ISSN 1226-4490

International Journal of Central Asian Studies

Volume 2 1997

Editor in Chief
Choi Han-Woo

The International Association of Central Asian Studies
Institute of Asian Culture and Development

English in Polite Korean Speech

by
Richard W. Howell
Hawaii

Some thirty years ago, while groping for a grasp of the rules underlying Korean verbal interaction, I noticed not only predictable loanwords from English and some not so predictable, but also some uses of spoken English that seemed reasonable but were nonetheless surprising. The loanwords came from American cartoons published for the entertainment of Koreans, while the other uses of English became apparent in my work with 14 native speakers of Korean who used English on a regular basis in the Berkeley area of California. They were not typical Koreans: most enjoyed socioeconomic advantages over the majority that had never left Korea.

Predictably, perhaps, English sometimes served as a means of communicating when it was convenient or even necessary to avoid the asymmetrical speech patterns required by Korean where there were awkward differences in social status. Less predictably, I trust, was the finding that for this bilingual group English expressions were interchangeable with Korean expressions marked at the lower mid-levels of politeness. In retrospect, the finding seems to offer some support for Gumperz'(1964) statement that:

> Whenever several languages or dialects appear regularly as weapons of language choice, they form a behavioral whole, regardless of grammatical distinctness, and must be considered constituent varieties of the same verbal repertoire.(p.140)

Since the group concerned bilinguals the study as a whole(Howell 1967) constituted a minor(unpublished) footnote to the literature on

languages in contact, a subject largely pioneered by Uriel Weinreich(1953). Weinreich had a clear influence on Gumperz and otherwise helped the emergence of sociolinguistics in the 1960s as a well-recognized field of study.

Two other "hyphenated linguistics" began to flourish in the 1960s, though of course their origins were much earlier. The term "ethnolinguistics" was used in 1920 by Malinowski; in 1935 J. R. Firth proclaimed "sociological linguistics" to be the great field for future research, and in 1951 Roger Brown was a cofounder of psycholinguistics as "a new area of research"(Brown 1958). Disparate conceptual threads may be traced to the considerably more distant past.

Roger Brown was not only a cofounder of psycholinguistics, but he coauthored one of the most widely cited papers in the sociolinguistic literature, "The pronouns of power and solidarity"(Brown and Gilman 1960), which was followed by a study of American address terms (Brown and Ford 1961). Both papers are summarized in Brown (1965). There were two important findings in these papers. First, that the language of deference is the language of social distance and the language of condescension is the language of solidarity. This seems not to have captured the imagination of linguists nearly as much as the second point, namely, that the yielding of asymmetrical interaction patterns(with deference being shown by the socially subordinate party) to patterns in which both parties reciprocate the same forms tends to occur when a society changes from rigid stratification toward a more egalitarian structure.

Sohn(1986) implies a rather long history of "purely linguistic" studies of Korean honorifics, presumably pre-1960, but including generative approaches after the middle of that decade. It is not necessarily the case that these were of the sort excoriated by Labov(1972), perhaps Weinreich's most famous student, who was unhappy with the fact that most linguists relied on their own individual idiolects and were apparently willing to work within the severe conceptual restrictions placed on linguistics(in the United States, at least) for a generation or more under the domineering influence of Leonard Bloomfield (1933). One of the more grating features of the Bloomfieldian perspective was that there was "free variation" in language,

since in Labov's view variation is socially conditioned and the key to any worthwhile linguistic theory.

Still, it does seem as if the investigator's approach should depend to a large extent on his research objectives. The explication of a well developed system of verbal respect may never be simple and the complications seem to be limited only by the ambition and imagination of the individual linguist. In the Korean case, at least, the more daunting intricacies appear in the approaches which treat honorifics as an aspect of Korean grammar rather than as an aspect of Korean social behavior. Yet even those with their focus primarily on grammar would be hard-pressed to ignore what are usually described as levels of speech in Korean. Labov(1966) found it instructive to distinguish "careful" from "casual" speech in his study of English spoken on the Lower East Side of New York City, but consider the sort of socially conditioned complications illustrated by the following sentence from Lee(1991: 41), which is rendered in the Yale system(essentially a transliteration of the spelling in Hankul, but with "ng" for the velar nasal):

halapeci, halapeci-kkeyse apeci-eykey ton-ul cwu-si-ess-upnita(Grandfather, you gave [some] money to father.)

The term for grandfather(halapeci) plus the honorific subject marker(-kkeyse) is used because the use of the pronoun tangsin(you) is more properly reserved for peers, married couples, and social subordinates. Father(apeci) is marked as the indirect object by the plain dative -eykey, though ordinarily we should expect the speaker to use the honorific -kkye. No disrespect toward father is intended, but the speaker's father is the son of the party being addressed. That is, father is subordinate to grandfather and from grandfather's perspective, does not warrant the honorific. Money(ton) is a word that requires no embellishment beyond the direct object marker(-ul), but the final verb(cwu-) draws on a form implying "bestow" because grandfather is presenting downward. The son would present upward with tulita(give). The verb is further embellished with the honorific particle -si- to mark the elevated position of the donor. And -ess- marks the past tense while the honorific ending -upnita shows high respect by the speaker for the addressee.

Lee's(1991) dissertation as well as Yun's(1993) even more purely linguistic doctoral effort show what are surely sociolinguistic influences in making various observations on alternate choices that reflect changes in (South) Korean society. We shall return to these in due course.

The importance of using the proper level of speech was nicely illustrated by one of my informants (Howell, 1967), a male graduate student at Berkeley. One day he received a telephone call from "a man who sounded as though he knew me. But I didn't recognize his voice and was in a quandary. I wanted to ask him who he was, but I didn't know how. If I used a polite form and he turned out to be a former classmate, then he would be offended. On the other hand, if I used a more familiar form(panmal) and he turned out to be a stranger or someone senior to me then, again, he would be offended." (What did you finally do?) "Well, I couldn't just stand there and not answer at all, so I finally said, 'May I ask who you are, using panmal?' And he was from the same [high] school, but several years behind me, so it was all right to use that form to him."

One of the essays in Sohn's(1986) collection is entitled "Power and solidarity in the Korean language." thus drawing directly on the inspiration of Brown and Gilman(1960). It is there that he notes the long history of linguistic studies of Korean honorifics and cites Martin(1964) and Howell(1967) as early examples of the serious sociolinguistic study of Korean. Martin, who described his study as ethnolinguistic, is often cited, but usually as one of many who see six levels of politeness in Korean speech(Martin seems to prefer eight levels in his reference dictionary, 1992). In Howell(1965) I took exception, not to his six levels, but to his arrangement of them, which depended on the notions of in-group and out-group. Based on a rather crude analysis of utterance endings in translations of "Blondie" cartoons(distinguishing only honorific [-pnita], polite [yo], and plain [all the other endings]), I noticed the same two-dimensional pattern described for pronouns by Brown and Gilman(1960), though I had been ignorant of that classic study when I analyzed the cartoon translations. In personal correspondence Martin said he had actually done his research before the Brown and Gilman(1960) paper, but on reflection could see the virtues of their model. I reported that in Howell(1967). Martin was and remains primarily

a linguist, though he included some instructive sociolinguistic observations in his 1964 paper.

In 1976 Dredge drew on that part of Howell(1967) which described my cartoon analysis to compare his similar examination of a Korean-Korean cartoon. That is, my cartoons relied on a translator who had to try to represent a cultural and social world in large measure alien to his Korean audience. Dredge's material was written by a Korean for Koreans and thus in some respects was an easier matter to deal with. Dredge and I agreed on many points and some differences were predictable on the basis of the nature of the two cartoons.

One factor Dredge(1976) thought I gave insufficient weight to was age, yet except for the adult-child dyad, the English-Korean cartoons provided little information on relative age. In the second part of Howell(1965), however, which was not described in the dissertation, I looked at age in considering informant responses to a questionnaire designed to elicit preferences for different levels of politeness in a variety of social situations Respondents were five men recruited at a Korean Methodist Church in San Francisco and five men who were university students at Berkeley. The Methodists were more conservative, more likely to prefer the politer usages, and the students tended to prefer plainer usages; four of the Methodists were older than all but one of the students.

Later in the dissertation, where the cartoon materials were evaluated on the basis of informant work, I gave age its due. Thus "In the absence of a clear hierarchical relationship, usually based on authority, an age differential of one or two years is sufficient to require asymmetrical linguistic expression in all but two relationships: that of high school classmates and that of equivalent rank in the military."(Pp. 111-112) I have not noticed either of these relationships mentioned in the more recent materials I have been able to examine, so at least the factor of high school affiliation may have lost some of its importance in the 30-year interim. Neither "power" nor "authority" is an ideal label for the vertical dimension, but I chose the latter largely because it is not always obvious that cartoon husbands, at least, have a great amount of actual power, while they do have a traditional authority over their wives

which is marked in the interaction of spouses. In a clear hierarchical relationship, authority is at least nominally in effect.

The importance of age is shown in the case of a woman then in her mid-thirties who had met another woman ten years earlier while taking a course in English(in the Berkeley area). At first they addressed each other as "Mrs.___" (in English), though most of their conversation was (and remained) in Korean. But as soon as my informant realized that she was two years younger than the other woman she switched to the metaphorical use of enni(elder sister), while her friend switched to a teknonymous expression based on the name of my informant's eldest child. The asymmetry was consistent, with the younger woman using a politer form for saying "no" than the older woman used (the actual forms are given in a chart provided near the end of the paper); to signal a readiness to depart the younger woman used a politer form and received a less polite form from the slightly older woman. It seems that once such a dyadic relationship is established, in this case within a few days, no matter what experiences they share or how old they may grow together, the asymmetrical linguistic pattern based on the age differential will tend to remain.

Thirty years ago the social relationship which permitted the reciprocation of the most familiar forms was the one which derived from membership in the same high school class. Among classmates it is questionable whether age differences ever became great enough to take precedence over the mandatory expression of solidarity. Sometimes criteria conflict, as when a subordinate is older than his supervisor, or in the actual case of a young woman who was the academic senior of another student at the same high school. She had been addressing her quite familiarly, and when she accidentally learned that she was a year or so younger than her academic junior she felt extremely uncomfortable(but she continued to speak down to her, exercising her prerogative as the academic senior).

Apparently minor age differences did not create such problems between members of the same class, however. The next example does not reflect an age problem, but does show something about the nature of the classmate relationship. I asked a woman of about 60 to think of a high school classmate whom she disliked, then asked a few minutes later if

the two had been friendly. "Oh, yes, of course." What she meant, as revealed in the discussion that followed, was that being high school classmates involved certain mutual obligations and privileges. No classmate would ever be addressed other than in familiar speech, so necessarily the use of intimate forms by one's classmates was always tolerated. Where for personality reasons classmates did not get along well together, recourse was had to avoidance behavior. (See Howell 1973 for an extended discussion of privileged license.) I did not have the wit at the time to exploit the implications, if any, of the fact that the older woman would have gone to high school during the 35-year occupation of Korea by Japan, when going to high school may have meant going to a Japanese high school. Even in 1960 I noticed several women(under 30) in Korea who apparently were unable to read even the simple Korean alphabetic script(Hankul).

The "Blondie" cartoons miss most of the subtleties of Korean interaction patterns, but differences in the handling of English in the translations and in my small sample of Korean-Korean cartoons warrant brief mention. I collected 382 "Blondie" cartoons which appeared in the newspaper Hankuk Ilpo over a period of years extending at least until 1961(and may still be appearing today). They preserved the original American dialogue, with a free translation added at the bottom of each panel. The validity of the Korean versions is attested by a number of significant departures from American usage. One, for example, is the use of yepo(dear) in place of their given names when Dagwood and Blondie interact, though the original names are given for other dyads. The employee calls his boss by title (company president) in Korean, though the original shows title (Mr.) plus family name(Dithers). Dithers uses a variety of terms, ranging from "numbskull" or comparable word in English(usually rendered by papo in the translation) about a quarter of the time; sometimes he says Bumstead(last name) or Dagwood(first name) with or without the familiar suffix -kwun; sometimes the American address term was unrepresented in the translations; but most often, about half the time, the translator used the chummier term yopoke. Elsewhere the Korean translation draws on the metaphorical use of "aunt" or "uncle" terms, usually where there is nothing to correspond to them in the original.

In addition to the "Blondie" cartoons, I had 38 Korean- Korean cartoons, including 24 of "Ko Pau," the series that Dredge(1976) analyzed. These suggest that plain forms enjoyed greater currency than was apparent in the translations, but otherwise they seem comparable, given the sociocultural differences in the two settings. There is one consistent difference, however, in the treatment of English loanwords. The translator usually placed the English terms in quotation marks and included items that may have been less familiar than the words in the Korean-Korean cartoons. The latter contained such terms as: taxi, bus, steam, saccharine, zero, chance(in the sense of opportunity), stop(as an order to a bus driver), Christmas, and jingle bell[s]. All these were treated as Korean words.

"Blondie" included: cents, dollar, kilt, Scotland (plus salam, for "Scotsman"), supermarket(with an explanation in Korean given in parentheses), [phonograph] record, apple pie, television, ink, coat, sign(for "autograph"), while only "okay" was used without quotation marks.

The "Blondie" translations gave no hint that English address terms, such as Mr., Miss, and Mrs., would ever be used in situations where all participants were Korean, though I believe they were in common use at the time the cartoons were being translated. In general, the translator drew on a very conservative model of interaction. As did the individual who performed similar translations for the half dozen or so episodes of another American cartoon, "Bringing up Father," which I found about the same time I was collecting the "Blondie" cartoons. Blondie always used polite(yo) forms to Dagwood, even when she was annoyed, while Maggie, a very short-tempered woman, used the polite forms in venting her rage, sometimes physically; poor Jiggs responded very meekly, but in the plain forms that were appropriate to his status as her husband.

The cartoons suffice to reveal gross interactions patterns, just as Brown and his associates were able to define broad patterns of considerable sociolinguistic interest from plays and other documentary materials. Here the more interesting uses of English come not from cartoons, however, but from the interview materials, which are at least a step closer to actual speech. Lee(1991: 47-50) depended heavily on her idiolect for various arguments and then rather innocently offered "actual

discourses" to illustrate shifting terms of address in accordance with a speaker's psychological state. But the excerpt is from a television drama. Even when actual speech is purged of false starts and other hesitation phenomena, the artificial speech of movies and television plays is likely to truncate various rituals, such as those which govern telephone closings. Ruth Wangerin (1969) mischievously kept extending conversations whenever a certain individual tried to initiate the closing sequence, to the obvious frustration of the caller. See Schegloff(1968) on similar routines. If writers do not take shortcuts they are in danger of slowing interaction to the extent that their audiences will disappear. Lee was able to argue her point, but fiction is still not actual dialogue.

The informants in the Berkeley study consisted of seven men and seven women, including two young married couples, and others of various ages, but most were graduate students. The men and women were interviewed individually for about two hours each with respect to a total of 114 dyadic relationships. Thus each informant described about eight relationships in which he or she had participated on a regular basis. Questions were designed to determine relative sex, age and the nature of the relationship(husband-wife, high school classmates, etc.). Each informant was asked how he addressed the other member of the dyad, how he was himself addressed, whether either member used the pronoun tangsin(you), how each would make a negative response to a yes-no question and how each would signal a readiness to depart with the other. Naturally the rather elaborate phrasing of the two verbal questions had to be augmented with various sample answers(including English) to give the informants an idea of what I was looking for. The procedure seemed to work reasonably well. The interviews were conducted in English, sometimes with the party making the introduction remaining in the background. Abundant time was provided for discussion to clarify points and collect additional information. Thus the later interviews also included questions to elicit forms of the all-purpose verb hata when it became obvious that I should have used it from the beginning.

One possible advantage deriving from using English for the interviews was that had I been proficient in conversational Korean, the

fact that English had a place in the Korean verbal respect system might never have come to light.

I was able to compare the perceptions of both members of many dyads and noted a high rate of agreement, and a further check was provided by the two couples, who were kind enough to use tape recorders to tap their normal interaction patterns. By happy chance, one couple ran the recorder freely when alone, but turned it off when a visitor arrived, and the other couple seldom ran the machine when they were alone but were diligent in turning it on when they had a visitor. In general, the recordings supported the findings of the interview materials.

With wonderfully lucid hindsight I realize that there were problems with both the "no" and "depart" questions. For the former, there are people to whom it is very difficult to say "no" (in any language), either because of the higher rank of the party being addressed or because a clear negative response could engender embarrassment. This is true in American culture, but it is an even touchier problem for Koreans(and Japanese). The "depart" question was a really poor choice because I was not thinking particularly in terms of the imperative and but that is often the way my informants interpreted it. And of course in a hierarchical situation it is often extremely difficult for a subordinate to employ an imperative to his superior unless there is an obvious crisis. Fortunately, some good came from the questions, but to appreciate that it is necessary to deal briefly with the problem of rank-ordering the markers of speech levels in contemporary Korean. I specify "contemporary" because there were "super honorific" forms that had become obsolete for my informants 30 years ago.

It is not quite the case that every student of the subject has his own notion of levels, but even where there is agreement on the number of levels and their markers the picture is "confused" by the notion of formal versus informal. I will not try to sort out the arguments here, but it may help to recall the two-dimensional model of Brown and his associates(Brown 1965). In particular, if there is an asymmetrical pattern, where the parties do not employ the same forms to each other, the interaction is on the power or authority dimension. Does the subordinate take it upon himself to decide to use the "informal" marker? If the superior has one way or another indicated that he would not mind a

lesser show of respect it might happen, but if the superior does not consider the "informality" to be appropriate, the subordinate would employ such forms upward at his peril. Where there is a symmetrical pattern, with both parties reciprocating the same forms, interaction is on the dimension of solidarity or familiarity. When there is no salient power or authority consideration there would seem to be relatively less risk in exploring the use of somewhat less extreme linguistic markers.

The question of informality seems most often to involve the two highest levels that appeared clearly in the responses to the "no" question. The most polite negative was anipnita. If I understand Martin's treatment in his reference grammar(1992), the an- is the basic negative prefix, the -i- is the copula, while the -pnita is the honorific or deferential ending. Everyone seems pretty well agreed that anipnita is most polite, with the understanding that a more periphrasic approach may be required if the negative response would pose a problem for the party being addressed.

Next in politeness in my material is anieyo. The placing of this form under anipnita does not elicit much argument except that my informants were reluctant to admit that there was a difference in politeness between the two levels, and as I have noted above, many consider the difference to be one of relative formality. No one has suggested that anieyo was more polite than anipnita and most agree on ranking anieyo under or behind anipnita. Yet where one must be as polite as possible, it seems to call for the more "formal" ending: anipnita. Thus when one of my informants and I were looking over a "Scenario" in the newspaper Tong-a Ilpo, which concerned a group of North Korean soldiers(Noksun Sen, by I Un-seng), I noticed that officers were always addressed with the(honorific) -pnita forms and they always used plain forms downward. My informant then confirmed that in his own experience, too, address upward(to include noncommissioned ranks as well) was always in the honorific forms with no intermediate forms: no -yo or less polite endings. Others may choose to argue that less formal is not less polite, but the markers are not always interchangeable and the rank-order does seem to be correct.

Third on my list of endings is anio. In this I was misled, as have been many outsiders, because of the glide from the front to the back vowel. That is, I recorded it as aniyo. Interestingly enough, a short

manual to familiarize members of the American military to some elementary spoken Korean(U.S. Department of Defense, 1960) lists "no" and offers the romanized form aniyo, while indicating in Hankul the spelling anio. Evidently the "yo" of "aniyo" is spurious and is not to be confused with the -yo of anieyo(which is usually written with yo in Hankul).

Anio is the first of what I call the middle range of politeness; the second, below anio in politeness, is just ani in my material. Most sources list -ney as marking this level(for declarative utterances), but the form seems not to have surfaced during the interviews and if it occurred in the cartoon materials I overlooked it because it was neither of the two top forms(i.e., it would have been lumped together with the other "plain" forms). Wang(1984), whose sociolinguistically oriented study of a village north of Pusan seems to be excellent, cites Martin(1964) as indicating -ney where I have the (unmarked) ani, and a 0(zero) marker for the next lowest level. But in fact Martin(1964) does not indicate a zero marker.

After discovering very recently that there was a curious gap in my list of markers I was able to ask a doctoral student(female) at Waseda University in Tokyo if she were familiar with a form aniney. She said it occurs, but did not think it was particularly common; it would be somewhere below anio in politeness, comparable perhaps to ania(site of Martin's fictional zero) and the second least polite of the markers. The least polite or most familiar marker for this type of negative is anita. There is general agreement on the -ta placing and on the ranking of the -a ending, though it is usually depicted as -e (for other verbs). At any rate, the ania and anita constitute the lowest level of politeness in my material.

Many of my informants indicated that in practice they only operate with four markers most of the time. That is, in regular dyadic interaction, at least, most of them tended to rely heavily on one of two adjacent levels. One male and several females, it seems, rarely used anipnita, usually employing anieyo. For others, one might usually say ani, where another would say anio, and yet others would seldom dip all the way down to anita, preferring to go only to ania, and so forth. In dealing with such choices it became apparent that the English phrases could also be drawn on.

In general, the people to whom one might use anio or ani are the same people one might simply say "no" to in English. The following table drawn from Howell(1967) shows where the English expressions fit into the ordering of speech levels and also the correlations between the negative responses and the ready-to-depart responses. I have not made any attempt to "clean up" the latter listings because I had failed to realize that some respondents would interpret the question as an imperative. None of my informants seemed to have trouble in responding to the question, however. The listing places "no" with "Let's go" because I wanted to see where the English and Korean negatives came together. The rank-ordering was determined on the basis of statements made by informants and by seeing which terms were given as alternatives. Thus one might say of another party, "I would say ani or anio and he would say ani or ania," from which I would conclude that ani occupied a position intermediate between anio and ania. The "go" terms are ranked from top(most polite) to bottom(most familiar) on the far left; the "no" terms are least polite at the far left to most polite at the right end of the line. The N indicates the total number of responses to the "go" term and the internal numbers show the percentage of the time the "go" term was linked with the "no" term, the only exception being "no" itself, in which the number shows the percentage of the time it was given as an alternative to the Korean term. It now occurs to me(after 30 years!) that the N=84 for kaca seems out of line with the other Ns, but I lack the wherewithal now to check back on it. The "x" indicates less than 10 per cent of the responses for the linkage.

kasipsita	0	0	0	38	×	54	N=24
kasiciyo	0	0	×	30	17	50	30
kaseyo	0	0	0	73	27	0	11
kacio	0	0	0	100	0	0	13
kapsita	×	×	16	40	15	20	55
Let's go	×	11	55	27	0	0	27
No	×	15	52	22	×	0	27
kaci	×	34	34	24	×	0	41

kaa	×	48	35	×	×	0	23
kaca	37	30	26	×	0	0	84
	anita	ania	ani	anio	anieyo	anipnita	

The table suggests that for the bilingual dyads the place of English in the Korean system fits into the lower middle ranks. Often the middle ranks are described as "neutral," but of course that is not correct. Recall that the man who received the phone call from a stranger felt it necessary to seek permission just to use panmal to ask who was calling. If a level were truly neutral, no permission should be required.

The non-neutral status of English was nicely demonstrated by a man who was at Berkeley in pursuit of an advanced degree. He enjoyed professorial standing in Korea and encountered several men who had been his students, but who were now fellow graduate students. He refused to accept English from them because it did not convey the respect due him by virtue of his status as their former mentor. He was a man who had had to disabuse himself of a strongly negative impression of America after his arrival and who looked forward to his return to Korea. He had no difficulty fitting English into his model of verbal respect, but did say he admired the convenience of just being able to say "Thank you" where appropriate because it did not entail evaluating relative social status, as the Korean setting would require. Apparently he and his wife "never" used English at home in Berkeley, but they did give their son an American nickname, as a convenience for him in dealing with his American schoolmates.

As indicated much earlier, English was also employed on occasion as a way around the awkwardness of the Korean system. For example, one man described his relationship with a fellow graduate student(also one of my informants) who was two years his junior in age and had gone to the same Korean college. "I like him a lot. We talk about a great variety of subjects--art, literature, philosophy, and so forth. And we talk about baseball a lot. [He and his wife and the younger man and his wife also attended San Francisco Giants games as a foursome.] We use familiar language [panmal] to each other. I could use more familiar language than he does, since I am a little older, but I don't like to. Actually, we use English quite a bit." (Is he your closest friend in this

country?) "Well, no. There are some things we don't talk about--oh, we do talk about women and such things, more personal matters, but usually it is more academic. Now, I did have a friend at another school here. We were [high school] classmates in Korea. We could really talk about anything, and we didn't have to worry. We used the plainest kind of language--he was from my part of the country, too, so I could even use my own dialect. I could express myself any way I wanted to." His very description of the latter relationship conveyed a sense of relief that had not been evident in his description of the former relationship. The first was based on common interests and general compatibility but was limited by the existence of two socially determined barriers: an age differential between non-classmates and a differential in seniority at the same Korean college.

The other half of the dyad involved the man who had had to find a way to deal with the stranger on the telephone. In this case he noted that "If we were from the same high school, then I would have to speak more politely to him because he was ahead of me in school. As it is, though, he is a little bit older and we went to the same college in Seoul, so I feel I really should show him some respect. But we are quite good friends, you know, so there is a tendency to speak the same way to each other. I have a feeling that I mumble the [polite verbal] endings, and sometimes when we feel awkward about the way we have to speak in Korean, we change to English."

The case of the two men is somewhat contradictory to the case of the two women whose interaction pattern would never change but seems generally similar, at least in the sense of feeling the traditional pressures governing speech. At the same time it hints of changes that are compatible with a more egalitarian pattern that has been developing in Korea.

Even thirty or more years ago English was used in Korea to avoid awkwardness. One of my male informants who worked on an academic project there was conducting a discreet affair with a woman who was senior to himself in age and in rank. On the job, where there were always others present they spoke Korean, with the informant using the proper deferential forms and the woman exercising her privilege of familiar speech. When the two of them were alone, however, they spoke what

was for them the language of intimacy: English. One might say that here English was neutral, but a better characterization would be to say that it was the means whereby they could communicate symmetrically to facilitate the reciprocation of intimacy.

Martin(1964) commented that when he was in Seoul(in the late 1950s) he noted a tendency for people taking charge of a situation to use politer(less authoritative) speech to the other party, as "a policeman to a traffic offender, customer to laundry-man, guest to hotel clerk, passenger to taxi-driver, etc." (p.140). The crude test of preferences suggested that younger men favored a more symmetrical pattern where there were rank differences(Howell 1965). Several of my informants assured me that since the overthrow of Rhee's government(1960) there had been important changes with, in effect, more opportunities for upward mobility in conjunction with improvements in the industrial situation. South Korea did not "take off" immediately, but the changes seem to support Brown's(1965) observation, which I would paraphrase to say that where achieved status takes precedence over ascribed status there will be a tendency to develop symmetrical rather than asymmetrical patterns of verbal and nonverbal interaction.

Earlier I noted sociolinguistic influences on even the very linguistically oriented students of Korean speech. Lee(1991) has reported a recent tendency for spouses to form a more symmetrical interaction pattern(p.25) and remarks that in some cases many speakers will find the use of the subject marker -ka acceptable where more conservative speakers will still select the honorific subject marker -kkeyse(p.29). Had she been a little more "sociolinguistic," she might have found space in her chapter on the kinship system to comment on the metaphorical use of kin terms.

Yun(1993), otherwise even more linguistic than Lee, devotes a fair amount of space to changes that have been taking place since the end of World War Two. She does not seem to have noticed Roger Brown's observations, attributing the changes mainly to the diminution of traditional Confucian values in favor of "the Western democratic orientation to which the younger generation is sensitive"(p.204). Yun refers to the "simplification" of speech styles, and her description suggests a move toward greater symmetry. Her discussion is not without

interest, and she is not oblivious to social forces. She noted such modern developments as the "substitution of [Korean] address terms with English terms" and presumably other signs of alien influence which "has tended to be too powerful," resulting in "the language purification movement in Korea"(p.218). The movement emerged in the 1960s, evidently, and Yun feels it has been supported by the public into the 1990s. In 1979, when I made a weekend visit to Seoul and was much impressed by the remarkable physical changes since my last very brief visit in 1960, my impression was of a resurgence of Japanese influence (more amiable than the enforced one from 1910 until 1945). At any rate, the language reform movement would seem to have its work cut out for it.

Finally, while Wang(1984) does not concern herself much with English, she does provide a most excellent capsule history of the sociolinguistic impact of events since 1945, including the period when the village she was studying was taken over by Communist forces during the Korean War.

To end by returning to the beginning, where English is available to Korean speakers, we may expect to find it used in two ways: where it would be awkward to observe differences in social rank, and where it may be used by individuals who would otherwise draw on the linguistic markers of lower-middle levels of politeness.

References

Bloomfield, Leonard

1933Language. New York: Henry Holt.

Brown, Roger

1958 Words and Things. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

1965 Social Psychology. New York; The Free Press.

Brown, Roger and Marguerite Ford

1961Address in American English. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology 62: 375-385.

Brown, Roger and Albert Gilman

1960The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity. In T. A. Sebeok, ed., Style in Language. New York; John Wiley.

Dredge, C. Paul

1976Social Rules of Speech in Korean; The Views of a Comic Strip Character. Korea Journal 16(1): 4-14.

Firth, J. R.

1935The Technique of Semantics. Transactions of the Philological Society: 36-72.

Gumperz, John J.

1964Linguistic and Social Interaction in Two Communities. American Anthropologist 66(Part 2, No.6, special publication): 137-153. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds., The Ethnography of Communication.

Howell, Richard Wesley

1965Linguistic Status Markers in Korean. The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers 55: 91-97.

1967Linguistic Choice as an Index to Social Change. Unpublished Dissertation(Anthropology), University of California at Berkeley, California.

1973Teasing Relationships. Addison-Wesley Module in Anthropology No.46. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Labov, William

1966The Social Stratification of English in New York City. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

1972Sociolinguistic Patterns. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lee, Won-Kyu

1991Honorifics and Politeness in Korean. Unpublished Dissertation (Linguistics). University of Wisconsin- Madison.

Martin, Samuel E.

1964Speech Levels in Japan and Korea. In Dell Hymes, ed., Language in Culture and Society, pp. 407-415.

1992 Reference Grammar of Korean. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc.

Malinowski, Bronislaw

1920Classificatory Particles in the Language of Kiriwina. BSO(A)S 1(4): 33-78.

Schegloff, Emanuel

1968Sequencing in Conversational Openings. American Anthropologist 70: 1075-1095.

Sohn, Ho-min

1986Linguistic Expeditions. Seoul: Hanshin Publishing Company.

Wang, Han-Sok

1984Honorific Speech Behavior in a Rural Korean Village: Structure and Use. Unpublished Dissertation(Anthropology), University of California at Los Angeles.

Wangerin, Ruth

1969The Last Goodbye. Unpublished seminar report. City University of New York.

Weinreich, Uriel

1953Languages in Contact. New York: Linguistic Circle of New York.

Yun, Sung-Kyu

1993 Honorific Agreement. Unpublished Dissertation (Linguistics), University of Hawaii at Manoa.