

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Economics and Business Administration

Betti Marie Peterson

Representations of Korean Identity in Modern Hanbok

Analysis of Discourses on Korean Identity in the Products by the Modern Hanbok Brand

Leesle

Master's thesis

Supervisor: Alevtina Solovyeva Ph.D.

Head of the centre for Oriental Studies

Tartu 2023

I have written this Research paper/Bachelor Thesis independently. Any ideas or data taken from other authors or other sources have been fully referenced.

(signature of the author and date)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BMP', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Betti Marie Peterson
18. April 2023

Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
1. Literature overview	9
2. Methodological framework.....	14
2.1. The Constructivist approach to Identity.....	14
2.2. Methodology	16
2.2.1. The wider framework.....	16
2.2.2. The extraction and compiling of codes	17
2.2.3. Further analysis of codes	19
3. Data.....	21
3.1. Selection of Data – Why Study Clothing?.....	21
3.2. The Brand, Leesle	22
4. Results and Analysis	25
4.1. Categories of discourses in Leesle’s product’s descriptions.....	25
4.1.1 Ancestors.....	26
4.1.2. Brand.....	26
4.1.3. High quality	27
4.1.4. Modern Hanbok	29
4.1.5. Characteristics related to the appearance and style of the product	29
4.1.6. Practicality	30
4.1.7. Unisex	31
4.1.8. Korean Traditions	32
4.1.9. History.....	32
4.1.10. Significant others	33
4.1.11. Collaboration with K-pop artists.....	33
3.2. The Leesle Online Store – Presentation of Products	34
5. Discussion.....	42
5.1. Implications for the concept of identity	42
5.2. Historical influences	44
5.3. Hanbok and the modernisation of Korea	48
5.4. Government promotions	49
5.5. Hallyu as establishing opportunities for promotion of hanbok abroad.....	49
5.6. Changing sentiments	51
5.7. Highlighting women’s experiences.....	51
Conclusion	53

Introduction

Identity is one of the key concepts characterising modern life – this is something even the critics of the concept recognise (Lebow, 2016), and the concept of identity is used in numerous fields of research, from social psychology to anthropology (Berenskoetter, 2010). Most contemporary social issues are related to questions of identity, power, and the construction of social knowledge. While the role social identity plays in processes of identity formation of the individual has been thoroughly researched by social sciences and fields such as social psychology (Hogg, 2003), the relationship between social identity and social representation, although it has been garnering significantly more interest in the last decade, still holds great potential for further research. (Moloney & Walker, 2007; Hall, *The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power*, 2018)

Moreover, despite prolific use of the concept by many scholars throughout social sciences, identity has also been criticised as an analytical concept (Onuf, *Parsing Personal Identity: Self, Other, Agent*, 2003; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Fearon, 1999). Scholars have called attention to the ambiguity of the term, which makes it relatively easy to abuse or misuse in academic research and political situations (Lebow, 2016).

Constructivism, even as it was first introduced into the field of International Relations, can be applied to the study of any kind of social relations (Onuf, *Constructivism: A User's Manual*, 1998). The constructivist approach allows us to look for the set of conditions (or rules) that make something possible, or possible to know, and how these conditions were produced through historical interactions (Kratochwil, 2008). This becomes especially important when considering social phenomena, as they are not natural nor simply given, but rather perceived as such because they are decidedly in established usage (Kratochwil, 2008; Hogg, 2003). The social nature of knowledge was explored already by Michel Foucault, especially with an emphasis on the relationship between power and knowledge, or what is considered to be true or knowable. Foucault called attention to the relationship between social representations and identity formation. (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969)

Social representations influence how individuals and groups construe meaningful understandings about their social environment; identity in turn is constructed through these social representations. Nevertheless the constructed nature of identity is oftentimes overlooked in a society, as it is mostly regarded as an ontological given, as common sense. (Moloney & Walker, 2007) However, concepts such as common sense, which, when defined

as something inherent and natural, can –much as identity– have a highly polarising effect on a society (Morozov & Pavlova, 2020).

As identity is such a widely used concept not only in academic research but also wider societal discourse, it is crucial to examine how identities are constructed and contribute to the understanding of identities as categories consisted of representational practices, rather than something naturally given and unchanging. Owing to the constitutive quality of the identity concept, research in identity construction is always relevant as the representational practices pertaining to identity are changing together with the social environment.

This thesis will operate with the concept of *identity* defined as discursive categories that delineate what it means to be a part of a group (Allan, 2016). The central identities of a group are in turn conceptualised as *discursive formations*: “clusters of concepts, values, metaphors and rules that hang together to order perceptions of the national self” (Allan, 2016, p. 6). The concept of identity will be regarded through a constructivist approach, outlining identity as constructed by representations of the relevant discourses in that group, but at the same time as constitutive of those discourses themselves.

Moreover, this thesis will conceptualise “national identity” in terms of the social identity theory as first described by Tajfel in the early 1970’s and which by now has been well established in the field of social psychology (Tajfel, 1974). *Social identity* is a collection of typical features associated with one group, which an individual can draw upon in their conceptualisation of the world and clarifying the connection between it and their personal self. (Abrams & Hogg, 2003) *National identity*, as applied in the framework of this thesis, has the same functions in a society as other social identities (e.g., gender), such as describing and prescribing perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviours (Hogg, 2003).

Brubaker and Cooper (2000), have in their work called attention to the “groupist” nature of contemporary social ontology, emphasising that it is crucial to note that while operating with concepts which congregate individuals in any kind of “group”, it is important to remember that such an approach forecloses other ways of conceptualising people’s social associations and actions.

As this essentially applies to all generalisations, Hopf (2009) argues for the importance of a diverse sample in analysing discourses of national identities. Nevertheless, any kind of research centring on collective representations and processes must acknowledge the inevitable compromises between universality and particularity which underly such an approach (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000).

For addressing the criticisms about identity as an analytical concept, this thesis will apply the constructivist approach to the notion of “national identity” and will use identity as a framework that answers the question “How do Korean discourses define what it means to be Korean?” where “what it means to be Korean” delineates “national identity”. Discourses are constantly negotiated and renegotiated in the society and national identity may include overlapping or even competing discourses (Allan, 2016), so this thesis will examine only a part of the representations and discursive formations that relate to Korean identity. As discussed above, identity as a concept has no fixed or exhaustive meaning, and even large collections of identity-related data, like the Making Identity Count project (Julka & Kumar, 2021), amount to partial recounting of discourses and representations pertaining to a nation’s identity.

This thesis, by analysing the products of Leesle, which is one of the most successful brands of modernised Korean traditional attire, hopes to add to the diversity of samples studied in examining the Korean identity, and demonstrate how applied arts and everyday commodities can also represent, and according to the constructivist view, construct larger group identities.

Even though clothes have functioned as signifiers throughout different times and societies, research in national discourses has yet to examine clothing and fashion as a potential mode of discourse construction. The English-speaking world mostly lacks an established practice of traditional attire which differs significantly from the predominant fashions of the people in power. Studies on the national costume of Great Britain today concentrate on clothing of the Irish, Welsh, and Scottish peoples, who also differentiate themselves from the seat of power in England, London (McClellan, 2017; Stevens, 2002).

As a significant part of the scholarly work on national identity has its foundations in Western thought, the meaning-making and representational aspects of clothing might seem obscure and thus remain under-examined. As most representations that make up group identities are first and foremost habitual and perceived as ontological reality (Moloney & Walker, 2007), their formation into categories pertaining to identity are, as proposed by the uncertainty reduction hypothesis, often motivated by encounters with something different and unknown (Abrams & Hogg, 2003). Accordingly, cultures outside of the colonialist Western powers, as they were confronted with these colonialist powers and their significantly different concepts of clothing, needed to consciously engage with their own habits and concepts connected to clothing. As a result of this process, the clothing traditionally worn by people under colonial rule became to represent their group as different from the colonial powers, and

as the concept of nationality and national identity started gaining popularity in the second half of the 19th century, was applied to this concept as well.

Although research on national identities has started to include other modes of communication besides written text, the communicative and meaning-making aspects of utilitarian necessities such as food and clothing for example tend to be overlooked still. As Parasecoli (2019) notes in his study on food and identity, food is not only a locus for the construction of cultural identities, but also for the negotiation of social structures, ideological systems, and power relations. As food and clothing have much in common, especially their dual function of filling physical needs on one hand and their discursive aspects on the other, the same observations are plausibly applicable to clothing as well.

Clothing research as a field of interdisciplinary academic study appeared in the late 20th century, the study of clothing being restricted into design schools and technical training institutions before the 1990's (Skov & Melchior, 2008). However, the role of applied arts (including clothing) as representational practices is still not acknowledged enough to be something taken for granted. Hopf (2009), for example, recognises mass popular texts like novels as a valid and valuable source for discovering identity categories – novels, together with movies, are a part of the standardised sample in the Making Identity Count framework (Julka & Kumar, 2021), but objects with utilitarian uses have not been recognised as a potential resource.

The main aim of this work is to examine the connection between discourses of national identity and clothing as a mode of representational practices which in part are constitutive of national identity. More specifically, this thesis will look at the representations of popular discourses on “what it means to be Korean?” in the product descriptions and representations of Leesle, one of the most popular retailers of modernised Korean traditional attire, hanbok.

For this, the Making Identity Count framework will be used, as developed by Hopf and Allan (2016) for recovering identity categories from a standardised sample of texts. The main method for determining these categories is discourse analysis operated under a set of rules for extracting codes from the text. These codes give raw counts of the discursive categories which constitute national identity and can be later condensed into more abstract categories which denote the central identities that make up discursive formations of a larger, national identity. (Hopf & Allan, Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database, 2016)

This approach bridges the gap between interpretive and quantitative methods (Allan, 2016) by combining both qualitative and quantitative elements, as it is first necessary to work closely with the sample texts to identify the raw categories pertaining to identity discourses, and from there on, basic descriptive statistical analysis is carried out on the recovered categories to determine how prevalent they are in the larger discursive formations.

As one of the main contributions of critical cultural studies was bringing the analysis of mass media into critical academic research, this thesis will examine Leesle's online store, which is accessible not only to Koreans, but to people around the world with English descriptions for a considerable number of their products. Already in the 1960's researchers like Barthes in semiotics demonstrated how, in addition to linguistic modes, physical objects such as clothes also act as signifiers, communicating and making meaning (Barthes, 1967). In case of Leesle's products, they are presented to the potential customer through both visual (photos) and linguistic (written descriptions) modes. Therefore, in addition to the Making Identity Count methodological framework, this thesis will also apply the method of Multimodal Critical Discourse analysis, especially in analysing the presentation of Leesle's products in their webstore.

This thesis will analyse the descriptions and presentation of a selection of the products listed on Leesle's website and relate the findings to the wider discourse on hanbok as representing aspects of Korean identity. By doing that, the connections between national costume and the traits that are considered to be "typically Korean" will be examined. As discussed above, "typically Korean" is constitutive of the Korean identity insofar as identity consists of naturalised discourses and habitual representational practices in the Korean society. Giving a systematic overview of Korean identity is not in the scope of this work, projects such as the Making Identity Count databases of national identities are better equipped for such tasks. However, as such identity databases mostly do not include national costume and related products as potential representations of identity discourses, further studies could compare the data from larger databases with that extracted from clothing-related discourse. As clothing and other textile crafts are predominantly produced by women, such studies could also provide insight into which discourses are represented in settings where women take on the role of the agent.

Keywords: Identity, nationality, traditional costumes, clothing, brands

CERCS: S210 Sociology S191 Market Study

1. Literature overview

Questions about identity and the Self have several millennia of history in the field of philosophy and were also central to the study of psychology for thinkers like Freud and Jung as seen in concepts such as ego and self, or Erik Erikson's theory on development of personality. However, the concept of identity and social representation only entered other disciplines in the 1960s. Since then, the study of social identity has risen to be among major theories in fields researching social phenomena, e.g., social psychology, anthropology, political studies, and international relations. (Berenskoetter, 2010; Markova, 2007)

Berger and Luckmann (1966), in their early examination of identity and shared concepts within a society, relate identity to the intersubjective background knowledge which individuals draw on in their perception of reality. This assumption about shared knowledge of categories as something that makes social order possible, has a long tradition in the European thought – Foucault described it as episteme, Durkheim as collective representations. A significant part of the modern research of group processes based on the social identity approach builds on Tajfel's (1974) work on social psychological theory and categorisation in the early 1970's. (Abrams & Hogg, 2003)

The social identity approach highlights how cognitive contrast and assimilation affect our perception of our social environment and emphasises how differentiation between the self and others underlies the process of categorisation (Abrams & Hogg, 2003). Similarly, Connolly (1991) views identity as relational and collective: "An identity is established in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognized" (Connolly, 1991, p. 64).

In the field of International Relations, the notion of identity has been explored by scholars such as Hopf (1998), Wendt (1992), Wæver (2002), and Hall (1999), operating with it in contexts like integration (Wæver, 2002), security (Browning & Joenniemi, 2017), and the formation of a national identity (Hopf & Allan, *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database*, 2016).

Social psychology has grappled with questions about the formation of social representations, the relationship between social categories, social representations, and identity, acknowledging the importance of understanding shared social representations and social identity when working with complex social problems like promotion of intergroup tolerance, for example (Markova, 2007). Nevertheless, research in such complex problems could plausibly benefit from interdisciplinary approaches, as different fields tend to examine the same questions from distinct angles.

Marchart (2012) calls attention to the potential of interdisciplinary dialogue between constructivist international relations theory and critical cultural studies in providing further insight into the link between the actions of individuals and groups on the micro-political level and the emergence of larger hegemonic formations. Morozov and Pavlova (2020) demonstrate the analytical possibilities such an interdisciplinary approach provides in their study on the protean nature of Russian mass common sense through looking at the various discourses represented in Russian women's fiction. Marchart (2012) was not the first to recognise the potential interdisciplinary approaches hold. Anthony Giddens, for example, recommended social scientists to "draw on the same sources of description as novelists or others who write fictional accounts of social life" (Giddens, 1984, p. 285).

The concept of identity has been criticised for its lack of conceptual clarity by both constructivist scholars like Weller (2000), Onuf (2003), Hopf (2002) and proponents of rational choice theory like Fearon (1999). These criticisms are also not restricted to the field of international relations, Brubaker and Cooper (2000), for example, question the utility of the concept in sociology, arguing that it has been used too loosely, often meaning too much and thus inhibiting examination of other possibilities and factors affecting people's actions and interactions (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). Lebow (2016) also argues that identity, even if conceivably plausible on an individual level, becomes even harder to defend at the national level. Lebow also calls attention to the ambiguity of the term, which not only makes it difficult to use consistently in an analytical context, but, even more importantly, has a strong political resonance, thus making it easy to use in furthering one's political views.

These criticisms on identity are valid and recognised even by the proponents of the concept (Berenskoetter, 2010). Nevertheless, identity seems to be a cognitive necessity, addressing cognitive limitations on the human capacity for information-processing, but also the needs for ontological security and reduction of uncertainty (Hopf, *Identity Relations and the Sino-Soviet Split*, 2009). Studies in social psychology since Tajfel have shown that identities operate within a personal level on the one hand, defining one's Self in relation to other individuals, and on group levels on the other hand, defining an individual from the standpoint of social categories associated with a group, rather than being relational to the identities of other individuals (Allan, 2016; Abrams & Hogg, 2003; Hogg, 2003).

This thesis will operate with the concept of identity as a product of social interactions that helps us understand and be understood in ways predictable to us and others by both enabling and discouraging ways of understanding or interpreting the world and our actions within it (Hopf, *Identity Relations and the Sino-Soviet Split*, 2009; Abrams & Hogg, 2003;

Hogg, 2003). This understanding relies on the constructivist approach to social relations and the prevalent discourses in society.

One of the earlier approaches to social theory that examines terms that are open for philosophical enquiry, for example “true art”, “democracy” or “the Christian doctrine” is “Essentially Constructed Concepts” by W. B. Gallie in 1956. Gallie argues that with constructed concepts it is not just difficult to agree on one conclusive definition, but it is, in fact, impossible, as these concepts acquire their meaning through societal disputes and thus possess no neutral definitions.

Later scholars in social sciences have made similar claims about many of the concepts used in the field – concepts such as identity, hegemony, or even nation state are said to have no fixed or inherent meaning of their own, those meanings are rather constructed within discourse. This is not exclusively the case with terminology and concepts in social sciences – all social practices are part of discourse, as they always carry meaning which in turn has influence on the actors themselves (Hall, *The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power*, 2018).

Constructivist approaches to research centre around the epistemological question of knowing and perception, challenging the empirical focus on knowing through senses, theorising instead that conceptualisation underlies perception (Kratochwil, 2008). Constructivism highlights the social nature of human beings, how social relations construct individuals, and how it is society that makes people, but also the other way around, people, that make society (Onuf, *Constructivism: A User's Manual*, 1998).

Fundamental to the constructivist approach is also the understanding that rules link society and people together, by giving agents (i.e., people who act on behalf of other people) choices and telling them which actions are appropriate in a given situation in a specific group. (Onuf, *Constructivism: A User's Manual*, 1998)

Researchers in the field of social psychology have called attention to the importance of intergroup relations, social representations and categories in the identity formation process. Furthermore, the conceptual separation between individual and society has been questioned since the 1980's and by now the social nature of knowledge has been more widely acknowledged outside of constructivist circles as well. (Moloney & Walker, 2007)

The theory of social construction and, especially, the discursive approach to examining constructions of rules, social norms, and knowledge goes back to the works of Michel Foucault, who understood discourses as constitutive of objects in our social environment. Foucault, in *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of*

Reason (1965), embarks on a thorough examination of the concept of madness, demonstrating how “madness” is a social invention, defined by discourses of what constitutes as normal or “moral” and what does not, i.e., madness is relational to normality. Even as Foucault looked specifically at concepts such as madness or sexuality, his works are considered as fundamental to the current research in discourses and representations (Hall, *Representation*, 1997).

Drawing on both Marchart (2012) and Hopf and Allan (2016), this thesis will examine the relations between discourses of Korean national identity and the representations of the products of Leesle, one of the most popular retailers of modernised Korean traditional attire, hanbok. As Korea does not have a large database of identity-related discourses accessible in English, this thesis will concentrate on discourses pertaining to the Korean national costume, hanbok, especially those represented in sources published by Korean government institutions with the aim of introducing hanbok and Korean culture and nationality to foreigners.

Not much academic research about hanbok is accessible in English, and that which has been conducted either describes collections of extant garments (Lee, Hong, & Chang, 2005) or deals with specific designs or functions of the garments, for example the relations of clothing and modernity in Colonial Korea (Lynn, 2004). In several studies hanbok is only briefly mentioned in the framework of the main research topic, such as the image of the New Woman in early 20th century Korea (Lee J.-E. , 2011). The field of clothing research outside of institutions that specialise in the production, history, and design of attire is still quite new, and so holds much potential for further interdisciplinary studies (Skov & Melchior, 2008).

The signifying or representational functions of clothing have been used throughout cultures and times, hanbok being no different with strict rules applying to designs, construction, fabrics and colours with the aim of signalling the wearer’s position in society. Designs and symbols were also believed to grant certain wishes and protect the wearer from evil spirits, illness, misfortune. (The Korea Foundation, 2013) The signifying quality of modes such as clothing or food for example has been recognised in academic fields as well, notably in semiotics (Barthes, 1967), but also in identity-related research, for example the connections between identity and food culture (Parasecoli, 2019) or national identity and brands (Bulmer & Buchanan-Oliver, 2010). Nevertheless, when examining larger research projects such as the Making Identity Count framework for the construction of national identity databases proposed by Hopf and Allan (2016), it becomes apparent that clothing as representational practice has not been widely acknowledged outside of specific garment-related research.

This thesis will aim to explore the potential of regarding clothing, especially traditional attire but also products and brands connected to it, as a part of national identity discourse, as well as how a modernised hanbok brand relates itself and its products to the discourse on Korean national identity which are usually associated with historic garments and the Korean society before the 20th century. Additionally, this thesis will contribute to the aforementioned areas of research that have been left largely unexamined by previous scholars.

2. Methodological framework

2.1. The Constructivist approach to Identity

Research in the field of discourses builds on works of Michel Foucault, who treated discourses as practices that also construct what they represent. In *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), Foucault defines a discourse as a group of sign sequences that make meaning in relation with a domain of objects and other verbal performances. Discourses appear in a mode associated with that group of signs, so, they not only have a perceivable existence, but that existence must denote “something more than a mere object made by a human being” (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969, p. 120). Foucault also states that discourses are not fixed or static, but always changing in time and place; discourses are also connected to the notion of power (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969) – Foucault dismisses absolute truth as unattainable, even non-existent, and sides with Nietzsche in proposing an intrinsic connectedness of truth and power and connecting the pursuit of truth with the pursuit of power (West, 2010).

Central to Foucault’s theory is also the understanding that rules of discourse formation (that is the systems of emergence of objects, of appearance and distribution of modes, circulation of concepts, and implementation of strategic choices), are to be found within the discourse itself, without relying on some outside source to fix its relations of meaning. (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969)

In the past decades, Foucault’s theory on discourses has been developed and expanded upon and has proven to be useful in numerous fields. This work is based on the theoretical background and methodological tools of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, which, although with roots in linguistics, has been used to examine how different modes, such as language, image, sound, physical objects, etc. combine to make meaning (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

One of the important aspects in conducting discourse analysis is having sufficient cultural knowledge, as recognising the common frame of reference within a culture is crucial to identifying and understanding discourses in a society the way they are understood and acted upon by members of that group. Without a grasp on the common frame of reference which enables people to act in relation to one another, meaningful elements could be missed or understood differently from the actors within that discourse. However, personal limitations also come to play in research of one’s native culture, as it can be too familiar, and even personal, making it difficult to recognise biases and “blind spots”. (Dunn & Neumann, 2016)

Studies in the field of social psychology also recognise that as most of the representations that make up “identity” are perceived as ontological reality, something habitual, natural, of common sense, the constitutive nature of identity is often overlooked by society (Moloney & Walker, 2007). Social categorisation and the assimilation of people to ingroup and outgroup prototypes, a process which in social psychology is understood to underlie construction and emergence of the concept of identity, is also (at the very least) partly motivated by uncertainty (Hogg, 2003).

The social psychological approach to group processes provides a framework for identity-related research in other fields as well, as it not only gives us the advantage of knowing to ask questions of our own biases but can also help understand the human component in fields that at times seem far removed from the cognitive processes of an individual. Even when analysing states as actors in the framework of international relations, the fact that states are made up of human beings, their social interactions, and environments remains unchanged.

Nevertheless, even as identity remains a widely used concept in numerous fields of research, the criticisms on the overuse and relative ease for misuse of the term must not be overlooked. As Berenskoetter (2010) puts it, much of the criticisms around the concept of identity arise from the fact that identities are hard to recognise and the term itself is seen as too ambiguous and easy to reduce to another step in a chain of causality.

However, studying identities might suggest how certain interests develop (Dunn & Neumann, 2016), providing a better understanding of the system of meanings individual actors draw upon in their actions. The concept of identity, in the constructionist view, is not causally linked to or constitutive of “interests” which in turn could “motivate actions”. (Berenskoetter, 2010)

Constructivist approach argues that identities are not given natural, unchanging entities, but rather constructed from cultural practices such as ideas, norms, values, and symbols (Berenskoetter, 2010), that in turn are negotiated through extant discourses in society (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1969).

Perhaps the most difficult questions to answer about the usefulness of identity as a concept in research is its apparent unstable nature. If identities are negotiated based on discourses in societies, they are stuck in a state of perpetual change. The fragmented and changing nature of identities is something Sarup also pointed out in “Identity, Culture, and the Postmodern World” (1996). However, this could also be seen as a potential strength of the identity concept, as it adapts to the changes in the prominent discourses in a society.

Therefore, it is necessary, if not even crucial, to analyse public discourses consistently in order to keep track of the possible changes in what constitutes a group's identity.

2.2. Methodology

2.2.1. *The wider framework*

This thesis applies the Making Identity Count framework as the main methodological approach to analysing discourses represented in the products of the modern hanbok retailer Leesle. The methodology is outlined in "Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database" (2016), edited by Ted Hopf and Bentley B. Allan, and constitutes the principal methodology used in the international research project Making Identity Count, which has assembled identity databases for US, UK, USSR/Russia, China, India, France, Brazil, Japan, Germany, and Italy, based on a standardised sample from eight years spanning from 1950 to 2020 (Julka & Kumar, 2021).

The method uses the tools of discourse analysis to extract categories of identities from a variety of widely circulated texts from centres of culture and power (Hopf & Allan, Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database, 2016). The standardised sample text used in the MIC project belong to five genres: leadership speeches, newspapers, history textbooks, novels, and movies. (Allan, 2016)

These texts are examined by trained analysts who extract possible identity categories from them, following rules of coding. First, the analyst will look for answers for the question "What does it mean to be X?". The answers (i.e., identity categories) are looked for inductively, based on the text itself and not the notions the analyst might expect to find. Then, the answers would be valued based on their valence (positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent); aspirational or aversive qualities; and significant others (who does X compare itself to). (Allan, 2016)

The same basic approach is used in this thesis, although with some alterations to better fit the specific case studied here. As Leesle is a modern hanbok retail brand selling their products, most of the product descriptions point out the positives. Therefore, the valence category was abandoned, as well as the aspirations category. Additionally, as this thesis operates in far smaller quantities of data compared to the MIC project, the few instances of negative representation or strong aspirations or aversions will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. The variations in valences of the codes would, in the case of this thesis, be statistically insignificant, yet at a closer look they can be rather revealing as they significantly differ from conventional product descriptions and advertising practices.

2.2.2. *The extraction and compiling of codes*

The first round of analysis extracts raw categories, which could then be recoded to fit the needs of basic quantitative analysis for identifying the most prominent categories. This is done by harmonizing the word use of the raw codes. However, the harmonizing process adds a greater level of abstraction, which with larger databases might be necessary, but in the framework of this thesis, would erase some valuable data. For this reason, categories were coded using a system that preserved the different steps in the process of abstraction, which were separated by a colon, starting from the largest category.

For example, first, a raw category of “Traditional Korean elements, mix with modern: challenging” was extracted from the following text:

The ready-made hoodie is symmetrical with the zipper going up from the centre, so the design of the neckline pattern is simple. Because of the structurally different features of Western clothes, the hood was turned upside down and pulled, and the natural look did not come out. (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023)

The raw category was then recoded to “Combining: hanbok and modern clothes: challenging” in order to, in later stages of analysis, examine the different codes under the category of combining: mainly combining what with what, but also other remarks about the process or concept itself.

The coding and recoding process was conducted using Apple Numbers program, which provides the tools for basic sorting and analysis of both numerical and textual information. The raw codes were entered in a table as seen on Figure 1.

Code	Text English	Comment	Product name	Price	Url
Brand: popularising Hanbok abroad	This is a new hanbok designed by the modern hanbok brand 'Lessel' and K-pop artist 'Card' to promote hanbok abroad.		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
Collaboration with Kpop artists	KARD X LEESLE HANBOK COLLABORATION		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
Combining: modern and traditional elements	It is a midi length dress that is easy to wear. While the neckline retains the traditional collar shape, I added a modern beauty by putting a big pocket and an understitch p(?)		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
Combining: modern and traditional materials	It combines hanbok and street look by boldly using conflicting materials such as leather, nylon, and traditional gold hemp.		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
High quality: small details	It's simple, but there are details that become points everywhere.		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
Practical: cold weather	No worries about the cold even in the cold winter with brushed mater(al). You will be able to wear it warmly.		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/
Simple	It's simple, but there are details that become points everywhere.		[LEESLExKARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leeslexkard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/

Figure 1: Extraction of raw codes

After the initial coding was finished, a column for “Code 1” for the recoding process was created. For the recoding, the initial codes extracted from the texts under the column “Code” were alphabetically sorted, so that the similar raw codes would be displayed together, making the recoding process faster and more accurate. Further quantitative analysis was conducted on the recoded, more abstract codes under “Code 1”. The recoding process is illustrated in Figure 2.

Code	Text English	Code 1	Comment for code 1	Comment	Product name	Price	Uri
Brand: production: domestic	A view of Lisle's Jeonju Hanbok Factory	Brand: production: domestic			Nao Jeogori	\$170.99	https://leesle.kr/product/nao-jeogori/1342/category/49/display/1/
Brand: reach	Liselle's products are sold at Musinsa Temple, Naver Designer Window, department stores, and overseas malls (LA)	Brand: popular			Dragon t-shirt	\$67.99	https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-t-shirt/1165/category/49/display/1/
Brand: unique	In the past, there have been many designs with motifs using Gonryongpo, but Liselle has a completely different feel. Feel it.	Brand: unique			Dragon t-shirt	\$67.99	https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-t-shirt/1165/category/49/display/1/
Brand: unique	Liselle is definitely different.	Brand: unique			Vertical Polar bear Padded Durumagi Jacket [Beige]	\$342.99	https://leesle.kr/product/vertical-polar-bear-padded-durumagi-jacket-beige/1275/category/50/display/1/
Breaking prejudices	Hanbok is cold! This is a design prepared to break the prejudice. The prejudice that hanbok is cold is because we have only seen thin hanbok for events worn in spring and autumn.	Hanbok: breaking prejudices			Poodle Hanbok Jumper [Ivory]	\$204.99	https://leesle.kr/product/poodle-hanbok-jumper-ivory/1785/category/50/display/1/
Bright	More if you wear it with a fresh color You'll have a bright feeling.	Look: bright			Meilland Jeogori [Ivory]	\$181.99	https://leesle.kr/product/meilland-jeogori-ivory/484/category/49/display/1/
Brilliance and modesty	Jeogori with two charms with brilliance and modesty - Please try it on once	Combining: brilliance and modesty		Combining two opposite things	Wildflower Jeogori [Navy]	\$170.99	https://leesle.kr/product/wildflower-jeogori-navy/1094/category/49/display/1/
BTS	Hanbok worn by BTS	Collaboration: K-pop artists: BTS			Dragon t-shirt	\$67.99	https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-t-shirt/1165/category/49/display/1/
BTS	BTS, Lee Hyo-ri, Yoo Jae-seok, and other celebrities are also wearing this hanbok.	Collaboration: K-pop artists: BTS			Papa jeogori	\$101.99	https://leesle.kr/product/papa-jeogori/1181/category/49/display/1/
Calm	The calmness given by the color scheme of the collar and pus.	Look: calm			Modern Ethnic Jeogori [Pink]	\$181.99	https://leesle.kr/product/modern-ethnic-jeogori-pink/1186/category/49/display/1/

Figure 2: Recoding process

Next, the recoded categories are sorted alphabetically, grouping all the abstract categories together. Based on this, the number of codes in each group is counted, showing how prevalent that group is compared to others. For example, the group of the category “Combining” has 28 individual codes in it, making it a visible category in the Leesle identity, but not the most prevalent one, as categories such as “Look” and “Practical” contain over 100 codes. The second level of abstraction reveals that the “Combining” category mostly refers to the combination of modern clothes and hanbok, but also combination of opposites, such as modern and traditional elements, materials or conventions on beauty, or, for example, formality and practicality. The third level reveals the notion that combining modern clothes and hanbok is difficult to do, and that Leesle’s designers attempt to achieve harmony between these seemingly contradicting styles. This initial stage of analysis is shown on Figure 3.

Code	Text English	Code 1	Comment for code 1	Comment	Product name	Price	Url
Brilliance and modesty	Jeogori with two charms with brilliance and modesty – Please try it on once	Combining: brilliance and modesty		Combining two opposite things	Wildflower Jeogori [Navy]	\$170.99	https://leesle.kr/product/wildflower-jeogori-navy/1094/category/49/display/1/
Formal vs practical	Formal and practical are actually contradictory concepts. Pursuing something special makes it far from practical. If you pursue practicality, it becomes a simple yet simple basic.	Combining: formal and practical			Romantic Pleasant Best Unisex [Pink]	\$262.99	https://leesle.kr/product/romantic-pleasant-best-unisex-pink/1116/category/50/display/1/
Loungewear	I wear more indoor clothes than outdoor clothes. There are new fashion wears that are on the rise these days, as people spend more time at home. We introduce necessities, lounge wear in this era.	Combining: hanbok and loungewear			LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori	\$170.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leesle-gogori-jeogori/1396/category/49/display/1/
Combination with modern clothes	It combines hanbok and street look by boldly using conflicting materials such as leather, nylon, and traditional gold hemp	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			[LEESLE×KARD] Tweed Short Vest Black	\$113.99	https://leesle.kr/product/leesle-x-kard-tweed-short-vest-black/1250/category/50/display/2/
Combination with modern clothes	Lisle is the best expression of that familiar yet Korean sentiment. I have introduced a design using dragon bo through the 'Yongan series'! This time, I combined it with a hoodie zip-up	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			Dragon hoodie [Black]	\$158.99	https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-hoodie-black/1730/category/50/display/2/
Mixed with modern fashions	This black-colored faux leather material allows you to enjoy both modern and traditional fashion.	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			Artificial Leather Top	\$193.99	https://leesle.kr/product/artificial-leather-top/1757/category/49/display/1/
Mixing with modern clothes: easy	So, the popularity has been increased so that it is possible to mix and match with ordinary clothes.	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			Nao Jeogori	\$170.99	https://leesle.kr/product/nao-jeogori/1342/category/49/display/1/
Mixing with modern clothes: easy	Nao Jeogori is highly useful because it is easy to coordinate with jeans, skirts, and jackets.	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			Nao Jeogori -Unisex	\$159.99	https://leesle.kr/product/nao-jeogori-unisex/1132/category/49/display/1/
Traditional Korean elements, mix with modern	But if we mix hanbok with the clothes we are already familiar with I thought it could be worn in so many different places.	Combining: hanbok and modern clothes			Daehan Hood zip-up	\$193.99	https://leesle.kr/product/daehan-hood-zip-up/1670/

Figure 3: Codes of the category “Combining” after recoding (in column “Code 1”)

2.2.3. Further analysis of codes

The categories extracted from the product descriptions on Leesle’s homepage are then in turn analysed in more depth, bringing in an element of intertextuality to determine if and how these ideas are represented in the wider discourse pertaining to Korean traditional national costume and Korean identity. The texts used at this stage are published by the Korean Government, prevalent Korean English-language newspapers, or academic (such as a detailed account of the extant garments in Ewha Woman’s University by Lee, Hong, and Chang, published in English in 2005), or from popular sources readily accessible at the Internet.

These sources were not coded in the same manner as the product descriptions at Leesle’s webstore, but rather the method of close reading was applied, with the aim of acquiring a more cohesive picture of the discourses that frequently feature in the examined sources.

Close reading is an essential methodology in humanities and is widely applied in contexts of analysing and deconstructing textual data and examining how texts create meaning. As a methodology, close reading can help reveal the realities a text represents, constructs, and perpetuates in a wider discourse by applying an “analytical lens” which helps to isolate meanings from a text and direct interpretations of that data. (Bizzocchi & Tanenbaum, 2011)

For the analysis of Leesle’s website and visual presentation of their products, the method of Multimodal Discourse Analysis was used. Multimodal Discourse Analysis applies

the basic tools found in critical linguistics and semiotics to visual communication. The main difference between the multimodal and conventional language-based approaches to discourse analysis is that Multimodal Discourse Analysis considers meanings in any mode explicit meanings. (Kress, 2011) For example, the use of colours can signal meanings associated with that colour in the society where the representation was created. The different modes of a representation often combine to signal meanings that, when only accounting for the language-based modes in a representation, would remain hidden. Kress (2011) also argues that discourses are realised in all modes, even though some modes are not “recognised” by some agents. This becomes crucial when examining representations in settings marked by power-difference, as the meanings conveyed by other modes than the prevailing “recognised” ones, are easily missed or deemed unimportant.

In the context of analysing Leesle’s webpage, the over-all representation of the brand’s products was analysed in terms of colour choice, layout, fonts, photo subjects, text placement, and the quality of the English translations.

3. Data

3.1. Selection of Data – Why Study Clothing?

It is often the case that social sciences overlook potential discursive properties of more utilitarian objects such as food or clothing. Hopf (2009), for example, when discussing the importance of extracting identity categories from samples across genres, mentions pulp fiction, opera and folk music, but leaves out food, national costumes, architecture, applied arts etc. Kress (2011) shows the potential of including meanings conveyed in different modes in examination of discourses, as discourses are realised in all modes accessible to a culture, and the modes that have not been widely recognised by power-structures acting as agents in a society are often discarded. That is especially pronounced in institutional settings like schools and universities, which traditionally have concentrated on mostly language-based modes.

When concentrating on mostly language-based data, a part of the larger networks of discourse, practice and social representations will remain unexamined, as was pointed out by Parasecoli in “Eating Pofers: Food, Culture, and Politics” (2019), where he argues that the study of food “forces critical theories to question distinction between discursive and non-discursive aspects of political processes [...]” (Parasecoli, 2019, p. 130).

Kress, one of the pioneers of critical linguistics, applies the basic set of tools used and questions asked in critical linguistics to visual communication (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Kress (2011) argues that language and written text is just one of the many modes that realise discourses, and partiality to language can be an issue concerning discourse analysis in general. He proposes a method of multimodal discourse analysis, which makes use of all the potential resources a culture can use in the process of meaning-making and implies that all the different modes are integral to this process. (Kress, 2011) The human experience, after all, is not purely linguistic, and thus recognition of the material side of existence is integral for attaining a fuller picture of the prevalent discourses in a society or a group of people.

Clothing, much like food, serves both a deeply utilitarian function in keeping the body protected against the weather, but it also carries and generates meaning, and is in turn tied to the construction of individual and cultural identities, as well as our relationship with both the social and physical environments around us. Barthes (1967) notes that material objects can indeed construct meaning and carry a message as they double as providing a physical function but also as signs.

When examining discourses of national identity, national costume is clearly a part of the discourses informing individuals of what it means to be part of the nation. As many of the

most notable names in constructivist identity research are part of the Western world, the meanings behind clothing might seem as irrelevant to national identity. However, Western clothing is the prevailing norm throughout the world, and thus has become something taken for granted, or as Hopf (2009) puts it, “naturalised daily practices”. Yet, in the same article he notes that identity is constructed through the mundane practices of everyday life. This makes a strong case for including clothing in research on identity discourses, and not only the “traditional costume”, which is marked by its “costumeness” i.e., the fact that it is no longer just normal everyday clothing, but something reserved for special occasions or even carrying within it an element of performance as opposed to ordinary activities.

Nonetheless, clothing did not signal identities only in older times with established laws dictating the symbolic meanings of garments, construction methods, fabrics, colours, etc., but it serves the same function to this day. Not only are there still discourses signalling what is appropriate to wear to formal, casual or official events (as noted by Barthes (1967)), but many groups, especially ones with identities not widely acknowledged or accepted, use clothing to signal their way thinking, acting, and existing in the wider society (Hayfield, Clarke, Halliwell, & Malson, 2013). Traditional clothing of non-Western peoples also took on this role when confronted with the dominant Western society and culture, especially in the second half of the 19th century when the ideas of nationality, national culture and nation state appeared in wider discourse (Llobera, 1994). This could also be the reason why national costumes have preserved the style and form they had in the second half of the 19th century, as the regular (especially formal) clothes people wore in their everyday life acquired a significant role in distinguishing their wearers from the predominant Western culture and setting them apart as different from it, as having a distinct quality that was interpreted as national identity.

3.2. The Brand, Leesle

The brand Leesle was established in 2011 by Hwang Leesle, who, after working with traditional hanboks for weddings since 2006, wanted to make the clothes more fashionable and better compatible with the modern lifestyle. (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017)

Leesle is a well-recognised brand in the industry and has become one of the most prominent hanbok brands, with a customer base around the world. (Im, 2018) Leesle’s products have also been worn by various K-pop stars like Jimin from BTS (Leesle, Fluffed Sapok Slacks [Black] -Unisex, 2023), and Taemin from SHINee (Kpopmap, 2020). The brand has

collaborated with groups such as MAMAMOO, most recently with the K-pop group KARD through the Hallyu-related collaborative contents planning and development support project CAST, with the aim of promoting hanbok abroad. (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017)

Leesle aims to bring hanbok back as a natural and stylish option for everyday wear as well as promoting hanbok and the Korean culture abroad (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017). In an interview to The Korea Herald, Hwang Leesle noted that: “Insiders are supportive of my attempt, saying ‘Clothing that neglects the consumers and the era will eventually die out,’ we need change and innovation” (Im, 2018).

Drawing on studies which have shown that brands can be resources for the construction of national identity (Bulmer & Buchanan-Oliver, 2010), this thesis looks also at the brand image of Leesle, as well as how the descriptions of Leesle’s products fit into the overall narrative on hanbok in Korea.

The cost of Leesle’s products falls into a comparatively affordable range, especially when compared to other prominent brands selling modern hanbok, like Danha. Prices for Leesle’s clothing analysed in this thesis ranged between \$1,135.99 for the most expensive product, a Lambskin Hanbok Rider Leather Jacket designed in collaboration with KARD, and \$29.99 for a Bandana Scarf, which could also be worn as a top. Most products fell around the \$200 range.

For this thesis all the descriptions of products listed on Leesle’s website under both men’s and women’s categories of “outwear” and “top”, as well as a selection of women’s dresses were examined. As not all products had English descriptions available, in total the descriptions of 98 different products were analysed, and 771 codes were extracted from the product descriptions.

After conducting the preliminary analysis of the listed descriptions, the appearance of the online store itself was analysed using the method of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis.

For getting an overview of the prevalent discourse on hanbok, materials published by The Korea Foundation, a non-profit organisation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea were used, as well as articles from prominent English-language Korean news outlets, such as the Korea Herald and The Hankyoreh. Other sources include magazines like Vogue and Magniffisance, and articles produced for the Hallyu! The Korean Wave exhibition in The Victoria and Albert Museum in the UK, as well as the online collection of The Asian Art Museum (Asian Art Museum, 2017). A study detailing the extant garments in

the Ewha Woman's University will also be used in providing historical background on hanbok. Otherwise, there are few studies written about hanbok in English-language academic research, and as this thesis' main aim is to examine the popular discourse on hanbok and how it has been related to Korean national identity, easily accessible materials in wider circulation were deemed more suitable for this thesis.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1. Categories of discourses in Leesle's product's descriptions

The following introduces and describes categories extracted from the coding of Leesle's product descriptions. Altogether 771 codes were extracted from the descriptions of 98 products. The counts of raw codes in each category are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Number of raw codes in identity categories extracted from the analysed texts

Number of raw codes	Category
1	SO: US and UK; SO: Vietnam
2	Eco-friendly; Cost; Men
3	Couple look; Market research; SO: Other brand; Pattern
4	Corona virus; Crowdsourcing; SO: China; Tradition
6	Korea/Koreans; Modern clothes
7	Coordination with other clothes
8	Choice; Collaboration with K-pop artists
9	Details; SO: Japan
10	Design
12	Customer input
13	Unisex
18	Symbolic meanings
23	Traditional Korean
24	History
28	Combining
37	Hanbok
42	Comfortable
47	Traditional hanbok
93	High quality
117	Practical
158	Look

4.1.1 Ancestors

The category of *Ancestors* consisted of 4 codes. The context was mostly related to aesthetics, but also memories of the grandparents of the MZ generation. Leesle's products are targeted mostly towards the MZ generation, which includes people born from 1980's to the 2010's, however the brand advertises certain basic items like the Nao Jeogori and Papa Jeogori as suitable for all ages.

4.1.2. Brand

On its webpage, under the introduction of the brand, Leesle states that the passion of the brand's main designer and CEO, Hwang Leesle, is to "introduce Hanbok to people's everyday life" (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017). The brand promises to make hanbok part of Korean popular culture and lead the hanbok industry into a new revival and economic vitality. They also wish to spread Korean values abroad and educate future generations on the traditions of hanbok. These goals were all represented in the descriptions of Leesle's products, especially presenting the popularisation of hanbok as the brand mission. Leesle portrays itself as ambitious and unique, notably in comparisons to other modern hanbok brands, emphasising Leesle's willingness to strive for the representation of different aspects of the tradition of hanbok, instead of simply using traditional patterns on typical modern clothing. Other brands were mostly mentioned in comparison with Leesle's products and portrayed as cutting corners in design and quality, making the clothes uncomfortable and having less variety in cuts and designs compared to Leesle. The exception to this was hanbok by Kim Byeong-gil, which has also been worn by celebrities like BTS's Jeon Jungkook and Lee Hyo-ri (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023).

Leesle's production is based in Korea, and in an interview to The Korea Herald in 2018, when asked about the brand headquarters' location in Jeonju, Hwang Leesle said she wants to "show that a mega-brand can be launched in a small city like Jeonju" (Im, 2018). The aspect of domestic production was also mentioned under products like the Nao Jeogori and Dragon T-shirt, which had longer descriptions about the design process and product details. Other brands were also said to have moved their production abroad, trading quality for price.

Another important aspect of Leesle's brand image was its consumer-friendly attitude. Leesle is shown as always keeping the experience of each customer in mind, making clothes that are durable and easy to coordinate with each other and the items people already have in their wardrobe (category of Coordination with other clothes which had 7 codes).

Furthermore, the product descriptions mention how the design will affect the wearer, by brightening their complexion or making the face look smaller, for example. It is also mentioned on several occasions that Leesle's clothes are designed to look good on the body and especially in movement, not only on hangers in the store.

The brand's customers are often portrayed as a community, using the word Reslers to describe their "fan base", for example (Leesle, Nokya Jeogori [Green], 2023). Leesle values customer input in the process of creating new products, designing articles upon request, letting people vote for which designs will be put into production, and using crowdsourcing to fund new projects. It is also mentioned that as the brand is popular, people need to enter their orders quickly, as the products available at the crowdsourcing round will be sold out in a matter of minutes (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023).

Leesle's mission of popularising hanbok abroad and introducing Korean values to an international audience is also disclosed in their product descriptions. They encourage people to wear hanbok when travelling to "show off the beauty of Korea to foreign tourists and friends" (Leesle, Traditional Pattern Graphic Tube Top [16 types], 2023) and partnered with the K-pop group KARD in order to promote hanbok abroad – this is clearly stated under every product designed in partnership with KARD. Leesle is also working together with Korean state institutions like Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, to promote hanbok to foreigners, but also Koreans themselves. (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017)

4.1.3. High quality

Another category connected to the brand image is *high quality*, which in total had a code count of 93. Leesle positions itself as a brand with much experience in designing and manufacturing hanbok, thus having the skills needed to integrate the unique characteristics of hanbok with modern clothing. For example, it is regularly mentioned that Leesle's technicians and designers have the high skill levels required to sew the traditional style collars, something that is regarded as one of the most difficult parts in sewing hanbok.

High quality and thought-out design also relate to comfort – *comfortable* is another prominent category in the descriptions, all together with 42 codes. Mostly, comfort in clothing is defined by freedom of movement, use of quality materials, practical designs (for example products featuring deep pockets), and ease of dressing. That holds true to the collar design as well, with Leesle's designers adjusting the collar shapes according to different needs of customers: higher collars for winter wear, more open angles for people with short necks, etc. Leesle's head designer and CEO Hwang Leesle also has academic background in

hanbok research and is said to be an expert on the design of earlier hanbok, using her skills and know-how to make Leesle's designs comfortable but also unique and versatile (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023).

Some project descriptions also feature a short recounting of the design process, highlighting the thought-out qualities of Leesle's designs, but also the challenges that need to be overcome during the designing and testing of new products. The recounting of the design process was most prominent under the printed T-shirts and hoodies but was also featured under the basic sweatshirts with hanbok collar designs. These products had a rather detailed description of the process of sampling and choosing fabrics and printing options, with emphasis on the brand aiming for the highest quality and durability.

The use of high-quality materials figured throughout a significant part of the product descriptions, highlighting different qualities of the materials which made them suitable for a specific kind of product, for example tightly woven fabrics for sweatshirts and sweatpants to increase durability, soft fleece with little "hair loss" for winter wear, materials with good draping for emphasising silhouettes (a crucial characteristic of traditional hanbok). Use of natural fabrics such as linen and cotton was also mentioned, together with their respective qualities, for example the insulation properties of wool (Leesle, Sochangui Maxi Coat, 2023) or the cooling effect of linen for summer wear (Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023).

Leesle shows its detail-oriented attitude as a part of the brand's high-quality image. Expert sewing is highlighted several times, as well as its crucial role in making clothes more durable (Leesle, Linnenia mid-Jeogori, 2023) (Leesle, Brushed cotton dress, 2023) (Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023). The descriptions call attention to details such as buttons, goreum straps, different variants of collar designs, garment shaping with darts, showing that much thought went into these small aspects of the garment as well (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023) (Leesle, Raum Jeogori, 2023) (Leesle, Bon Durumagi Short, 2023).

However, it is also acknowledged that with high quality comes high cost, especially for a brand with comparatively small domestic production lines. The idea behind the Papa hanbok was to streamline the production as much as possible, with the aim of making it a "national hanbok". For this product, Leesle conducted market research in Japan, as kimono and yukata have become successful options for everyday clothing for not only the Japanese, but also internationally. Kimono, yukata and haori are a popular item in second-hand stores in Estonia too, especially the second-hand stores in Telliskivi Loomelinnak together with The Baltic Station Market in Tallinn and Aparaaditehas in Tartu which cater to a more fashion-oriented client base. The kimono style cut has even become a regular style for fast fashion

brands like H&M. Hwang Leesle even admits to being jealous of the Japanese success in popularising their traditional attire. (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023)

4.1.4. Modern Hanbok

Another category of codes was centred more around modern hanbok, and not necessarily Leesle's brand image. This category was coded as *hanbok* and consisted of 37 codes in total. The prejudices connected to hanbok were mentioned throughout the descriptions of the products and were mostly connected to hanbok being uncomfortable and not fit for the needs of modern life. Hanbok was also said to be too hot for summer, or too cold for winter. At the same time, hanbok is viewed as something that would represent the Korean nationality and be part of the Hallyu wave. This aspect of hanbok has also garnered interest from the Korean Government, collaboration with Korean state institutions for supporting the development of modern hanbok is mentioned in the descriptions of several Leesle's products. Leesle also promotes wearing hanbok while travelling as something that could represent Korean culture abroad. Some products are specifically presented as good option for travelling, highlighting versatile wearing options and ease of packing as features.

4.1.5. Characteristics related to the appearance and style of the product

The descriptions centring around the appearance of the products were all grouped together under the category *look*. Simple, sophisticated, luxurious, stylish and unique were the most prominent adjectives used in the descriptions of Leesle's products.

The uniqueness of Leesle's clothes manifests predominantly in the distinctive design choices like the hanbok collar type, textured fabrics, asymmetry, and print. The King Dapho is described as having shoulders which "are covered with gold leaf to create a unique look" (Leesle, KING DAPHO, 2023), the Traditional Pattern Graphic Tube Top as having a "Unique design that draws attention with modernized Korean traditional patterns" (Leesle, Traditional Pattern Graphic Tube Top [16 types], 2023). The count of codes referring to a unique appearance was 33, making it the most prominent category under *look*. Some items were also described as special, but this referred more to hidden details or use at special events, adding a more personal quality to the word, as for example seen in the description of Lettering Fluffed Dress (designed in collaboration with KARD): "It was hidden and added specialness" (Leesle, [LEESLE×KARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black], 2023), referring to the detail of an inside button placket.

Subtlety, neatness and natural beauty were also mentioned repeatedly. Hanbok is traditionally seen as a simple design with flowing lines and harmonising colours, drawing

inspiration from the surrounding nature (The Korea Foundation, 2013), all of these attributes were applicable to Leesle's products too, and can be seen in quotes such as: "Among the various aesthetics that Hanbok has, I like 'lightness'. It is a charming unpretentious natural dress" (Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023) or: "What design style did the Goguryeo people like? It's about cleanliness and neatness" (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023).

Another prominent category under look was *simple* with 13 codes. Hanbok is usually described as possessing a reserved beauty with small details that draw attention to the natural beauty of the wearer, instead of being the focal point themselves (The Korea Foundation, 2013). Leesle's Bon Durumagi was described as having "no other decorations besides the collar, goreum, and sympathy, so it is proud of its simplicity" (Leesle, Bon Durumagi Short, 2023) and the description of the Gogori Jeogori stated that "This unobtrusive simplicity is the charm of Goguryeo clothing" (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023).

Luxurious appeared in the descriptions 18 times, making it a noteworthy code as well. Often this quality comes from the fabric choice, like in the case of the King Dapho: "Glossy fabric is used for the collar and sleeve ends. Double the luxury!" (Leesle, KING DAPHO, 2023), or the Meilland Jeogori: "Made of luxurious jacquard fabric. A three-dimensional pattern rather than general printing" (Leesle, Meilland Jeogori, 2023). Details such as gold embroidery, pleating, lace or buttons were pointed out as giving the garments a luxurious appearance.

Several products were described as *sophisticated*, totalling 9 codes, often combined with adjectives such as sensual and provocative, giving the products a more modern feel. Another modern theme was that of the *street look*, which had a count of 7 codes. Korea, especially Seoul, is well-known for its street fashion, the style featuring in magazines like Vogue (Cho & Kim, 2012), and that particular quality is also represented in Leesle's designs, for example in the Tweed Short Vest Black, designed in collaboration with KARD, and described as combining "hanbok and street look by boldly using conflicting materials such as leather, nylon, and traditional gold hemp" (Leesle, [LEESLE×KARD] Tweed Short Vest Black, 2023).

4.1.6. Practicality

The most prominent quality that came through in the descriptions were that of practicality: the category *practical* consisted of 117 codes. Practicality was related to many aspects, one of them being the compatibility of modern hanbok with the Korean weather. Korea has considerable differences in temperatures throughout the year, the summers being

hot and humid while winters can get rather cold. Some items were described as suitable for all seasons, for example the Sun Git vest: “Keep a good collection of good things to wear all year round :)” (Leesle, Sun Git Vest, 2023), while others were designed for a specific season, like the Linen Bon Jeogori: “Can be worn cool in summer” (Leesle, Linen Bon Jeogori, 2023), or the Vertical Polar bear Padded Durumagi Jacket: “Long padding winter is now more than a necessity, it's a survival item” (Leesle, Vertical Polar bear Padded Durumagi Jacket, 2023).

Versatility is not exclusively tied to the weather, but also styling choices, age range, and the variety of events and situations the clothes can be worn at. Many products were described as suitable to wear anywhere: “Office look, guest look, daily look, etc. Lisle highly recommends it as an all-purpose item that can be worn!” (Leesle, [LEESLE×KARD] Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black], 2023).

Another aspect of practicality was hanbok’s cut, which, compared to Western clothing, can accommodate a larger variety of body sizes and shapes. This is the case, for instance, with the Hyacinth Jeogori: “Depending on the body shape, the width of the fastening can be different. It's a good product to wear without worrying about size” (Leesle, Hyacinth Jeogori, 2023). Some products are also designed with more modern techniques for achieving adjustable sizing, for example adding Velcro fastening (Leesle, [LEESLE×KARD] Moonlight Peony Cropped Tube Top, 2023). Customers are encouraged to make alterations for improving the fit of the clothes as well, ranging from simple jobs as moving the snap button on the collar (Leesle, Linen Bon Jeogori, 2023), to in-shop alterations for hemlines (Leesle, Il Wol O Bong DAPHO, 2023) (Leesle, See-through DOPO Vest, 2023).

Other aspects of practicality related to the needs of modern life, like using washing machines or having clothes suitable for training. Some of the products were especially designed during the pandemic and described as versatile loungewear. The Papa hanbok for example is described as: “Corona 19's social distance has increased the number of hours of stay at home throughout the golden holidays and weekends. [...] Hanbok that can be worn at home + Hanbok that can be worn in front of the house + Hanbok that can be worn even when going out for a festival or a trip = I made all of this into an all-in-one” (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023).

4.1.7. Unisex

The modern hanbok is shown to be mostly *unisex* – it is a visible category with a code count of 13, however, the fact that many of the products are unisex is apparent even after

taking one glance at Leesle's online store, without having to specify that quality under the product descriptions. Almost all the products that are under the men's category appear in the women's as well. However, the more traditionally feminine products such as the short jeogori designs, and skirts and dresses only appear under women's clothing.

4.1.8. Korean Traditions

In Leesle's product descriptions, the modern hanbok is compared to Western clothes and traditional hanbok, which are both portrayed as impractical: modern clothing due to the cutting of costs and rapidly changing trends, and traditional hanbok due to its long skirts, rich look and difficult care. For example, when discussing the modern Korean's reluctance to wear hanbok in the description of the Daehan Hood zip-up, the product's designer states: "At the same time, I understand. It is not suitable for long and rich traditional Hanbok when commuting to and from work or going to and from school. There are many opinions that it is burdensome because it is inconvenient to do laundry as well as activities" (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023).

However, traditional hanbok is also treated as a rich source of inspiration – its fabric and colour choices, goreum knot, collar designs, sleeve shapes, patterning and garment types such as the cheollik coat with pleated skirt, as well as hanbok's long tradition and changes through time are all drawn upon in creating new designs. Other elements from traditional Korean culture serve the same purpose: these include the traditional patterns of flowers, birds, dragons etc., traditional techniques such as embroidery, gold leaf embellishments, knots and quilting, but also the symbolic meanings of those elements, the historical rules and beliefs behind them.

4.1.9. History

The category of *history* consisted in total of 24 codes, most of them related to different dynasties known from Korean history. From the Three Kingdoms Period, Goguryeo and Baekje were mentioned, the Goguryeo kingdom being mostly associated with tomb murals, (which are also the earliest depictions of hanbok (The Korea Foundation, 2013) (Lee, Hong, & Chang, 2005)), but was also depicted as a prosperous society, where women had more rights than in later periods. The Leesle Gogori hanbok for example was designed based on hanbok depictions from Goguryeo tomb murals, and the description also included the following portrayal of the Goguryeo society: "In the Goguryeo period, women also liked to wear trousers. Women are skirts! Men were not pants! It was an open culture where you could freely enjoy dating, not gender discrimination" (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori,

2023). The Tree Kingdoms Period was also mentioned as a whole, but codes about the Joseon dynasty were the most prominent in the history category. The traditional hanbok of today took its form during the late Joseon dynasty (The Korea Foundation, 2013), therefore the Joseon Dynasty is mostly associated with hanbok today. Joseon king's attire was also mentioned several times, as the dragon motifs on the king's robe featured on several of Leesle's products.

4.1.10. Significant others

The significant others mentioned in the product descriptions were China, Japan, UK/US and Vietnam, with Japan and China being the most prominent in the significant other category. Japan was mostly mentioned in a positive light, with the international recognition and popularity of kimono being an aspirational goal for Leesle and modern hanbok in general. China, however, was mentioned in more negative contexts, notably concerning the "hanfu incident" where Leesle recounts an "absurd incident" where they received allegations from Chinese internet users about hanbok being Chinese dress (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023). Other mentions of China were more neutral and connected to the relatively inexpensive production costs in China and incorporation of Chinese traditional dress into modern fashions (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023) (Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023). UK and the US were mentioned in the context of their recognisable flags, the motifs of which have been popular in clothing design as well. In that instance both were seen as aspirational and providing the motivation behind the Daehan Hood zip-up sweater, which incorporates designs of the Korean national flag (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023). Vietnam was mentioned once, regarding lower production costs.

4.1.11. Collaboration with K-pop artists

Hanbok designers such as Cho Young-Ki and Leesle's CEO, Hwang Leesle, have mentioned the role of K-pop in the popularisation of hanbok in the past several years. In an interview to Hankyoreh, Cho Young-Ki notes that:

With hanbok, you have elements of lines and flow. The sochangui [a form of coat with side slits] that J-Hope wore for his barefoot dance had those strong points in mind, and it was just so beautiful to see the way the tail rippled. The qualities of clothing truly perform their role to the fullest when it comes together with a great artist. (Yoo, 2021)

Collaborations with K-pop artists were mentioned in Leesle's product descriptions as well, most notably the clothing line the brand designed together with the K-pop group KARD with the aim of popularising hanbok abroad. Additionally, as BTS is one of the most

successful groups in the K-pop industry and the best known internationally, the products worn by members of BTS featured a note about it as well. For example, the slacks worn by Jimin during the 2018 Melon Music Awards performance are still listed in Leesle's webstore and the note "BTS Jimin Wear" is written in red letters under the product name (Leesle, Fluffed Sapok Slacks [Black] -Unisex, 2023).

3.2. The Leesle Online Store – Presentation of Products

The over-all appearance of Leesle's online store is compatible with the ideas presented under the descriptions of the brand's products: the website features a simple design with white background, a clear simple font. The products are presented in an orderly manner, making it easy for a potential customer to grasp the selection available and compare prices and different options. Figure 4 shows the front page of the Women's category on Leesle's website.

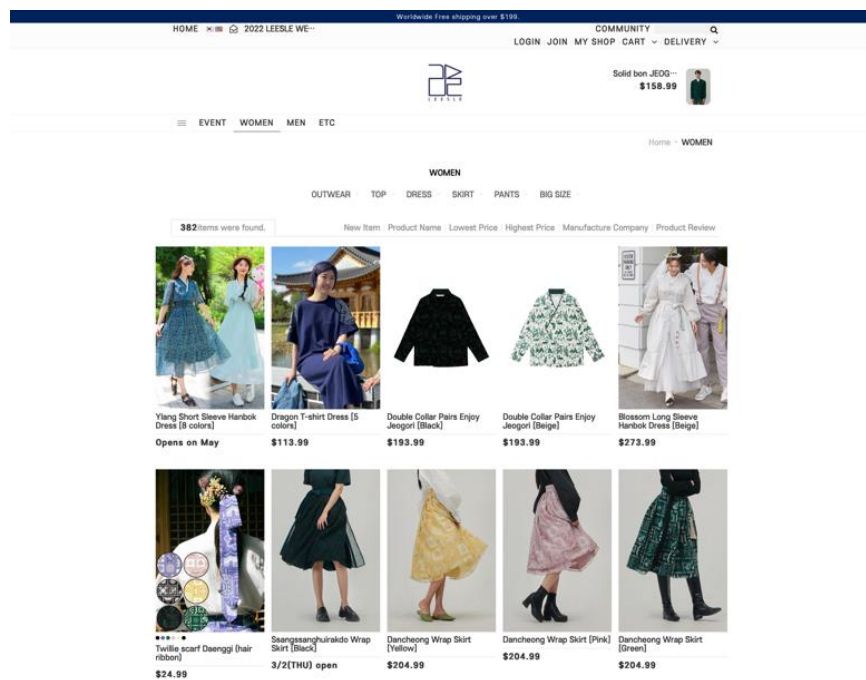


Figure 4. Over-all appearance of the Women's category

Source: (Leesle, Women, 2023)

The product descriptions follow the same logic of simple and easy to grasp presentation, providing textual descriptions, photos, charts on sizes and characteristics, as well as real fit and laundry information. Many product descriptions also showed photos depicting the product details, especially when those details were mentioned in the textual description as well. Photos describing the real fit of the products featured people of different

body shapes wearing the different size options of the product. These series of pictures could also feature a size and fit recommendation.

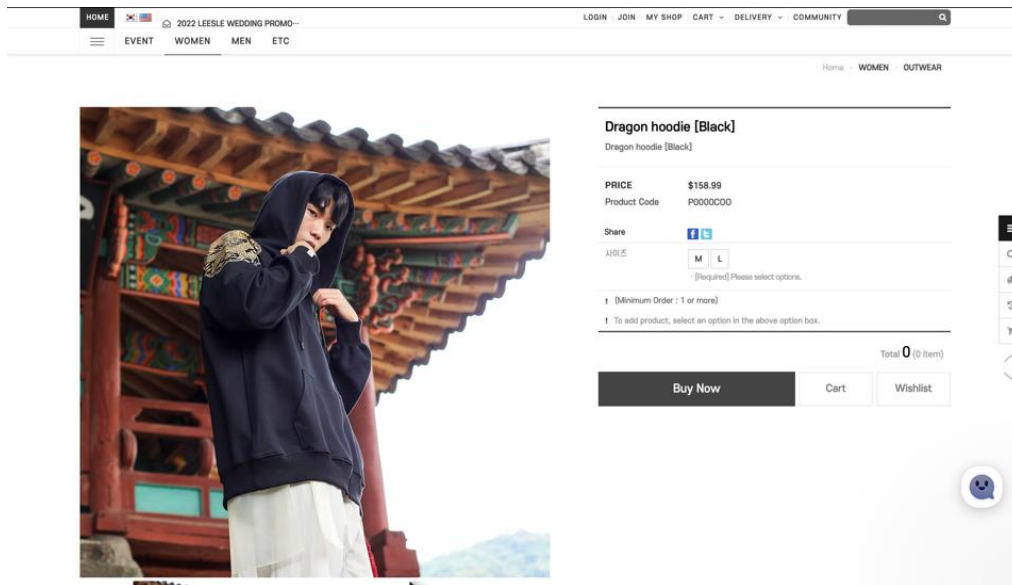


Figure 5. Basic product information

Source: (Leesle, Dragon Hoodie, 2023)

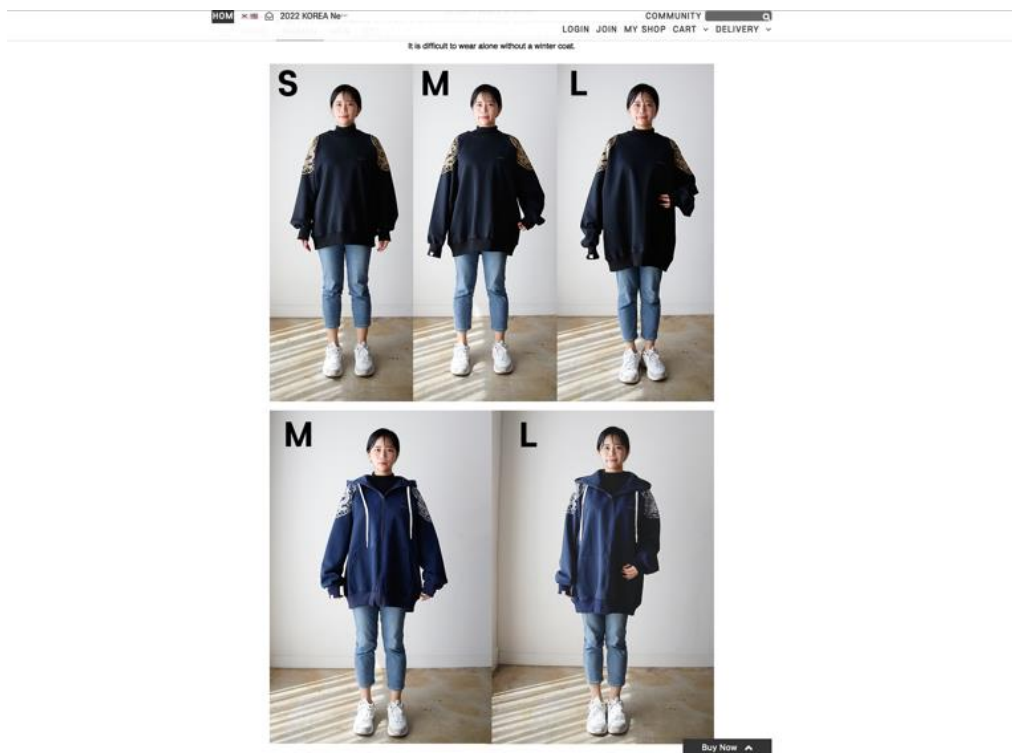


Figure 6. Photos depicting the real fit of the different size variants of the product

Source: (Leesle, Dragon Hoodie, 2023)



Figure 7. Detail view of the product

Source: (Leesle, Dragon Hoodie, 2023)

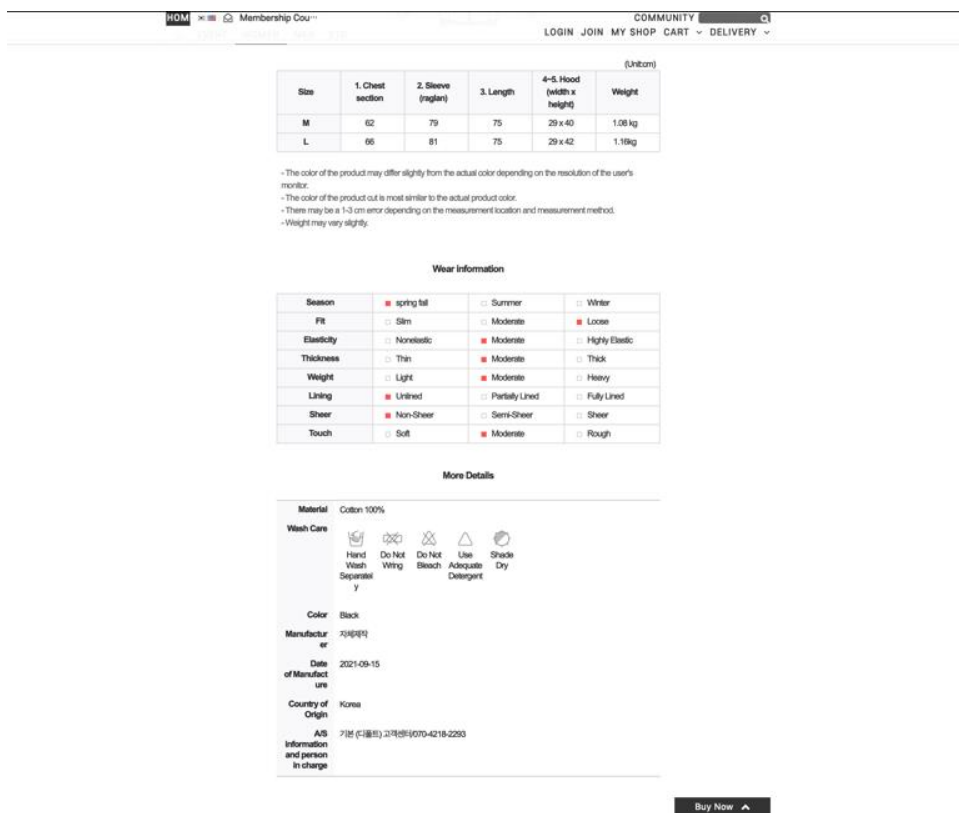


Figure 8. Size and laundry information

Source: (Leesle, Dragon Hoodie, 2023)

Every product had numerous photos depicting models wearing the garments included in the product description. Some pictures depicted the clothes being worn in everyday situations, some concentrated on communicating the feel and style of the product through the mode of photography, some photos concentrated on the fit and movement of the garment.



Figure 9. Picture under the product description of the Dragon Hoodie

Source: (Leesle, Dragon Hoodie, 2023)

In an interview to *The Hankyoreh*, Hwang Leesle conveyed that: “Whenever I’ve designed ‘everyday hanbok’ that can be worn in ordinary situations, I’ve gotten the same question time and time again: ‘When do you actually wear this?’ I sensed there was a need for images to show concrete situations” (Yoo, 2021).

A considerable part of product descriptions of Leesle’s modern hanbok feature photos depicting the garments worn in everyday situations. That is especially the case with the Nao, Papa, and Gogori hanbok lines, which all include numerous pictures of models wearing the hanbok in different situations, such as visiting a coffee shop, lounging, exercising, shopping for groceries, etc.



Figure 10. Pictures of the Nao Jeogori worn by a couple on a stroll through a park
 Source: (Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023)

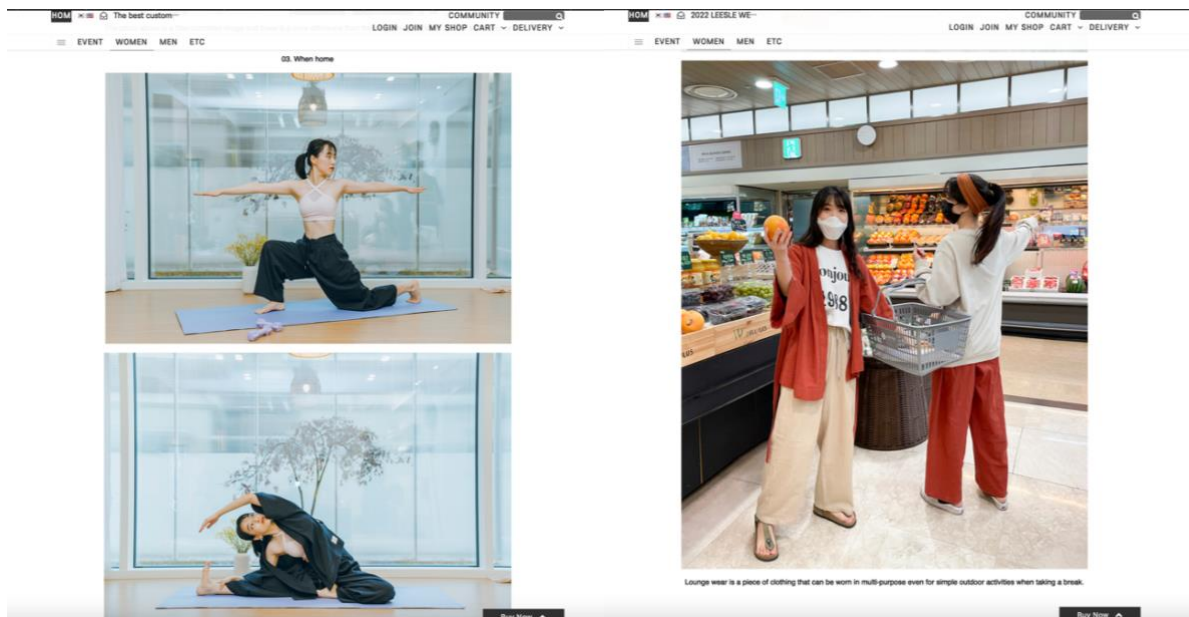


Figure 11. Pictures of the Gogori hanbok being worn for physical exercise and grocery shopping
 Source: (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023)

Even though the over-all look of the Leesle webstore is professional and clear, some product descriptions have errors related to the English translation and text placement. Most

product descriptions include text in both English and Korean as some parts of the descriptions are presented in pre-formatted visual representations which all have originally been in Korean. Some of these visual representations have been translated with providing the English text under the Korean representation, as seen in Figure 12.



Figure 12. Original representation in Korean with English text provided below

Source: (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023)

Some parts of the representations are left in their original form and language without providing English text neither as integrated into the design, nor under the original representations as plain text. An example is seen in Figure 13.

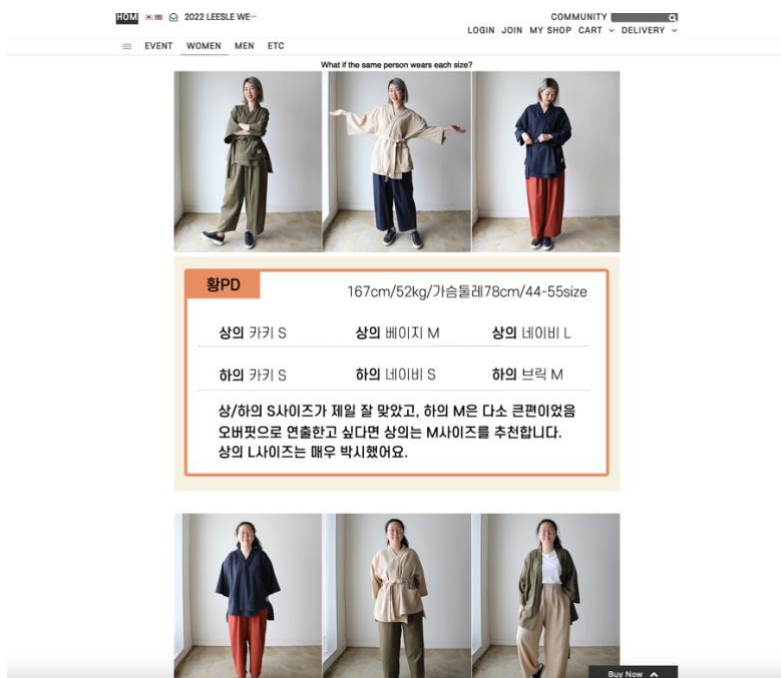


Figure 13. Korean text with no translation

Source: (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023)

Some products featured English descriptions integrated into the visual presentation in the same way as the Korean text. However, a notable characteristic of these kinds of English descriptions were connected to problems of formatting. In many cases, parts of the English text were missing due to formatting issues as demonstrated in Figure 14.

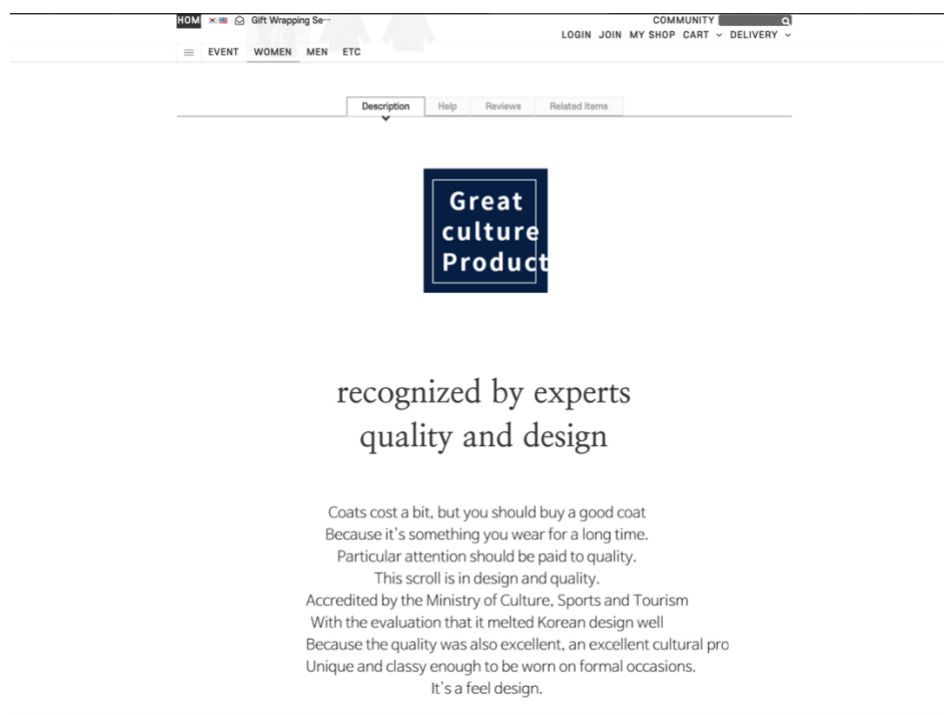


Figure 14. Formatting issues with English text (third line from the bottom)

Source: (Leesle, Men's New Pentagon Git Durumagi Coatt, 2023)

The English translations in the product descriptions was often confusing and inconsistent, most notably in the spelling of the brand name and terms delineating parts of clothing. Some of the forms of the spelling of Leesle, which is the official translation, included for example variations such as Lisseul and Resle.

As the structure of hanbok differs significantly from that of western clothes, some details, such as the goreum strips for example, lack an English equivalent. At times, these were called goreum, for example in the description of the Colour button Hanbok Jeogori: “Double collar and check color matching, instead of goreum. I gave a point with a button” (Leesle, Color button Hanbok Jeogori, 2023), sometimes it was referred to as fastening and pus: “The fastening part is in the form of a hanbok pus” (Leesle, Artificial Leather Top, 2023).

Another characteristic of the translations was their apparent straight translation from Korean without accounting for the difference in structures and phrases of the two languages. These translations were often confusing and made the text look unprofessional. Instances of confusing use of English include descriptions such as the following:

The most basic of hanbok coats is, of course, a scroll. There are no other decorations besides the collar, goreum, and sympathy, so it is proud of its simplicity. What is simple? It's perfect to wear this outfit to that outfit! (Leesle, Bon Durumagi Short, 2023)

Some errors in the translations, such as translating 철릭 (*cheollik*) as cheorrik (Leesle, Deep Green Flower Wrap Dress, 2023) suggest that a translation software was possibly used in the translating process – Korean script does not differentiate between *l* and *r* so this might be an easy mistake for a translation software to make while Korean people themselves are aware of the distinction as Latin script and English words are widely used in Korean society.

5. Discussion

5.1. Implications for the concept of identity

Hanbok literally means the clothes (*bok*) of the *han*, i.e., Korea or Koreans. Even as the tradition of Korean clothes has been around for millennia, the term hanbok itself was adopted only in the late 19th century when after the opening of Joseon to the world, Koreans needed to differentiate their everyday clothing from the garment styles that came from the West (Kim J.-Y. , 2023). This also shows how the concept of hanbok itself is relational – before encountering the Western powers, Koreans had no need for defining their clothes as anything other than just clothes with functions defined according to the needs of their own society, but as they came into contact with different approaches to clothing, it became necessary to differentiate between the traditions.

Leesle’s product descriptions also bring attention to the reality that most of the garments Koreans wear today are of Western origin, for example, this was explicitly stated in the description of the Daehan Hood zip-up: “The pants and shirts we wear all the time are Western clothes” (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023).

The concept of identity, and indeed of categorisation in general is relational. This is widely acknowledged in identity studies in various fields from social psychology (Hogg, 2003) (Abrams & Hogg, 2003) to international relations (Hopf & Allan, Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database, 2016). In order to construct a group’s identity, a perceived outgroup is needed which gives the ingroup the ability to compare certain characteristics between the two groups, thus constructing itself as a separate entity with distinct characteristics which in turn make up the group’s identity. In the Making Identity Count framework, these outgroups, or “others” as defined by Edward Said in “Orientalism” (1978), are coded and analysed as Significant Others (SO), and make up an important category in the construction of national identities (Hopf & Allan, Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database, 2016).

Leesle’s product descriptions mention the “others” as well, as seen from the codes collected for this work. Even though the significant others category is not prominent by the number of codes, it nevertheless stands out as important, especially in terms of emotional value. Notably, mentions of China were the most negatively charged out of all the codes analysed, and it becomes even more visible when considering the presentation of the “hanfu incident” on Leesle’s website, where it is initially introduced featuring a gradually darkening background, making the viewer anticipate something ominous while scrolling down the page.

Hwang Leesle also mentions comments from Chinese internet users in an interview given to The Hankyoreh: “Often, when one of the Chinese internet users tries to pick a fight in the replies, I’ll just quietly click on the ‘report’ button“ (Yoo, 2021). Cho Young-Ki of CheongUi MuBong also addresses the question of originality in the same interview. In a comment about Chinese internet users’ posts which effectively accuse him of plagiarising or appropriating Chinese traditional clothes Cho notes that:

What they’re doing now is gathering examples of things that look ‘similar’ to their eyes and calling them ‘copies.’ But the ‘originals’ they’re citing aren’t even their own. They’re calling the cheollik [military coat] ‘Chinese,’ but it’s Mongolian. It’s exasperating to see the kinds of absurd arguments they make. (Yoo, 2021)

The discussion about neighbouring countries’ influences on each other’s clothing styles highlights the relational aspects and the roles of “significant others” in the processes of categorisation and identity formation.

Relational tendencies can be seen as defining modern hanbok as well – it is contrasted to regular modern clothing, which is mostly based on Western clothing styles, but also traditional hanbok. Both were presented in ambivalent terms, on the one hand describing them as uncomfortable and cheaply made or incompatible with the modern lifestyle, and on the other hand as a rich source of inspiration. What is notable considering the perspective of identity construction, is that modern hanbok defines itself as related to, but separate and distinguished from both the prevailing norm of Western style everyday clothing and the rigid conventions of traditional hanbok. Therefore, both Western clothing and traditional hanbok could be seen as significant others for the identity of modern hanbok, “significant” as they play a crucial role in defining modern hanbok, “others” as modern hanbok still clearly sees itself as different.

Another characteristic which came through in the descriptions of Leesle’s products and can be connected to relational aspects of identity was the combination of different, or even opposite concepts to create something unique. Combinations of such concepts as formal and practical, brilliance and modesty featured in the product descriptions, but the most prominent of the combination category was the combination of hanbok and modern clothes, which is essentially what modern hanbok entails. Leesle brought attention to different parts of both the Western and Korean clothing traditions, for example using the French *toile* printing style to depict motifs from Korean folk art (also called *minhwa*) (Leesle, Jikryong Shirt Jeogori Korean Folk Art Toile, 2023). This demonstrates that even though Korean and

Western traditions are defined as different or even opposite when describing Korean culture or hanbok on a larger scale, it does not necessarily mean an antagonistic relationship or mutual exclusivity of the two traditions, and can even serve as a source for inspiration, something to be experimented with and that can motivate novel approaches. Leesle's product and the concept of modern hanbok overall fits well into the larger narrative on Korean fashion and its fluency in creating unique and dynamic styles by mixing different elements, something that is considered to give fashions designed in Korea a distinctly Korean sensibility (Cho & Kim, 2012).

The relation between traditional and modern hanbok also serves to illustrate the complex connections between discourses that construct national identity – many of them can have ambivalent, even contradictory relationships *vis-a-vis* one another. As Allan (2016) notes, such relations are easy to miss with purely statistical analysis and thus make the use of both interpretive and quantitative methods in the analysis of identity discourses crucial for obtaining a more comprehensive understanding of (national) identity.

5.2. Historical influences

The first known depictions of hanbok can be traced back to tomb murals from the Three Kingdoms Period (57 BC – 668 AD), where it looks quite different from what most people regard as the traditional hanbok today. The form associated with hanbok today, developed during the Joseon dynasty, when Korea was governed according to the Neo-Confucian ideology, and principles such as austerity and simplicity were at the foreground in every aspect of people's lives. (The Korea Foundation, 2013)

The basic values in Neo-Confucianism were connected to societal harmony and adhering to tradition, bringing about a rigidly structured society. Everyone had their own place and roles assigned to them and were expected to conform to these roles and societal norms. (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2023)

The Neo-Confucian thought affected all aspects of life, and aesthetics were no exception. Hanbok's famous silhouette were at first a necessity for the upper-class women in Korea, as the Neo-Confucian norms prohibit women to showing any skin in public, so they wore layers upon layers of undergarments to make sure no skin would ever show under the skirt, and that the woman's natural body shape would be hidden. (The Korea Foundation, 2013)

Another part of aesthetics directly influenced by the Neo-Confucian philosophy was that of harmony. The colours and details of hanbok had to exist harmoniously together, just

as the people in society. Colours had symbolic meanings, articulated in the *obangsaek* concept, that were widely acknowledged in society and applied to not only clothing, but also food like bibimbap, for example. Harmony and simplicity in form and colours stood behind other creations of Joseon Dynasty Korea as well, one notable example being the famous Korean moon jars, which Kan Ho-Sup, a fashion professor in Hongik University likens to Korean sense of fashion as well, stating that Korean fashion

is lyrical and earthy, like a white porcelain moon jar which has a simple and subtle beauty. The moon jar is white overall but reflects varying shades of light and dark. Its symmetry is imperfect, but the form is harmonious, nicely rounded but with a resolute strength. (Cho & Kim, 2012)

Harmonious combining of different elements was also a feature described in Leesle’s products, as well as the asymmetrical features of traditional hanbok and its simple nature as seen from the descriptions of Leesle’s products which emphasise harmony, simplicity and the seamless integration of hanbok’s asymmetrical features with modern clothes. For example, in the description of the Daehan Hood zip-up, Leesle emphasises the process and challenges of combining Western and Korean style clothing, highlighting their struggles in achieving a natural look that would follow the basic principle of finding harmony in natural asymmetry, subtle beauty and compatibility with modern lifestyles (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023). Part of the recounting of that process is demonstrated in Figure 15.

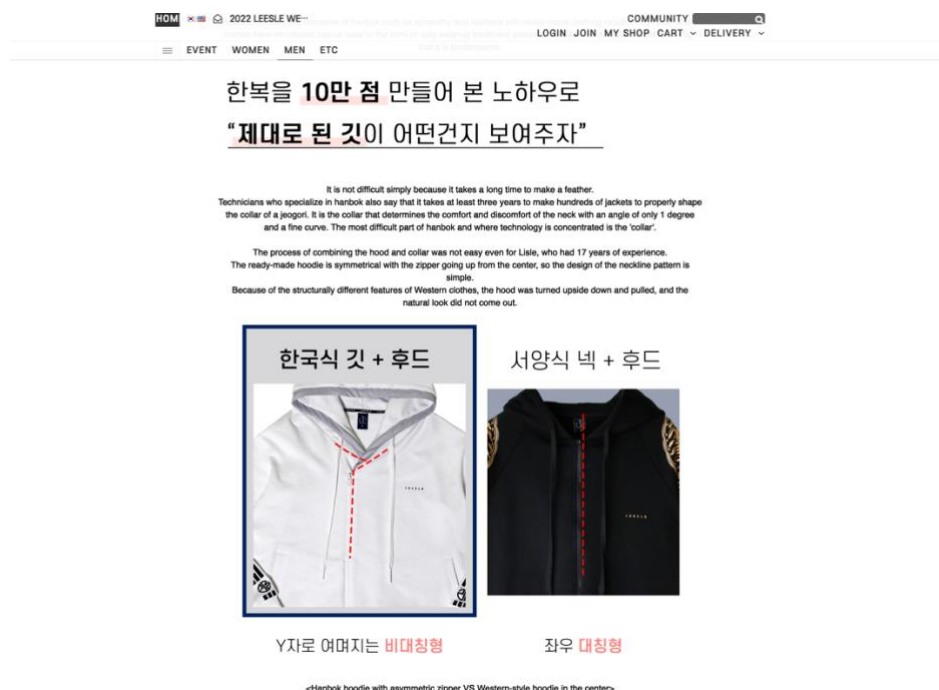


Figure 15. Description of the process of combining Western and Korean style clothes

Source: (Leesle, Daehan Hood zip-up, 2023)

Another typical feature of the Confucianist philosophy is that of respecting elders and people with considerable professional and especially academic experience. Leesle repeatedly mentions the experience their designers and technicians have in hanbok sewing, demonstrating both their authority and reliability in hanbok design.

During the Joseon dynasty, most men opted to wear simple white clothing to signal these values; Koreans even called themselves “the people clad in white” (Kim J.-Y. , 2023).

Simplicity was used as descriptive of Leesle’s products as well: an extract from the description of the Gogori Jeogori stated that “This unobtrusive simplicity is the charm of Goguryeo clothing” (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023); this emphasis on simplicity is revealed in short extracts as well, such as in one short sentence from the description of the Linen Bon Jeogori, which states quite explicitly that “Simple is the best” (Leesle, Linen Bon Jeogori, 2023).

In Neo-Confucianist ideology, maintaining strict social roles was seen as guarantee to societal harmony, so hanbok also took on the role of signifying the social class and status (age, gender and marital status) of the wearer (Kim J.-Y. , 2023). Even though these norms are no longer followed in modern Korea, Leesle’s products use these codes in evoking certain emotions in their customers. This was especially notable with elements originating from royal garments, such as the dragon *bo*, and phoenix print known from the Joseon queen’s official attire.

One of the best recognisable garments from Korean history besides the noblewoman’s attire from late Joseon Dynasty, is the *gonryongpo*, the official attire for the king. The central piece of the *gonryongpo* is the *bo*, an emblematic medallion sewn on the front and back of the king’s robes. It featured the image of a dragon, a symbol of strength and power, reserved for the use of the royal family. (The Korea Foundation, 2013) The *bo* depicting a dragon is well-known symbol of the Korean king and a popular traditional motif. It was used in the hugely successful Daechwita music video by Agust D (better known as BTS Suga), where it functions as a shorthand for identifying the main villain of the video as a tyrannical king.

The royal *bo* is also used as the focal point of Leesle’s Dragon line products, such as the Dragon Hoodie, the Dragon Sweatshirt, and the Dragon t-shirt. The descriptions of these products all refer to the king of Joseon Dynasty, even explicitly stating that “The moment you put it on, you become the king of Joseon” (Leesle, Dragon Sweatshirt, 2023). Since the time of the Three Kingdoms, and especially during the Joseon Dynasty, with the proclamation of the “Great code of Administration” in 1485, Korean people’s clothing choices were determined by their social status and official rank, and the royal dragon *bo* was exclusively

reserved for the official and ceremonial attire of the king and queen. In the modern times, however, it has lost its official meaning, but retained its symbolic status as signifying both the royalty of Joseon and the features associated with the king, mainly those of power, opulence, nobility, and strength.

The design of the royal *bo* has historically also been assigned the ability to ward off evil spirits. This belief is reiterated in the descriptions of the dragon line products as well. For example, part of the description of the Dragon t-shirt outlines the symbolic meanings and protective function of the dragon pattern: “I have used various patterns to give meaning to animals and plants. In particular, the dragon pattern is a divine being that symbolizes the authority of the heavens, it has an auspicious meaning to ward off evil spirits” (Leesle, Dragon t-shirt, 2023). The ideas of coexistence of humans and different spirits, and the ways how to protect oneself from those with evil intentions, but also negotiating with the supernatural date back to Korea’s ancient shamanistic traditions and are still influencing Korean’s worldview today (Seo, 2013).

As a culture with a strong Confucian background and history, ancestors are held in high regard by Koreans. Confucianism sees the traditions and customs of past generations as a valuable resource in keeping social order and harmony. The Confucianist ideal of the restoring antiquity (*fugu* 復古) also reflects the belief that the previous generations “knew better” and for reinstating harmony in the contemporary society, the ancient traditions of one’s ancestors must be studied. (Mäll, 2009)

Confucian ideals can be found throughout the product descriptions of Leesle’s hanbok. The Papa hanbok line, for example, calls up images of one’s grandparents, acknowledging their values by implementing them in the style of the design, and prompting customers to remember their own grandparents. “Do you remember the linen clothes worn by the grandfather and grandmother? [...] The design was inspired by ramie clothes. So I named it Papa Jeogori and Papa Pants in the sense of clothes worn by his grandfather” (Leesle, Papa Jeogori, 2023).

As already mentioned above, the first depictions of hanbok originate from that time period, notably from tomb murals in the Goguryeo kingdom (Lee, Hong, & Chang, 2005). Although hanbok scholars claim that hanbok has retained its core features since its first known descriptions from the Three Kingdoms period (1st century BC – 7th century AD) (Lee, Hong, & Chang, 2005), Leesle’s main designer, Hwang Leesle, notes in an interview given to The Hankyoreh that most Koreans do not recognise Korean attire from outside of late Joseon

Dynasty as authentic hanbok, but rather as Chinese or Japanese, as they are not accustomed to the clothing styles worn by Koreans of earlier dynasties (Yoo, 2021). In addition to popularising hanbok both in Korea and abroad, Leesle also wishes to broaden people's understanding of hanbok by introducing the earlier versions of Korean attire in their product line – Leesle Gogori hanbok and Nao hanbok lines both draw inspiration from the Three Kingdoms period (Leesle, LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori, 2023; Leesle, Nao Jeogori, 2023).

5.3. Hanbok and the modernisation of Korea

After nearly 500 years of closed doors policy during the Joseon Dynasty, Korea started to open up in the 1880's. The last decades of the 19th century also saw the first generation of intellectuals who had acquired at least a part of their education in the West. Those people were among the first to start advocating for westernisation of Korean attire, calling the traditional clothing which still adhered to the strict hierarchy and social rules of the Joseon society impractical. (The Korea Foundation, 2013)

During the same time, the West lauded itself not only as a civilisation among equals, but as the superior, most developed one, with colonies of Western powers, such as the British Empire, reaching their historic heights. This idea of the West as the more advanced and superior civilisation lay the foundations of the concept of "Burden of Civilisation", which was, among other things, used to justify colonialist rule. (Bowden, 2018) The attitudes toward hanbok as something impractical and unfit for modern life held by many Westerners and Koreans who had received their education in Western countries also reflect the strong biases towards the "modernity" of Western culture prevalent at the time.

These sentiments became increasingly more prolific during the 20th century. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, especially after the beginning of democratisation of South Korea in the 1980's, Western styles were increasingly adopted by the South Koreans, and hanbok became regarded as ceremonial costume worn at traditional holidays and special occasions like weddings and funerals. (The Korea Foundation, 2013) And even as the 1980's saw the birth of Korean own fashion industry with the first domestic brands selling off the rack clothing and original designs that, unlike in the 60's and 70's were not direct copies taken from Western magazines, the everyday clothes of South Koreans were still distinctly Western, especially in official and work settings. (Yang, 2012)

In the 1990, the prevailing sentiments towards globalisation and social interconnectedness were rather optimistic (Turner, 2010). This also reflected in the choices of the new generation of Korean consumers, whose preference of cosmopolitan styles and

Western clothing rose rapidly in the 1990's, spurred on by the ever-growing number of Western luxury brands available on the Korean market. The 1990's are also known as the beginning of K-Pop and Korean popular culture in general, which perpetuated the spread of Western culture even further. (The Korea Foundation, 2013)

Nevertheless, these trends have started to change in the late 20th and early 21st century. Already in the 1990's, while Western influences seemed to be at all-time high in South Korea, hanbok began garnering some international attention (The Korea Foundation, 2013). In 1993, Lee Young Hee debuted at Prêt-à-Porter Paris, showcasing her hanbok collection "Clothes of the Wind" (Hart, 2018).

5.4. Government promotions

During the 21st century, the Korean Government has organised numerous events throughout the world to promote hanbok, and President Park Geun-Hye wore hanbok in several official meetings and trips, something that many called the "hanbok diplomacy" (The Korea Foundation, 2013).

The Korean government has also designated October the 21st as Hanbok Day and now regards *hanbok saengwal* as National Intangible Cultural Heritage. The term *hanbok* was also included in the Oxford English Dictionary in 2021, so hanbok has clearly become a recognised and celebrated tradition not only in Korea, but also internationally. (Kim J.-Y. , 2023)

Several of Leesle's products have also been designed by the support of Korean Government institutions, most notably the collaboration of the brand with the K-pop group KARD in the framework of the Hallyu-related collaborative contents planning and development support project CAST, which is hosted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and organized through the Korea Craft & Design Culture Promotion Agency. (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017)

5.5. Hallyu as establishing opportunities for promotion of hanbok abroad

More recently, K-dramas and K-pop have contributed significantly in popularising hanbok, and as the Hallyu wave keeps growing, so will the global community's exposure to Korean fashion. Hallyu is described as a "glocal" phenomenon, popularising Korean culture around the globe. (Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

This provides ample opportunities for modern hanbok to become increasingly more established as a stylish fashion choice around the world, much like the Japanese kimono has become in recent years. These aspirations are also visible in Leesle's brand image and product descriptions. On its homepage, Leesle states that making hanbok an integral part of Korean popular culture is a crucial part of the brand's mission (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017).

For now, K-pop is still the most notable part of the Hallyu wave phenomenon, but K-dramas are becoming more popular internationally as well. In the Hallyu report for 2022, Korean historical dramas were counted as part of the reason why hanbok has been garnering increasingly more interest in Korea and abroad. (Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023). Both K-pop and dramas were mentioned in Leesle's online store as well, some products were highlighted as having been worn by some member of a famous K-pop group.

Even though the direct economic impact of the export of cultural products might not be as significant as it seems at first glance, it has still benefitted Korean tourism industry, as well as internationally raising awareness of Korea, its people, and history, and has also enhanced Korea's reputation abroad (Parc, 2022). Modern hanbok, even as it is still a more local phenomenon confined to the borders of South Korea, has potential to become a notable part of Korea's cultural exports. Leesle, for example, already has stores in over 50 locations outside of Korea (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017), and as Korean culture keeps attracting increasingly more international attention, overseas interest in hanbok is bound to increase.

However, as seen above, competence in the English language might pose a challenge to conducting business overseas. Even though the total expenditure on private English education of Koreans in 2022 reached up to 26 trillion won (US\$20 billion), English education in Korea is targeted towards performance in language tests, with relatively little significance placed on the practical use of the English language (Kang, 2023). The Korean English teaching system is described as inefficient when considering the money spent on education and Koreans' communicational skills in English. This "English craze" has roots in both history and the prevalence of the US economy on the international stage, but also the highly competitive society of Korea, where outstanding scores in English language tests can give extra credits to grant access into the country's top universities. (Kim B.-R. , 2015)

5.6. Changing sentiments

The everyday needs of the higher-class people of Joseon Korea differ highly from the average young Korean today. That is also one of the reasons behind why for many Koreans the first association with traditional hanbok is that it is uncomfortable and impractical. As most of the functions served by traditional hanbok are no longer necessary and are even considered bothersome –like the silk fabric, which traditionally displayed wealth, but nowadays is just considered difficult to wash, or the long skirts designed to cover up women’s bodies, which might get in the way of free movement– Leesle claims that combining essential details and design philosophy pertaining to traditional hanbok and historical Korean society with modern clothes is a harmonious way to make hanbok compatible with modern life, without losing the traditional aspects which still make the clothes look beautiful to modern customers as well.

The many prejudices connected to traditional hanbok, and the modern people’s unwillingness to wear it are also part of the reason why Leesle’s descriptions of the modern counterpart emphasise comfort and practicality over everything else. This is clearly visible in the codes extracted from Leesle’s product descriptions with practicality being the most prominent category of all. High quality also relates to the goal of popularising and introducing hanbok to Koreans and foreigners alike. In an interview to The Hankyoreh, Hwang Leesle stresses the high-quality aspect of modern hanbok, relating it to Leesle’s mission of popularising hanbok:

Experiencing modern hanbok can lead people to traditional hanbok. If we want that to happen, then quality is crucial. If the clothing falls apart after just a few washes, that’s not going to need them to the next stage of experience. (Yoo, 2021)

5.7. Highlighting women’s experiences

During the Joseon Dynasty, women were mostly confined to the home and expected to perform domestic tasks. This gave rise to *gyubang* culture, i.e., Korean boudoir culture, which gave a tradition of highly skilled handicrafts like jogakbo-making and embroidery. (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2023)

Leesle’s products still relate to the intricate culture of *gyubang*, with the head designers being women of considerable expertise in their craft. Great attention is paid to details, just as was the case with jogakbo-making and traditional Korean embroidery.

In the past, *gyubang* arts gave women an outlet to express themselves, each piece becoming a recounting of that person's life and thoughts. Only recently have the *gyubang* arts, such as bojagi become regarded as artworks, as before they were considered to be crafts rather than art (Asian Art Museum, 2017).

The same sentiments are visible in attitudes towards clothing today, especially traditional attire. When the pieces showcased on runways in Paris or New York are often regarded as art, especially in the case of renowned designers such as Iris Van Herpen for example, traditional clothing, such as Estonian rahvariided or Korean hanbok is still seen as part of a handicraft tradition, rather than art tradition.

Modern hanbok, however, is making its way to the runways on the fashion hubs of the world during the annual fashion weeks. Leesle has shown its products in Milan, Paris, and New York, as listed on their webpage (Leesle, 오! 한복한 인생 리슬, 2017). Modern hanbok might thus draw more attention on the art made by women, to works with traditional roots, but also novel creations, and bring international attention to the experiences of Korean women.

Conclusion

Examining the discourses represented in the product descriptions listed in the online store of the modern hanbok retailer Leesle, demonstrates how meanings conveyed through modes other than language-based data can also relate to identity discourses. Even as the data used for the extraction of identity categories was mainly language-based, it was nevertheless connected to the products themselves, simply outlining the meanings behind the clothes.

The modern hanbok also provides an interesting framework for examining the relational aspects of the identity concept, as it is delineated by several significant others, which might even seem contradictory at a first glance – the extracted codes demonstrate that modern hanbok regards itself as distinct from the typical Western style modern clothes as well as what is considered as traditional hanbok. This serves to further emphasise the constructed nature of the identity concept and how discourses on national identity are constantly negotiated and renegotiated, making it impossible for national identity to have a fixed or exhaustive meaning. As the modern hanbok movement gains more popularity in time, it might become as important to the Korean identity as traditional hanbok or K-pop is today.

Clothing and what is traditionally called “crafts” can also play a significant role in a person’s, or a group’s identity, as “lower art forms”, such as handicrafts like quilting (jogakbo), making clothes, and embroidery are often deemed to be, might constitute a significant part of the few outlets subjugated people have for the expression of their experiences in the world. As representations are constitutive of discourses, and discourses of identities, it is important to include meanings conveyed in modes other than the language-based ones best recognised by agents in positions marked by significant power-differences vis-à-vis the rest of the society. Otherwise, only a part of societal discourse will be accounted for in the analysis of a group’s identity. Continuing Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s metaphor, the inclusion of visual representations and modes used by applied arts (such as clothing) in representational practices, can help to give the subaltern a chance to speak (Spivak, 1988).

The results of the analysis conducted on Leesle’s product descriptions also helped to further illustrate how clothing not only serves a functional purpose, such as keeping someone protected from the elements, but also representing the society’s prominent discourses on concepts such as aesthetics, philosophical or religious views, or the social roles of different people. Ideas represented in the examined product descriptions were connected to not only traditional hanbok, but also the (Neo-)Confucian societal structures, ideas about austerity,

social roles, and ancestors, as well as different historical periods from the Three Kingdoms Period onward. The case of Leesle's hanbok also shows how many conventions about Korean identity, especially those pertaining to traditional hanbok originate from the Joseon dynasty, and how, when confronted with typical garments of Koreans from earlier times, Koreans seem to dismiss these types of clothes as Chinese or Japanese. The connection between the prevalence of Joseon dynasty culture and what is perceived as traditionally Korean today could be the subject matter of further studies. Another topic for further research could use a comparative approach in examining the form of traditional costume in Korea and Eastern Europe, for example, as the clothes that are considered as traditional hanbok, or Estonian rahvariided for instance, have maintained their late 19th century appearance. Examining these tendencies in the light of the relational nature of identity could further our understanding of how the concept of nationality was experienced and represented in everyday life.

Furthermore, the analysis of Leesle's clothing illuminates the potential Multimodal Discourse Analysis and interdisciplinary approaches to identity have. Even though Hopf and Allan (2016) have argued for the importance of a diverse sample of data in the process of extracting discourses on identity, the Making Identity Count project still samples only language-based data. However, for developing a standardised methodology and sample of non-linguistic representations of discourses, further studies need to be conducted.

References

1. Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (2003). Collective Identity: Group Membership and Self-Conception. In M. A. Hogg, & S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes* (pp. 425-460). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
2. Allan, B. B. (2016). Recovering Discourses of National Identity. In B. B. Allan, & T. Hopf, *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database* (pp. 20-46). New York: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190255473.001.0001
3. Asian Art Museum. (2017). *Wrapping cloth (bojagi)*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture: [http://asianart.emuseum.com/view/objects/asitem/items\\$0040:15377](http://asianart.emuseum.com/view/objects/asitem/items$0040:15377)
4. Barthes, R. (1967). *The Elements of Semiology*. London: Cape.
5. Berenskoetter, F. (2010). Identity in International Relations. In R. Denmark, *The International Studies Encyclopedia* (pp. 3594-3611). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
6. Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. London: Penguin Books.
7. Bizzocchi, J., & Tanenbaum, J. (2011). Well Read: Applying Close Reading Techniques to Gameplay Experiences. In D. Davidson (Ed.), *Well Played 3.0: Video Games, Value And Meaning* (pp. 289-316). Dartmouth: ETC Press.
8. Bowden, B. (2018). Civilization and its consequences. In *Oxford Handbooks Online* (pp. 1-13). Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935307.013.30
9. Browning, C. S., & Joenniemi, P. (2017). Ontological security, self-articulation and the securitization of identity. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 52(1), 1-17. DOI: 10.1177/0010836716653161
10. Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "identity". *Theory and Society*, 29, 1-47. DOI: 10.1023/A:1007068714468
11. Bulmer, S., & Buchanan-Oliver, M. (2010). Experiences of Brands and National Identity. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 18(4). Stable link: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2010.07.00>
12. Cho, S.-K., & Kim, Y.-S. (2012, Winter). Industry insiders on Korean Fashion. *Koreana*, 30-35.
13. Connolly, W. E. (1991). *Identity / Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

14. Dunn, K. C., & Neumann, I. B. (2016). *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
15. Fearon, J. (1999, November). What Is Identity (as We Now Use the Word)? Stanford University.
16. Foucault, M. (1965). *Madness and Civilization*. New York: Random House Inc.
17. Foucault, M. (1969). *Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.
18. Gallie, W. B. (1956). Essentially Contested Concepts. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series*, 56, 167-198. Stable link: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4544562>
19. Giddens, A. (1984). *The Constitution of Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
20. Hall, S. (1997). *Representation*. London: Sage.
21. Hall, S. (2018). The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power. In T. Gupta, C. E. James, C. Andersen, G.-E. Galabuzi, & R. C. Maaka (Eds.), *Race and Radicalization* (pp. 85-95). Toronto: Canadian Scholars.
22. Hart, L. R. (2018). *Revival of a Lost Art*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Magnifissance: <https://magnifissance.com/arts/artisanship/hanbok-designer-lee-young-hee/>
23. Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., Halliwell, E., & Malson, H. (2013). Visible lesbians and invisible bisexuals: Appearance and visual identities among bisexual women. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 40, 172-182. Stable link: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.07.015>
24. Hogg, M. A. (2003). Social Categorization, Depersonalization, and Group Behavior. In M. A. Hogg, & S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes* (pp. 56-85). Oxford: Backwell Publishing.
25. Hopf, T. (1998). The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory. *International Security*, 23(1), 171-200. DOI: 10.2307/2539267
26. Hopf, T. (2002). *Social Construction of International Politics*. London: Cornell University Press.
27. Hopf, T. (2009). Identity Relations and the Sino-Soviet Split. In R. Abdelal, Y. M. Herrera, A. I. Johnston, & R. McDermott (Eds.), *Measuring Identity* (pp. 279-315). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
28. Hopf, T., & Allan, B. B. (2016). *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database*. New York: Oxford University Press.

29. Im, E.-B. (2018, February 5). *[Herald Interview] Capturing hanbok's beauty with modern elements*. Retrieved April, 2023 from The Korea Herald:
<https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180205000636>
30. Julka, A., & Kumar, M. (2021). *Making Identity Count*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Making Identity Count: <https://makingidentitycount.wordpress.com>
31. Kang, Y.-S. (2023, March 7). *Private education spending up 10.8 pct in 2022*. From Yonhap News Agency:
<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20230307002900320#:~:text=Total%20expenditures%20on%20private%20education,data%20compiled%20by%20Statistics%20Korea.>
32. Kim, B.-R. (2015, June). The English Fever in South Korea: Focusing on the Problem of Early English Education. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, 2(2), 117-124.
Retrieved from: http://jespnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_2_June_2015/15.pdf
33. Kim, J.-Y. (2023). *Hanbok – traditional Korean dress*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Victoria and Albert Museum: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/hanbok-traditional-korean-dress>
34. Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2023). *2022 Analysis of Global Hallyu Status*. Seoul: The Korea Foundation.
35. Kpopmap. (2020, December 15). *Need A New Winter Look? Hanbok Fashion Can Give You Something Fresh*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Kpopmap:
<https://www.kpopmap.com/need-a-new-winter-look-hanbok-fashion-can-give-you-something-fresh/>
36. Kratochwil, F. (2008). Constructivism: what it is (not) and how it matters. In D. D. Porta, & M. Keating (Eds.), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences* (pp. 139-161). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
37. Kress, G. (2011). Multimodal Discourse analysis. In J. P. Gee, & M. Handford (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp. 35-50). London: Routledge.
38. Lebow, R. N. (2016). Identity. In F. Berenskoetter, *Concepts in World Politics* (pp. 73-87). London: Sage.
39. Lee, J.-E. (2011). New Women to New Housewives: Changing Discourses in Sinyōsōng, 1923-34. *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*, 90-121. Stable link:
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42772307>
40. Lee, K.-J., Hong, N.-Y., & Chang, S.-H. (2005). *Traditional Korean Costume*. Kent: Global Oriental.

41. Leesle. (2017). *오! 한복한 인생 리/슬*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/shopinfo/company.html>
42. Leesle. (2023, April). [*LEESLE×KARD*] *Lettering Fluffed Dress [Black]*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/leesle×kard-lettering-fluffed-dress-black/1272/category/48/display/1/>
43. Leesle. (2023, April). [*LEESLE×KARD*] *Moonlight Peony Cropped Tube Top*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/leesle×kard-moonlight-peony-cropped-tube-top/1247/category/49/display/1/>
44. Leesle. (2023, April). [*LEESLE×KARD*] *Tweed Short Vest Black*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/leesle×kard-tweed-short-vest-black/1250/category/50/display/2/>
45. Leesle. (2023, April). *Artificial Leather Top*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/artificial-leather-top/1757/category/49/display/1/>
46. Leesle. (2023, April). *Bon Durumagi Short*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/bon-durumagi-short-cream/1776/category/50/display/1/>
47. Leesle. (2023, April). *Brushed cotton dress*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/brushed-cotton-dress-brown/1277/category/48/display/1/>
48. Leesle. (2023, April). *Color button Hanbok Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/color-button-hanbok-jeogori-wine/1243/category/49/display/1/>
49. Leesle. (2023, April). *Daehan Hood zip-up*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/daehan-hood-zip-up/1670/>
50. Leesle. (2023, April). *Daehan Hood zip-up*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/daehan-hood-zip-up/1670/>
51. Leesle. (2023, April). *Deep Green Flower Wrap Dress*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/deep-green-flower-wrap-dress-green/1231/category/48/display/1/>
52. Leesle. (2023, April). *Dragon Sweatshirt*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-sweatshirt-deep-blue/1729/category/49/display/1/>
53. Leesle. (2023, April). *Dragon t-shirt*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-t-shirt/1165/category/49/display/1/>
54. Leesle. (2023, April). *Fluffed Sapok Slacks [Black] -Unisex*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/fluffed-sapok-slacks-black-unisex/1061/>

55. Leesle. (2023, April). *Hyacinth Jeogori*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/hyacinth-jeogori-ivory/1333/category/49/display/1/>
56. Leesle. (2023, April). *Il Wol O Bong DAPHO*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/il-wol-o-bong-dapho-pink/1764/category/50/display/2/>
57. Leesle. (2023, April). *Jikryong Shirt Jeogori Korean Folk Art Toile*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/jikryong-shirt-jeogori-korean-folk-art-toile-wine-pre-order/1330/>
58. Leesle. (2023, April). *KING DAPHO*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/king-dapho/1297/>
59. Leesle. (2023, April). *LEESLE GOGORI Jeogori*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/leesle-gogori-jeogori/1396/category/49/display/1/>
60. Leesle. (2023, April). *Linen Bon Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/linen-bon-jeogori-beige-unisex/1176/category/49/display/1/>
61. Leesle. (2023, April). *Linen Bon Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/linen-bon-jeogori-beige-unisex/1176/category/49/display/1/>
62. Leesle. (2023, April). *Linnenia mid-Jeogori* . From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/linnenia-mid-jeogori-navy/1172/category/49/display/1/>
63. Leesle. (2023, April). *Meilland Jeogori*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/meilland-jeogori-ivory/484/category/49/display/1/>
64. Leesle. (2023, April). *Nao Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/nao-jeogori/1342/category/49/display/1/>
65. Leesle. (2023, April). *Nokya Jeogori [Green]*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/nokya-jeogori-green/1093/category/49/display/1/>
66. Leesle. (2023, April). *Papa Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/papa-jeogori/1181/category/49/display/1/>
67. Leesle. (2023, April). *Raum Jeogori*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/raum-jeogori-pink/1156/category/49/display/1/>
68. Leesle. (2023, April). *See-through DOPO Vest*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/see-through-dopo-vest-black/1783/category/50/display/1/>
69. Leesle. (2023, April). *Sochangui Maxi Coat*. From Leesle:
<https://leesle.kr/product/womens-sochangui-maxi-coat-warm-gray/1023/category/50/display/1/>
70. Leesle. (2023, April). *Sun Git Vest*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/sun-git-vest-skyblue/1697/category/50/display/1/>

71. Leesle. (2023, April). *Traditional Pattern Graphic Tube Top [16 types]*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/traditional-pattern-graphic-tube-top-16-types/1886/category/49/display/1/>
72. Leesle. (2023, April). *Vertical Polar bear Padded Durumagi Jacket*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/vertical-polar-bear-padded-durumagi-jacket-beige/1275/category/50/display/1/>
73. Leesle. (2023, May). *Dragon Hoodie*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/dragon-hoodie-black/1730/category/50/display/2/>
74. Leesle. (2023, May). *Men's New Pentagon Git Durumagi Coatt*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/product/mens-new-pentagon-git-durumagi-coatt-navy/1480/category/50/display/1/>
75. Leesle. (2023, May). *Women*. From Leesle: <https://leesle.kr/category/women/159/>
76. Llobera, J. R. (1994). *God of Modernity*. London: Routledge.
77. Lynn, H. (2004). Fashioning Modernity: Changing Meanings of Clothing in Colonial Korea. *Journal of International and Area Studies*, 11(3), 75–93. Stable link: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43107104>
78. Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2012). *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis, A Multimodal Introduction*. London: Sage.
79. Mäll, L. (2009). Konfutsiusse suurus ja ulatus. In *Konfutsius* (L. Mäll, Trans., pp. 13-37). Tartu: Lux Orientis.
80. Marchart, O. (2012). Elements of Protest. *Cultural Studies*, 26(2-3), 223-241. DOI: 10.1080/09502386.2011.636194
81. Markova, I. (2007). Social Identities and Social Representations. In G. Moloney, & I. Walker (Eds.), *Social Representations and Identity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
82. McClellan, K. E. (2017). The British National Costume: Of Tweed and Tension. *Textile, Cloth and Culture*, 15(1), 86-107. DOI: 10.1080/14759756.2016.1256085
83. Moloney, G., & Walker, I. (2007). *Social Representations and Identity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
84. Morozov, V., & Pavlova, E. (2020). Popular Culture and Authoritarianism in Russia: A Study of Common Sense Through the Prism of Women's Fiction. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 73(2), 318-339. DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2020.1748872
85. Onuf, N. (1998). Constructivism: A User's Manual. In V. Kubalkova, N. Onuf, & P. Kowert (Eds.), *International Relations in a Constructed World* (pp. 58-78). London: Routledge.

86. Onuf, N. (2003). Parsing Personal Identity: Self, Other, Agent. In F. Debrix (Ed.), *Language, Agency and Politics in a Constructed World* (pp. 26-49). Armonk: M.E.Sharpe.
87. Parasecoli, F. (2019). Eating Power: Food, Culture, and Politics. In T. Marttila (Ed.), *Discourse, Culture and Organization* (pp. 129-153). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
88. Parc, J. (2022, August 9). *Korea's cultural exports and soft power: Understanding the true scale of this trend*. Retrieved April, 2023 from The University of Melbourne Asialink: <https://asialink.unimelb.edu.au/insights/koreas-cultural-exports-and-soft-power-understanding-the-true-scale-of-this-trend>
89. Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
90. Sarup, M. (1996). *Identity, Culture, and the Postmodern World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
91. Seo, J.-S. (2013). *The role of shamanism in Korean society in its inter- and intra-cultural contacts*. Tartu: University of Tartu Press.
92. Skov, L., & Melchior, M. R. (2008). *Research Approaches to the Study of Dress and Fashion*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School.
93. Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern speak? In C. Nelson, & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. London: Macmillan.
94. Stevens, C. (2002). Welsh Peasant Dress — Workwear or National Costume? *Textile History*, 33(1), 63-78. DOI: 10.1179/tex.2002.33.1.63
95. Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65-93. DOI: 10.1177/05390184740130020
96. The Korea Foundation. (2013). *Hanbok: Timeless Fashion Tradition*. Seoul: Seoul Selection.
97. Turner, B. S. (2010). Theories of globalization. In B. S. Turner (Ed.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies* (pp. 3-22). London: Routledge.
98. Victoria and Albert Museum. (2023). *Jogakbo – traditional Korean patchwork*. Retrieved April, 2023 from Victoria and Albert Museum: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/jogakbo-traditional-korean-patchwork>
99. Wæver, O. (2002). Identity, communities and foreign policy. In L. Hansen, & O. Wæver (Eds.), *European Integration and National Identity* (pp. 22-49). London: Routledge.
100. Weller, C. (1997). *Collective identities in World Society*. Bremen: FP World Soc., Inst. for Intercultural and Internat. Studies, University of Bremen.

101. Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization*, 46(2), 391-425. DOI: 10.1017/S0020818300027764
102. West, D. (2010). Beyond the Subject: Structuralism and Poststructuralism. In D. West, *Continental Philosophy: An Introduction* (pp. 173-208). Cambridge: Polity.
103. Yang, S.-H. (2012). Passion for Fashion Korean Style. *Koreana*, 26(4), pp. 4-7.
104. Yoo, S.-J. (2021, July 11). *Hanbok is evolving amid controversy*. From Hankyoreh: https://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_entertainment/1002991.html

Resümee

Magistritöö „Korea identiteedi representatsioonid moderniseeritud hanbokis, Korea identiteedi diskursuste analüüs moderniseeritud hanboki brändi, Leesle, toodetes“, analüüsib, millised populaarsed Korea identiteedi kohta käivad diskursused on esindatud moderniseeritud korea rahvarõivaste, hanboki, bränd Leesle toodetes.

Töös analüüsitakse 98 Leesle veebipoes kättesaadavat toodet ja nende toodete kirjeldusi, kasutades Making Identity Count meetodit, mille on välja töötanud Hopf ja Allan (2016). Leesle veebipoe kujunduse ja toodete esitluse kohta ülevaate saamiseks kasutati multimodaalset diskursusanalüüsi.

Toodete kirjelduste analüüsi tulemusel saadi kätte 771 koodi, millest kõige sagedasemad kirjeldasid moderniseeritud korea rahvariideid kui mugavaid ja praktilisi rõivaid, mille unikaalse välimuse kujundab traditsiooniliste ja tänapäevaste elementide kombineerimine. Leesle esitleb ennast kui brändi, mis disainib oma tooteid tuginedes brändi juhi, Hwang Leesle, akadeemilistele hanbokialastele teadmistele, ekspertidest õmblejate kogemusele aga ka koostööle klientidega.

Leesle tootekirjeldustest eraldatud koodid viitasid modernse hanboki seosele nii ajaloolise rõivastustraditsiooni kui ka tänapäevase rõivamoega, kuid samas piiritleb moderne hanbok ennast kui eraldi traditsiooni, mis kombineerides mõlema traditsiooni omadusi ja detaile, loob endale uue identiteedi ja funktsiooni Korea traditsiooniliste väärtuste ja ajaloo kandjana tänapäeva maailmas.

Leesle hanbok näitlikustab, kuidas identiteedi kontseptsiooni sisu konstrueeritakse ühiskonna diskursuste põhjal. Nagu rõivamoed, on ka see, mis mahub identiteedi kontseptsiooni alla pidevas muutumises, vastavalt diskursustele, mis mingil ajahetkel selles ühiskonnas levivad.

Rõivamoodide uurimine aitab välja tuua ka need diskursused ja tähendused, mida antakse edasi sellistes modaalsustes, mida ühiskonnas võimupositsioonidel olevad agendid ei pruugi tunnustada kui tähenduslikke, nagu näiteks rõivad, toit ja tarbekunst. Selliseid modaalsusi on oma kogemuste väljendamiseks ja jäädvustamiseks kasutanud eriti need grupid, kes muidu jäävad võimupositsioonidelt kõrvale – näiteks Koreas kujunes Joseoni dünastia ajal välja *gyubangi* kultuur, kus naised, kellel muidu neokonfutsianistliku ühiskonnakorralduse kohaselt puudusid võimalused samamoodi ühiskonnas kaasa rääkida nagu mehed, väljendasid oma arvamusi ja elukogemust näputöodes, näiteks *jogakbo* lapitehnikas ja tikandites.

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina, Betti Marie Peterson,

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) minu loodud teose „**Representations of Korean Identity in Modern Hanbok**, Analysis of Discourses on Korean Identity in the Products by the Modern Hanbok Brand Leesle”,

mille juhendaja on Alevtina Solovyeva Ph.D.,

reprodutseerimiseks eesmärgiga seda säilitada, sealhulgas lisada digitaalarhiivi DSpace kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.

2. Annan Tartu Ülikoolile loa teha punktis 1 nimetatud teos üldsusele kättesaadavaks Tartu Ülikooli veebikeskkonna, sealhulgas digitaalarhiivi DSpace kaudu Creative Commons'i litsentsiga CC BY NC ND 4.0, mis lubab autorile viidates teost reprodutseerida, levitada ja üldsusele suunata ning keelab luua tuletatud teost ja kasutada teost ärieesmärgil, kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
3. Olen teadlik, et punktides 1 ja 2 nimetatud õigused jäävad alles ka autorile.
4. Kinnitan, et lihtlitsentsi andmisega ei riku ma teiste isikute intellektuaalomandi ega isikuandmete kaitse õigusaktidest tulenevaid õigusi.

Betti Marie Peterson

18.05.2023