

# **Embracing New Markets: Editorial Opportunities in South Korea**

**by**

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B.A., University of Western Ontario, 2009

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Publishing

in the

Publishing Program

Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

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**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

**Summer 2016**

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## **Abstract**

**Editorial opportunities external to North America and the United Kingdom are rarely discussed in Canadian publishing. This report examines positions for native English-speaking editors in South Korean educational publishing companies. It first provides background on the prevalence of English-language education in South Korea and the booming educational publishing industry that has ensued. Next, it examines the need for native English editors within this industry while outlining the necessary qualifications they must have to gain employment.**

**Included in this analysis is a case study of a large English educational publisher in South Korea called Neungyule Education Inc. and the study material it creates for the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) exam. This case study examines the role of the native editor in creating TOEIC test materials and illustrates how this specific role fits into the larger cultural mandate of learning English in South Korea.**

**Keywords: ESL; EFL; editing; educational publishing; TOEIC; English-language proficiency tests; South Korea; native editors; English-language education**

## **Dedication**

To Dad, who had limitless faith in what I could do and where I could go.

## **Acknowledgements**

**My sincere thanks go out to my family and friends who have supported me during the nearly six-year process of finishing this paper. Specifically, thank you to Kelly and Michelle for always keeping me accountable, and to Jon, whose support for me is above and beyond the standard support expected from one's friends. Thank you to both my mother and grandmother, who endured reading through multiple early drafts of this paper to provide valuable observations. I am also grateful to my eagle-eyed copy editors, Andrea Hitchon and Sabrina Leroe who polished off the final product.**

**I must offer thanks to my supervisor, John Maxwell, whose academic insights helped focus my ideas. I am grateful to my other two readers, Scott Steedman and Gregory Bartz, as well; this paper certainly benefitted from their professional opinions as well. Much love goes out to Jo-Anne Ray, the publishing program's manager of academic and administrative services. She is a tireless warrior for the needs of her students, and she has had my back on more occasions than either of us cares to count.**

**From my time at Neungyule, I thank Boyoung Lee who provided information about our company, our editorial team, and our books. I sincerely appreciate the efforts of my research assistant Min Jeong Chae, who located, accessed, and translated several Hangul sources for me. Much of the data in Chapter 3 came from her research.**

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## List of Acronyms

ACES	American Copy Editors Society
CAD	Canadian Dollar
CAL	Center for Applied Linguistics
CMOS	Chicago Manual of Style
CSAT	College Scholastic Ability Test
Editors Canada	Editorial Association of Canada
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EPIK	English Program in Korea
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETS	Educational Testing Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Hackers	Hackers Language Research Institute
HR	Human Resources
KICE	Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation
KIS	Korea Immigration Service
KOSDAQ	Korean Securities Dealers Automated Quotations
KPA	Korean Publishers Association
KPS	Korea Poly School
LEI	Language Education Institute
MPub	Master of Publishing
NE	Neungyule Education Inc.
PM	Project Manager
ROK	Republic of Korea
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SERI	Samsung Economic Research Institute
SKY	Seoul National University, Korea University, Yonsei University
SMG	Seoul Metropolitan Government
SNU	Seoul National University
TEPS	Test of English Proficiency, developed by Seoul National University
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language

TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
TOMATO	TOEIC for Maximum Achievement in TOEIC
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USD	United States Dollar
YBM	Young Bin Min

# Introduction

“How I can get an editorial job in publishing?” This is the question that most young, aspiring editors ask when they are starting out in the industry. It shapes the summer programs they decide to apply for, the professional training programs (formal and informal) they choose to invest in, the opportunities they pursue, and the connections they seek to establish. A quick internet search reveals a variety of blog posts, articles, and opinion pieces that attempt to address this question. This paper does not intend to answer this question, nor does it aim to be a how-to-get-a-job-abroad guide for novice editors. Instead, the goal of this report is merely to provide some insight for editors on an unusual, but rewarding, career path that is available in a seemingly unexpected place.

The editorial community is reasonably well connected between the major English-speaking countries and editorial positions are relatively similar across these different industries. Regardless of our specific locations, editors in English-speaking countries follow — by and large — the same general procedures, processes, and mechanical conventions. We also use the same reference books, attend many of the same conferences, go through the same types of training programs, and structure our professional associations in a similar manner. A qualified Canadian editor could realistically find work in the American publishing epicenter in New York, just as an enterprising Irish editor could work for freelance clients in Australia or England. However, what many professionals — especially those embarking on new careers — often do not realize is that there is also a need for English publishing professionals in countries that do not have English as an official language.

In this report, I focus on the kinds of editing opportunities available in South Korea while presenting my own particular experience working in the Korean publishing industry. Since August 2014, I have been employed as an editor and writer for the educational publisher Neungyule Education Inc. (NE), which is one of the most reputable creators of English materials in South Korea. I am one of eight native editors currently employed by this company. I am also the only in-house editor in the training and testing department, which publishes practice tests and study guides for several of the English-language proficiency exams. It is from my experience here (as well as through my interactions with

other expats in the editing/publishing industry in South Korea) that I have become convinced that Canadian editors could find opportunities to work here. Throughout this paper, I will detail the need for English editors in this country and outline the qualifications an interested editor will need to meet in order to be hired. I use my personal experience as an editor at NE to serve as a case study to illustrate the types of opportunities available for adventurous editors interested in living and working abroad.

Before proceeding, it is necessary to define a few terms. First, “Republic of Korea (ROK)” is the official name of the country referenced throughout this report. However, “South Korea” is more commonly used in print sources and daily conversations. Therefore, for the sake of consistency, the country will be referred to exclusively as “South Korea.” Second, all citizens of this country will be referred to as “Koreans.” Third, the word “American” refers to citizens of, or practices from, the United States of America (US). Fourth, the phrase “native editor” refers to an editor who speaks English at a native level and is a passport holder of a country where the official language is English. Finally, Korean names used throughout the paper will be written in the traditional Korean form with the surname listed first and followed by the given name. All subsequent in-text references will be to the surname only. References will follow the standard *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMOS) style of “surname, given name.” The hyphenation and capitalization of Korean first names throughout this report will follow the preferred style of the specific individual named. Finally, “won” is the official currency used in South Korea. Amounts in won will be mentioned throughout the paper (followed by the approximate Canadian equivalent). These monetary amounts are based on currency exchange rates at the time of writing.

## Chapter 1.

# The English-Education Industry in South Korea

### 1.1. Prevalence of English in South Korea

In order to grasp the potential career opportunities for native editors in South Korea's educational publishing industry, one must first fully understand the importance of the English language in South Korea overall. Learning English has become a "collective neurosis"<sup>1</sup> in this country. It is best illustrated in a March 2013 *Groove Korea* magazine article, which shares the story of an eleven-year-old girl named Kelly. She spends ten hours a week learning English in seven different English classes. This makes up approximately seventy-five percent of the time spent at school for all her other subjects combined. Furthermore, the ten-hour figure only counts in-class time and does not include any time spent completing English homework. According to the statistical average in South Korea, by the time Kelly transitions to middle school, she will have spent 15,548 hours on her English education.<sup>2</sup> This is why the expression "English fever" has developed as a description for the educational climate in South Korea.

South Korea's history with English began in 1883. After experiencing its first contact with the West, the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1897) signed the Korean-American

<sup>1</sup> *Economist*, "The Other Arms Race: South Korea's Education Fever Needs Cooling," *Special Report on the Koreas*, October 26, 2013, [economist.com/news/special-report/21588204-south-koreas-education-fever-needs-cooling-other-arms-race](http://economist.com/news/special-report/21588204-south-koreas-education-fever-needs-cooling-other-arms-race).

<sup>2</sup> Elaine Ramirez, "Is Korea's ESL Education Failing?" *Groove Korea*, March 2013, 30.

Treaty, which opened isolated Korean ports for the first time.<sup>3</sup> That same year, the government established the first English school called the *Dongmunhak*, which was intended to train English interpreters to further Korean trade and business with the Western world. “Since then, English has enjoyed the status as the most popular foreign language in South Korea.”<sup>4</sup>

The “dark days of English” in South Korea existed during the period of Japanese Colonial rule between 1938 and 1945, which declared English as “the language of the enemy.”<sup>5</sup> This anti-English position was immediately reversed after the Japanese surrender at the end of WWII. In September 1945, English was announced as the official foreign language of South Korea.<sup>6</sup> During the following three years of American occupation, “the status of the English language was solidified as the language of the ruling class, and has since retained its prominent status in South Korean society.”<sup>7</sup>

The modern obsession with English education took hold in 1995 with the English Program in Korea (EPIK). EPIK was introduced as an attempt to better “prepare students to successfully integrate into a highly demanding and increasingly globalized society.”<sup>8</sup> Focus on the study of English in public schools increased under President Kim Young-

<sup>3</sup> Eun-gyong Kim, “Beginning of English Education,” *Korea Times*, April 16, 2008, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/04/113\\_22588.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/04/113_22588.html).

<sup>4</sup> Eun-gyong Kim, “History of English Education in Korea,” *Korea Times*, April 2, 2008, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/special/2008/04/181\\_21843.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/special/2008/04/181_21843.html).

<sup>5</sup> Eun-gyong Kim, “English Education Under Japanese Rule (VI),” *Korea Times*, November 12, 2008, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/11/113\\_34300.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/11/113_34300.html).

<sup>6</sup> Kuun-gyong Kim, “English Education Under US Military Government (IV),” *Korea Times*, August 12, 2009, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/08/113\\_50024.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/08/113_50024.html).

<sup>7</sup> Eun-gyong Kim, “English Education Under US Military Government (I),” *Korea Times*, December 17, 2008, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/12/113\\_36278.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/12/113_36278.html).

<sup>8</sup> Elaine Ramirez, “Native English Teacher Head Count Continues Decline,” *Korea Herald*, May 1, 2013, [koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130501000556](http://koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130501000556).

sam, who believed that if the whole country spoke English, then South Korea could attract foreign investment to strengthen its still-developing economy.

Through the EPIK program, English instructors were brought to South Korea from English-speaking countries to teach in public schools. By enlisting native English speakers to teach students, the Korean government sought “to engage students to learn English not only as a school subject, but as a language and part of [a] culture.”<sup>9</sup> The program only hired fifty-nine teachers in its first year, but has grown over the decades and now employs among the largest number of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the world.<sup>10</sup> According to 2014 statistics from the Korean Immigration Service (KIS), there are 17,949 native English teachers (E-2 visa holders) and 2,644 native English professors (E-1 visa holders) in South Korea. Of these numbers, sixteen percent and eight percent, respectively, are Canadians.<sup>11</sup>

As EPIK expanded and became normative, so did the establishment of private English academies called *hagwons*, which are independent businesses that generally run during evenings and weekends. They cover a range of subjects in order to maximize a Korean child’s education, but the most common schools are for English instruction. Over seventy percent of all Korean students attend English *hagwon* classes at the end of their regular school days.<sup>12</sup> Through after-hours kindergarten, elementary, and middle-school English classes, English *hagwons* supplement the government-funded public English education that Korean students already receive. The Korean *hagwon* system is so famous that even a Japanese newspaper, which studied the differing attitudes towards English in

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Korean Immigration Service, [immigration.go.kr/HP/TIMM/index.do?strOrgGbnCd=104000](http://immigration.go.kr/HP/TIMM/index.do?strOrgGbnCd=104000).

<sup>12</sup> Elaine Ramirez, “Is Korea’s ESL Education Failing?”, 30.



Asian countries, stated that in Korean *hagwons* “English is considered [even] more important than mathematics and Korean.”<sup>13</sup>

Correspondingly, the English education market in South Korea is a multibillion won annual industry.<sup>14</sup> When tallied, South Korea spends more as a country on the study of English than any other non-English speaking nation.<sup>15</sup> China and Japan are close behind but are “not yet at South Korean levels [where] 28% of South Korean households cannot afford monthly loan repayments and are hard pressed to live off their incomes”<sup>16</sup> because more than “70% of Korean household expenditures...goes toward private education, to get an educational edge over other families.”<sup>17</sup>

To better understand these numbers, let’s look at public spending. Korean taxpayers spend twenty-five billion won (thirty million CAD) a year on public English education. Korean parents then spend another seventeen billion won (nineteen million CAD) a year on private tutoring and English lessons.<sup>18</sup> According to one statistic, Korean parents spend as much as one million won (\$1,100 CAD) a month on English instruction fees for a single child.<sup>19</sup> The annual amount spent on private education is estimated to be

<sup>13</sup> Clavil Teru, “China, South Korea Face Familiar Woes in English Quest,” *Japanese Times*, January 19, 2014, [japantimes.co.jp/community/2014/01/19/issues/china-south-korea-face-familiar-woes-in-english-quest/](http://japantimes.co.jp/community/2014/01/19/issues/china-south-korea-face-familiar-woes-in-english-quest/).

<sup>14</sup> Jon Huer, “Korean Kids Learn English in Wrong Way,” *Korea Times*, April 12, 2009, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2012/05/272\\_43003.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2012/05/272_43003.html).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Yojana Sharma, “Asia’s Parents Suffering ‘Education Fever’,” *BBC News*, October 22, 2013, [bbc.com/news/business-24537487](http://bbc.com/news/business-24537487).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Reuters, “Koreans Spend \$5 bn to Teach Kids English,” *The Financial Express*, May 27, 2008, [archive.financialexpress.com/news/koreans-spend-5-bn-to-teach-kids-english/315166/2](http://archive.financialexpress.com/news/koreans-spend-5-bn-to-teach-kids-english/315166/2).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Z. Jambor, “English Education in South Korea,” *South Korean Education*, March 2013, [sites.google.com/site/southkoreaneducation/home/english-education-in-south-korea](http://sites.google.com/site/southkoreaneducation/home/english-education-in-south-korea).

four times as much as any other major economic power. It also equals 1.9% of the country's entire Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, some parents even spend as much as five billion won (six million CAD) out of pocket to send their children abroad for English education.<sup>21</sup> In 2011, South Korea sent 18,600 teenagers overseas to study.<sup>22</sup> In 2014, there were 7,117 Korean students at the secondary level or lower in Canadian schools, which accounts for thirty-seven percent of all Koreans studying in Canada.<sup>23</sup> Most other countries do not send their children abroad to study quite so young. In South Korea, however, parents believe that their children will absorb English more easily at the elementary level. The corresponding impact on South Korea is that one parent (usually the father) remains in the country, while his family lives overseas, sometimes for several years at a time. Depending on his earnings and ability to visit, he may hardly see them. The problem is so pervasive that in 2008, President Lee Myung-bak stepped in to address the problem. Stating, "Korea is actually the only country in the world undergoing such a phenomenon," President Lee promised to bring more English teachers to South Korea to encourage families to stay in the country together.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Reuters, "Koreans spend \$5bn to Teach Kids English."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Jin Kyu Kang, "S. Korean 'Goose Fathers' So Lonely They Keep Flies," *Reuters*, May 17, 2012, [reuters.com/article/us-korea-goosefathers-idUSBRE84G0IZ20120517](http://reuters.com/article/us-korea-goosefathers-idUSBRE84G0IZ20120517).

<sup>23</sup> Humphries et al., *World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education* (The Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), 2013), 13.

<sup>24</sup> Norimitsu Onishi, "For English Studies, Koreans Say Goodbye to Dad," *New York Times*, June 8, 2008, [nytimes.com/2008/06/08/world/asia/08geese.html](http://nytimes.com/2008/06/08/world/asia/08geese.html).

## 1.2. English Proficiency as a Requirement for Success

The dedication to English-language learning in South Korea has come from a belief that “English mastery is good for the country, good for careers, and is the future of world communication. English competence is the golden key to personal happiness and national prosperity.”<sup>25</sup> Because English is still **the** language of international business, English-speaking Koreans are valuable commodities in a country that is seeking to establish itself as a global competitor.

There are several benchmarks in Korean society in which English plays a significant role. One of the most important occurs in high school when students need to write the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT). Called *suneung* in Korean, the CSAT was first instituted in 1994.<sup>26</sup> It is a full-day, multiple-choice exam administered by the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE) and written by over 650,000 students in 1,200 testing centres every November.<sup>27</sup> It is the single most important test that Korean students will write, as it determines to which university they will be accepted. Koreans believe strongly that all universities are not created equal. The most desirable are the big three: Seoul National University (SNU), Korea University, and Yonsei University, known colloquially as SKY. Incredible pressure is put on students to get into a reputable university because Korean culture dictates that where one goes to school determines one’s future. “Most people [in South Korea] believe academic achievement determines everything in their lives. Throughout their entire education, students repeat the mantra ‘reach for the SKY’ because there is a cultural perception that academic ranking will make or break their marriage[s] and career[s].”<sup>28</sup> In many cases, these assumptions are accurate, as most of

<sup>25</sup> Huer, “Korean Kids Learn English in Wrong Way.”

<sup>26</sup> The CSAT is modelled after the American Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT).

<sup>27</sup> *Economist*, “Test Taking in South Korea: Point Me to the SKY,” November 8, 2013, [economist.com/blogs/banyan/2013/11/test-taking-south-korea](http://economist.com/blogs/banyan/2013/11/test-taking-south-korea).

<sup>28</sup> Reuters, “Koreans spend \$5bn to Teach Kids English.”

South Korea's leading politicians, physicians, engineers, and policymakers graduated from SKY schools. The preference for SKY alumni across all industries is so pervasive that even Korean critics worry that "over-reliance on [this] single measure of success"<sup>29</sup> has distorted the distribution of talent in South Korea.

The key connection between English education and the CSAT is that the English section constitutes a quarter of the exam. Therefore, sufficient English proficiency is a requirement for students to score well on the CSAT. In keeping with their "relentless pursuit of academic excellence,"<sup>30</sup> Korean students — much like Kelly mentioned previously — are groomed from the age of four or five to start learning English for this test.

These practices may sound extreme to a Canadian, but in a country where seventy-five percent of the population enters university and ninety-eight percent of those individuals go on to graduate,<sup>31</sup> rankings become a meaningful way to distinguish between students once they become job candidates. After all, the Korean job market is exceptionally competitive and the country is still highly homogeneous, in which most job applicants look alike, dress alike, and have very similar backgrounds, education, and skills. Therefore, English proficiency offers a competitive edge when seeking employment. As illustrated in Figure 1-1, Korean university students are told to expect that at least six percent of all their future job interviews will be conducted entirely in English. Another 1/4 will be spoken half in English and half in Korean, and thirty-two percent (roughly 1/3) will have a minimum of twenty-five percent English content.<sup>32</sup>

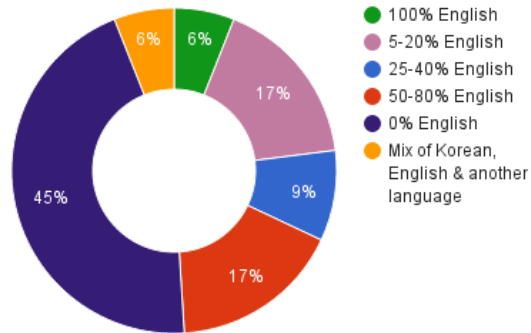
<sup>29</sup> *Economist*, "Test Taking in South Korea."

<sup>30</sup> Teri Tan, "Facts and Numbers on the Korean Book Market: Digital Publishing in Korea 2014," *Publisher's Weekly*, March 21, 2014, [publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/digital/content-and-e-books/article/61577-facts-and-numbers-on-the-korean-book-market-digital-publishing-in-korea-2014.html](http://publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/digital/content-and-e-books/article/61577-facts-and-numbers-on-the-korean-book-market-digital-publishing-in-korea-2014.html).

<sup>31</sup> *Economist*, "Test Taking in South Korea."

<sup>32</sup> Paul Z. Jambor, *English Language Necessity: What It Means for Korea and Non-English Speaking Countries* (Seoul: Korea National University, 2012), 10.

**Figure 1-1 Job Interviews in South Korea by Percentage Conducted in English<sup>33</sup>**



Considering these figures, it is apparent how necessary English communication is for success in South Korea. Simply put, candidates who cannot perform adequately in job interviews will likely not receive offers of employment. As one blog post pointed out, in some cases “English is even used as the *defining* factor in selecting new employees.”<sup>34</sup>

Korean citizens’ abilities to speak English well will not only help them obtain jobs in the first place, but is also often necessary for promotions to senior corporate leadership positions. As foreign companies continue to invest in South Korea and Korean companies invest abroad, the highest levels of business regularly require effective English communication skills in order to maintain relationships with international clients, coworkers, and corporate partners. English ability is further necessary for high-level executives who

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Connor O’Reilly, “Korea’s EFL Education is Failing, but What Can be Done About It?” *Korea Bridge*, March 27, 2013, [koreabridge.net/post/korea-s-efl-education-failing-what-can-be-done-about-it-conororeilly](http://koreabridge.net/post/korea-s-efl-education-failing-what-can-be-done-about-it-conororeilly).

must prepare for global conferences and trade shows held in English.<sup>35</sup> When asked, company representatives admitted that English “is expected to become the unofficial communicative medium of the South Korean elite.”<sup>36</sup> As a result, learning English is not optional for the most ambitious Koreans; rather, it is closer to being a minimum qualification.

<sup>35</sup> Jambor, “English Education in South Korea.”

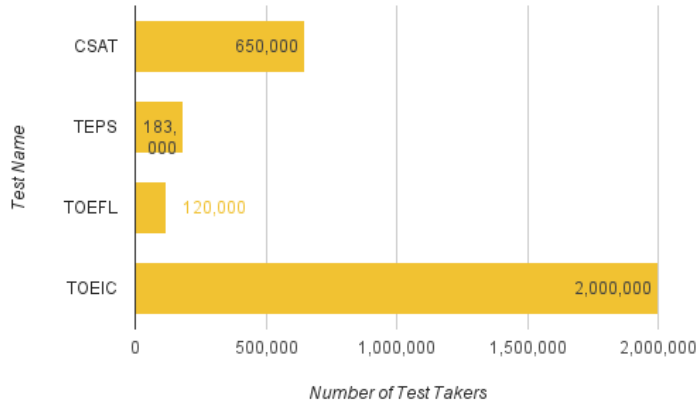
<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

### 1.3. English-Proficiency Exams in South Korea

One of the ways to assess the English skills of Koreans is through standardized English tests, which have become an integral aspect of the Korean education system. Quite frankly, Koreans are exhaustively overtested. Rob Dickey, a foreign professor at Gyeongju University, outlined this problem by stating: “The test culture [in South Korea] overpowers all other aspects of child life. They don’t have a chance to build a resume because they spend all the[ir] time [studying] for [tests].”<sup>37</sup> Testing is pervasive in Korean culture and goes far beyond the standard school system. For more recent numbers, Figure 1-2 shows 2015 statistics regarding how many Koreans write the various English proficiency tests in South Korea each year.

<sup>37</sup> Shin-who Kang, “Korean Test Culture—Too Unique,” *Korea Times*, November 13, 2008, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/11/117\\_34381.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/11/117_34381.html).

**Figure 1-2 English-Proiciency Test Takers in South Korea<sup>38</sup>**



## **The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**

“The TOEFL test [sic] is the most widely respected English-language test in the world.”<sup>39</sup> It has become the standard by which nonnative English-speaking students are evaluated on their proficiency. The TOEFL was originally designed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and is administered internationally by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). ETS is the largest private education-testing organization in world. The TOEFL measures skills in reading, listening, writing, and speaking. TOEFL scores determine the eligibility of a student to study at an English institution. They are recognized

<sup>38</sup> Compiled by the author based on the numbers provided in *Economist*, “Test Taking in South Korea: Point Me to the SKY”; *English Chosun*, “New English Proficiency Test to Replace TOEFL in Korea”; ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 4–5; and Huer, “Korean Kids Learn English in Wrong Way.”

<sup>39</sup> Educational Testing Service. *About the TOEFL IBT Test*, [ets.org/toefl/ibt/about?WT.ac=toeflhome\\_ibtabout2\\_121127](https://ets.org/toefl/ibt/about?WT.ac=toeflhome_ibtabout2_121127).



by more than 9,000 colleges, universities, and agencies in more than 130 countries.<sup>40</sup> Since 1962, more than thirty million people have written the TOEFL.<sup>41</sup>

In South Korea, more than 120,000 people write the TOEFL each year, which means South Korea has the greatest number of TOEFL test takers from any one region.<sup>42</sup> By 2013, SERI concluded that Koreans make up 1/5 of the worldwide TOEFL test takers.<sup>43</sup> Domestic factors also prompt Koreans to write the TOEFL. Many jobs — even those that do not need English fluency — are using TOEFL test scores to help distinguish between candidates, Korean universities are introducing TOEFL scores as a graduation requirement, and governmental agencies also are requiring TOEFL scores to be submitted during recruitment. According to one human resources (HR) director, “English ability is a basic criterion now.”<sup>44</sup>

### **The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)**

Much like the TOEFL, the TOEIC is an English-language proficiency test also administered around the world by ETS. In South Korea, however, the company YMB<sup>45</sup> licenses the right to put its name on ETS material alongside the ETS logo and administer the test throughout the country. Despite some similarities between TOEFL and TOEIC, the two tests have distinctively different purposes. Unlike the TOEFL, the TOEIC was not designed as a measure for admission into an academic program or a field of study.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Huer, “Korean Kids Learn English in Wrong Way.”

<sup>43</sup> Ramirez, “Is Korea’s ESL Education Failing?”

<sup>44</sup> Su-Hyun Lee, “High Demand Causes 'TOEFL Crisis' in South Korea,” *New York Times*, May 14, 2007, [nytimes.com/2007/05/14/world/asia/14iht-english.1.5699917.html?\\_r=0](http://nytimes.com/2007/05/14/world/asia/14iht-english.1.5699917.html?_r=0).

<sup>45</sup> YBM represents the initials of owner Young Bin Min.

<sup>46</sup> Educational Testing Service, *TOEIC From A to Z* (Princeton NJ: Educational Testing Service, 2003), 9.

Instead, the TOEIC measures one's ability to understand spoken and written English in professional contexts.<sup>47</sup>

The TOEIC was created in 1979 to help businesses develop a more effective workforce, offer a competitive advantage to job seekers, and allow universities to better equip their students for international work settings.<sup>48</sup> Thirty years after its creation, the TOEIC "is recognized as the main worldwide standard of English competence in the workplace."<sup>49</sup> Nearly 14,000 organizations across the world use TOEIC scores to judge potential candidates.<sup>50</sup> Each year, the TOEIC is administered in two hundred countries to over seven million test takers, two million of whom are in South Korea alone.<sup>51</sup>

The TOEIC has become one of South Korea's most "high stakes" tests.<sup>52</sup> Corporations use these certificates for recruiting and promoting employees, providing technical training, determining overseas assignments, and developing language-training programs.<sup>53</sup> Overall, scores of 800 out of a possible 990 are generally regarded as the necessary minimum requirement for a job application to be considered by first- or second-tier Korean corporations.<sup>54</sup> However, within the competitive nature of South Korea, many job seekers do not feel comfortable applying for positions until they have achieved a TOEIC score of at least 900. As such, many Koreans write the test repeatedly until a satisfactory score has been achieved.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>48</sup> Educational Testing Service, *The TOEIC Tests—The Global Standard for Assessing English Proficiency for Business*, ets.org/toeic/succeed.

<sup>49</sup> ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 4.

<sup>50</sup> ETS, *The TOEIC Tests—The Global Standard for Assessing English Proficiency for Business*.

<sup>51</sup> ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 4–5.

<sup>52</sup> H. Douglas Sewell, *The TOEIC: Reliability and Validity Within the Korean Context* (University of Birmingham, 2005), 3.

<sup>53</sup> ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 5.

<sup>54</sup> Sewell, *The TOEIC: Reliability and Validity Within the Korean Context*, 10.

TOEIC scores remain in effect indefinitely, but are only valid as long as the test taker's level of English proficiency remains the same. ETS recommends that candidates rewrite the TOEIC test every few years because "generally, over a period of two years, proficiency in a language tends to change."<sup>55</sup> This unofficial "two-year rule" therefore also contributes to the rate of repeat test takers.

## **The Test of English Proficiency (TEPS)**

The TEPS is a Korean-developed English-proficiency test. It was created by SNU's Language Education Institute (LEI) to "more accurately" evaluate English-language skills in South Korea. It is administered nationwide each year and, increasingly, companies, government institutes, and schools are using TEPS as another evaluation system for applicants.<sup>56</sup>

The test consists of four sections: listening comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The TEPS has a similar structure to the TOEIC, but is very similar in content to the TOEFL. In fact, TEPS test takers can even have their scores converted into valid TOEFL scores when applying to universities in North America. While the TEPS appears to an outsider like a combination of both the TOEFL and the TOEIC, to Koreans, it was a response to a perceived need for a more authentic evaluation of genuine English skill.

"As opposed to other English proficiency evaluation tests, which tend to evaluate their applicants on minor details,"<sup>57</sup> the TEPS was created in 1999 as a more comprehensive measurement of test takers' communicative English ability. It was

<sup>55</sup> ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 12.

<sup>56</sup> *English Chosun*, "New English Proficiency Test to Replace TOEFL in Korea."

<sup>57</sup> Kun-man Yang, "TEPS Taking the Lead in English Testing," *Chosun Ilbo*, February 1, 2000, [english.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2000/02/01/2000020161305.html](http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2000/02/01/2000020161305.html).

designed to be a different type of test by decreasing the reliance on standard Korean test-taking strategies like rote memorization. Thus, rather than replacing one of the other two language tests, the TEPS has fallen into the rotation as yet another test that the average Korean is expected to write. In the nearly seven years that it has been administered, TEPS has fast become “the most favored domestically developed test.”<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> *English Chosun*, “New English Proficiency Test to Replace TOEFL in Korea.”

## Chapter 2.

# Editorial Opportunities for Native English Editors in South Korea

## 2.1. The Korean Publishing Market

In 2012, the chief editorial writer of the *Korea Times* wrote that the “TOEIC, TOEFL, and TEPS are often likened to a driving test.”<sup>59</sup> This analogy can be used in a straightforward way: individuals cannot drive a car until they first pass a driving test, just as they cannot get jobs in South Korea unless they have passed an English test. This statement speaks to the pervasiveness of proficiency tests in South Korea in general. These tests are like driving tests because virtually everyone in modern Korean society will need to take them at some point in their lives. As with driving, all who fail to perform adequately on the tests must take them again until they do. The one flaw in the analogy, though, is that while driving is not a necessity for everyday life in South Korea, virtually every Korean needs to pass an English test at some point.

In addition to the money that Koreans spend to study English, they pay even more money in test-taking fees. On average, Koreans spend approximately seven hundred billion won (eight hundred million CAD) annually in test fees for the TOEFL and TOEIC alone.<sup>60</sup> Clearly, the English-language market in South Korea is lucrative, and—as smart entrepreneurs have recognized—profit can be generated easily from industries associated with English education. The rise of educational publishing companies is a prime example. With so many individuals studying English in public schools, in *hagwons*,

<sup>59</sup> Chang-su Lee, “Learning English through Hacking,” *Korea Times*, February 16, 2012, [121.78.129.106/www/news/opinion/2015/04/298\\_105009.html](http://121.78.129.106/www/news/opinion/2015/04/298_105009.html).

<sup>60</sup> ETS, *TOEIC From A to Z*, 9.

and with private tutors, there is a need for businesses to create the study materials to be used. Consequently, the market for education products is essentially guaranteed. Thus, the English-obsessed, test-taking culture of South Korea has developed “the basis for a large publishing and course- preparation industry.”<sup>61</sup>

In 2009, the Korean Publishers Association (KPA) released a report stating that South Korea has 42,000 registered publishing companies<sup>62</sup> and valued the Korean publishing market at \$4 billion USD (approximately \$5.5 billion CAD).<sup>63</sup> Educational publishers alone accounted for sixty-five percent of the total industry.<sup>64</sup> Five years later during a presentation at the 2014 London Book Fair, Min Sunshik, the president of YBM, provided statistics illustrating that English reference books, self-study guides, and mock-test books make up twenty-five percent of all Korean textbook sales.<sup>65</sup> Clearly, in the world of South Korean publishing, “producing test kits is critical.”<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Sewell, *The TOEIC: Readability and Validity within the Korean Context*, 10.

<sup>62</sup> Gem SumGyeoJin, *An Overview of Korean Publishing Market*, May 18, 2014, [sumgyeojingem.com/an-overview-of-korean-publishing-market/](http://sumgyeojingem.com/an-overview-of-korean-publishing-market/).

<sup>63</sup> Tracy Manning, “The Publishing Industry,” *Reading and Readership in South Korea*, July 9, 2011, [southkorea20309.wordpress.com/2011/07/09/textbooks/](http://southkorea20309.wordpress.com/2011/07/09/textbooks/).

<sup>64</sup> SumGyeoJin, “An Overview of Korean Publishing Market.”

<sup>65</sup> Sunshik Min, “Korean Digital Textbooks: Radical Change on a Bumpy Road in Korea,” (presentation, London Book Fair, Seoul, South Korea, April 10, 2014), [internationalpublishers.org/images/what-works/2014/sunshuk-min-ybm-what-works-second-edition.pdf](http://internationalpublishers.org/images/what-works/2014/sunshuk-min-ybm-what-works-second-edition.pdf).

<sup>66</sup> Lee, “Learning English through Hacking.”

## 2.2. The Need for Native Editors

Just as there is a demand for publishers to create books and courses aimed at helping Korean students achieve high scores on the required English tests, there is also a demand for native editors to work for those publishers.<sup>67</sup> Although there are other editorial career opportunities for native editors in South Korea (banks, government agencies, English newspapers, private businesses, museums, etc.), the English educational materials industry presents the most opportunities.

There are two primary reasons that native editors are a necessary part of the educational publishing process. The first is quality control. Even individuals who speak English fluently have trouble writing prose that is completely devoid of error or awkwardness. When the material is either written or checked by an English-language expert familiar with its nuances and idioms, it reduces improper usage and ensures that all constructions sound natural to someone whose first language is English. This would be true of many second language learners, but it is especially relevant in a Korean context. As a language, English is almost entirely backward to Korean and the sentence structures and grammar points are completely opposite. This affects not just how sentences are written, but also influences the logical formation of ideas. By employing native writers and editors, publishers are able to eliminate many of the typical issues found in the writing of nonnative speakers.

Additionally, native editors lend credibility to organizations that hire them. South Korea is a place in which image matters heavily and there is a perception that native English speakers have skills that cannot be substituted by bilingual Koreans. The danger of relying on Korean English speakers is demonstrated in very public ways all over South Korea — on advertisements, signs, menus, and websites. Unfortunately, Korean business owners and employees “take a leap of faith in their English ability every day.”<sup>68</sup> Many

<sup>67</sup> Sewell, *The TOEIC: Reliability and Validity Within the Korean Context*, 10.

<sup>68</sup> Elliot Patton, “Korean’s Proofreading Woes,” *The English Connection* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 29.

overestimate their own language skills and mistakenly assume that they are capable of doing their own translations and proofreading. This allows all manner of English sins to pass unnoticed and uncorrected in public. English failures and awkward *Konglish* (Korean and English) constructions are routinely noticed by patrons. A number of online forums regularly contain posts mocking these problems. A few examples identified by expats in one Facebook group include a café wall menu that reads “bervige,” the word “apllition” on a kiosk screen at the Korean Immigration Office, and a garbage labelled “cans, bottles, pets” at a fast-food restaurant.

In addition to these humorous errors flagged by expats, there are also larger English errors that cause the Korean government public embarrassment and cost taxpayers money to correct. In September 2015, the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) launched a campaign (the second of its kind in as many years) to remove and fix street signs containing errors of Romanization (using an incorrect letter from the English alphabet), translations, and spelling.<sup>69</sup>

The result of such poorly and publicly executed copy has shaped skeptical attitudes toward almost anything printed in English if it was produced in South Korea. For years, Korean-produced English textbooks were criticized for being “full of awkward and unnatural dialogue.”<sup>70</sup> Today, consumers have greater faith in materials produced domestically when that material is reviewed by professionals who know the language natively. Just as the EPIK program was born out of a belief that native English-speakers are better able to teach English than English-speaking Koreans, many Koreans feel that this carries over into writing as well. Companies with native editors on staff, therefore, appear to be more reputable than the ones that do not.

This reputation matters because although Canadian readers do not buy books based on the publisher, Korean students do. It is also common for customers to call a

<sup>69</sup> Se-jeong Kim, “Seoul Seeks to Remove Signs with English Errors,” *Korea Times*, September 24, 2015, [koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2015/09/116\\_187516.html](http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2015/09/116_187516.html).

<sup>70</sup> Elaine Ramirez, “Saying Goodbye to an Era,” *Korea Herald*, March 5, 2013, [koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130305001101](http://koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130305001101).



publisher directly to discuss the contents of a book or simply to point out a question that they believe contains an error. Native editors need to be on hand to help respond to grammatical queries in these cases. Korean buying habits seem to indicate that publishers with native editors and/or writers on staff are perceived to produce better books, as the top-selling test books are those with English names on the cover. Ultimately, as long as South Korea continues to encourage its citizens to learn English, and as long as these citizens continue to write proficiency tests with such vigour, there will be a market for English educational publishers. And as long as there is a market for English educational publishers, there will be jobs available for native editors.

Even outside of traditional book publishers, there is still a lot of room in the world of educational materials development for native editors and writers. Many large *hagwons* have their own curriculums and publishing departments. Schools like Avalon English and the Korea Poly School (KPS) are examples of this type of system. They publish a plethora of English content annually, but those materials are restricted to internal use, so the organizations are not considered publishers per se. The same is true of major Korean universities like Yonsei University and SNU.

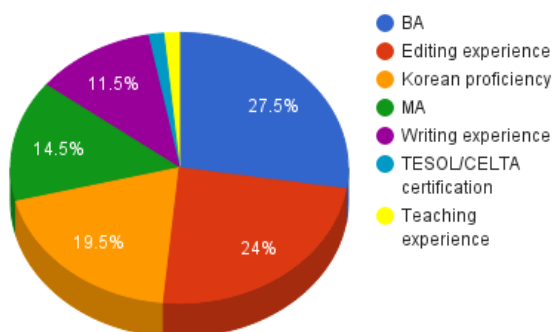
## 2.3. Necessary Qualifications and Experience

Recognizing that there are potential job opportunities for native editors in South Korea is one thing, but being able to secure one of those positions is quite another. It is therefore important to have a sense of who gets hired here. Fortunately, the professional expat communities in South Korea are fairly connected. To give just a few examples (though there are plenty more), I organize a networking group for Seoul's non-teaching professional expats alongside Breda Lund, an editor for one of the large English-language newspapers in South Korea. The group meets monthly to attend seminars, socialize, and share contacts and experiences. The cohort also actively shares job postings in case individuals are seeking to switch companies or are interested in comparing the benefits and salaries offered by different organizations. I have also corresponded a great deal with Elaine Ramirez and her editorial team at the magazine *Groove Korea*, for which I have written articles in the past.

Through these relationships it has not been difficult to assess industry demographics and trends. Therefore, the following is a realistic portrait of the typical native editor working in South Korea: he is an American man in his mid- to late-twenties. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and taught English to elementary and middle school students for at least a year in South Korea. He had neither formal editorial training nor any professional editorial experience at the time he was hired, but he may have since started to pursue editorial certification online.

The above description was compiled largely through industry observations before being compared against over three dozen public native editor job postings in South Korea between 2013 and 2016. All job descriptions were advertised either directly on company websites or through the primary expat job-hunting sites in South Korea, including [worknplay.co.kr](http://worknplay.co.kr), [seoulprofessionals.com](http://seoulprofessionals.com), [koreanjobfinder.com](http://koreanjobfinder.com), [koreraobserver.com](http://koreraobserver.com), [eslkok.com](http://eslkok.com), [monsterenglish.com](http://monsterenglish.com), [korea.net](http://korea.net), and [jobsee.kr](http://jobsee.kr). The results are shown in Figure 2-1, which indicates which qualifications were specifically outlined and provides the percentage of the postings that specified each listed requirement. The most important was a university degree.

**Figure 2-1 Top Qualifications of Native Editors by Percentage Requested in Korean Job Postings**



To verify the observations I made while reviewing job postings, I spoke with Chung Hyunju (Keira), the HR director for NE. For five years, she has been responsible for hiring all of NE's native editors. She admits that there may be small discrepancies between organizations but maintains that NE's hiring practices are largely representative of the Korean educational-publishing industry as a whole. The industry itself seems to reveal a few biases that I asked about from an HR perspective. For instance, the majority of native editors are male, but Chung stated firmly that NE has no gender preferences, which is confirmed by the fact that exactly half of the current native editors at NE are female.<sup>71</sup> However, the same cannot be said of all other Korean educational publishers. Todd Odenath, an American who served for four years as the editorial specialist at Seoil Systems, was responsible for hiring his own successor when he left in early 2015. He has stated unequivocally that his boss specifically wanted a man to replace him.<sup>72</sup>

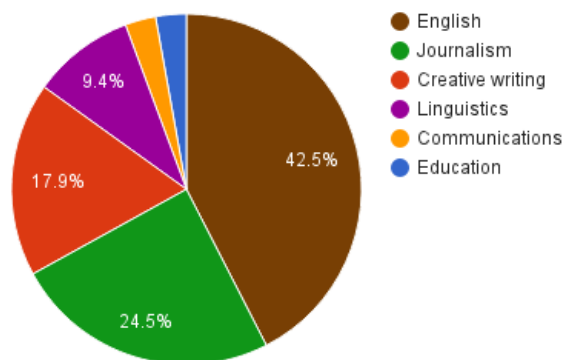
<sup>71</sup> Hyunju Chung (Human resources director, Neungyule Education Inc), interview by author, August 24, 2015.

<sup>72</sup> Todd Odenath (Former editorial specialist, Seoil System), personal communication with author, August 26, 2015.

Next, the industry profile suggests a preference for Americans, as the majority of native editors in South Korea seem to be from the US. Chung admitted that there is a slight bias in this regard. Editors from North America are preferred simply because their spoken English is more easily comprehended by Korean coworkers. Because an editor's role involves regular interaction with team members, communication is important. Candidates will not be overlooked if they are from outside of North America, but the thickness of their accents is considered during interviews. Similarly, while candidates from Canada and the UK are eligible, they are expected to conform to American spelling and usage conventions once hired because American English is the standard used throughout South Korea. Currently, six of the eight native editors at NE are American.

In terms of education, Figures 2-3 indicates that degrees in English, linguistics, or communications are the most desirable for native editors to have. Although the majority of editors hold degrees in these areas, it is not compulsory as long as candidates have graduated from a four-year university program.

**Figure 2-2 Preferred Field of Study for Native Editors (According to Korean Job Postings)<sup>73</sup>**



<sup>73</sup> This information comes from the same dataset cited in Figure 2-1.

Many job postings ask for either a master's degree or two years' editing experience. Candidates with a master's degree tend to receive an invitation to take an editing test automatically. Possession of a master's degree also helps editors successfully apply for and receive their work visas. To work in South Korea, native editors must apply for an E-7 visa, which is the "foreign national of special ability" visa. It covers eighty-five different professions and requires the submission of either a master's degree or proof of two years' professional experience in a related position (hence where HR departments often develop their qualifications).<sup>74</sup> Candidates who have been given an editorial job offer but who do not hold a master's degree will need to present letters from previous employers verifying past work experience. This is commonly referred to as a "career certificate."<sup>75</sup> Conversely, the submission of a photocopy of a notarized master's degree would be sufficient on its own.

Editing and writing tests are also a standard component of the application process in South Korea. The tests differ between companies and departments, but they usually have similar sections testing grammar knowledge, editing corrections, writing passages, etc. Just as test scores dictate the careers of Koreans, they also have some bearing on the career success of foreigners. Candidates will not be given an interview unless they have passed the editing test. Even then, though interview performance is important, applicants will have already been ranked in order of their test scores. In the interview, personality plays an important role. Working in a foreign environment is undeniably difficult. Korean hiring managers therefore look for applicants who appear to be open-minded, flexible, and adaptable. Candidates must demonstrate an ability and willingness to adapt to the rules and standards of a Korean workplace; those who appear the best able to do so are most likely to be hired.

Although the majority of native editors were hired without previous professional editorial experience or formal editorial training, it is still a qualification asked for in job

<sup>74</sup> Ministry of Justice, Korea Immigration Service, *Visa Instruction Guide (Eligibility, Required Documents and Other Prerequisites for All Visa Types)*, (Seoul: July 31, 2015), 141.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

postings. Therefore, a candidate who has either (or both) of these elements is very likely to be invited to take the editing test. Secondly, education, training, and experience should — in theory — enhance one’s performance on an editing test in the first place. After all, the more a person knows about editorial principles and common errors, the more likely that person is to notice and correct them. Ultimately, professionally trained editors should have a noticeable advantage on the test.

Given the qualifications outlined in many native editor job postings as well as the actual qualifications of the native editors who have been hired, a graduate from the Master of Publishing (MPub) program would be a competitive candidate. This is especially true of graduates who have completed editorial internships and can demonstrate their skills on an editing exam. The knowledge and qualifications derived from the editorial components of the MPub program, coupled with a strong knowledge of grammar, should enable MPub graduates to pass the résumé screening and a written editing test, and the MPub degree alone is sufficient to meet the visa requirements.

## Chapter 3.

### A Case Study: NE and the TOEIC

#### 3.1. A Brief History of NE and Its Relationship with the TOEIC

Neungyule Education Inc., known simply as “NE,” is a Korean publisher of English educational materials. It employs 260 workers in Seoul and has annual revenues of fifty-five billion won (sixty million CAD).<sup>76</sup> It was established in July 1980 and is currently one of the most prestigious publishing companies in South Korea.<sup>77</sup>

NE has been listed on the Korean stock market, the KOSDAQ (Korean Securities Dealers Automated Quotations), since December 2002. It has three major corporate divisions: traditional print publishing, elearning, and other business. Internationally, NE’s books and services are distributed to sixteen markets, which include Africa (Egypt), Central and South America (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru), the Middle East (Qatar, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]), North America (Canada and Mexico), Southeast Asia (Taiwan and Thailand), and the the).<sup>78</sup>

One of NE’s most famous products is the TOMATO<sup>79</sup> book brand. Starting in 2002, NE began publishing TOEIC study guides and practice test books under this name. My department, language testing and training, produces books for all of South Korea’s English-language proficiency tests.<sup>80</sup> However, all new books published by NE in the last two years have been exclusively related to the TOEIC, which makes us essentially the

<sup>76</sup> Boyoung Lee, “Briefing on Neungyule,” Training, Neungyule Education Inc., Seoul, South Korea, August 12, 2014.

<sup>77</sup> Neungyule Education Inc., *Corporate History*. [neungyule.com/pages/en/company/history.asp](http://neungyule.com/pages/en/company/history.asp).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> TOMATO stands for “TOEIC for Maximum Achievement in TOEIC.”

<sup>80</sup> This excludes the CSAT.

TOEIC department. NE's TOEIC prep books are created with three major components in mind: 1) practice tests written in English, 2) test-taking tips written in Korean, and 3) lists and definitions of new English vocabulary words.

The passages and questions are carefully shaped to authentically reflect real exam questions — this means that students buy NE's books trusting that the material inside will be an accurate example of what the real TOEIC test will look like. This is accomplished through careful study of previous years' tests.

NE's Korean editors are familiar with the TOEIC, as they take it regularly as part of their language-learning process and their professional development. Through repeatedly writing the test, they have become conscious of patterns in the structure of the questions as well as the content, style, and frequency of passages. The study material released by ETS and other competitors is scrutinized, analyzed, and documented in elaborate data sheets to ensure that NE's material provides students with accurate preparation for the real TOEIC, while also offering the same kinds of study tips and strategy suggestions as all the other TOEIC books on the market.

Everything about the test is analyzed: the accents of the speakers in the audio material that accompanies the listening section, the word counts of passages, the use of fillers like "um" or "ah," the order and frequency of general questions (e.g., "Where most likely is this conversation taking place?") versus specific questions (e.g., "What does Mr. Stewart plan to do on Thursday?"). Moreover, updates from ETS are closely monitored and as the official ETS changes, so do NE's publications.

NE's TOEIC books can be divided by the two sections of the actual test (listening and reading comprehension) or by parts (one through seven). Additionally, NE's study books are sometimes also written according to difficulty level. The actual TOEIC questions cover all difficulty levels mixed randomly throughout the test. In contrast, NE's prep books are divided into levels that target specific types of questions for study purposes. These levels are basic, intermediate, and advanced. Occasionally, books will be published representing multiple levels, in which case tests one through seven are considered basic level and tests eight through ten are advanced.



Table 3-1 demonstrates the overall percentage of NE’s annual sales that come directly from my department (and therefore specifically from TOEIC study books).<sup>81</sup> On average, our books contribute to about thirteen percent of NE’s overall sales.<sup>82</sup>

**Table 3-1 TOEIC Department Contributions to NE's Sales Revenue<sup>83</sup>**

Data Year	TOEIC Sales (won)	TOEIC Sales (CAD)	Overall NE Sales (won)	Overall NE Sales (CAD)	Percentage
2015	4,845,454,958	\$5,336,377	53,139,373,649	\$58,523,245	9%
2014	7,668,910,625	\$8,445,894	52,916,515,803	\$58,277,808	14%
2013	9,157,480,644	\$10,085,280	55,623,116,949	\$61,258,631	16%

NE’s placement in the broader TOEIC test-book market is best understood when examined alongside its competitors. The data provided for Figures 3-1 and 3-2 were sourced from public financial information. YBM and Pagoda have their own English schools, so their revenues include income from all business enterprises combined. Despite this, NE remains the fourth-largest company according to sales revenue.

<sup>81</sup> These numbers include the sales from print books, corresponding online materials, and TOEIC applications.

<sup>82</sup> Table 3-1 indicates a noticeable drop in TOEIC sales in 2015. This is because in the autumn of 2015, ETS announced that a new version of the TOEIC test would be introduced in May 2016. In preparation for the altered test, students stopped buying study books created for the previous test. To compensate, NE published four books designed for the new TOEIC test in early to mid-2016. These books have all sold well.

<sup>83</sup> Neungyule Education, *반기 보고서 [Business Report 2013–2015]* Seoul: March 31, 2016. [In Korean], 16.

**Figure 3-1 TOEIC Competitors Ranked According to Sales Revenue<sup>84</sup>**

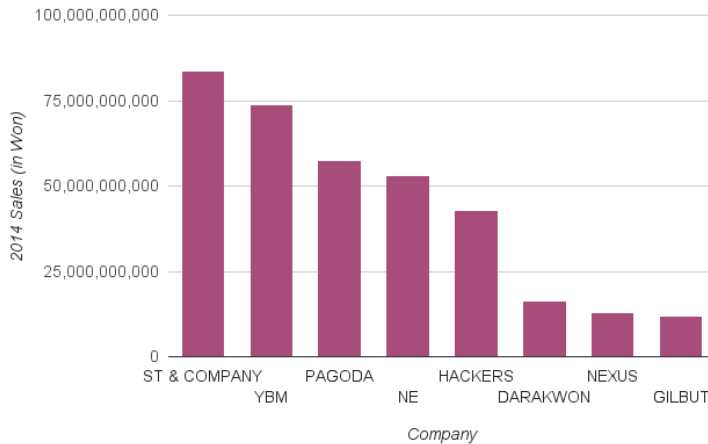
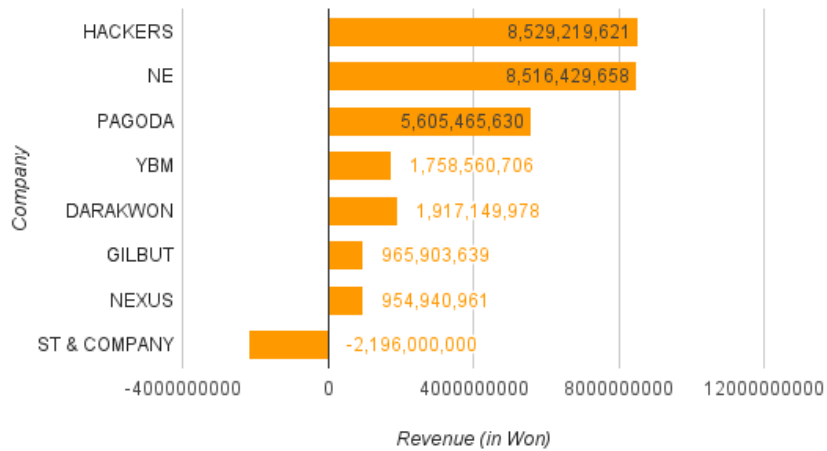


Figure 3-2 represents the overall 2014 profit data available for all companies listed.<sup>85</sup> Unlike Figure 3-1, which simply shows the money earned from product sales, here expenses have been deducted from revenue totals to illustrate the final takeaway earnings for each company. In this chart, NE's ranking increases. Where it was ranked fourth for sales revenue, it becomes second for overall profit.

<sup>84</sup> DART. [*Repository of Korea's Corporate Filings.*] [dart.fss.or.kr/](http://dart.fss.or.kr/) [In Korean].

<sup>85</sup> Except for ST & Company for which no data was available that year. The number for ST & Company provided in the graph is the 2013 figure. It was included specifically to point out that ST & Company finished that year operating at a significant loss.

**Figure 3-2 TOEIC Competitors Ranked According to Overall Profit<sup>86</sup>**



The total number of employees for each company is shown in Table 3-2. NE is the second-smallest organization. NE’s profits could be higher than the companies with larger sales because its smaller size leads to lower overhead costs.

**Table 3-2 TOEIC Competitors Ranked According to Size<sup>87</sup>**

Company Name	# of Employees
PAGODA	1050
YBM	636
ST & COMPANY	500
HACKERS	450
NE	260
NEXUS	110

While these companies compete for market share, their books are both competitive and comparative titles. Korean students purchase as many TOEIC study guides as possible from each publisher to enhance their chances of achieving a high score. In that

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

regard, all of these companies are fighting against each other while at the same time working with each other.

One person who uses TOEIC books on a daily basis is Kim Jun Yeon, an eight-year veteran of teaching English to Korean adults. She has spent the last four years teaching TOEIC preparation courses to the Korean army's Joint Chiefs of Staff. During this time, she has become an expert in TOEIC study materials and regularly purchases TOEIC books from multiple companies. Speaking as an unofficial representative of TOEIC instructors and students alike, she ranked NE as the number one choice for basic-level TOEIC books, the company Hackers as the best publisher of intermediate-level books, and Mozilege as the best creator of advanced-level books.<sup>88</sup> Her assessment reflects sales data, as NE is a niche leader with basic TOEIC books.

In addition to its prominence in South Korea, NE has a growing international presence. NE's TOEIC books are sold in China, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.<sup>89</sup> Publishers in these countries buy the rights to reprint NE's books and translate the Korean instructions into their own languages. The English passages and questions are left alone.

<sup>88</sup> Yu Jeon Kim, (English conversion and TOEIC instructor, Korean National Army Joint Chiefs of Staff), interview by author, August 14, 2015.

<sup>89</sup> NE, *Corporate History*.

## 3.2. TOEIC Writing Projects at NE

The language testing and training department at NE typically works on three projects simultaneously. Each project operates on a cycle of four to six months, which enables us to publish approximately six books a year. TOEIC projects are published in pairs. There will be one listening comprehension book with practice tests and study tips for Parts 1–4 and one reading comprehension book that does the same for Parts 5–7. They can be purchased either individually or as a package. Occasionally, NE publishes specialized skills books or books that are themed according to section for enhanced study.

Since the TOEIC's debut in 1979, its standard seven test sections have only been altered twice. A comprehensive breakdown of the original TOEIC and its 2016 revision are listed in Tables 3-3 and 3-4.

**Table 3-3 Breakdown of the 2007–2015 TOEIC**

SECTION	PART	QUESTION TYPE	QUESTIONS
Listening	1	Photographs	1–10
Listening	2	Question-Response	11–40
Listening	3	Conversations	41–70
Listening	4	Talks	71–100
Reading	5	Incomplete Sentences/ Grammar Errors	101–140
Reading	6	Text Completion	141–153
Reading	7	Reading Comprehension for single passages and double passages	154–200

The first change to the test was introduced in 2006. This update affected both the listening and reading sections. Part 1 was shortened and new dialects were added to Parts 3 and 4 by hiring British and Australian voice actors. In the reading comprehension section, Part 6 became a fill-in-the-black section, and in Part 7 all passages were lengthened and double passages were introduced. After these changes were made, the test remained unaltered for another decade. However, in November 2015, ETS formally announced that changes to the tests administered in Japan and South Korea would be introduced as of May 2016. The most notable of the new TOEIC revisions are that Parts 2 and 5 are shorter, new dialogue types (such as three-speaker conversations) were added to Part 3, and triple passages were added to Part 7. These changes have had no impact on the TOEIC

administered in other countries.<sup>90</sup> Because this change took place during my time working at NE, I have written material for both the previous TOEIC test and the current 2016 version that has just been released. Although the question types have changed, the process of creating the questions remains basically the same.

**Table 3-4 Breakdown of the 2016 TOEIC**

SECTION	PART	QUESTION TYPE	QUESTIONS
Listening	1	Photographs	1–6
Listening	2	Question-Response	7–31
Listening	3	Person Conversations (with and without a visual)	32–70
Listening	4	Talks (with and without a visual)	71–100
Reading	5	Incomplete Sentences/Grammar Errors	101–130
Reading	6	Text Completion	131–146
Reading	7	Reading Comprehension for single passages and multiple passages	147–200

While a book set is in process, there are normally two teams of Korean editors: one team works on the reading book and the other on the listening book. Each team typically has one Korean project manager (PM) and two less experienced editors. The native editor works as a member of all projects simultaneously. The roles involved in the publishing process in South Korea are porous and therefore even though my title is “editor,” about seventy-five percent of my job is actually writing the materials described above. As a result, I receive an author listing on the front cover (as long as I have written more than fifty percent of the material) as well as an editorial credit inside.

Most TOEIC study books include approximately ten sample tests for each of the seven parts of the TOEIC test. This means that I write 450 passages with 2,000 corresponding questions and nearly 8,000 unique answer choices for each individual book.

<sup>90</sup> Educational Testing Service. *ETS to Update the TOEIC® Listening and Reading Test in May 2016*, news.ets.org/news/ets-to-update-the-toeic-listening-and-reading-test-in-may-2016.

Anything that cannot be written by the native editor is assigned to freelancers.<sup>91</sup> To see an example of TOEIC passages, view Appendix A: Sample TOEIC Passages and Questions.

As the TOEIC editor, my work is expected to resemble that of the real TOEIC. Therefore, once hired, I was expected to quickly become an expert in TOEIC style. Because of the need for authenticity in our study material, every decision made by our team — both authorial and editorial — is shaped by the question, “Is this TOEIC?” And by “TOEIC” we mean the TOEIC as created by ETS. This means that when it comes to writing, I consider everything in one of two categories: things that are TOEIC and things that are not. It is my job to become so familiar with the TOEIC that I can intuit this difference simply by looking at content.

Despite our best efforts to consider only concrete data, the decisions about what “is” or “is not” TOEIC can often still be subjective and, obviously, not all individuals agree all the time. Everyone’s understanding of the TOEIC material and its patterns is largely stable (as is the TOEIC itself), but becomes fluid when small adjustments are detected in either the monthly TOEIC tests held by ETS or in the study books released by YBM. Some practices do fall out of favour over time and it is the job of all NE editors (both Korean and native) to stay up-to-date on minor alterations that do not warrant a formal announcement by ETS. The authority for each NE book ultimately lies with the Korean PM (unless overruled by the department head), so she determines which words, question types, and themes are appropriately “TOEIC” as she understands TOEIC to be. This means that when writing new material, the native editor’s understanding of “what is TOEIC” is often a secondary opinion and may need to change slightly from project to project based on which team members are involved. Someone in my role will therefore succeed best by being flexible and by learning the nuances preferred by the various PMs and then writing to them.

<sup>91</sup> Approximately ninety percent of the freelancers that NE contracts for current TOEIC writing assignments are former in-house NE editors. Therefore, there is long-term potential to maintain a working relationship with NE even after leaving the company.

## The Writing Process

Writing for TOEIC is akin to completing a very large puzzle with pieces that one is creating while simultaneously matching them together. To be a good writer/editor for TOEIC, one must be a skilled strategist who understands how everything is interconnected and what the “rules” (as created/perceived by the senior NE staff) of writing for TOEIC are. Here are a few examples of these rules:

1) The order of the questions should always reflect the order that their hints appear in a passage. A “hint” is the sentence that provides the necessary information to answer the question correctly.

2) No two correct answers can be the same anywhere in the published book.

3) All fictional names created for companies require verification that the company, website address, and email address used are not actually valid. (Korean editors disagree as to what is considered “too similar” and what can be deemed “acceptable.”)

4) Feelings are regarded as less business-like and all content should relate to professional settings. Therefore, emotions are avoided. Sentences like “She disliked the services she received from the salesperson” should instead be cast as: “She was dissatisfied with the service she received from the salesperson.” The first is a personal expression of emotion while the second is an evaluation of professional services rendered. The difference is slight, but according to NE’s perspective of standard TOEIC contents, it matters because personal emotions “are not professional.”

There are many other examples of book-development rules created by NE Korean editors that the native editors must familiarize themselves with. Furthermore, while writing, a native editor must understand the nature of each part of the TOEIC and its specific purposes and testing points. This is especially true of Part 5 (known as the grammar section), which requires that test takers identify the correct word to complete a sentence.

The Korean PMs are responsible for determining what specific testing points are required for each question in this section. After examining previous TOEIC tests to identify relevant testing points, they create writing guidelines intended to help the native editor produce similar questions in NE’s book. These instructions can be quite limiting. Occasionally, they make it difficult for the native editor to write sentences since Koreans are taught to approach English very mathematically and mechanically and provide



instructions the same way. Oftentimes, the formulaic nature of the instructions feels unnatural. A sample instruction for Part 5 is: “be verb+p\_p+preposition.” Here, the native editor should identify that the testing point is to evaluate whether test takers know the difference between a gerund (-ing) and the past participle (-ed). Using the guidelines given above, a sample test question could be:

**All business loans approved by the bank come with an interest rate that is -----  
for one year.**

**(A) guarantee**

**(B) guaranteed \***

**(C) having guaranteed**

**(D) guaranteeing**

Here, the be verb is “is,” past participle is “guaranteed,” and the preposition is “for.” The rest of the sentence is built around including these elements. The main distractor (wrong answer) is “guaranteeing” and students are being tested on whether they can identify the correct verb form. This is a simple example of grammar instructions that often become much more complicated and convoluted.

## **The Feedback Process**

Once passages and questions are completed, they are reviewed by each of the Korean editors assigned to that book and revised according to their combined feedback. Korean editors analyze passages for appropriate levels of difficulty, variety of vocabulary used, variation in question types, and comprehension when translated into Korean. They also study questions to ensure that they follow the established TOEIC style. This could, in a very abstract way, be considered the substantive editing stage of the process because substantive editing does not exist in the form it would at a Canadian publisher.

After the feedback stage, professional TOEIC instructors are contracted to review the passages and questions. They make sure the proposed material is in keeping with the TOEIC style and standards, and they identify potential stumbling blocks for teachers and students. These instructors are analogous to the external peer reviewers used by acquisitions editors at academic presses to review submitted manuscripts.

### **3.3. TOEIC Editing Projects at NE**

Although my primary role is as a writer, I also have editorial components to my position, which are 1) editorial management, 2) proofreading materials, and 3) grammar consultation.

#### **Editorial Management**

The native editor is the keeper of the TOEIC style guide. Unlike other departments at NE, the training and testing team has created and uses a comprehensive style guide to ensure consistency within and among our books. As good editors know, a quality style guide should be a living document that is constantly being updated to reflect the usage changes and decisions an organization makes over time. It is the responsibility of the native editor to keep track of those details at NE and ensure that the style guide remains up-to-date. The native editor also ensures that everyone involved in the process — the freelance writers, the Korean editors, the designers, and the typesetter — follow the standards outlined in the style guide. Realistically, however, native editors are often the only one checking these details, which makes it all the more critical that they know the document well.

#### **Proofreading Materials**

Another big adjustment for a trained editor will be acclimating to the minor differences in the Korean publishing system and editing process. Native editors who have worked or been trained in Canada will be familiar with the Canadian categories of editing defined by the Editorial Association of Canada (Editors Canada).<sup>92</sup> In NE, however, the editorial term applied to all forms of revision is “proofreading.” “Proofreading” does not refer to the post-edit document comparison check to which Canadian editors are accustomed. Rather, the term “proofreading” often means a combination of stylistic editing

<sup>92</sup> Editors Canada, *Definitions of Editorial Skills*, [editors.ca/hire/definitions.html](http://editors.ca/hire/definitions.html).

and copy editing. There is no distinction between required mechanical corrections or optional stylistic changes. Therefore, because “copy editing” itself is not properly understood, there is no real understanding of the three levels of copy editing used in the English-speaking publishing industry. Whereas Canadian publishers will outline the scope of a project by indicating what level of copyediting they are expecting, at NE, multiple levels of editing occur simultaneously under the title of “proofreading,” regardless of whether it is at the first-draft stage or the printed-folio stage.

In addition to the differences in editing terminology, the actual editing processes also vary slightly from established Canadian norms. First of all, while there is a style guide in place, as mentioned previously, many of the Korean editors often forget to reference it regularly because it is not considered to be an integral step in their reviewing processes. Moreover, style sheets are not created and do not follow the files passed between editors. Therefore, because editorial decisions do not get recorded as they are made, the same questions are often repeated each time a new person reviews a document. Moreover, without style sheets, editors may inadvertently overrule each other when reading through passages.

Next, the Korean editors in my department prefer to use Excel files, not Word, for writing and editing on screen. Some Korean editors believe that it is easier to use Excel as a grid containing all drafts, feedback notes, and revisions in one file. While it is easier to see all versions of the passage at once, it also results in a high margin of error in final proofs. This is primarily because all formatting (bold, italics) are lost when the material is moved into other file types, creating more work for the typesetter. Therefore, a formatting consistency check is a critical step on the native editor’s proofing checklist.

Track changes, too, is not regularly used. No clear explanation for this has been given. Some Korean editors have demonstrated that they know how to use the file functions yet still refuse to do so. Instead, changes and comments are often indicated throughout a file with the use of parentheticals and coloured text. As an example, “**They** our the owners of the café.” would come back with one of two types of on-screen corrections:

- 1) “They our (“our” → “are”) the owners of the café.” OR
- 2) “They our (shouldn’t “our” be “are”)? Please check it.) the owners of the café.”

Just as electronic revisions are performed differently in South Korea, so are the on-paper editing markups. Unlike editing done in the West, there are no standard Korean proofreading symbols. Amy Einsohn, author of one of the most authoritative books on copy editing, points out that “no two copyeditors use identical markups;” however, there are conventions “universally understood by publishing professionals”<sup>93</sup> in the Western world. By contrast, in South Korea, there is significantly less consistency. The use of specific editing marks varies by company, department, and PM. Native editors are not given formal training on these marks, and I was only able to compile a list after asking very specific questions and going through paper markups made by multiple Korean editors to assess commonalities in usage. Appendix B: Comparison of Copy-Editing Marks lists some of the differences in markups.

There are also some minor variations in the editorial conventions surrounding how editorial marks are used. For instance, NE follows one standard editorial convention that says to cross out and rewrite any words that contain multiple errors. Yet, it overlooks the convention that requires an editor to write in any punctuation marks following an inserted word or an inserted letter at the end of a word.<sup>94</sup> Much like with the different editing markups, native editors must learn to catch on to the Korean editing conventions quickly so that their edits are understandable to their coworkers and vice versa.

## **Grammar Consultation**

The final, and perhaps most crucial, element of the native editor’s job is the ability to answer a wide variety of English grammar questions. These questions come from Korean coworkers who are verifying the accuracy of a passage, checking their

<sup>93</sup> Amy Einsohn, *The Copyeditors Handbook* (California: University of California Press, 2000), 30.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

understanding of English, confirming that only one answer can be considered correct, and testing their comprehension of certain collocations.

Korean editors also receive customer questions and complaints through NE's online inquiry forum. These questions generally come from students who are confused or upset about answering a practice question incorrectly. When such inquiries or challenges are received, the native editor will be asked to explain the relevant grammar concept to the Korean editor so that she in turn can explain it to the customer. Korean editors customarily submit these questions to the native editor through NE's instant messaging system or by asking them in person.<sup>95</sup>

Grammar consultation can be a challenge for more seasoned editors. This is because most formally trained editors are taught specifically not to use complex grammatical terminology in their corrections and queries. The editing course in the MPub program emphasizes that editors should focus on explaining changes to writers using common language. Likewise, in the "The Art and Science of Editing" module required to complete the American Copy Editors Society (ACES) Poynter Certificate in Editing, Merrill Perlman, the editing instructor, explicitly advises students to avoid using technical grammatical terms to explain edits to authors.<sup>96</sup>

However, the complete opposite is expected when working for a Korean publisher. An ESL learner's knowledge of grammar is often superior to that of the average native speaker. In addition to being able to understand complex grammatical nomenclature, Korean editors expect to hear native editors explain concepts using it. For instance, using specific grammatical terms such as "predicate," "adverbial clause," and "intransitive verb" in explanations adds clarity and credibility to the native editor's explanations. If native editors fail to use this language, their Korean counterparts often assume that it is because they simply do not know what they are talking about. As a simple illustration, when asked

<sup>95</sup> The method varies depending on the Korean editors and their comfort levels with spoken English.

<sup>96</sup> Merrill Perlman, "The Art and Science of Editing," Webinar lecture, ACES Poynter Certificate in Editing, October 2012.

why “backwards” is used sometimes in an article on the internet but only ever appears in NE’s books as “backward,” it is not enough to say, “Well, one is American English and one is British English.” The more thorough response should be something similar to “In American English, only the word *backward* is used. In British English, however, *backwards* is used when the word functions as the adverb, and *backward* is used when it functions as the adjective.”

The questions that Korean editors ask will range widely from easy to difficult to nearly-impossible-to-answer hypotheticals. The frequency of these questions varies depending on the stage of the project. Questions come in heavily during Korean editors’ proofreading stages, as instructors are reviewing the material, and shortly after books have been released. During these times, there are often several questions a day from multiple editors. Reader questions are harder to predict and one may get calls in 2016 for a book published in 2008. I’ve gone as long as a week without receiving a single grammar question, while other times I’ve had more than a dozen a day. Some can be answered within seconds and others may take several hours (and consultation with multiple reference books) to answer. See Appendix C: Sample Grammar Questions from Korean Coworkers for examples.

## Conclusion

Chapter 2 outlined the specific on-paper qualifications necessary to gain employment and obtain a visa in South Korea. It also identified how an MPub graduate would easily meet those qualifications. It is usually at this point that I expect to be asked: “But don’t you need to have been a teacher in South Korea first?” The answer is both “yes” and “no.” Teaching experience is not an explicit requirement for editors but is the most common starting point. NE has never hired an editor who did not first work as a teacher in South Korea. The reason for this is quite simple — part of the editing test evaluates one’s ability to write and correct material intended for a specific audience or age level. Anyone who has never taught English in South Korea will likely have limited familiarity with a test’s targeted audience. However, this does not mean that one must be an experienced teacher to create these materials. There are currently two native editors at NE, I being one of them, who taught for only six months. Therefore, the focus is not necessarily on candidates’ lengthy experiences as teachers, but whether they know both the materials they need to create and the market selling those materials.

In this regard, the English-educational publishing industry in South Korea is like any other content-specific publisher in Canada. Editors hired to manage an automotive magazine are expected to have knowledge about cars, just as subject-specific developmental editors for textbook publishers have a background in the subject. Therefore, to acquire an editorial position for an English-education publisher in South Korea, one must simply perform the necessary research to become familiar with the industry and the type of material it produces. Candidates should be able to illustrate a solid understanding of the contents and audiences for English-educational material in South Korea; otherwise, they will not perform well on an editing test.

For example, one type of question that might be present on an editorial test is: **“Read the following passage and make some suggestions on how you could improve it.”** An editor who knows the industry will not stop at spelling, syntax, punctuation, etc. An editor who knows the subject matter will make suggestions to level up or level down the vocabulary and sentence structures based on the ages of the readers. She will identify when distractors (wrong answer choices) are too difficult or too easy. She will zero

in on redundancies in words and point out concepts that will be difficult for Korean students to comprehend. Essentially, a trained editor will be able to make the passage read correctly, whereas editors wishing to work in South Korea who have taken the time to familiarize themselves with the content of Korean educational publishers will know how to improve the passage by matching it to the audience, the publisher, and the industry.

Beyond the practical and testable skills that MPub graduates should have, Chapter 2 also addresses the necessary traits that help editors succeed in this type of environment. They are open-mindedness, flexibility, and adaptability. Chapter 3 outlines the need for these characteristics while explaining the new processes to which a native editor needs to become accustomed. An entire department is not going to switch to the native editor's method of doing things (even if the editor argues that their practices are well established in the West). Therefore, in order for working relationships to function and flourish, the native editor will need to be the one who adjusts. Editors who are able to cope with changing their habits will be a good fit in South Korea. Working in a different culture is difficult, but South Korea especially is a society in which things happen quickly (often at the last minute) and someone who cannot switch gears instantly or meet unexpected deadlines may find themselves struggling. Editors who appear to be "stuck in their ways" or unwilling to accept new approaches will not be well received by their colleagues.

Ultimately, the position of a native editor for a publisher like NE is best suited for recent MPub graduates or novice editors just starting out. This is partly because of the lack of responsibility and leadership occasionally given to native editors, specifically those working at NE. Here, native editors are hired as contractors and therefore remain outside of the Korean corporate hierarchy. The salaries of native editors increase over time, but their seniority within the company does not. Therefore, a native editor often does not have the authority to make decisions regarding the content and schedule of publications, as she is never the PM. Moreover, the planning and production meetings in which the major decisions are made are conducted in Korean and the native editor is often not invited.

For editors like me, who have publishing experience in leadership capacities, it can be difficult to feel disconnected from the publishing process as a whole. Likewise, native editors are often given information on a "need-to-know" basis, which further limits their



understanding of and involvement in certain projects. Many NE editors know only their specific role in a project but nothing beyond that scope. The result is that some native editors feel less like an integral part of the publishing process and more like “in-house freelancers.” Although an established editor with a few years’ experience may be perfectly happy in a role like this, many might feel as if they’ve taken a step back while simultaneously restricting how far forward they can move. Generally speaking, Korean publishing may be a good place to start a career, but it is perhaps a less desirable place to conclude one, as there is only so far up the ladder that one will be able to climb.

In contrast, editors just starting out will likely not experience the same types of frustration. For them, a year or two spent at a company like NE would provide a good introduction to publishing and editing. Their experiences will differ from those of their peers, but the same is true of editors who work for tiny independent presses versus their counterparts who work for multinational trade publishers. In addition to the “editor” entry on their résumés, native editors will make connections, gain valuable insights on how publishing works in other parts of the world, and build a substantial portfolio in South Korea. For a list of the titles I’ve worked on during my two years in South Korea, see Appendix D: Cari Ferguson’s Body of Work at NE.

Furthermore, the differences between publishing processes will likely seem less pronounced — and therefore less difficult to acclimatize to — for a first-time editor who is not yet entrenched in the particular publishing system or methodology of the West. In the overall process, the differences pointed out in Chapter 3 are not exceptionally difficult to adjust to, but it still could be easier for less experienced editors to accept the Korean standards. Starting out as an editor in South Korea also presents a lot of possibilities that might not be available in Canada. Southeast Asia has a variety of niche markets for English content that may be easier to transition into from a Korean publisher than from a Canadian one. As mentioned earlier, there is also a strong likelihood of developing a network in South Korea that will provide opportunities for ongoing freelance writing that can be done remotely. This can be used either as secondary income for an editor who finds another position in Canada or as the launching point for a full-time freelance business. This is particularly true in the TOEIC field, where it is hard to find writers who are material experts.

After outlining who is best suited to work as an editor in a country like South Korea, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge why doing so could be beneficial. The point of this report has been simply to raise awareness of unique international opportunities, not to actively persuade anyone to pursue them. However, it is valuable to explain some of the benefits that could come from working in South Korea. Ignoring the obvious personal growth and development that comes from experiencing another culture and living/working abroad, editors could benefit professionally as well. Primarily, the fact that my readers are EFL learners and my coworkers have advanced grammar knowledge has really forced me to be at the top of my game grammatically. Native editors are hired as experts in the language, and we are expected to live up to that title. To meet performance expectations, many native editors even supplement their existing knowledge with online grammar classes as refreshers to ensure that they understand and can clearly communicate the fundamentals of the language.

Secondly, native editors also become very good at providing references for their answers. Style guides and reference books do not lie dormant on our shelves. Native editors use them frequently to substantiate their answers to complicated questions. We have developed systems to find the necessary information quickly, while mastering the skill of knowing what to look up in the first place. This kind of knowledge and precision is valuable in any editorial capacity and will help guarantee that an editor never needs to admit, "I know that it is wrong, but I do not know why it is wrong."

Similarly, native editors working in a Korean environment often become incredibly diplomatic. Because of the language barrier (even with English-proficient coworkers) and cultural differences, it is critical that all queries, explanations, and suggestions are very clearly and carefully articulated. As Paul Richmond, advisor and instructor for the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Copyediting Certificate, informs his students, when it comes to querying, "a copy editor's diplomacy skills are critical."<sup>97</sup> After working

<sup>97</sup> Paul Richmond, "Copyediting 1," Lecture, UCSD Extension Copyediting Certificate, 2016.

for a Korean company, a native editor will return home with very strong skills in this facet of copy editing.

Third, after having worked as both the writer and the editor in the publishing process, native editors will develop a better perspective of, and greater sensitivity for, the author's role in the creation process. Because relationship building is such a critical component of a successful author-editor partnership, this perspective will serve a native editor well during future interactions with clients. Editors should also become less sensitive to receiving feedback on their own work and will likely be less attached to their style choices when/if a senior editor on the project overrides them. There are more skills that native editors develop through working in a Korean company, but the ones listed above are some of the most important ones.

Admittedly, none of these advantages are unique to employment in South Korea. They are all native to the editorial profession as a whole and could also be developed by working as an editor in Canada. However, the need for these skills is particularly pronounced in this type of environment. Each job works specific editorial muscles more strongly than another. These skills may be developed elsewhere, but likely not to the same magnitude because the context is different.

Moving abroad is certainly not for everyone, nor is the adjustment to culture shock and unfamiliar working environments. However, for aspiring editors, particularly ambitious MPub graduates, if they are willing to cope with the inherent challenges of expat life, moving to a foreign country like South Korea could provide some valuable editorial experience in a publishing industry outside of North America. The publication knowledge and editorial skills required are fundamentally the same despite some minor difference in application. Companies like Neungyule Education Inc. offer valuable work experience as both a writer and editor, while also providing an opportunity to build a professional body of work.

Understandably, it is easy and natural for professionals to consider only the options close to home, but with a little bit of research, an open mind, and a strong sense of adventure, novice editors could discover that there are a host of nontraditional editing and

publishing positions around the world for native English speakers with specialized writing and editing skills.

Publishing is an ever-adapting industry. Over the last several years, the books we make as well as the ways we make them have been changing dramatically. Likewise, the roles involved in the publishing process are also changing. Fewer editors are working in-house and growing numbers of professional editors work as full-time freelancers. Further, we live in an increasingly global and interconnected world. The old rules no longer apply and the standard career paths are disappearing as quickly as the new ones are forming. The result is that there are countless possibilities to explore outside of the previous norms. Since editors are known for their creativity, more of us should be trying to forge unconventional careers in unexpected places. There is a demand for English editors abroad and Canadian editors will never know which doors will open until they first venture out and starting knocking on them.

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## Appendix A.

### Sample TOEIC Passages and Questions

**NOTE:** Questions are formatted according to the NE house style guide and NOT to the CCSP style guide used previously throughout this paper.

#### LISTENING TEST

In the listening test, you will be asked to demonstrate how well you understand spoken English. The entire listening test will last approximately 45 minutes. There are four parts and directions are given for each part. You must mark your answers on the separate answer sheet. Do not write your answers in the test book.

#### PART 1 (6 questions)

**Directions:** For each question in this part, you will hear four statements about a picture in your test book. When you hear the statements, you must select the one statement that best describes what you see in the picture. Then find the number of the question on your answer sheet and mark your answer. The statements will not be printed in your test book and will be spoken only one time.



1. (A) Some women are having a conversation.  
(B) A hairdresser is styling a client's hair.  
(C) One of the women is buying beauty products.  
(D) One of the women has closed her eyes. \*

**PART 2 (25 questions)**

**Directions:** You will hear a question or statement and three responses spoken in English. They will not be printed in your test book and will be spoken only one time. Select the best response to the question and mark the answer (A), (B), or (C) on your answer sheet.

7. Do you want my ticket to the play on Saturday?  
(A) You can't go? \*  
(B) Yes, we have two.  
(C) On the balcony.

**PART 3 (13 passages, 39 questions)**

**Directions:** You will hear some conversations between two people. You will be asked to answer three questions about what the speakers say in each conversation. Select the best response to each question and mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet. The conversations will not be printed in your test book and will be spoken only one time.

**Questions 32–34 refer to the following conversation.**

W: Hello. I would like to purchase a new microwave. Your catalog shows these two models, but I don't really understand how they are different. Could you explain that to me?

M: Of course. The XV-7 is the newest one on the market. It has the fastest cooking time available. It also comes in a variety of colors—black, white, or stainless steel. The XV-5 is the model from two years ago. It's a little slower and doesn't have some of the pre-set time components. However, its price is much lower.

W: I'd rather have the faster cooking time and extra features. I guess that means I'd like the XV-7. I noticed that there aren't any on the shelf, though.

M: We're all sold out at the moment. However, I can sell you the display model for 10% off.

32. What department does the man most likely work in?  
(A) Repairs  
(B) Returns  
(C) Sales \*  
(D) Delivery
33. What are the speakers discussing?  
(A) The features of two products \*  
(B) The types of delivery options

- (C) The best way to stock shelves
- (D) The company's exchange policy

34. How can the woman get a discount?

- (A) By purchasing multiple items
- (B) By ordering in advance
- (C) By writing an online review
- (D) By buying an opened product \*

**PART 4 (10 passages, 30 questions)**

**Directions:** You will hear some talks given by a single speaker. You will be asked to answer three questions about what the speaker says in each talk. Select the best response to each question and mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet. The talks will not be printed in your test book and will be spoken only one time.

**Questions 71–73 refer to the following telephone message.**

W: Hello. This message is for Hunter Dean. My name is Anna Culos, and I am calling from the Serendipity Bookstore. You left a voicemail about a book called *Rivers Wild* asking why you couldn't find it in any of our stores. I am sorry, but this book is out of print. Most bookstores no longer carry it. Your message indicates that this particular novel is very important to you, so I suggest that you go to our online store and search for it there. Our distribution center works with several smaller retailers to sell used copies of popular texts online. As long as you don't require a brand-new copy, this is probably your best option for finding the book.

71. What is the purpose of the phone call?

- (A) To confirm that an order has arrived
- (B) To respond to a customer inquiry \*
- (C) To request an address for delivery
- (D) To apologize for an employee's mistake

72. What problem does the speaker mention?

- (A) A shipment has been damaged.
- (B) An order was processed incorrectly.
- (C) A payment was not collected.
- (D) An item is no longer available. \*

73. What does the speaker suggest that the listener do?

- (A) Visit the company's Web site \*
- (B) Select a different title
- (C) Update a credit card number
- (D) Pick up his ordered items

## READING TEST

In the reading test, you will read a variety of texts and answer several different types of reading comprehension questions. The entire reading test will last 75 minutes. There are three parts, and directions are given for each part. You are encouraged to answer as many questions as possible within the time allowed. You must mark your answers on the separate answer sheet. Do not write your answers on the test book.

### **PART 5 (30 questions)**

**Directions:** A word or phrase is missing in each of the sentences below. Four answer choices are given below each sentence. Select the best answer to complete the sentence. Then mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D).

101. In order to lose weight, you should ----- your diet and exercise choices very closely.

- (A) monitor \*
- (B) monitors
- (C) monitored
- (D) monitoring

**PART 6 (4 passages; 12 questions)**

**Directions:** Read the texts that follow. A word or phrase is missing in some of the sentences. Four answer choices are given below each of the sentences. Select the best answer to complete the text. Then mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet.

**Questions 131–133** refer to the following letter.

Olivia King  
4424 James Street  
Vancouver, BC, V5V 3J1

Dear Ms. King,

This letter is to offer you the position of News Anchor here at Channel 9. You stood out as the best applicant of all the candidates we interviewed last week.

The television production managers were ---41.--- with the initial audition tape that you sent us, and the in-person screen test that you performed in person further illustrated how natural you are in front of a camera.

I did notice that the headshots you submitted with your application are out of date. I would appreciate if you would be sure to ---42.--- new photographs.

As you are probably aware, we display these images at the beginning of the news segment. --43.---

I've booked an appointment for you with our studio photographer on Thursday, September 23 at 2:30 P.M. Please call him at 555-234-8921 and confirm the type of outfit you need to wear.

Congratulations again,

Aidan Temple, HR Manager  
KFA Channel 9 News

41. (A) informed  
(B) valued  
(C) relieved  
(D) impressed \*

42. (A) inspect  
(B) handle  
(C) recruit  
(D) submit \*

43. (A) Each segment lasts for half an hour.  
(B) This is why they must have been taken recently. \*  
(C) Your first on-camera appearance will be at the end of the month.  
(D) We need all pictures to be submitted in color.

**PART 7 (15 passages, 53 questions)**

**Directions:** In this part, you will read a selection of texts, such as magazine and newspaper articles, letters, and advertisements. Each text is followed by several questions. Select the best answer for each question and mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet.

**7a SINGLE PASSAGES (10 passages; 29 questions)**

**Questions 147–148** refer to the following memo.

October 5

MEMO

Dear staff:

This memo contains the updated schedule for the few major events we have remaining this calendar year. Please note that we have extended the company's holiday closure to include the two days before Christmas. We hope that you all enjoy the extra time off!

- Association of Advertisers fall conference.....November 1–5
- Final presentation for Industry Bank project.....November 18
- Distribution of employee holiday bonuses.....December 15
- Company closure for Christmas holidays.....December 23–27

147. Why was the memo sent?

- (A) To promote conference sign-up dates
- (B) To announce a project for a new client
- (C) To share the dates of holiday parties
- (D) To report a change to the schedule \*

148. When will employees receive a financial gift?

- (A) On November 1
- (B) On November 18
- (C) On December 15 \*
- (D) On December 27

**7b DOUBLE PASSAGES (2 passages; 10 questions)**

Questions 176–180 refer to the following e-mail and Web site.

**To:** All staff  
**From:** HR  
**Date:** July 4  
**Subject:** Fitness discounts

Dear Staff,

Recently, we instituted an employee appreciation program as a thank you for the hard work and devotion that our staff members give to our organization. As part of this program, we have partnered with the nearby Austin Fitness. Using our corporate rate, you will get a discount on a yearly gym membership.

You will be able to sign up for individual or family memberships, the second option allowing your spouse to receive the discount as well. These plans cost \$300 and \$600, respectively. Membership rates must be paid upfront for the entire twelve-month period. Additionally, you can choose to pay for an optional three months of personal training at a 15% discount. Furthermore, if you are a first-time member with Austin Fitness, your initial account activation fee will be waived. This saves you an additional \$25/person.

If you wish to take advantage of this service, please visit [www.austinfitness.ca](http://www.austinfitness.ca) where you can submit an application electronically. In order to apply for the discount, you will need to provide our corporate account number "RT5AM9." You will be expected to pay as soon as you complete your application, so have a credit card ready. Finally, you will need to upload a photograph for your membership card, so please be sure to read the specifications provided on the Web site while doing so.

Sincerely,  
The HR Department

Home | Facilities | Membership | **Contact**

Membership Comment Form

Hello,

Earlier this month, I was contacted by my company's human resources department about a partnership between our firm and your gym. Obviously, I was interested in receiving a discounted gym membership, so I filled out an application form the day after I received the e-mail. As far as I could tell, I completed the individual membership form correctly and everything was processed without an issue. When I went in to pick up my card and use the facilities for the first time, there were no complications, and my personal trainer, Matthew, was fantastic. However, I just received my credit card statement, and I noticed an additional \$25 charge. I was told by my company that account set-up fees would be waived. Clearly that did

not happen. I would like to be reimbursed for that expense. But, rather than refunding it to my credit card, could you please apply that fee to future personal training sessions?

Thank you,  
Benjamin Bergsma

**SEND INQUIRY**

176. What is the purpose of the e-mail?

- (A) To promote a weight-loss initiative
- (B) To advertise a local business
- (C) To announce an employee benefit \*
- (D) To explore a potential partnership

177. What is indicated about memberships?

- (A) They allow access to multiple locations.
- (B) They are available for six-month periods.
- (C) They include instructor-led fitness classes.
- (D) They must be paid in full and upfront. \*

178. What is NOT required to apply for the service?

- (A) An individual photograph
- (B) A valid credit card
- (C) A company account code
- (D) An employee ID number \*

179. What can be inferred about Mr. Bergsma?

- (A) He saved money on a fitness instructor. \*
- (B) He signed up for a family membership.
- (C) He paid for the use of a storage locker.
- (D) He requested help using the machines.

180. What does Mr. Bergsma request?

- (A) A replacement membership card
- (B) A credit card reimbursement
- (C) A payment receipt for tax purposes
- (D) A credit toward future expenses \*



**7c TRIPLE PASSAGES (3 passages; 15 questions)**

Questions 186–190 refer to the following ticket and e-mails.

**To:** Kathleen Sosa <kathleen@ficenterprises.com>  
**From:** Patrick Botwell <patrickb@advantagetraavel.org>  
**Date:** April 23  
**Subject:** Your flight  
**Attachment:** Sosa flight itinerary

Dear Ms. Sosa:

As you requested, I have booked your upcoming trip to Toronto. You are currently scheduled to fly in business class on Oceania Airways to Canada via a short layover in Japan. I've attached the flight itinerary to this e-mail for you to look over. I also want to draw your attention to two of the airline's policies:

- 1) Please arrive at the airport at least 90 minutes before the listed flight departure time. This will allow you sufficient time to go through security.
- 2) Your ticket can be canceled up until three hours before your flight. A penalty will be charged for the cancellation, but the remainder of the ticket price will be refunded to you.

As always, thank you for your business,

Patrick Botwell  
Travel Agent, Advantage Travel

**OCEANA AIRWAYS**

Flight itinerary for: Kathleen Sosa

Booking confirmation: 27173350

<b>DEPARTURE</b>	Incheon International Airport Seoul, South Korea Terminal: International	04/28 08:00
<b>ARRIVAL</b>	Narita International Airport Tokyo, Japan Terminal: A	04/28 10:35
<b>Seat Number</b>	A6	<b>Meal preference</b> None
<b>Travel Time</b>	2 hrs 30 min	<b>Layover</b> 2 hr 25 min
<b>DEPARTURE</b>	Narita International Airport Tokyo, Japan Terminal: A	04/28 13:00
<b>ARRIVAL</b>	Pearson International Airport Toronto, Canada Terminal: C	04/28 12:50
<b>Seat Number</b>	J2	<b>Meal preference</b> None
<b>Travel Time</b>	11 hrs 50 min	

**To:** Dave Gonzalez <dave@ficenterprises.com>**From:** Kathleen Sosa <kathleen@ficenterprises.com>**Date:** April 28**Subject:** Travel update**Attachment:** Training slideshow

Dear Dave,

As you know, I'm scheduled to join you all at the Toronto branch tomorrow. I left Seoul this morning, but I've encountered a setback during my layover. There are severe winds coming from Taipei and my second flight has been permanently delayed until the storm has stopped.

I'm supposed to deliver a training session for the new staff members, but in all likelihood I will not be able to make it in time. I'm so sorry to ask this of you, but I'm going to need you to step in and take my place. Attached to this e-mail is the slideshow I intended to present. Everything's contained in it, so hopefully it won't be too much work for you to fill in for me. Feel free to change the presentation as necessary.

Thank you for your help,  
Kathleen

186. What is indicated about Ms. Sosa?

- (A) She purchased her flights at the last minute.
- (B) She will be traveling in economy class.
- (C) She booked her trip through an agency. \*
- (D) She earns loyalty points with Oceania Airways.

187. What is true about Oceania Airways tickets?

- (A) They can be printed at the airport.
- (B) They can be canceled on the day of a flight. \*
- (C) They can be transferred to another person.
- (D) They can be upgraded at the gate for a fee.

188. What can be inferred from the flight itinerary?

- (A) Ms. Sosa selected her seats in advance. \*
- (B) Ms. Sosa requested a specific menu.
- (C) Ms. Sosa has a layover in Toronto.
- (D) Ms. Sosa is flying with a coworker.

189. Where most likely was Ms. Sosa when she sent the second e-mail?

- (A) In Seoul
- (B) In Toronto
- (C) In Tokyo \*
- (D) In Taipei

190. What is Mr. Gonzalez asked to do?

- (A) Take over a presentation \*
- (B) Update a travel itinerary
- (C) Correct a slideshow
- (D) Contact the airline directly

## Appendix B.

### Comparison of Copy-Editing Marks

ENGLISH MARK	HOW IT'S USED	WHAT IT MEANS	HOW IT'S USED	NE MARK
	I ate <del>her</del> his liver with some fava beans and a nice chianti.	Delete	I ate <del>her</del> his liver with some fava beans and a nice chianti.	
	I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.	No space; close up the gap	I think this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.	
	Make <sup>your</sup> lives extraordinary.	Insert something here	Make <sup>your</sup> lives extraordinary.	
	Nobody puts Baby in a corner.	Add a space	Nobody puts Baby in a corner.	
	Life is like a <del>book</del> <sup>box</sup> of chocolates.	Change this letter/word	Life is like a <del>book</del> <sup>box</sup> of chocolates.	
	All right, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up.	Don't change/let stand	All right, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up.	
	Here's looking at you, kid.	Insert a comma	Here's looking at you, kid.	
	A boy's best friend is his mother.	Insert an apostrophe	A boy's best friend is his mother.	
	That was the most fun I've ever had without laughing.	Make this a capital letter	That was the most fun I've ever had without laughing.	
	There's no crying in baseball.	Make this a lowercase letter	There's no crying in baseball.	
	You've got to ask yourself a question: "Do I feel lucky?"	Spell it out	You've got to ask yourself a question: "Do I feel lucky?"	
	You're gonna need a bigger boat.	Move left	You're gonna need a bigger boat.	
	Toto, I've got a feeling we're in not Kanas anymore.	Move right	Toto, I've got a feeling we're in not Kanas anymore.	

## Appendix C.

### Sample Grammar Questions from Korean Coworkers


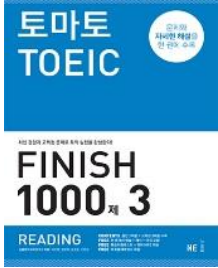
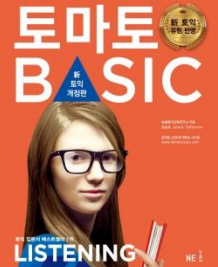

*Note: Questions are not listed in any particular order.*



1. *A low credit score, however, could be rejected or may be approved with accompanying conditions such as the need to provide collateral.* →Is "the need" used as a noun? And then "to provide" is a modifier?
2. Is it grammatically correct for "ago" to follow "since" in a present progressive construction? Like this example: *"I have been ill since three days ago."*
3. In this question, is "how" a relative adverb or an interrogative adverb?  
*The instructions outlined in the manual explain how equipment should be turned on and off.*
4. What is the difference in meaning of the word "relationship" in countable and uncountable forms?
5. In this sentence: *The vehicle was driven regularly by the owner for three years and \_\_\_\_ last week it was operating reliably.* Why can't I put "during" in the blank instead of "until"?
6. *The two-year renovation would have been canceled had the Hyde Corporation not stepped in to a cover the outstanding costs.* What is the verb in this sentence? "would have been" or "had"?
7. In the dictionary, it says "plus" is a conjunction in an informal sentence, but in a question it was used as an adverb like "however." Why is that okay?
8. What is the difference between "effective on" and "effective from"?
9. Korean students are taught that present participles can be used when the same subject is used before and after the conjunction like: *"When I unpacked the goods, I broke a plate."* → *"Unpacking the goods, I broke a plate."* Please explain how the following example fits into this explanation. *"Unfortunately, the exercise machine was shipped without some vital parts, making it useless."*
10. In this sentence, which one is correct, and how are they different? Something vs. Anything: *Please interrupt me at any time if you are not sure about [something/anything].*
11. Can you check the grammaticality of "used to not ~"?
12. Can you explain the difference between "expectation" and "expectancy"?

## Appendix D.

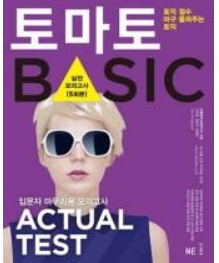

### Cari Ferguson's Body of Work Completed at NE

#### EDITOR CREDITS ONLY

BOOK IMAGE	TITLE AND ISBN	DATE PUBLISHED
	<p><b>TOEIC FINISH 1000 제 3 LISTENING</b></p> <p>ISBN: 791125305033</p>	<p>November 2014</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC FINISH 1000 제 3 READING</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125305026</p>	<p>November 2014</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC BASIC LISTENING 4<sup>th</sup> EDITION (updated)</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791123501110</p>	<p>February 2016</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC BASIC READING 4<sup>th</sup> EDITION (updated)</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125301103</p>	<p>February 2016</p>

	<p><b>TOEIC FINISH 1000 제 3 LISTENING</b>  <b>2<sup>nd</sup> EDITION (updated)</b></p> <p><b>ISBN: 9791125311669</b></p>	<p>April 2016</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC FIT 339 READING</b></p> <p><b>ISBN: 9791125311973</b></p>	<p>June 2016</p>

**BOTH AUTHOR AND EDITOR CREDITS**

BOOK IMAGE	TITLE	DATE PUBLISHED
	<p><b>토마토 BASIC ACTUAL TEST</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125305156</p>	<p>December 2014</p>
	<p><b>토마토 빈출랭킹으로 3주에 끝내는 파트 5&amp;6 전략</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125307914</p>	<p>May 2015</p>
	<p><b>토마토 시간을 15분 줄여주는 파트 7 전략</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125307907</p>	<p>May 2015</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC FINISH 1000 제 3 READING 2nd EDITION (updated)</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125311676</p>	<p>April 2016</p>
	<p><b>TOEIC FIT 339 LISTENING</b></p> <p>ISBN: 9791125311966</p>	<p>June 2016</p>