

A Study on Korean Language Education Evaluation System in China- with Special Focus on the Training of Korean Interpreters and Translators

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Article History

Received: 02.07.2021

Accepted: 06.08.2021

Published: 13.08.2021

Abstract: This study aims to examine the various tests conducted in China, namely, ‘TKM 4/8’, ‘MTI’, ‘CATTI (China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters).’ by focussing mainly on the Korean translation and interpretation training management policy. Korean Language education is now considered important and not an exception in China’s new trend of foreign language education policy. In China, Korean language was formerly not given much importance and was considered a minority language. But it was able to breakthrough from such obscurity in the 20th century and after which Korean Language Education was able to conduct the TKM and it was also included in the MTI curriculum. And in the year 2020, Korean Language was incorporated in CATTI. This laid the foundation for Korean Language to be considered as equal with other major foreign languages in China. However, the impact of Korean language’s incorporation in CATTI is not all positive. With China’s globalization of education policy and the strong competitiveness of government recognized qualification exam, this test will have considerable influence on Korean language education system in Korea. Thereby, imposing the necessity to be fully prepared to evaluate the Korean language learners with TOPIK level 6 and higher.

Keywords: TKM, Korean Translator and Interpreter, Translation and Interpretation, Qualification Test, Language Training Policy, Education Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

In China, presently there are many universities that have Korean Language as a major subject. Korean language education in Chinese Universities has a long history of over 70 years, starting from the late 1940s. For the first 40 years, Korean language training program was chiefly carried out in Beijing (which is known as the political centre of China) and in Military colleges and National Colleges. The turning point for the expansion of Korean Language education in China came in the 1990s with the expansion of Higher education institution in the country.

Since the end of 1990s, China has selected a number of major college-centred higher education institution (211, to be precise) and develop each of them into a state-supported university. Also, provincial colleges were given license to expand their educational infrastructures. In this way, the number of Korean language department in Higher education’s Institutions in China began to increase rapidly. Thus, the present state of increased proliferation and spread of Korean language education in China can be traced back to the incremental changes that took place over the last 2 decades.

Although there is no accurate statistic in the number of learners of Korean language in China, Yonggen Quan (2020:1) [1] estimates that the number of students enrolled in Korean language department is approaching roughly 30,000 to 40,000. The approximate number of students of Korean language can be estimated through the number of takers of TOPIK held in China in April and October each year. The total number of students who sat for the 63rd and 66th TOPIK exams (both held in 2019) were 31,978 and 27,980 respectively. This is not taking into account the number of

Chinese students who took TOPIK in Korea. Thus, in the year 2019 alone, the total number of students who appeared for TOPIK in China was 59,958.

Another way of knowing the number of Chinese students learning Korean language is through the number of Chinese International Students in Korea. According to the Ministry of Education, in 2019, the number of Chinese international students reached 71,067, seeing an increase in 3.7% from 2018. They accounted for 44.4% of international students in Korea. Considering the fact that the number of Chinese students in the year 2003 (less than 20 years ago) was just 5,607, the spread and the increase of Chinese students learning Korean can be surmised to some extent.

Due to the rapid increase in the number of Chinese students learning Korean language, to evaluate Chinese learners of Korean language, various other changes aside from TOPIK are being incorporated in accordance with China's Foreign Language Education Policy (henceforth to be referred as FLEP). Also, as a number of expert Korean language speakers are increasing in China, the need for Korean language translation and interpretation is increasingly felt because of which new and relevant policies are being framed. All such changes are in a way, reflective of the change in China's FLEP which in turn influences, along with Korean language education, other major foreign language education. As such, the need to take cognisance of these consequential changes that are taking place in China cannot be overstated, especially in light of the fact that China is considered to be one of the largest growing markets for Korean language education.

In China, Korean language education is primarily influenced by two language policies. One is the Minority Language Policy and the other is the Foreign Language Policy. The Foreign Language Policy subsumes (a) Joseon language of North Korea, and (b) Korean language of South Korea or simply Korean language. Thus, in China, Korean language departments are in many cases written as just "Joseon Language Department" or as "Korean/Joseon Language Department". In this paper, research will be done to find and trace the changes that has taken place in the last 10 years in the Korean language training policy and the reasons thereof by perusing the various tests and exams conducted in China in relation to Korean language education as a foreign language, namely, 'TKM 4/8', 'MTI curriculum' and 'CATTI'. Through this, the paper will analyse the effect of China's new FLEP and influence it has on Korean language education in particular. The reason for adopting this route of analysis is because China has a centralised education system under which their foreign language educational scene as a whole is rapidly changing and developing; it is unlikely in such a system for Korean language education to survive on its own, independent of the system.

2. Shift in the Korean Language Education

I. A Key-note of Foreign Language Education Policy (FLEP)

In order to analyse and understand the current situation, in a year, more than 70,000 international Chinese students come to Korea- it is necessary to thoroughly look into the Chinese government's FLEP as a whole instead of simplifying it down it being a result of problems in Chinese University's entrance exams. The first half of China's FLEP is bend towards education of English and the other 5 UN's Official Languages apart from Chinese. Other languages wielding important roles in China's FLEP (but are not a part of the other 5 UN's Official Languages) are German, Japanese and Korean. But because German and Japanese education started relatively early in China, the individual education policy change in tandem with and adapt to the education policy of the other main foreign languages in China. Korean language, on the other hand, although considered an important language, is still visibly lagging behind in many areas.

According to the research of Jun, Wu (2020) [2], Qinglian, Jia (2020) [3] and Xiaoying, Lee (2020) [4], the change and shift in China's FLEP can be summarised into three distinct bases.

The first is (the change and shift in FLEP) on the basis of the society's demand. Due to the requirements that crop up along with economic and cultural developments in China, there is an ever increasing need to provide the society with language experts. The paper explicitly mentions that foreign language education in China needs a change in its policy to meet the demands of the society.

The second is an open FLEP. Because of the fact that for the development of foreign language education, it is necessary to introduce not only the language and culture but also the theories and methodologies of foreign language education, the paper points out the best elements from the education policies of other countries needs to be incorporated into China's FLEP.

The third is expansion of accessibility to foreign language education. Until the 20th century, foreign language education in China was centred only in school education. As a result, students outside elementary, middle and high school did not have proper access to it. The author points out the necessity to expand the best of the potential new learners of the foreign language and create a natural environment for foreign language learning in the society.

In this way, because of the needs and demands of the society, the need to be open and amenable to various other foreign languages policies, and the need for the expansion of base of the target learners, the foreign language education in China has been undergoing rapid expansion and change in the last decade. As a result, the number of Chinese international students in Korea is also rapidly increasing.

II. The Direction of China's FLEP

Unlike Korea's FLEP, the change and development of China's FLEP do not depend solely on market demands but also on the very important role that the government plays in it. In this regard, Jun, Wu (2020:139) discusses and summarises the direction of FLEP in China as follows.

Firstly, for establishing and implementing FLEP, political consensus is required. And for this, public awareness and a strong executive body is needed for building the foundational infrastructures like institutions and schools.

Secondly, it is necessary to implement FLEP at the national level. This will help bring awareness amongst local government. The author further points out that central government can play influencing role in schools, on students and the parents.

Thirdly, it is necessary to increase the effectiveness and improve the quality of foreign language education. The author further points out that this can be done by solving the existing problem of exorbitantly costly education system.

Fourthly, efforts to bring about a well-rounded, balanced, and inclusive education system that does not leave out any regional area are urgently required. This is one area, where the government is specially equipped to intervene and solve.

Fifthly, a foreign language education system that is systematic and organised needs to be established by the state – a system appropriate for China's educational institutes, a system that not only sets a specific goal at each stage but also achieve the set goals.

Such educational development might appear as a deform government-centred or totalitarian education system to one who is incognizant of China's unique political setting and socialist concept of education. However, one should understand and accept this development as China's unique educational system especially in light of the fact that such government-centredness can help promote a foreign language education which is trustworthy, inclusive and socially acceptable.

There are many research papers about China's education policy focussing on 'Foreign Language Education Policies appropriate for learner's education levels.', and Jun, Wu (2020:138), after analysing China's FLEP for the past 10 years, categorised the problems plaguing FLEP into four areas.

First, there is a region-wise imbalance in foreign language education and policy research. Second, the policy is too college-centric in its focus.

Third, the research about the policy focuses mostly on minor superficial things rather than on the bigger and more important picture.

Fourth, China's FLEP is not reflective of the actual changes that are rapidly happening in the foreign language education scene.

From the researches and observations mentioned so far, it is known that the government-centred aspect of FLEP which was emphasized in the developmental process, ironically, is also the problem. The policy prepared by the central government is not suitable for all the regional areas. The problem is not so much the policy itself as a whole but rather portions and sections of it. And because the policy in its current form cannot lead to the desired social change, it might be appropriate to incorporate suitable policy changes.

If we look at shortcomings in FLEP through the four categorizations of Jun, Wu (2020: 138), it can thus be seen that there is imbalance in the regional areas and in order to reduce this gap (imbalance), we need to depend on strong government policy. But even through this, it will be difficult to bring about a perfect balance in the regional areas. We can also know that various policies are continuously being prepared and looked into as there are rapid changes taking place in the educational environment and in the demands of the society due to the change in society and culture. We can

also see that the policy is focussing on introducing foreign language training programmes and also education and evaluation system in higher education institutions to help resolve the problems.

In light of all this, many businesses and projects are still undertaken by stakeholders, reflecting the trust they have in the government's policy. In the same vein, Korean language education policy in China and its associated projects try not to deviate from this policy.

3. Current Status of Korean Language Training Policy in China

I. Introduction to TKM

The TKM 4 and TKM 8 conducted at universities in China is a nationwide evaluation exam that evaluates the Korean language proficiency of students whose major is Korean language. According to Yonggen, Quan (2020:6), a committee was informed by the Korean Language Education Research Association, China in 2020 and since then this committee has been conducting this exam at universities across the country. This exam is similar to the evaluating system of China's 'Higher Education Undergraduate Course'. Needless to say, this exam is very popular among students of Korean language in China than their counterpart in Korea.

TKM is based on the common curriculum of China's Ministry of Education and is divided into TKM 4 and TKM 8, 4 and 8 signifying that this test must be taken by the students majoring in Korean language during their 4th and 8th semester respectively. In 2019, there were 2,119 TKM 4 test takers and 1,965 TKM 8 test takers. Taking these two numbers as averages, we can make an educated guess about the number of undergraduate students majoring in Korean language in China in a year. As TKM is based on the common curriculum of China's Ministry of education, a student's score in this test can be indicative of the educating ability or skill of the universities of each student. As such, TKM is being used as a performance index for the improvement of the ability of instructors and the learners.

As mentioned before, TKM test is initially taken during the 4th semester (end of 2nd year) and only after passing the TKM 4 can the students take TKM 8 in their 8th semester (end of 4th year). Students who could not pass TKM 8 on their first try can always retake the exam after graduation. However, they need to pass TKM 8 before their graduating certificate can be issued to them. This exam is therefore a type of certificate exam endorsed by the Higher Education Foreign Language Education Committee of China's Ministry of Education and, as such, it can be said to be directly based on the government's education policy.

Korean language education in China, as already mentioned, has a long history of over 70 years. The policy of Joseon language and Korean language mentioned in foreign language policy is different from that of Joseon language mentioned in China's national minority language policy. Unlike the past, Korean language education in China is now under the scope of FLEP (since 20 to 30 years ago), the policy that governs English language and other UN's 5 official language.

In China, language proficiency test similar to that of TKM are conducted only for the other 5 UN's official languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic) and also German and Japanese languages and now Korean. This shows the importance of Korean language in China. Other than that, TKM test also makes it possible to know that Korean language education in China is under FLEP in China.

But of course, the implementation of TKM alone does not explicitly address the overlapping ambiguity of Joseon as a minority language and Korean/Joseon as a foreign language. However, the incorporation of Korean language into China's major foreign language evaluation system in the year 2010 explicitly shows that Korean language education is being handled within the scope of FLEP in China.

II. Introduction of MTI (Master of Translation and Interpretation)

Korean language education in China began 20 to 30 years ago. The number of Chinese students learning Korean language is 71,000 in Korea and 30,000 in China. In addition to this, if we also take into account the 2 million ethnic Koreans living in China, the number of Korean learners and speakers in China far exceeds that of any other foreign language spoken in China. As such, the demand for professional Korean language expert like interpreters and translators has also become huge. This is accentuated by the ever increasing cultural and economic exchange between the two countries. Similar developments in China are also taking place in English and Japanese language education. Accordingly, there arises a need to formulate a new policy that takes into account all these new developments and changes not just in Korean language but also in other foreign language.

Thus, China's Ministry of Education has opened the MTI training course for producing advanced foreign language learners. A brief background of the MTI is as follows.

In line with the development of China's society, economy and culture, the urgent demand for professional interpreters and translators are increasing. In order to meet this demand and also to improve the quality of interpretation and translation education in China, MTI or Master of Translation and Interpretation was established. MTI is different from the extant Masters of Arts in Translation, and unlike other Master's Degrees, that focusses on academic and theoretical research, it focusses on improving practical interpretation and translation skills for all the fields that require the same. This course is, therefore, also known as Practical Master's Degree or a specialized Master's Degree.

According to Wang Cheom (2021:12) [5], in 2007, China's Ministry of education formulated that MTI curriculum with an aim to foster high-quality foreign language experts in China. The MTI education committee was also established at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. As early as 2008, 15 institutes had recruited students under MTI for the first time. After that, the number of institutes increased to 114 in 2011, 158 in 2014 and 259 in 2020. Eventually, the MTI curriculum was expanded to include 7 new languages, namely, 5 UN's official languages and German and Japanese. And unlike other Master's courses, the emphasis is less on research and thesis submission and more on the student's translation and interpretation skill.

According to the MTI committee, MTI is a 2 years Postgraduate Certificate course; to differentiate it from other Postgraduate course, it is also known as Practical Translation and Interpretation Masters course. The MTI committee requires that the recruitment process be done separately for translation course and interpretation course with separate curricula for each. However, according to Yongnam, Lee (2017:3) [6] there are 3 universities that only recruit interpreters (University of Foreign Economic and Trade, Jilin University, and Jilin Huaqiao University of Foreign Languages), 4 universities that only recruit translators (Dalian University of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University, Ocean University of China, and Guangxi Teachers Education University) and 5 universities that recruit both translators and interpreters (Sichuan Foreign Studies University, Yanbian, Tianjin University of Foreign Studies, Tianjin Teachers Education University, Yantai University).

The MTI course was offered for the first time in 2010 by Yanbian University. According to ChenChen, Liu (2018: 12) [7], the number of new institutes that offered MTI course thereafter are as follows: 2 in 2011, 6 in 2012, 12 in 2014, 20 in 2016 and 27 in 2020. Of the total universities that offer MTI course, statistics show that more than 13% offer MTI in Korean language as well. 10% of all universities with Korean language departments (270) have started MTI programs in Korean language.

Thus, it is evident that Translation and Interpretation Education in Chinese Universities is rapidly expanding. To augment this expansion and spread, plans and policies are also being formulated to give institutional support to BTI (Bachelor of Translation and Interpretation) and DTI (Doctor of Translation and Interpretation).

In Chinese academia, 'Interpretation and Translation' falls under Applied Linguistics which in turn comes under Linguistics. And based on linguistic research that started in 1950s and cultural research that stated on 1970s Interpretation and Translation started developing into two branches, namely, (a) translation from Chinese into other foreign languages and vice versa, and (b) translation from Chinese into minority languages and vice versa. Till the 20th century, out of the two branches, '(b)' was more prominent due to political and administrative factors. And such translation concerning minority languages was overseen by a dedicated translators' guild established by the government.

On the other hand, '(a)', despite being a part of university education since 1979, has not been able to carve out a niche for itself academically. However, due to the technological changes ushered in by the 21st century, and the corresponding globalization, there is a rise in the popularity of and demand for foreign languages in China. As such, the demand for interpreters and translators fluent in these foreign languages is also rapidly increasing. China's FLEP is also shedding its parochial character and imbibing new and progressive outlook, an outlook that aims to educate and train a new breed of experts in foreign language interpretation and translation. The MTI can be seen as the brainchild of such pragmatic and forward-thinking education policy.

III. Introduction of Korean Interpretation and Translation Qualification Test (CATTI)

CATTI, China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters is the only language-related test incorporated into the national occupational qualification certificate system. According to CATTI's website [8], this exam is the most authoritative accreditation test in translation and interpretation proficiency in China. Most company enquire their employees to have CATTI passing certificate. Also, CATTI is mandatory for master's degree students majoring in interpretation and translation. The China International Publishing group has been entrusted with the implementation and administration of CATTI by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of the People's Republic of China.

The objective of CATTI are as follows – to strengthen the management of the translation industry; to meet the needs of China’s economic development and to upgrade the quality of professional foreign language translators; to scientifically, objectively, and impartially evaluate the level and capabilities of professional translators and interpreters and to regulate the translation market; and to align with international standards in the fields of politics, economy, culture, education, etc. by providing more professional translators and interpreters.

To sum it up, CATTI is an evaluation system on translation and interpretation conducted across the country to standardize job skills, and to nurture professional interpreters and translators. It is also a certification exam for Majors like MTI and BTI.

According to Lihua Qing, Yingxian, Zhang (2018:151) [9], in 2003, English became the first foreign language in China to adopt CATTI. Subsequently, it was adopted by French and Japanese languages in 2004. And by Russian, Arabic, Spanish and German languages in 2006 making it a total of 7 languages to have adopted CATTI. Simultaneous Interpretation (Translation) qualification exam was also introduced into CATTI in 2005. The number of CATTI test takers in 2005 was 10,000; it had increased to 100,000 by 2016 and to over 200,000 by 2018.

According to CATTI committee, as stated in the website of CATTI, the test consists of two components – the translation qualification test and the interpretation qualification test. The translation qualification test comprises of two sections: ‘Translation Comprehensive Aptitude’ with a duration of 120 minutes and ‘Translation Practice’ with a duration of 180 minutes. The interpretation qualification test also comprises of two sections: ‘Interpretation Comprehensive Aptitude’ with a duration of 60 minutes and ‘Interpretation Practice’ with a duration of 60 minutes (except Level 3 for 30 minutes).

The current form of CATTI is a result of changes introduced in 2010. According to which, CATTI became linked with MTI curriculum. In China, any foreign language learners may take the exam, but CATTI is mainly known as a certificate of proficiency (level2) that MTI students are mandated to pass.

As pointed out by Dan Wang (2016: 261-73) [10], Korean language had not been incorporated into CATTI even as late as Nov, 2020. And as such, the students of Korean MTI course were not able to obtain nationally recognised qualification even after earning their MTI degree. In fact, it was only in November, 2020 that Korean/Joseon language was incorporated into CATTI and with thus, Korean is now among the fully established foreign languages in China with its learners guaranteed the same policy benefits as the ones accorded to the learners of other major foreign languages in China.

Aside from this, the benefits that will accrue to learners of Korean language who pass this test are as follows. First, they will be able to apply for membership in the Chinese Interpretation and Translation Association. According to the regulations of the Chinese Interpretation and Translation Association, those who have obtained level 3 or level 2 can apply for general membership and those with level 1 and above can apply under professional.

Second, they will get preferential treatment while applying for interpreting and translating jobs whether in the public or private sector.

Third, provincial government in China and administration of large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai prefer their potential employees to have passed CATTI when it comes to interpretation and translation related jobs.

Fourth, having this certificate is an important criterion in bidding for national research projects and a prerequisite condition when applying for large-scale interpretation and translation projects or research projects on/to international organizations or the Chinese government.

Incorporation of Korean into CATTI coupled with necessary policy support will help motivate Korean learners in China. One reason is that it is a qualification nationally recognised by China and also an evaluation system whose influence is steadily rising. As already stated, the Chinese government actively extends policy support to CATTI. CATTI is the world’s largest exam in the field of interpretation and translation and as such, the significance of the impact it will have on the status of Korean language in China cannot be overstated.

4. Analysis of Korean Interpretation and Translation Training Policy with special focus on CATTI

I. CATTI as a tool to assess MTI curriculum

Korean language education in China has undergone many changes over the past decade, MTI was introduced in 2020 and TKM was incorporated in 2011. The anomaly of Korean language being outside the purview of CATTI was also finally rectified by 2020.

As already stated above, in China, minority language policy and foreign language policy both governs Korean language. As such, when it comes to Korean language education in China, the boundaries of minority language policy and FLEP overlaps, which to some, may seem incoherent.

With the incorporation of Korean language into CATTI, and the role of TKM, MTI and CATTI that we have discussed above, the overall educational policy framework of China’s ministry of education for training high-level Korean language interpretation and translation professionals can be said to be complete.

Table-1: Comparison of China’s TKM, MTI and CATTI vis-à-vis TOPIK

TOPIK		TKM	MTI	CATTI
TOPIK I	Level 1	Level 4		
	Level 2			
TOPIK II	Level 3	Level 8	MTI entrance standard	CATTI Level 3
	Level 4			
	Level 5		MTI graduate standard	CATTI Level 2
	Level 6			

TKM 4 and TKM 8 have similar difficulty level as TOPIK level 3 and TOPIK level 5 respectively. Taking the 1st Korean CATTI test held on November 15, 2020 as our point of reference, it can be seen that TOPIK level 4 has the same difficulty level as CATTI 3, and TOPIK level 6 as CATTI 2. As TOPIK has no other higher level than level 6, the difficulty of CATTI 1 currently exceeds that of any TOPIK level.

Thus, a systematic curriculum that takes into account both evaluation systems, namely, CATTI and TOPIK and one that allows students of translation and interpretation to reach CATTI level 1 was required. The MTI curriculum was created to fulfil this requirement.

Therefore, as seen from the table, a graduate student with TKM 8 can apply for an MTI degree, and can prepare himself for CATTI 1 exam. Thus, MTI plays a nurturing role for students of Translation and Interpretation who wants to advance to CATTI 1.

We can see that CATTI can. Thus, be used as a tool to effectively assess and evaluate the quality of MTI in China. Which can in turn be used to evaluate TKM as well as TOPIK.

II. CATTI’s Open and Global Strategy

CATTI is a vocational qualification test that is open not just to students of MTI degrees but also to the general public. Anyone with certain foreign language skills can take the CATTI level 2 and level 3 exams in the target language regardless of age, academic background, or status. And because CATTI is open to everyone, even Chinese students studying in Korea can take this test and get the benefit of being evaluated within the same system.

The CATTI assessment is attracting attention as one of the most important qualifications for international students to get a job in China and participate in economic activities. According to the website of China’s Ministry of Education, there were 710,000 Chinese international students in 2019 among them 71,000 Chinese students were studying in Korea. Many returning international students are already taking CATTI, and the number of test takers has been rapidly increasing since 2016 at the average rate of 100,000 every two years.

The Chinese government and the CATTI committee are working extensively to promote the internationalization of CATTI. In fact, the CATTI was successfully conducted abroad (at the Belarusian National University) for the first time in 2019. This was followed by Moscow, ST. Petersburg in Russian and Minsk in Belarus. CATTI is also being planned to be conducted in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Canada by 2021.

With the internationalization of CATTI and its spread abroad, international Chinese students (studying overseas) of translation and interpretation can conveniently take this test without having to come back to China. Moreover, students of other countries learning translation and interpretation in Chinese in their home country can take this test in their home country and, thus, get the benefit of being evaluated under the same system as those international students learning Chinese translation and interpretation in China.

CATTI was initially developed with a focus on the major languages. At present, there is a total of 8 major languages under CATTI. However, as pointed out by Lihua, Qing, Yingxian, Zhang (2018: 48), there is a plan to expand CATTI so as to include other languages aside from the other 5 UN's official languages.

With a view to cater to regions where there is a demand for Chinese language education such as central Asia and Southeast Asia, the CATTI committee in 2020 proposed to set up CATTI bases in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, etc. This will help in cementing the role of CATTI as not only being an evaluation system but also that of popularizing and spreading Chinese Language.

III. Competitiveness analysis of Korean CATTI exam

The Korean MTI curriculum, which started in 2010 was not fully equipped to train professional translators and interpreters. However, even under such circumstances, the number of universities offering MTI Master's programs in China continues to increase, and the number of students taking up MTI courses is also increasing.

In Korea there is no course analogous to MTI. But in China, the appeal of MTI curriculum is such that language students from Korea studying in China continues to take up the course despite certain aspects of the curriculum being redundant for them. In fact, the popularity of MTI among these students has, if anything, only increased with the recent incorporation of Korean into CATTI, and the facility to acquire a government approved certificate in translation and interpretation.

Chinese government, through extensive policy support is striving hard to expand CATTI beyond the region into other neighbouring areas such as Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and Central Asia.

With respect to Korean-Chinese and Chinese-Korean translation and interpretation, Korea also has an indigenous certification system and it is called ITT. This exam was made available in China in 2009 and has been conducted twice a year (May and November) ever since. The number of students taking this exam is considerably less with 400 students in 2019. But this test is popular among Chinese students studying in Korea.

Though CATTI and ITT are similar, there are some aspects in which they differ, first, CATTI is a national certification exam accredited by the Chinese government, whereas ITT is a private, non-accredited certification in Korea. Second, CATTI is a certification exam of Chinese language translation and interpretation that can be taken by international students of not just Korean language but also the other 5UN's official language, and German and Japanese, on the other hand, ITT is a certification exam in Korean language translation and interpretation that can be taken by international students of other foreign languages. Third, CATTI certification is mostly sought after by employers of most professions related to translation and interpretation whereas ITT certification is mostly sought after by professions in the judicial, health and business industries. Also, unlike CATTI, ITT does not have a standardized curriculum. Lastly, unlike CATTI, ITT is a certification given by a private body and thus, its scope and applicability is narrow and its credibility limited.

As such, there is a huge difference or gap in the competitiveness of Korean language's CATTI and ITT. Only when Korean language was not yet incorporated into CATTI was the ITT able to garner any interest of Chinese students in Korea. However, even this has ceased with the incorporation of Korean into CATTI.

Moreover, there are a number of limitations with the TOPIK exam. As mentioned earlier, there are 30 to 40 thousand students in China majoring in Korean language, and 71,000 Chinese international students in Korea who are required to learn Korean language. So at least 100,000 students of Chinese origin can be said to be learning Korean language. Among them, the number of students who have TOPIK level 6 and want to pursue translation and interpretation from Korean-Chinese and vice versa are rapidly increasing. Thus, it can be seen that students and learners of Korean language are no longer content with getting a proficiency certificate through such exams as TOPIK but are more and more inclined to learn translation and interpretation professionally so as to equip themselves with the necessary language skills for any job that might require the same.

5. CONCLUSION

In the last century, the field of translation and interpretation has gradually become accepted as an exclusive domain of specially trained bilingual speakers. As we enter the 21st century, the need for effective communication has exponentially increased due to increase in immigration, rise in the number of international students and globalization in general which has been accentuated by the rapid spread of internet and social media. All these had meant an increase in intercultural and international communication and information exchanges leading to a rise in the global attention and interest in the field of translation and interpretation.

Nevertheless, the corresponding development in education and evaluation systems has not been in keeping with the changes and developments in foreign language learning environments and educational environments. However, the Chinese government is working tirelessly to rectify this. For example, since 2010, vigorous policy measures have been put in place for expansion of Chinese language education overseas.

In regard to these changes taking place in the area of foreign language education in China, Korean language education is no exception. In the 20th century, it was slowly able to breakout from relative obscurity of being a minority language and successfully catapults itself into being recognised as a foreign language. The TKM test was also introduced; Korean language was included in the MTI curriculum followed by the incorporation of Korean language into CATTI in 2020. As a result of all these, a complete framework has been laid for Korean language to be treated equally and being in the same vein as the other major foreign languages such as Japanese and German.

The incorporation of Korean language into CATTI has particularly meant that Korean language learners in China whose qualifications were erstwhile not recognised even after receiving a degree through the MTI curriculum will now be recognised. The impact of this on the development of Korean language education in China can only be positive.

At the same time, this has thrown up a new challenge: as Korea does not yet have a certification and evaluation system for its foreign students pursuing translation and interpretation of Korean language, CATTI assumes added significance in evaluating Chinese and Korean students in Korea learning Korean language and Chinese language respectively.

This should however in no way detract from the fact that Korea needs to come up with its own evaluation system for Advanced Korean learners with TOPIK level 6 or higher as also a certification system for its level of students, both international and foreign, of Korean language translation and interpretation.

In this paper, the three representative policies of China's Ministry of Education that have led to new changes in China. Over the past decade along with the related issues and problems were examined. As we have seen, the problems and issues discussed therein are particularly pertinent to Korean language education in China and also to Korean and Chinese language education in Korea and in neighbouring countries.

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CITATION: Lim Hyungjae & Flourish Kamei (2021). A Study on Korean Language Education Evaluation System in China-with special focus on the training of Korean interpreters and translators. *South Asian Res J Human Soc Sci*, 3(4): 219-227.