

A Study on the Use of Kim Kwang-seok's "Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love" as Korean Language Educational Material: A Teaching Method for Paradoxical Realization and Expressions of Emotional Intensification

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1) Abstract

This study proposes a method for teaching Korean learners about Korean emotional sensibilities regarding separation and philosophical reflections on love by utilizing the song "Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love" by the singer Kim Kwang-seok as Korean language educational material for foreign learners. This song is an advanced-level text that conveys paradoxical realization through the opposing concepts of "pain" and "love," and it is rich in metaphorical expressions that symbolize abstract suffering throughout its lyrics. By integrating psychological theories of emotional education with linguistic grammatical analysis, this study identifies the educational value of realization-marking sentence endings and expressions of emotional intensification found in the song lyrics. Based on this analysis, a three-stage teaching-learning model is designed to enhance learners' logical thinking skills and their ability to express complex emotions, along with specific discussion and writing activities.

Keywords: paradoxical realization, emotional intensification expressions, realization sentence endings, painful love, philosophical reflection

I. Introduction

2) 1.1 Necessity and Purpose of the Study

Even when foreign learners become fluent in Korean, expressing highly abstract emotions such as "love," "sadness," and "separation" in ways that align with Korean emotional sensibilities remains one of the greatest challenges. Kim Kwang-seok's "Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love" is an ideal educational text for overcoming this difficulty. As a live-performance singer, Kim Kwang-seok's songs are often evaluated as having the power to embrace the wounds of listeners' lives. This particular song poses a fundamental question about the essence of love and dramatically captures the philosophical "realization" gained through painful experiences.

This study aims to achieve the following objectives. First, it analyzes the meaning of the paradoxical statement embedded in the song's title within the Korean perspective on love. Second, it examines the educational effectiveness of realization-related grammatical forms such as "-ieosseumeul" ("was not...") and abstract emotional vocabulary such as "loneliness" and "wounds" used in the lyrics. Third, it designs a teaching model that utilizes these elements to improve learners' critical thinking skills and their ability to describe complex emotions.

3) 1.2 Review of Previous Studies and Scope of Research

Previous studies on emotional expression education have largely focused on basic vocabulary or interjections. In contrast, research on the popularity of Kim Kwang-seok's music indicates that his songs achieve universal empathy through lyrical analysis. This study differs in that it addresses the universal Korean narrative of "maturity through pain" conveyed through song, and it places the purpose of language use on "emotional liberation and reflection." The scope of this research targets intermediate- to advanced-level learners and focuses on an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the song's philosophical questions and grammatical expressions of realization.

II. Theoretical Background

4) 2.1 Emotion Language Education Theory

Language is not merely a means of communication but a tool for defining and categorizing human inner emotions. Emotion language education is a process through which learners understand how emotions are perceived and expressed within the culture of the target language. This song demonstrates that in Korean culture, "love" is deeply connected not only to positive emotions but also to negative emotions such as "pain," thereby helping learners understand the complex emotional world of Koreans.

5) 2.2 Discourse Analysis and the Function of Sentence Endings

From a discourse-analytic perspective, Korean sentence endings do more than simply conclude sentences; they determine the speaker's attitude and contextual meaning. In particular, realization or reflective sentence endings such as "*-ieosseumeul*" function to strongly reveal the outcome of reflection that the speaker has reached in the present. Through learning how to use this ending, learners can understand how Korean speakers linguistically finalize important truths about life.

III. In-Depth Analysis of the Lyrics of

"Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love"

6) 3.1 Structural Analysis of Paradoxical Realization

The song's title itself is a paradoxical statement. The final conclusion, "it was not love," arises from the premise that the love "hurt too much."

Measurement of Pain: The lyrics measure the intensity of love using "pain" as a scale of suffering. This reflects the unconscious Korean expectation that true love should be a form of comfort free from wounds.

Process of Reflection: Rather than stopping at the experience of pain, the song completes a narrative of emotional liberation and healing through the realization-ending "*was not*," which signifies awakening and reflection.

7) 3.2 Perceptions of "Painful Love" in Korean Culture and Cultural Context

In Korean emotional sensibility, love and separation are believed to entail deep suffering (*han*), and enduring that suffering is seen as a path toward emotional maturity. Kim Kwang-seok's musical world is analyzed as having the power to evoke a cultural atmosphere that embraces such pain. "*Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love*" encapsulates the Korean aesthetics of wounds and healing. By reinterpreting separation not as a "failure of love" but as a "discovery of misguided love," the song presents learners with a mature Korean perspective on breakups.

IV. Linguistic and Cultural Value as Educational Material**8) 4.1 Linguistic Value: Learning the Grammar of Realization and Abstract Vocabulary**

(Educational elements, lyric examples, and learning objectives remain the same as in existing content.)

9) 4.2 Cultural Value: Teaching the Korean Philosophy of Love

Binary Perception of Love: This section teaches the Korean value system that distinguishes between “true love” and “painful attachment.” Understanding this dichotomy is essential for interpreting the love dilemmas frequently found in Korean dramas and literature.

As shown in studies on the imagery and placeness of “*Kim Kwang-seok Street (Kim Kwang-seok Dasi Geurigi-gil)*,” themed around the singer, his music plays an important role in creating a sense of place and shaping cultural atmosphere.

Narrative of Maturity: Learners study the Korean narrative of maturity, in which individuals reach their own conclusions and move forward after enduring pain. This reveals how Korean society perceives personal growth.

V. Teaching–Learning Model Design:

A Three-Stage Integrated Reflection Model

The teaching–learning model designed in this study consists of three stages that systematically integrate linguistic knowledge, emotional empathy, and philosophical discussion.

10) 1. Stage 1: Motivation and Exposure (Introduction)

Objective: To stimulate learning motivation and present the core concepts embedded in the song.

Main Learning Activities:

Paradoxical Questioning: Based on the song title “*Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love*,” learners are asked paradoxical questions such as, “Can something that hurts too much still be love?” to arouse curiosity.

Core Vocabulary Association Discussion: Learners share and discuss the images or concepts they associate with the key words “**pain**” and “**love**” based on their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

11) 2. Stage 2: In-Depth Analysis and Language Learning (Development)

Objective: To acquire grammatical and philosophical expressions found in the lyrics.

Main Learning Activities:

Analysis of Realization Grammar: Learners study in depth the usage and pragmatic nuances of realization sentence endings such as “*-ieosseumeul*,” analyzed in Section 4.1 of the paper.

Abstract Vocabulary Analysis: Learners analyze abstract emotional vocabulary used in the lyrics, such as “love,” “pain,” and “wounds,” and engage in a concept map activity to visualize how these concepts are interconnected.

12) 3. Stage 3: Expression and Cultural Integration (Application)

Objective: To exercise critical thinking skills and expand emotional expression based on acquired linguistic knowledge and cultural understanding.

Main Learning Activities:

- **Pro–Con Debate:** Learners engage in debates on the topic “**Conditions of True Love**,” enhancing logical reasoning and advanced discussion skills.
- **Reflective Essay Writing:** Learners write personal essays using the realization structure of the song, based on the prompt “**To me, () was not (**

)." This activity develops their ability to express personal reflection using Korean grammar.

VI. Detailed Activity Plans and Educational Effects

The specific activities used at each stage of the teaching–learning model and their expected educational effects are as follows.

13) 1. Vocabulary/Grammar Activity: Creating “Realization” Sentences

Activity Description: Learners practice completing sentences using the realization sentence ending “-ieosseumeul,” such as “Travel was not hardship” or “Failure was not the end,” applied to various everyday situations.

Educational Objective: To help learners master the correct usage and nuances of realization sentence endings, particularly the way they convey a reflective speaker attitude.

14) 2. Writing Activity: “Defining Loneliness”

Activity Description: Referring to the emotions expressed in the lyrics, learners engage in in-depth writing to define “**What loneliness means to me**” from their own philosophical perspective.

Educational Objective: To enhance learners’ ability to concretize and clearly define abstract concepts in Korean, thereby fostering high-level academic and logical writing skills.

15) 3. Speaking/Debate Activity: “The Boundary of Love”

Activity Description: Learners participate in group discussions or presentations on the topic “**Where is the boundary between love and attachment?**” using lyric quotations or personal experiences to support their arguments.

Educational Objective: To improve advanced discussion skills by enabling learners to logically and emotionally argue complex emotional topics using advanced vocabulary and grammar.

VII. Conclusion and Suggestions

16) 7.1 Conclusion

“*Love That Hurts Too Much Was Not Love*” is a core text that opens new horizons for emotional and philosophical education in Korean language teaching for foreigners. The song’s paradoxical structure and reflective expressions simultaneously promote learners’ linguistic and intellectual growth, offering an experience of deeply understanding one’s life through the Korean language. This study demonstrates that an integrated teaching model utilizing this song is an essential component of advanced Korean language education.