

**Korean Studies in Malaysia: Development,
Challenges and Future at University of Malaya**

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Korean Studies in Malaysia: Development, Challenges and Future at University of Malaya*

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Korean Studies in Malaysia is part of the Malaysian government's Look East Policy which has placed Korea as one of focal countries. In Malaysia, Korean Studies has been primarily developed with a strong focus on Korean language as evidenced by the Korean language programs being offered in several universities. However, the Korean Studies program offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Malaya is a unique program taking a multidisciplinary approach where students are exposed to a variety of social sciences and humanities-specific topics relating to Korea. The process of teaching and learning for the students in the program is deemed lifelong, as knowledge gained can be utilized in both profession formation and personality development. The popularity of Korean Studies program within the University of Malaya and the response from the students have been very encouraging with 40% of students enrolled in East Asian Studies are specializing in Korean Studies. However, the Korean Studies program faces several challenges in terms of survival or sustainability

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because the students' selection is often associated with their marketability in the workforce. Therefore, the ups and downs of demand for Korean Studies in Malaysia, especially at the University of Malaya lend uncertainty in the future ahead. This paper will discuss the development of Korean Studies program at the University of Malaya and will analyze the challenges encountered in implementing this program. This paper will also discuss the efforts made to ensure the sustainability and improvement of this study program in Malaysia, and at the international level.

Keywords: Korean Studies, marketability and uncertainties, challenges, sustainability and future

Introduction

The program for Korean Studies at the University of Malaya, although it is a relatively new course when compared to other universities in Asia, has made impressive progress in at least three aspects. Firstly, efforts to establish Korean language courses, and courses related to Korea have multiplied; secondly, academic activities such as seminars and conferences concerning Korea have expanded, and the responses have been encouraging; and thirdly, increased interest among researchers and students to conduct research related to Korea. The rapid growth of bilateral trade between Malaysia and South Korea and the growing amount of Korean investments entering Malaysia have influenced the demand for people with expertise on Korea. Thus, the expansion of Korean Studies and Korean language education in the University of Malaya is essential to fulfil the demand in the current local job market, as well as to further strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries. Initially, Korean Studies courses in most of the universities in Malaysia started off with the teaching of Korean language and later expanded into multidisciplinary courses on Korea. In this regard, University of Malaya is the first university in Malaysia to introduce Korean Studies. It began by offering Korean language course in the mid-1980s. This was followed by the commencement of social science

courses on Korea. Korean Studies Program is under the Department of East Asian Studies, whereas courses on Korean history, culture, economic and foreign relations were first introduced in the 1996/1997 academic session.

Korean Studies Program at University of Malaya

Korean Studies Program has become one of the three essential components in the Department of East Asian Studies, which also offers China Studies and Japan Studies programs. The department was established as a result of the restructuring of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The suggestion for its inception came about during a Workshop on Civilizational Dialogues I and II, which was organized by University of Malaya in 1995 and 1996, respectively.

The Korean Studies Program is a three and half year undergraduate program. Students are expected to complete a total of 122 credits hour. Students majoring in Korean Studies are required to take 94 credit hours of Korean and East Asian related courses. To complete the rest of the credits, students are required to take compulsory university courses as well as faculty core courses. Table 1 shows the specific courses and distribution requirements of the Korean Studies Program for the 2016/2017 academic year.

Program Structure and courses of Korean Studies

Korean Studies at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences organized under the Department of East Asian Studies. It is one of the country specialization besides Japan and China Studies. It went through curriculum review conducted Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. One of the main criteria for specialization in studies Korea is well versed in Korean speech and writing and Korean culture. All students are required to learn Korean at the beginning of the semester for four semesters (Korean Language IA, IB, IIA, IIB) and option in Korean Language IIIA and IIIB. See Table 1 (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, 2016). Knowledge of Korean Studies among students will be enhanced at the mid-level of studies, especially in the third and fourth semester. The

students can study and analysis about Korea in their interested field either in the economic, political and socio-cultural by selecting the courses offered as in Table 1. While at the final stage of the study, i.e., at the 5th and 6th-semester students can analyze in depth about Korea as well as perform scientific research in the field of economic, political and socio-cultural of Korea. To provide students with strong soft skills and help them to be ready for the job market, all students in the Korean Studies program are encouraged to undergo industrial training for one semester at government, non-government agencies or companies owned by Koreans in Malaysia and abroad, especially those in Korea.

Table 1: Courses Offering for Korean Studies in the Department of East Asian Studies in 2016/2017 Academic Session

Classification	Courses and credits	Credit Hours
University courses	Islam and Asia Civilization (TITAS) (2) Ethnic Relations (2) Basic Entrepreneurship Culture (2) Information Literacy (2) Social Engagement (2) Co-Curriculum (2) External Faculty Elective Course English Communication I & II (6)	20 credits
Faculty Elective Courses	Introduction to Social Sciences and Humanities (3) Research Methodology of Social Sciences and Humanities Research (3) Ethics and Professionalism in Social Sciences and Humanities (2)	8 credits
Korean Studies Programme and core courses	AIG1007 Introduction to East Asia (3) AIG1008 Culture and Society of Japan (3) AIG1009 Culture and Society of China (3) AIG1010 Culture and Society of Korea (3) AIG2007 International Relations of East Asia (3) AIG2009 Political Economy of China (3) AIG2016 Political Economy of Japan (3) AIG2022 Political Economy of Korea (3) AIG3007 Academic Project (8) AIG3008 Practicum (8) AIG3009 Research Seminar on East Asia (3) AIG3010 Economic Development of East Asia (3) AIG3011 Security Issues in East Asia (3) AIG3015 Contemporary Politics of China (3) AIG3028 Korean Organizational Culture (3)	55 credits

Choose 16 credits Korean Language courses and 14 credits from the Korean studies courses including the remaining Korean language courses.	AIG1005 Korean Language IA (4) AIG1006 Korean Language IB (4) AIG2005 Korean Language IIA (4) AIG2006 Korean Language IIB (4) AIG3005 Korean Language IIIA (4) AIG3006 Korean Language IIIB (4) AIG2023 Korean Civilization (3) AIG2024 Korean Economy (3) AIG2025 Globalization and Popular Culture of Korea (3) AIG2026 North Korea and South Korea Relations (3) AIG2027 Modernization Process of Korea (3) AIG2028 Social Transformation in Korea (3) AIG3027 Korean Entrepreneur and Corporate Management (3) AIG3029 Korean Foreign Policy (3) AIG3030 Korea-ASEAN Relations (3) AIG3031 Contemporary Politics of South Korea (3) AIG3032 International Trade of South Korea (3)	30 credits
9 credits of other countries/ regional courses	AIG2008 Territorial Dispute in East Asia (3) AIG3012 United States–East Asia Relations (3) AIG3013 Political Issues in East Asia After 1900 (3)	9 credits

The Korean Studies at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences organized by the Department of East Asian Studies and Department of Asian Languages, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics. Courses on Korean economic, politics, and socio-cultural topic taught by the Department of East Asian Studies and Korean Language courses taught by the lecturers from Department of Asian Languages, Faculty Language, and Linguistics as follows:

- Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Senior Lecturer, Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Field of expertise: International Relation – South Korea-North Korea Relations
- Dr. Tan Soo Kee, Senior Lecturer, Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Field of Expertise: Business and Organizational Culture (Korea), Immigrants and Foreign Labour Issues in Korea
- Dr. Park Chang Kyoo (Senior Lecturer - Visiting) – Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Field of Expertise: Political Science and Sociology, interest in research of Hallyu and ethnology.

- Ms. Wong Yan Yee, Korean Language Teacher, Department of Asian and European Languages Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya.
- Dr. Jang Yongsu, (Visiting lecturer for Korean language) sponsored by Korea Foundation to Department of Asian and European Languages, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya.

Students Enrollment and Graduate of Korean Studies

Three factors contributed in attracting students to the program. Firstly, students are encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of the University of Malaya to Korean Studies Program as an academic discipline. Secondly, the courses being offered have a well-designed and comprehensive curriculum. Thirdly, financial support and incentives offered by some Korean companies based in Malaysia and opportunities provided by the University of Malaya for an exchange program to Korea give great motivation for students who are keen in pursuing Korean studies.

One of the good things about the program is that undergraduate students have the opportunity to understand the historic and cultural dynamism of Korea through courses on Korean politics, history and economics. The purpose of offering interdisciplinary courses on Korea is to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in both current and past Korean affairs. Given that lately, there has been an increased support for the program, it is predicted that in the next few years, the Korean Studies Program will become the most popular program in the department.

Meanwhile, the Department of Asian and European Languages in the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics offers Korean language courses as an elective course. Historically, Korean language courses were first offered in UM in the mid-1980s at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, which specializes in the teaching of world languages. The Korean language course in this department is one of the most popular courses among students. Although many students from various faculties show keen interest to learn the Korean language, the lack of

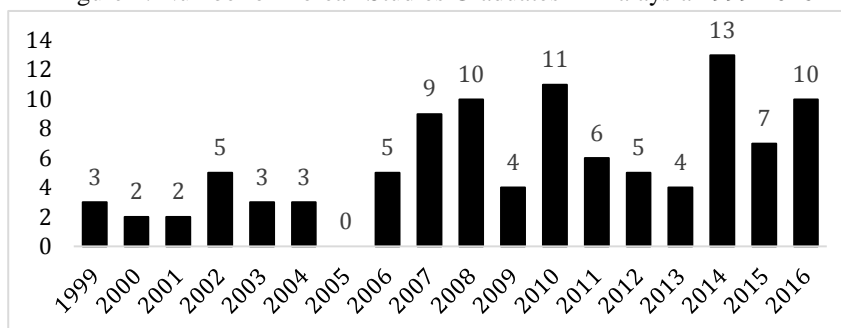
lecturers and limited places for the program make it impossible to accommodate all interested candidates.

Over the past decade, University of Malaya has been recognized as the nation's leading language and area studies centre for the interdisciplinary studies of Korea. At present, University of Malaya is the only higher education institution in Malaysia which offers an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree in Korean Studies.

As of 2016/2017 academic session, two departments in the University of Malaya contribute to the development of Korean Studies. They are the Department of East Asian Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and the Department of Asian and European Languages in the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics. Of these two departments, the Department of East Asian Studies specializes in the teaching of the Korean language, as well as courses on Korea, in addition to its Bachelor of East Asian Studies. On the other hand, the Department of Asian and European Languages merely focuses on the teaching of Korean Language without the degree program.

The steady development of the Korean Studies Program, as well as the achievement of its students, reflects the strength of the program can be seen in Figure 1 below. In 1999, three Korean Studies Program were graduated, and in 2000 and 2001, two were graduated. While in the year 2002, 5, 2003 and 2004, 3. The number of graduated students increased to 5 in 2006, 9 in 2007 and 10 in 2008. In 2009, 4; in 2010, 11; in 2011, 6; in 2012, 5; in 2013, 4; in 2014, 13; in 2015, 7 and 2016, 10. These students were all active participants in all the activities organized by the Department of East Asian Studies. With the continuous support from the Korea Foundation, a relevant curriculum and substantial funding opportunities, the number of students majoring in Korean Studies is expected to increase.

Figure 1: Number of Korean Studies Graduates in Malaysia 1999-2016



Source: Admission and Record Division as of 13 September 2016, University of Malaya

Collaborations, Incentives and Research Projects

Aside from the support of the Korea Foundation, the Department is fortunate that many Korean companies, as well as organizations, provide an incentive to students who major in Korean Studies Program. They offer scholarships and sponsor study trips to Korea for the best students. In addition, POSCO TJ Park also offers scholarships to university students who excel academically. Students majoring in the Korean Studies Program are also entitled to these awards. On July 19, 2007, POSCO TJ Park signed an agreement with the University of Malaya promising to give 25 scholarships annually. Out of the 25, ten are allocated to the Korean Studies Program students. Each of the scholarship amounts to US\$800 per annum. Table 2 summarizes the financial support to the Korea Studies Program by Korean companies and organization in 2016.

Table 2: Financial Support by the Korean Companies/Organization, 1996-present

Name of Company/Organization	Type of assistance	Year /Period	Remarks
Samsung Company	Tuition fee + book allowance for all the Korean studies majoring	1996-present	Temporarily suspended in 2005 and 2006

	students (maximum RM40,000 per annum for the program)		
Korea Foundation	Research grants and fellowship for lecturers and students	(2002-present)	
POSCO TJ Park	USD800 per student	July 2007-present	7 scholarships allocated to 7 majoring Korea Studies Program student every year.
Korean Government Scholarship (NIIED)	Full Scholarship for Master/PhD/research program in Korea	2000-present	Scholarship allocated Korean Studies Program to pursue graduate studies in Korea

Source: Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya

Research on Korea, Grants and Outputs

These days, research on Korea is continually undertaken by local researchers and Korean Studies experts who are interested in this subject. However, efforts should be taken to encourage research on Korea and research exchange between Malaysia and Korea with the sole purpose of improving Korea and Malaysia ties. The table below shows some research on Korean Studies done in Malaysia that were presented and published from 2005 to 2016 (selected). Numbers of researches are divided into Korean Studies Development in Malaysia, Korean Foreign Relations, Korean Language, Korean Culture, Korean Economy and others issues related to Korea.

1. Assoc. Prof Dr Md Nasrudin Md Akhir, Changes in State Capacity and its leadership and its Impact on National Development- A Comparative Analysis of Malaysia and South Korea, The Academy of Korean Studies, 50,000 won per year x 4 years.
2. Dr Tan Soo Kee, The Impact of Hallyu on Korean Corporate's Business. (Samsung Grant) RM3000.

3. Dr. Park Chang Kyoo, Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Dr. Tan Soo Kee, The Soft power of Korean Wave in South East Asia, USD30,000 from The Korean Foundation. (2015/2016).
4. Dr. Park Chang Kyoo, Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Dr. Tan Er Win, Impact of Globalization on Korean Society: Korean, Malaysian and Singaporean Perspective on Multiculturalism, Principal Investigator (PI), 01/04/2013-31 March 2014, International Funding, USD30,000, The Korean Foundation.
5. Geetha Govindasamy, Impact of Globalization on Korean Society: Korean, Malaysian and Singaporean Perspective on Multiculturalism, Principal Investigator(PI), 01/04/2013-31 March 2014, Geran Sanjungan, RM6531.03.
6. Dr. Tan Soo Kee, Motivation of Korean FDI in Malaysia, BKP063-2014, RM8000. (2014)
7. Geetha Govindasamy, North Korea Under Kim Jong Un, Principal Investigator(PI), 2012-2012, Embassy of South Korea, International.
8. Geetha Govindasamy, Japan's Role in Dealing with the North Korean Nuclear Dilemma, Co-Investigator, 2009-2010, Japan Foundation, Japan, International.
9. Geetha Govindasamy, Engaging North Korea: Assessment and Development of South Korea's Engagement Policies Between 1998 and 2008, Principal Investigator(PI), 2008-2009, Short Term Research Fund (Vote F), International.
10. Dr. Park Chang Kyoo, The Impact of Islam in Korea: Past Present and Future (1 year) 15/7/2008~14/7/2009, RM43790, PJP.
11. Dr. Tan Soo Kee, Perubahan Ciri-Ciri Budaya Organisasi Perniagaan Korea Selatan: Pertembungan Budaya Tradisi dengan Budaya Barat, Principal Investigator(PI), 2007-2008, Short Term Research Fund (Vote F)(PJP), University
12. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Malaysia's Policy towards East Asia, Co-Investigator, 2003-2005, Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS), University.
13. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Korea Foundation Grant (April 2013 - March 2014) Impact of Globalization on Korean Society: Korean, Malaysian and Singaporean Perspectives on Multiculturalism – principal investigator.13.

14. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, 2014 Resident Scholar for the International Centre for Korean Studies Visiting Scholar Program. Korea University, Seoul, South Korea.
15. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Korea Foundation Grant (July 2015 - July 2016) Hallyu in Southeast Asia: the cases of Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand – principal investigator.
16. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Grant from the ASEAN University Network under the Joint Research Korea-ASEAN Academic Exchange Program 2001, to undertake research on “The Korean Connection in the Look East Policy.”
17. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, Grant from the ASEAN University Network Exchange Fellowship, Korea-ASEAN Academic Exchange Program 2001, to undertake research on “A Preliminary Study of South Korea’s Involvement in ASEAN Plus Three.”
18. Dr. Geetha Govindasamy, recipient of Kore Foundation Fellowship, 2001 Korea Foundation Fellowship (3 months) and 2005-2006 (6 months).

East Asian Studies Department academic staff are actively engaging their research with the research that they received as mentioned above. They are also collaborating with the members of the department and also academics in the faculty and University community in the field of economy, politics and socio-cultural. Among the outputs of the research among the Korean Studies academic at the Department of East Asian Studies, i.e., Dr Geetha Govindasamy, Dr Tan Soo Kee, and Dr Pak in the form of book, chapter in book, journal paper and proceedings are as follows:

Books

Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Soo Kee (eds), *Korean Affairs: A Contemporary View*, Department of East Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 2010.

Chapters in Book

Geetha Govindasamy. 2016. Modi's "Make in India" Policy: The Case of South Korea. *Modi's Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*

(eds). *Modi's Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*. 97-108. Pentagon Press. New Delhi.

Geetha Govindasamy, 2015. *India's Drifting North Korea Policy: An Overview and the Road Ahead*. In Sudhir Singh (ed), *India in Emerging Asia*, pp. 99-110, Pentagon Press.

Geetha Govindasamy (2011) *India, China and the Korean Peninsula: Contemporary Policies and Relations* in Sudhir Singh (ed) *China-India Relationship; Challenges for 21st Century*, Pentagon Press, New Delhi.

Geetha Govindasamy, *Malaysia-Korea: 50-year Relationship* in Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Soo Kee, *Korean Affairs: A Contemporary View*, Department of East Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 2010.

Tan Soo Kee. 2012. *Foreign worker's policies and issues in South Korea*. In *Asian Migration Policy: South, Southeast and East Asia*, Md. Mizanur Rahman and AKM Ahsan Ullah eds. New York: Nova Science. pp. 41-56

Tan, Soo Kee. 2010. *Collectivism and Korean Youth Drinking Pattern*. In Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Soo Kee eds. *Korean Affairs: Contemporary View*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya. pp. 147-162

Journal Publications

Govindasamy, Geetha, Park Chang Kyoo, Er-Win Tan, "The Potential Role of South-East Asia in North Korea's Economic Reforms: The Cases of ASEAN, Vietnam and Singapore," *The Journal of Asian and African Studies*, published online first, Sage Publication, March 2015. (DOI: 10.1177/0021909615570952) (SCOPUS)

Govindasamy, Geetha, Park Chang Kyoo, Er-Win Tan, "North Korea's ASEAN Experience: The Prospects and Challenges of a New Economic

Beginning,” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 13 May 2015 (online)

Govindasamy, Geetha, Park Chang Kyoo, Er-Win Tan, “Korea's Challenges in Multiculturalism Policy: A Perspective from Singapore,” *Asian Profile*, Vol. 42, No.6, 2014, 557-571

Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Er-Win, “Designing Economic Reforms: The Cases of North Korea and Vietnam,” *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2014, 73 -101.

Park Chang Kyoo, Tan Er-Win and Geetha Govindasamy, “The Revival of Russia’s Global Role on the Korean Peninsula,” *Asian Perspectives*, January-March, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2013. (SSCI/ISI)

Er Win Tan and Geetha Govindasamy, “From Kim Jong Il to Kim Jong Un: Nuclear Impasse or Diplomatic Opportunity?,” *Asia Europe Journal*, Online Edition, 4 July 2012. (SSCI/ISI)

Tan Soo Kee. 2015. The role of Korean collectivism in South Korea's industrialization process. *International Journal of East Asian Studies*. 4(1):35-48 (*Non-ISI/Non-SCOPUS Cited Publication*)

Kim Seung Jin & Kim GiSeung. Changes in Revealed Comparative Advantage of South Korea and Her Major European Union Trading Countries, *International Journal of East Asian Studies*, UM, 3(2): 47-68 (*Non-ISI/Non-SCOPUS Cited Publication*), 2014

Tan Soo Kee. 2013. South Korea’s outward foreign direct investment in South East Asia: Trends, motivation and case studies (*Non-ISI/non-SCOPUS Cited Publication*)

Tan Soo Kee. 2011. Policy responses to the Asian Currency Crisis: The case of Malaysia and South Korea. *International Journal of East Asian Studies*. Vol. 1, no.1. pp. 97-114 (*Non-ISI/Non-SCOPUS Cited Publication*).

Park Chang Kyoo, Tan Er-Win and Geetha Govindasamy, "The Revival of Russia's Global Role on the Korean Peninsula," *Asian Perspectives*, January-March, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2013. (SSCI/ISI)

Proceedings

Tan Soo Kee.2014. Key drivers of Korea's FDI in South East Asia. 6th KoSASA Biennial International Conference's proceeding, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.403-421 (*Non-ISI/Non-SCOPUS Cited Publication*)

To encourage interest among academics and researchers in Korean Studies, as described, Department of East Asian Studies also collaborates in research and publication. The research was conducted using the research grants together with the collaborator. As mentioned by Normah Mansor (editors) (2016: xi), academic ties added another milestone in the Malaysia-South Korea relationship with the launch of the Look East Policy in the later part of the 1980s; there were more research results were published as found in Table 3 below;

Table 3: Research on Korea in Malaysia and its Publication

Research Field: Korean Studies Development in Malaysia
Rou Seung Yoan & Kim Keum Hyun, "Korean Language and Korean Studies Programs in Malaysia," <i>10th International Conference on Bilingualism: The Korean Language Education in Southeast Asia</i> , University of Malaya
Choi Kim Yok and Kim Keum Hyun, "Korean Studies: The Malaysian Perspective," <i>1st KAREC Symposium on Korean Studies</i> , Sydney
Rou Seung Yoan & Kim Keum Hyun, "Korean Language Education in Malaysia, Cooperation and Development in Research and Education," <i>1st Korean Studies Workshop in Southeast Asia</i> , Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya
Md. Nasrudin Md. Akhir (2005) "The Korean Studies Program at the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Malaya," <i>Korean Studies in Southeast Asia and Oceania: Strategic Cooperation and Development in Research and Education</i> , Proceeding of the 3 rd USSH-KAREC International Symposium, 26-28 September 2005, Ho chi minh City, pp. 45-52
Rou Seung Yoan & Kim Keum Hyun(2007) "Research on Korean Studies and Korea in Malaysia," in Choi Kim Yok(ed) <i>Korean Studies in Southeast Asia: Strategic</i>

Cooperation and Development in Research and Education, Proceeding of the 2nd International Conference of the Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia, 29 January- 1 February 2007; University of Malaya, Malaysia. pp. 21-29.

International Conference of the Korean Studies in East Asia, 8 February-9 February 2007; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. pp.110-121.

Research Field: Korean Foreign Relations

Geetha Govindasamy, "Hyundai Asan Corporation and the Mount Kumgangsan Tour: Facilitating Inter-Korean Relations through Economic Interactions," Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) 26-29 June 2006, University of Wollongong, Australia.
Geetha Govindasamy, "Transformation North Korea: South Korea's Attempts of Engaging Pyongyang," Asia-European Perspective Association (AEPA), 2 June 2006, Seoul, South Korea.

Cho Chul Ho, "Korean Wave in Malaysia and Changes of the Korea-Malaysia Relations," International Malaysia-Korea Seminar on Broadcasting, Petaling Jaya; Malaysia 2006.

Negotiating Peace: European Union's North Korea Policy, International Journal of Arts and Sciences (IJAS) Conference for academic disciplines, 03 Dec 2013 to 06 Dec 2013, International Journal of Arts and Sciences.

Govindasamy, Geetha 2009. Revisiting Japan-United States Security Relations in the 21st Century in Md Nasrudin Md Akhir and Rohayati Paidi (eds) Japan and the Asia Pacific, Department of East Asian Studies, University of Malaya.

Geetha Govindasamy, Malaysia-Korea: 50-year Relationship in Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Soo Kee, Korean Affairs: A Contemporary View, Department of East Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 2010.

Geetha Govindasamy (2011) India, China and the Korean Peninsula: Contemporary Policies and Relations in Sudhir Singh (ed) China-India Relationship; Challenges for 21st Century, Pentagon Press, New Delhi

Public Diplomacy of Malaysia: Implications for Korea, ODA, Public Diplomacy and Korea's National Strategies for the 21st Century, 30 Sep 2010 to 30 Sep 2010, The Korean Association of Area Studies.

The Formulation of South Korean Security Policies Towards North Korea between 1998 and 2008, International Convention of Asian Scholars 6, 06 Aug 2009 to 09 Aug 2009, ICAS, Korean Association of Political Science and Communication, Chung Nam National University.

South Korea's India Policy in the Era of East Asian Regionalism, International Seminar on India and East Asia: Prospects of Cooperation and Problems of Integration, 07 Oct 2009 to 09 Oct 2009, Sri Venketeswara University.

Geetha Govindasamy, 2015. India's Drifting North Korea Policy: An Overview and the Road Ahead. In Sudhir Singh (ed), India in Emerging Asia, pp 99-110, Pentagon Press.

Research field: Korean Language

Rou Seung Yoan & Kim Keum Hyun, *Korean Language for Malaysians*, Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, (Textbook written in Malay and Korean) 2003.

Choi Kim Yok, "A Korean-Malay Learners' Dictionary for Malaysia," *Workshop for Korean Language Education and Research in Southeast Asia*, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya, (Conference paper) 2004.

Research Field : Korean Culture

Tan Soo Kee, "Popularity of South Korea," *Utusan Malaysia*, July 4, 2006

Tan Soo Kee, "Characteristics of Korean Corporate Culture," Research Grant Sponsored by the University of Malaya, 2007-2008.

Tan Soo Kee, "Influence of Confucianism on Korean Corporate Culture", *Asian Profile*, Vol.36, No.1 (Feb issue of 2008), pp.9-20.

Foreign Workers Policies and Issues in South Korea: Focus on the workers from the South East Asian Region, *Global Korea: Old and New*, The Sixth Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australia, 8 Jul 2009 to 10 Jul 2009.

Key drivers of Korea's FDI in South East Asia., 6th Kosasa Biennial International Conference, 23 Sep 2014 to 25 Sep 2014, KoSASA(Korean Studies Association of South East Asia).

Perbandingan Dasar Buruh Asing dan Isu-isu Buruh Indonesia di Jepun dan Korea, Seminar International: Indonesia-Malaysia Update 2008, 27 May 2008 to 29 May 2008, Universitas Gadjah Mada.

Tan Soo Kee.2012.Foreign worker's policies and issues in South Korea. in *Asian Migration Policy: South, Southeast and East Asia*, Md.Mizanur Rahman and AKM Ahsan Ullah eds.New York: Nova Science. pp. 41-56

Tan,Soo Kee.2010.Collectivism and Korean Youth Drinking Pattern.In Geetha Govindasamy, Park Chang Kyoo and Tan Soo Kee eds. *Korean Affairs: Contemporary View*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya.pp.147-162.

Kim Keum Hyun. 2014. Konflik Silang-Budaya Antara Pekerja Melayu dan Pekerja Korea Dari Segi Pengelakan Ketidakpatian dan Orientasi Masa, *Jurnal Akademi Pengajian Melayu*.

Rou Seung Yoan & Kim Keum Hyun. 2014. A Comparative Study on Idioms of the Human Body Parts in Korean and Malay Languages. *International Review of Korean Studies (IROKS)*, Australia.

Kim Keum Hyun, Cultural Divergence between Korean and Malay Industrial Workers as Reflected in their 'Definition of the Situation dalam *Korea Journal* Vol.52. No. 2, Summer 2012.

Research Field: Korean Economy

Mukerjee, Dilip, "Lessons From Korea's Industrial Experience," Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1986.

Lim Pay Loo, *Changes in Korean Economic Policy and Effects on Post-Secondary Education Policy in the Early 1970s with a Focus on Seoul National University*, MA Thesis, Seoul National University, 2006.

Tan Soo Kee. 2011. Policy responses to the Asian Currency Crisis: The case of Malaysia and South Korea. *International Journal of East Asian Studies* vol.1,no.1 .pp.97-114.

Tan Soo Kee, Influence of Confucianism on Korean Corporate Culture , *Asian Profile*, Vol.36, No.1 (Feb issue of 2008), pp.9-20.

Research field: Others issues related with Korea

"Techno-economic Studies on the Utilization of Malaysian Palm Oil in Korean Food System," Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Bandar Baru Bangi, PORIM, 1982.

Emillia Zainon and Tan Siew Eng, "Japan and Korea: A Preliminary Checklist of Materials in the East Asian Collection," Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Library, 1983.

Hasmah Zainuddin, *New Media Policy: A Comparative Perspective on Malaysia-Korea*," International Malaysia-Korea Seminar on Broadcasting, Petaling Jaya; Malaysia 2006.

Enhancing Korean Studies Program through MoUs and MoAs

The University of Malaya has already established MOUs with Seoul National University, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Yonsei University, Woosuk University and Sungkyunkwan University. It is anticipated that such exchanges will not only enhance knowledge and understanding of Korea among students but allow the students to learn the Korean language from native speakers in a suitable environment. Furthermore, the said exchange programs provide graduate school and career opportunities, and more importantly, enhances a student's resume through international exposure. Table 4 shows MOUs signed by the University of Malaya with three South Korean universities. Through current management, University of Malaya is also strengthening the Korean Studies Program through few MoA, i.e., especially for student exchange program and staff exchange program. This is a very smart move by the University of Malaya and her partner universities in Korea to enhance Korean Studies in both countries.

Table 4: MOUs with Universities in South Korea

Name of Institutions	Benefits	Remarks
Yonsei University	Tuition fee waived for exchange students	No student applied at the moment due to the insufficiency of financial support
Woosuk University	Tuition fee waived + free meal and accommodation	Return airfare and living allowance supported by local Korean company.
Sungkyunkwan University	Tuition fee waived + free accommodation	MOU signed in 2007
Hallim University	Tuition fee waived	MOU signed in 2008 May
Sogang University	Tuition fee waived	MOU signed in 2008 May

Challenges and Problems

Besides substantial incentives from Korean companies, the Korean Embassy and Korea Foundation both play major roles in facilitating the development of Korean Studies in Malaysia. From the beginning, the Korea Foundation has consistently contributed Korean Studies Program books and coordinates the annual visiting professorship scheme. The visiting professorship scheme refers to a program wherein Korean Studies Program invites experts on Korean Studies to serve as visiting professors for a certain period. Funding is provided by the Korea Foundation. This scheme is aimed at exposing local students to native Korean professors, allowing them first-hand knowledge. Between the 1996/1997 and 2007/2008 academic sessions, five visiting professors have been sponsored by the Korean Research Foundation and Korean Foundation. The professors include Dr Kim Seung Jin from Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (1997-2002), Dr Kim Byung Siok from Kyonggi University (1998-2000), Dr Yi Il-Cheong (2003-2004), Dr Cho Chul Ho (2004-2007), and Dr Park Chang Kyoo (June 2007-2015). Within the context of enhancing the Korean Studies Program, the role and contribution of the Korea Foundation, the Embassy of Korea and Korean companies in Malaysia have been invaluable and crucial in the development and sustainability of the program.

Table 5 shows the number of visiting professors at the Korean Studies Programme, at the Department of East Asian Studies from 1997-present.

Table 5: Visiting Professors from Korea Funded by the Korea Foundation, 1997-present

Name	Duration	Remarks
Kim Seung Jin	June 1997-September 1997	From Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
	June 1998-September 1998	
	Dec. 6, 1999-Feb. 29, 2000	
	Dec. 1, 2000-Feb. 28, 2001	
	June 4, 2001-Oct 28, 2001	
	May 27, 2002-Oct. 28, 2002	
Kim Byung Sok	Feb. 1998-Feb. 1999	From Kyonggi University
	June 2000-Sept. 2000	
Yi Il Cheong	May, 19, 2003-May 18, 2004	-
Cho Chul Ho	June 15, 2004-June 17, 2007	Korea University
Park Chang Kyoo	June 25, 2007-2015	Korea University

Source: Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UM

One major problem encountered by the Department of East Asian Studies is the insufficient number of lecturers involved in the Korean Studies Program. Until now, there are only two permanent lecturers in the Korean Studies Program, and this shortage is temporarily addressed through the services of visiting professors from Korea.

Among other challenges faced by the Korean Studies Program is a lack of interest for the students to continue their studies at postgraduate level. All graduates are always getting good job offers and high salary from the companies attracting them to priorities career rather than pursue their studies.

The Future of Korean Studies in Malaysia

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has taken some concrete strategies for the promotion of Korean Studies at the University of Malaya that would go much further to supporting long-term, sustainable growth in this field.

Currently, the University of Malaya is assisting far more funding opportunities targeted at undergraduate students learning Korean and majoring in East Asian Studies to incentivize under-utilized, pre-existing academic exchange opportunities. For example, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences currently has mutual student exchange agreements with universities in Korea including Korea University, Yonsei University, Seoul National University, and Ewha Women's University, Sejong University, Myongi University, etc.

At the same time, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences itself has initiated academic-industrial relations of where the students majoring in Korean Studies or East Asian Studies will do their intern at Korean companies which based in Malaysia or Korea. This industry-university relations would impart and trigger the opportunity for the students in terms of employability. To enable the continuity and sustainability of Korean Studies Programme in University of Malaya, especially at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of East Asian Studies has taken several steps to promote Korean Studies Program as follows:

1. To initiate closer collaborations with Korean companies in Malaysia that would result in the increase of funding for the Korean program
2. To offer postgraduate degrees in Korean Studies at Masters and PhD Levels.
3. To increase the number of local students involved in the program
4. To initiate collaborations between UM and Korean institutions
5. To increase research and conference on Korean related subjects that will result in ISI publications
6. To increase exchanges between Korean and local students through summer programs.

Conclusion

Although Korean language courses have been offered in Malaysia since the mid-1980s, serious development of Korean Studies only began to take off in the 1990s when the Korean Studies Program has developed in 1996/97 academic session. Besides consolidating the teaching of Korean language courses, more attention has been given to research and teaching of various aspects of Korea like history, economics, management, trade, international relations, and culture.

However, there are three main challenges in promoting and ensuring a more speedy development. Firstly, the dedication and commitment of university administration in encouraging Korean Studies are still at a minimum level. For instance, University of Malaya is the only public university that has a viable Korean Studies Program. In contrast, other universities only offer Korean language courses and sometimes include a small number of cultural components. One of the main problems overcome if the university administration encourages, initiates, and provides chances for younger lecturers to focus on different fields of specialization pertaining to Korea.

Secondly, there is still not enough experts on Korean Studies in public universities. There is still need to strengthen research on this area. Likewise, the importance of Korean Studies within the academic community has yet to be emphasized and felt. Compared to other Asian countries like Vietnam, Malaysia has a shortage of well-qualified and prominent Korean Studies scholars who can provide academic leadership to young scholars. The number of Korean Studies experts at every public university, research and publishing, and acknowledgement of the importance of Korean Studies Program among the academic community is still low. If there are more scholars who are able to lead, efforts towards developing Korean Studies can be more successful, resulting in more advanced research and publications. As such, a Chair of Korean Studies should be formed as soon as possible.

Thirdly, lack of research materials has curtailed new explorations in the field of contemporary Korean Studies research. Research sources such as book collections, journals, newspapers, government reports and others have to be given more attention so that the quality of research can be improved and maintained. If these three

problems are addressed, then the advancement of Korean Studies in Malaysia will be rapid as the foundation already exists.

Already, University of Malaya is the only elite Malaysian academic institution to have developed a comprehensive Korean Studies Program. Therefore in the eyes of the Malaysian public, the Korean Studies Program is regarded as the nation's premier Korean Studies Program. At the moment, University of Malaya is only able to offer students a broad general education. Shortly, we would like to develop the Korean Studies Program as a program that offers comprehensive expertise in specific areas of Korean related issues and development. To be relevant in our part of the world, the ultimate aim is to have our students exposed to the study of Korea in the context of Southeast Asian civilization and the modern world economy, not simply as a single country isolated from its neighbors. As such the Department of East Asian Studies has plans gradually to increase the teaching capacity through high-level research training. Last but not the least, to promote Korean studies locally, we will actively seek collaborations with leading research institutes and universities worldwide. Faculty of arts and social sciences will also play a pro-active role in increasing interest among students to be involved in Korean Studies from time to time.

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