

A New perspective on the History of Japanese Language Teaching:
Popular Songs in Korea during the Japanese occupation period

Abstract

The history of Japanese Language Teaching is a complicated topic intricately connected to the history of Japan. It is also connected to the histories of other countries, namely those countries which have, or had relations with Japan. Among these nations which have, or had relation with Japan, Korea is a rather different case; Korea is one of a handful of countries which has experienced direct -political, military, and society- occupation by Japan. In Korea and other countries, Japanese was taught as the "National Language".

This paper will challenge to give a new perspective on the history of Japanese Language Teaching during the Japanese occupation period of Korea. Previous research has focused on how Japanese was taught as "National Language". However this paper aimed to make clear that there are another lives of Korean people outside of the school by seeing the history of "National Language" and popular songs of that age simultaneously. If we only see education, we may neglect what happened outside of the schools. It might cause us to evaluate the role of "National Language" partially.

'Popular Songs' dealt with in this paper is songs which are

transmitted by radio or records, and do not include folk songs of Korea. Japan occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945. Korea was not fully modernized when she was occupied in Japan. Consequently, most 'modern culture' came by way of Japan, which was modernized little earlier than Korea. Popular songs were modern culture, because they need modern technology, such as radio, or records. Popular songs are also the songs of ordinary people. By examining these songs, We can imagine how was the society of that age.