

Food Storytelling and Its Development in Gangwon Province, Korea¹-focused on Kim Yu-jeong's Novels-

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Abstract

Gangwon Province, located in the mid-eastern part of the Korean Peninsula, is blessed with beautiful mountains and beaches that offer some of the best sceneries and vacation spots throughout the year. It also provides a wide variety of food that embraces local identity. The mountainous region in the west and the seaside region of the east both add more colors to its local food in terms of recipes and ingredients. In addition, this study focuses on its renowned novelist Kim Yu-jeong, developing food contents through storytelling which was reflected on his works.

Keywords: *Gangwon Province, Chuncheon-si, Kim Yu-jeong, storytelling, local food*

1. Introduction

The consumers in the present times intend to get style, story, experience and even sensibility embedded in the products when they purchase goods. Considering this, storytelling is likely to play a role to expand the space in which the consumers experience by influencing their way of thinking, leading the consumers' change in terms of related activities and aspects. That is, story is to connect the consumers to products; storytelling is essential to stimulate consumers' sensibility. Such storytelling method in marketing is actively utilized in the recent years, adopted in the promotion of local brands or even a certain region.

In this study, among many fields of storytelling, food storytelling is chosen. The existing food storytelling can be classified into three categories according to the topic: First, the story is adopted from a human resource; it is a method in which a certain person and his/her related food are connected with each other. Secondly, the story based on a certain place, for instance, a local food which represents a local identity and culture. A local food differentiates its own locality from that of other regions. Lastly, it is a story that emphasizes food ingredients of local food. According to the climate and geography, the ingredients have developed differently. The characteristics that every ingredient has function differently behind the story of their own.

Like this, in general, one out of the three existed storytelling methods has been chosen to utilize so far, this study focuses on a certain region and finds out about a representative local character and his/her related materials. Furthermore, the local food implied in a sense of place is introduced to develop a sophisticated storytelling through a comprehensive survey man through a comprehensive survey considering nutritional function combined with general information of the food.

These days, many local governments try to promote their local food in order to revitalize the economy; developing original and unique food of their own becomes one of the most important agendas in the administration. In this context, the purpose of this paper

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is to promote visitors' interest in local food on the aspect of marketing and to expand the tourism to revitalize local economy.

Gangwon Province is chosen to study on this research. It accounts for almost half of the eastern part of the nation with its north bordered with North Korea. Its east is surrounded by 300km long coast. Gangwon Province is divided into two parts according to geography. The eastside called Yeongdong is abundant in seafood, so, the preserved food like 'jeotgal' and 'sikhae' developed in the region [1]. On the contrary, the westside of heavily forested Yeongseo exuberates in many sorts of herbs and crops. Such characteristics of the province provide a very good example for food storytelling utilizing colorful food contents. The stories in the food are chosen by analysis of documents regarding its cultural characteristic and historical figures. Through this process, Kim Yu-jeong, a famous novelist of Gangwon Province and the local food reflected on his works were selected in this study.

2. Previous Studies and Study Method

2.1. Previous Studies

The researches on food storytelling have gradually grown in number since 2008. They are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Previous Studies on Food Storytelling

Name	Contents
Kim Ji-hyeong, Jin Yang-ho(2008)	The human resources of the region around Gwangju in Jeolla Province; the stories about traditional food embedded in old houses
Cho Jeong-Suk, Park Han-shik(2009)	Traditional foods in Gangwon Province; suggesting step-by-step storytelling
Kang Jae-gu, Lee Jeong-hak(2011)	The classification of consumers according to the recognition of storytelling
Kim Gi-hong(2012)	Suggesting the possibility of the Korean cartoon series "Shikgaek or houseguest" as food storytelling
Yeo Ho-geun(2012)	The development of food storytelling using Korean apricots in Gwangyang, South Jeolla Province
Song Yeong-ae(2013)	Study on documents related to food storytelling in Korea

In short, most of the researches presented so far emphasize the importance and necessity of food storytelling, developing a new menu or tourism related to the existing stories. Furthermore, there have been practical studies on the consumer's behavior to analyze the effect of storytelling.

2.2. Subject of Food Storytelling

Storytelling is defined as a new term combined story with telling, meaning that 'telling' signifies 'expanding' through a wide variety of media. Storytelling is basically carried out on the premise of mutual interaction. It is an activity that passes the information that can be very private and subjective to others turning into interesting and lively stories. The existing food story telling is classified in three categories: (1) the story about a person; it is a story about person who develops a certain food or who cooks the food using a particular recipe. (2) the story based on place; it is a place which is famous for a certain food or traditional food in a region. The food ingredients are most likely to be materials produced within the region. Thus, the food is different from those of other regions. (3) the

story about food ingredients; it is a story that focuses on food ingredients to distinguish the differences between regional foods. The rarity and uniqueness of the food is common pride of the locals. In this regard, Gangwon Province-born Kim Yu-jeong provides very comprehensive food storytelling having local culture, uniqueness, a way of life in the region as well as various people reflected on his novels through local foods.

2.2. Food and Kim Yu-jeong's Cultural Contents

The functional and cultural elements combined together should be food called contents. It is important to draw the elements from the stories embedded in the food and through visual images, to realize visual storytelling of food contents. That is, it requires establishing the basis to utilize food culture as contents. To carry out this plan effectively, it is necessary to help communicate utilizing storytelling strategies and acquire various archetypical resources. In this case, Kim Yu-jeong's novels have provided very good resources. Lastly, the story bank which has strong basis for contents can offer differentiated services for consumers.

Among the food contents that symbolize Gangwon Province and Kim Yu-jeong, simple but nutritional ingredients such as herbs of Yeongseo and fresh seafood of Yeongdong region are chosen for the study. The local food of Gangwon Province generally has plain taste of nature. Even though recipes may differ the taste of food, most of food from Yeongseo, which is located in the mountainous area, is cooked without using meat while that of Yeongdong in the seaside uses anchovy or shells for seasoning food. In Yeongseo, it is easy to find the food using potatoes, corn, and buckwheat rather than rice. For example, ongsimi noodle soup whose main ingredient is potatoes, oksusubumbeok of corn porridge, gangnaeng-isujebi or hand-pulled dough soup with dried corn. Potatoongsimi is a variety of sujebi (a dumpling soup) in Korean cuisine, consisting of dumplings made from ground potato and chopped vegetables in a clear broth. It is a local specialty of Gangwon province, where a lot of potatoes are cultivated and harvested due to the cold weather. It has a relatively bland taste with a broth usually made from anchovies. The name ongsimi is a local dialect term for sae-al, a small ball made of grain flour or rice served in soups or porridge.

Makguksu of buckwheat noodle are considered local foods of Gangwon Province [1]. Makguksu is a little similar to Japanese soba; this Korean buckwheat noodle dish served in a chilled broth, sometimes served with sugar, mustard, sesame oil or vinegar. It is also a local specialty of the Gangwon province and its capital city, Chuncheon [2].

With simple ingredients, Gangwon Province has developed one-dish meal unlike other regions. As a result, the recipe is simple and seasoning or spicing is not in favor. Rather, food was perceived as medicine. So-called 'yaksikdongwon(藥食同源).' That is, this term was coined by ancient Chinese thought, which means 'Medicine and food lie at the same root.' Thus, in Gangwon region people prioritize fresh ingredient cooking seafood dishes and 'steaming' recipe is preferred to frying or pan-frying [2]. In conclusion, the recipes try to keep the natural condition of ingredients as they are and make the best use of natural flavors, gaining popularity among our contemporaries who value health above anything else.

3. Kim Yu-jeong's Life and His Novels

3.1. Novelist Kim Yu-jeong's Dramatic Life

Kim Yu-jeong was born in the village of Chung-ni in Gangwon Province on January 11, 1908. Even though he was raised in a wealthy family, the family fortunes, however, were whittled away by his older brother, and Kim spent much of his adolescent and adult life in penury. Kim left for Seoul to attend what is now Yonsei University. He made his literary debut with the publication of *Wayfarer of the Hills (Sangolnageune)* in 1933 and won

short fiction contests held by a major newspaper company such as ChosunDaily and ChosunJoong-angDaily.

In 1935, he became a member of the literary coterie, The Society of Nine, which included leading poets and fiction writers of the era. He has left thirty novels and short stories, most of them published in 1935 and 1936. Until he died of pulmonary tuberculosis on March 29, 1937, he stayed in his hometown, Sille Village in Chuncheon-si, Gangwon Province. The backgrounds in most of his novels introduce rural scenes of Sille Village in Gangwon Province [3].

3.2. Food Contents in Kim's Works

In Kim's works, many foods and crops appear as a means of explaining the characters or setting of the story. And they are interrelated with well-known local crops such as potatoes, corn or buckwheat. As mentioned earlier, in his 1936 story *The Camellias*, the heroine main character Jeomsun secretly gave a new potato to the hero to express her affection toward him, but he turned her down.

In the novel, there are lines: *I took a sip of red pepper paste from the pot; the three large potatoes, still hot and steaming, proudly lie on my hand.*

'Potato and red pepper paste' introduced in the novel can be most likely to be the most Korean foods of all with conceiving locality of Gangwon Province as well. Cognitively, potatoes remind readers of hometown and local lyricism.

There are also lines in the story of *the Camellias*: *I did not know what blew me away. I fell to the full blown yellow camellias.* On the contrary popular belief, the color of flowers signified yellow, not red camellias. The reason is that the camellias described in the novel are 'ginger trees' which were grown in Sille Village at that time. In the Gangwon dialect, camellia refers to ginger tree, which smells like ginger. The locals used the leaves of the tree as green tea and the flowers and the bark as medicine. Jeomsun has a resilient, shrewd character that is similar to tingling nature of ginger. Her way of expressing her affection naturally connects the readers with ginger tree. The characters' purity and indigenous beauty lyrically approach readers. It is not overstated that the local foods resemble the characters in the story. In Kim's another work, *Plucking Gold in a Field of Beans (Geumttaneunkongbat)* the background is the bean field as reflected on the title. His 1935 novel *Rice Cake (Tteok)* described a scene of the main character's eating rice cake coated with mashed red beans. In the story there is another steamed cake made of potatoes. Steamed rice cake in an earthenware steamer was the traditional way of making rice cake for Koreans before sticky rice took over upon the invention of iron pot. Now, there are hundreds of different kinds of Korean rice cake eaten year round. In Korea, it is customary to eat tteok soup on New Year's Day and sweet tteok at weddings and on birthdays. Rice is the most popular ingredient for cake but in Kim's novel there is also cake made of potatoes or buckwheat. Rice cakes are chosen for particular occasions depend on their color and the role they play in Korean traditions. Rice cake, potatoes, and red beans all symbolize rural lyricism. The local foods introduced in Kim's novels are as follows in Table 2.

Table 2. Local Foods Related to Kim's Novel

Name of the food	category
corn	Agricultural product
mandarin fish	Fish
braised leather carp	Fish
gingseng	Agricultural product
deodeok	Forestry product
pine nuts	Forestry product
mushroom	Forestry product
apple	Agricultural product
potato ongsimi(noodle)	Agricultural product
makgukksu(buckwheat noodle)	Special dish
chicken wings	Special dish
Korean honey	Forestry product
Korean beef	Livestock product
Korean pork	Livestock product

Adopted and revised in Ham Seung-si's thesis (2001, p.12) [4]

3.3. The Literary Village of Kim Yu-jeong

The Literary Village of Kim Yu-jeong, is located in a small village called Sille which is surrounded by mountains, just two subway stations short of Chuncheon. The village, founded in 2002, is easier access with the new subway line and ITX(express train) were constructed recently that carries tourists from the Seoul Metropolitan area. This line makes getting to Chuncheon (and the Kim Yu-jeong literary site) much easier with only a couple of dollars of fare. In Sille town there is a restoration of his birth house; the Kim Yu-jeong House of Literature is part of an effort to turn the whole village into a literature village commemorating the novelist. The house has an exhibition hall, a walking path, and a hiking trail. Inside the exhibition hall, his birth home and even a treadmill are reproduced in their original form. A variety of programs reproducing his works have also been organized. Since 2003, the Kim Yu-jeong Foundation has held the Kim Yu-jeong Literature Festival every May. The program includes the Storytelling competition, the conference on Kim Yu-jeong literature, the Children's Making Stories on Kim Yu-jeong's novels, the music concert, the traditional wedding ceremony demonstration, the folk plays(kite-flying, jegi-kicking, making straw ropes), drawing the characters of Kim's novels and finally making rice cake by pounding steamed rice. This event attracts thousands of tourists each year, which has become one of the representative contents among Kim Yu-jeong's literary works.



Figure 1. A Rooster-Fighting Adopted from a Scene from *the Camellias*

4. Development of Food Contents through Storytelling

In Kim's major work *Scoundrels(Manmubang)*, the main character Eung-chil earned a living by picking and selling pine mushrooms. He often exchanges them for some rice wine at the tavern. Actually, every region presents its own wine. Gangwon Province produces rice wine fermenting crops such as mushrooms, potatoes and corn. That is, it is named after 'The traditionalGangwonset of three.' These three kinds of wine require much care and take quite a long time to get fermented. Yet, their racy flavor stays true to the original ingredients [5].

Most of Koreans regard wine as a functional beverage, which plays a role of relationship buffer. Korea is one of the most competitive societies in the world. Under the circumstance, many people try to relieve their mind when drinking. Thus, wine is, more often than not, the most popular food at mealtimes. In this regard, the Kim Yu-jeong menu including wine is suggested. The traditional Gangwon wine set of three includes natural pine mushroom wine, potato wine, rice and corn wine. First, 'natural pine mushroom wine' made the best of the natural mushroom boasts its indigenous taste. The second brand is 'potato wine' or seaju. As already mentioned above, potatoes are typical crop in Gangwon region. Seaju represents its own local culture. Lastly, fine quality corn and rice fermented together is distilled liquor, 'Okseonju.' These three kinds of local wine all need a great deal of care. The process of fermentation is also very complicating.



Figure 2. A Set of Three Traditional Liquor in Gangwon Province

In his 1935 'Rain Shower,' Chunho's wife barely sustained a living by digging out deodeok, a mountain herb whose roots have restorative properties, instead of him. In the early 20th century at the rural region, planting crops or digging herbs are a major means of living for poor people. Gangwon-originated deodeok is very popular because of its good quality. Koreans eat deodeok, stirred up with hot red pepper paste, and sesame oil. Like this, Kim Yu-jeong menu consists of assorted crops and herbs that typically grow well in Gangwon. In 'Rain Shower,' the rice wine is another main food that has pretty strong impact. Even though his novel is somewhat connected to satirical symbolism, the back of the story lies in the life of poor farmers of the past. That is, the people of the story are interrelated to perpetual poverty. Furthermore, Kim himself reflected his poverty and sorrow into the novel. Due to this, the characters of the novel, the people of those days and Kim Yu-jeong share sorrow in common. That is the reason to choose 'rice wine' to comfort all of these. As known to the public, drinking is part of Korean culture and of Korean people's lives, especially, when suffering hardships. With the food contents mentioned above, comprising a menu of the deodeokgui and traditional rice wine of Gangwon Province can be suggested.

Literary Ingredient
Rice wine, mushroom, Bellflower roots, deodeok
Symbolism
Characters in the novel, People of the past, the rice wine to comfort Kim
Local Ingredient
Deodeok, mushroom, A set of three traditional wine



Figure 3. Kim Yu-jeong Menu with Deodeok and Wine

Deodeok complements the function of lungs. It is also efficacious to neutralize toxin and relieve swelling. Deodeok contains a great deal of saponin which is effective to ease coughs, phlegm and asthma. Due to abundant saponin, deodeok is good for intestines as well. In addition, it helps cure a respiratory disease such as bronchitis and a sore throat. When consumed with liquor, it helps relieve the hangover by its detoxification function. The deodeok dish is outstanding in terms of flavor, taste and nutrition. In oriental medicine, it has qi of coldness, so it is a food to relieve heat. As mentioned above, that is the reason why deodeok and liquor, having qi of heat, makes a great combination.

As mentioned above, potatoes are representative food in Gangwondo, thus, Kim's novel introduced these healthy, simple food many times. Cake, noodle, stew and pancake can be made with potatoes; potatoes also go well with rice, Koreans' main food.

5. Conclusion

Food is not only things that are eaten to sustain life but also a culture that implies unique tradition and history of a country. It is a media that connects human to human. On this wise, through stories, food and food culture can be easily accessible. This study tried to develop food contents to publicize a various food cultures based on novels. Food is a representative culture of a certain age. Especially for consumers, it is essential to consider food to approach people as culture, not just as substances. From now on, the consumers would perceive the food as culture. In addition, the food stories without food can impress consumers even more that they used to. With fast growing media as well as traditional media like novels and poetry, deliver savory messages to consumers more effectively.

Accordingly, the existing local foods simply represent dishes that use local ingredients. However, this study suggested combining a local figure which represents local culture and food which is related to him/her. In the height of well-being trends, healthful foods as well as tasty ones are also paid attention to. Food storytelling on the various aspects attracts tourists and promotes the city brand boosting consumers' interest in local foods, which naturally leads to local revitalization. Song insisted storytelling influences the behavioral intentions of consumers. Thus, when storytelling is applied to contents, the consumers' interests in food are boosted regardless of previous knowledge of the region or

the food [6]. This fact implies that developing local foods can promote the local image as well as local foods. In addition, well-organized and unique food contents efficiently connected to other local tourism contents are a stepping stone to successful and sustainable local cultural development.

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