This idea has arisen in

opposition to the generative theory that “the workings of language can be explained

by a system of rules of general applicability,” and that “a lexicon largely made up of

minimal units, and a set of basic principles of semantic interpretation.” Cowie (1998

p.2-3)\(^4\)

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\(^3\) The strong version of linguistic relativity which says that language actually determines the way we think

must logically be rejected by linguists, but as Kramsch (1998:13) says “a weak version, supported by the

findings that there are cultural differences in the semantic associations evoked by seemingly common

concepts, is generally accepted today. The way a given language encodes experience semantically makes

aspects of that experience not exclusively accessible, but just more salient for the users of that language.”

\(^4\) For further discussions about this subject see Bolinger, D (1976), 'Meaning and Memory,' *Forum


modernas* (Chile) 12: 84-104. Fillmore, C.J., Kay P., and O’Connor M.C. (1988), Regularity and

Chapter I Introduction

Modern cognitive linguists claim that culture is represented and reproduced through language, and that culture becomes a part of the language as it is passed down from generation to generation through linguistic and cultural norms of usage. Thus, language itself contributes to the formation of a collective cultural identity. Kramsch (1998) says that language expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality. Teliya et al. (1998:57) especially, maintain that “Native speakers’ capacity for linguistic introspection and cultural reflection derives from their knowledge of cultural-linguistic codes – that is, from their linguo-cultural competence. Linguo-cultural competence is assumed to be acquired in the process of internalizing collective cultural experience.” Lee Su kim (2003) goes even further saying:

Culture is inextricably linked to language. Without language, culture cannot be completely acquired nor can it be effectively expressed and transmitted. Without culture, language cannot exist. Language and culture are so interconnected that it is difficult to define the parameters of language and culture, and whether language impacts culture or vice-versa. (2003:1)

A lot of our everyday language assumes that there is a common knowledge between the speakers. This common knowledge includes a knowledge of not only the social norms and customs, but also of the proverbs, sayings, and idioms of the people of that culture.

To facilitate communication, we need both linguistic competence, and a certain amount of pragmatic competence. Kasper (1997:1) says that “Pragmatics is the study of communication action in a sociocultural context” she goes on to say that “Communication or communicative action includes not only speech acts – such as requesting, greeting, and so on – but also participation in conversation, engaging in different types of discourse, and sustaining interaction in complex speech events.” A detailed discussion on all aspects of pragmatic competence is outside the scope of this thesis. However, I talk about it briefly here because it encompasses cultural competence.

In order to gain cultural competence what culture should we teach? Many language teachers think that explaining daily customs, and habits, and teaching various idioms is all that is needed in the language classroom, but I do not agree. Although these
things can help surface-level understanding of a culture, they do not significantly help to deepen cultural understanding. We also need to be able to understand the various social dos and don’ts which are imposed by culture on language users. And in order to achieve a high level of competency it is also necessary to understand the different attitudes towards life and human relationships of the people who use the language of the target culture. Failure to do so, will I believe, hinder and even prevent language acquisition from going beyond daily conversational patterns. Therefore there is a need for salient linguistic artifacts that can accelerate and facilitate learning. I claim that one of these is proverbs.

Francis Bacon said, “The genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs” They are like the extract of life experience reduced to the shortest form of expression possible. The proverb was once called the “the fruit of the longest experience in the fewest words,” and Miguel de Cervantes called it “a short sentence based on long experience.” Proverbs are packed with cultural information, and I will show in this thesis that using proverbs as language material is an effective and interesting way to teach culture to intermediate level Korean EFL students. Proverbs are what I call, “concentrated clues” to culture. Mieder (1999) attempted to define what a proverb is, and recognized that proverbs are culturally specific. This does not mean that a particular proverb does not exist in other cultures, it just means that it has cultural relevance in the county/culture it is used. Taylor (1996) also recognized the social and cultural influence of proverbs. Schuster (1998) went even further, and said that if you want to know a people, you should know their proverbs because each culture has proverbs that are unique to it:

Sayings from various Native American tribes often reflect their view of the land as sacred: "Take only what you need and leave the land as you found it" (Zona, 1994) and the importance of spirituality: "Wisdom comes only when you stop looking for it and start living the life the Creator intended for you" (Zona, 1994). Japanese proverbs often refer to morals: "An evil deed remains with the evildoer" (Zona, 1996) and discretion: "The tongue is like a sharp knife, it kills without drawing blood" (Zona, 1996). Many Mexican proverbs reflect the thinking and values of rural people or the average person on the street and hope is a common theme: "Hope dies last of all" (Sellers, 1994).

(1998:1)

She continued to say in the same paper that:
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Proverbs are one way we can expand our multicultural repertoire. Through the sharing of proverbs we can reinforce the similarities and differences of people everywhere. (1998:2)

Of course, it is questionable how much we can “know” about a whole race of people based solely on the proverbs that they use. And I do not suggest that we can come to any definite conclusions concerning national character. However, the research I have conducted for this thesis has found that the discussion of the cultural implications of selected proverbs is an effective way to introduce certain cultural traits and tendencies.

This supports Kramsch’s (1996) contention that cultural awareness, and the learning of a second culture can only help attain proficiency in a second language. Proverbs do offer an insight into the way the people of that culture think and categorize the world. They are a key which can help FL learners to understand the culture of the language they are trying to learn (Williams 2000).

There is no claim in this thesis that proverbs are the only way to understand a culture, but it will be shown that using proverbs in a language class can help to increase intercultural understanding, and also contribute to student motivation which, it is argued, contributes to increased student participation and interest.

1.4 A Task-based pedagogical approach

R. Ellis (1997a) says that there are two areas of second-language acquisition that have relevance for teacher education. One is the role of input and interaction, and the other is the role of form-focused instruction (FFI) There have been a number of studies concerning form-focused instruction (FFI) and their findings have been reviewed by several researchers (e.g., Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991; Ellis 1994, 1997a, 2001a, 2001b; Spada 1997, Doughty and Williams 1998a; Norris and Ortega 2000, 2001). However, Nassaji and Fotos (2007) say that there is still a great divide between the successful application of the research to language pedagogy.

A task-based approach to language education could be called a pedagogue’s answer to the older types of teaching methodologies. (see section 2.2) In the past few years,
task-based teaching has been gaining the interest of an increasing number of researchers. This is evident in the large number of recent publications relating to task-based learning and teaching (for example, Willis 1996, Skehan 1998; Lee 2000; *Language Teaching Research* Vol. 4.3, 2000; Bygate *et al.* 2001; Ellis 2003; Willis and Willis 2007).

Willis and Willis (2007:1) say that “Proponents of task-based teaching (TBT) argue that the most effective way to teach a language is by engaging learners in real language use in the classroom. This is done by designing tasks – discussions, problems, games, and so on – which require learners to use the language for themselves.” My findings in this study support this claim. Until they enter university, Koreans students have seldom been asked to think for themselves. They have been forced to partake in rote memorization of facts, figures, and their English education has consisted of learning large lists of vocabulary and grammatical rules. This has resulted in students that often sit passively in the language class. However, when the students are encouraged, through task-based exercises, to take responsibility for their own learning, then there is a significant increase in their class participation. (see section 7.3). It is true that each class is slightly different, but one special aspect of task-based instruction (TBI) is that teachers who choose to use tasks in their classroom have the freedom to refine an approach which fits their own classroom, and their own students (Edwards and Willis, 2005).

The rationale behind adopting a task-based pedagogy for the Korean EFL class, agrees with Skehan’s (2000:124) claim that “giving learners tasks to transact will drive forward language development. The tasks themselves, it is argued, will create a need for language change, and a means of fulfilling that need.”

Hypothesis two in this thesis states that a task-based pedagogical approach that uses proverbs as the core material for classroom discussions for a Korean tertiary EFL class, is an effective way to increase class interest, and therefore contribute to communicative competence. The reason for this, it is argued, is that it seems to suit the character of the Koreans.
I want to teach culture through proverbs as a way to help the students understand the attitudes, values, and mindsets of the people of the target culture. However, it should be made clear that I am not advocating the study of only English proverbs, but also the study of Korean proverbs in English. The main reason for doing this is rooted in the idea that understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation to one's own, and that some Korean proverbs translated into English can also provide interesting discussion material.

1.5 Establishing a paremiological minimum

The first hypothesis of this thesis is that the study of proverbs will offer a stimulating way for Korean university students to study English. The question we have to ask is which proverbs should they study? If proverbs are going to be used as catalysts for classroom discussion, it is reasonable to argue that these proverbs should be in current use, as it is only these proverbs that reflect the current values and beliefs of the people of the target culture. Permiakov was the first scholar to refer to a "paremiological minimum" of English proverbs, (Permiakov, 1971, 1973, & 1989). He felt that it was important to identify proverbs that were in current and common use, and that a paremiological minimum was of important consequence in the instruction and learning of foreign languages.

As already mentioned in section 1.1, to date there have been only very few studies of Korean proverbs done in English, and there have been no studies trying to establish a paremiological minimum for Korean proverbs, although there have been numerous books and papers on English proverbs, Taylor (1931, 1934,) Eberhard (1985), Charteris-Black (1995, 1999), Mieder (1991, 1993, 1995, & 1996), Hernadi and Steen (1999), Pasamanick (2000).

Albig (1931) and Bain (1939) conducted studies on the best well known English proverbs, but the first attempts to identify a paremiological minimum in a language were made by the Russian G.L. Permiakov (1971, 1973, & 1989). Higbee and Millard (1983) made a study to identify 15 of the most familiar and 15 of the least familiar proverbs. Later, Whiting (1989) published a large new collection of Modern
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Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases. The book contains 5,567 main entries based on the proverbial materials which Whiting discovered in over 6000 books and numerous magazines and newspapers published in this century. He identified the number of references each text had, showing the proverbs with high frequency, but he also did not identify any kind of paremiological minimum. Mieder (1995) wrote a paper discussing the need for a paremiological minimum for English, and he argued for the need to establish this based on a corpus which is representative of modern writing and speech. However, he did not himself establish a paremiological minimum of any significance. A more recent study of a paremiological minimum for English proverbs was carried out by Charteris-Black (1999) who wrote a paper The Survival of English Proverbs: A Corpus Based Account. Based on the proverbs in the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs, he tabulated the frequency of the appearance of these proverbs in the Bank of English Corpus; which at the time of his study consisted of 330 million words. In his work he also tried to ensure that all proverb variations were identified as well. In this study he identified 73 English proverbs which appeared the most frequently used in this large corpus. Although 73 is a substantial number, I do not think it is large enough to be considered a paremiological minimum because a large number of frequently used proverbs that were identified in this study were not introduced. This thesis is the first to identify a larger paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs. My examination of the British National Corpus for the English identified 153 proverbs for the English paremiological minimum, and my examination of the King Sejong Corpus identified 150 proverbs for the Korean paremiological minimum. One of the main arguments in this thesis is that it would benefit the EFL(KFL) learner to start learning these proverbs, but it goes without saying that the more proverbs a second language learner knows of the language he/she is studying, the more “culturally literate” he/she can be considered to be.

5 Proverbs like "Time will tell. Easier said than done. He who laughs last laughs longest. Better to be safe than sorry. Kill two birds with one stone. Old habits die hard." which had a high frequency of appearance in this corpus study, did not appear in Charteris-Black’s paremiological minimum.
1.6 Using a corpus to decide the paremiological minimum

As discussed in the previous section, most of the studies which have attempted to establish a paremiological minimum have been based on the intuitions of a relatively small number of informants. These studies (Albig, 1931; Bain, 1939; Permiakov, 1971, 1973, & 1989; Mieder, 1995) have supported traditional methods of counting the number of references for particular proverbs in an established reference work such as Whiting (1989) to establish their importance. But it was Charteris-Black (1999) who was the first to suggest using a corpus to identify a paremiological minimum. He claimed that we should combine the data available in reference works with that available in a corpus. And argued that a corpus:

...allows the user to search the database. This allows the user to establish the frequency and other statistical information regarding the occurrence of language patterns. It will allow us to search for any string of words whether it is the full standard citation form of a proverb or its variations ... If the corpus is large and representative enough, we may be in a position to realize Hirsch's (1987) goal of establishing the extent to which proverbs constitute part of a minimum of cultural knowledge for an educated speaker of a language. A corpus provides data both on proverb types and their frequency in contemporary language use and I share the view that "a dictionary of cultural literacy ought to be based on frequency analyses" (Mieder, 1995). (Charteris-Black, 1999:2)

Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998:9) also argue that, "comprehensive studies of use should not only rely on intuition, anecdotal evidence, or small samples; they rather require empirical analysis of large databases of authentic texts, as in the corpus-based approach." Because there are now large corpora data bases, it is possible to arrive at more objective conclusions. There are several studies which claim that the concept of frequency of appearance in a corpus is the most important thing when deciding the currency of a proverb and its importance in society (see, for example, Mieder, 1995, Murison-Bowie 1996, Charteris-Black 1999). I agree with this because it is reasonable to suggest that the more frequently a proverb appears in a corpus, the more well known it is. It is because of this that the proverbs which formed the two paremiological minimums I have identified in this thesis, depended on the frequency of use of each proverb found in the two large corpuses.

The usual use of corpus-based investigation is not simply to report quantitative findings, but to explore the importance of these findings in order to shed light on
patterns of language use. However, in this thesis the goal is solely to identify a paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs based on frequency of appearance in the corpuses. In this case a quantitative analysis of the frequency can be considered to be the purpose itself. Whereas revealing how a proverb is used in literature may be helpful for linguistic analysis, I purposely avoid doing this, because I argue that this will confuse intermediate level Korean EFL students and hinder their classroom discussions. This question will be discussed more fully in section 5.4.

When we talk about the benefits of doing a corpus based study to establish a paremiological minimum, we have to realize that there are limitations. Even though the huge databases of hundreds of millions of words can be mobilized, they cannot possibly hope to capture the moments of everyday life that a child spends with his/her friends, or with his/her mother or father. Be that as it may, a start has to be made somewhere. However, until a larger corpus which includes recordings of these kinds of daily conversations appears, it is a good way to objectively conduct research.

Although the term “paremiological minimum” will be used throughout this thesis, it is hoped that the readers understand that the word “minimum should be thought of as being more like a “paremiological beginning” and the more proverbs a person knows of the people of the target language, the more culturally literate he/she can considered to be.

1.7 The origin of proverbs

Although this thesis classifies English proverbs as being English, and Korean proverbs as being Korean, it is often difficult to say whether or not all the proverbs used in the English and Korean cultures can be claimed to be of English or Korean origin. British culture has been greatly influenced by the Judeo-Christian cultures, and Korean culture has been greatly influenced by the Chinese culture (Buddhist/Confucian). This means that there are a number of proverbs originating in other cultures that have been translated and accepted as being an “English” or a “Korean” proverb.
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One example of this is a Buddhist proverb, *Give a man a fish and he will have food for a day. Teach him how to fish and he will have food for life.* Many Koreans think that this is a Korean proverb. However, this proverb exists in both China and India and probably originated in one of those two countries. In fact this proverb has also been translated into English and used as a slogan to advertise a charity. It only recorded one hit in the BNC, but the context in which it appeared in the corpus shows how easy it is for proverbs to cross the cultural divide. Consider: *"The essence of it is summed up in the old proverb: 'Give a man a fish and he is satisfied for a day: teach him how to fish and he will be satisfied for the rest of his life.'"* The introduction of this proverb as just being an "old proverb" and not an "old Buddhist proverb" might lead to a number of English speakers thinking that this proverb actually originates in English.

Because of the inherent uncertainty concerning the origin of a particular proverb, in this thesis any proverb that is known and freely used by the citizens of each country as being a proverb of that country will be accepted. So, an English proverb will be defined as, "Any proverb, regardless of the origin, which British people recognize and use when they speak or write the English language." And a Korean proverb will be defined as, "Any proverb, regardless of the origin, which the Korean people recognize and use when they speak or write the Korean language." This means there is bound to be an overlap of translated English proverbs in the Korean paremiological minimum due to the fact that for the last 40 years everybody who has gone to middle school or high school, has studied at least a few English proverbs in their English classes, and exam questions for both the oral and written exams in Korean middle and high schools require the knowledge of some British proverbs. Korean students do not get taught English proverbs in the classroom, but they are required to "know" some of the better known ones. The problem is that none of the students are able to identify which proverbs are "better known." The fact that many English proverbs have been translated into Korean will add an interesting flavor to this study in that it will be interesting for the Korean students to share their opinions as to which Korean

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6 There are four listening Comprehension exams for both middle and high school. And there are two reading exams each year, including one university entrance exam for high school students.
proverbs have been translated from the English, and as to which proverbs they actually consider to be “Korean words of wisdom.”

1.8 The context of this study

According to the Korea national Statistic Office (2007) in 2006, the population of South Korea stood at 48.297 million, the population of North Korea stood at 22.583 million, and there are almost 5 million ethnic Koreans throughout the world. With a total of nearly 76 million people who speak Korean it ranks twelfth in the world in terms of numbers of speakers. Despite this large number of Korean speakers, Korea and Korean as a language is relatively unknown to western scholars. Accordingly, this section will introduce the social context of this study.

This research is intended to contribute to the development of EFL communication pedagogy in Korea. It advocates the implementation of a task-based pedagogy for a tertiary intermediate EFL communication class in Korea, and is significant both in approach and in principle as it aims to develop an understanding of how to increase the ability of Korean university students to speak in English, not only at the university in Asan city where I conducted my experiment, but also in the wider Korean context.

The EFL pedagogy introduced in this thesis should be understood in terms of the larger Korean EFL context, and as such, this section gives a brief overview of the Korean language, the general educational context, English language educational context, the geography, and the institution involved in this study. It intends to give a broader picture of EFL communication pedagogy in Korea. To borrow the words of Lee (2003:7) “In doing this I want to offer an understanding of the sociohistorical background in which the participants in my study reside.”

1.8.1 The linguistic context: The Korean language and writing system.

Koreans all speak and write the same language, which has been a crucial factor in their strong national identity and cultural unity, which makes it possible to distinguish

The linguistic family relations of Korean language are uncertain, but it may belong to the Altaic language family, along with Japanese. It differs greatly from Chinese, which belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family, and from English, which belongs to the Indo-European family. The geographical location has meant that Chinese cultural influences, including Confucianism, on Korea over the centuries have had a profound effect on both the written and the spoken language. Korean words come in three kinds: native Korean words; Sin-Korean words (Chinese words that were adopted into Korea); and foreign loan words, mostly from European languages. (2003:7)

The use of the Korean “Han-geul” in the various examples given in this thesis requires an introduction to this unique writing system. Before the fifteenth century, in fact, what was actually thought worth writing down and preserving was overwhelmingly written in Chinese which was difficult for people in general to learn. King Sejong (1418-1450), the fourth monarch of the Yi dynasty, Chosun Kingdom, ordered his scholars to devise a simple method of writing down spoken Korean so that common people would be able to express their thoughts in writing. (Lee, 2003:7)

King Sejong said in the preface to his new Korean phonetic script that:

Because our language differs from the Chinese language, my poor people cannot express their thoughts in Chinese writing. In my pity for them I create 28 letters, which all can be easily learned and used in their daily lives. (Cited in Taylor and Taylor 1995:185)

The Korean writing system which King Sejong created was introduced in 1443 and called Han-geul. Han-geul is unique because it is actually a phonetic alphabet designed especially to depict the spoken sounds of the Korean language. Hangeul is considered by many as a most remarkable phonetic system for its internal structure and for its graphic origin (Martin, 1972 referred to by Choi, 2002:22; Taylor and Taylor, 1995) Although Hangeul was first created in 1443, its extensive use was restricted for many hundreds of years. (The educated class still preferred to write using Chinese characters.)

\[7\] Han means people of the 'Han' race and geul means "writing." So han-geul means writing of the people of the “Han” race. For a good introduction to the Korean writing system Hangeul refer to Daniels and Bright’s The World's Writing Systems (1996:218-227).
Hangeul, as it is known today, experienced only slight changes over the centuries and in 1933, the syllabary (symbols) were finally standardized into 19 consonants, 10 simple vowels and 11 compound vowels (see section 4.6) Even though Hangeul has existed for hundreds of years, it was only at the founding of the Republic of Korea after World War II that Han-geul was accepted as the official writing system of Korean. This has implications for this thesis because it is only quite recently that Korean proverbs came to be recorded.

1.8.2 The general educational context

Koreans have always valued education. Historically a state examination testing the knowledge of the applicants was the main method of recruiting government officials. Even today, all people who want to work for the white collar government jobs have to take a civil service examination and “success in the examination is the most honorable and surest road to success (Korean Overseas Information Service, 1995:88).

The formal education of Korea consists of 6 years of elementary school, 3 years of middle school, and 3 years of high school. Although students are only required to complete their education until middle school, it is considered a matter of duty for them to complete high school education. Lee (2003) notes that:

At pre-school, most five year olds are taught basic literacy and numeracy skills since parents believe that these learning experiences at an early age are crucial for their children’s later school success. Consequently elementary school teachers proceed on the assumption that children arrive with a reading and writing base and do not need to start learning the alphabet (Korean alphabet Hangeul) or do simple counting.

From middle school, the system starts to place more emphasis on three specific subjects: Korean, Mathematics, and English. Most students devote themselves to these subjects, pursuing various modes of attendance such as large groups at institutes and small groups or individual private lessons, in addition to the supplementary classes provided by schools themselves. After each examination a chart ranking top performers is displayed on the school bulletin board, reinforcing the significance of academic achievement. (2003: 8)

One of the reasons often cited for the failure of public education in Korea to produce students who are unable to speak English with any degree of fluency is that they are
restricted by the requirements of the university entrance exam placed on them and the teachers. Choi, (2002) says that:

High school students face the ultimate test of their endurance as the university entrance examination approaches. The catchphrase, 'Success with four hours sleep, failure with five' becomes the battle cry for students, teachers and parents alike, and this reveals the intense pressure felt by Korean students. Metaphors such as 'examination war,' 'examination disease', and examination hell' sum up the way Koreans respond to the massively hyped-up university entrance examination (2002:25).

Cho (1992), who studied the effects of examination hell claims that the current system of the university entrance examination which focuses on a single answer or memorization of factual information rather that the development of critical thinking or creativity, creates a compliant population for future generations. He argues that:

Under this system, much instructional time is given over to rote learning practices which serve the purpose of fixing information in the short term memory for access at exam time, but which have little longer term effect (Cho cited in Choi, 2002:32).

Because this thesis discusses teaching English in a Korean tertiary classroom, this section will also give an introduction to some important considerations concerning education in Korea vis-à-vis the importance of understanding the hierarchy of relationships that exists in Korea, Scollon and Scollon (2001) claim that the hierarchical relationships in Korea have twofold consequences for discourse.

One learns first to show respect to those above, then, in due time, one learns the forms of guidance and leadership of those who come after. The second consequence is that one comes to expect all relationships to be hierarchical to some extent. If hierarchy is not based on kinship relationship, then it is seen to be based on age, experience, education, or gender. (2001:143)

Klopf and Park (1992) say that:

The hierarchical system supplies guidelines concerning individual behavior. The talk is structured according to status and once the communicators know each other’s status, they can utilize the appropriate language, form of address, and manner. Korean hierarchy stresses differences in age, sex, status, and rank, with the family. Until quite recently, the male head (father or grandfather) was the unquestioned ruler. The eldest son ranks next and takes over when the father is absent. The mother runs the household and functions as the intermediary between children and father. The remaining family members are ranked by age and sex. The eldest have more power, and the male outranks the female.
In the working world, the relationships have also been based on rank. Rank is determined by age, sex, educational background, or length of employment. (1992:136)

The Korean language itself is structured to reflect this hierarchy of relationships, and imposes a hierarchical relationship on the speakers. At school, age rather than grade, determines how Koreans speak to each other. The Korean hierarchy of relationships has important implications for this thesis because it can hinder the adoption of any kind of student centered pedagogy, and it can act as a barrier to classroom discussions between students of different ages. It also restricts the colloquial use of many Korean proverbs. A proverb usually suggests some form of instruction or comment about life. In Korea, a junior would never presume to instruct his senior, and even a comment such as "Like father like son" could easily be taken as impudence by a senior. Because of this, even if the use of a proverb is appropriate, for example even if a manager is upset if a project fails because there are too many people doing the same job. A junior would never dare to say to him/her, "If there are too many oarsmen the boat will go up the mountain." (Too many cooks spoil the broth.) This means that in daily life the frequency of use of a proverb might be less than in the west. Although, interestingly enough, the corpus results show that the frequency of proverb use is relatively similar to the frequency of English proverb usage. This may be due to the Korean tendency for seniors to instruct their juniors at any opportunity they have possible and also the tendency that some Koreans have to use a proverb to instruct, encourage, or justify themselves.

This hierarchical structure in Korean society has led to totally different styles in education in the west and in Asia. The very essence of western education is to try to help students to become independent thinkers. However, as mentioned before, in Korea, until high school at least, students are not encouraged to think for themselves in the classroom. Confucian thought creates a hierarchical teacher-student relationship that grants the teacher unquestioned authority in a teacher-centered classroom (Oak & Martin 2003:19). The Confucian student-teacher relationship often acts as an obstacle to implement a learner-centered education. As Breen (1998:25) says, "questioning and analyzing is not highly valued, and questioning in class can be viewed as an insult to the teacher." The students themselves are also reluctant to ask
questions for fear of appearing to be foolish in front of their classmates by asking a question that everyone else already seems to know the answer to (as confirmed by their silence), and also because the Korean teachers do not usually welcome questions as perhaps a western teacher would. This is especially true at the high school level because as already mentioned, Korean high school teachers have the job of preparing their students for the university entrance exam. The tremendous pressure placed on them to prepare their students for this exam, and restrictions of time, means that the Korean high school teacher is often not happy if a student "disrupts" the class by asking questions.

The teacher-student relationship in Korea can be confusing for the expatriate EFL teacher brought up according the western style of education. Scollon S. (1993) has identified distinct differences in the expectations of the expatriate teacher and Asian students in language classrooms. She believes they are due to differences between Confucian and Socratic discourse. Explaining the roles of the teacher and the behaviour of students in an EFL classroom in Hong Kong she says that the teaching methodology in many Chinese classrooms still tend to follow the Confucian method. The master speaks and the students listen. Then the students ask a question which the teacher answers. Sometimes the teacher asks a question, but more often than not he answers it himself.

He (the teacher) sometimes responds to a student's question with a question. This method of asking a rhetorical question, and then answering it, is common in the language classroom as well as in Chinese textbooks. Students most often expect a teacher to answer his own questions, and it may feel like pulling teeth to get a student to answer a question unless he really believes it is an open question. Confucius is asked questions by his students and responds with wisdom. Rather than being a midwife who helps give birth to a truth which lies within, he is a messenger who transmits the wisdom of the ancients. Instead of invoking an internal authority, he has been seen as providing his students with an external authority, though he frequently tells them to think for themselves. (1993:19)

The teacher-student role as explained by Scollon is written to explain a Chinese classroom, but it could just have easily been written about a Korean EFL classroom.
although Korean students are often even more reluctant to ask questions publically.\footnote{I have noticed this in some of my own English communication classes which comprise of both Korean and Chinese students. Even though in the minority, (3 out of 25 students) the Chinese students seem more ready to ask questions than the Korean students do.} The Confucian influenced teacher-student relationship has led to a "teacher is king" mentality in Korea. The teacher is the absolute authority. He/she is supposed to know everything, and what he/she says must be so. It is rare in Korea for a Korean teacher or professor to admit that he/she doesn't know the answer. There are numerous examples of a teacher refusing to admit that he/she has committed an oversight when students complain to them that their grade should be changed because there are two possible answers on a multiple choice test. Admitting to not knowing something is considered by many Korean teachers as losing face, and to do so would be to upset the established social order. Western teachers, on the other hand tend not to consider ignorance to be shameful, and they readily admit that they don't know something. For Korean students this can at first be very shocking.

1.8.3 The EFL educational context

The Korean Ministry of Education, aware of that the students who finish their public school education are still weak at speaking English, continue to ask text book writers and teachers to produce and teach material that will help the Korean students to be able to understand foreign culture, and be able to communicate better in English. Two quotes from Ministry of Education Guidelines written by Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation 2007. (한국교육과정평가원) show this:

The goal of the Curriculum is to cultivate the basic ability to understand and use English in everyday life. Moreover, it is to present a correct perception of foreign cultures in order to develop our own culture and introduce it to other countries. In order to do this the Curriculum must first build a basis to promote interest and confidence in English for students who to receive life-long education. Secondly we must foster the ability to communicate in everyday life and about ordinary topics. Thirdly we must foster the ability to understand diverse foreign information and make full use of it. Finally, by understanding foreign cultures, students may more properly understand our own culture and acquire a correct perspective. (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, Korea, 2007:281)

In secondary schools, the interest that students have developed in English since elementary school should be continually encouraged, while developing the basic ability to communicate in English. At the same time, students should be exposed to a variety of educational experiences which can develop their fluency and accuracy. Therefore,
teaching and learning methods that stress the acquisition of language should be applied in order to let the students become the center of English classes. (ibid, 2007:280)

Although Korean English teachers in Korea are asked to use a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in their lessons, and equally teach the four skills of language, listening, speaking, reading and writing, a study done by Eun (2001) found that this was not being done. Eun (2001:129) found in her interviews with Korean teachers that most had trouble even understanding the nature of CLT, and felt that it was not appropriate for their classroom settings. Eun (2001:32) argued that the many problems implementing CLT in Korean classrooms was due to “teachers’ lack of proficiency in spoken English, large class size, and a resistance among learners to active participation, and a lack of CLT training for teachers.” Because of this she found that most high school teachers often ignore the speaking and writing sections of the text book, and concentrate only on the listening and reading sections. Their rationale for doing this is that their main concern is to prepare their students to sit the state university entrance exam, which contains only two sections; listening and reading; hence the use of the grammar-translation method in high school English classes.

An education which is totally teacher centered, has led to most students being passive learners, unable to speak English. It is for these students that a task-based pedagogic approach is suggested in this thesis.

1.8.4 The geographical and institutional context

The Korean peninsula extends southward from the north eastern section of the vast Asian continent, spanning 1,000 km north to south. It shares most of its northern border with China and touches Russia. It is separated from China’s Shandong peninsula to the west by the 190 km width of the Yellow sea, and from Japan’s Tsushima Islands in the southeast by 55 km of the Eastern Sea. Since 1948, the peninsular has been divided into two parts, the Republic of Korea in the south and the Democratic Republic of Korea in the north. The Korean peninsula is 222,154 km², almost the same as the UK or Romania. The administrative area of the Republic of
Korea is 99,392 km², slightly larger than Hungary or Portugal and a little smaller than Iceland (Korean Overseas Information service, 1995).

The participants in my study were all students of Sun Moon University near Asan City, Chungnam Province, and were first year English major students in the second semester of the academic year of 2007. Sun Moon University has 9 colleges and 48 departments. It is considered to be a "countryside university" (due to its geographical location) and is composed mostly of students who have been unable to enter the more prestigious universities situated in and around Seoul. Sun Moon University has a student body of just over 10,000 students, and the Division of English itself has an enrollment quota of 372 students. Although Sun Moon University is some 60 miles south of Seoul, the students come from all over Korea, and do not belong to any particular social class.

I chose Sun Moon University and the students of the Division of English as the subjects for my study for two reasons. The first being that it is easier to use students in my own classes, and the second being that as a professor I am able to control the content of the class curriculum.

1.9 The overall structure of the thesis

Following on from this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 gives a review of current EFL pedagogies and task-based learning. It ends with my giving reasons for the adoption of task-based instruction in this study. In it I set the pedagogical rationale for the teaching method that uses proverbs to have a threefold benefit in the language classroom: namely to introduce culture, stimulate motivation, and also act as a catalyst for communicative interaction between students in a Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication class.

In Chapter 3 the proverb is defined and discussed, and an overview of proverb scholarship today is given. Some of the issues surrounding the study of proverbs, and

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9 There are a total of 10 provinces in Korea.
10 The Korean government restricts the number of students each department can accept. However, international students are not included in the enrollment quota and the Division of English is well known for its relatively large international student body.
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the criteria that make a proverb a proverb, and not just a sentence idiom are dealt with. In this chapter, existing definitions of the proverb and their formal characteristics are discussed, and a new definition of a proverb is given.

In Chapter 4 the importance of teaching culture in EFL classrooms is discussed. In the first part of this chapter, a definition of culture is given. Following on from this there is a discussion on the role of culture in language teaching. In the last part of this chapter discussions turn to identifying the types of culture there are, and the type of culture that can be taught using proverbs as classroom material for a task-based Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication class.

In Chapter 5 the various stages that made up the method of research followed are discussed. In the first part of the chapter, a rationale for doing a corpus based study is established, and also the corpora used for this study is introduced. Issues of sampling and representativeness are discussed, and the way in which the data was collected and entered into the computer is described. This includes the criteria used for selecting an initial list of 351 English and 301 Korean proverbs, and explains how the parameters of the proverbial form, and the varieties of the proverbial form which were allowed in searching the corpus were set. Following on from this there is a short discussion on why a minimum of 5 hits was chosen for the proverbs to be selected for the paremiological minimum list. In the final part of the chapter, there is a brief discussion on the listing and explanation of the selected proverbs.

Chapter 6 presents a short discussion of the results and introduces a paremiological minimum of 153 English proverbs and 150 Korean proverbs. The English and Korean proverbs identified by the corpus study are grouped side by side according to the topic or concept they relate to. All the proverbs in this chapter are cross-referenced with a complete list of the paremiological minimum in the appendix where a detailed explanation of each proverb is provided as a reference.

Chapter 7 presents a short discussion of the results, and gives a lesson plan for a one semester intermediate communication class at a Korean university using proverbs as the focal point of the lesson. In this chapter I introduce a 14 week lesson plan, show
how a sample lesson is to be conducted, introduce a case study of the actual implementation of the lesson, and provide critical evaluation of some of the issues that arose during the implementation of that lesson.

Chapter 8 is a short chapter which gives a conclusion of this study, considers the limitations of the study, and indicates areas for further research.
CHAPTER 2 Previous Research

Introduction

This chapter offers a review of the literature of task-based EFL pedagogy and gives the reasons for the adoption of a task-based EFL methodology in this study. It also includes a discussion of task-based learning (TBL) and motivation, and introduces a task-based approach that uses proverbs to teach culture and communication in a Korean tertiary EFL classroom. It sets the pedagogical rationale for this teaching method, and claims that the teaching of proverbs has a threefold benefit in the Korean tertiary EFL classroom; namely that they are salient linguistic artifacts which can be used to introduce culture, stimulate motivation, and act as a catalyst for communicative interaction between students.

2.1 A Summary of EFL Pedagogies

To begin my review of the literature on task-based EFL pedagogy a brief summary of EFL pedagogy in general will be given. There is already a great deal of research introducing language pedagogy, starting with Rivers (1968, 1981), Brown (1994), and more recently Larsen-Freeman, 2000, Lightbown 2000, Mitchell 2000, Richards & Rodgers, 2001, Ellis (2001, 2003) and Fotos 2005 who examined the different types of EFL methodologies. There have also been a number of recent studies (See, e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2000, and Richards & Rodgers, 2001) that show the differences and similarities among the many different approaches and methods. I will use an adapted version of Rodgers (2001:1) synoptic summary of EFL teaching methods and teacher and learner roles in table form, in order to show the roles defined for teachers and learners within each method.
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Table 2 Teaching Methods and Teacher & Learner Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Teacher Roles</th>
<th>Learner Roles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar translation Method</td>
<td>Teacher oriented</td>
<td>Passive participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Method</td>
<td>Teacher oriented</td>
<td>Active participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational Language Teaching</td>
<td>Context Setter, Error Corrector</td>
<td>Imitator, Memorizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiolingualism</td>
<td>Language Modeler, Drill Leader</td>
<td>Pattern Practitioner, Accuracy Enthusiast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
<td>Needs Analyst, Task Designer</td>
<td>Improviser, Negotiator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Physical Response</td>
<td>Commander, Action Monitor</td>
<td>Order Taker, Performer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Silent Way</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Learner centered, Discoverer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Language Learning</td>
<td>Counselor, Paraphraser</td>
<td>Collaborator, Whole Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Natural Approach</td>
<td>Actor, Props User</td>
<td>Guesser, Immerser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestopedia</td>
<td>Auto-hypnotist, Authority Figure</td>
<td>Relaxer, True-Believer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, Natural Approach, Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response methodologies have the teacher as being the ideal language model and leader of classroom activity. On the other hand, in the Communicative Language Teaching, Community Language Learning, and The Silent Way methodologies, the teacher is the background facilitator, who acts as a classroom colleague to the learners.

Each of the different schools of thought on language teaching methodology has established its own arguments for each theory. Supporters of the Total Physical Response, and Natural Approach methods, argue that we should base our teaching methods on first language acquisition because it is the only true successful model of language learning we have. Opponents to this, point out the different learning situations and abilities of older learners as opposed to children, and so they propose that methods such as the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning should be used when teaching older learners. There are also various views
on just how quickly teachers should encourage students to start trying to use the new language. Rodgers (2001) summarizes these views in the following way:

Another key distinction turns on the role of perception versus production in early stages of language learning. One school of thought proposes that learners should begin to communicate, to use a new language actively, on first contact (e.g., Audio-Lingual Method, Silent Way, Community Language Learning), while the other school of thought states that an initial and prolonged period of reception (listening, reading) should precede any attempts at production (e.g., Natural Approach).

Starting in the 1980s, new types of teaching methods started to appear. These methods became known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Communicative Language Teaching advocated a more interactive approach to language teaching and learning. CLT methodology is based on the realization that the encouragement of communication in the L2 classroom should be the primary concern of teachers, and this led to the increasing popularity of methods like task-based language learning which encourages communication. As it is a task-based approach to language teaching that is central to this thesis, a detailed explanation of task-based learning will be introduced from now.

2.2. Task-based Learning

Task-based learning (TBL), as it is known today, puts the completion of a set task at the center of its pedagogical focus. The teacher gives the task, and the students learn by working together to complete the task. In the past, many teachers used tasks only as a follow-up to a series of structure/function or vocabulary based lessons. They were 'extension' activities as part of a graded and structured course. Prabhu (1987), working in Bangalore, India was responsible for popularizing task-based learning when he used it as the main methodology for his language classes. Prabhu defined a task as "an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process" (1987:24), and he claimed that "students were just as likely to learn language if they were thinking about a non-linguistic problem, than if they were concentrating on particular language forms." Based on this belief, he decided to use tasks for the students to complete together, believing that this would encourage real
communication. Prabhu's work helped to change the emphasis of EFL instruction at that time because it suggested that communicative competence could be achieved though "meaning making" in real contexts. Prabhu's Communicational Teaching Project, also known as the Bangalore Project, came to be the foundation for task-based instruction and learning.

Since Prabhu, research into task-based instruction has been the subject of an increasing body of research, with researchers offering various definitions of a "task" and "task-based learning.

Breen (1987:27) said that task-based learning is "any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task."

Nunan (1989:10) defines a task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form."

Skehan (1996:38) defines a task as "an activity in which: meaning is primary; there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome."

Lee (2000:4) defines a task as "an activity or exercise that has: (a) an objective obtainable only by the interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) a focus on meaning exchange; (2) a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some set of workplans."

Bygate, Skehan, and Swain define a task as being "an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective." (Bygate, Skehan, and Swain cited in Ellis 2003:5)
Ellis (2003:3) defines a task as “activities that call for primarily meaning-focused language use. In contrast, 'exercises' are activities that call for form-focused language use.”

Although a task can be connected with any type of language activity, the literature on tasks (see Crookes and Gass 1993a and 1993b; Bygate, Skehan, and Swain 2001) assumes that tasks are usually try to encourage speaking skills although reading, writing and listening may also be required.

In *A Framework for Task-Based Learning*, Willis (1998:2) presents a three stage process to task-based instruction:

1. Pre-task - Introduction to the topic and task.
2. Task cycle – Task, planning, and report
3. Language focus - Analysis and practice.

In the model of task-based learning described by Willis, the traditional PPP or 3P method (presentation, practice, production) lesson is reversed. The students start with the task production, they practice it, and then they present it. When they have presented it, the teacher draws attention to the language used, making corrections and adjustments to the students' performance. The methodology requires a change in the traditional teacher's role. The teacher does not introduce and 'present' language or interfere ('help') during the task cycle. He or she is an observer during the task phase, and becomes a language informant only during the 'language focus' stage. Willis and Willis (2007) argue that

> The most important role for the teacher in the task-based classroom is not so much the purveyor of knowledge as the manager of discourse...In the task-based classroom, teachers still fulfill their traditional role of providing language knowledge and input, but they have also to promote real language use and provide a clear link between the classroom and the real world. (2007:148)

Task-based instruction, Skehan (2000:122), explains, “advocates the use of communicative tasks on the assumption that transacting the tasks will drive forward acquisition. The tasks themselves, it is argued, will create a need for language change and a means of fulfilling that need.” The tasks to be performed can be set up in any
Chapter 2 Previous Research

way. A task can follow a meaning-based approach which is based on the belief that “it is more effective to encourage learners to use the language as much as possible, even if this means that some of the language they produce is inaccurate. Teachers provide learners with opportunities in the classroom to use the language for genuine communication” (Willis and Willis 2007:4). Or it can be a structure-based approach which advocates that the tasks are set up in such a way that the students are forced to use certain pre-determined structures (see Fotos and Ellis 1991).

2.2.1 Evaluating Task-based Learning

The general consensus of pedagogues concerning task-based learning, is that it can be very effective at intermediate levels and beyond, but many teachers question its usefulness at lower levels. Although task-based instruction is gaining popularity today, there have been surprisingly few studies to date evaluating how effective it really is. The reason for this is probably that it is difficult to quantify how much language learning actually takes place in a language classroom where there are no specific language goals other than to use the language to complete a task. Success in these courses, is often measured in terms of the amount of time the students spend using the second language in order to complete the task, or as Lightbrown and Spada (2006:110) put it, is measured “in terms of their (the students) ability to ‘get things done’ in the second language, rather on their accuracy in using certain grammatical features.” The usual methods of evaluation of task-based instruction don’t work because as Krahne, (1987:62) points out, “The global nature of task-based learning prevents it from being measurable by some of the more restricted and traditional tests.”

Be that as it may, there are a number of studies making general, and specific claims about the benefit of this form of instruction. Nunan (1991) suggests that task-based instruction helps the teacher to promote a student-centered learning environment. Fotos (1993) concludes that task-based instruction is both effective and practical. Finch (2001:134) reports that in the Korean university where his study was carried out “there was a general consensus amongst the teachers and the students that the (task-based) program was helping the students to speak English.” and that the

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teachers in general saw more “evidence of communication and participation, greater
development of learning strategies, more confidence and enjoyment, and less need for
direction.” Hatip (2005) claims that a task-based learning approach in his EFL class,
contributes to learner motivation.

Because learners are striving to express what they want to say, they are more motivated
to absorb the language needed—either new language that they ask you for, or language
that they have already met, but not acquired properly so far. (2005:6)

Ruso (2007) reports that:

Implementing a TBL approach in EFL classes creates variety for the students.
Moreover it enhances their learning, since TBL tasks encourage student involvement
and lead to significant improvements regarding their language performance. The
research participants suggest that they do not like teacher-directed lessons where they
cannot find enough opportunities to express themselves in the target language. (2007:1)

More recently, Erten & Altay (2009) did a study that evaluated collaborative
behaviours in task-based activities. Their study was based on their belief that practice
is most beneficial when carried out in collaboration with small groups of peers, rather
than with the teacher or in a whole-class setting. The results of their study showed
that:

Task-based activities are likely to involve more frequent use of collaborative
behaviours than topic-based activities, and can thus be more conducive to
creating a collaborative learning experience. (2009:49)

However, not every study found task-based learning to be effective in certain specific
educational environments. Burrows (2008) for example, reported that task-based
instruction didn’t work well in his Japanese EFL class.

Although TBL appears to have strong theoretical and pedagogical arguments which
offer students more of a challenge than the display activities used in the CLA, it is my
conclusion that it leads to less productive lessons in a collectivist country like Japan.
(2008:15)

Although there are many aspects of Korean culture that might be deemed similar to
Japan, Korea is definitely not a collectivist country, and the research done for this
thesis rather supports the findings that a task-based learning program is effective and
does contribute to communicative fluency. The task-based instruction lesson
introduced in this thesis was designed with the specific goal of giving the students the
opportunity to use the English that they already knew, and classroom success was judged in terms of student satisfaction with the language class, evaluation of the group discussions, and the mini drama performances of the different groups. This will be discussed in more detail in sections 7.3 and 7.4.

2.2.2 Method Synergistics Task-based Teaching

To date, much of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research has been based on trying to introduce and choose the right method. However, there has been no research that has definitively shown the superiority of using one method over another. There is also the question as to the importance of searching for such a method in the first place. Bartolome (1994) maintained that we shouldn’t even try to search for a best method. Long (1991) pointed out that most teachers do not think in terms of methods when planning their lessons suggesting that they are more likely to be concerned about which activities to use. Katz (1996) asserted that even if pedagogues do claim to follow a particular methodological approach in their L2 classrooms it actually tells us little about what really occurs.

Skehan (2000) says that:

Most proposals to guide the nature of pedagogic intervention are judged more by their workability and pragmatic utility than by their connection with current acquisitional theory or research. (2000:121)

My proposed method is, too. I call the teaching method introduced in this thesis, task-based instruction, but it could also be called what Rodgers (2001:4) has called, Method Synergistics which is a more holistic approach to language teaching.\(^\text{11}\) When it was first introduced by Rodgers, Method Synergistics did not have any real form as a teaching method. It was just a suggestion by Rodgers of a possible future type of methodology in L2/LF teaching. However, in this thesis it is given a form. The basic idea behind this method is that the teacher should crossbreed elements from various methods into a common program of instruction, methods, and approaches. Rodgers says that this method could aim to combine practices from different approaches

\(^\text{11}\) Method Synergistics is often also referred to with the adjective 'eclectic' (i.e. pick and mix)
where the philosophical foundations are similar. However, the method suggested in this thesis does not require similar philosophical foundations, and is based on the idea that in ESL/EFL education “anything goes” if it works (and should be discarded if it doesn’t)\(^{12}\). It is the purpose of this thesis to introduce a method which has “workability and pragmatic utility.” The Method Synergistics I propose reflects what actually takes in the language classrooms of more experienced teachers who do not usually insist on using one method, but often fluctuate between different methodologies as the need arises. This kind of methodology argues that teaching a language is like a living organism. It is constantly changing, and so the teacher should be able to change to suit the situation. In the real language classroom there is no such thing as one size fits all. This means that although the teacher requires the students to follow his/her learning methodology he/she also adapts his/her teaching methodology to the needs of the students, and sometimes even tailoring the teaching methodology to suit individual students.

The rationale behind the task-based pedagogy suggested in this thesis agrees with Lee (2000) who said that the completion of a task can only be achieved through the interaction of the students, and with Skehan (2000:124) who said that the tasks themselves would “create the need for language change, and a means of fulfilling that need.” The attraction of a task-based learning approach is that it lets the learner be more responsible for his or her own learning. Several educationists and researchers (Wenden, 1991; Little, 1991; Benson, 2000) argue that becoming an autonomous learner, that is, taking charge of one’s learning, can help learning. This assumption is based on humanistic psychology, namely that “the only kind of learning which significantly affects behaviour is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning” (Rogers,

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\(^{12}\) Not all methods are suited to students from different cultures. “Pennycook (1989), for example, argues against what he sees as a cultural imperialist stance of CLT, citing the “many Western teachers abroad [who] blithely assume the superiority of their methods” (p. 611), and pointing out that many non-native English-speaking EFL teachers abroad resent the imposition of native English-speaking “experts.” The allegation of cultural imperialism is underscored by Holliday (1994), who writes that learner-centeredness carries with it a set of perhaps naive ideas which belong to the BANA (British, Australian, North American) professional-academic culture...learner-centeredness has provided a banner for the moral superiority of the communicative approach” (p. 175)” in Larsen-Freeman *On the appropriateness of language teaching methods in language and development*. 1999:2

http://www.languages.ait.ac.th/hanoi_proceedings/contributors.htm#larsen-freeman.
1991: 276). Task-based learning EFL classrooms offer the students the chance to do just this.

2.3 Motivation and Task-Based Learning

Language aptitude is concerned with the cognitive abilities that a prospective language learner has. It affects the degree of success with regards to the speed that this learner acquires a language. Motivation involves the “attitudes and affective states that influence the degree of effort that learners make to learn an L2” (Ellis R. 1997b:75).

2.3.1 Motivation in Language Acquisition

In the 70s and 80s research on motivation in ESL/EFL language acquisition was strongly influenced by Gardner and Lambert (1972), and Lambert (1985). They made a distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation. Gardner suggested that people who have integrative motivation (the desire to integrate into the community of the target language) are more likely to succeed in learning the target language, than those who only have instrumental motivation (the desire to use the language for some personal gain.) At first, people accepted this as an adequate explanation of motivation with regards to language acquisition, but later studies showed that motivation is far more complex. (see Au, 1988; Crookes and Schmidt, 1991 ; Brown 1994; Dornyei, 1994, 1996, Dornyei and Cziser, 1998)

Today 4 types of motivation are said to affect language acquisition: instrumental or extrinsic motivation, integrative motivation, resultative motivation, and intrinsic motivation.

1. Instrumental motivation is concerned with a functional reason as to why the students are studying the L2 – to get good grades, to pass an examination, or to get a better job. For many L2 learners instrumental motivation is the main force in determining success in leaning a second language.
2. Integrative motivation is affected by what takes place outside the classroom. “Extrinsically motivated behaviors are carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond itself.” Brown (1994:38). They refer to the degree that the student is attracted by the culture of the target language community. And in the strong form of integrative motivation, how much he “wishes to integrate himself into that culture” Harmer (1983:3). A weaker form of integrative motivation “would be the student’s desire to know as much as possible about the culture of the target language” Harmer (1983:3). There is controversy over the definition of this kind of motivation because there are studies which found that in some cases less integratively oriented people were more successful at learning English than those who had a high degree of integrative motivation (see B.N. Peirce, 1995). In her study, Peirce found that it wasn’t the desire to integrate, but rather the desire to manipulate, and overcome the people of the target language, that contributed to better language acquisition.

3. Many researchers assume that motivation is the cause of success in SLA. However, it is also possible that motivation is the result of success at learning the target language, hence the name resultative motivation. However, as Ellis 1997b shows, this success can contribute to either increasing or decreasing learner motivation. Fast learners may be motivated to strive to new heights, or they may become quickly bored, and thus be less motivated to learn.

4. Intrinsic motivation refers to the desire to do something for an internal reward. As Brown (1994) says:

Because the behavior stems from needs, wants, or desires within oneself, the behavior itself is self-rewarding; therefore, no externally administered reward is necessary at all..... and classroom techniques have a much greater chance for success if they are self-rewarding in the perception of the learner. The learners perform the task because it is fun, interesting, useful or challenging, and not because they anticipate some cognitive or affective reward from the teacher. (1994:20)

Intrinsic motivation is a result of such factors as personal interests, and the extent to which an L2 student feels personally responsible for his/her classroom success.
2.3.2 The motivation of the Korean students I teach

There is no conclusive evidence to say which of the type of motivation is better. In my language classrooms in Korea I have found that instrumental and intrinsic motivation are the greater motivating factors for the students. However, the different types of motivation do not necessarily have to be exclusive. In fact, in Korea many students have all of the types of motivations at times. And they are connected to their short-term goals, or long-term goals. The short term goal is personal self-satisfaction; the enjoyment of having success in the language the pleasant feeling that comes with respect from his peers, (something which Korean students seem to like) and good grades is something which seems to be important for many Korean students. The long-term goal is the fact that English is necessary for employment in any respectable company in Korea. Many businesses require students to score in the high 800s on the TOEIC test, and a large number of companies hold oral interviews in English with their job applicants.

There are students, of course, who don’t appear to have any motivation at all. They are at university because their parents forced them to come. Highly motivated and talented students will succeed at learning a language regardless of the teaching methodology. However, unmotivated students need extra care and encouragement. The students in the English department at Sun Moon University tend to be less motivated than students from universities in Seoul (See 1.8.4.). It is actually with these students in mind that I developed a task-based EFL class that uses proverbs. The rationale for using proverbs to teach culture is directly connected to motivation. Korean university students seem to enjoy learning and using proverbs. They tend to be extremely idealistic, and society as a whole always stresses the need for living according to one’s conscience. It is not that most people in Korean society actually do

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13 All professors in Korea have the responsibility to be the academic advisor to a large number of students. In my case I am responsible each year to advise at least 70 students I teach. Among the questions frequently discussed are, “Why are you learning English?” and “What do you want to do with English after you graduate from college?” It is based on these discussions that I am able to determine the motivation of my Korean students with regards to them studying a foreign language.

14 As already discussed in Section 1.8.4, Sun Moon University is considered to be a “countryside university” (due to its geographical location). It is composed mostly of students who have been unable to enter more prestigious universities situated in and around Seoul. This means that a small number of students at Sun Moon University do have an inferiority complex.
this, but they are quite attached to the perception that they should live proper and upright lives, so as not to bring shame on one parents or ancestors. The meaning of the Korean proverb, “When a person dies he leaves his name, when a tiger dies it leaves its skin”\(^{15}\) shows the importance that Koreans place on right action in life.

There are studies that show the benefit of using proverbs as classroom material. For example Cruz and Duff (1996:118) argue that “working with proverbs in the classroom can improve students’ learning experiences, their language skills, and their understanding of themselves and the world. This happens because: they provide an opportunity for students to be knowledgeable experts as well as learners, to learn about each other and their shared values, to gain insight as they discuss their experiences and work out their understanding of proverb meanings, to use their home culture as a stepping stone into school culture, and to improve thinking and writing as students both provide and receive information.”

It is also a central claim of this thesis that the using of proverbs in the EFL language classroom has a threefold benefit: namely to introduce culture, stimulate motivation, and also act as a catalyst for communicative interaction between students in a Korean university’s intermediate conversation class.

2.3.3 Increasing classroom motivation

One question we have to ask ourselves as teachers is “Who is responsible for student motivation?” We all know that it is easy to teach students who are highly motivated. However, what do we do about students who are only in the class to fulfill course requirements, or because it was the only class that fit their timetable? It is easy to say to such students, “If you don’t want to be in this class, you shouldn’t have registered for it.” But what do we do with students who stay anyway? In such a case the teacher is the key to opening up the students’ mind. Dornyei (2001:116) suggests that, “teacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness”. And “whatever is done by a teacher has a motivational, formative,

\(^{15}\) This proverb registered 7 hits in the Korean Corpus.
influence on students and teacher behaviour is a powerful, motivational tool.” (Dornyei, 2001: 120).

Harmer (1983) comments on the demotivating effect of a boring ESL/EFL class.

The method by which students are taught must have some effect on their motivation. If they find it deadly boring they will probably become de-motivated, whereas if they have confidence in the method, they will find it motivating. (1983: 5)

As Thanasoulas (2002:6) says, motivation is not a onetime affair, but “an ongoing process that has to be sustained, or result in boredom and subsequent demotivation.”

Obviously the material the students use will have a direct effect on motivation, and subsequently discourse production. Winfield, and Barnes-Felfeli, (1982) recognized that the strength of feeling about a particular topic affected discourse. They showed that culturally specific knowledge can affect both comprehension and production of discourse, finding that familiarity of Spanish students with the story of Don Quixote contributed to their relative fluency. Other researchers say that we don’t even have to go as far as having culturally specific knowledge. Willis and Willis (2007:218) found that “abstract topics that would motivate us (language teachers) to talk in a classroom do not always guarantee our students’ interest. But talking about concrete, even mundane things can be surprisingly fruitful.” Students do respond better to material that they can relate to, and that has some relevance to their lives. Chambers (1999: 37) says, "If the teacher is to motivate pupils to learn, then relevance has to permeate activities". It is a central claim in this thesis that the message and didactic instruction in proverbs are relevant to the students’ lives, and so the study and discussion of these proverbs can help to make the classroom environment more interesting and so contribute to student motivation.

2.4 Rationale for Task-based teaching in the Korean EFL Classroom

The main goal of EFL classes in Korean universities is to provide opportunities for the students to speak the language. It is a sad reality that even though all Korean university students have had at least 10 years of “school” English (4 years of elementary school English, 3 years of middle school English, and 3 years of high school English) many of them are still unable to speak English.
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It is claimed in this thesis that task-based learning lessons that use proverbs as material for classroom discussions about culture will encourage communication between the students, and act as an important stimulus to aid communicative competence. The TBL classroom activities that are introduced require the students to use the language that they already know. In my task-based EFL class centered on proverbs, the students are required to discuss the cultural implications of selected proverbs in groups, and then create role play dialogs or mini dramas using the proverbs they discussed. At the end of the lesson each group is required to perform their "creations". A fuller explanation of how this is done is explained in Chapter 7 where a task-based lesson is introduced.

As a preparation for this thesis, I used this methodology in several EFL classes and have obtained very encouraging results with regards to better class participation, and also student satisfaction. The desire of the students to create more interesting dialogs than other groups proved to be a driving force motivating the students to participate more fully in their in-class group discussions. Another advantage that was found was that task-based instruction that required teamwork allowed for peer tutoring (there is always someone in a group who is better than the other students), and it also encouraged students to take greater responsibility for their own language learning. It will be shown that this kind of language teaching is effective in the Korean university EFL communication classroom.

It should be made clear that a TBL methodology which uses proverbs to teach culture and to stimulate classroom interaction amongst intermediate Korean EFL students is not meant as a substitute for any other basic EFL classroom instruction using established teaching methodologies. It rather has the goal to be used as a complementary technique. It should also be made clear that there is no claim in this thesis that this is the only way to teach culture to Korean EFL students. However, it will be shown in Chapter 7 that it is an effective way, offering multiple benefits.

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16 It should also be possible to use other materials for subjects of discussion. Movies, poems, or other forms of literature might also be used as material to introduce culture. However, using this kind of material does not fulfill the goal of introducing the students to an English paremiological minimum which is one of the requirements of cultural literacy.
CHAPTER 3 Current Research on English and Korean Proverbs.

Introduction

3.1 The origin of proverbs
3.2 Defining the proverb – Formal characteristics of a proverb
3.3 Dictionary definitions of the proverb - English
3.4 Dictionary definitions of the proverb - Korean
3.5 A linguistically founded proverb definition based on Norrick’s Feature Matrix
3.6 Function of Proverbs
3.7 The ability to recognize and interpret proverbs
3.8 My definition of the proverb

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to introduce a task-based teaching methodology that uses proverbs to introduce English culture to tertiary Korean EFL communication students. Several scholars have already suggested the benefit of using proverbs in the EFL classroom. Ciccarelli (1996) for example, suggested that we could use proverbs as materials for discussion saying that we could focus on how the proverbs are different from or similar to proverbs in the student’s native language, and how any differences that are revealed might help to show the historical and cultural background.

Using proverbs as a way to explore culture also provides a way to analyze the stereotypes about and misperceptions of the culture, as well as a way for students to explore the values that are often represented in the proverbs of their native culture.

This chapter, therefore, offers a review of proverb scholarship today. In the first part of the chapter, existing definitions of the proverb and its formal characteristics are discussed, and a new definition of a proverb is given. Following on from this, there is a discussion about the proverbial functions. In the last part of the chapter there is a discussion on important considerations in the interpretation of English and Korean proverbs, and also arguments that support the rationale for using proverbs as teaching material to introduce culture in the language classroom are made.
3.1 The origin of proverbs

Proverbs exist in every country and language, and they reflect an accumulation of wisdom passed on down through the ages. They come to us from the wit of one, or the experience of many. Hernandi and Steen (1999) call them

Brief, memorable, intuitively convincing, and socially sanctioned guidelines... (which help us) frame the way we look at a situation, and encourage us adopt a certain cognitive perspective. (1999:8)

Proverbs survive because they effectively communicate the values and attitudes of society. They are, in reality, tools of social manipulation, and are often an indirect means of social control. The didactic function of proverbs can apply in a number of situations, and more often than not, they are a method through which the older generation passes its “cognitive and moral tenets” to the next. They are “intuitively convincing sayings for gently guiding the young” (Hernandi and Steen, 1999:9). However, they can also be thought of as a higher authority used by a person who wants to influence his friend’s behavior, and does so indirectly, by calling on this higher authority to educate, advise, warn, or criticize. All proverbs are based on direct or indirect experiences, and come about due to the ability of humans to notice certain trends or patterns concerning the affairs of humans, or the natural world. For example, the proverb *A stitch in time saves nine* is a proverb that most likely came from the experience of a tailor, seamstress, or housewife who often had to repair clothes. Obviously somebody realized that if you repair a tear opportunely you save yourself a lot of work later on, and that the importance of opportune stitching does not only apply to sewing, but can also apply to a whole host of situations.

*Little strokes fell great oaks* most likely came from the experience of, or from someone observing, a wood-cutter in days gone by who realized that even a great oak tree can be felled with the constant chopping of the little strokes of an axe. It became a wise saying when somebody realized that the experience learned in chopping down a big tree can be applied to a number of situations: namely that a big task cannot be done in one go, and requires the endurance and hard work of the constant chopping of the little strokes of an axe.
Chapter 3 Current Research on English and Korean Proverbs

A number of our English proverbs also come from the Bible:

*A leopard cannot change its spots.* Jeremiah 13:23

*Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.* Proverbs 6:6.

*He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*
Proverbs 13:24

Other sources of English proverbs can be found in the works Shakespeare and other literary figures, although it is not certain that these writers actually created the proverbs used in their works.

- *Brevity is the soul of wit* (in *Hamlet by Shakespeare*).
- *Cowards die many times before their deaths* (in *Julius Caesar by Shakespeare*).
- *A rose by any other name would smell as sweet* (in *Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare*).
- *A little learning is a dangerous thing* (in *Essay on Criticism by Alexander Pope*).
- *A thing of beauty is a joy for ever* (in *the poem Endymion by John Keats*).
- *Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone* (in *the poem Solitude by Ella Wheeler Wilcox*).

Due to the fact that proverbs reflect the experience of human life, it is natural that new proverbs are constantly being created. The computing world has given us *Garbage in, garbage out* and *What you see is what you get*, and the business world has given us, *There's no such thing as a free lunch.* And there are even examples of the modernization of old proverbs to fit current reality e.g. *Don't store all your data on one disk* as opposed to *Don't put all your eggs in one basket.* Korean proverbs have their origins in the life of the common people, too. A proverb with a similar message to *A stitch in time saves nine* is:

*He fills with a shovel what should have been filled with a hoe.* This proverb also stresses the need for opportune action, and is based on the experience of rice farmers.
who realized that if you hold off filling the hole in your rice paddy with a hoe, you may end up using a spade. (see Appendix 2 - Proverb 148)

There are no Korean proverbs that originate in the Bible; however, there are some proverbs which can be traced back to the Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian teachings.

The Taoists saw the universe as being the balance between Eum, or the negative (in Chinese, yin) and Yang, or the positive (also Yang in Chinese) and they saw all changes in nature as manifestations of the relationships between these. There are a number of Korean proverbs that reflect the belief in the natural balance of the universe and the basic principle of cause and effect. Consider:

*If one month is long, another month is short.*

*If lightning flashes, there will be a clap of thunder.*

*Will a tree without roots have any leaves?*

*Boats sail only when the wind blows.*

Buddhism tried to educate people on the importance of humility through giving examples from nature.

*The riper the grain the lower it hangs its head.* (The more mature and truer a person becomes the more s/he shows humility.

*The high branches are more easily broken.* (Be careful not to become arrogant.)

*A full bottle of water does not make a sound.* (A person with wisdom has the humility to know when to speak and when not to speak.)

Confucian teachings say that all other virtues can be derived from filial piety so it is natural that there are a number of Korean proverbs dealing with this subject. Consider:

*Any of the ten fingers will hurt if it is bitten.* (All children are dear to their parents.)

*Filial sons are born to good parents.* (A son learns his filial duties from his own parents who are filial to their parents.)
It is difficult to find any Korean proverbs in the works of historical literary figures, mainly because the upper class tended not to use proverbs which they felt were vulgar expressions of the common people. There are a number of English and Korean proverbs that also have their origin in other languages, but often it is difficult to trace where the proverb actually originated. Because of the inherent uncertainty concerning the origin of a particular proverb, in this thesis I will accept any proverb that is known, and freely used by the citizens of each country as being a proverb of that country. So an English proverb will be defined as, “Any proverb, regardless of the origin, which British people recognize and use when they speak or write the English language.” And a Korean proverb will be defined as, “Any proverb, regardless of the origin, which the Korean people recognize and use when they speak or write the Korean language.”

3.2 Defining the proverb – Formal characteristics of a proverb

Reviewing some of the literature on proverbs has led me to realize that giving a suitable explanation as to what a proverb is, is not an easy task.

Taylor in his book The Proverb (1931) wrote over 200 pages trying to define the proverb. Despite these 200 plus pages, he is mostly quoted today for his statement that, “an incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not...Let us be content with recognizing that a proverb is a saying current among the folk.”

Norrick (1985) says that “Proverbs are consistently described as self-contained, pithy, traditional expressions with didactic content and fixed, poetic form.” (Norrick 1985:31). Examination of existing proverbs shows that being traditional expressions, having didactic content, and fixed, poetic form, are important, but not essential attributes of a proverb. However, the words “self-contained and pithy” do deserve some discussion.

Norrick (1985) suggests that he got the idea that proverbs are self contained from Seiler. (1922: 2) “Being self-contained” means that none of their essential grammatical units may be replaced. Norrick says that Seiler made this definition in
order to distinguish proverbs from proverbial phrases. Milner (1969a), Barley (1972), and Abrahams (1972) say that a proverb should be a full statement. This means that it must have at least one logical proposition, and one or more arguments. Consider the following: *Easy come, easy go.* The logical proposition in this proverb is “easy come” and the conclusion is “easy go”. If you get something quickly and easily, then you will often lose it quickly.

*Forewarned, forearmed.* – The logical proposition in this proverb “forewarned”. And the argument is “forearmed.” If you know that something is going to happen in advance then you can prepare for it.

However, proverbs often contain more than one propositional unit.

*Time and tide wait for no man.* This proverb has two logical propositions. “Time and tide” and the conclusion is “wait for no man.” There are certain things in life, like time and tide that human beings cannot control.

Norrick’s idea that proverbs are “pithy” is also used in many current definitions of a proverb. However, there can be millions of pithy sentences that could never be mistaken for proverbs. Therefore, pithiness itself cannot be a major consideration in defining a proverb although it has certainly helped in the passing down of each proverb from generation to generation.

We can see in a definition of Korean proverbs given by Kim (1992:27) that there are many similarities as to how Koreans define a proverb:

1) A proverb is short in its form.
2) The subject of proverbs is the people.
3) The material of proverbs is our lives.
4) A proverb is expressed in popular language.
5) A proverb is a kind of condensed poem communicated by word of mouth.
6) A proverb is a guiding principle in our lives.

Mieder (1999:2) asked what he called “members of a sophisticated and highly educated society” to write their definition of a proverb on a piece of paper without
any previous discussion of proverbs whatsoever. Based on words that occur "from four to twenty times in his collected definitions, Mieder later provided a "composite definition saying: a proverb is "a phrase, saying, sentence, statement, or expression of the folk which contains above all wisdom, truth, morals, experience, lessons, and advice concerning life and which has been handed down from generation to generation." (1999:5)

3.3 Dictionary definitions of the proverb – English

In the OED (2002), a proverb is defined as being "A short pithy saying in common and recognized use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all; an adage, a wise saying."

The Collins Cobuild English language dictionary (1987:1156) says that a proverb "is a short sentence that people often quote and that gives advice or tells you something about human life and problems in general."

In the Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture (1992:1058) a proverb is defined as: "A short well-known, supposedly wise, saying usually in simple language."

From these three definitions we could conclude that a proverb is short, in common use, often metaphorical, and expresses some truth about human life and problems in general. It is interesting to note that two of the five main attributes, "morals and lessons", mentioned in Mieder's composite definition, wisdom, truth, morals, experience, lessons, are completely absent from the dictionary definitions. The Cobuild dictionary doesn't even mention the word wisdom which is one of the main attributes that most people consider that a proverb should have. Even the Longman dictionary qualifies the word wise by adding "supposedly." We can speculate that this is due to people's changing beliefs and attitudes, and many people no longer accept all proverbs to have "Bible-like" authority unless they are actually based on empirical proof.
3.4 Dictionary definitions of the proverb – Korean

The Korean word for proverb is “seok-dam”. The definition of “seok-dam” in Minjung’s Essence Korean-Korean dictionary (2002:1349) is: Easy words of “kyeok-on” or advice which have been passed down among the common people from long ago. I wrote the word “kyeok-on” here because the English translation of the word “kyeok-on” as shown in the Korean-English dictionary is a maxim, an adage, a proverb, a saying, an apothegm.

The Multimedia Korean-Korean Dictionary 4.0 (1997 CD Rom) gives the following definition of the word seok-darn (proverb): “Words of indirect instruction; words which are critical in their content which contain a lesson and a certain amount of satire.”

The introduction of the word satire to explain the meaning of the Korean word for proverb is interesting because it reveals certain attitudes that many Koreans seem to have towards a number of their proverbs. Koreans, as a people, have suffered a lot during their nearly five thousand year history. Accepting their lot in life as their fate, has caused them to develop an extremely satirical approach to life, and it is this that can often be seen in their proverbs.

3.5 A linguistically founded proverb definition based on Norrick’s Feature Matrix

Barley (1974 a: 880) advocated a componential analytic approach to the classification of proverbs suggesting that one should “forget the genres and concentrate on the features” in defining a proverb. Barley suggests that the proverb be defined and related to other items of folklore by arranging a set of features into a matrix. Each feature is a + or a − or a +/- sign indicating the presence, absence or optional presence of a given classification property. In a feature matrix one thing to bear in mind is that all the features included in the definition of a given genre are of equal importance. Of course, this is not so, and could be overcome by using different print size for the signs. For example + + + features could be used to indicate in the case of a feature being present whether it was more or less important. Based on Barley’s idea, Norrick also made a feature matrix, and in it he uses + and − in the same way as
Barley, but uses a 0 to indicate the optional presence. This is what is done in this thesis.

Norrick’s (1985:73) feature matrix to define the proverb and related genres are originally based on 11 properties. However, one more property, “anecdotal” has been added in this thesis in order to account for the Korean type of phraseological unit “Go-Sa-Song-Oh” (anecdotal proverb-like sayings). This new property in the feature matrix is the only proverbial type that is absolutely fixed (meaning that there can be no variation at all). An explanation of the 11+1 properties is given from now:

1) Potential free conversational turn – Norrick (1981:5), defines in his work the notion of free conversational turn as a “discrete contribution to an ongoing conversation which the speaker ends voluntarily (i.e. without being interrupted).”

2) Conversational – is just commenting on the conversational nature of the proverb. Norrick says that this feature distinguishes the proverb from riddles, jokes, tales and songs, since they “interrupt the flow of conversation.” The proverb on the other hand is “usually woven into the fabric of the conversation.”

3) Traditional – Traditionally means that they have had a common use over a period of time. This separates proverbs from freely formed utterances and from authored items like slogans and aphorisms.

4) Spoken – this is a defining feature of a proverb because proverbs are never sung (unless in opera) and although they appear in written works they are usually said.

5) Fixed Form – as opposed to jokes and tales which are free form.

6) Didactic – the proverb always has a didactic tendency otherwise it is not a proverb.

7) General – The proverb is usually, but not always, general and impersonal in meaning even when said to somebody. Curses and taunts on the other hand are directed at a particular hearer.

8) Figurative – The proverb is usually metaphorical.

9) Prosodic – Poetic form is not an essential attribute of a proverb, but Norrick includes it in his feature matrix so as to be able to separate proverbs from songs, tales, and jokes.

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10) Entertaining – jokes, tales and song are actually designed to entertain in some way. Proverbs may do so, but they only do so incidentally.

11) Humorous – The presence of humor is the only feature distinguishing the joke from the tale.

12) Anecdotal – some Korean proverb-like sayings, Go-Sa-Song O (Set phrases of historical fact (allusion) or anecdotal proverb-like sayings), have their origins in anecdotes.

Norrick made this feature matrix with the intent to distinguish the proverb from all other traditional, literacy and linguistic genres or items. However, in this thesis it will be used it to distinguish between what Gläser (1998) and Moon (1998:4-5) call “sentence-like phraseological units (or sentence idioms).

Table 3.1 Feature Matrix – For sentence-like phraseological units

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<tr>
<th>Potential free</th>
<th>Conversational</th>
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<th>Spoken</th>
<th>Fixed Form</th>
<th>Didactic</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Figurative</th>
<th>Prosodic</th>
<th>Entertaining</th>
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Although the idea for this table was taken from Norrick, I disagree with his classification of quotations and winged words which he calls aphorisms. Norrick says that aphorisms can be separated from proverbs because proverbs are not “authored.” I disagree with this because although it is true than many of the proverbs we know today have no known author, they must at sometime have had an author. Norrick classifies an aphorism as not being conversational, traditional or spoken and it is obvious that they can be. That’s why they have been classified in Table 4 with a “+” and an “0” respectively. Norrick says that traditionality means that they have had a common use over a period of time, and that it is this which separates proverbs from freely formed utterances, and from authored items like slogans and aphorisms. However, the almost instantaneous dissemination of information all over the world through the Internet has speeded up this process, and there is an acceptance of a number of modern expressions as proverbs. Consider again the examples given in the introduction of this chapter of new proverbs such as Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise, and Garbage in, garbage out. What you see is what you get of the computer world, and There is no such thing as a free lunch of business society. And there are even examples of the modernization of old proverbs to fit current reality e.g. Don’t store all your data on one disk as opposed to Don’t put all your eggs in one basket. These kinds of examples obviously negate the requirement of traditionality for proverbial status.

Based on his feature matrix Norrick gives a definition of proverbs saying that: “The proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning.” Norrick (1985: 78). A distinction between English and Korean proverbs was made in the feature matrix to show that there is no real difference between English and Korean proverbs in terms of classification, although Korean proverbs tend to have a less definite prosodic form, something that will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Using Norrick’s feature matrix, it should be possible to clearly distinguish between proverbs and ordinary idioms. For many people the distinction in English is not clear,
and many phraseological like sentence units which are really idioms, are listed in a number of proverb dictionaries and vice-versa. It is important to note here that due to the figurative content of most proverbs nearly all proverbs are idiomatic; however, not all idioms are proverbial due to the fact that they lack didactic content.

The feature matrix does a good job of defining old proverbs, but it doesn’t clearly tell us what to do with new proverbs. As history progresses, and as the way we live our lives changes, we can find some older proverbs which have fallen into disuse, and find some new recently created proverbs as mentioned earlier on in section 3.1.

3.6 Function of proverbs

Proverbs have a number of different functions. Many give advice on what course of action to take. Some are used for social or moral training, and have the purpose to educate people on how to behave in their daily lives e.g. be kind, patient, honest, diligent etc. Some proverbs are used just to criticize. Many times they are just used to rationalize or justify a past action of the speaker. There are proverbs however, which have no easily recognizable didactic content, but are just used to sum up situations based on past experience and past judgments. These proverbs often indirectly recommend a course of action, or serve as a past precedent for present or future actions. Weather proverbs especially fall into this category. Consider

Red sky at night, shepherd's delight; red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning

The function of this proverb can be just to comment on what the weather is going to be like, but it could also be a warning/advice on whether or not to prepare to go on a planned picnic the next day, because the weather will be good/bad.

The underlying function of most proverbs is almost always to instruct or warn although certain proverbs can have a multiple function according to the context. For example, the underlying function of the proverb “Let sleeping dogs lie.” is to warn somebody that it is better not to do anything that will stir up unnecessary trouble. “That person is dangerous so leave him alone.” or “I'm not upset at the moment, but if you continue to do or say what you are doing then things might change very
quickly; but it could also be said to comfort someone: “That person has his own
problems, and so don’t waste your time on arguing with him.”

Most people think of a proverb as being a wise saying. Lord John Russell describes
proverbs as being “One man’s wit and all men’s wisdom.” (Quotation
Source/reference: unknown.) Hernadi and Steen (1999:2) say that they prefer the
word “advice” to “wisdom” because they see many proverbs as been just “strategies
for thought and conduct rather than timeless truths.” They base this distinction on the
fact that you can often find apparently contradictory proverbs shown in Table 2.3.

Table 3.2 Contradictory English and Korean Proverbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absence makes the heart grow fonder</th>
<th>Out of sight. Out of mind.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All good things come to those who wait.</td>
<td>Time and tide wait for no man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes make the man.</td>
<td>Never judge a book by its cover.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good things come in small packages.</td>
<td>The bigger the better.</td>
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<tr>
<td>He who hesitates is lost.</td>
<td>Act in haste. Repent at leisure.</td>
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<td>Look before you leap.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many hands make light work.</td>
<td>Too many cooks spoil the broth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Even a piece of paper is lighter if two people carry it. (Korean)</td>
<td>Too many oarsmen will make the boat go up the mountain. (Korean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice makes perfect.</td>
<td>All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence is golden.</td>
<td>The squeaky wheel gets the grease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re never too old to learn.</td>
<td>You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proverb advocates do not think that all proverbs are absolute truths. They argue that
such contradictory proverb pairs only show that each proverb does not have a universal
applicability. The truth is only relevant within a certain context. For example, for a
large number of happily married couples, “absence really does make the heart grow
fonder.” However, for those experiencing problems in their married lives, “out of
sight” may really mean “out of mind.” Sometimes the proverb doesn’t really refer to a
truth at all, but rather tries to guide us when we make a decision about something. Especially when the function of a proverb is to advise, they often offer conflicting advice. Hernandi and Steen (1999) argue that they remind us of the possible courses of action that we can take, but they do not tell us which the better of the available options is. Consider, for example, the advice on just when to make a decision. Should we look a little more carefully before we leap? But might the hesitation displayed when we do mean that we lose everything. Proverbs often offer us possible choices, but it is we humans who have to make the final decision on how we act. However, what proverbs can often do is to help us to justify the course of action that we have taken. Apart from having these kinds of functions, proverbs also have a function within culture itself to help pass on the traditional beliefs and values. As Williams (2000:15) says, “Not only do they educate new members of the culture, but they reinforce previously held messages and encourage the development of novel understandings of the code.”

3.7 The ability to recognize and interpret proverbs

A study of proverbs, unlike a study of idioms, does not require deep structural analysis, because we are comparing complete sentences and ideas. With pure idioms, like spill the beans or kick the bucket, it is impossible to guess the meaning from the words themselves. In this kind of idiom, the idiom is ‘not the sum of its parts.’ Although a proverb can also be thought of as a sentence idiom, (not all proverbs are idiomatic.) Proverbs differ from idioms in that they can be understood to a certain degree out of context. Lakoff and Turner (1989) make two basic assumptions about proverbs. The first is that proverbs are deeply embedded in culture and, the second is that people’s understanding of proverbs operates by a metaphorical mapping principle. The first assumption suggests that proverbs are always familiar to people. In other words they claim that people do not need to be told that a proverb is a proverb. They just know. This is even true for intermediate and higher level L2 learners who are able to recognize a proverb even if they don’t know what it means exactly. And it also suggests that proverbs typically comment on uniquely human concerns. However, merely recognizing a proverb and understanding the intended message do not always go hand in hand. This is evident from the various interpretations given for the proverb A rolling stone gathers no moss. According to
this proverb, the “stone is rolling”, and because of this “it gathers no moss”. The “rolling stone” is usually taken to symbolize a person who is on the move. And “gathers no moss” is usually taken to symbolize money or possessions or sometimes even problems. However, for some speakers the ‘moss’ signifies something negative. Moon (1998) discusses the evaluation of this proverb as being potentially ambiguous.

I do not agree with Lakoff and Turner that proverbs are always familiar to people. However, they do seem to become more recognizable as one gets older. General empirical work (Honeck, Sowry, & Voegtle, 1978) Nippold, Martin, and Erskine (1988) indicates that until age 11 or so children are quite poor at recognizing and interpreting proverbs presented in irrelevant-context situations and as people become older their ability to recognize a proverb as a proverb seems to improve. It is a fact that most adults are able to process the meaning of most proverbs quite well. Honeck & Temple (1994) say that proverb processing requires creativity as is implied by the ability to make up novel proverbs, to understand proverbs despite their occurrence in a virtually unlimited number of contexts, and to apply proverbs to anything. There may be multiple nuances of meaning, but native speakers of the country of the proverb of origin can usually understand that meaning. And for many proverbs, even a non-native speaker seems to have an innate ability to work out in his/her own mind the intended message of these proverbs. The fact that proverbs exist, and are still in wide use, as is shown by our corpus analysis, backs up this claim. Take a well known proverb, *When in Rome, do as the Romans do*. We are all able to picture in our minds how this proverb came into existence. We are all able to guess the intended message of the proverb. We can imagine that long ago somebody went to Rome and was quite surprised at how differently the Romans did things, and when asking for advice on how to behave, we can imagine that somebody suggested that it might be wise just to follow the customs of the culture he was in, in this case, Rome.
3.8 My definition of the proverb

Based on what has been discussed hitherto, I venture to offer my own definition of the proverb. "Proverbs can be seen as useful, brief, and purportedly wise generalizations about life which are usually said with the intent to advise or comfort the hearer or speaker in order to effect if not a change in behavior, at least a change in attitude." For me the "poetic form" of Norrick or Kim Byong-woong, and the "in common use" of Mieder's definition, are not important because that although many proverbs have poetic form, many do not. This is true for Korean proverbs as well. Although there are a number of proverbs which follow the Korean poetic form (which is based on meter, rather than rhyme), there are also many proverbs which do not appear to do this. I decided upon this definition because although the existing definitions of the proverb do talk about the speech act function of advising, none of them define the proverb in relation to whom it is being said to, or sufficiently explain why proverbs are used.
CHAPTER 4 Culture in Language Teaching

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Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1(1.2), it is one of the hypotheses in this thesis that commonly used proverbs are useful tools in the teaching of culture in a Korean EFL classroom, and a knowledge of these proverbs contributes to cultural literacy. EFL pedagogies and proverb scholarship was already discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. This chapter will discuss the importance of teaching culture in EFL classrooms. In the first part of this chapter, a definition of culture will be given. Following on from this there will be a discussion on the role of culture in language teaching and the importance of the teacher himself/herself becoming culturally aware. Finally discussion will turn to the types of culture there are, and the type of culture that can be taught using proverbs as classroom material for a task-based Korean tertiary EFL classroom.

4.1 Culture defined

What is culture? There is very little agreement on this subject, and arriving at a precise definition of culture is nearly impossible. Culture is made up of various levels. Scott Moreau (1995:121-122) claims that there are three fundamental levels of culture. The universals we share as human beings, the things that are culturally particular to a specific group, and the things of an individual that are idiosyncratic. This is a very broad definition and contributes only a little in helping our understanding of culture.

The problem in making any definition of culture is that it is always multi-leveled. There is little argument that there is such a thing as British culture or Korean culture. It also seems clear that reference can be made to smaller units of culture, such as
youth culture or even school culture. However, an attempt to identify culture as belonging to people of a specific cultural group suggests that we are actually able to separate people into cultural groups. Of course, to do this definitively in today’s world is not possible. The reason for this is that members of a cultural group do not necessarily belong to that group 100%. For example, Indians living in London can be simultaneously members of both Indian and British cultural groups, and within any culture further subdivisions are possible. These may be national, linguistic, racial, or religious and may cover areas such as kinship, economics, education, politics, leisure activities, health, transportation, etc. Scollon (1995:382) points out that there has been a “miniaturization of the concept of culture so that researchers study and write about the culture of the school or even the culture of the classroom.”

Another consideration that needs to be addressed when talking about culture is that it is not static; rather it is a dynamic, and always changing. We must acknowledge that there has been a partial universalization of culture in many countries of the world brought about through the Internet, cable TV, satellite TV, newspapers, magazines and movies. Today, contact with different cultures through this kind of media has led to the assimilation of certain cultural practices of other cultures. Then what do we mean when we talk about culture?

Lado (1957:110) described culture as being “The ways of a people.” Hofstede (1991) says that we may consider culture as a type of mental software which programs us to act in a specific way. He develops the idea that culture is given rather than chosen, and it makes us who we are.

Culture is a total complex, involving 1) our world view, which refers to a set of assumptions through which we filter our perceptions of life; 2) a methodological plan embodying functional, structural, and cognitive elements for applying those assumptions in interpreting and explaining everything around us as well as determining how to live in the world; and 3) the manifestations of the assumptions and methodological plan, seen in the system of living exhibited by the people of the culture (the symbolic and ecological elements). (1991:4)

Jenkins (1992:1) defines culture from the point of view of cultural identity.

Each society has a collection (formal or informal) of social institutions and practices correlating and expressing a common perspective of a group of people sharing an
identifiable set of common or shared experiences... and that the shared significant experiences lead to a common perspective on reality, with associated moral and social values, which are the basis of certain assumptions which are entailed in the common social institutions.

The set of shared experiences that Jenkins talks about gives an identity to the members and results in a shared worldview. Language provides a vehicle for the worldview. People who are not of the same culture do not have the same shared "significant experiences" and so they are considered to be outsiders. For the "insiders", language is a "strong identifying and unifying factor, both as an expression of the common perspective and as a factor in the development or changing of that common perspective." Jenkins (1992:1)

There are some problems in such general statements about culture. If it is true that people growing up in the same culture are influenced by culture, and that it contributes to what Hofstede (1991) calls "a world view" and Jenkins calls "a common perspective on reality due to common or shared experiences" then why aren't all people the same? The effect of having shared common experiences does not result in all people having a common view on reality; although it is possible to identify common values and customs among people from the same culture.

The National Center for Cultural Competence (of America) defines culture as

an "integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations" (Goode, Socklingam, Brown & Jones, 2000:1)

It is interesting that Goode et al. suggest that culture has the ability to be transmitted to succeeding generations because proverbs have been also said to have this goal. (See Chapter 1 section 1.3)

Kramsch (1998:4) attempts to clarify culture by comparing it with nature. She says: "nature refers to what is born and grows organically: culture refers to what has been grown and groomed." When talking about culture Kramsch asks "Are human beings what nature determines them to be from birth or what culture enables them to become through socialization and schooling?" (ibid: 4). The obvious answer is we are both.
All humans have human nature, but culture often conditions the way in which we express this nature. This idea is supported by Lantolf (2007) who claims that

All human development is culturally mediated and therefore passes through other individuals; this includes the symbolic artifacts (for example, grammatical rules) constructed by those individuals. Thus, all development, finds its source, not in the individual, but in others." (2007:4)

Based on the various definitions of culture given so far we can say that culture is "given rather than chosen." It "passes through other individuals" Lantolf (2007). If it passes through other individuals then we have to ask, how does it do this? The obvious answer is through language, and so it is necessary to discuss the relationship of culture and language.

4.2 Culture and language

The relationship between culture and language was briefly discussed in Chapter 1.3. We discussed the varying attitudes to linguistic relativity as stated in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1956), (the idea that culture is inextricably connected with language use and that what we think of the world is to a great extent the product of the categories imposed upon perception and thought by the languages we happen to speak) and suggested that language affects culture, and culture influences the language we speak. Teliya et al. (1998:56) proposed that language is culture bound, a vehicle for culture, and that it is "the means of representing and reproducing culture."

Kramsch (1998:3) develops this idea that language is a vehicle for culture saying that language expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality. She argues that culture is represented and reproduced through language, and it becomes embedded into the language as it is passed down from generation to generation through linguistic and cultural norms of usage. Thus, language itself contributes to the formation of a collective cultural identity.

Other scholars go further than Teliya and Kramsch, and argue that language is culture. Tang (1999) states that

Language is culture...By speaking the language, one automatically (to a greater or lesser extent) aligns oneself with the culture of the language. To speak a language well,
one has to be able to think in that language, and thought is extremely powerful. A person's mind is in a sense the centre of his identity, so if a person thinks in French in order to speak French, one might say that he has, in a way, almost taken on a French identity.” (1999:2)

I do not agree with Tang's deterministic view that "language is culture" and that "a person who thinks and speaks in French takes on a French identity." It is true that language greatly contributes to culture, but it cannot be called culture. For example, I can think in Korean, and speak it fluently. However, I do not see myself as having almost taken on a Korean identity; although it may appear, at times, that I have done so. Proper usage of Korean does require an understanding of social and cultural norms, and sometimes the use of the language itself, forces its user to follow the same norms and linguistic requirements that Koreans would. For example it requires that one uses the Korean honorific expressions to address people who are older. This means that a foreigner who speaks "proper" Korean is forced by the language to take a subservient role, and so it might appear that he/she has taken on a Korean identity. However, it doesn't mean he/she has actually taken on this identity as it does for the Korean native speaker.

It is not the suggestion of this thesis that we try to prepare Korean EFL students for entry into a new culture, or that we try to have them take on British or American identity. The goal of the language classroom discussed in this thesis aims only at helping the students become aware of some of the customs, and the associated moral and social values of the British through discussions on the cultural meaning of proverbs. It must be made clear here that no amount of studying a foreign culture will enable people to escape from the culture that they were brought up in. Hinkel (2001:445) says that “Learners’ awareness of sociocultural frameworks and the concepts they acquire as a part of their socialization into beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors remain predominantly first-culture bound, even for advanced and proficient learners.” and Byram and Morgan (1994:43) point out, “Learners cannot simply shake off their own culture and step into another .... Their culture is part of themselves and created them as social beings.”
I came to Korea in my early twenties, and have lived in Korea for over 30 years. Often people say to me, "Oh, you've become Korean!"17 Of course, it is not so, and it is not something that I want to do. It is just that I am aware of the cultural dos and don'ts of Korean culture, and choose to copy the ones I like, and discard the ones I do not like. It is a conscious choice, and not something that I would do naturally as it would be if I had been brought up in Korea.

4.3 Teaching culture in L2/FL education

Although we cannot say that "language is culture", the importance of understanding the culture of the target language has been emphasized for as long as there has been FL learning. Kramsch (1996) has done a lot of research on the connection between culture and language learning and comments on its importance.

Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them. (1996:1)

She goes on to challenge traditional views about teaching culture saying:

One often reads in teachers' guide-lines that language teaching consists of teaching the four skills 'plus culture'...culture is often seen a mere information conveyed by the language, not as a feature of language itself; cultural awareness becomes an educational objective in itself, separate from language. If however, language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency. (1996:8)

The research of Lessard-Clouston (1997), Cortazzi and Jin (1999), Hinkel (2001), also support Kramsch's view about the importance of culture in the EFL classroom. Lessard-Clouston (1997) claims that:

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted... Culture...is the foundation of communication. (Samovar, Porter, & Jain, 1981, p. 24) We should and do teach our students the L2 or FL culture in our classes

17 When said by a Korean, this is always said as a compliment. However, if an American or British person said it to me, it would probably not be a compliment.
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when our goal is communicative competence. Not only is culture part and parcel of the process, but the educational value of it within L2/FL education is great. (1997:4)

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) maintain that:

It is now broadly accepted in most parts of the world that learning a foreign language is not simply mastering an object of academic study, but is more appropriately focused on learning a means of communication. Communication in real situations is never out of context, and because culture is a part of most contexts, communication is rarely culture-free. Thus, it is now increasingly recognized that language learning, and learning about target cultures cannot realistically be separated. (1999:197)

Hinkel (2001) argues that:

Although attaining linguistic proficiency is essential for learners to be considered communicatively competent, particularly in the case of ESL learners, this is not sufficient. On the whole, to become proficient and effective communicators, learners need to attain second language sociocultural competence. (2001: 443)

Established views about teaching culture in the language classroom, view the teaching of culture to be the transmission of the ways, the attitudes and world views of the people of the target country. But as Kramsch (1996:205) says: “It has usually ignored the fact that a large part of what we call culture is a social construct, the product of self and other perceptions.”

In recent years there has been renewed interest in the ways of looking at the teaching of language and culture. In the past, teachers have been content to focus on the transmission of cultural information, such as the facts of civilization as in the classics of literature and the arts, the foods, fairs, and folklore of everyday life. Kramsch (1996:24) claims that, “This view of culture has favored facts over meanings and has not enabled learners to understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets. It has kept learners unaware of the multiple facets of the target group’s cultural identity. It has left them blind to their own social and cultural identity, implicitly assuming a consensus between their world and the other.” Obviously these issues need to be addressed in the EFL class.

4.3.1 What does teaching culture mean?

Kramsch (1996:205-206) identifies several considerations that are necessary in order to introduce culture in the EFL classroom. I introduce the three of them which are
relevant to the teaching method to be introduced in this thesis. Kramsch claims that we should:

1. Establish a *sphere of interculturality*. Kramsch (1996:205) argues that “the link between linguistic forms and social structure is not given, it has to be established. Similarly, understanding foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one’s own....Thus an intercultural approach to the teaching of culture is radically different from a transfer of information between cultures. It includes a reflection both on the target and on the native culture.”

2. Teach culture as an interpersonal process. Kramsch (1996:205) argues that “If meaning emerges through social interaction, then it is pointless to try and teach fixed, normative phenomena of language use. Rather we should...replace the presentation/prescription of cultural facts and behaviors by the teaching of a process that applies itself to understanding foreignness or ‘otherness’. Teachers should be encouraged to recognize the rupture points in the logic of the explanations brought forth by their students in order to bring cross-cultural aspects of communication to the fore.”

3. Teach culture as difference. When we teach culture it is tempting to fall into the trap of introducing stereotypical ideas, like “the Germans like law and order,” the “French are individualists” “Americans are gregarious” etc. Kramsch (1996:206) suggests that “National traits are but one of the many aspects of a person’s ‘culture’.” Rather than talk about national traits we should discuss questions like “What makes one British?” or “What makes one Korean?”

She acknowledges that there are such things as national characteristics, but they should only be introduced with reference to “other cultural factors such age, gender, regional origin, ethnic background, and social class.” (1996:206)

Since Socrates said “Know yourself” people have understood that we need to know who we are before we can even attempt to try to understand other people. EFL students need to have a good understanding and awareness of “their own cultural
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...myths and realities that ease or impede their understanding of the foreign imagination.” (Kramsch, 1996:216). This gives meaning to the first suggestion of Kramsch, that in teaching culture we should first establish a ‘sphere of interculturality’ because “understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one’s own”

When we talk about teaching culture we can only do so reservedly because in reality we can only teach about it. Culture is something that has to be experienced, and even if you experience it, it does not mean that you “know” it. We must not mistake the teaching of cultural norms to mean the actual teaching of culture. The goal of the EFL classroom is to help the students to become more culturally aware of the ways and values of the people of the target language no matter how various they might be and EFL teachers should try to help their students develop better cultural awareness, and have an understanding of what acceptable and unacceptable ways of behavior are. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999:217), cultural awareness “means being aware of members of another cultural group: their behavior, their expectations, their perspectives and values. It also means attempting to understand their reasons for their actions and their beliefs.”

4.3.2 Becoming a culturally aware teacher

Another important consideration in the teaching of culture is the role and character of the EFL teacher. When we talk about culture in the EFL classroom most scholars think that we are only discussing the culture of the language to be learned, but for those teaching in the East, we have quickly learned that it is just as important for the teacher to understand the culture of the students he is trying to teach, as it is for him to try to teach to the students the culture of the language they are learning. Kramsch (1993) recognizes that there is a difference between ESL and EFL instructors saying:

ESL instructors have tended to transmit with the language “a view of the world that reflects only the values and cultural assumptions of the native speaker’s society. Even as an international language, English instruction transmits such Anglo-Saxon values as efficiency, pragmatism, and individualism, that superimpose themselves on those of the learner’s native culture. Foreign language instructors on the other hand.... Generally transmit with that language a view of the world that mainly promotes the values and cultural assumptions of the L1 educational system. (1993:12)
Kramsch's observation is not entirely true because there are many instances where the EFL teacher also attempts to transmit Anglo-Saxon values. I have observed a number of EFL teachers displaying a cultural superiority complex over the Korean students. They somehow think that being American, Canadian, Australian, or British is better. Unfortunately even some Koreans who speak good English have this attitude about themselves in relation to other Koreans who cannot speak English.

Arrogance displayed by some western EFL teachers in Korea means that they do not even make an effort to try to understand Korean culture. This often causes problems for them in their EFL classrooms. The importance of cross-cultural awareness for native English speaker EFL professionals teaching in the Far East was discussed by Savvidou (2002), who argued that “increased awareness of the Chinese culture is an essential factor in EFL teaching, enabling teachers to interpret behaviour, identify learning styles, and help students make the transition to a western model of education.” Thus, in order to help students cross the linguistic and cultural divide, the ability of teachers to overcome their own underlying prejudices should not be underestimated.

This idea is supported by Liu (2001). In a study he did, he showed that something as simple as knowing a student’s name, can affect language acquisition. He argued that,

In China, names are the mirror of society. An example of their cultural importance is demonstrated by the fact that between members of a shared culture, names are an invaluable source of prior information, which not only confer identity but also reflect a particular culture and ethnicity. For the EFL teacher, a lack of shared cultural knowledge can create confusion and frustration, tensions that act as obstacles to language learning.” Liu (2001)

The importance of EFL teachers needing cross-cultural understanding in the EFL classroom, cannot be emphasized enough, and Korean students are not unlike Chinese students in that they tend to respond to teachers who understand Korean culture better.

Koreans are a proud people, but we should not mistake pride for arrogance. Humility is a highly held virtue in Korean culture. There is both an English proverb and a Korean proverb touching on the subject of arrogance. The English proverb “Pride
comes before a fall” is a direct warning against the dangers of being too proud. The Korean proverb “The grown barley plant bows its head.” also has a similar signification, but the didactic advice is more subtle, which is often the Korean/eastern way. The Korean proverb is a gentle hint that if you are a mature person, you will naturally be humble, and bow your head just as the mature barley plant bows its head.

The teaching of culture in the EFL classroom should always be done with humility and be treated as a meeting of two equal cultures. There is no-one who could argue that one culture is inherently better than another. They are just different. As Kramsch (1996:29) claims “The language classroom should therefore be viewed as the privileged site of cross-cultural fieldwork, in which the participants are both informants and ethnographers.” The learning and teaching of culture is therefore a partnership.

It was argued earlier on in this chapter that a better understanding of one’s own culture contributes to the understanding of the target culture. Because of this, EFL teachers often try to encourage students to reflect on their own culture in relation to the target culture so as to help their cultural understanding. An American colleague of mine, Dr. Colford, who teaches a university level Intercultural communication course at Sun Moon University, recently asked a new student in her class the question “Who are you?” The student replied, “I’m 25 years old.” Dr. Colford knew that the student hadn’t understood her question, but she used the opportunity to have a short discussion on the importance of age in Korean society, and discuss the differences between American and Korean attitudes towards age.

There are some areas of culture which are more sensitive, and discussions about these things can lead to tension. It stands to reason that a tense classroom climate can undermine learning and demotivate learners (MacIntyre, 1999, and Young, 1999). If the teacher is commenting on a cultural trait that he/she considers to be negative, the students can easily interpret the teacher’s observations to be unwarranted criticism, no matter how objectively he/she tries to introduce them. Western students would tend to react to what they feel to be unwarranted criticism by challenging the teacher. However, in Korea, students have been taught that the “teacher is king”. And the king
should never be openly challenged. Even if they had the same feelings a western student had, most of them would deal with it in a different way. They would close up and be reluctant to participate in class discussions anymore. Peterson and Coltrane (2003:1) say that cultural information should be presented in a nonjudgmental fashion, in a way that does not place value or judgment on distinctions between students' native culture and the culture explored in the classroom. Kramsch (1993) describes the meeting place of culture in the language classroom as a "third culture" - a neutral space that learners can create and use to explore and reflect on their own and the target culture and language.

EFL teachers have the responsibility to help students understand that cultures are not monolithic. Teachers must allow students to observe and explore cultural interactions from their own perspective to enable them to find their own voices in the second language.

Another danger in the EFL classroom can be called cultural imperialism. All too often the EFL teacher tries to impose his/her own culture on the students. For example, the usual way of addressing a teacher in Korea is to use the teacher's surname, and add the suffix "honorable teacher". It is also acceptable just to say "honorable teacher". I saw one Canadian teacher specifically tell his 11 and 12 year-old students to call him Steve instead of Mr. Bodner. He wanted to let the students know that he thought of them as equals and he was their friend. The students were confused by this. They did call the teacher Steve, but they added on "honorable teacher" saying, "Steve honorable teacher". In the strictly hierarchical society of Korea it is impossible for the student to call the teacher by his/her first name. They are not even allowed to call somebody who is one year older than them by their first name, unless they add "older brother" or "older sister" to the name. If the teacher had insisted on just being called Steve, he would be requiring the students to completely reject their own cultural norms. Saville-Troike (1992:280) picks up on this point and says, that "sociolinguistic rules can be talked about, but it should be left to the learners' own decision to adopt them or not for productive use."
Because of the possible dangers of misunderstandings in an intercultural communication language class Post and Rathet (1996) have even suggested that we use native culture as cultural content in the English language classroom. They argue that:

Further support for using students' own culture content in English language classrooms comes from schema theory research. A wide range of studies has shown that using content familiar to students, rather than unfamiliar content, can influence student comprehension of a second language (see, for example Anderson and Barnitz 1984, Johnson 1981, Long 1990, Pearson-Casanave 1984). Research has demonstrated that unfamiliar religious (Carrell 1987), folklore (Johnson 1981), and literary (Winfield and Barnes-Felfeli 1982) information can impede students' learning of the linguistic information used to convey the content. (1996:12)

Post and Rathet are concerned about overburdening; especially lower level students, with both new linguistic content and new cultural information simultaneously. They argue that the use of familiar cultural content while teaching English can reduce what Winfield and Barnes-Felfeli call the "processing load" that students experience. The findings in this thesis also show that it is beneficial to discuss the native language culture in EFL classrooms, but it is argued that the native culture should only be used as a stepping stone for discussions about the target culture.

4.4 Using of proverbs to introduce positive culture

As mentioned in the introduction, it is one of the goals of this thesis to introduce a methodology that uses proverbs to introduce culture. This means that we have to clarify what culture we are trying to teach in the language classroom. This is often difficult because as discussed earlier in the chapter, (section 4.2) culture is difficult to pin down. The idea of a partial universalization of culture brought about by access to the Internet, cable TV, satellite TV, newspapers, magazines and movies has already been introduced. I argued that exposure to different cultures through this kind of media has led to the assimilation, in varying degrees, of certain cultural practices of other cultures. With such a variety of exposure we are forced to ask ourselves, whose culture and even whose language is it we are trying to teach? This is particularly true for the English language which is spoken throughout the world. In the modern world talking about a target culture can be vague because it is very difficult to delineate
culture. Almost every society in the world is multicultural, and contains a number of subcultural groups all which have their own idiosyncrasies and cultural practices.

Due to the large-scale migration around the world we must recognize that cultural boundaries have become much hazier, and because of this there has, in recent years, been an ongoing discussion concerning two concepts of authenticity and appropriateness when talking about culture. Kramsch (1998) comments that

Two factors are putting the notion of authenticity and appropriateness in language learning into question. First, the diversity of authenticities within one national society, depending on such contextual variables as age, social status, gender, ethnicity, race; what is authentic in one context might be inauthentic in another. Second the undesirability of imposing on learners a concept of authenticity that might devalue their own authentic selves as learners. Thus cultural appropriateness may need to be replaced by the concept of appropriation, whereby learners make a foreign language their own by adopting and adapting it to their own needs and interests. (1998:81)

Because of these diversities of authenticities it is difficult for EFL pedagogues to know what culture to teach. As Kramsch (1998:83) points out in modern urban communities there are often no universally or "nationally accepted moral principles."

However, despite the existence of a multicultural society in a nation state, we must recognize that there is still a dominant culture which is built around the people who form the majority, and who speak the main language used in that culture. It is argued in this thesis that a student will profit from knowing the norms and values of the people of the dominant culture.

The reality of teaching a 16 week communication course in a Korean university, forces the teacher to look realistically about how much cultural information can be introduced. We cannot hope to teach everything about culture in the limited time we are given in university level EFL courses in Korea. The most we can hope to do is introduce some general cultural tendencies and norms. And even this is a challenge in itself because of the numerous levels of culture. It is the central argument of this thesis that the study and discussion of proverbs in the EFL class is a good way to introduce culture to students, and help them understand the attitudes, values, and mindset of the people of the target culture.
There are other benefits, for using proverbs in the language classroom, too. For example, proverbs are a good way to help the students become better aware of their own culture, and not just the culture of the target language. It was pointed out in the last section that the EFL teacher may sometimes run into problems when he/she comments on a cultural trait that he/she considers being negative. The advantage of using proverbs to introduce culture in Korea is that it is a culturally attuned teaching methodology in that it is not the "foreign" teacher who is making these comments on the character of the people, rather it is a higher authority (ancestors). This indirect approach helps to remove any bad feeling that might be caused by the students' ego defense mechanism. It allows the teacher to call on a higher authority and say, "This is the advice your ancestors gave you. Is it relevant today? Is this one aspect of the Korean character? Does this reflect Korean values today? Do you think that this will apply to western culture, or is it a specifically Korean value?"

One thing that needs to be clarified is that I am not advocating the study of only English proverbs, but also the study of Korean proverbs using English. This will help the Korean students to fulfill the condition that understanding foreign culture requires evaluating that culture in relation to their own. The introduction, comparison and discussion of Korean proverbs in the classroom will also help the EFL teacher understand the culture of the students he is trying to teach.

Although most of the proverbs of a culture offer an insight into the way the people of that culture think and categorize the world, they are by no means the only way to understand a culture. Also not all proverbs have cultural content. For example, two English proverbs *Easier said than done* and *Easy come, easy go* do not contain any culturally specific information, as such, and they could be said to any person of the human race. However, many proverbs do contain cultural information and they can be thought of as a key which can help FL learners to understand the culture of the language they are trying to learn. Williams (2000) supports the idea that proverbs are good cultural texts.
are interesting in that their message sometimes has an addresser and addressee which are the same, thus the message is not novel, but is already known to both the addresser and addressee. Lotman calls the transmission of such 'known' texts autocommunication (Lotman 1990). In autocommunication the addressee and addresser are the same. Autocommunicative texts, such as proverbs fulfill a mnemonic function within a culture. Not only do they educate new members of the culture, but they reinforce previously held messages and encourage the development of novel understandings of the code. (2000:15)

Williams is talking about the education of new members of the culture by other people within the same culture, and he is not talking about using proverbs in a L2/FL situation. However, there is no reason why proverbs cannot be used to educate people of a different culture. If they are used in this way, then Williams’ views need to be slightly modified. For example, in the L2/FL learning situation with some L2/FL proverbs, the message will not be novel, but the form will be, whereas in other proverbs, both the message and form may differ. These types of contrastive issues can naturally be dealt with in classroom discussions. We will show that the students find it quite interesting to see how different metaphors are used to give a similar message.

Williams says that the very function of a proverb is to pass down what I will call "positive" culture from one generation to the next, and educate new members of the culture on how to live their lives. The “term “positive” as opposed to “negative” culture used here, requires further discussion. Proverbs in themselves can be seen as a collective social conscience. A kind of layman’s, as opposed to religious man’s, attempt to pass on what society has decided are “positive” values from generation to generation. All societies have cultural idiosyncrasies that the collective conscience would prefer not to pass down to the next generation. Negative culture refers to such idiosyncrasies, and can be said to bring out negative feelings in the person trying study that culture.

In Korea, Hollywood is often blamed for contributing to such “negative” culture. For example, watching an American or British movie in which a teenager swears at his/her parents, would immediately cause feelings of disgust and would bring condemnation from Korean teenagers. Korean Teenagers may feel angered by things their parents do or say, but the vast majority of them would never, never swear at their parents.
Many Korean people tend to form impressions of western culture from what they have seen in Hollywood movies. This means that there is often a false understanding of western culture; culture as portrayed by television programs and the movies, as opposed to "real culture" that is actually the way most people really think and behave. "Hollywood culture" is often thought of as "negative" culture in that the subject matter and dialog often portrays people at their worst. Although the theme of many Hollywood movies is one of good finally triumphing over evil, it is often the negative aspects of each movie that enter the subconscious mind of the Koreans, and this influences their perception of the west. Even American and western attitudes to good and evil are challenged by a number of Korean students who argue that good is always relative to who is in power.

One experience I had which illustrates this point was in an audiovisual culture class. The students were shown a 1991 movie "Not Without My Daughter". It is a "true" story showing the struggles of an American woman who was married to an Iranian doctor during the Khomeini era. It shows her visiting Iran with her family, and then being held captive by her husband who decided he wanted to bring up his daughter as a Moslem. After many hardships the woman manages to escape from Iran with her daughter, and gets safely back to America, the land of "freedom and normalcy" for women. When I saw this movie I felt relief that the woman had escaped from an oppressive society, and an oppressive husband. But in the movie reflections of a large number of the Korean students, they wrote that they were quite upset by the one-sided point of view presented by the American movie industry, and several of them strongly criticized the actions of the American woman who left her husband alone in Iran. They accused her of being responsible for breaking up her family.

Another movie shown to the students was "The Power of One" (1992). This movie is about the beginning of apartheid in South Africa. It is a story of a white boy, who sacrificed himself to help unite the black tribes of South Africa, and teach them how to read and write. The movie itself is quite moving, and the actions and sacrifices made by the white boy are to be highly commended. In student movie reflections, there was a lot of praise for the white boy, but there were also questions and
criticisms about the movie concerning the reason why the hero and savior of the blacks in the movie had to be white. Some of the movie reflections actually showed why it is very important to teach culture in the LF classroom. One student’s reflection went: "I saw the Power of One Movie today. I cannot understand why white people oppressed the niggers. This is unfair. We are all humans, and we are all equal. This means we should treat the niggers as equal, too. I think we should all love the niggers." The student was actually unaware of the derogatory meaning of the word "nigger". He had heard it used throughout the movie, and had thought that that was the proper way to talk about black people. However, his movie reflection provided a good chance to discuss racial discrimination, equality, and the cultural dangers of making politically incorrect statements.

Although there are a number of good Hollywood movies which are useful for introducing different aspects of culture, the reality is that most movies portray a lot of negative culture. One of the biggest obstacles to teaching culture in the EFL classroom is the negative culture people often have to digest first before they get to the “positive” culture. Also, the effect of many Hollywood movies has lead to a large number of discrepancies in what is really true about a people, and what people perceive to be true. As I mentioned earlier, it is a reality that Koreans often think things about the Americans and the British based entirely on what they have seen in a movie. In the example given earlier, that most American or British children swear at their parents, this is obviously not true. The purpose of the EFL culture communication class introduced in this thesis is to help the students to understand the cultural stereotypes which they might hold, knowingly or even unknowingly, and explore the good values of the people of the target culture.

In this chapter I have looked at the importance of teaching culture in the EFL classroom. I have also emphasized the importance of cultural understanding for the teacher who is in an EFL situation. I claim that using proverbs as material for discussion, is well able to expose any cultural stereotypes, and clarify any mistaken ideas, as students are required in the lesson to discuss about what they think is true
and what they perceive to be true. I will show in Chapter 7 that the student’s mini
dramas, also provide an abundance of material for further cultural discussion.
CHAPTER 5 Research Process and Practices in identifying the English and Korean Paremiological Minimums

5.0 Introduction

5.1 Summary of research methods
5.1.1 Introducing the Korean corpus used in this thesis
5.1.2 Introducing the English corpus used in this thesis
5.2 Data sources: Selecting the initial proverb list of 351 English and 301 Korean proverbs
5.3 Determining proverbial form
5.3.1 Other considerations concerning proverbial form
5.4 Explanations of the proverbs in the English and Korean Paremiological Minimum.
5.5 Transcribing Hangeul into English
5.6 Conclusion to this chapter

Introduction

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this thesis is to first identify a paremiological minimum of English and Korean proverbs based on an examination of the British National Corpus (BNC) and the King Sejong Corpus of Modern Korean (KSC), and then introduce a task-based teaching methodology that uses these proverbs as material for discussion in a Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication class to introduce English culture.

This chapter introduces the methodology that was followed in identifying the English and Korean paremiological minimums. It deals with the approach to data collection and analysis, as well as with other methodological considerations.

5.1 Summary of research methods

The first part of this chapter describes the Korean and English corpora used in this thesis. Following on from this the various stages that made up the method of research followed in obtaining the English and Korean paremiological minimum are discussed. There is a discussion on how the first group of candidate proverbs was chosen, and also on the variations of the proverbial form that were included in the search results. The last part of this chapter explains how the results showing the paremiological minimums are introduced in this thesis.
5.1.1 Introducing the Korean corpus used in this thesis

One major difficulty I had in my corpus-based research on Korean proverbs, was to find a suitable corpus for the Korean. After extensive searching, I was only able to identify two viable Korean corpora: the “Yonsei University Korean Corpus” of roughly 40 million syllables, and the 21st Century King Sejong Corpus of Modern Korean of roughly 112 million syllables.\(^\text{18}\)

The Yonsei University policy allowed only indirect access to the corpora\(^\text{19}\). However, it was possible to have direct access to the Korean government-sponsored King Sejong Corpus, and as it was a much larger corpus, I decided to use it. The actual size of the King Sejong Corpus in terms of number of words is quite difficult to determine because the length of a Korean manuscript is described in terms of the number of syllables, and not by the number of words.\(^\text{20}\)

The King Sejong Corpus is a diachronic corpus and reflects both spoken (10%) and written (90%) texts. Table 1 shows the composition of the Korean corpus used in this thesis.

\(^{18}\) Determining the Length of Korean Manuscripts
Korean orthography is quite different from many other writing systems in that the letters are not written one after the other in a line; rather they are grouped together into sound syllables. Here are a few examples:

\begin{align*}
a. \text{\ Hangul: } & \text{\ n a m} \text{\ (na-mu) ‘tree’} \\
& \text{\ Hangul: } \text{\ s o k d a m} \text{\ (sok-dam) ‘proverb’} \\

\end{align*}

Because Hangul is written in syllables in this way, it is usual to recognize these clusters of symbols as the basic, individual units of the writing system. This means that Koreans think of ' sok-dam', (sok dam) not consisting of six units, but of two units, or two syllables, and the length of a document is not determined by the number of words in that document, but rather by the number of syllables. When a document requires an answer of a certain length, it is the number of syllables, these groupings of letters that are counted and not the number of words.

\(^{19}\) Indirect access means that I would have had to pay a Yonsei university student to search the corpus for me. This would mean that I would not have direct control over the search methods, or the results, and also would have no way of checking how thorough the search had been. This restriction of direct access was also a major reason for not using this corpus.

\(^{20}\) A tentative estimate of the actual number of words in the King Sejong Corpus of 112 million syllables is between 45 and 55 million words. The number is purely based on the fact that most Korean words are made up of two syllables, and also that Koreans often, but not always, use subject and object particles (not words in themselves) and at least one kind of verb ending attached to every verb.
Table 5.1 Composition of the Korean King Sejong Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Texts</th>
<th>Sub Corpus</th>
<th>Size in syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>14,300,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Novels</td>
<td>33,297,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Books</td>
<td>43,200,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>12,411,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,404,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken Word</td>
<td>Spoken Word</td>
<td>6,868,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>111,482,222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The written texts are divided into five main sub corpora: newspapers (all the major newspapers); books (novels, poems, short stories, essay etc.); educational materials (all the Korean textbooks from the first grade of elementary school to the 12th grade, and also university textbooks); magazines; other written texts (religious texts translated into Korean of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Christianity (the Bible), and other kinds of miscellaneous documents). The spoken texts are taken from transcriptions of recorded broadcasted material both from television and radio, as well as from various types of other recorded texts and published electronic media.

The Korean Corpus producers made an obvious effort to be as representative as possible in their corpus and works from every century, starting with the 11th Century to the present day were included in the corpus. Special care was taken to also include works from the nine provinces in South Korea and even some representative works from North Korea. Although the Korean corpus includes historical works, because very few manuscripts from old Korea remain, and because nearly all of them before the beginning of the 20th century were written in Chinese characters and very few Korean proverbs were expressed using Chinese characters, the historical documents that were included in the corpus had very little bearing on the results of this study.

Although I was able to have direct access to the King Sejong Corpus, there were however some difficulties in using it. The main one being that the corpus was not...
available for home use, and the offices of the National Korean Research Center (over 100 miles from my home) had to be visited directly for over a period of several months. On top of this, the design of the software used for searching the corpora did not allow for a combined common search. The King Sejong Corpus is divided up into the years 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and each year is in effect a sub corpus of roughly 15 to 20 million syllables. This meant that the corpus examination was extremely time-consuming in that the search for each of the 301 Korean proverbs on the initial proverb list had to be repeated 6 different times for the corpora in each of the different years. Just one proverb search also entailed trying to identify possible proverbial variations. When this was done the number of hits then had to be carefully checked to confirm that each entry appearing in the search results actually referred to the proverb. The positive hits were then manually counted, and the results tabulated.

5.1.2 Introducing the English corpus used in this thesis

For the English proverbs the British National Corpus of 100 million words was used for two reasons: One, because it is closer in size to the Korean corpus, and two because I wanted to use a different corpus from Charteris-Black (1999) who has already done foundation work for identifying a paremiological minimum for English proverbs using the Bank of English which, at the time of his study, was a corpus of 330 million words.

In their own introductory literature, the makers of the British National Corpus (BNC) say that it is a:

100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of current British English, both spoken and written. The written part (90%) includes, for example, extracts from regional and national newspapers, specialist periodicals and journals for all ages and interests, academic books and popular fiction, published and unpublished letters and memoranda, school and university essays, among many other kinds of text. The spoken part (10%) includes a large amount of unscripted informal conversation, recorded by

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21 The amount of variation allowed in the proverbial form is discussed in detail in section 5.3. In order to check for the possible variations, different key words from the proverb had to be entered. This meant that there was an average of 4 to 5 searches for each proverb. For the Korean corpus alone this translates into over 9,000 search queries. (This figure excludes the number of times that the data was rechecked. – at least twice and in some case three or four times.)
volunteers selected from different age, region and social classes in a demographically balanced way, together with spoken language collected in all kinds of different contexts, ranging from formal business or government meetings to radio shows and phone-ins.

One of the differences between the BNC and the Korean Corpus is that the BNC is fundamentally a synchronic corpus. The intention was that no text should date back further than 1975. This condition was relaxed for imaginative works only, a few of which date back to 1964, because of their continued popularity and consequent effect on the language. The corpus itself reflects both written (80%) and spoken (20%) text. Table 5.2 shows the composition of the British National Corpus used in this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British National Corpus (BNC)</th>
<th>Size in words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written texts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written books and periodicals</td>
<td>80,490,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written-to-be-spoken</td>
<td>1,350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written miscellaneous</td>
<td>7,550,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken Word</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken demographic</td>
<td>4,300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken context-governed</td>
<td>6,380,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100,480,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Data Sources: Selecting the initial proverb list of 351 English and 301 Korean proverbs

In this section I describe the process gone through in selecting the initial proverb lists of English and Korean proverbs. Due to the large number of both Korean and English proverbs, it was first necessary to select a preliminary list of proverbs for more detailed analysis. For the English proverbs, this was done by selecting what turned out to be 351 English proverbs, and 301 Korean proverbs. The first stage was to identify candidate proverbs for the initial list of English proverbs. In order to ensure that there is a certain level of currency to the proverbs examined, I decided to include the proverbs identified in the research of other scholars, Albig (1931), Read Bain (1939) Higbee and Millard (1983), Whiting (1989), Mieder (1995) Charteris-Black (1999) who have carried out studies with the aim of identifying some sort of paremiological minimum for English, and I also rely on six popular books on English...
proverbs which sell well in Korea. The rationale for including such books in this study is that they were written with the idea to introduce the proverbs that are known by the average American and British native speaker. I checked the proverbs in the six books introducing English proverbs, and chose all the proverbs that appeared in at least three of the six proverb books to be included in the initial proverb list for the corpus study. An examination of the six books in this way identified 351 English proverbs for the initial proverb list.

The selection of the Korean proverb list also underwent a similar process, and the proverbs were selected from a variety of contemporary sources also. There are as yet, no studies identifying a Korean paremiological minimum, however, Yonsei Korean Dictionary (2004) does contain a list of 187 proverbs in the appendix. The proverbs in this list were counted as one book, which meant that a total of six books of contemporary Korean proverbs were checked. The checking process was the same as for the English proverbs, and a threshold of a minimum occurrence in at least three

22 There are several books on English, American/English proverbs selling now in Korea and many of the proverbs were also selected from these. The books used were:

5. What your Kindergartener Needs to Know. (The Core Knowledge Series) (1996) The Core Knowledge Series is a set of seven books (A book for each grade) edited by E.D. Hirsch, Jr. with the goal to establish a guideline for core knowledge for American children from kindergarten through 6th Grade. In them they introduce, amongst other things, a number of sayings and proverbs which the editors and their team of authors feel all American school children should know. Because only between eleven and thirty proverbs appeared in each book of this series, I treated the seven books as one book.

23 The Korean books used were:

1. 한국인의 속담 (Proverbs of Korea) 심후섭 (Shim Hu Seop) (2000).
2. 한국인의 속담 (Proverbs of Korea) Best Books Compiled by 이수경 (Lee Su-kung and the editing department) (1999)
3. 한국영어성어사전(Korean English Dictionary of Proverbs) 이기한 (Lee Gi-han), 홍민표 Hong Min-pyo), Ross Zarub (1997)
of the six books for each proverb became the criterion for the proverbs to be included in the initial proverb list. This actually came to 301 Korean proverbs.

5.3 Determining proverbial form

Before beginning the corpus search it was necessary to set the parameters of the proverbial form, or the variations of the proverbial form which were allowed in the search results to ensure that all the variations of the citation form were identified. This section is a discussion on how this was done.

All proverbs have two ideas. The first part lays down a premise or situation and the second part suggests some kind of result that will or will not happen. For example:

*A rolling stone gathers no moss.*

The stone is rolling, and because of this it gathers no moss. The “rolling stone” is usually taken to symbolize a person who is on the move. And “gathers no moss” is usually taken to symbolize money or possessions or sometimes even problems. Every proverb has what I will call “critical” words which in most cases provide the core metaphor for the proverb. (There are of course proverbs which do not contain metaphor and can be understood literally e.g. *Like father, like son.*) The critical words are words that if changed or deleted, would negate or change completely the meaning of the proverb. In English there is not much variation in the “critical” words of each proverb. For example, “rolling” and “stone” always appear in the corpus. And a search of the phrase, *rolling stone* does reveal the whole proverb. Although it may be possible to find some examples where only the first part of the proverb “*A rolling stone...*” appears, and the second part of the proverb, “*gathers no moss*” is understood. You would not usually hear in English the second part of the proverb, “*gathers no moss*” being spoken alone. In a search of the BNC using the search string “rolling stone” there were 98 hits. However, a large number of these actually referred to the pop group “The Rolling Stones” (easily recognized through the context and the capitalization), and only two of these referred to the proverb in its full citation form:
1. Because I mean there's plenty of epigrams like a rolling stone gathers no moss, but that's a subject not a verb, and it's actually saying something totally different, or every time...

2. A rolling stone gathers no moss.

I did not find any variation of this proverb replacing "a rolling stone" with "a rolling rock" or "a rolling pebble". Therefore I considered the words rolling stone, and moss to be the critical, fixed (through convention), parts of the proverb, and recorded this proverb as only having two hits.

For Korean proverbs also, there are also critical words. However, these words are less "critical" than the English words in that Korean often has several words that mean the same thing, and it is quite possible for many of these words to be used interchangeably in a number of proverbs. The choice of words often depends on how a Korean perceives himself/herself with regards to educational achievement or status. For example, historically many of the Korean nobility frowned on the use of proverbs because they were often spoken in plain, vulgar, language. The aristocratic Korean nobility did not like to use the vulgar expressions of the common low class people. When they did so they replaced some of the pure Korean words of the proverb with a word that had Chinese characters, but that meant the same thing. This meant that although the metaphor is fixed, some of the "critical" words in Korean proverbs do sometimes appear differently in the Korean corpus.

For example there is a Korean proverb
1. A carpenter may lend his wife, but never his tools.

Mok-su-ga a-nae-neun bil-lyeo jyoo-do yeon-jang-eun an bil-lyeo-jun-da."

목 수가 아내는 빌 렀 지도 연 장은 안 빌 렀 준 다.

In this proverb the usual Korean word for wife is "a-nae" However, the nobility might replace "a-nae" with the word "bu-in" which still means "wife" but it is written
in Chinese characters and is considered to be on a higher level. In English it would be like using the Latin to replace the words "Mother or Father" with "Mater or Pater."

The fact that the "critical" words of a Korean proverb did sometimes change, made the proverb search far more complicated, and several different parts of each proverb and several variations of certain critical words had to be entered, in order to determine conclusively the exact number of times it appeared in the corpus.

Another issue that had to be dealt with was the natural variation that appears in some proverbs. Charteris Black (1999) discusses the various types of proverb variations, and argues that proverbs which have undergone substitution, truncation antonyms and expansion should also be counted as an example of the core proverb. I agree with Charteris Black because all these forms refer to the original proverb. I have allowed for this kind of variation in each proverb in this thesis. For example, in doing a corpus search for English proverbs in the BNC using the search terms 'throw the baby' and 'out with the bathwater' for the proverb Don't throw the baby out with the bath water, I found a total of 10 hits.

1. As was so chillingly illustrated by the postwar period of mass destruction and misconceived redevelopment, it is possible to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

2. That does not mean that we have to throw the baby out with the bath water.

3. The world has distorted this, and unfortunately many Christians have responded in a very reactionary manner causing many to throw the baby out with the bath water.

4. The voluntary bodies must be consulted in a rather more positive fashion than the very flimsy effort so far produced by the Scottish Development Department and the Government must now throw the baby out with the bath water and greatly weaken our statutory conservation agency just when it is needed most.

5. You can't throw the baby out with the bath water.

There are actually 4 different words for "wife" in Korean all of which could be used in the Korean proverb. (a-nae, cho, bu-in, ma-nu-ra)
6. In other words, we might not throw the baby out with the bath water, but we might keep so much water in the bath, the baby drowns.

7. The small practitioner has been frightened by the spectre of the JMU into throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

8. Or though the baby of Western expertise should not be thrown out with the bathwater of its failings.

9. This is not the same as 'force-feeding' doctrine; one can sympathise with Jayne Greenwell's reservations, but we should be careful what gets thrown out with the bathwater.

10. However insignificant, they still don't deserve to be thrown out with the bathwater, or rather the pond water.

The last two examples here do not even mention 'baby' yet they seem to be motivated by the proverb and so they were each counted as a hit. I found quite a lot of variation in other proverbs, too. This meant that when I tabulated the corpus search results, any form of the proverb, as long as it could be seen to relate to the proverb according to the context, was counted as a "hit".

5.3.1 Other considerations concerning proverbial form

One of the problems of using a corpus is that it draws heavily on the media, and a considerable number of English potential proverb "hits" were actually the title of books, television dramas, or movies. When the proverb was a book title, the name of a movie, or television drama (again obvious by the use of capitalization), then it was only counted as one example (one hit) of the proverb.

For example, there were 25 hits for "Birds of a feather flock together," but 16 of the "Birds of a feather" hits referred to the title of the sitcom drama "Birds of a Feather," and 1 of the hits actually referred to a book about birds, "Birds of a feather." (obvious by the context.) For this proverb then, only 9 hits were recorded.
After tabulating the results, and then sorting them in order of frequency, using a number of convenience of 5 hits as the standard for the minimum level of occurrence, 153 English proverbs (the number of English proverbs which recorded 5 hits), and 150 Korean proverbs (the number of Korean proverbs which recorded 5 hits) of the most frequently occurring proverbs were taken to be the paremiological minimums.

Although great effort was made to record the exact number of hits each proverb had in each corpus, in some cases, especially in the BNC (due to inclusion of the fragments of proverbs), it was sometimes quite difficult to know from the context whether or not the apparent partial citation forms of a proverb actually referred to the proverb. As already mentioned, the cut off point for the paremiological minimum was an occurrence of at least five hits in the corpus. In proverbs for which the number of hits far exceeded 5, when there was any doubt that the hit referred to the proverb, that particular hit was excluded from the result. However, when the number of hits was five or under, then even doubtful hits were allowed.

As all the results were done by manual frequency counts, for the English corpus it is possible that a certain amount of human error may have crept into the findings in some way; especially when the number of hits far exceeded the number 5, and especially when fragments of proverbs were counted to represent the full citation form of the proverb. For the Korean corpus there was less room for human error due to the fact that Korean proverbs do not usually appear in fragmentation, and that the Korean corpus search for the 301 Korean proverbs had to be repeated six times for

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25 Deciding the paremiological minimum for both Korean and English proverbs was not easy. At first, I decided to select 100 Korean proverbs, and 100 English proverbs to form the paremiological minimum of each language. But after doing a preliminary corpus based study, tabulating the results, and then analyzing them, I found that there were many common proverbs that fell outside this parameter. Because of this I settled upon an arbitrary number of convenience, of 150 Korean proverbs, and 150 English proverbs to form the paremiological minimum for the English or Korean language student to learn so that he or she could be said to have a basic level of cultural literacy. After tabulating my new results I found that for both the English and the Korean Corpora this actually turned out to be a minimum of 5 hits in both the English and the Korean Corpora. Then using the criterion of a minimum of 5 hits for each proverb in each corpus, I listed the proverbs which met this criterion. This turned out to be 153 English proverbs and 150 Korean proverbs.
each mini corpus. Although this was a slow process, it meant that the total number of hits being dealt with was actually much smaller, and thus easier to keep track of. So even though great effort was made to record the data results accurately, there may be slight discrepancies in the data results recorded. However, whether 38 hits instead of 40 was recorded as the number of hits, this was not thought to be relevant in this thesis as it far exceeds the required minimum of five hits. It must be emphasized however, that when there was a definite scarcity of use (0-5 hits), the results are accurate because the data was checked and rechecked several times.

5.4 Introducing the English and Korean Paremiological Minimums.

The next stage was to list and explain the meaning of these proverbs. This process actually underwent several revisions. At first it was decided to introduce the English and Korean paremiological minimum in two different chapters. In the initial draft chapters the English proverbs were shown in the form in which they appeared in the *Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs*, and the Korean proverbs were shown in the form in which they appear in *Donghwa's Dictionary of Proverbs*. This form was called the "standard citation" form. After the proverbs were recorded, then each proverb was explained. The explanations for the English proverbs were written keeping the Korean reader in mind, and the explanations for the Korean proverbs were given keeping the English reader in mind. This meant that an effort was made to keep the English as simple as possible, and include not just an explanation of the meaning, but also an introduction explaining the circumstances in which a particular proverb could be used.\footnote{At first serious thought was given to the possible benefits of giving corpus examples of the way in which the English proverbs are used, but I decided against doing this because an examination of a large number of the English proverbs revealed that they are frequently used in quite a flippant way in modern writing. It was felt that such examples would not be helpful, but rather confuse the Korean students who might not even have a basic understanding of the original English proverb yet. The focus of this thesis is not to show how these proverbs are used in literature or in everyday conversation, but rather to identify proverbs that should be studied and memorized. If readers are interested in finding corpus examples of usage then the BNC can easily be accessed on-line at http://hcu.ox.ac.uk/BNC. Unfortunately the King Sejong Corpus is not yet set up to be accessed on-line.}

\footnote{Many of the go-sa-song-o type proverbs are obscure, and not well known to the ordinary Korean. However, there are some go-sa-song-o type proverbs which are so well known, that they appear as proverbs in books about Korean proverbs, and so for the purpose of this study they can be thought of as ordinary Korean proverbs.}
language was also shown, and cultural comments about the culture and national character of both the English and Koreans were made.  

The explanation of each proverb was influenced by a number of sources. For the English proverbs, 9 different books and dictionaries were used as a reference when writing the explanation of each proverb, and for the Korean proverbs, 9 different books and dictionaries were also used as a reference. The cultural comments that were made about many of the proverbs were based on my own understanding of English and Korean culture, and then crossed checked by doing an Internet search of the proverb in question, and summarizing the explanations given in each entry.

When the paremiological minimums were introduced in this way it meant that there were two extremely long chapters: fifty-seven pages for the introduction of the

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28 The reference books used for English proverbs are:

29 The Reference Books used for the Korean proverbs are:
1. *Proverbs of the Korean People* (Shim Hu Seop)
2. *Proverbs of the Korean People* Compiled by Lee Su-kung and the editing department (1999)

30 These explanations were based on my experience of having lived in Korea for over 30 years, and having taught at the university level for over 25 years. The validity and implication of basing my explanations on my personal observations and experiences is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

31 I chose this method over the usual method of eliciting interpretations from native speaker informants, because many of the explanations of Korean proverbs appeared as individual blogs. There were sometimes hundreds of entries giving opinions as to the meaning of certain proverbs (far exceeding the number of people that could be used as informants in this thesis.) These were all examined, recorded, and a consensus of the ideas were introduced.
Chapter 5 Research Process and Practices in identifying the English and Korean Paremiological Minimums

English paremiological minimum, and ninety-three pages for the introduction of the Korean paremiological minimum. Although these explanations are interesting and helpful, it was deemed that they were not essential to the main purpose of this thesis. Because of this it was decided to move these two chapters to the appendix (for reference) and introduce the English and Korean paremiological minimums side by side according to the topic or concept they relate to. It was done in this way in order to clarify whether or not there was a general similarity in the topics or concept areas of the English and Korean proverbs, and also to examine whether or not there some noticeable differences in content area (shown, for example, by the number of proverbs on a specific topic) which would be worth mentioning in classroom discussions.

5.5 Issues in translating from the Korean

A lot of the work on Korean proverbs in this thesis involved doing the research in Korean and translating Korean texts. In this section the inherent difficulties in doing this are discussed. The many differences between English and Korean sentence structure sometimes make it difficult to translate. Korean is a multivalent language which sometimes conveys by a single phrase, or even by a single word, several different levels of meaning. Good English prefers short, compact sentences, while literary Korean often uses long and complex sentences full of intricately connected clauses. This makes any English translation of longer Korean sentences quite difficult. However, because Korean proverbs are inherently short and precise they are comparatively easier to translate. Nevertheless, the literal English translations of the Korean proverbs in this thesis should not be regarded as absolute. Where possible an effort has been made to reveal the meaning of the Korean proverbs in a way that is understandable to the western reader.

In this thesis, back translation was not used for two reasons. The first is because almost any translation has many equally correct ways that it can be translated into another language, and a back translation also has many equally correct ways that it can be translated back into the source language. The second reason is because Korean proverbial form is fixed. Although it would be possible to translate the meaning of
the English translation back into Korean, the translation would not always reveal the recognized proverbial form.

5.6 Transcribing Hangeul into English

One unique feature about this thesis is that although it is in English, Hangeul is also used when showing the Korean proverbs to aid the Korean reader (and English Korean scholar) understand the Romanization of Hangeul better. In 1939 McCune-Reischauer created a system to transcribe Korean sounds into English. However, it caused a great deal of confusion because it did not properly allow for the different sounds in Korean. As a result of this inadequacy the Ministry of Culture and Tourism created a new system of Romanization for the Korean language which they formally proclaimed on July 4, 2000 as the official way to represent Korean using the English alphabet in the future. The following is a chart showing how Korean sounds should be transcribed into English according to this new system.

Fig. 5.1 Simple Korean Consonants

|ㄱ |ㄲ |ㄴ |ㄷ |ㄸ |ㄹ |ㅁ |ㅂ |ㅃ |ㅅ |ㅆ |ㅇ |ㅈ |ㅉ |ㅊ |ㅋ |ㅌ |ㅍ |ㅎ |
| g, k | n | d, t | r, l | m | b, p | s | ng | j | ch | k | t | p | h |

Fig. 5.2 Simple Korean Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ㅏ</th>
<th>ㅐ</th>
<th>ㅑ</th>
<th>ㅒ</th>
<th>ㅓ</th>
<th>ㅔ</th>
<th>ㅕ</th>
<th>ㅖ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ae</td>
<td>ya</td>
<td>yae</td>
<td>eo</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>yeo</td>
<td>ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 5.3 Simple and Compound Korean Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ㄱ</th>
<th>ㄲ</th>
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<th>ㄸ</th>
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<th>ㅃ</th>
<th>ㅅ</th>
<th>ㅆ</th>
<th>ㅇ</th>
<th>ㅈ</th>
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<th>ㅋ</th>
<th>ㅌ</th>
<th>ㅍ</th>
<th>ㅎ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g, k</td>
<td>Kk</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>d, t</td>
<td>tt</td>
<td>r, l</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>b, p</td>
<td>pp</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>ss</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>jj</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 5.4 Simple and Compound Korean Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ㅏ</th>
<th>ㅐ</th>
<th>ㅑ</th>
<th>ㅒ</th>
<th>ㅓ</th>
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<th>ㅕ</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ae</td>
<td>ya</td>
<td>yae</td>
<td>eo</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>yeo</td>
<td>ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 are actually what can be considered to be the modern Hangeul alphabet. The compound sounds: ㅐ (ae) ㅒ (yae) ㅔ (e) ㅖ (ye) ㅐ (wa) ㅔ (wae) ㅏ (a)
Chapter 5 Research Process and Practices in identifying the English and Korean Paremiological Minimums

(wo) \( r \) (wi) \( l \) (ui) \( y \) (oe) are actually made by combining the main vowel sounds. For example:

\[ l = \text{\textbar} + \text{\textbar} \quad l = \text{\textbar} + 1 \quad * l = \text{\textbar} + 1 \quad * \quad l = \text{\textbar} + 1 \quad * \quad \text{\textbar} = \text{\textbar} + \text{\textbar} \quad \text{etc.} \]

It is this new system of Romanization that is now used in all books and articles in which the Romanization of Hangeul is required, and it is this system that has been followed in this thesis. Although it much improves the old system, it is still lacking in that it doesn’t always take in to account how a native speaker of English would read the Romanized forms of the Korean. For example, the Korean word for thirty is \( \text{seo-reun} \) and it is transcribed using the English alphabet as \( \text{seo-reun} \). The English speaker would usually pronounce this representation as see-oh re-un, but the actual sound of the Korean should be the same as the so sound of sod and run as if spoken with a Scottish accent. Although this thesis is to be submitted in England, it is expected that it will be widely read by Koreans, and students of Korean as well. It is for this reason that Hangeul has been included.

5.7 Conclusion to this chapter

In this chapter I have tried to describe the process of collecting the data for the initial proverb list, as well as the process involved in analyzing these corpora so as to identify the proverbs to be put in the two paremiological minimums. This process enabled me to see the usefulness of the data collection and gave me ideas (not originally thought of) how the results can be usefully pedagogically applied to the tertiary EFL classroom at the university I teach at. In the next chapter, I introduce the English and Korean paremiological minimums.

There may be questions as to why some of the explanations given for the English proverbs appear to be not that different from the explanations given in any other book on proverbs. And there also may be questions raised concerning the explanation and the cultural comments given in the chapter on Korean proverbs. I would like to answer these questions by saying that although I claim that my explanations and comments about Korean culture are quite accurate, the position that there will be different viewpoints goes without saying – what counts ultimately is how well a
particular theoretical and or applied perspective on proverbs is argued for and illustrated. In fact it is argued that different opinions and points of view will only add to the intensity of the Korean EFL classroom discussions.
CHAPTER 6 The Paremiological Minimums of English and Korean Proverbs

Introduction

6.1 A paremiological minimum of 153 English and 150 Korean proverbs listed by topic or concept
6.2 Conclusions to this chapter

Introduction

In this chapter the results of the corpus-based study showing a paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs are introduced. The English and Korean proverbs are introduced according to the topic or concept they relate to. This was done in order to clarify whether or not there was a general similarity in the topics or concept areas of the English and Korean proverbs in the paremiological minimum, and also to examine whether or not there are any noticeable differences in topics which would be worth mentioning in classroom discussions.

The grouping of proverbs by topic or concept is quite difficult to do as these topics tend to overlap. Because of this, there is often no clear cut way to categorize each proverb. For example, the proverb, "When the cat's away the mice will play." refers to absence, license, and also to opportunity. For this reason, in the table below, it was listed in all three places. Many of the topic or concept titles listed in the table were identified by Kirkpatrick (2003); however, 18 new extra topics and concepts have been added in order to allow for a new topic or concept of a number of Korean proverbs in the Korean paremiological minimum. 32 The proverbs in our two paremiological minimums have been introduced in their standard citation form. (See Chapter 5.3) The first number on the right of each proverb shows how many hits it received in each corpus search. The second number shows the number of the proverb as it is listed in the appendix. 33 (Appendix 1 for the English, and Appendix 2 for the Korean proverbs).

32 The topics are ability, blame, carelessness, cheating, crime, confidence/courage, conformity, desperation, destiny, destination, greed, identity, hardship, humility, hunger, preparation, punishment, reputation
33 A comprehensive introduction of the English and Korean proverbs is given in the appendix. If there is a comparable English/ Korean proverb (same expression- same metaphor, different expression - same metaphor) it is given. The accepted meaning of the proverb is given and comments on what insights can be gained from these proverbs concerning the culture and national character are made.
6.1 A paremiological minimum of 153 English and 150 Korean proverbs listed by topic or concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Proverbs</th>
<th>Korean Proverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>If there's a creature that crawls, there's a creature that runs. If there's a creature that runs, there's a creature that flies. 7-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence</td>
<td>Absence makes the heart grow fonder. 11-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out of sight, out of mind. 15-101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When the cat's away the mice will play 6-150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action and Inaction</td>
<td>Don't stretch your legs until you've determined where you can lie. 9-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ten strokes would fell any tree. 6-107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>Don't teach your grandmother to suck eggs.6-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>You are never too old to learn. 6-152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The habits you have when you are three-years-old remain till you're eighty. 15-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. 9-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can't spit on a smiling face. 17-114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proverbs</td>
<td>Korean Proverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance, Beauty</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handsome is as handsome does. 5-54</td>
<td>A rice cake that looks good tastes good. 6-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proof of the pudding is in the eating. 28-125</td>
<td>Clothes are wings. 16-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. 14-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance, Deceit,</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearances are deceptive. 6-14</td>
<td>It's a wild apricot of appetizing color. 23-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty is only skin deep. 6-18</td>
<td>Though you know what's under the water ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still waters run deep. 8-114</td>
<td>fathoms deep, you can't tell what's inside a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't judge a book by its cover. 10-33</td>
<td>man's heart. 19-106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can't tell a book by its cover. 10</td>
<td>He darts between the liver and gallbladder. 9-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beginnings and Endings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All's well that ends well. 5-11</td>
<td>A journey of a thousand ri begins with one step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great oaks from little acorns grow. 8-53</td>
<td>6-128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A dragon comes from a stream. 14-11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only by comparing it can you determine which</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is long and which is short. 6-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Betrayal, Trust</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearances are deceptive 6-14</td>
<td>The trusted axe stabbed on my own foot. 12-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Big and Small</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great oaks from little acorns grow. 53-8</td>
<td>Small peppers are hot. 6-117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small is beautiful 30-111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bigger they are the harder they fall. 5-119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blame</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If things go well it's my fault, if things go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>badly, it's your fault. 5-118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boldness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack is the best form of defence. 7-16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight fire with fire 10-46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing ventured, nothing gained. 8-94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In for a penny in for a pound.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proverbs</td>
<td>Korean Proverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bribery and Corruption</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power corrupts 11-105</td>
<td>The water downstream is clean only when the water upstream is clean. 22-116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money talks 18-87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Busybody, Caution</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let sleeping dogs lie. 14-77</td>
<td>A one-day-old puppy does not fear a tiger. 9-143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave well alone. 35-75</td>
<td>Don’t scratch something into a boil. 24-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You shouldn’t fan a burning house. 8-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carelessness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t stick your nose into the soup that’s ready. 6-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change, Habits, Backsliding</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New brooms sweep clean 24-90</td>
<td>In a drizzle, you don’t realize you are getting wet. 8-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old habits die hard. 18-95</td>
<td>The habits you have when you are three-years-old remain till you’re eighty. 15-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leopard can’t change its spots. 6-123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety is the spice of life. 5-146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity begins at home. 8-26</td>
<td>The arm always bends inwardly. 14-136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheating, Crime</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long tails are easily caught/stood on. 18-29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cat shut its eyes complaining. 23-40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To eat the chicken and hold out a duck’s drumstick 15-45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The thief suffers from numb feet. 8-47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s a rat caught in a jar. 21-48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children should be seen and not heard. 7-27</td>
<td>You can tell a good tree even by its sprout. 11-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare the rod and spoil the child. 7-113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children and Parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like father, like son. 10-78</td>
<td>Sow soya beans, get soya beans; sow red beans, get red beans. 22-132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like mother like daughter. 7-79</td>
<td>Give one more rice cake to the child (person) you don’t like. 5-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circumstance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When in Rome do as the Romans do. 12-149</td>
<td>Keep your wits even if you get carried off by a tiger, and you’ll live. 11-147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proverbs</td>
<td>Korean Proverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coincidence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak of the devil and he will appear. 13-116</td>
<td>Talk of the tiger and it will come. 7-146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conduct</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty is the best policy. 11-60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confidence, Courage</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just because you fear maggots doesn't mean you should give up making soybean sauce. 18-19</td>
<td>It's like swimming on the land. 5-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conformity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pointed stone is hit with a chisel. 10-62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contentment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no place like home. 17-130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consequences</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you play with fire, you get burnt. 5-63</td>
<td>Sow soya beans, get soya beans; sow red beans, get red beans. 22-132</td>
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<td><strong>Orderliness</strong></td>
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<td>There are two sides to every story/question/story/dispute/argument/issue.</td>
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<td>It is like a cow looking at a chicken, and a chicken looking at a cow.</td>
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<td><strong>Possibility and Impossibility</strong></td>
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<td>One cannot have his cake and eat it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(You can’t have your cake and eat it.)</td>
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<td>You cannot have it both ways.</td>
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<td>A stitch in time saves nine. 8-4</td>
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# Chapter 6 The Paremiological Minimums of English and Korean Proverbs

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<td><strong>Variety</strong></td>
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Chapter 6 The Paremiological Minimums of English and Korean Proverbs

6.2 Conclusions to this chapter

A tabulation of the results of the corpus study does not reveal any surprising differences between the topics or concepts covered by British and Korean proverbs. Though there are some areas which seem to be more emphasized, as shown in the number of proverbs with a similar concept. For example, the larger number of English proverbs connected with risk and caution and prudence and thrift suggest that these things tend to be stressed in British society. Conversely, the larger number of Korean proverbs concerning speech suggests that Koreans seem to stress caution when using our mouths. Issues like this will be discussed more fully in the next chapter where the English proverbs identified in the paremiological minimum are introduced in a 16 week lesson plan for a Korean tertiary intermediate EFL communication class.

Although the proverbs have been introduced in this chapter side by side, it should be understood that they are merely a link to the English and Korean paremiological minimums which have been put in the appendix because of their size, and that any study of the proverbs introduced in this thesis has to be conducted by referring to the appendices.

34 At first the paremiological minimums with their text and explanations were included in the main body of the thesis, but it was decided later to move them to the appendix because of their length. The paremiological minimum of 153 English Proverbs is 40 pages long, and the paremiological minimum of Korean proverbs is 66 pages long.
CHAPTER 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

Introduction
7.1 Preparing the lesson plan
7.2 Classroom methodology
  7.2.1 Participants and class makeup
  7.2.2 Lesson plan
  7.2.3 Case Study: Actual classroom experience
    7.2.3.1 General group discussion comments made by the students.
    7.2.3.2 Student mini-drama dialogs
    7.2.3.3 Teacher comments on grammatical errors, incorrect use of language, and on points of culture brought up in the lesson.
7.3 Discussion of the results and feedback on the lesson.
7.4 Teacher evaluation of the lesson
7.5 Conclusions

Introduction

In the introduction in Chapter One, the goal of this thesis is introduced as being two-fold: to establish a parerniological minimum for English and Korean proverbs, and then to select some of these proverbs to be used in a one-semester intermediate level EFL Korean university communication course as material for discussions on English and Korean culture. One goal of the kind of language classroom introduced in this thesis is also to have the students memorize all the English proverbs in the paremiological minimum identified in this study. The claim is that the discussion and memorization of these proverbs, will have a two-fold benefit for Korean tertiary EFL students: they will be able to fulfill one requirement of cultural literacy – namely, they will learn 153 of the most commonly used English proverbs; and the discussions of the cultural implications of the selected proverbs, and the task-based language exercises used in the classroom, will help them to improve their cultural and communicative competence.

Van Lier (1988:47) says, the language classroom is “the gathering, for a given period of time, of two or more persons (one of whom generally assumes the role of instructor) for the purpose of language learning.” Allwright and Bailey (1991:18) note that “the language classroom is the crucible – the place where teachers and learners come together and language learning happens. The learners bring with them
their whole experience of learning and of life to classrooms, along with their own reason for being there, and their own particular needs that they hope to see satisfied.

The teacher brings experience, too, of life and learning, and of teaching. No matter what they all bring, everything still depends on how they react to each other when they all get together in the classroom.” Although Allwright and Bailey’s use of the word “react” can be understood, in modern pedagogy it is positive interaction, and not reaction, that should be one of the focal goals of the EFL class. It is the task of the language teacher to use pedagogical methods which encourage better class interaction, not just between teacher and student, but between student and student as well. And it is a task-based methodology that does this, that is introduced in this chapter.

My corpus based study has already identified the paremiological minimum. In this chapter, a 16 week lesson plan for a one semester intermediate communication class (Communication II) using proverbs as the focal point of the lesson is given, and a case study of the actual implementation of a lesson is introduced. Following on from this I give a critical evaluation of some of the issues that arose during the lesson.

7.1 Preparing the lesson plan

In this section I show the stages that were gone through in order to prepare a 16 week lesson plan for a one-semester intermediate communication course at Sun Moon University, South Korea.\textsuperscript{35}

In order to prepare a lesson plan to cover the 14 weeks of actual class time, a further examination of the English and Korean paremiological minimums first had to be conducted. Because 14 topics or themes had to be identified for the class discussion material, the first task was to examine again the English and Korean proverbs introduced in the paremiological minimum in Chapter 6 by topic or concept. The focus of this examination was to choose topics and themes for classroom discussion.

\textsuperscript{35} One semester at a Korean university is 16 weeks long, however, students do not usually have classes in the 8\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} week which is a period set aside for their mid-term and final exams. The official course name is Communication II.
Particular attention was paid to identifying any general similarities or differences in specific topic or concept areas of the English and Korean proverbs in the paremiological minimum. It was felt that noticeable differences (shown by the existence or absence of proverbs on a specific topic) would be worth discussing. For example, the large number of English proverbs on the topic of appearance and external beauty could provide material for discussions on differing, or similar views about beauty and character in both England and Korea. And conversely, the large number of Korean proverbs on cheating and crime as compared to the relative scarcity of English proverbs on this subject, could provide material to discuss different attitudes towards deceitful actions such as bribery, cheating, and plagiarism, and provide a platform for discussions on the feasibility of implementing an honor code in Korean schools keeping in mind that Korean society stresses human relationships above all else. Asking the students to reflect more about their own culture by asking questions such as “Would a Korean student be willing to report someone who has been cheating if he were a friend?” or “Have you ever cheated on an exam?” would enable the teacher to introduce differences in culture and also talk about the consequences of cheating or plagiarism in England in a very natural way.

The following 14 topics and proverbs for discussion, shown in Figure 7.1.1 and Figure 7.1.2, were chosen either because they are themes that interest Korean students, or because they identify possible areas of culture shock which a Korean student might encounter if he/she decides to visit or study in England.
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

Figure 7.1.1 First eight weeks of a sixteen-week lesson plan for the Communication II class at Sun Moon University in Korea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Proverbs</th>
<th>Korean Proverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Topic and Proverb for discussion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 Theme: Bribery and the power of money – Discussions about the role of money and bribery in English and Korean society.</td>
<td>* Money can buy the testicles for a virgin girl. * There must be kindness shown for kindness to be returned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverb:</strong> Money talks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 Theme: Marriage / Love and Dating / One sided love – Discussions about love and differing attitudes towards the role of women in society.</td>
<td>* If the hen cries, the household will collapse. * Dumb for three years, deaf for three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverbs:</strong> Marriages are made in heaven. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 Theme: Common Courtesy – Discussions about the differences and similarities between the English “gentleman” and the Korean “yangban.”</td>
<td>* Kind words spoken, kind words received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverb:</strong> Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 Patience – Discussions about waiting one’s turn, cueing, and patience in daily life.</td>
<td>* Are you full with the first spoonful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverbs:</strong> Patience is a virtue. Rome wasn’t built in a day. First come, first served</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 Theme: Cultural differences – Discussions about general cultural differences identifying the “dos” and “don’ts” in both England and Korea.</td>
<td>When a person dies he leaves his name, when a tiger dies it leaves its skin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverb:</strong> When in Rome do as the Romans do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 Theme: Punishment and education. – Discussions about the “love rod” (physical punishment) in Korea and in England.</td>
<td>* It is better to be hit first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverb:</strong> Spare the rod and spoil the child.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 Theme: Honesty and plagiarism/cheating. – Discussions about honesty and plagiarism and cheating and introducing an honor code in Korean schools.</td>
<td>* Long tails are easily caught/stood on. * To eat the chicken and hold out a duck’s drumstick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proverb:</strong> Honesty is the best policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 Mid-term exams - Oral Test, and written exam of the proverbs appearing in the student homework weeks 1-7.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

115
Figure 7.1.2 Second eight weeks of a sixteen-week lesson plan for the Communication II class at Sun Moon University in Korea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Proverbs</th>
<th>Korean Proverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9 Theme: Relationships / Family</strong> – Discussions about family relationships introducing the meaning of “me” and “we” cultures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *Proverbs: Blood is thicker than water.* | *The arm always bends inwardly.*  
*You can’t trick your blood.* |
| **Week 10 Theme: Recreation / Free time activities / Study** – Discussions about different attitudes towards education and free time activities. |
| *Proverb: All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.* | *You should welcome hardship at a young age, even if you have to buy it.* |
| **Week 11 Theme: Privacy / Personal space** – Discussions about different attitudes towards privacy and personal space. |
| *Proverb: An Englishman’s home is his castle.* | *Just watch the exorcism, and have some rice cake afterwards!* |
| **Week 12 Theme: Time / Appointments** – Discussions about cultural norms concerned with making and keeping appointments. |
| *Proverb: Better late than never.* | |
| **Week 13 Theme: Manners / Education of children by their parents** – Discussions about the different way English and Korean parents discipline their children. |
| *Proverb: Children should be seen and not heard.* | *You should welcome hardship at a young age, even if you have to buy it.*  
*The habits you have when you are three-years-old remain till you’re eighty.* |
| **Week 14 Theme: External Beauty / Character** – Discussions about differing or similar attitudes towards beauty and character. |
| *Proverbs: Handsome is as handsome does.*  
*The proof of the pudding is in the eating.*  
*Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.* | *A rice cake that looks good tastes good.*  
*Clothes are wings.* |
| **Week 15 Theme: Selfishness / Individuality** – Discussions about the freedom of the individual in relation to the requirements of belonging to a group. |
| *Proverb: Every man for himself.* | *A pointed stone is hit with a chisel.*  
*You don’t want to eat it, and you don’t want to give it away.* |
| **Week 16 Final Exams** – Oral Test and written exam of the proverbs appearing in the student homework weeks 9-15. | |

7.2 Classroom Methodology

This section has three parts. The first part introduces the makeup of the class and the students used in this thesis. The second part introduces a lesson plan for a two-hour...
class period, and the third part introduces an actual two hour language class that follows this lesson plan.

7.2.1 Participants and class makeup

The participants in the lesson were 20 English major students in their second semester of the first year who were taking the English department’s Communication II course at Sun Moon University in South Korea. There were 10 male students, and 10 female students, and the average age of the students in the class was 19.7 years old. At the beginning of the class the students were asked to form 4 groups. They were allowed to choose their own group, and they naturally formed two groups consisting of six, and four male students, and two groups consisting of six, and four female students.

7.2.2 Lesson plan

This section is divided into two parts. In the first part, a general course description, a lesson plan including the classroom language goals, and a copy of instructions to the teacher are introduced. In the second part, copies of the student handouts given to the students at the beginning of the lesson are shown.

Course description

Grade Level: University Freshman - 2nd Semester

Course Title: Communication II - Intermediate level EFL discussion class

Time Required for Each Lesson: 2 hours - 2 Class Periods (50 minutes each)

Course Description Design and Objectives: The purpose of Communication II is to help the students speak better English. Using English as the medium of study, the students in each lesson will

1. become more aware of British values and culture by comparing and discussing commonly used English and Korean proverbs.

2. be able to identify specific British cultural thinking or social behavior.

3. try to find similarities and differences between British and Korean cultural thinking and social behavior.

---

36 I had already taught the students Communication I for one semester, and I was also their academic advisor. At Sun Moon University each professor is assigned a number of students to guide in course selection and school life in general. This meant that I was familiar with who the students were, and also with their spoken language ability.
4. have to create a mini-drama dialog incorporating the proverb/proverbs discussed in the class.

Materials:
1. Class handout of the proverbs and topic to be discussed.
2. Copy of the ten proverbs to be memorized as homework.
3. Lesson evaluation sheets.

Procedure:
The goal of this class is two-fold. The first goal is for the teacher to have the students discuss in their groups the proverb/proverbs on the handout sheet, and the second goal is have the students create, as a group, a mini-drama dialog in which the main English proverb/proverbs is/are used. The two-hour class period is divided into two one-hour blocks. In the first thirty five minutes of the first hour, the teacher distributes the handouts, and goes through them with the students, giving a general explanation of the goals of the lesson. He/She then asks the students to start going through the worksheet. Each group elects a leader and a reporter. The leader guides the conversation and is responsible for making sure that all the questions on the class handout are discussed. The reporter takes minutes of the discussions and reports them to the class after the discussions are over. The teacher then summarizes the content of the different reports, and makes comments on the different reports. At this stage he/she does not present his/her personal view. In the last fifteen minutes of the first hour the students are required to create mini-drama dialogs using at least one of the proverbs discussed. In the first 30 minutes of the second hour the students are asked to practice their mini-drama dialogs, and then perform them for the class. While the students are performing their mini-dramas, the teacher makes notes of major grammatical errors, incorrect usage of language which he/she comments on after the mini dramas are performed. In the last 20 minutes of the lesson the teacher discusses some of the major grammatical errors that the students made in their dialogs and also makes general comments concerning the cultural practices and behavior of the English in relationship to what the students wrote. Figure 7.2 is a short teacher’s guide for the lesson. And Figures 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 are the three handouts that were given to the students at the beginning of the lesson.
Fig. 7.2 Teacher’s Guide for Lesson 1. - Understanding British Culture through Proverbs

Understanding British Culture through Proverbs

Week 1 Theme: Bribery and the power of money

First hour: First 35 minutes

1. Have the class get into small groups and distribute the handouts.
2. Outline the class goal.
3. Read through the proverb and the cultural comments with the students.
4. Have the students choose a leader and a recorder, and then discuss in their groups the following questions:
   a. What do you think is the meaning, and the message of the English proverb/proverbs on your handouts?
   b. Do you know any other similar English or Korean proverbs?
   c. What do you think about the comments?
   d. Can you think of any examples of when the message of the proverb is true/untrue?
   e. Who do you think this proverb would be said to? Do you have any examples in your life of when you have used a similar proverb or when this proverb was said to you?
   f. What do you think this proverb says about British culture or the values of the British people?
   g. Do you think that this English proverb can be applied to Korean culture?
   h. Discuss the topic of the proverb from a Korean point of view.
5. Go round each group and check on the students’ discussions. Only be available for minimal help or advice. Write comments related to the students’ comments, behavior and performance on the teacher student evaluation sheet for each student.
6. Have the group recorders come up and give a brief report.

First hour: Last 15 minutes

7. Have the students begin to write a mini-drama containing the proverb discussed.

Second hour: First 30 minutes

8. Have the students practice and perform their mini-drama in class.
   Take notes of grammatical errors, and general content, and write down personal thoughts about the students’ ideas.

Second hour: Last 20 minutes

9. Discuss the major grammatical errors that the students made in their dialogs.
10. Have the students fill in the class evaluation sheets. (See Fig. 4)
11. Complete the teacher evaluation of the student’s performance while the students are performing their mini drama dialogs.
12. Make cultural comments based on the content of the mini-dramas.
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

Figure 7.3 Understanding British Culture through Proverbs – Student Handout

Understanding British Culture through Proverbs
You have two goals in this class:
1. Discuss the proverbs below in your groups and try to answer the questions.
2. Create a mini-drama dialog in your groups using at least one of the English proverbs that you discuss.

Each group elects a leader and a reporter. The leader guides the conversation and is responsible for making sure that a mini-drama using at least one of the proverbs that you discuss is completed. The reporter takes notes of the discussions and gives a short report on your group’s discussions before you perform your mini drama dialog.

Read the proverbs and comments on the next page, and answer the questions below.

a. What do you think is the meaning, and the message of the English proverbs?
b. Do you know any other similar English or Korean proverbs?
c. What do you think about the comments?
d. Can you think of any examples of when the message of the proverb is true/untrue?
e. Who do you think this proverb would be said to? Do you have any examples in your life of when this proverb was said to you?
f. What do you think this proverb says about British culture or the values of the British people?
g. Do you think that this English proverb can be applied to Korean culture?
h. Discuss the topic of the proverb from a Korean point of view.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Proverbs to Discuss</th>
<th>Similar Korean Proverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Money talks.</td>
<td>1. 돈이면 처녀 불알도 산다.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Money makes the pot boil.</td>
<td>2. 가는 장이 있어야 오는 장이 있다.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There must be kindness shown for kindness to be returned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English proverbs: The English proverbs are often used by people who want to receive a bribe. But they can also be said by anyone who is asked to do a difficult favor.

Comment: The English proverbs don’t suggest that the impossible can be made possible, but they do suggest that people who have a lot of money usually have more power and influence than others.

Korean Proverbs:
Comment: The Korean proverbs suggest that even the impossible is possible if you have money. Koreans tend to equate money with power, and the common folk (people without money) complain about the abuses of the rich and powerful who do not follow the usual rules of conduct. Although it is seems to be on the decline, graft and bribery are common features of Korean life. Some parents still give “white envelopes” (envelopes full of money) to their children’s teachers to ask them to show special favor to their children. Businesses give “rice cake money” (graft money amounting to thousands, or even millions of dollars) to politicians for help in having their company chosen for government-sponsored projects.
Figure 7.4 Student Homework for Week One

Your homework is to memorize the following ten English proverbs. You will have a short test at the beginning of the next class in which you will have to match each proverb with its meaning:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.</td>
<td>It is better to be satisfied with one thing you have, rather than to risk losing it in the hope that you might get more later.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.</td>
<td>We should get our facts straight before making a decision about something important, or we might suffer, and even cause other people to suffer, too.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A place for everything and everything in its place.</td>
<td>We should try to keep everything tidy. This will help our lives to run smoothly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A stitch in time saves nine.</td>
<td>Quick action at an early stage will save a lot of grief later.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.</td>
<td>Two people who love each other often grow to love each other even more when they are separated for any period of time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Accidents will happen.</td>
<td>Accidents sometimes can and do happen. And we shouldn't blame the person who is responsible for the accident.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Actions speak louder than words.</td>
<td>What we do is more important than what we say.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. All good things must come to an end.</td>
<td>You cannot expect good times or enjoyable experiences to last forever.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. All is fair in love and war.</td>
<td>In matters that are connected to love and war you can do anything you want to.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.</td>
<td>We all have to relax and play sometimes. If we don't, we will come to have a very dull character, and this might even be harmful to our health.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

Figure 7.5 Lesson Evaluation Sheet for Students

Questionnaire on what you felt about the lesson.

Please answer as honestly as possible.

5 – This statement is completely true for me.

4 – I moderately support this statement.

3 – I’m not sure. I’m in the middle.

2 – I don’t really think this is true.

1 – I completely disagree with this statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) This lesson was interesting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) I enjoyed discussing English proverbs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) I enjoyed creating the mini-drama dialogs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) I learned some interesting things about British culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) I spoke more English than I usually do in the communication class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do not write an answer for this question until your teacher tells you to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6) I learned some interesting things about British culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.3 Case Study: Actual classroom experience

In the model of task-based learning the students first have to do the task (production), they practice it, and then they present it. It is only after they have presented it, that the teacher draws attention to the language used, making corrections and adjustments to the students' performance. In the accepted form of task-based methodology the
teacher is an observer during the task phase and becomes a language informant only during the 'language focus' stage. The teacher does not introduce and 'present' language or interfere ('help') during the task cycle. However, in our lesson there was no specific task for the students in the first part of the lesson, and during the discussion time the teacher circulated around the class, and was available for minimal support if the students asked for it. The following case study is based on observations of an actual class which used the proverb material for discussions about culture. The main purpose of this class was to test the methodologies suggested in this thesis.

My initial concern obviously was the method of data collection. Weir and Roberts (1994:159) argue that "there are no rigid rules to help researchers make data collection decisions beyond ensuring that the methods which are appropriate to the situation and for the purposes for which information is sought." The method of data collection I chose to adopt for this part of the thesis was classroom observation, and personal notes. Due to the fact that I was the teacher this also included self observation as well as student observation. Particular effort was made during the collection of data to be as objective as possible.

To make my records more focused I had prepared a teacher evaluation sheet, as shown in Figure 7.6 for each group before the class began. On this sheet I not only evaluated student behavior and performance, but also jotted down specific comments related to individual student performance in their group discussions. This section for my personal notes (comments about what took place, including unforeseen problems and also personal feelings about classroom interaction etc.) was quite useful to capture a number of interesting aspects of classroom processes that were not actually observable in any very reliable or measurable way. As soon as the lesson was over I wrote down everything that I and the students had said in the general discussions while it was still fresh in my mind. I decided not to record the lesson because I didn’t want the students to be influenced in any way by the knowledge that what they were saying was being recorded and also for the obvious reason that it would be difficult.

37 I had tried to use a tape recorder in other classes and had found that many students became self conscious and were often reluctant to speak when they knew that what they said was being recorded. As I took extensive notes, and had the students hand in the mini drama dialogs that they had written, I felt that this was enough.
to effectively record each of the four groups, and the voices of up to twenty people speaking at the same time.

Figure 7.6 Teacher Evaluation Sheet for Each Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should be evaluated by their general class participation, class reports, and on the quality of the oral presentations of the mini-dramas they created.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 - Very good
4 - Moderately Good
3 - Satisfactory
2 - Poor
1 - Very Poor

Group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal Notes

General Comments:

At the beginning of the class I asked the students to form 4 groups and then I gave them three handouts shown in figures 7.3, 7.4., 7.5. After I had given the handouts to the students, I carefully explained the goals of the lesson.\footnote{It should be mentioned here that the medium of language instruction for this class was predominantly English. Although at the beginning of the lesson, after explaining everything in English, I briefly said the same thing again in Korean to make sure that the students understood properly what they had to do.} The students were then given a short time to choose their leader and reporter. The rest of the lesson was conducted in the same order as the lesson plan already introduced in Figure 7.2.
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A record of what actually took place in the lesson is introduced in the next section which contains the transcripts of the students mini-drama dialogs, notes I took as I went around from group to group, notes of the individual report of each group including personal comments, and an explanation of how the lesson was conducted. The notes, themselves represent points that I thought should be discussed in the general discussion time at the end of the class vis-à-vis grammatical errors, incorrect use of language of the students in their presentations, and general points that were made to help better cultural understanding.

7.2.3.1 General Group Discussion comments made by the students.

In this section I introduce the notes I took as I went around each of the 4 groups. They are based on comments made by individual students as they were discussing the meaning of the proverbs that they were asked to discuss.

1. Money talks means that with money you can do everything. So I want to be rich.
2. Bribery is a part of Korean business life. Maybe I will have to do it one day.
3. “Money talks” doesn’t only mean bribing someone. It also means that you can get special treatment. If you have money in an expensive restaurant you can always get a seat.
4. Money doesn’t always talk. For example, money is not important in love.
5. We are so young, we don’t know well about this.
6. I don’t like these proverbs. I especially don’t like the Korean proverb. Why does a virgin girl need to buy testicles? A man must have made this proverb. Most girls don’t want testicles. I wish Korean society was more like Western society.
7. When I was in school my mother sometimes gave a white envelop full of money to the teacher.

A student’s question to the professor: Do parents in England give money to the teacher?

Prof’s answer: No. English parents would not usually give money to their child’s teacher. These days in England the proverb “Money talks” doesn’t usually refer to bribery. It just refers to the power to do almost anything you want within the law if
you have money. For example, England has a national health system. Sometimes you have to wait a long time to see a dentist, or see a doctor. If you have money you can go as a private patient to the hospital and get the best treatment. In a restaurant you can usually reserve a good table if you have money.

8. This proverb can easily be applied to Korean culture. You can do anything you want in Korea if you have money.

9. In Korea most people enter politics because they want to “listen to money.”

Prof’s question: That’s an interesting expression Chris. What do you mean?

Student’s answer: If money talks, someone has to listen to it. Korean Politicians like listening to money.

7.2.3.2 Student mini-drama dialogs

In this section I introduce the students’ mini-drama dialogs. They are exact copies (without corrections) of the student’s work which they handed in at the end of the class. All the students in the class had chosen English names and they are given to show the gender make-up of each group.

1. **Group One: Roy (leader) Brian, Jack (reporter), Porter, Leonardo, David**

Narrator: Once upon a time there was a rich boy. But he had no friends. So he decided to buy friends with his wealth.

Scene 1

A: Hey! Can you play with me if I buy you a toy?

B: OK. What can you provide me with?

A: Just ask. How much do you need?

Scene 2

A: Hey! Do you want to go to Outback with me? It’s on me.

B: Oh, how thoughtful and rich you are! Sure.

Narrator: “A” thought he had many friends. A few years later his money was completely depleted.

---

39 Outback is quite an expensive restaurant in Korea which students sometimes go to when they can afford it.
A: Oh, my noble friends. Please play with me.
B: What can I get from you today, buddy?
A: Sorry. But I have no supplies for you today.
B: Then, get lost!
A: How about you, dear friend?
C: Sorry. I can’t play with you anymore. I’m... um... Yes, I’m moving to the U.S.
A: Why can’t you play with me?
B/C: You know what they say, “Money talks!”

2. Group 2: Wendy (Leader), Doris (reporter), Leslie, Carol, Alexandra, Sarah

Title: Money talks

Daughter: Mom. I bombed the final exam.
Mother: Oh, I’ve got to go and meet your teacher.
Daughter: Good idea, Mom.
Mother: I’ll use my credit card to buy a nice present for her.
Daughter: Yes, buy a nice present. Money talks! Well, see you later Mom, I have to go and download my homework from the Internet.

(At School)
Mother: Excuse me. I’m Doris’ mother.
Teacher: Oh, yes. Sit down, please. How can I help you?
Mother: Oh, my daughter failed the exam. This is for you.
Teacher: What is this?
Mother: It’s a small present.
Teacher: A small present? Thank you so much. Oh, and don’t worry about Doris’ exam.
Mother: (smiling to herself) The proverb is right. Money talks!


(The team made paper money to give to the students in the class and I added stage directions to facilitate understanding.)
Narrator: Here we are at the Hong-Doe club. This is a very famous club.

A: (Student A walks around the room giving paper money to the other students.) I’m 3rd generation money. I have many, many, many money. Oh, that girl is hot. I need her. I want her. Who is that girl? (goes to the girl) Hello. My name is Luke, I’m the chairman of a large company. I will give you a lot of money if you play with me. Do you have time?

B: (To herself) Wow! He is so ugly. (smiling) Oh, you are so handsome. Um... How much money will you give me? I’m very expensive. I like expensive things.

A: I have many money on me. You can have it.

B: Well let’s go.

Narrator: Susie. How can you go with that ugly man?

A: Money talks. Money talks.

---

4. Group 4: Kelly (leader), Lucy (reporter), Vivian, Hillary

Title: The Sorrow of Second Place

A: Congratulations. Even though you did get only second place.

B: Oh... Thanks.

C: What’s the matter? Your face is so red.

B: I can’t understand it.

A: What do you mean?

B: The girl who got first place. Look at her! How could that person with such face and body get first place? It’s not possible. She’s such a loser.

C: I agree. That girl is not pretty than you.

B: I know. I know. It’s true. I heard that girl gave some money to a judge. She thinks money is everything.

A: Really? Why didn’t you give some money?

B: What?

A: Well, money talks.

B: Are you my friend? I don’t do that. Anyway, I am the most prettiest. It’s not fair.
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

7.2.3.3 Teacher comments on grammatical errors, incorrect use of language, and on points of culture brought up in the lesson.

In this section I introduce a summarized version of the main comments I made at the end of the lesson with regards to grammatical errors, incorrect usage, and culture.

Comments on grammatical errors and incorrect usage

First I want to talk about some of the grammatical errors you made in your mini drama dialogs. 1. In one group somebody said “I have many money.” Of course he should have said, “I have much money.” Remember you only use many when it’s a non-count noun.

2. In another group somebody said, “The girl is not pretty than you.” You should have said “The girl is not as pretty as you” or “The girl is not prettier than you (are).”

3. Also you can’t say, “I am the most prettiest.” You have to say, “I am the prettiest.” You use the word “most” to make the superlative only with adjectives that are longer than three syllables, although there are a few exceptions when you can use the word most with only two syllable adjectives. For example, “He is the most stubborn person I know.”

In Roy’s group the narrator said, “A few years later his money was completely depleted.” A better way to say this would be “He had used up all his money.”

Comments on Culture

I had hoped that you would have made an effort to reflect more about the origin and meaning of this proverb within English culture when you wrote your mini drama dialogs, but it seems like you have used a Korean proverb to create mini drama that actually reflects Korean culture. The question I want to ask you all now is “Do you think that similar situations to the ones that you have created could actually happen in England?” I’ll give you one more chance. Which of the mini dramas do you think could also take place in England?

Roy: Our drama. I think people all over the world will use money to buy friends.
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan


Chris: I think so, too.

Professor: How about the other dramas? (Silence...) Okay, you don’t know. Actually I suppose it could be possible for something similar to Roy’s and Luke’s group to take place in England, but I think the dramas made by Wendy and Kelly’s groups would never happen in England. I am not saying that there is never any bribery in England, but it is not an accepted way to get things done as it seems to be in Korea. I mean how many of your parents have given money to your teacher? Put up your hands. 14 out of 20. That’s a lot. I think English parents would never give any money to their child’s teacher. I am told that Korean policemen sometimes accept bribes. Never try to bribe an English policeman. If you try to bribe an English policeman you will be arrested and put in prison!

Student: Don’t people ever give presents to teachers?

Professor: I think they sometimes do. But it can only be a small present. If you do really want to say thank you to your teacher and it cannot be interpreted that you are asking for a favor. You are allowed to give a small present the value of which should not exceed 20 English pounds. I am not sure if this is the exact amount. I know that different schools and places of work have different regulations about this.

7.3 Discussion of the results and feedback on the lesson.

In this section we discuss the results of the lesson. It is actually very difficult to judge the success of the language lesson. For example how can we quantify how much learning actually took place? And how can we measure with certainty the students’ satisfaction with the lesson? In an attempt to answer these questions I created two questionnaires: one for the student evaluation of the lesson, and one for a teacher evaluation of the students’ performance. Figure 7.7 shows a copy of the class evaluation sheet with the tabulated results of the student evaluations which they wrote after I had made my comments on the mini-drama dialogs. The reason for question 6 will be explained in the next paragraphs.
### Class Evaluation Sheet

Questionnaire on what you felt about the lesson. Please answer as honestly as possible.

5 – This statement is completely true for me.
4 – I moderately support this statement.
3 – I'm not sure. I'm in the middle.
2 – I don’t really think this is true.
1 – I completely disagree with this statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) This lesson was interesting.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) I enjoyed discussing English proverbs.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3) I enjoyed creating the mini-drama dialogs.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) I learned some interesting things about British culture.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) I spoke more English than I usually do in the communication class.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Do not write an answer for this question until your teacher tells you to.

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<th>Question</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6) I learned some interesting things about British culture.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The class evaluation sheet for students contained 6 questions, and was divided into two sections. The first five questions related to the lesson before there was any teacher input. Question 4 was purposely asked twice because I wanted to check how much culture the students felt they had learned before and after there had been teacher input. An examination of the tabulated results to these six questions show that the students thought the lesson was interesting, and that they spoke more English than they usually do in the communication class. However, it was found that student discussions alone did not enable them to intuitively understand the cultural thinking and social behavior of the English. Teacher input and explanations of these things was required. When this was done, the results of the student evaluation sheets (Figure 7.7 - Tabulated Results of the Student's Class Evaluation)
7.6 Question 6) show that the level of the students' understanding greatly increased. The creation and acting out of the mini dramas was extremely popular with the students, (apparent by numerous comments about how interesting the lesson had been) and I observed a significant increase in student participation and enthusiasm.

However, there were certain outcomes of the lesson that I had not foreseen. Although I had hoped that the students would try to create dialogs using the proverb that would reflect British culture, in fact the reverse happened. The themes that the students introduced in their respective dialogs all made some comment on current Korean culture. However, because the students were discussing and creating situations that they were familiar with, their level of interest significantly increased. A brief analysis of the content of the student mini-drama dialogs revealed some very interesting points about Korean culture. For example:

1. The tendency of many rich kids in Korea to try to buy friends.
2. The practice of some Korean mothers to give their child's teacher a white envelope full of money in order to ask him/her to pay particular attention to her son/daughter.
3. The tendency of many Korean students to think nothing of downloading their homework from the Internet and completely plagiarizing it.
4. The practice of the rich to use their wealth to get a date with someone from the opposite sex.

As discussed in section 7.2, the content material of the mini-drama dialogs of the students provided me with a good opportunity to introduce certain aspects of the cultural thinking and social behavior of the English in a way that was meaningful to the students, due to the fact that they were able to relate the new information to their own culture.

7.4 Teacher Evaluation of the Lesson

In this section I introduce the results of the teacher evaluation of the lesson, and teacher evaluation of each group. I present a copy of these evaluation sheets for the four groups with the notes I made during the class. Although I make comments concerning individual students on these sheets, the evaluation was a group evaluation,
and not an individual student evaluation. It can be seen in the teacher evaluation sheets that there are three categories of evaluation: class participation, class reports, and oral presentations. The personal notes and general comments were written down as the lesson proceeded, and the evaluations of each category was made immediately after the lesson ended, and were based on my observation of the lesson, and the notes that I took during the lesson.

Figure 7.8.1 Teacher Evaluation Sheet for Group 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation Sheet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should be evaluated by their general class participation, class reports, and on the quality of the oral presentations of the mini-dramas they created.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 – Very good  
4 – Moderately Good  
3 – Satisfactory  
2 – Poor  
1 – Very Poor

Group 1: Roy (leader) Brian, Jack (reporter), Porter, Leonardo, David

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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**Personal Notes**

All the students with the exception of Leonardo are discussing enthusiastically. Should mention the proper way to use “depleted”. Even Leonardo is starting to talk. (Needs more encouragement) Roy, Jack and David have excellent pronunciation and acting skills. Brian and Porter seem to be talking more.

**General Comments**

Interesting theme. Money can buy me friends. Should make the comment that there are students like this in England, but it is probably more difficult to “buy” friendship in England.
Figure 7.8.2 Teacher’s Evaluation Sheet for Group 2

Teacher Evaluation Sheet

Students should be evaluated by their general class participation, class reports, and on the quality of the oral presentations of the mini-dramas they created.

5 – Very good
4 – Moderately Good
3 – Satisfactory
2 – Poor
1 – Very Poor

Group 2: Wendy (Leader), Doris (reporter), Leslie, Carol, Alexandra, Sarah
Title: Money talks

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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Personal Notes
Need to practice pronunciation with Carol. Sit not shit, failed not pailed.

Doris: I don’t like these proverbs. I especially don’t like the Korean proverb. Why does a virgin girl need to buy testicles? A man must have made this proverb. Most girls don’t want testicles. I wish Korean society was more like Western society.

Sarah: When I was in school my mother sometimes gave a white envelop full of money to the teacher.

All the girls in this group participated well.
No grammatical mistakes to discuss. Discussion turned to the role of women in society.

General Comments

What a funny dialog! Especially the part about downloading one’s homework from the Internet.
Must explain about the importance of not plagiarizing anything in England. (Also in Korea for that matter!) English parents never try to bribe their teacher. Even if they did there would be a 98% chance of the offer being refused.
Figure 7.8.3 Teacher Evaluation Sheet for Group 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation Sheet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should be evaluated by their general class participation, class reports, and on the quality of the oral presentations of the mini-dramas they created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – Moderately Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Very Poor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Group: 3. Luke (leader), Chris (reporter), Bruno, Brad

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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td>Class Reports</td>
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<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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Personal Notes

Luke: Money talks means that with money you can do everything. So I want to be rich.

Chris: Money doesn’t always talk. For example, money is not important in love.
Chris: We are so young, we don’t know well about this.

Luke, Chris and Bruno are writing their mini-drama dialog enthusiastically.

Brad isn’t saying much.

The best acting, but the worst written English.
Should comment on “many money:

General Comments:

Theme – Money can buy me love. However should introduce that the English proverb is not usually used in connection with buying love. Should mention again that “money talks” is used more often in connection with getting preferential treatment.
Chapter 7 Classroom Methodology and Lesson Plan

Figure 7.8.4 Teacher Evaluation Sheet for Group 4

Teacher Evaluation Sheet

Students should be evaluated by their general class participation, class reports, and on the quality of the oral presentations of the mini-dramas they created.

5 – Very good
4 – Moderately Good
3 – Satisfactory
2 – Poor
1 – Very Poor

Group 1: Kelly (leader), Lucy (reporter), Vivian, Hillary

Title: The Sorrow of Second Place

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Class Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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Personal Notes

Lucy and Hillary are talking much more.
Hillary: Bribery is a part of Korean business life. Maybe I will have to do it one day.
* My comment - “Money talks” doesn’t only mean bribing someone. It also means that you can get special treatment. If you have money in an expensive restaurant you can always get a seat.
* Class report a little weak.
* The girl is not pretty than you.” You should have said “The girl is not as pretty as you” or “The girl is not prettier than you (are).”
* Such face and body -> such a face and body

General Comments

Theme - bribery for personal gain. Is interesting that both the girl teams introduced the theme of bribery. Should mention that bribery is not that common in England. (Although it does sometimes happen in sports – soccer, cricket) It would be difficult to bribe someone to change the result of a public competition. Must mention - Should never try to bribe a policeman.
The comments I made on each observation sheet were only intended to help me remember what I should discuss in the general discussion time towards the end of the lesson.

Figure 7.9 shows the teacher’s general class evaluation sheet which is a record of my evaluation for each group. There were four groups so a “4” means that this was true in all four groups.

**Figure 7.9 Teacher’s General Evaluation Sheet of the Class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation Sheet of the Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

5 – Very good
4 – Moderately Good
3 – Satisfactory
2 – Poor
1 – Very Poor

Group:

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<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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</table>

**General Comments**

The students were extremely enthusiastic during the mini-drama creation and performance. There was frequent laughter and students who seldom talked in previous classes started to open up and participate more in classroom discussions.
7.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I introduced a 16 week lesson plan for a one semester intermediate communication class (Communication II) using proverbs as the focal point of the lesson. There was also a case study of the actual implementation of a lesson using a task-based methodology in which introduced a detailed account of an actual lesson. Following on from this a critical evaluation of some of the issues that arose during the lesson was given.

The rationale for task-based teaching/learning used in this study is that it suits the character of Koreans and it offers a possible solution to the problem of the inability many Korean students to speak English even after ten years of studying English at elementary, middle and high school. Overall the data from this chapter support my thesis claims that it is possible to introduce culture using proverbs, and that the task-based methodology introduced in this thesis is an effective way to teach English Korean tertiary university students.

Actual classroom experimentation showed that having the students discuss the proverbs had multiple benefits vis-à-vis increased class interest and participation. And it provided a good platform to introduce certain aspects of English culture. A conclusion that could be drawn from the lesson was that Korean students seem to thrive on competition. In a normal language classroom, many Koreans tend to be shy and passive, because they have seldom been called upon to express an opinion. However, when the element of competition is introduced, many of them lose their shyness, and become active participants. This lesson is a challenge, in that the students have to produce a mini-drama dialog using the proverb that they discussed in the lesson. The challenge itself is a motivating force. The challenge was made even more interesting when the students introduced the element of competition themselves making it clear that they wanted to create a mini drama that was more interesting than that of other groups.
In the next chapter the research question are brought together, a discussion of this thesis as a whole is presented and indications for areas of further research are introduced.
CHAPTER 8 Conclusions: Introducing a task-based methodology that uses the proverbs appearing in a paremiological minimum for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

Introduction
8.1 A summary of findings from earlier chapters
8.2 Limitations of the study
   8.2.1 Limitations of corpus research.
   8.2.2 Need for duplication of the research by other EFL teachers
8.3 The contribution of this research to the field of EFL pedagogy in Korea
8.4 Directions for further research
8.5 Conclusion

Introduction
The purposes of my research as I initially set them out were to identify a paremiological minimum of English and Korean proverbs based on a corpus, and then introduce a task-based teaching methodology that used these proverbs as materials for discussions to teach English culture in a Korean tertiary EFL communication class. The research itself was founded upon two specific research questions and two hypotheses.

My aim in this chapter is, therefore, to provide an overview of my research as a whole, and present the conclusions that I was able to reach through this research in relation to the research questions and the hypothesis I introduced in Chapter One. I also attempt to identify the limitations of the study, show what contributions have been made to the field of EFL pedagogy in Korea, and also present suggestions of areas for further study that can carried out based on this research.

8.1 A summary of findings from earlier chapters
This section provides an overview of the findings of my research in relation to my initial hypotheses and research questions, and also summarizes the conclusions I was able to reach. Each hypothesis or research question will be dealt with individually.
Chapter 8 Conclusions: Introducing a task-based methodology that uses the proverbs appearing in a paremiological minimum for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

1. Research Question One: Can we identify a paremiological minimum, i.e., a central stock of commonly used English and Korean proverbs which most native speakers know, and which are therefore necessary for cultural literacy based on the examination of an English, and a Korean, corpus?

Permiakov (1971, 1973, & 1989) was the first scholar to refer to a "paremiological minimum" in a language. Later, Higbee and Millard (1983) made a study to identify 15 of the most familiar and 15 of the least familiar English proverbs. Mieder (1995) discussed the need for a paremiological minimum for English, arguing that it should be based on a corpus which is representative of modern writing and speech. However, he did not himself establish a paremiological minimum of any significance. A more recent study seeking to identify a paremiological minimum for English proverbs was carried out by Charteris-Black (1999), who listed 63 English proverbs which appeared the most frequently in the Bank of English Corpus. Since Charteris-Black, this is the first research that has identified a larger paremiological minimum (153 English proverbs) based on the BNC, and it is the first study that has identified a paremiological minimum of Korean (150 Korean proverbs) based on the King Sejong Corpus (currently the largest Korean corpus). The results of my research have enabled me to conclude that it is possible to identify a paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs using a corpus, but as will be discussed in section 8.2.1, deciding a paremiological minimum relying solely on a large corpus does have possible limitations in that corpora are, for the most part, based on written works, whereas a proverb is something that is usually spoken in everyday communication. However, there are obvious benefits to establishing a paremiological minimum in that the students can know that they are learning and discussing proverbs which are in contemporary use.

2) Hypothesis One: Commonly used English and Korean proverbs are useful and effective tools in the teaching of culture in a Korean EFL classroom, and a knowledge of commonly used English proverbs will contribute to increased cultural literacy for the Korean EFL student.
Chapter 8 Conclusions: Introducing a task-based methodology that uses the proverbs appearing in a paremiological minimum for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

My research findings are consistent with the findings of other research with regards to the relation of paremiology and culture (Taylor, 1996; Schuster, 1998; Mieder, 1999; Williams 2000). These findings say that proverbs do offer insights into the way the people of that culture think and categorize the world. They are a key which can help FL learners to understand the culture of the language they are trying to learn.

As already discussed in section 4.4, Williams (2000:15) claims that, “Not only do proverbs educate new members of the culture, but they reinforce previously held messages and encourage the development of novel understandings of the code.” If proverbs are significant in educating “new members” of a culture it is reasonable to argue that they can be used to educate people of different cultures, not with the goal of effecting a change in behavior, but rather helping them to understand the culture behind the target language. The results of my classroom research suggest that this is true. The use of proverbs in the EFL classroom as material to introduce culture was an effective way to introduce culture. However, contrary to what I had first expected, the students were not always able to intuitively understand English culture correctly just by discussing the proverbs amongst themselves. What they most often did was to adapt the meaning of the proverb to suit Korean culture. Although this was at first unexpected and discouraging, the students’ adaptation of the English proverbs they discussed into Korean culture actually made the lesson more interesting, and later enabled me to introduce English culture naturally by comparing it to the cultural tendencies of Korean culture that appeared in the mini-drama dialogs of the students.

There was no claim in this thesis that proverbs are the only way to introduce culture, but my current research suggests that using proverbs as catalysts for discussions in a Korean intermediate EFL communication class is an effective way to increase intercultural understanding.

Hirsch (1987) was the first scholar to introduce the idea of the need for cultural literacy, and claimed that having knowledge of the mostly commonly used proverbs was one criterion for it. It is my contention in this thesis that, for Korean students, learning the 153 proverbs of the English paremiological minimum is one way of
Chapter 8 Conclusions: Introducing a task-based methodology that uses the proverbs appearing in a paremiological minimum for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

fulfilling this requirement. It is recognized that just knowing all the proverbs in the paremiological minimum does not guarantee cultural literacy. However, it can be established as one goal if the students desire to speak the language better.

3. Research Question Two: How effective is a task-based approach that uses proverbs as EFL material in terms of student satisfaction and classroom participation with regards to Korean university students?

Although task-based learning as an independent teaching methodology was first introduced by Prabhu (1987), in the past few years, task-based teaching has gained the interest of an increasing number of researchers. This is evident in the large number of recent publications relating to task-based learning and teaching (for example, Willis 1996, Skehan 1998; Lee 2000; Language Teaching Research Vol. 4.3, 2000; Bygate et al. 2001; Ellis 2003; Willis and Willis 2007).

Willis and Willis (2007:1) especially comment, that “Proponents of task-based teaching (TBT) argue that the most effective way to teach a language is by engaging learners in real language use in the classroom.” My findings also support this claim when teaching students who are more advanced. Until they enter university, Koreans students have seldom been asked to think for themselves, or been encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. They have been forced to partake in rote memorization of facts and figures, and their English education has consisted of learning large lists of vocabulary and grammatical rules. This has resulted in students that often sit passively in the language class. However, when the students are encouraged, through task-based exercises, to take responsibility for their own learning, then a significant change in their performance was seen. Having proverbs as the center of the subject matter to be discussed was found to interest the students. Also the task which required the students to create their own mini dramas using the main proverb that they had discussed, contributed to higher motivation and greater participation in group discussions by the students. This was evident by the answers the students gave on their class evaluation sheets at the end of the lesson, and also by the results of the teacher evaluation sheet.
Chapter 8 Conclusions: Introducing a task-based methodology that uses the proverbs appearing in a paremiological minimum for teaching culture in the Korean EFL classroom.

4. Hypothesis Two: *A task-based pedagogical approach that uses proverbs as the core material for classroom discussions for a Korean tertiary EFL culture and communication class is an effective way to increase student participation and interest.*

Based on the results of the student evaluation sheets, and classroom observation of the case study introduced in the last chapter, I claim that the students were better motivated in the language class. My current findings suggest that it is possible to increase student active participation in a Korean intermediate EFL class by using a task-based approach to teaching.

8.2 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this research can be divided into two parts. The limitations of introducing a paremiological minimum based on a corpus examination alone, and the fact that this research was only conducted in one language classroom, and by only one teacher, and that factors such as the teacher’s experience or familiarity with the culture of the students he was teaching were not considered.

8.2.1 Limitations of corpus research.

Although a corpus-based approach has been used in this study to identify a paremiological minimum for English and Korean, objections might be raised as to how representative of the culture the proverbs selected as being “those in most frequent use” are. The authenticity of these proverbs could be questioned because there are so many variables, such as age, social status, gender, and race. Also, people who write books or even scripts for television dramas are usually better acquainted with proverbs and are more likely to use them in their writings than the average person would be. Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998:9), strong supporters of using a corpus approach when undertaking language research, make the point that corpus-based analysis should be seen as a complementary approach to more traditional approaches, rather than as the single correct approach. We should therefore recognize that the challenge raised by any form of research trying to establish a paremiological minimum based on a corpus is that the data cannot be infallible, and that there are obvious limitations. Even though the huge databases of hundreds of millions of words
can be mobilized, they cannot possibly hope to capture the moments of everyday life that a child spends with his/her friends, or with his/her mother or father. Nevertheless, a start has to be made somewhere, and until a larger corpus, which includes recordings of long-term interaction between parents and their children, appears, it is a good way to objectively conduct research. One way to support the data introduced in this thesis, would be to conduct a similar study but check these same results using a statistically recognized number of informants.

In this thesis my paremiological minimum for both English and Korean are those proverbs (including proverb variations) which appear at least five times in the respective corpuses. It should be understood that although I refer to a paremiological minimum, the word “minimum” is used advisedly. There can be no real justification for setting the cut-off point for our paremiological minimum at five hits. It could be argued that it should be set lower at 4 hits, or even three hits. It is hoped that the readers of this thesis understand that the paremiological minimums identified in this study should be considered to be more like a “paremiological beginning,” and the more proverbs a person knows from a particular country, the more culturally literate he/she can be considered to be. However, what the paremiological minimums do in this study is clearly identify the proverbs that are in current use suggested by their higher frequency of appearance in each corpus.

8.2.2 Need for duplication of the research by other EFL teachers

One of the obvious limitations of this study is that the language teaching methodology suggested here has not been tested by other EFL teachers in Korea and that the researcher was also the teacher and the observer. Although there are advantages to being the researcher, the teacher, and the observer, there are also limitations. In this section I will discuss this.

The main advantage in being the researcher, the teacher, and the observer means that you experience the research situation directly, and it is familiar to you. In my case, I knew the students very well, and I knew what they were like before I used this new
task-based teaching methodology. This meant that I was able to make an informed judgment as to the changes in the amount of English the students used, and their increased in-class participation. However, the obvious disadvantage of doing everything alone is the potential problem of objectivity. Although I made a particular effort to be as objective as I could, questions could be raised as to how possible this really is. For example, would a different observer observing my teaching classroom come to the same conclusions that I did?

Another factor of this study which has not been discussed, is the length of the teaching experience of the teacher, and the familiarity of the teacher with Korean culture itself. For example, would the same results be obtained by teachers with less experience, and who are new to Korean culture?

In order to address such issues it is suggested that the research conducted for this thesis be continued in other EFL classrooms at Sun Moon University, and be a joint study done with other teachers, so that there can be more objectivity in the research process. Although this method was found to be effective in my own classroom, it is not clear whether or not this is due to the methodology itself, the enthusiasm of the teacher teaching the class, or a combination of both of these.

It would also be interesting to test this methodology in another study not only in the Korean EFL classroom, but also in other Asian EFL classrooms. The fact that task-based learning first became popular in India might suggest that this kind of methodology is particularly effective in Asian classrooms. However, the only way to do this kind of research would be to write a textbook, adapting it to reflect the cultural background of the EFL students.

8.3 The contribution of this research to the field of EFL pedagogy in Korea

This research is significant because it contributes to an important area of EFL pedagogy in Korea that is not well developed. It aims to suggest a new way to teach culture, not only at the university in Asan City where the experiment was conducted, but also in the wider Korean context. This thesis intended to establish a paremiological minimum for English and Korean proverbs, and what makes it unique
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is that I introduce a task-based approach that uses proverbs as material to teach culture in a Korean EFL communication class. The rationale for using proverbs is the based on the premise that they offer invaluable insights into the culture and mindset of the people of the target language. The research I have done in this thesis is also significant because:

1. There is no work to date supported by corpus-based evidence which identifies a large paremiological minimum for either English of Korean proverbs. There is also no work which explores the cultural meaning or information contained within many of the proverbs introduced. The identification of the paremiological minimum for Korean proverbs especially is foundation work that will allow for further research into Korean paremiology, language and culture.

2. There has been no one until now who has suggested using the proverbs in a paremiological minimum as the main material of a task-based EFL communication course.

This work is important for Korean students studying English, but it is also important for scholars of Korea, and native speaker teachers of English in Korea in that it will help them to understand English/Korean culture better. It is hoped that the implications for practice of the task-based EFL teaching methodology using proverbs proposed in this thesis will make a small contribution, suggesting a possible new approach for native English teachers in Korea to teach culture in EFL communication classes.

8.4 Directions for further research

Even though the main experimentation done in this thesis was done with Korean students, all the groundwork for using the same kind of technique to teach Korean to international students has been done, and it is hoped that a new language textbook for introducing Korean language and culture can soon be forthcoming. Other than this, I introduce three main research areas that should naturally follow on from this thesis.
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The first is research that focuses on particular categories of Korean and English proverbs and discusses these categories in more detail. Such categories might include family, nature, house, morals, food, language, and body parts etc. The goal of such a study would be to undertake some linguistically-based classification of the proverbs, identifying what % of the proverbs in the paremiological minimum showed a particular linguistic feature (e.g. body part terms).

The second is research which compares in depth the most commonly used Korean and English proverbs as was revealed in this corpus-based study with a view to identifying differences in cultural attitudes, for example, towards women or human relationships.

The third is research which examines the actual use of Korean proverbs in Korean literature and drama. One outcome of this research is that I myself have become more aware of the use of proverbs in everyday life, and in current Korean TV dramas. I noticed that the Korean proverbs were often not used in the way one would generally expect them to be used; namely, to advise or comfort the hearer in order to effect, if not a change in behavior, at least a change in attitude. Surprisingly, they were used as a tool of argumentation or justification for a specific course of action said by the speaker to himself, or to someone else about his own actions, and often they were used again by the speaker to himself as a source of comfort and encouragement. Such usage in Korean culture could reflect the restrictions imposed on a speaker in Korean society by the hierarchy of relationships that exist. Further study into the differences in usage of Korean proverbs in everyday Korean communication would be very interesting and revealing.

8.5 Conclusion

Because there is so little scholarship in English on Korean proverbs, there is still much to do. This thesis has only begun to explore the relationship between proverbs and culture. It has attempted to introduce a substantial paremiological minimum of English and Korean proverbs, and has shown a way to use these proverbs to introduce British culture. The most significant pedagogical implication that can be drawn from
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Observation of student interaction and class participation as they carry out the tasks set for them, is that the task-based methodology introduced in this thesis is effective, and can contribute to helping the students use the language that they already know. The grammar translation method of the high school education that Korean students have received has produced students that know a lot of English, but are unable to speak it. The teacher-centered classes of Korean high schools have resulted in many of the students in EFL communication classes being very passive, and untalkative. However, a task-based methodology which required students to assume greater responsibility and initiative for their own learning was found to significantly increase in-class interaction, and also contribute to oral fluency by providing opportunities for the students to use the language that they already know.

To conclude, this research is intended to contribute to an important area of communication pedagogy in Korea, and offers a new perspective on the benefits of using proverbs to introduce culture in Korean EFL classrooms. It is also hoped that the Korean proverbs identified and explained in this research will become foundation material for further research on Korean proverbs.
Appendices

Appendix 1: A Paremiological Minimum of 153 English Proverbs

The proverbs in this paremiological minimum are introduced in alphabetical order and the number in parentheses on the right of the proverb is the number of hits the proverb received in the corpus analysis. The meaning of each proverb is explained. If there is a comparable Korean proverb (same expression - same metaphor, different expression - same metaphor), it is given. The Korean equivalent is shown in its translated form, and also includes both the Romanized and Hangeul version. Where applicable, comments on what insights can be gained from these proverbs concerning the culture and national character are also given. The comments on a number of proverbs were made keeping Korean cultural idiosyncrasies in mind. The explanation and comments are only one point of view, and they are not meant to be the final word on the subject. In fact, it is hoped that there will be different opinions and points of view, which this researcher feels will only add to the intensity of the Korean EFL classroom discussions.

A Paremiological Minimum of 153 English Proverbs

1.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (10)

This proverb means it is better to be satisfied with one thing you have, rather than to risk losing it in the hope that you might get more later. It is usually used when trying to advise somebody not to be too greedy.

Korean: Better a dog’s leg today than a cow’s leg tomorrow.

내일 소 다리 보다 오늘 개 다리가 낫다.


Comment: The message of the English and Korean proverbs is the same. We should play it safe, and shouldn’t be too greedy. It is a sad fact (for many English dog-lovers) that dog meat is still eaten in Korea. However, the popularity of this practice is in decline. Koreans who eat dog meat insist that the dogs are special dogs bred only for human consumption, and they definitely do not condone the eating of household pets.

2.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. (7)

This proverb means making judgments about something when you only know half the facts can bring about a very bad result. We should get our facts straight before making a decision about something important, or we might suffer, and even cause
other people to suffer, too. This proverb is usually used as a warning against being too arrogant, and can be said to, or about anybody.

Korean: The novice shaman kills the person.

_Seon mu-dang-i sa-ram jab-neun-da._

선 무 당 이 사람 잡 는 다.

Comment: A shaman in Korea had the responsibility to exorcise evil spirits from buildings or from people. If she was a novice and didn’t know how to do this properly, then she could end up being defeated by the evil spirits, and killing the person. The actual message of the Korean proverb is similar to the English.

3.

A place for everything and everything in its place. (6)

This proverb means we should try to keep everything tidy. Then this will help our lives to run smoothly. It is usually used to admonish those who are not particularly tidy.

Comment: This proverb actually shows Victorian values of England long ago. The Victorians believed that a person who is neat and tidy will also act uprightly (like ‘Cleanliness is next to Godliness’). Today, the proverb has come to take on a more practical aspect suggesting that tidiness will save time. The Koreans are like everyone else when it comes to tidiness in that some people are tidy, and some are not. However, Koreans like another kind of tidiness as well. I will call this “hierarchical tidiness.” We could make a new proverb for Koreans, “A place for everyone and everyone in his place” to reveal something about the Korean culture. Hierarchical tidiness, or order, is extremely important in Korean society. However, this order is determined only by age.

4.

A stitch in time saves nine. (8)

This proverb means that if you do something about a problem the minute you notice it, you will save yourself a lot of work later on. Quick action at an early stage will save a lot of grief later.

Korean: He fills with a spade what should have been filled with a hoe.

_Ho-mi-ro mak-eul geol ga-rae-ro mak-neun-da_  

호 미로 막 을 걸 가래로 막 는 다.
Appendices

Comment: Both these proverbs have the message that prevention is better than cure, and urge a person to act opportunistically. However, the Korean proverb is often said after a problem has happened, and carries a more sarcastic message saying, “Why didn’t you act diligently?” The English proverb, on the other hand, is encouraging people to be diligent before the event. (See Korean proverb 148 for further discussions)

5.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder. (11)

This proverb means that two people who love each other often grow to love each other even more when they are separated for any period of time.

cf. Out of sight out of mind. (See proverb 101)

6.

Accidents will happen. (7)

This proverb is just commenting on the inevitable truth in life that accidents sometimes can and do happen. And that we shouldn’t really blame the person who is responsible for the accident. It is usually used to comfort or forgive a person who has just had an accident. For example if a guest breaks a glass by mistake one might say, “Don’t worry about it. Accidents will happen.” It means “I forgive you.” However, this proverb is also sometimes used to warn a person that s/he should be careful because accidents can happen.

7.

Actions speak louder than words. (10)

This proverb means that what we do is more important than what we say. It is usually used to chastise somebody who is all talk and no action. It is also used to stress the importance of doing something rather than just talking about it.

Korean: Look at one (thing of a person) and you can tell ten (things about him)

한 나를 보 면 열을 알 다.

Ha-na-reul bo-myeon yeol-eul an-da.

8.

All good things must come to an end. (8)

This proverb means you cannot expect good times or enjoyable experiences to last forever. Sooner or later they will finish. People also often say this proverb to
themselves when they have to stop doing something they really enjoy doing. It is often used in a humorous or lighthearted way.

Comment: Many Koreans often try to extend the length of good experiences far longer than perhaps the ordinary Englishman would. In the Korean drinking culture, after a party has finished, the Koreans (especially men, but these days an increasing number of women) quite often go for a second, and even a third course of drinking. And they boast in the morning that they went on "three courses" the night before.

9.

All is fair in love and war. (5)

Originally this proverb meant that there are no rules when it comes to love and war. It means you can do anything you want in order to gain victory. Today it has come to mean that in some situations, any kind of behavior is acceptable in order to get what you want. It is usually used to justify a deceitful action that you have done, are doing, or are about to do, if it will help you to achieve what you want.

Comment: Although many Koreans might agree with the comment about war, there would be some resistance to the idea that there are no rules when it comes to love. Koreans would be much happier saying All is fair in business and war.

10.

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. (6)

This proverb means that we all have to relax and play sometimes. If we don't, we will come to have a very dull character, and this might even be harmful to our health. This proverb is usually used to chastise somebody for working all the time, and not taking time to enjoy himself/herself.

*cf. Practice makes perfect.*

Comment: The message of this proverb would be quite foreign to Koreans. Koreans encourage diligence, and have few vacations each year (even if their contract says 15 days vacation, most employees would expect their workers not to take all of these days off). Korean parents want their children to study hard. Many middle school students are forced to study at school until at least ten o'clock at night, and many high school students are kept at school until 11:00 p.m. A large number of these students go home, and have private tutors until one or two o'clock in the morning.

11.

All's well that ends well. (5)
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This proverb means that a satisfactory ending is more important than the process, even if there have been many difficulties or problems. This proverb is usually used to express relief that some kind of unfortunate happening or disaster has been averted, and the ending has turned out satisfactorily.

12. An apple a day keeps the doctor away. (5)

This proverb means that eating fruit, like apples, will help to maintain one’s health. It is usually used to encourage people to include fruit in their diet, and eat at least one apple a day.

13. An Englishman’s home is his castle. (6)

This proverb is commenting on the fact that English people like their privacy. It is usually used to explain why English people might not at first welcome a stranger openly into their house.

Comment: Korean and English people have very different attitudes towards privacy. In fact privacy is a relatively new concept in Korea. An English person in traveling in Korea might be shocked by a complete stranger approaching them and asking all sorts of personal questions. A Korean person traveling in England on the other hand, might find the English not to be very friendly or approachable at first. Koreans should try to understand that most English people value their privacy, and this means that he/she should refrain from asking personal questions.

14. Appearances are deceptive. (6)

This proverb is similar to the proverbs “You can’t judge a book by its cover” - “Beauty is only skin deep.” and “All that glitters is not gold.” It is usually used to warn against making a hasty decision about a person based only on how they look. For example, a person with long hair, and a nose ring might actually be a very nice person; and a person with short hair and a suit might actually be a crook.

Korean: A wild apricot of appetizing color.

 krist eun ge sal gu.

Bit joh-eun gae-sal-gu.

This Korean proverb is used more to talk about things; as is All that glitters is not gold. However, it is also used to talk about people, too.
Comment. The English proverb *Appearances are deceptive* would be good for Koreans to learn because Koreans tend to be quite conservative, and often do judge people on how they look.

15. Ask a silly question and you get a silly answer. (5)

This proverb means that if you ask a silly or flippant question, you cannot expect to get a serious or helpful answer. This proverb is usually used to advise people to think about what they are asking more carefully. It is often used by children who tend to be less tolerant of stupidity than adults are. An adult would be cautious of using this proverb to another adult.

16. Attack is the best form of defence. (7)

This proverb actually means that when you are under attack of some kind, it is often better to attack the aggressor, than sit passively waiting to be attacked. Today this proverb is given as advice to encourage somebody not to be passive when s/he tackles a situation. It suggests that a more positive and aggressive attitude should be adopted. In the world of business it is used to encourage people to be more positive and aggressive, but it also the advice an English father might give to his son who is often too passive when he gets beaten up at school.

17. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. (14)

This proverb means that beauty is a subjective thing. The idea of beauty suggests different things to different people, so what one person finds beautiful, another person might not. It is usually used to justify or defend a person's aesthetic sense.

Korean: *The glasses are made for your own eyes.*

제 눈에 안 겸.

*Jae-nun-e an-gyeong.*

*(Even something that is miserable looks good to the person who likes it.)*

Comment: The Korean attitude towards human beauty is quite surprising. Of course they appreciate beautiful external features. However, if you ask a Korean male student, “Do you think you’re handsome?” He will almost never give you a straight answer for fear of appearing too proud. A common answer would be. “My mother thinks I’m handsome!” Or just a plain, “No, I’m not handsome.”
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18.

Beauty is only skin deep. (6)

This proverb means that looks and character often have no relationship. The external appearance or beauty of a person does not necessarily show the beauty of his/her heart. Beauty doesn't exclude people having a beautiful and attractive character, but it also doesn't guarantee it. This proverb is usually used to advise against making a judgment about someone based solely on their external appearance. It is often said to those who are looking for a partner in marriage.

19.

Beggars can't be choosers. (12)

This proverb means that a person in need of help shouldn't complain about the help s/he is given. It is usually used to admonish somebody who is not satisfied with a gift s/he has been given, and advise them to be thankful for what they get. It is also used to remind a person that when there is no choice they should be satisfied with what is available.

Korean: Can a hungry person complain about whether the rice is hot or cold?

베 고 음 사 람이 찌 밥 더 운 밥 가 리 라?

Bae-go-peun sa-ram-i chan-pap teo-eun pap ga-ri-rya?

20.

Better late than never. (16)

This proverb means that it is better to arrive, or hand in a piece of work late, than not to come, or not hand it in at all. Or it is better that a success happens late rather than to not happen at all. It is usually used by somebody who is trying to excuse himself for being late, or by a person who is trying to forgive somebody for being late. The modern day version of this proverb is “Better late than never. Better never late!” It is also sometimes used to express a sigh of relief that something turned out successfully even though it did take a long time happening.

21.

Better safe than sorry. (32) (Better to be safe than sorry.)

This proverb means that it is better to be careful, and not take risks which might cause us to regret something later. It also warns against being too greedy. In today's world, this proverb would usually be used to encourage a person to be cautious in everything s/he does. In business matters it would mean don't take too many risks.
While driving it would mean, “obey the traffic laws.” For somebody going on a camping trip it would mean, “take an extra blanket or bar of chocolate, just in case.”

22. Better the devil you know than the devil you don’t know. (12)

This proverb means that it is better to deal with a bad person or situation that you are familiar with, rather than with a bad person or situation you are not familiar with. When dealing with the devil you know, at least you know how that person or situation is going to turn out. Whereas dealing with the devil you don’t know might be far worse. For the individual person this proverb might be used to encourage a person not to change companies just because he doesn’t like his boss. It suggests that there is no guarantee that the new boss will be any better. In today’s world this proverb is often used to talk about heads of state. A leader of a country might be a bad person, but if s/he supports you, then it is better to deal with this person rather than to work to change a regime and get a new leader who could be even worse than the first one.

23. Birds of a feather flock together. (9) (A man is known by the company he keeps.)

This proverb means that people with similar natures or attitudes tend to gather together. It suggests that you can tell what kind of person a man/woman is by the company s/he keeps. Today this proverb is often shortened to “Birds of a feather.” It is usually used to advise somebody to be careful about the company s/he keeps because other people will tend to judge them based on this fact alone.

cf. Opposites attract.

Korean: 1. Like attracts like.

Yu Yu Sang Jong

가 절은 계 편 이리.

2. The crayfish sides with the crab.

Ga jae neun ge pyeon i ra.

3. The green colors are the same.

Cho-rok-eun dong-saek.

Dark green and emerald green are almost the same color. They are called different things, but they have a similar nature.
24.

**Blood is thicker than water. (13)**

This proverb means that members of the same family share stronger ties with each other than they do with others. Because of this, they are much more likely to help, or side with people of the same family in an important decision, or in a dispute of any kind. It is used in exactly the same way in Korean proverb below. Although it might be even truer in Korea, where people often try to exploit family ties for personal gain. In fact, any relationship in Korea (even graduating from the same elementary school) is better than none, and is often exploited.

Korean: 1. *Blood is thicker than water.*
   
   피는 물보다 진하다.
   
   *Pi-neun mul bo-da jin-ha-da.*

2. *The arm always bends inwardly.*
   
   팔은 안으로 굽는다.
   
   *Pal-eun an-eu-ro gub-neun-da.*

25.

**Boys will be boys. (12)**

This proverb can be understood literally, that boys will act like boys. It is often used to excuse the mischievous, unruly or boisterous behavior of boys.

Korean: *When all is said and done, boys are boys.*
   
   사나, 네 운석시 사나에다.
   
   *Sa-nae, neun yeok-si sa-nae-da.*

26.

**Charity begins at home. (8)**

This proverb means that you should take care of those who are close to you before helping other people, and that love and cooperation is more often seen in the family. It is often used as an excuse not to donate money to charity. It is also sometimes given as a reason not to help other people having the message, “I should help myself, first.”

Korean: *The arm always bends inwardly.*
   
   팔은 안으로 굽는다.
   
   *Pal-eun an-eu-ro gub-neun-da.*
Comment: Any person is more likely to help those closer to him. But “home” in English is just as likely to mean the individual himself. The Korean proverb however, speaks more about cooperation within the family. However, it is often used to explain or comment on nepotism.

27. 

Children should be seen and not heard. (7)

This proverb means that children should understand their position in the grand scale of things. It warns them that they should remain quiet, and not be a nuisance in the presence of adults. It is used to chastise a child or children who are being too noisy. It is interesting that a long time ago in England this proverb applied only to girls, and not to boys.

Comment: Koreans don’t seem to mind so much if their children are a little noisy and boisterous in front of adults. In fact, many Korean parents are quite slow to discipline such behavior.

28. 

Discretion is the better part of valour. (12)

This proverb means that it is better to be cautious rather than to be foolishly brave, and take risks that aren’t necessary.

29. 

Divide and rule. (34) (Divide and conquer.) (7)

This proverb advises leaders that they should encourage people under them to continue quarreling so that they do not unite together and try to overthrow them. It is also a warning to people who are quarreling about the consequences of their actions. It is a proverb that politicians or company bosses might be advised to follow if they are having trouble with trade unions.

Comment: Koreans don’t have a proverb like this, probably because although Koreans “divide” quite easily, it is actually still quite difficult to conquer them even when they do so.

30. 

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. (5)

This proverb means that you should treat others in the same way that you want to be treated by them. A variation of this proverb is Do as you would be done by. It is used to advise somebody to be kind to others. It might more readily be said to children,
encouraging them to be kind, but also containing a subtle warning that if you treat somebody badly you might well be treated in the same way by them.

Comment: The English originally comes from Jesus’ teaching recorded in the Bible in Matthew 7:12. But the idea that treating others in the same way you would like to be treated by them is also a part of Confucius’ Golden Rule.

31.

Don’t bite the hand that feeds you. (12)

This proverb means you shouldn’t hurt or betray somebody who takes care of you. It is used to encourage people to be loyal, or to scold people who have been disloyal.

32.

Don’t count your chickens before they hatch. (6)

This proverb cautions people not to make plans based on something that might happen before it has actually happened. It is a strong warning against being too confident and acting hastily because things may still go wrong. The truncated form ‘Don’t count your chickens’ is often used.

Korean:

While the host is not even thinking about giving the cakes, the guest drinks the kimchi soup first.

떡 줄자 함은 생 각 지도 없는 때, 김 쏘 국 부터 마신 다.


33.

Don’t judge a book by its cover. (12)

This proverb is similar to the proverb Appearances are deceptive. It warns people against forming an opinion about something based solely on appearances alone. Don’t judge a book by its cover is more commonly used to speak about things. Whereas, Appearances are deceptive is usually used to speak about people.

cf. Clothes make the man.

Korean: The taste of the soybean sauce is better than the earthen bowl it's in.

물 배 기보다 장 맛이 좋다

ddeuk-bae-bo-da jang-ma-si joh-da.
(Though the appearance is poor, the substance is good.)

Comment: Both these proverbs have a similar message.

34.

Don’t kill the goose that lays the golden egg/s. (5)

This proverb means that you shouldn’t destroy something that will help you to become rich and successful. It is used to warn somebody against treating badly somebody or something that is helping you, unless you want that help to cease.

35.

Don’t make a mountain out of a molehill. (7)

This proverb means that you shouldn’t exaggerate a problem, and make it seem to be more significant than it actually is.

Korean: Making a small needle into a big pole.

迷你Orientation

Chim-so-bong-dae.

36.

Don’t put all your eggs in one basket. (14) (You shouldn’t)

This proverb means that you shouldn’t depend completely on one thing or one course of action in order to get success so that you have no other plans if this fails. In other words you shouldn’t gamble, and risk losing everything at once.

Comment: If you put all your eggs in one basket, and then drop the basket by mistake, all the eggs will break, and you will end up with nothing.

37.

Don’t teach your grandmother to suck eggs. (6)

This proverb means you shouldn’t try to teach an older person how to do something they are more experienced at doing than you are. It is used to put somebody in his/her place. It is similar to the proverb Don’t teach a fish how to swim.

Korean: To write words (of wisdom) in front of Confucius.

Kong, 자 앞에서 문 자 쓴 다.
Appendices

Gong-ja ap-e-seo mun-ja sseun-da.

38. 

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water. (10)

This proverb means you shouldn't get rid of the good, useful, or essential parts of something along with the bad parts, or the parts you want to change.

39. 

Don't wash your dirty linen in public. (8)

This proverb means that you shouldn't discuss something embarrassing or bad about yourself or your family in front of other people.

Korean: I lift up my bottom and all can see it.

 thật lể nhởزين

Nae mit deul-o nam bo-in-da.

40. 

Easier said than done. (62)

This proverb means talking about something is much easier than doing it. It is usually used to remind a person that the advice s/he is giving is very easy to say, but actually quite difficult to do.

41. 

Easy come, easy go. (8)

This proverb means that when you get something, especially money, easily, then it is often quickly used or spent. It contains a message not to worry too much about material things. It would usually be used to remind a person that often any money that is obtained without much effort - e.g. winning the lottery, is easily spent.

42. 

Every cloud has a silver lining. (6)

This proverb means that there is usually a good or pleasant side to every situation. You will be able to find something good, even in a situation that seems very sad or difficult. It is used to encourage people not to lose hope, saying that something good always comes out of something bad.

162
Korean: 1. *After the disasters of war there is a blessing.*

   
   *Jeon hwa wi bok.*

   전 화 위 복

2. *Can spring appear without winter passing?*

   *Gyeo-eul-i ji-na-ji anh-go beom-i o-rya?*

   겨울이 지나지 않고 봄이 오랴?

3. *Even if the sky falls down, there is a hole to escape.*

   *Ha-neul-i mu-neo-jeo-do sot-a-nal gu-meong-eun it-da.*

   하늘이 무너져 도둑아 날구멍은 있다.

Comment: The English and Korean proverbs have a similar meaning, but the severity of the suggested suffering is different in the Korean proverbs. Being surrounded by powerful neighbors, China, Russia and Japan, Korean life was a constant fight for survival. Through the 4300 years of Korean history, Korea has been invaded over 950 times. The indomitable spirit of the Koreans is suggested by three proverbs with a related meaning; namely that there can be a blessing after hardships.

43.

*Every little helps.* (8)

This proverb means that small amounts of something, when gathered together will come to make a large amount. So you should not disregard anything as being unimportant. It is often used by people to remind them that any contribution, no matter how small, can have some benefit, even if they are feeling that their contribution is so small and insignificant.

Korean: *Dust gathers to make a mountain.*

   
   *Ti-kkeul mo-a tae-san.*

44.

*Every man for himself.* (18)

This proverb means that in difficult times or in business, people should take care of themselves first, and not give, or expect any help. This proverb is usually used today as a warning to people that they shouldn’t expect help from other people. People are much more likely to look after their own interests first, so we shouldn’t be surprised when they only think of themselves in times of difficulty.
Comment: Koreans consider their culture to be a "we" culture, as opposed to a "me" culture. Many Koreans would therefore reject the message of this proverb. Friendship is extremely important to Koreans, and a Korean would often sacrifice himself/herself for a friend. In Korea individual gain is still not as desirable as public gain. However, the tendency towards selfishness is on the increase today. This is probably because many families only have one child.

45.

_Familiarity breeds contempt._ (6)

This proverb means that when you know people well you will be able to discover their weaknesses, and you may come to lose admiration or respect for them.

Comment: This is one proverb that probably wouldn't be adopted in Korean society because hierarchical order in relationships is always stressed.

46.

_Fight fire with fire._ (10)

This proverb means that you should use the same methods as your opponents in an argument, competition etc. If they are aggressive, you should be aggressive, too.

Korean: _To control heat with heat._

오열 치열

이열 치이열

The Korean proverb is more often used to give advice to people on how to overcome the hot Korean summers. It advises them to eat hot food on a hot day.

The English proverb has nothing to do with food or the weather. It based on the experience of firefighters who often use fire to fight forest fires.

47.

_First come, first served._ (20)

This proverb emphasizes the importance of being prompt if you want to get/achieve what you want. It is often used by people to justify their action of serving themselves first with the best, or most delicious food. It can also be used not as a proverb, but just to say that something will be given to the people who arrive first, when there is not enough for everyone. E.g. "People will be served on a first come, first served basis."
48.

**First things first. (31)**

This proverb means there is an order in the way things should be done, and it is not wise to go against this order.

49.

**Flog a dead horse. (7)**

This proverb advises a person to stop trying to do something that is impossible. S/he should accept the fact that what they are trying to do will not change the situation.

Korean: 1. *Touching the testicles of a dead son.*

   *Jeuk-eun a-deul bul-al man-ji-gi*

   죽 은 아들 불알 만지기

   2. *Counting the age of a dead child.*

   *Jeuk-eun ja-sik na-i se-gi.*

   죽 은 자 식 나이 세기

   3. *Strike a city wall with eggs.*

   *Dal-gyal-lo seong-chi-gi.*

   달 갈로 성 치기

Comment: Although the intended meaning of the first Korean proverb is similar to the English, the meaning of the Korean proverb contains a tremendous amount of sadness as well. The testicles of the dead son should have been responsible for carrying on the family name; a duty that is very important to Koreans. This desire to carry on the family name explains why there is a preference for boys in Korea.

50.

**Forewarned is forearmed. (13)**

This proverb means that if you know about something, especially a problem, before it happens, you can be better prepared for it.

Korean: *If you prepare in advance you will have no worries later.*

   *유 비 무 한.*

Comment: The English proverb is usually given as advice to somebody to suggest that s/he should understand their rival or competitor in order to be better prepared in
case of competition. A similar English proverb is *Prevention is better than cure*. It is concerned with preparing for an impending problem that you know will happen. The Korean go-sa-song-o type of proverb encourages people to expect the unexpected, and to prepare for any possible future problem.

51.

**Forgive and forget. (27)**

This proverb means that we should have the heart of forgiveness, and forget any grudges that we have against someone.

Comment: This proverb shows the Christian tendency towards forgiveness. This is opposite to the oriental tendency to seek revenge. Not so long ago in Korea there was the expression to “wipe out the three sets of relatives: the relatives on one’s father’s side, one’s mother’s side and one’s wife’s side as well as one’s parents, one’s siblings [brothers and sisters], one’s wife and children. The reason for this was so that there would be no one left to take revenge later. Of course, there are many Christians in Korea today, and the desire to extract revenge is not as strong as it used to be.

52.

**God helps those who help themselves. (6)**

This proverb means that although God is important, each person has to fulfill his/her responsibility if they want to receive God’s help.

Korean: *Absolute sincerity moves heaven.*

지성이면감천이다

*Ji-seong i myeon gam-cheon i-da.*

53.

**Great oaks from little acorns grow. (tall) (8)**

This proverb means that often something large and successful begins in a small way, and even that which is very impressive has had a small beginning.

54.

**Handsome is as handsome does. (5)**

This proverb means that good looks are nice to have, but the mark of a good character is what you do, not how you look.
55.

He who hesitates is lost. (5)

This proverb advises people to be decisive in their actions. It suggests that many times hesitation will result in failure.

cf. Act in haste, repent at leisure.

56.

He who laughs last laughs best (longest). (54)

This proverb means that the person who succeeds in making the last move often has the most fun. It is warning against being too proud of a present success, because in the end another person may end up being more successful.

It is usually used in a slightly confrontational situation between friends. If one of the friends has been successful at something, and is laughing at his friend’s misfortune, the other friend might reply, He who laughs last laughs best (longest). The form this proverb most frequently appears in is, To have the last laugh. It means “to have the final victory.”

57.

He who pays the piper calls the tune. (9)

This proverb means the person who provides the money for something can control how it is spent.

58.

Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. (9)

This proverb means when a woman is rejected by a man she can be extremely hostile, and seek revenge. It can be used to comment to explain why a woman is acting so aggressively. Or it can be used as a warning to men to be faithful to their wives or partners. There is a similar Korean proverb warning their men about the consequences of the grief of a woman who has been scorned.

Korean: A woman who harbors grief and resentment can make it frost in May and June.

어 자가 한 음 풍 오 면 오 뉴 월에도 시리 가 내 린 다.

59.

**History repeats itself. (16)**

This proverb means that if something happens once it is likely to happen again. It is often used to comment on the reoccurrence of events in a particular family, company, political party etc.

*Korean: To know the new by studying the old.*

_on-go ji-sin._

60.

**Honesty is the best policy. (11)**

This proverb means what it says. It is better to be honest than to tell lies.

Comment: For Koreans honesty often seems to be relative. If it is a choice between honesty, or friendship, most Koreans would choose friendship. The fact that honesty doesn’t seem to be stressed so much in Korean society may explain why some Korean students seem to have a problem with plagiarism. The truth is that most Korean students don’t even understand what plagiarism is.

61.

**Hope for the best and prepare for the worst. (10)**

This proverb means that although it is good to hope that everything will turn out how you want it to, you should also prepare for a bad or unfortunate outcome.

62.

**If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, again. (5)**

This proverb means that you should persevere until you reach your goal.

*Korean: 1. Ten strokes would fell any tree.*

열 번 찍어 안 넘어 가는 나 무 없 다.

_Yeol beon jjik-eo an neom-eo-ga-neun na-mu eob-da._

Comment: Both the Korean and English proverb encourage perseverance. But the practical mind of westerners now question the wisdom of this proverb, and
sometimes humorously add - *If at first you don't succeed, try, and try again, and then quit.*

63.

**If you play with fire, you get burnt.** (5)

This proverb means that if you do something dangerous, you are more than likely to suffer the consequences, and get hurt or damaged in some way.

64.

**Ignorance is bliss.** (7)

This proverb means that in certain situations, not knowing about something is better because then you won’t worry about it.

Korean: *Ignorance is medicine.*

모르는게 약이 다.

*Mo-reun-neun-gae yak-i-da.*

65.

**Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.** (5)

This proverb means that trying to imitate, or to be like a certain person, is the most genuine way of praising that person. It is often said ironically when someone tries to copy someone else’s ideas in order to get attention for himself/herself. But school children will also use this proverb as a rebuttal when a classmate tries to copy the actions and speech of someone in order to tease him.

66.

**In for a penny, in for a pound.** (9)

This proverb means that once you have decided to do something, it is worth spending as much money and time as you need in order to complete it. People often say this proverb to themselves in order to overcome any personal doubt they might have in a business venture. They often use this proverb to encourage themselves if they have started doing something that involves some kind of risk. Of course other people may use it to encourage people who are starting to have doubts about a course of action they have started.
67.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. (9)

This proverb means that there is no problem so bad that it does not bring some advantage to somebody. Therefore, one person's bad luck is often another person's good luck. It is often used to explain one's good luck at the expense of another person's bad luck. This proverb often appears in written texts just as "It's an ill wind."

68.

It's no use crying over spilt milk. (11)

This proverb means that there is no use grieving about having had an accident, or having done something that cannot be changed.

Korean: You can't put the water spilled from a jar back into the jar.

어지 빼 리진 물 은 다시 닦을 수 없다.


Comment: The Korean proverb contains the same meaning as the English proverb, but it is also used to talk about relationships that have gone wrong. It suggests that actions that influence human relationships cannot be undone. It is rather like the Yoruba proverb 'Words are like spears once they leave your lips, they can never be taken back.'

69.

It's swings and roundabouts. (29)

This proverb means that the two choices you are faced with have an equal number of good points and bad points, so there is little difference between them. It is usually used when someone asks an opinion about a matter, but there is no clear choice because both have merits and demerits.

Comment: This proverb came originally from the proverb What you gain on the swings, you lose on the roundabouts. The swings go up and down, and the roundabout goes around and around. Who can say which is better?

70.

It takes all sorts to make a world. (6)
This proverb means we shouldn’t think too badly about people who we think have very strange or unusual behavior. We should just accept the fact that everyone is different, and likes different things. There are two other similar English proverbs: *Variety is the spice of life.* *(To each his own)*

Korean: *Ten men, ten colors.*

십 인 십 색.

*Sip in sip saek*

71.

**It takes two to tango. (5)**

This proverb means that when two people, or two groups, work as a team, both are responsible for its successes or failures. It is often used to chastise a person who blames another person for starting a fight. It is basically saying, “You are responsible, too!”

Korean: 1. *Two hands have to meet to make a sound.*

두 손 빽 이 맞 아야 소리 가 난 다.


2. *It takes the clap of two hands to make a sound.*

손 바 타 도 마 주 쳐 야 소리 가 난 다.

Son-ba-dak-do ma-ju-chyeo-ya so-ri-ga-nan-da

Comment: The tango is a Latin American dance, and the dancers in this dance, dance very closely together.

72.

**Kill two birds with one stone. (19)**

This proverb means that you have two beneficial results with one action.

Korean: 1. *To eat the pheasant and its egg as well.*

㎏ 병 고 알 먹 다. *(31)*

kkwong mok-go al mok-da.

2. *One stone, two birds.*

일 석 이 조

Il seok i jo
Comment: The English and Korean proverbs have exactly the same message.

73.

Know yourself/thyself. (41)

This proverb means a person should try to know everything there is to know about himself/herself. It suggests that there are many advantages to knowing what kind of person you are.

74.

Knowledge is power. (15)

This proverb means that the more we know, the stronger the influence we have over others.

Comment: Some people today might purposely use this proverb to justify their trying to dig up some dirt on people e.g. political opponents. Ethel Watts Mumford (1904)39 said, Knowledge is power, if you know it about the right person.

75.

Leave well alone. (35)

This proverb means that we shouldn’t try to improve something that is already satisfactory. Or try to get involved in something that is dangerous or risky. If we do, we might make things worse.

76.

Let bygones be bygones. (10)

This proverb means that we should forget the past and not hold a grudge. It is similar to the proverb Forgive and forget.

77.

Let sleeping dogs lie. (14)

This proverb means that it is better not to bring up a past problem because doing so might cause new problems, and make matters worse.


78.

Like father, like son. (10) Two were "Like father like daughter."

This proverb means that a son’s character or behavior is similar to his father’s.

Korean: The father passes down to the son who passes down.

부 진 자 진.

Bu-jeon-ja-jeon.

79.

Like mother like daughter. (7)

This proverb means that a daughter’s character or behavior is similar to her mother’s.

Comment: I included this nearly identical proverb to “Like father like son,” to show how the attitudes towards women in the west have changed. It also appeared separately in the corpus.

80.

Live and let live. (13)

This proverb means that we should live our lives how we want to, and be tolerant of others who are living their lives how they want to. It might be used to silence a person who is complaining about the lifestyle of another person.

81.

Look before you leap. (12)

This proverb means that you should consider all aspects of a situation or a plan before you take any action. It is similar to the proverb Better safe than sorry. It is usually used to advise somebody to be prudent, and to consider all the possible results or dangers of something before they do it. It is similar to the Korean proverb below.

Korean: 1. Even the stone bridge should be tapped before crossing.

돌 다 리 도 두 드 려 보 고 건 너 라.
2. Be careful when crossing a shallow brook.

역은 넘어도 길게 건너라.

Yat-eun nae-do gip-ge geon-neo-la.

(Cross a shallow stream as though it was deep.)

82.

Make hay while the sun shines. (8)

This proverb advises a person to take advantage of an opportunity to do something while it lasts. It is similar to the proverb *Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today*. Or *Strike while the iron's hot*.

Korean: Take out the bull's horns in one stroke.

소뿔도단곱에 끼라

Soe-ppul-do dan gim-e ppae-ra.

The Korean proverb means “Don't waste time dithering – finish what you start”. It is actually more similar to the English proverb *Strike while the iron is hot*. (See proverb 115)

Comment: *Make hay while the sun shines* is more of a long-term call for diligence in order to prepare for the future. The other proverbs, however, are more to do with taking advantage of an immediate opportunity.

83.

Marriages are made in heaven. (12)

This proverb means that God predestines who our ideal marriage partner should be. It is often used to comment on a husband and wife who seem to get along very well together, and love each other very much.

Korean: A relationship preordained by heaven.

천생연분.

Cheon-saeng-yeon-bun.

(A relationship already decided before you were born.)
Comment: Koreans seem to believe quite strongly in fate, (even those Koreans who are not religious). And many mothers will visit fortunetellers before allowing their son or daughter to get married, to see how the two are fated to live together. This is called Gung-hap (궁합 - 宮合) which means marital harmony as predicted by a fortuneteller. There are quite a number of people who will even change their names on the advice of a fortuneteller.

84.

Might is right. (9)

This proverb means that the stronger of two opponents will always control the situation. Having the power to do something gives you the right to do it. It is usually used to tell somebody that they just have to accept something that they think is unfair. Especially if the person doing it, is more powerful than they are.

85.

Money is the root of all evil. (9)

This is a literal proverb, and means that money is the cause of all the problems in the world. It is a warning against placing too much importance on money.

86.

Money isn’t everything. (12)

This proverb means that there are more important things in life than money. It is used to remind people that money has only a limited importance in the grand scheme of things. For example, true love, friendship, and happiness are things that all people can achieve without money.

87.

Money talks. (18)

This proverb means that people who have a lot of money usually have more power, and influence than others. With the help of money they can do almost what they want to do. Other similar English proverbs are: 1. Money makes the pot boil. 2. A rich man can do nothing wrong. 3. A golden key opens every door.

Korean: 1. Money can buy the testicles for a virgin girl.
돈 이 면 처녀 볼 알도 산 다. (19)
Don-i-myeon cheo-nyeo bul-al-do san-da
2. If you have money, you can call up the ghosts.
돈 이 면 귀 신 도 부린 다.

87.

Necessity is the mother of invention. (6)

This proverb means that a difficult problem motivates people to think of a solution to it. Therefore, most inventions are created to solve a problem.

Korean: In time of need you will find a way.

Ｇung-ha-myeon tong-han-da.

If you are at your lowest point “gung” then you will think of a way to overcome your problems.

89.

Never (Don’t) look a gift horse in the mouth. (12)

This proverb means you shouldn’t complain about something that is given to you for free.

90.

New brooms sweep clean. (24)

This is a modern proverb, and a new broom refers to a person who has just started work in a high position in an organization. Often a new boss is expected to make a lot of changes.

Comment: The “new broom” in Korea would have a very difficult time to sweep clean. In fact he would be expected to make changes quite gradually; especially when it comes to changing personnel.

91.

No man can serve two masters. (8)

This proverb means that you cannot be loyal to two people, or to principles or ideas which are completely different from each other. This is a Biblical proverb. It was first said by Jesus in Matthew 6:24.
92.

No news is good news. (7)

If one does not hear the outcome of a situation, you should believe the outcome is positive until you hear otherwise. This proverb is often used to tell people not to worry too much if they haven't heard from a friend or loved one for a few days.

Korean: No news is good news.
무 소 식 이 회 소 식.
*Mu-so-shik-i hui-so-shik.*

Comment The English and Korean proverbs are exactly the same. It is quite probable that the Korean proverb is a translation of the English proverb.

93.

Nothing succeeds like success. (8)

This proverb means that is a person is successful in one area of his or her life, then s/he will most likely be successful in other areas as well.

94.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. (8)

This proverb means that you can’t achieve anything unless you take a risk and try.

Korean: You have to enter the tiger’s lair in order to catch a baby tiger.
호 랑 이 곳에 들어가 야 호 랑 이 새 키를 잡 는 다.
(You have to be brave and take risks to achieve something substantial.)

95.

Old habits die hard. (18)

This proverb means that it is very difficult to change an established pattern of behavior.

Korean: Your habits when you are three continue until your eighty.
세 살 때 롭 어 든 까 지 간 다.
*Se-sal beo-reut yeo-deun-gga-ji gan-da.*
Appendices

Usage: This proverb is used in the same way as the similar Korean proverb

96.

Once bitten, twice shy. (9)

This proverb means a person is always more careful the second time if s/he has had an unpleasant or unfortunate experience the first time. E.g. If you have ever been bitten by a dog you tend to be cautious of other dogs. This proverb is often given as a reason for somebody acting overcautiously. It is used in the same way as the similar Korean proverb.

Korean: 1. If frightened by the turtle you fear even the rice pot lid.
Ja-la bo-go nol-lan ga-seum sot-ddeu-ggong bo-go nol-lan-da.
2. A person once scalded by hot water will blow on cold water before drinking it.
Kkeulh-neun mul-e den sa-ram-eun chan mul do bul-e ma-shin-da.

97.

One cannot have his cake and eat it. (42)(You can’t have your cake and eat it.)

This proverb means you aren’t able to use something, and then still have it. In other words you can’t have all the advantages of something, and not have any of its disadvantages. There is another similar English proverb: You cannot have it both ways. (See proverb 153)

98.

One law for the rich another for the poor. (11)

This proverb means that people who don’t have money or power are often treated more badly than those who do have money and power. It is usually used by the poor when they suffer some kind of abuse from the rich. Poorer people often use this proverb to complain about how unfair life is unless you have money.

99.

One picture is worth a thousand words. (21) One picture paints a thousand words.

This proverb means that seeing a picture once, is worth a thousand words of explanation. It emphasizes the benefit of showing visual images when giving a description of something.
100.

One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel. (6).

This proverb means that one bad, or inefficient person, can ruin things for, or cause harm to everyone else. So be careful of the company you keep. In English this proverb often appears just as “rotten apple”.

Korean: One mudfish can muddy the whole well.

미꾸라지 하나 마리가운 우물 호린다.

Mi-ku-ra-ji han ma-ri-ga on-u-mul heu-lin-da.

101.

Out of sight, out of mind. (15)

This proverb means that somebody will quickly be forgotten when they are no longer with you. This proverb is not usually said about close family members or people who you love a lot. It is often used by a husband or wife who have been separated for a period of time, and want to justify being unfaithful.

cf. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

102.

Out of the frying pan into the fire. (9)

This proverb means although you have managed to solve one problem you are now faced with another problem just as bad, if not worse, than the first. It is often used to say that a certain course of action hasn’t helped in any way. If anything, it has made matters worse. Sometimes this proverb is used as a warning to somebody not to take a particular course of action. “If you do that, it will be like going out of the frying pan into the fire.”

Korean: The more one travels, the higher the mountains become.

갈수록 높아진다.

Gal-su-rok tae-san.
Appendices

2. Over one mountain to find another mountain.

첩첩 산 중.

Cheop-cheop san-jung.

Comment: The Korean proverb suggests a touch of sympathy and pity for somebody who is experiencing hard times. The English proverb originates in cooking, and seems to be more cold-hearted and more aggressive.

103.

Patience is a virtue. (5)

This proverb admonishes people not to act rashly, and be patient.

104.

Power corrupts. (11)

This proverb means that when a person has the power to do what s/he wants, s/he often doesn’t do what is right. In other words having power often tempts people to act dishonestly or immorally.

105.

Practice makes perfect. (12)

This proverb means that doing something many times will help you to become better at doing it. It is used to encourage people to practice a lot at something that they want to become very good at.

cf. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.

106.

Practice what you preach. (5)

This proverb means that a person’s words and actions should be the same. It is used to criticize a person who says one thing and does another.

107.

Prevention is better than cure. (31)

This proverb means that it is better to stop something bad from happening rather than trying to deal with the problem after it has happened.
108.

**Pride goes before a fall. (6)**

This proverb means that if you are too proud or your skills or abilities, something will happen to make you look stupid and cause you to fail. It is used to warn people not to have too high an opinion of themselves.

Korean: 1. *He who praises me is my enemy.*

```korean
나 를 찬양하는 사람은 나의 적이 될 것이다.
Na-reul ching-chan-ha-neun ja-neun na-ui won-su.
```

2. *The riper the rice becomes, the lower it bows its head.*

```korean
비록 익은 백과 백을 숙인다.
Byeo neun ik-eul-su-rok go-gae-reul suk-in-da.
(The more mature we are the more humble we become.)
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Comment: The metaphor of the Korean proverbs is different, but the intended message is the same. It is a warning against pride, and a call for humility.

109.

**Revenge is sweet.**

This proverb means that it often feels good to extract revenge on a person who has injured or hurt you.

110.

**Silence is golden. (6)**

This proverb means that is often best not to say anything. It is often used to warn people against not speaking too much.

Korean: *A person can pick up an arrow he has shot, but not a word he has spoken.*

```korean
살은 쌈고 주어도 말을 하고 못-ver 느낀다.
Sal-eun sso-go ju-o-do mal-eul ha-go mot jib-neun-da.
```

*cf. The squeaky wheel gets the grease.*
Small is beautiful. (30)

This is a modern proverb which means that the biggest does not always mean the best, and that doing things in a small and controlled way many times can yield better results.

Usage: This proverb is often used as a justification for modesty, and doing things on a small scale.

Korean: Small peppers are hot.

작은 고추가 맵다.

Jag-eun go-chu-ga maeb-da.

Comment: Until quite recently Koreans were generally quite small as a race. And small people often felt inferior to tall people and were often teased at school. This meant that they came to have a fiery temper and often got into fights. This proverb is used as a reminder that the smaller red peppers are usually hotter than the larger ones. “Red Pepper” in Korean is also used to mean the male sexual organ. So people worried about the size of their private parts would receive comfort when this proverb was said to them. However, we should notice the difference of the relationship between “small” and “beautiful” and “small” and “powerful”

Sour grapes. (46)

This proverb is used to show that you think somebody is jealous although s/he is pretending not to be jealous.

Korean: He pokes the persimmon because he cannot eat it.

못 먹는 감젤리나 본다.

Mot meok-neun gam jjil-lo-na bon-da.

Comment: Koreans are often quite willing to suffer monetary loss if it will help them to save face. The similar Korean example shows that sometimes people are needlessly spiteful. The message of the Korean proverb is “If I can’t eat it, nobody can.” The proverb is used to scoff at such an action.
113.

Spare the rod and spoil the child. (7)

This proverb means that if you don’t hit a child while s/he is growing up, the child will turn out to have a bad character. So it suggests that the child who is encouraged by an occasional beating will grow up well.

Korean: Love grows at the tip of a rod.

매 꼬리에 정든 다.
Mae kkeut-e jong-deun-da.

Comment: Beatings are still practiced in many schools in Korea. But when a teacher hits a student it is not called a “beating.” It is called “using the love rod.”

114.

Still waters run deep. (8)

This proverb means that a person who appears to be shy or quiet might actually know or feel more than you think s/he does.

115.

Strike while the iron’s hot. (10)

This proverb means you should use an opportunity the moment it appears. This proverb warns people against hesitating. The intended message is actually similar to the proverb He who hesitates is lost.

Korean: Remove the bull’s horns in one stroke.

쉬는 뱀도 단 간에 빼라.
Soe-ppul-do dan gim-e ppa-ra.

(If you are pulling on the bull's horns you might as well finish the job and pull them out.) (See Appendix 2: proverb 95 for another meaning of the Korean proverb.)

116.

Talk of the devil and he will appear. (13) (speak 2)

This proverb means that people have an uncanny way of appearing when you start talking about them.
That's water under the bridge. (17) (over the dam) (1)

This proverb means that what has happened in the past can’t be changed, and should no longer be thought about.

The best things in life are free. (5)

This proverb means that the things that give people the most happiness don’t cost anything.

The bigger they are the harder they fall. (5)

This proverb means that the more important someone is, the more severe the consequences of his/her failure are. It is also used to encourage young men to stand up for themselves if they are being bullied by a bigger boy. The message is if you knock over a bigger person he will be hurt more.

The early bird gets/catches the worm. (5)

This proverb advises people to act promptly if they want to achieve something. It is saying that the person who is diligent, and takes the opportunity to do something before other people, will have an advantage over them. To delay taking action could well end up in disappointment. The proverb often just appears as “early bird.”

The end justifies the means. (10)

This proverb means that bad or unfair methods of doing something are acceptable if the result of that action is good or positive.

Korean: Even if I go diagonally sideways, as long as I end up in Seoul, it’s okay.
모로가도 서울 만 가면 되는다.
122.

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence. (5)

This proverb is said about people who think that another place or situation always appears to be better than theirs.

Korean: The other person's rice cake always looks bigger than yours.

감의 밥이 커 보인다.

Nam-ui tteok-i keo-bo-in-da.

Usage: These proverbs are both a chastisement against jealousy, and they appeal to people to be satisfied with their own situation and what they have.

123.

The leopard can’t change its spots. (6)

This proverb means that a person cannot change his or her basic character once it has been formed. You are who you are.

Korean: You can’t give a dog your habits.

게 냄가 못 준다.

Je beo-reut gae mot jun-da.

124.

The more the merrier. (12)

This proverb means the more people there are that are involved in doing something, the more interesting and enjoyable it will be. It suggests that getting along with other people will make life happier.

125.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. (28)

This proverb means that you can only judge whether or not something is good or bad by trying it.

126.

The show must go on. (18)
This is a modern day proverb, taken from Hollywood, meaning that no matter what kind of sadness or hardship you are experiencing, you still have to fulfill your duty to complete what you are doing.

Comment: This is one American proverb that the English have adopted. It is most commonly used in show business, but has come to be used in everyday situations as well.

127.

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. (7)

This proverb means that you would like to do something good, but you are too busy or lazy to actually do them. It is usually used in a humorous way to explain why a person is not doing something s/he should.

128.

The straw that broke the camel's back. (3) (Last straw. 113)

This proverb means that it is the last seemingly insignificant event which makes something too hard to endure.

Usage: This proverb is usually said about someone or something, rather than to someone or something. Today The last straw has become an idiom, although it does refer to the whole proverb.

129.

There are two sides to every story (question, dispute, argument, issue). (11)

This proverb means that there are always two points of view, or perspectives, in every dispute or proposal.

130.

There is no place like home. (17)

This proverb means that a person is happiest at home with his or her family and friends.

131.

There is no such thing as a free lunch. (15)

This is a modern proverb, and it means that you will always have to pay in some way for what you get.
132.

There’s no smoke without fire. (18) (Where there's smoke, there's fire.)

This proverb means that if something bad is being said about somebody or something there is probably a good reason for it. There is an element of truth in bad rumors about people or things. This proverb is used in the same way as the similar Korean proverbs below. All deal with the theme of cause and effect.

Korean: 1. Will there be smoke from a chimney that doesn’t have a fire lit?
   아
   니
   들
   응
   기
   나라
   A-ni ddaen gul-dduk-e yeon-gi nal-kka?

2. Can sound come from a drum that has not been hit?
   아
   니
   림
   북
   소
   리
   날
   가?
   A-ni ddae-rin buk so-ri nal-kka?

3. Will leaves will open on a tree that has no root.
   Ppu-ri eob-neun na-mu-e ip-i pil-kka?

133.

There’s nothing new under the sun. (5)

This proverb means that whatever the novelty, it has all been seen, heard, said, or done before.

134.

There’s safety in numbers. (25)

This proverb means that being in a group will make you safer, and so help you to feel more confident.

135.

People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. (6)

This proverb means that you shouldn’t criticize other people, because they will easily find ways of criticizing you.

136.

Time flies. (14)

This proverb means that time passes very quickly, especially when life is interesting and you’re having fun. It is sometimes also used as a warning not to waste time.
137.

Time is a great healer. (7) Time heals all wounds. (1)

This proverb means that no matter how sad or hurt you feel, you will feel better with the passing of time.

Korean: Time is medicine.

세월이 약이다

Se-wol-i yak-i-da.

138.

Time is money. (22)

This proverb means that wasting time or delaying something will cost money in the world of business. It is used to remind people not to waste time; especially if they have a job to do.

Comment: This proverb comes from the idea that the hours (time) people work can be translated into money. It means that monetary value can be placed on time. Until quite recently the Korean concept of time was quite different, and they divided appointment times into “before lunch” and “after lunch”. However, in recent years most Koreans have adopted the western attitudes towards time.

139.

Time will tell. (71)

This proverb means you will only be able to know about the result of something with the passage of time.

Korean: Only by comparing it can you determine which is long and which is short.

길고 짧은 것은 대비 아야 한다. (6)

Gil-go jjalb-eun geos-eun dae bwa-ya an-da.

140.

Tomorrow is another day. (5)

This proverb means that you should forget about the problems of the present, and think about the good things that might happen in the future.
141.

Too many cooks spoil the broth. (5)

This proverb means that if too many people are involved in trying to take care of or do something, the result will not be good.

Korean: 1. *If there are too many oarsmen, the boat will go up the mountain.*
   
   사공이 많음 면 배가 산으로 올라간다.
   
   Sa-gong-i manh-eu-myeon bae-ga san-eu-ro o-la gan-da.

   2. *Too many carpenters knock over the house.*

   목수가 많으면 집을 무너 떠린다.
   

142.

Truth is stranger than fiction. (7)

This proverb means that things that happen are often stranger, and more surprising than things or stories that are invented. It is used to express surprise at an extremely surprising true story. It shows that you realize the fact that surprising things can happen in real life.

143.

Two heads are better than one. (8)

This proverb means that two people working together can solve a problem quicker and better than one person working alone. Whereas the proverb *Many hands make light work* is to do with a physical task. The proverb *Two heads are better than one* is to do with a mental task.

Korean: *Even a piece of paper is lighter if two people carry it.*

   백지장도 맞돌면 덜 맘낫다.
   

Comment: The Korean proverb includes both the physical and mental benefits of cooperation.

144.

Two wrongs don’t make a right. (9)

This proverb means if somebody does something bad to you, the situation will not be improved by doing something bad to them.
145.

Two's company, three's a crowd. (5)

This proverb means that couples often enjoy their privacy, and dislike having a third person around. It is often used as an excuse not to include somebody on a date.

146.

Variety is the spice of life. (5)

This proverb means that new and exciting experiences and changes make life more exciting and enjoyable.

147.

Walls have ears. (7)

This proverb means that you should be careful what you say because other people may be listening.

Korean: Birds hear you talk during the day and rats hear you talk at night.

Birds hear you talk during the day and rats hear you talk at night.


148.

Waste not, want not. (9)

This proverb means if you are thrifty, and don’t waste anything, especially food or money, you will have it when you need it.

149.

When in Rome do as the Romans do. (12)

This proverb means that when we are in a foreign country we should follow the customs of the local people.

Comment: Koreans will be very impressed if visitors to Korea follow this advice. However, they tend not to follow this advice themselves when visiting other countries.

150.

When the cat's away the mice will play. (6)
This proverb means that people often misbehave and enjoy themselves more when they are not being watched by the person in charge of them. Both this proverb and the Korean proverb below are used to express disapproval of rowdy and irresponsible actions, usually of junior and younger people.

Korean: In a forest where the tiger is away, the rabbit acts like a king.

호 랑 이 없 는 숲 에 도끼 가 왕 노 롯 한 다.

Ho-rang-i eob-neun sup-e to-kki-ga wang-no-reut-han-da.

151.

Where there’s a will, there’s a way. (6)

This proverb means that if you want to do something badly enough, you will find a way to do it. It is a little similar to the proverb, If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.

Korean: To fall down seven times to stand up eight.

칠 진 팔 기.

Chil-jeon-pal-gi.

152.

You are never too old to learn. (6)

This proverb means that a person can learn to do something at any age. There are several variations to the word “learn” in this proverb: to start new hobbies, to do anything, to rock’n’ roll, to change.

cf. You can’t teach a dog new tricks.

153.

You cannot have it both ways. (43)

This proverb means that you cannot expect to have the advantages of two opposing courses of action. You have to choose one of them. There is another similar English proverb: You can’t have your cake and eat it. (See proverb 97)
Appendices

Appendix 2: Paremiological Minimum of 150 Korean Proverbs

Appendix 2 is a comprehensive introduction of the Korean proverbs identified by my corpus study. I have listed the paremiological minimum of 150 Korean proverbs which was determined by each proverb having at least 5 hits in the 21st Century King Sejong Corpus of Modern Korean. The proverbs are introduced in the order of the Korean alphabetical in order to facilitate looking them up. The meaning of each proverb is explained. If there is a comparable English proverb (same expression-same metaphor, different expression - same metaphor), it is given. The common, accepted meaning of the proverb is then given and where applicable, comments on what insights can be gained from these proverbs concerning the culture and national character are made. Although the English/Korean equivalents for many of the proverbs are given, they do not always mean exactly the same thing as their counterparts. The intended message of some of the proverbs may be quite similar, or they may be slightly similar. Where necessary this is explained.

A Paremiological Minimum of 150 Korean Proverbs

1. 가는 날이 장 날. (12)
   Ga-neun nal-i jang nal.
   going day market day
   The day you go turns out is market day.
   This proverb means you never know your luck. Most Koreans take it to mean to unexpectedly have some unfortunate experience when you visit a place. You went to town to complete some business, but you couldn’t get it done because it was market day and everybody was shopping at the market. This proverb could also be translated as “I was unlucky, and I went there for nothing.”
   English: You never know your luck.

2. 가는 말이 고와 야 오는 말이 곱다. (8)
   Ga-neun mal-i go-wa-ya o-neun ma-li go-pda.
   Going words beautiful must be coming words beautiful
   Kind words spoken, kind words received.
   This proverb means that if you speak kind words to others, you will receive kind answers. There is another similar Korean proverb (See proverb 3)
There must be kindness shown for kindness to be returned.
Ga-neun jeong-i it-seo-ya o-neun jeong-i it-da.
가는 정이있어야 오는 정이있다.

English: A civil question deserves a civil answer.

3.

There must be kindness shown for kindness to be returned.

The original meaning of this proverb is that you should be careful how you treat other people. It is like the biblical teaching, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” However, today it has become a front for asking people to grease one’s palms!

English: 1. One good turn deserves another.

2. You scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours.

Comment: This proverb is often used by people in authority who want to receive a graft. But it can be said by anyone who is asked to do a favor. (See comment on no. 49 for a discussion of graft and bribery in Korea.)

4.

Drizzle in clothes wet don’t know
In a drizzle, you don’t realize you are getting wet.

This proverb means that even very small problems or bad habits can build up and become big problems after a time. So be careful in everything you do. It is a warning not to ignore very small and seemingly insignificant things because they might come to make a big problem later on.

5.

crayfish crab side is
The crayfish always sides with the crab.

This proverb means that those in a similar situation, or those who have a similar nature, know how to gather together and help each other. However, it also means that people of the same type will most likely side with each other.

English: 1. Like attracts like.
   2. Birds of a feather flock together.
   3. Dog does not eat dog.

There is also another similar Korean proverb

The green colors are the same.

Cho-rok-eun dong-saek.

Dark green and emerald green are almost the same color. They are called different things, but they have a similar nature. This proverb is used to say that people of a similar nature will gather together.

6.

A tree with many branches is always shaken by the wind.

This proverb means that the worries of a father with many children will never cease.

It is a call to the children to fulfill their filial duty, and get along well together. Doing this will at least reduce some of the worries for their parents.

English: He that has children, all his morsels are not his own.

7.

He darts between the liver and gallbladder.
This proverb is said about a person who thinks about his own profit or loss, not taking care of his character or image. It contains a warning not to trust a person who will flatter other people for his own benefit.

8.

감 나무 밑에서 입 벌리고있다. (13)
Gam-nam-u mit-e-seo ip beol-li-go-it-da
persimmon tree under, place mouth opening is

She lay down under the persimmon tree, waiting for the fruit to fall into her open mouth.

This proverb is used to rebuke someone for relying on luck in order to receive some kind of blessing, instead of working hard for it.

English: Lie in bed till meat falls in one's mouth.

9.

같은 값이면 다홍치마. (12)
Same price if crimson skirt

Buy the crimson skirt if it is the same price.

This proverb means that if the price is the same, then it is better to choose the one (clothes) of better quality. If you have a choice between two things, choose the one which will benefit you more.

Comment: Not so long ago in Korea the new bride often wore a crimson skirt of high quality when she first came to her in-laws house. Because of this, crimson skirts came to symbolize quality.

10.

개같이 벌어져 정승같이 쓴다. (6)
Gae gat-chi beor-eo-seo jeong-seung gat-chi sseun-da.
dog like earn, and minister of state like use

To work like a dog and spend like a minister of state
This proverb means that a person makes money by doing all sorts of menial tasks, but he spends it lavishly like a minister of state would. The proverb is used to criticize people who waste money. The Korean expression to “work like a dog,” does not mean the same as the similar English expression meaning “to work hard”. It means “doing all manner of low and dirty work.”

English: Narrow gathered, widely spent.

11.
개 천 에서 용 난다. (14)
Gae-cheon e-seo yong nan-da.
stream from dragon born is

A dragon comes from a stream.

In Korean folklore a dragon is supposed to rise from the sea not from a small stream. This proverb means that even the son of a humble family is able to rise to fame and glory (so don’t count anyone out). The proverb is also used to praise a son who has become much more successful than his poor father.

12.
걱 정 도 팔자. (13)
Geok-jeong-do pal-ja.
worry also fate

Worrying is your fate.

This proverb says that some people are predestined to be worriers since the day they were born. It is usually said to rebuke or complain about a person who worries too much. It actually means “Stop worrying.”

13.
고래 싸움에 새우 등 터진다. (16)
Go-rae ssa-um-e sae-u deung teo-jin-da.
Whale fight, in shrimp back broken is

A shrimp’s back gets broken if it caught in the middle of a whale fight.

You should be careful not to get involved in the fight of two powerful people if you are weaker than them. If you do you will be crushed, even if they are not trying to
crush you. The proverb recognizes that small nations, and small people, often suffer at the hands of the powerful.

14.

고 생 끝에 낙에 온다. (17)
Go-saeng ggeut-e nak-i on-da.
Suffering end, at happiness comes

At the end of suffering (hardships) comes happiness.

This proverb means that after enduring something difficult and painful you will also experience happy times.

There are two other Korean proverbs with a similar meaning.

1. The earth hardens after rain. Bi on dwi-e ttang-i gud-eo-jin-da. (비 오 뒤에, 풍이 굳어진다.) (See proverb 81)
2. The sky may fall, but there'll still be a hole through which to rise up/escape. Ha-neul-I mu-neo-jyeo-do sot-a-nal gu-meong-i it-da. (하늘이 무너 지도 솟아날 구멍이 있다.) (See proverb 141)

English: 1. Every cloud has a silver lining.
2. After the storm comes a calm.
3. The darkest hour is just before dawn.
4. More rain brings grass.

The Korean and the English proverbs have a similar message.

This proverb means that after enduring something difficult and painful you will also experience happy times.

15.

고 양이 목에 방울 달기. (10)
Go-yang-i mok-e bang-ul dal-gi.
cat neck, on bells hang

(A rat) trying to hang bells on the neck of a cat.

The proverb means to discuss about (or try to do) something that has no chance of success. The rat tried to tie a bell round the neck of a cat so that it could know when it
was coming. But when he tried to do this it was obviously eaten by the cat. So we should be realistic about what we try to do.

16. (15)
Go-yahg-i ap-ui jwi i-da.
Cat before rat is

Like a rat before a cat.

This proverb is used to comment on (or express sympathy for) the unfortunate situation a person is in. He is confronted by somebody much more powerful than him so he is unable to do anything.

Comment: I have also heard this proverb used in reverse saying that the rat can sometimes catch the cat. There are certain circumstances that can give a definite advantage to the underdog. This proverb can especially be used to describe an ambush situation in a war.

17. (14)
Gong-deun tap-i mu-neo- ji-rya.
labor tower fall down will it?

Will a tower born of labor fall down?

Any work/job into which you have invested all your heart and energy will not easily fail. The result will remain. So this proverb is used to encourage people to invest themselves completely into whatever they are doing.

18. (8)
Gong-su- rae gong-su- geo.
Empty hands come empty hands go

With empty hands we come, with empty hands we go.

Naked came we into the world and naked shall we depart from it. Job 1:21.
This proverb is commenting on the pointlessness of trying to gather physical riches, for when we go to the spiritual world we take nothing physical with us. We are born into the world with nothing, and we die with nothing.

English: *You can't take it with you.*

19.

구 더기 무서 워장 못 담 그 나. (담을까)  (18)
Gu-deo-gi mu-seo-wo jang mot dam-geu-na. (dam-eul-kka?)
Maggot fear soybean sauce can't make. (is it possible to make?)

Just because you fear maggots doesn't mean you should give up making soybean sauce.

This proverb has two meanings:

1. You shouldn't let small problems stop you from doing something.

2. You should worry about small setbacks when you have a large task in front of you. These things are only to be expected.

20.

껌 벵 이도 구르 는게 주는 있다. (5)
Gum-beng-i-do gur-eu-neun jae-ju-neun it-da.
maggot also squirming talent has

Even a maggot is talented in squirming.

Even something as mindless as a maggot has one talent, and this is squirming about. So no matter how stupid a person looks s/he is bound to have at least one talent.

English: 1. *All things in their being are good for something.*
   2. *Willows are weak, yet they bind other wood.*

21.

굿 이나 보 고 떡 이나 먹 다. (11)
Gus-in-a bo- go tteok-i-na meok-da.
Exorcism just watch and rice cake just eat.

Just watch the exorcism, and have some rice cake afterwards!
Appendices

This proverb means don't interfere in other people's business. Worry about things that concern you. It is a warning against excessive inquisitiveness.

English: 1. Everything comes to him who waits.
   2. Meddle not with another man's matter.
   3. Curiosity killed the cat.

22.

궁 하 면 통 한다. (13)

Gung- ha- myeon tong-han-da.
Be in want if way is

In time of need you will find a way.

This proverb means that when you are at your lowest point, then you will think of a way to overcome your problems.

English: 1. Necessity is the mother of invention.
   2. In necessity you will find a way.

23.

귀에 걸 면 귀걸이, 코에 걸 면 코걸이. (13)

Gui- e geol- myeon gui-geol-i, ko- e geol- myeon ko-geol-i.
Ear, on hang if earing nose, on hang if nose ring

On the ears, an earring; on the nose, a nose ring.

The person who decides what a thing should be used for is the person who is using it. Some people might like to use a ring as a nose ring; some people might like to use it as an earring. There is always more that one point of view, so who is to say which one is right?

24.

금어 부스럼 만들 지말라. (24)

Geulg-o bu-seu-reom man-deul-ji mal-la.
scratch boil make don't

Don't scratch something into a boil
This proverb means that it is better not to mention a subject, or something that happened in the past, because doing so might cause new problems, and make matters worse.

English: 1. Let sleeping dogs lie.
2. Leave well enough alone.
3. If it ain't broken, don't fix it.

25.

金 壤 山 道 死 后 情. (6)
Geum-gang- san- do sik- hu gyeong.
Geum-gan mountain also eating after looking

Sightseeing at Mt. Kumkang should start after you have eaten.

(Mt. Kumkang is arguably the most beautiful mountain on the Korean peninsula. Throughout the history of Korea the mystery of the thousands of needle peaks of the Golden Mountain (Geum-gang) has inspired artists, poets and Buddhists monks.)

This proverb reminds us that basic human needs (such as eating) are more important than beauty. Therefore no matter how interesting something is, you have to eat first before you can really enjoy it.

English: 1. An army marches on its stomach.
2. The belly carries the legs.
3. A loaf of bread is better than the song of many birds.

26.

기 는 늘 위에 뛰는 놓이고, 뛰 는 늘 위에 나는 놓이다. (7)
Gi-neun nom wi-e ttwi-neun nom it-go, ttwi-neun nom wi-e na-neun nom it-da.
Crawl guy above running guy is, running guy above flying guy is

If there's a creature that crawls, there's a creature that runs. If there's a creature that runs, there's a creature that flies.

This proverb means that you will always find somebody who can do something better than you, so don’t be too proud of yourself or put on superior airs, no matter how talented you are.
Comment: It is a human tendency to show off, and Koreans are no exception to this. For the English, it is enough to think of Koreans as being the Italians of the East in that they tend to be flamboyant. This may explain why there are a number of Korean proverbs urging people to be humble.

27. 

길 고 짧은 것은 대 락 아 안다. (6)

Gil- go jjalb-eun geos-eun dae bwa-ya an-da.
Long, and short thing measure must know

Only by comparing it can you determine which is long and which is short.

This proverb is a warning against making hasty judgments about people or something. You can only know whether something is bigger or smaller by actually measuring it. Everybody is born with at least one talent so don’t come to any hasty conclusions about the result of something. A person may be down, but not out.

There is another Korean proverb with a similar meaning;

You can only know the water is deep or shallow by crossing it.

Gip-go yat-eun mul-eun gon-neo-bo-a-ya an-da.
길 고 얕은 물은 긴 너 보아야 한다.

English: 1. It ain’t over till it’s over.
2. It ain’t over till the fat lady sings.

28. 

까 마귀 날 자 배 떨어진다. (11)

Kka-ma-gwi nal- ja bae tteol-eo- jin-da.
Blackbird flies as soon as pear fall does

When the blackbird starts flying from a tree, a pear falls.

This proverb means that it is just a coincidence that two events happen at the same time. The two are not connected, but you might mistakenly think they are. The message is that the cause and effect are not always what they appear to be so we shouldn’t jump to hasty conclusions. There is a Korean go-sa-song-o type proverb meaning the same as this proverb:
Appendices

Blackbird Flies Pear Falls.

_O Bi I Rak—
오비이락 (烏飛梨洛).

29.
꼬리가 길 면 잡힌 다/밟힌 다. (18)
tail long, if catch / step on

Long tails are easily caught/stood on.

This proverb means that if you keep on doing bad things over a period of time you will get caught in the end because you leave a trail. It is a warning against impropriety.

English: Crime doesn't pay.

30.
꿩 대신 닭. (11)
Kkwong dae-sin dalg.
pheasant instead of chicken

In the absence of the pheasant, take the chicken instead.

This proverb means if you don't have the right ingredients or tools, make do with what you have, especially if it is similar.

English: Half a loaf is better than none.

31.
꿩 먹고 알 먹 다. (31)
kkwong mok-go al mok-da.
Pheasant eat, and egg eat

To eat the pheasant and its egg as well.
This proverb means that by doing a certain action you can get a double benefit from doing only just one thing. There are several Korean proverbs about getting a double benefit from just doing one thing:

1. *She both picked mulberries and saw her lover*.

   
   Nim-do bo-go ppong-do tta-go.
   
   남도 보고 농도 태고. (See proverb 82)

2. *One stone, two birds*.

   il seok i jo
   일석 이조

English: Kill two birds with one stone.

32.

남 의 멍이 커 보인다. (6)

Nam- ui tteok-i keo- bo-in-da.

others of rice cake big looks

The other person's rice cake always looks bigger than yours.

This proverb has exactly the same meaning as the English proverb below. It means that we should be satisfied with what we have and not envy others although this is quite a common human emotion.

English: *The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence*.

33.

남 의 장단 에 춤 춘다. (21)

Nam- ui jang-dan- e chum-chun-da

another, of beat (of a tune), to dance

Dancing to another man's tune.

This is said about a weak-minded person who just does what other people tell him to do. It is actually entreatng other people to think and act for themselves.
Appendices

34.
남의 제사에 감 농아라 배 농아라 한다. (27)

Nam-ui je-sa-e gam noh-a-la bae noh-a-la han-da.

another, of offering table, on persimmon put pear put say

Tell a person to put persimmon and pears on his ancestor offering table.

Sometimes today the word je-sa (ancestor offering table) is replaced by jan-chi (ceremonial feast, party, banquet) This proverb means that it is foolish to interfere in things that have nothing to do with you, especially in something as private and as personal as to what is put on an ancestor offering table. Although this proverb usually appears in the affirmative, it always means that a person should just mind his/her own business.

35.
낮 농 고 기억 차도 모른 다. (14)

Nat noh-go gi-yeok-ja-do mo-reun-da.

sickle put down, and gi-yeok letter, even don’t know

To not know the letter 'ㄱ' (gi-eok) when looking at a sickle. (ㄱ (gi-eok) is the first letter in the Korean alphabet, which resembles a sickle.)

This proverb means that the person you are dealing with is a blind illiterate so don’t pay too much attention to him because what he says will not help you.

English: Not know one’s ass from one’s elbow

36.
낮 말은 세가 듣고 밤 말은 쥐가 듣 는 다. (11)


day words birds hear, and night words rats hear

Birds hear you talk during the day, and rats hear you talk at night.

This proverb means that nothing is secret, and so you should be careful what you say because other people may be listening.

English: Walls have ears.
37. 
누 울 자릴 보고 발을 뻗 다. (9)

Don't stretch your legs until you've determined where you can lie.

This proverb means that you should act properly according to the situation you are in. Originally this proverb was used to warn people against spending beyond their means.

38. 
누 워 서 침 빗 기. (8)

Spitting in the air lying on one’s back.

This proverb means that if you do something with the intent of hurting someone else, you will end up hurting yourself.

There two other similar Korean proverbs:

1. Urinating on your own foot.
   Je bal-deung-e o-jeum nu-gi.
2. Look at heaven and spit
   Ha-neul bo-go chim baet-gi.

English: 1. Cut off your nose to spite your face.
   2. Who spits against the wind spits in his own face.
   3. Piss not against the wind.

39. 
누 이 좋 고 매 부 좋 다. (30)

Older sister good, and brother-in-law good

It’s good for my older sister, and it’s good for my brother-in-law, too.

This proverb means that two people will both benefit from a particular action. It is praising a certain action through which all will benefit.
Appendices

English: What's good (sauce) for the goose is good (sauce) for the gander.

Comment: Despite their fiery temperament, Koreans are actually quite interested in peace and balance in their relationships with each other. Because of this, they generally tend not to be selfish, and will often choose the path which will bring about a satisfactory benefit to both people, rather than choose the path that will bring about a substantial benefit to only one side. (Of course there are exceptions.)

40.
눈 가리고 아옹 한다. (23)
Nun ga-li-go a-ong han-da.
eye cover meow do
Shut one's eyes complaining.

Korean people generally do not like cats. The cultural assumption is that you can never trust a cat. It may close its eyes and meow trying to look innocent of its crime (of eating the family hamster) but the culprit is obvious. Duplicity, of course is not the exclusive prerogative of the feline family. Humans also often try to trick each other using shallow schemes that in reality people will not be fooled by. This proverb then, is a warning to a person that s/he shouldn't think that s/he can get away with being deceitful.

English: Cheats never prosper.

41.
님 도 보고 봉 도 마고. (11)
Nim-do bo-go ppong-do tta-go.
lover, also see, and mulberries, also pick, and
She both picked mulberries and saw her lover.

This proverb means to get a double benefit from doing only just one thing. (See proverb 31)

English: To kill two birds with one stone.

42.
다 된 죽에 코 뻣 뜨 리다. (6)
Da dwoen juk-e ko ppa-teu-ri-da.
ready soup, in nose falls in
Sticking your nose into the soup that's ready.

This proverb is criticizing a person who makes a silly mistake, and spoils something that is almost finished. It is a reproach against carelessness.

43.
달 갈로 바위 치기. (5)
Dal-gyal-ro ba-wi chi-gi.
egg, with rock hit
It's like hitting a rock with an egg.

This proverb means that there is no point in a weak person fighting against a stronger person because he/she will only end up getting hurt. So there is no point getting involved in battles you can't win.

English: You can't fight city hall.

Comment: Like the English proverb, the Koreans frequently use this proverb to advise people not to fight against bureaucracy and red tape.

44.
달 면 삑기고 쓸 면 뼈는다. (28)
Dal-myeon sam-ki- go sseu-myeon baet-neun-da.
Sweet, if swallow, and bitter, if spit out
To swallow when sweet, and then to spit out when bitter

This proverb means that if something benefits a person, they will accept it. If it harms them, they will reject it. This proverb is criticizing somebody who is selfish, and only thinks about his own benefit not worrying about being faithful or loyal to others.

English: When good cheer is lacking, our friends will be packing

45.
닭 잡아 먹고 오리 발 내 믿다. (15)
Dalg ja-ba meok-go o-ri bal nae-min-da.
chicken catch eat, and duck, leg put out
To eat the chicken and hold out a duck's drumstick
This proverb means that a person awkwardly tries to hide his/her misdeed by trying to distract people by doing something else. However, lies will always be found out. This proverb is also used to criticize a person who always tries to avoid the issue.

46.

닭 쫓던 개 지붕 쳐 다 본다. (22)
Dalg jjot-dun gae ji-bung chyeo-da-bon-da.
Chicken chasing dog roof looks at
A dog looking up at the hen on the roof that he had been chasing

This is said with a man who enviously looks at something that he wanted and tried to achieve, but is now out of his reach. After you fail in something, you wish in vain that you had succeeded. It means that there is no point in wishing for something that you cannot have no matter how much effort you have put into doing it.

English: After the acting, wishing is in vain.

47.

도둑이 제 발 저리다. (8)
Do-duk-i je bal jeo-ri-da.
thief his own feet numb
The thief suffers from numb feet.

This proverb means that if you do something wrong, then you will naturally start to feel nervous, and your faults will come to show themselves. So you should always try to live a life without any shadows. You shouldn't do anything that will prick your conscience.

English: A guilty conscience needs no accuser.

48.

독 안에 듯쥐. (21)
Dok an-e deun jwi
Jar in caught rat
A rat caught in a jar
A rat which has sneaked into a jar cannot escape when the farmer’s wife puts a lid on the jar. So this proverb means that you are unable to escape from danger or do anything about the unfortunate situation you are in. It is your fate and destiny and so you must accept it. There is little hint of sympathy in this proverb. It suggests that a person has done something wrong, and has been caught red-handed, and so he/she should suffer the consequences.

49.

돈이 면 처리 너 불알도 산다. (19)

Don-i myeon cheo-nyeo bul-al-do san-da
money, if virgin testicles, also buy

Money can buy the testicles for a virgin girl.

This proverb means that everything is possible if you have money. There is another Korean proverb with the same message.

If you have money, you can call up the ghosts.
돈이면귀신도 부린다.

   
   2. *Money makes the pot boil.*
   
   3. *A rich man can do nothing wrong.*
   
   4. *A golden key opens every door.*

Comment: The English proverb doesn’t suggest that the impossible can be made possible, but it does suggest that people who have a lot of money usually have more power and influence than others.

Koreans also tend to equate money with power, and the common folk (people without money) lament against the abuses of the rich and powerful who do not follow the usual rules of conduct. Although it is seems to be on the decline, graft and bribery are common features of Korean life. Some parents still give “white envelops” (envelops full of money) to their children’s teachers to ask them to show special favor to their children. Businesses give “rice cake money” (graft money amounting to thousands, or even millions of dollars) to the politicians for help in being chosen for government sponsored projects. One politician suggested recently that those caught receiving “rice cake money” should be forced to buy actual rice cake with the money and not be allowed out of prison until they finish eating all the rice cake bought with the money. Even the humble businessman is expected to give some kind of money, or gift to the companies that use his product.
50. 
돌 다리 도 두드리 보고 건너 라. (17)
stone bridge, also strike/knock see, and cross
Even the stone bridge should be knocked on before crossing

This proverb means that you should be careful and think about all aspects of a situation or plan before you do it so you don't regret it later. Even if the stone bridge looks firm, you should always check it out first.

There is another similar Korean proverb.

말은 내도 걱정 건너라.
Yat-eun nae-do gip-ge geon-neo-la.
Be careful when crossing a shallow brook.
(Cross a shallow stream as though it was deep.)

Comment: The Korean and English proverbs offer similar advice not to act rashly. Both advise people to consider the possible results or dangers of something before they do it. However, in the Korean proverb the advice to be cautious seems to be more weighted in that no one would expect a stone bridge to be unsafe.

51. 
되로 주고 말로 받 는 다. (5)
Doe-ro ju-go mal-ro bad-neun-da.
Pint, as give gallon, as receive
Give a pint receive a gallon.\(^{40}\)

This proverb means that if you do something bad to some person he will pay you back in kind, ten-fold. So be careful how you treat other people.

English: To sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

\(^{40}\) One dwoe is a measurement of about 2.5 liters and one mal is a measurement of about 18 liters.
52.

Promising tree seed leaf from know

You can tell a good tree even by its sprout.

This proverb means that you can tell whether a person will become successful in the future by how they act as a child. The result of something will depend on how you start out doing it.

English: 1. As the twig is bent so grows the tree.
   2. The childhood shows the man as morning shows the day.
   3. The child is the father of the man.
   4. Genius displays itself even in childhood.

53.

Backwards fall, even if nose breaks
A person who falls on his back breaks his nose.

This proverb means that an unlucky person will be unlucky in whatever he does.

Comment: Koreans believe that bad luck can be blamed on the bad actions of one’s ancestors. So there is no hope for someone who is fated to be unlucky; that is until he has paid the price of his ancestors’ sins.

54.

Rang jip-go he-eom-chi-gi.
It’s like swimming on the land.

This proverb means that the job at hand is very easy and the result is a forgone conclusion, so you shouldn’t doubt, or worry about the result.
55. While the host is not even thinking about giving the (rice) cakes, the guest drinks the kimchi soup first.

This proverb means that you prepare to receive something even though the other person has no intention of giving it. It is criticizing a person because s/he has no intuition, wit, or sense of shame.

English: Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

56. This proverb means that a person with his/her own faults shouldn’t criticize other people for their faults.

English: The pot calling the kettle black.

Comment: The Koreans are a very earthy race and you can find a large number of proverbs from old Korea using various bodily functions and other earthy themes in their metaphors. Blaming, or accusing others is a common theme in Korean proverbs. There is an interesting Korean proverb about assigning blame.

If things go well it's my fault. If things go badly it's my ancestors fault.

길 되 면 제탓, 못 되 면 조상 의탓.

Jal doe myeon je tat, mot doe myeon jo-sang-ui tat.

57. Where there is a will, there is a way.

English: Where there is a will, there is a way.
This proverb means that if you give your full attention to something, there's nothing you can't accomplish.

English: *Where there is a will, there is a way.*

Comment: This proverb has most likely been translated from the English, but it used so widely today in Korea, that it can also be considered to be a Korean proverb.

58. 
매운 하늘에 날벼락. (11)

Ma-reun han-eul-e nal-byeo-rak.

Clear sky, in bolt from the blue

Lightening sometimes appears out of a clear sky.

This proverb means that misfortune is often unexpected. There are some bad things in life that just happen and so you just have to accept them. The proverb is often used to show sympathy to, or encourage a person who has had a sudden unfortunate experience through no fault of his/her own. But it also used to remind people that even though you do your best to prepare for the future, nothing is certain.


2. *Nothing is certain but the unforeseen.*

59. 
말 한 마디에 천 땅 빚을 갚는다. (5)

Mal han- ma-di-e cheon nyang bis-eul gap-neun-da.

word one, with thousand nyang debt pay back

You can repay a debt of a thousand pieces of silver with a word.

This proverb means that you can overcome most problems if you have the gift of the gab. It is emphasizing the importance of rhetoric.

60. 
말이 써가 된다. (12)

Mal-i ssi-ga dwoen-da.

words seeds become

Words become seeds.
This proverb means that words can become a seed [to reality]. So be careful what you say, because it might come true. The seed here is usually saying something bad about one’s own or another person’s life or affairs.

English: Be careful what you wish for.

61. 
매 도 먼 저 맛 는 게 낳 다. (5) 
Mae-do meon-jeo mat-neun-ge nat-da.
Whip, also first hit better, is
It is better to be hit first.

This proverb means that if you are going to have some unpleasant experience whatever you do, then it is better to go through it before others do.

62. 
모 낚 돌이 정 맛 는 다. (10) 
Mo-nan do-ri jeong mat-neun-da.
Rough, become stone chisel hit, is
A pointed stone is hit with a chisel.

If you stand out, and are so much better than every one else they will begin to dislike you. A person who doesn’t have a well-rounded character will be disliked by other people even if he is very talented.

There is another similar Korean proverb:

The straight tree is the first to be chopped down. (The good die young.)
Got-eun na-mu meon-jo jjik neun-da.
곤은 나무 면 지적 는 다.

Comment: The Koreans as a race tend to be very opinionated and almost everyone has an opinion about everything. On the other hand, they don’t like people to be too superior. In the west we tend to encourage talent. In Korea, you will often hear some kind of disparaging remark by other students about a student who does well in an exam.
63. 모로 가도 서울 만 가 면 된 다. (11)
Mo-ro ga-do Se-oul man ga-myeon dwoen-da.
Diagonally sideways go, even Seoul, only go, if okay is

Even if I go diagonally sideways, as long as I end up in Seoul, it is okay.

This proverb means that bad or unfair methods of doing something are acceptable if the result of those actions is good or positive.

English: The end justifies the means.

64. 목 마른 사람 이 우물 판다. (12)
Mok-mar-eun sar-am-i u-mul pan-da.
thirsty person well digs
It's the thirsty man who digs the well.

This proverb means that the person who most needs something to be done will in the end be the person who starts doing it first. There is a similar go-sa-song-o type proverb,

Person Thirsty Digs Well
Im gal gul jeong
입 갈 곁 정
臨渴 扦 井.

The message here is not to lose too much sleep about something that you don’t need to do.

English: He that would eat the fruit must climb the tree.

65. 목 구멍 이 포도 청. (18)
Mok- gu-meong-i po-do-cheong.
neck hole police station
The throat is a police station.
This proverb means that the throat is as frightening as a police station is, and when times are hard, people are forced to do something they don’t really want to do in order to eat. This proverb is often said by people who explain that they are doing something because they have no choice.

English: 1. A hungry belly has no ears.
2. The devil dances in an empty pocket.

66.

못 오를 나무 쳐 다보지도 마라. (11)
Mot o-reul na-mu chyeo-da-bo-ji-do ma-ra.
Can’t go up tree look at, don’t
If you can’t climb a tree, don’t look up at it.

This proverb means that you should keep your expectations realistic and don’t even think about trying to do something that you will have no chance of succeeding in.

English: 1. Don’t bite off more than you can chew.
2. Seek that which may be found.

67.

물에 빗친 사람은 지푸라기라도 잡는다. (19)
Water, in fallen person straw, even catch
A drowning man will catch at a straw.

If you are in difficulties you will grab hold of anything to try to save yourself, no matter how small or ineffective that thing might be. So this proverb means to try everything possible to find a solution or hope in a difficult situation, even though it will probably be unsuccessful or even though it is clearly useless.

English: A drowning man will clutch at a straw.

The English and the Korean proverbs have exactly the same metaphor.

68.

미꾸라지 한 마리가 온 우물 호린다. (10)
Mi-kku-ra-ji han ma-ri-ga on u-mul heu-lin-da.
loach one of them all well muddies
Appendices

One loach can muddy the whole well.

This proverb means that one bad person can cause harm to all those to are with him. It is a warning to be careful of the company you keep.

English: *One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel.*

69.

미운 논 (아이) 맥 하나 더 준다. (5)

Mi-un nom (a-i) tteok ha-na deo jun-da.

hated guy (baby) rice cake one, more give

Give one more rice cake to the person (child) you don't like.

This proverb means that although you would like to punish the person (child) who is continuously naughty, you can actually win over him/her with kindness. So the more love you show to him/her, the more quickly s/he will repent of his/her ways.

English: 1. *Kindness is the noblest weapon to conquer with.*

2. *Honey catches more flies than vinegar.*

Comment: The English proverbs relate more to the value of kindness in general. However, the Korean proverb is more commonly used to talk about the best way to educate children. The Koreans sometimes take this proverb even further, and say the best way to educate children is to “Give one more rice cake to the child you don't like, and hit (with a rod) the child you do like.”

70.

믿는 도끼에 발 둥 적힌다. (12)

Mid-neun dok-ki-e bal-deung jjik-hin-da.

trusted axe, by instep stabbed

The trusted axe stabbed my own foot.

This proverb means that you can be betrayed by the very person you trust. It is a warning against unconditionally trusting those who are close to you.


2. *Stabbed in the back.*
71.

밀 빼진 독 (항아리)에 물 뿌기. (16)

Mit bba-jin dok (hang-a-ri)-e mul but-gi.
bottom lost jar, in water pour in
To pour water into a jar without a bottom

This proverb has two meanings:
1. A person does something fruitless which is not going to bring any kind of reward.
2. Even though you make a lot of money it is never enough to cover your expenses.

72.

바늘 가는 데 실 간다. (6)

Ba- neul ga-neun-de sil gan-da.
needle goes, place thread goes
Where the needle goes the thread follows.

This proverb means that people who have a close relationship or common goal, usually go about together. It can also be used to talk about the relationship of two things which always go together. A certain action will necessarily bring about a certain result.

English: Birds of a feather flock together.

73.

발 없 는 말이 천 리 간다. (11)

Bal eob-neun mal-i cheon- ri gan-da.
legs no words thousand ri go
Words without legs still travel a distance of a thousand miles.

This proverb cautions people to refrain from talking too openly about something especially if they don’t want other people to know about it, because rumors spread so easily.
Appendices

74.
배 보다 배꼽이 크다. (17)

Bae- bo- da bae-ggop-i keu-da.

belly more, than navel      big, is

The navel is bigger than the belly.

This proverb means that a person is trying to do more than his/her abilities will allow.

English: 1. To bite off more than one can chew.

2. The eyes are bigger than the stomach

75.
백 문 이 볼 여 일전. (7)

baek-mun-i bul-yeo-il-gyeon.

100 hearing  not  one seeing

Hearing it one hundred times isn’t the same as seeing it once.

This proverb means that seeing a picture once is worth a hundred words of explanation. It emphasizes the benefit of showing visual images when giving a description of something.

English: One picture is worth (paints) a thousand words.

76.
병 어리 삶 년, 귀 마거리 삶 년. (12)

Beong-eo-ri sam-nyeon, gwi-meo-geo-ri sam-nyeon
dumb        three, years     deaf         three, years

Dumb for three years, deaf for three years.

This proverb means that when a woman first gets married and starts to live with her in-laws, for the first three years she shouldn’t speak out and give her opinion. She should also pretend not to hear anything bad she finds out about her new family. This was advice in old Korea on how to act in order to live a happy married life, and it still applies today in more traditional families.
Comment: In many families in Korea the eldest son has to live with his parents and take care of them. In reality this burden falls on his wife who has to do all the housework and cook all the food. Although many daughter-in-laws have a good relationship with the mother-in-laws, many do not and actually resent being treated almost as maids. It is interesting that in Korea the relationship between the son-in-law and the mother-in-law is almost always good. There is even a Korean proverb which refers to this relationship:

*The son-in-law is a hundred-year guest.*

*Sa-wi-neun baek-nyeon son-nim*

사 위 는 백 년 손님.

It means that the son-in-law will always be treated well by his in-laws.

77.

*버룩의 간을 베(내어) 먹는다. (7)*

Byeo-ruk-ui gan-eul be-(nae-eo) meok-neun-da.

*flea of liver take out eat*

To take the liver out of a flea to eat it.

This proverb means to unreasonably try to get an extremely small benefit from something, usually in a spiteful or vicious way. This proverb is usually used to mock such an action.

**English:** You can’t get blood from a stone (turnip).

78.

*병 주 고 약 준다. (21)*

Byeongju-go yak jun-da.

disease give and medicine give

Give sickness, then give the medicine.

This proverb speaks about hypocrisy. You first make someone sick, and then give them medicine. Or you cause harm to someone, and then pretend to help them.

Comment: Honesty is not usually considered to be as important as loyalty in Korean society. And there are some people who are quite willing to do something deceitful, if they feel it will bring some kind of advantage to themselves, their family, or their
friends. Foreigners in Korea should be especially careful in business matters, and keep in mind the English proverb, *Beware of Greeks bearing gifts*.

79.
보기 좋은 떡이 먹기도 좋다. (6)
Bo-gi joh-eun tteok-i meok-gi-do joh-da.
look good rice cake eat, also good
A rice cake that looks good tastes good.

This proverb means that if the external appearance of something is good, then usually the content is good, too. This proverb is emphasizing the importance of the external appearance of something.

80.
불 난 데 부채 질하다. (8)
Bul nan de bu-chae-jil-ha-da.
fire started place fan do
To fan a burning house.

If you fan a burning house, the fire might get worse and spread. It is like adding fuel to fire. So this proverb means that you are not helping anybody by commenting about something that went wrong, or talking about something that is a sore point for them. If you do this you are only making matters worse. This proverb is a warning against inciting an angry person.

English: *To rub salt into an open wound.*

Comment: The English proverb means that you are causing pain to a person by talking about a sore point. The Korean proverb doesn’t mean to cause more pain, but rather to cause a person to become even angrier than s/he already is. Koreans tend to have a fiery personality, and will often do extreme things when they are angry.

81.
비 온 뒤에 땅이 굳어 진다. (7)
Bi on dwi-e ttang-I gud-eo-jin-da.
rain came after ground hard becomes
The ground hardens after the rain.
This proverb means don't lose hope no matter what kind of difficult situation you are in. Things will get better. There is another similar Korean proverb (See proverb 14)

*At the end of suffering (hardships) comes happiness. Go-saeng ggeut-e nak-i on-da.*

And proverb 142

*The sky may fall, but there'll still is a hole through which to rise up/escape.*

*Ha-neuli mu-neo-jyeo-do sot-a-nal gu-meong-i it-da. (하늘이 무너 지도 솟아날 구멍이 있다.)*

English: *After the storm comes the calm.*

Comment: The English actually often reverse this proverb with *The calm before the storm.* This means “calmness before impending danger. However, Koreans only ever talk about stability and peace after hardships. This is probably because the Koreans have had so many storms in their history (history books say they have been invaded over 950 times).*

82.

*빛 좋은 개 살구.* (23)

*Bit joh-eun gae-sal-gu.*

color good wild apricot

A wild apricot of appetizing color

This proverb means that a tree with beautiful blossoms does not always yield the best fruit. A wild apricot has a nice color, but the taste is astringent. Something may look good, but the result is fruitless. This proverb is said about a person or thing that has a good appearance, but no substance.

English: 1. *All that glitters is not gold.*

2. *Appearances can be deceiving.*

3. *You can't tell a book by its cover.*

4. *Handsome is as handsome does.*
This proverb means that a good name will shine forever, so we should be very careful about how we live our lives because everything we do will contribute to what people think about us after we die.

English: A good name is better than a precious ointment.

Comment: The English proverb is concerned more with one’s reputation while alive. The Korean proverb stresses the everlasting importance of a name. Koreans believed, and still believe (to a greater or lesser degree) that it is important to pass a good name down to their descendants.

This proverb refers to envy. It speaks about being jealous of other people’s good fortune.

English: An envious man waxes lean with the fatness of his neighbor.

Comment: Koreans often compare jealousy to having a stomachache. So if a friend or acquaintance of yours has some good fortune, you might easily be asked, “Do you have a stomachache?” meaning are you jealous?
85.
산 입 에 거미줄 치 라? (18)
San ip- e geo-mi-jul chi- rya.
Live mouth, on spider web form, would it?
Would spider webs be formed on live mouths?

This proverb is commenting on the toughness of humans. It is trying to give hope, saying that it is not that easy to die. Even though life is difficult, people will always try to find something to eat.

English: Everyday brings its bread with it.

86.
서 당 개 삼 년 에 풍 월을 한다. (9)
Seo-dang gae sam-nyeon-e pung-weol-eul han-da.
Village school dog three years, in wind and moon do.

(write poetry)

After three years, even the school dog can write poetry.

This proverb means that no matter how ignorant a person is, if he keeps company with a well educated person, then over a period of time he will become wiser. It can be used either disparagingly or even to encourage a student who is doing badly in school. The message can be “you should better” but it can also mean “Have hope. You can do better if you keep at it.”

English: 1. The sparrow near the school sings the primer.
2. Practice makes perfect.
3. Experience is the mother of wisdom.

87.
세 살 벌 롫 여 든 까지 간다. (15)
Se-sal beo-reut yeo-deun- gga-ji gan-da.
three years habits eighty until go

The habits you have when you are three-years-old remain till you're eighty.

The habits you learn when you are young will remain with you all your life. This proverb is trying to encourage people to learn good habits from a young age.
Appendices

English: 1. Old habits die hard.
2. What is learned in the cradle is carried to the grave. (tomb)

Koreans don’t seem to worry so much about how children under the age of six act. In fact, young children are quite often allowed to do pretty much what they want. However, after they start to go to school, then the parents tend to be far stricter than the English are in the disciplining of their children. The strict social hierarchy (absolute deference to those who are older), and the language itself, seem to ensure that most young Koreans don’t go too wayward.

88.
세월이 약 이다. (18)
Se-wol-i yak i-da
Time medicine is.
Time is medicine.

This proverb means that no matter how sad or hurt you feel, you will feel better with the passing of time.

English: Time heals all wounds.

89.
소 귀에 경 읽기. (9)
So gwi-e gyeong ilg-gi
cow ear, in scriptures read
It's like reading Buddhist Sutras (scriptures) into the ears of a cow.

In Korea a cow is thought of as a foolish and obstinate animal. So the meaning of this proverb is a warning against wasting too much effort in trying to persuade a foolish, or obstinate person.

There are two similar go-sa-seong-o type proverbs which mean the same.

Cow Ear Read Scripture.

Eu-i-dok-gyeong. and Eu-i-seong-gyeong.
우이 독 경 (字耳讀經) 우이 성 경 (字耳誦經).

English: Don’t cast pearls before swine.
90.
소 닭 보듯, 닭 소 보듯. (10)
So dalg bo-deut, dalg so bo-deut.
cow chicken look, as chicken cow look, as
It is like a cow looking at a chicken, and a chicken looking at a cow.

This proverb has two meanings:

1. The cow is upset at the chicken because it is eating the cow’s grain. But the cow is unable to say anything, so it just stares at the chicken angrily. In other words this proverb is used to talk about a situation where two people look at each angrily because one of them has done something to upset the other, but they don’t say anything because they have no authority to do so.

2. The second meaning is that two people stare at each other indifferently because they have no real common ground.

91.
소 잃고 의 양 간 고 친다. (22)
So ilh- go oe-yang-gan go-chin-da.
cow lose, and stable fix
To fix the stable after the cow runs away

This proverb means that there is no point regretting your mistake after something has gone wrong. By that time it is too late.

English: 1. Don’t close the barn (stable) door after the horse runs away (has fled, has been stolen).
2. It’s no use crying over spilt milk.

Comment: Both the Korean and the English proverbs have the message that it is pointless to act too late. There is another Korean proverb with a similar message. After the visit of a burglar, repair the brushwood gate in the hedge. (Do-duk mat-go sa-lip-mun go-chin-da.) (도둑 맞고 사림문 고친다)
92.  
소문 난 잔치에 먹을 것이 없다. (9)  
So-mun nan jan-chi-e meok-eul geo-si eop-da.  
rumor started feast, in eat something not, is  
A feast rumored to be good offers little to eat.

This proverb means that rumor and reality are not always the same. Therefore something that is thought to be good might actually not be so good. Often this proverb is said about a person who boasts or brags a lot, but in reality has nothing to boast or brag about. It suggests that people who are too proud of themselves, in reality have very little to show for it.

2. Great braggers, little doers.

93.  
속 빈 강 정. (8)  
Sok bin gang-jeong.  
inside empty rice cake  
An empty rice cake without the glutinous jelly.

This proverb means that something that was started actually ends up with no result. In this case it can be translated as "a fruitless venture." However, this proverb can also be used to describe a person who has no substance. It also serves as a warning not to trust such a person.

94.  
손 -(바 닥) 으로 하늘 가리기 (12)  
Son -(ba-dak)- eu-ro han-eul ga-ri-gi  
hand (palm) with sky cover  
Trying to block the sky with your hands.

This proverb means that you are doing a pointless thing. You won't succeed in blocking out the sky with your hands, so it is useless trying to do so. This proverb is often used to remind a person that it is pointless to try to resist a powerful person.
95.

소뿔 도 단 김에 빼라. (9)

Soe-ppul-do dan gim-e ppa-rea.

bulla horns, also pull, while remove:

Remove the bull's horn in one stroke.

This proverb means that if you intend to remove the bull's horn, you should do so in one stroke. The message is that we should act decisively, and not waste time dithering and dathering over a certain matter.

English: Strike while the iron is hot

96.

수박질할기. (40)

su-bak got halt-gi

watermelon outside licking

It's like licking the outside of a watermelon.

This proverb is used to speak about a person who has just scratched the surface of something, and doesn't know the essence of it.

97.

수염이 석자라도 막여야 양반이다. (6)

Su-yeom-i seok-ja-ra-do meog-eo-ya yang-ban-i-da.

beard three foot, even if eat must yang-ban, is

Even if you have a three-foot-long beard, you must eat to remain a yangban (gentleman).

This proverb means that no matter how talented or important a person is, he still has to eat when he gets hungry. Everyone has to follow the natural laws no matter how important they are, so we should not be too proud.

Comment: Not so long ago, all the gentlemen belonging to the yangban ruling classes grew beards. Koreans are generally not a hairy race and many Korean young men need only to shave once or twice a month. So growing a beard of any substance would take a long time. A particularly long beard would show both masculinity, and authority. Be that as it may, everybody still has to eat to live.
98.

Cheap things bean-dregs cake

Cheap things are like a bean-dregs cake.

This proverb means “You get what you pay for.” If you buy things cheaply, then the quality will be inferior. So it is actually a warning against buying cheap things. If you do that you will end up paying more money.

English: 1. *A cheap thing will cost you dear.*

2. *Buy cheap and waste your money.*

99.

“Ah” different, and “Oh” different, is

There is a big difference between 'Ah' and 'Uh'.

“Ah” and “Uh” can change the meaning of words so be careful what you say.

English: *Mind your p’s and q’s*

Comment: The Korean proverb cautions people to watch what they say, the English expression cautions people to be careful what they do, and be on their best behavior. However, the Korean proverb is also sometimes used to warn a person not to trust a certain person because s/he is deceitful.

100.

Can smoke come from a chimney that doesn’t have a fire lit?

This proverb means that nothing can happen without having a cause somewhere. For example, if something bad is being said about somebody, or something, there is probably a good reason for it.
There are several other Korean proverbs with the same message.

1. 아나 배 린 복 소리 날까?
   *An-i ddae-rin buk so-ri nal-kka?*
   Can sound come from a drum that has not been hit?

2. 뿌 리 없는 나 무에 오리 필까?
   *Ppu-ri eob-neun na-mu-e ip-i pil-kka?*
   Will leaves open on a tree that has no root?

English: *There's no smoke without fire. (Where there's smoke there's fire.)*

The Korean and English proverbs have a similar message.

101.
아닌 밤 중에 홍 두깨. (19)
* a-nin-bam-jung-e hong-du-kkae.
Deep at night, in wooden cloth roller
A wooden cloth roller deep at night.

Jumping out at someone deep at night holding a wooden cloth roller club would startle a person, so this proverb means to startle a person with a surprising suggestion; or being surprised oneself by some sudden event. It suggests that a person should think before s/he does something, and not act on impulse. S/he should try to act more sensibly and normally.

102.
암 탐이 올면 집안이 망 한다. (14)
hen cry, if household collapse

If the hen cries, the household will collapse.

If the hen (the wife) is stronger than the husband, and always tries to interfere in the husbands business, then there will be problems at home.

English: *It is ill with the roost when the hens crow, and the cock must remain silent.*
Comment: Koreans like to emphasize the natural order of things. Confucianism taught that the wife should listen to, and obey her husband. Traditionally the Korean wife was not supposed to interfere, or even concern herself with matters outside of the house. However, this did not stop many women in Korean society trying to do so. When this happened, more often than not the house came to ruin. So this proverb warns against being a noisy wife. Although this proverb may be used today by two hen-pecked husbands when they complain about their wives and try to encourage each other to take control of family matters, most Korean men would never dare say this proverb directly to their wife.

103. 
언 발 에 오즘이기. (5)
Eon bal-e o-jum nugi.
frozen feet, on urinating
It's like urinating on frozen feet.

This proverb means that although there may be temporary benefit, the end result will end up being more harmful. It is used as a warning to people not to take stop-gap measures.

104. 
엎 드려 절 박기. (9)
Eop-deu-ryeo jeol bat-gi.
Lie on stomach bow (to) receive
Prostrate yourself to receive a bow.

In Korea it is customary for you to return a bow if someone bows to you. If a person wants to receive a bow from someone s/he bows first. This proverb is said about a person who tries to get something (like praise or a treat) from a person who really had no intention of giving it, by doing something to draw his attention. (See proverb 144 for further discussion)

105. 
여 자가 한을 품으 면 오 뉴 월에도서 리가 내린다. (9)
woman resentment harbors, if May, June, in, also frost forms
A woman who harbors grief and resentment can make it frost in May and June.
The only thing that could cause grief and resentment in a woman is the unfaithfulness of her husband. So it is a warning not to do anything that might cause your wife to have resentment against you.

English: *Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.*

106.

열 길 물 속 은 알아도 한길 사람 속 은 모른다. (19)

Though you know what's under the water ten fathoms deep, you can't tell what's inside a person's heart.

This proverb means that it is difficult to know what another person really thinks and feels, so you should be careful about whom you trust.

English: 1. *He who trusts not, is not deceived.*

2. *Trust not a new friend or an old enemy.*

107.

열 번 찍어 안념 여가는 나무 없다. (6)
Yeol beon jjik-eo an neom-eo-ga-neun nam-u eob-da.

Ten strokes would fell any tree.

This proverb has two meanings. The first is close to the English expression, *If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again. (and you will most likely end up succeeding.*) In other words, if you don't give up after a few failures, you will finally be the victor. The second meaning is that it is extremely difficult for people to overcome temptations, no matter how upright they are.

English: 1. *Little strokes fell great oaks.*

2. *An open door may tempt a saint.*

3. *Opportunity makes the thief.*

4. *Everyone has his price.*

Comment: It is the general belief of Koreans that you will be able to bribe anyone if the price is right and if you tempt them frequently enough. The practice of bribery in Korea is still quite common today.
108.

Yeop-gu-ri jil-reo jeol baji.

Poke someone in the side to receive a bow.

This proverb is used to criticize a person who is fishing for compliments. Or who is trying to make a person praise him/her for something he has done. It criticizes a person who demands that someone serves him/her as a special guest even though that person originally had no intention of serving him/her. (See proverb 104)

The two proverbs Poke someone in the side and receive a bow, and Prostrate yourself to receive a bow (proverb 104) both mean roughly the same thing. However, the action of poking someone in the side can be justified because you would only do it if you had done something well, and wanted to be praised for it. However, there is no justification for trying to extract a bow from someone by prostrating yourself before him, when you haven't really done anything that deserves praise.

109.

O-sip bo baek bo.

Fifty steps a hundred steps

A man who fled 50 feet calls a man who fled 100 feet a coward.

This proverb is said of people who accuse other people of committing sins similar to their own. There is another Korean proverb with a similar message.

The dog with dung on itself reproaches the dog with straw on itself.

Ttong mud-eun gae-ga gyeo mud-eun gae na-mu-ran-da.

English: Look at the pot calling the kettle black.

110.

Os-i nal-gae-da.

Clothes wings are

Clothes are like wings.
This proverb means that even a low class person will look good if s/he is wearing good clothes. This proverb is not commenting on the character of a person. It is saying that the only real difference between a poor person and a rich person are his/her clothes, and if a person wears good clothes then s/he will look exactly the same as a rich person.

English: *Fine feathers make fine birds.*

Comment: In old Korean society clothes really did make the man because each level of government appointment required people to dress in the appropriate clothing. People were actually treated according to the type of clothing they wore. Like the English proverb “Clothes do not make the man” there is also a Korean proverb which contradicts this proverb, *A wild apricot of appetizing color* (Bit joh-eun gae-sal-gu) Which means the appearance may be good but that doesn’t guarantee the taste. (see proverb 82)

111.
우물 안의 개구리. (46)

_u-mul an ui gae-gu-ri_

well inside frog

He/She is like a frog in a well (who has never been out of it)

This proverb is spoken about a person whose knowledge and experience of the world is very limited and so they don’t know how things are done in the world. It is often used to criticize the inadequacies of others suggesting that they should not be so proud.

It is used as a warning against self-puffery.

112.
우물을 파도 한 우물을 파라 (17)

_U-mul-eul pa-do han u-mul-eul pa-ra._

well dig, even one well dig

When you are digging a well, keep digging in one place.

If you are trying to dig a well, you have to keep digging until you reach water, rather than giving up after a short time and then start digging in a new place. So this proverb means that you should concentrate on one thing at a time, and finish it if you want to be successful.

English: *A jack of all trades is master of none.*
Appendices

113.
울 먹 거자 먹기. (97)

Ul-myeo gyeo-ja mok-gi
cry and Chinese mustard eat
Eat Chinese mustard in tears

This proverb means that you have to do something that you do not really want to do at all even it it means eating Chinese mustard. In order to fully understand this saying, the westerner will have to a spoonful of pure Chinese mustard. It will surely bring tears to your eyes. It is very hot, and if you are forcibly made to eat it, you will reluctantly eat it in tears. Koreans often translate this proverb with the English idiom *Face the music*. Whereas it can mean to face criticism or punishment for something that you have done or failed to do, it is actually used more to comment on the mind a person has when s/he is forced by circumstances to do something he/she really doesn't to do so the metaphor or “Bite the bullet” might be closer in meaning to the Korean. It can either be used to show sympathy, or to express smug satisfaction that somebody is forced by circumstances to change.

Comment: Koreans accept certain duties as their fate, or destiny. For example, it is the duty of all Korean males to do two years of military service. They reluctantly accept this duty. For them this would be like eating mustard in tears. Unlike in the west where independent thinking is valued, and people tend to be clearer about what they will or will not do, Koreans will often do things they don’t want to do. However, they will complain a lot about it when they do so.

114.
웃는 얼굴 (웃)에 침 못 빼는다. (17)

Ut- neun eol-gul ((nach)-e chim mot baet-neun-da.
laughing face, on spit can’t spit
You can’t spit on a smiling face.

You can’t be angry with a person who smiles kindly at you. So you should treat all people well because how you treat, or relate to other people, will be how they treat, or relate to you.

English: *A soft answer turns away wrath.*
115.

원숭이도 나무에서 떨어진다. (8)

Won-sung-i-do na-mu e-seo tteol-eo-jin-da.

monkey, even tree from fall

Even a monkey will sometimes fall from a tree.

Even a person who is expert at something will sometimes make a mistake.

Don’t be too proud of yourself, or your own ability. The proverb is also sometimes used to comfort a person who has failed at something. It means that anyone can be excused from making the occasional mistake.

English: *Even Homer nods.*

116.

윗물이 맑아야 아랫물이 맑다. (22)

Wit mul-i malg-a-ya a-raet mul-i malg-da.

upstream water clean must be downstream water clean, is

The water downstream is clean only when the water upstream is clean.

This proverb means that those in power (the head) need to be upright in their actions, and set an example in order for the people under them to be upright.

English: *The fish always stinks from the head downward.*

Comment: Cases of corruption of people in power are still quite common in Korea. People are calling for more transparency, but it is still slow in coming.

117.

작은고추가 맵다. (6)

Jag-eun go-chu-ga maeb-da.

small peppers hot, are

Small peppers are hot.

This proverb means that small people are often more hardworking than big people.

English: *1. Small is beautiful*
2. The best things come in small packages.

Comment: Until quite recently Koreans were generally quite small as a race. And small people often felt inferior to tall people and were often teased at school. This meant that they came to have a fiery temper and often got into fights. This proverb is used as a reminder that the smaller red peppers are usually hotter than the larger ones. "Red Pepper" in Korean is also used to mean the male sexual organ. So people worried about the size of their private parts would receive comfort when this proverb was said to them. In Korean the metaphor of "hot" is often used to mean physical power or strength. Therefore even if ones sexual organ is small, it kicks a punch. However, we should notice the difference of the relationship between "small" and "beautiful" in the English proverb and "small" and "powerful" in the Korean proverb. For Koreans, sexual power seems to be more important than beauty which is stressed in the English proverb, and many Korean men will eat anything if they believe it will increase their stamina.

118.

 잘 되 면 제탓, 못 되 면 남의탓. (5)


If things go well it's my fault, if things go badly, it's your fault.

This proverb is said when someone wants to shift the responsibility onto someone else when something turns out badly. There is another variation of this proverb:

If things go well it's my fault. If things go badly it's my ancestors fault.

잘 되 면 제탓, 못 되 면 조상 의탓.

Jal doe myeon je tat, mot doe myeon jo-sang-ui tat.

Many Koreans actually believe that their lot in life is, to a greater, or lesser degree, affected by the good, or bad deeds of their ancestors.

Comment: Koreans are extremely keen to place blame when something goes wrong. They cannot accept the fact that certain things sometimes just happen. In Korea somebody has to be responsible. The kings of old Korea often blamed themselves for lack of virtue if there was a natural disaster like a famine caused by a drought, or by flooding caused by heavy rains. Publishing team heads will lose their job if the text books they have been working on fail to pass the stringent approval process of the Ministry of Education (even though they had nothing to do with the content of the books. This custom of "placing blame" is quite difficult for foreigners living in Korea to come to terms with.
119.
제주는 곰이 부리고 돈은 중국 사람이 번다. (15)

stunts bear does, and money Chinese person earn, does
The bear does the stunts, but its Chinese owner collects the money.
This proverb is also frequently said as follows:
제주는 곰이 넘고 돈은 되늄이 번다
Jae-ju-neun go-mi neom-go don-eun dwi-nom-i beon-da.
The bear gives the entertainment and another person gets paid.

The person who does the work should get paid, but somebody who has done nothing comes and receives the payment. This proverb is used to comment on the unfairness of a certain action. But the message is “Life isn’t fair. This kind of thing happens so just accept it.”

Comment: This proverb actually alludes to the relationship that Korea had with China throughout its history. China was the superpower of ancient Asia, and thought of Korea as a vassal state. As such, it expected tributary gifts from it. Although it should be understood that China did not feel that it was extorting these gifts from Korea. In fact the Chinese emperor often sent his own gifts to the Korean royal household. Nevertheless, Koreans deeply resented being in this position of subservience, and often felt that they were getting the raw end of the deal. Hence the overt complaint about the Chinese person getting all the benefits when it is in fact someone else who does all the work.

120.
지먹자니 싶고 남 주자니 아깝다. (5)

Jeo meok-ja-ni silh- go nam ju-ja-ni a-kkab-da.
I eat don’t like, and others give waste
You don’t want to eat it, and you don’t want to give it away.

This proverb means that a person will not use something he doesn’t need, but they don’t want another person to benefit from it. This proverb is used to criticize people who are needlessly selfish.
Appendices

121.

절 어서 고 생 은 사서도 한다. (8)

Jeolm-eo-seo go-saeng-eun sa-seo-do han-da.
young, age suffering buy, even do

You should welcome hardship at a young age, even if you have to buy it.

This proverb also appears as:

초 년 고 생 은 은주고 산다.

Cho-nyeon go-saeng-eun eun ju-go san-da.

Hardships of youth are bought with silver.

This proverb means that the hardships you experience when you are young will become the key to unlock any hardships you might experience in your latter life. Therefore, you should welcome them, or even seek them out.

Comment: Koreans are not afraid of hardships, and actually believe they are essential to building character. They even have an expression, “Go-saeng hae-rea! - Suffer a lot in the job you are doing.” (But it is said to encourage a person to finish a difficult task.)

122.

중 로 에서 빼 맛 고 한 강 에가 서 화 풀이 한다. (6)

Jongno, at cheek get hit, and Han river, to go, and anger, get rid of

To get slapped on the cheek in Chongno and scowl at the Han River. (Chongno is a downtown street of Seoul)

This proverb means that when a person is unable to say anything when s/he has been insulted, s/he goes to some totally unconnected place to vent his/her anger. The message is that it unreasonable to vent your anger in this way.

English: To go home and kick the dog.
123.

Jung-i je meo-ri mot kkak-neun-da.

The Buddhist monk can't shave his own head.

This proverb means that you sometimes need the help of other people to achieve something, especially concerning things that concern you. So don't be stupid and try to do everything yourself.

124.

Jwi gu-meong-e-do byeot-deul nal-i it-da.

Even the rat hole sometimes gets the sun.

This proverb means that there will be certain days of good fortune, even for the person who is suffering many hardships. People may be down on their luck right now, but you never know when their fortune is going to change. So don't count them out, or look down on them.

English: Every dog has his day.

125.

Ji beo-reut gae mot jun-da.

You can't give your habit to a dog.

This proverb means that a person cannot change his or her basic character and bad habits once they have been formed. You are who you are, and you have to be responsible for your own faults.

English: The leopard can't change its spots.
126.
지렁이도 밟으면 꿈을 거린다. (14)

Ji-reong-i- do balb-eu- myeon kkum-teul-geo-rin-da.

worm also step on, if squirms
If stepped on, even a worm will squirm.

Even something as lowly as a common earth worm will squirm if you step on it. So this proverb means that even the most humble and gentle person will resist if you mistreat and abuse him/her.

English: Even a worm will turn.

Comment: In old Korea, the king and the nobility were supposed to take care of the people, but often the nobility exploited them. This proverb was a warning that the people will revolt if they are continuously treated badly. Today it has come to mean that all people in power should heed the intended message.

127.
지성 이면 감천 이다. (33)

Ji-seong i-myeon gam- cheon i-da.

perfect sincerity if moves heaven does
Perfect/Absolute sincerity moves heaven.

This proverb urges people to be honest, truthful and industrious. It is used to encourage people to diligently work hard. If they do this, then heaven will be moved, and they will be blessed with the successful outcome of whatever it is they are working for.

Comment: Although in the past most Koreans did not believe in one God, they did believe in the power and influence of “Heaven” on their lives. Because of this you can hear many references to “Heaven” when Koreans speak amongst each other even if they don’t believe in God.

128.
천 리 길도 한 걸음 부터. (6)

Cheon-ri gil-do han geol-eum- bu-teo.

thousand ri way, also one step from
A journey of a thousand ri begins with one step (where one ri corresponds to 400 meters)
This proverb means that you shouldn’t worry about the size of a project you are about to start. You should just start it. Any project you have, no matter what it is, must have a beginning, and you should just begin from there. Any beginning is better than not doing anything at all.

2. *He who would climb the ladder must begin at the bottom.*

Comment: You will probably be able to trace the origin of a number of Korean proverbs back to the Chinese sages. This proverb also, is attributed to the Chinese Philosopher Lao-tzu (c.604-531 B.C). The English version of this proverb also can be traced back to the Chinese proverb.

129.

Range after range mountains in the middle  
As I walked on, the mountains got taller and more rugged.

This proverb means that things in life often just keep getting more and more difficult. Many Koreans use this proverb when they feel sorry for themselves, lamenting about the hardships that do not seem to stop.

English: *Out of the frying pan into the fire.*

130.

Are you full with the first spoonful?

This proverb means that you can’t expect to receive satisfaction, or to see the fruit of your work when you first start doing it. If you faithfully do your work, then little by little you will see the results of your efforts. Everything takes time.

English: *Rome wasn’t built in a day.*
131.

친구 따라 강 남 간다. (12)

Chin-gu tta-ra gang-nam gan-da.
To follow a friend all the way to Gangnam.

This proverb is criticizing a person who doesn’t think for himself/herself. The message is you should think for yourself, and not blindly do what your friends do.

English: *One sheep follows another.*

132.

콩 심은데 콩 나고 팽 심은 팽 난다. (22)

Kong sim-eun de kong na-go pat sim-eun de pat nan-da.
Sow soya beans, get soya beans; sow red beans, get red beans.

This proverb deals with the universal law of cause and effect. It means that if you do good things, good things will happen to you, and if you do bad things, bad things will happen to you. Another meaning of this proverb is *Like father, like son.*

English: 1. *As one sows, so shall he reap.*

2. *As you make your bed so you must lie in it.*

133.

콩으로 메주를 쓰다 해도 안 믿 는다. (17)

Kong-eu-ro me-jur-eul ssun-da hae-do an mid-neun-da.
Even though you say soya beans make soya bean cakes, I wouldn’t believe you.

Fermented soybeans can only be made from fermented soybeans, but you don’t want to believe a person who tells you this if he/she has lied so many times before. The proverb means that a habitual liar will not be believed, even if what he/she says is true.

English: 1. *No one believes a liar when he tells the truth.*

2. *You’ve cried wolf too many times.*
134.

There is no person you can shake that dust will not fall from.

This proverb means that everyone has faults or a well-hidden secret, even the person of the highest reputation. So we shouldn’t be proud and take a “holier than thou” attitude.

English: *There’s skeleton in every closet.*

135.

Dust gathers to make a mountain.

This proverb means we should treat all things as precious, no matter how small they are. If you save them, little by little, they will come to make something great. So this proverb is encouraging people to be thrifty.

English: 1. Many a little, makes a mickle.
    2. Many drops make a shower.
    3. Every little helps.

136.

The arm is directly connected to the body so this proverb means that love and cooperation is more often seen within the family – or those who more closely connected to you. Another Korean proverb which has this message is *Blood is thicker than water. Pi-neun mul bo-da jin-ha-da.* (See proverb 15.)
Appendices

English: 1. Blood is thicker than water.

2. Charity begins at home.

3. The shirt is nearer than the coat.

Comment: Any person is more likely to help those closer to him. But “home” in the English proverb “Charity begins at home” is just as likely to mean the individual himself. The Korean proverb however, speaks more about blood ties and cooperation within the family. However, it is often used to sarcastically say that nepotism is the reason why the boss’ son (or nephew) was promoted over somebody who really deserved it. It is a covert warning not to expect to be treated equally if family ties are involved.

137.
Pi-neun mot sok-in-da. (11)

blood can’t trick
You can’t trick your blood.

This proverb means that the children will always turn out to be similar to their parents.

English: Like father like son.

138.
Pi-neun mul bo-da jin-ha-da. (23)

blood water more thick, is
Blood is thicker than water.

English has the same proverb and there is little difference in meaning between the Korean and English proverbs. However, the duties of being part of the same family are emphasized more in Korea. Whereas in England “blood” would tend to be limited to the nucleus family, in Korea “blood” often means the extended family. (Even to as far as cousins once or twice removed.) There is another Korean proverb:

The arm always bends inwardly.

Pal-eun an-eu-ro gup-neun-da.

(See proverb 135)
139. 하 나 를 보 면 열 율 안 다. (14)
Ha-na-reul bo-myeon yeol-eul an-da.
one see, if ten know
Look at one (thing of a person) and you can tell ten (things about him)
This proverb means that you can tell what kind of person somebody by his/her actions.
English: 1. Actions speak louder than words.
2. Know a man by his friends.

140. 하 나 만 알 고 들은 모 른 다. (8)
Ha-na-man al-go dul-eun mo-reon-da.
One, only know, and two don't know
Knowing only one side and not two.
This proverb is used to criticize people who are unable to see the whole picture. They are foolish people who are stubborn, and not flexible in their thinking. The hidden message is that they should be more open-minded.

141. 하늘을 보아 별을 따라지. (7)
Ha-neul-eul bwa-ya byeol-eul tta-ji.
heaven see, must star pluck
You must look up and see heaven in order to pluck a star.
This proverb means that you need to have the right opportunities, and circumstances in order to fulfill your goal. If you don’t, then there is no way you can succeed.
English: 1. Nothing seek, nothing find.
2. He who aims at the moon may hit the top of a tree. He who aims at the top of a tree is unlikely to get off the ground.
142.

하늘이 무너 지도 손아날 구멍이 있다. (28)

Ha-neul i mu-neo-jyeo-do sot-a-nal gu-meong-i it-da.

Sky falls, even if spring out hole, is

The sky may fall, but there'll still is a hole through which to rise up/escape.

This proverb means that there is always hope of making a new beginning, or finding a way of salvation, no matter how bad the situation may be. The proverb is usually used to cheer up someone who has experienced a major discouragement such as a business failure.

English: 1. Every cloud has a silver lining.
   2. After a storm comes a calm.
   3. April showers bring May flowers.

Comment: Koreans tend to be quite fatalistic and have a cynical attitude towards life. The Korean proverb talks hoping to avoid suffering, whereas the English proverb is trying to emphasize the fact that you can usually find some kind of blessing within suffering. Although the message of “blessing” is missing from this Korean proverb, as a race Koreans are extremely optimistic, and generally believe that their fortune will change for the better. This idea is expressed in another similar Korean proverb At the end of suffering (hardships) comes happiness. Go-saeng ggeut-e nak-i on-da. (고생 끝에 낳아 온다.) (see proverb 14) or The ground hardens after the rain. Bi on dwi-e ttang-i gud-eo-jin-da. (비 온 뒤에 땅이 굳어 진다.) (See proverb 81.) - which are actually closer in meaning to the English proverb Every cloud has a silver lining.

143.

하룻 강아지 벌 무서 운줄 모른 다. (9)

Ha-reut gang-a-ji beom mu-seo-un jul mo-reun-da.

one-day-old puppy tiger fearful, is doesn’t know

A one-day-old puppy does not fear a tiger.

In the same way that a puppy has no fear of a tiger, a small and weak person might fearlessly try to attack a big and powerful person. Of course this is a dangerous and silly action. So this proverb is a warning to be careful who you fight against if you don’t want to suffer, especially if they are bigger, stronger, and more powerful than you.

English: Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
Appendices

144.
한 귀로 듣고 한 귀로 흘린다. (33)
Han gwi-lo deut-go han gwi-lo heul-in-da.
one ear, through hear, and one ear, through flows
In one ear and out the other.

This proverb is used to describe a person who is very shallow. It criticizes them for not paying attention, suggesting that they should treat life more seriously. It also contains a warning that a person is very superficial, and therefore cannot be trusted.

145.
현 절 신도 짝이 있다. (5)
Heon jip-sin-do jjak-i it-da.
old straw shoe, also pair has
Even an old straw shoe has its pair.

This proverb means that everyone has a mate no matter how ugly, or wretched, that person may be.

English: Every Jack has his Jill

146.
호랑이 (범) 도 제말 하면 온다. (7)
Hor-ang-i (beom)-do je mal ha-myeon on-da.
Tiger even its talk do if comes
Talk of the tiger and it will come.

The original purpose of the Korean proverb is slightly different from the English proverb below. It contains a warning not to say bad things about somebody behind his/her back because he/she is very likely to suddenly appear and catch you doing it. However, many Koreans jokingly use this proverb today in the same way as the English proverb Speak/talk of the devil.

English: Talk of the devil and he is bound to appear.
147.
호 양이에게 물려 가도정 신 만 차리 면 산다. (11)
Ho-rang-i- ge mul-ryeo ga-do jeong-sin-man cha-ri-myeon san-da.
Keep your wits even if you get carried off by a tiger, and you'll live.

This proverb means that no matter how difficult a situation you are in, if you keep a cool head, then you will find a way to escape from it.

148.
호미로 막을 겠 가레로 막 는 다. (8)
Ho-mi-ro mak-eul geol ga-rae-ro mak-neun-da.
He fills with a shovel what should have been filled with a hoe.

If you hold off filling the hole in your rice paddy with a hoe, you may end up using a spade.

English: A stitch in time saves nine.

Comment: Both these proverbs have the message that we should act opportune. However, the English proverb is more concerned with prevention. The Korean proverb contains a note of sarcasm (which is a common theme of many Korean proverbs) that someone did not act opportune. It is saying indirectly, “What a fool you are!” If you had done what you were supposed to do, then you wouldn’t have had to suffer. Koreans sometimes seem to enjoy looking at other people suffering if it is due to their own laziness.

As a race Koreans tend to be quite impulsive, and this leads to a proportionally larger number of car, and other industrial accidents, than in Britain, or in America.

149.
혹 때 려하다 혹 붙 있다. (26)
Hok tte-ryeo-ha-da hok but-yeot-da
I tried to get rid of a wart, but ended up with a second wart.
This proverb means to go out expecting something good to happen, but rather only bad things happen. For example if you ask someone a favor, you are asked a favor instead. Or while trying to solve your own problems, you are beset by more problems.

English: Many go out for wool and come home shorn.

150.

황 금 보기를 돌 갈이 하라. (9)

Hwang-geum bo-gi-reul dol gach-i ha-ra.

gold look stone like do it

One must look upon gold as stone.

This proverb means that you shouldn’t be jealous of other people’s wealth or position otherwise you will meet with misfortune. The way to do this is not be greedy, and look at gold as though it were only stone.
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Note
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