

Issues and Trends in Brazilian Studies in South Korea: Social Sciences and Humanities

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Abstract

As Brazil emerges as a significant and influential country in the global arena, studies related to Brazil have drawn keen scholarly interests from a number of fields of study. In this regard, “Brazilian Studies” has grown considerably in the last several decades and has solid representation in most disciplines, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. In South Korea, Brazilian Studies has also become a competitive and promising discipline through the effort of pioneer Korean brazilianists, yet less lively compared to Brazilian Studies in the United States and other European countries that have guided this field. Employing web-based methods, including online-based searching, and bibliographical analysis based on the data collected by DBpia, this study aims to introduce and examine the issues, trends and current state of Brazilian Studies education and research in South Korea, particularly focusing on the social sciences and humanities.

Resumo

À medida que o Brasil surge como um país significativo e influente na arena global, os estudos relacionados ao Brasil cresceram em vários países. Nesse sentido, os “estudos brasileiros” têm crescido consideravelmente nas últimas décadas e tem sólida representação na maioria das disciplinas, particularmente nas ciências sociais e humanas. Na Coréia do Sul, os estudos brasileiros também se tornaram uma disciplina competitiva e promissora por meio do esforço dos brasileiros pioneiros, mas menos vivaz do que os estudos brasileiros nos Estados Unidos e outros países europeus que nortearam esse campo. Empregando métodos baseados na internet, incluindo busca online e análise bibliográfica com base nos dados coletados pela DBpia, este estudo tem como objetivo apresentar e examinar as questões, tendências e estado atual da educação e pesquisa em estudos brasileiros na Coréia do Sul, especialmente com foco nas ciências sociais e humanas.

As Brazil emerges as a significant and influential actor in the global arena, studies related to Brazil have drawn keen scholarly interests throughout the globe from a number of academic fields. In this regard, “Brazilian Studies” has grown considerably in the last several decades and has solid representation in most disciplines, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. According to the Brazilian Studies Association (BRASA), scholarly interests in Brazil grew exponentially in the United States particularly during the transitional period between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. This growth occurred by virtue of the introduction of new sources of information; for example, the American historian Thomas Skidmore’s book *Politics in Brazil, 1930–1964: An Experiment in Democracy* (1967) and Robert Levine’s introductory guide to field research methods, *Brazil: Field Research Guide in the Social Sciences* (1966). Furthermore, the translation and publication of a number of Brazilian scholars’ research, such as Gilberto Freyre (1933), José Honório Rodrigues (1957, 1978), Caio Prado Júnior (1942), and many others, largely contributed to the development of Brazilian Studies outside Brazil.

In South Korea, Brazilian Studies has also become a competitive and promising disciplinary field through the effort of pioneer Korean *Brazilianists*. Navigating the current issues and trends in Brazilian Studies in countries other than the United States, Canada and Europe, where studies related to Brazil and Latin America have shown vigorous growth due to the development of hemispheric economic and cultural ties, is timely. This study primarily aims to examine the issues and trends of Brazilian Studies education and research in South Korea, focusing on the social sciences and humanities. This article will contribute to understanding the non-Western context of the globalization of Brazilian Studies, particularly in South Korea, which has not to date drawn scholarly attention.

Methods

This study primarily employs various methods to examine the historical trends and the past and current issues of Brazilian Studies education and research in South Korea. In this article, I confine Brazilian Studies to area studies within the boundary of social sciences and humanities, because area studies have been “an integrated, multidisciplinary coverage of an area” while maintaining “ground in a traditional discipline,” within social sciences and humanities in particular, including but not limited to history, economics, political science, geography, sociology and language and literature (Khan, 2018, p. 132).

First, to investigate Brazilian Studies education in South Korea, I employed web-based methods. Data was collected via the internet, mainly through searching online. I particularly referred to the Korean Ministry of Education's Higher Education in Korea website, which allows one to search for information about all Korean universities according to the provisions of the *Act on Information Disclosure of Educational Institutions*. I also collected data from departmental websites of Dankook University, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, and Pusan University of Foreign Studies to examine the Korean universities' current Portuguese and Brazil-related curriculums and departmental mission statements.

In addition, this study capitalized on the DBpia database to conduct a bibliographical analysis of the research trends in Brazilian Studies in South Korea. *DBpia* is the largest Korean-based academic information portal, which enables researchers and students to search for literature. I searched for articles written in Korean and other languages published in Korean journals. As of January 2020, the *DBpia* database covered 1,874 publishers and 3,418 journals with approximately 3 million articles. I searched research topics and existing literature associated with Brazilian Studies from 1968 to 2019 (no Brazil-related publications existed prior to 1968 in South Korea, according to search results). I also searched the number of publications related to other countries, such as those of other Latin American countries, as well as the United States, China, Japan, Russia and North Korea, to compare how Brazilian Studies stands in South Korea relative to other area studies. Publications included in this study embrace not only scholarly journal articles but also governmental and public agencies' publications. The scope of Brazilian Studies literature examined in this article not only incorporates academic articles that primarily deal with Brazil as a key research subject but also embraces ones that partially involve Brazil as a comparison target.

Employing quantitative content analysis of the title and keywords of chronological research publications, this article also attempts to understand changes and trends of research topics in Brazilian Studies over time. This study also referred to the webpage of the Korean Association of Lusophone Area Studies (KALAS), the Institute of Latin American Studies at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and the Latin American Studies Association of Korea (LASAK) to survey the history and current issues of Brazilian Studies in the country. Table 1 presents the web references for this study.

Table 1. Websites for Data Collection

Website	Address
Higher Education in Korea	https://www.academyinfo.go.kr/
DBpia	https://www.dbpia.co.kr/
Department of Portuguese, Dankook University	http://cms.dankook.ac.kr/web/portuguese
Department of Portuguese, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus	http://portuguese.hufs.ac.kr/
Department of Brazilian Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Global Campus	http://hufsbrazil.hufs.ac.kr/
Department of Portuguese, Busan University of Foreign Studies	http://cms.buufs.ac.kr/portu/cor/html/04/sub01_01.aspx
Master's Program in Portuguese Language and Literature, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus	http://builder.hufs.ac.kr/user/gra/download/sub1_09.pdf
Korean Association of Lusophone Area Studies	https://kalubs.jams.or.kr/
Institute of Latin American Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	http://ilas.hufs.ac.kr/
Latin American Studies Association of Korea	http://www.lasak.or.kr/modules/doc/index.php?doc=intro

Current State of Brazilian Studies Education in South Korea

According to the Higher Education in Korea website, Spanish departments outnumber Portuguese departments in South Korea; as of 2020, 15 undergraduate programs in Spanish and/or Hispanic studies exist, whereas only four departments intensively offer intensive undergraduate-level Portuguese and Brazilian Studies education in South Korea (See Table 2). Although some programs partially offer Brazil-related courses—for example, Dr. Paul Sneed, an outstanding Brazilianist working in the department of Hispanic Studies at Seoul National University—they tend to focus heavily on Spanish and Hispanic Studies. This ultimately signifies that Spanish has gained far more weight than Portuguese has in undergraduate education, perhaps because the populations and number of countries

around the world that speak Spanish are much larger. It is worth noting that no undergraduate program in South Korea offers a combined Spanish and Portuguese curriculum, unlike many other academic departments in the United States that provide wider opportunities for students to holistically learn both languages, literature, and cultures.

Table 2. Comparison of Undergraduate Spanish and Portuguese Programs in South Korea

Area	Universities	Department (Year)
Spanish and Latin American Studies	Busan University of Foreign Studies	Spanish (1982)
	Chonbuk National University	Spanish and Latin American Studies (1987)
	Chosun University	Spanish (1979)
	Daegu Catholic University	Spanish and Latin American Studies (1980)
	Dankook University	Spanish (1983)
	Duksung Women's University	Spanish Language (1992)
	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus	Spanish (1955)
	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Global Campus	Spanish Interpretation and Translation (1979)
	Keimyung University	Spanish and Latin American Studies (2007)
	Korea University	Spanish Language and Literature (1983)
	Kyung Hee University	Spanish (1980)
	Pai Chai University	Spanish Language and Latin American Studies (1991)
	Seoul National University	Hispanic Language and Literature (1984)
Sun Moon University	Spanish Language and Latin American Studies (1997)	
University of Ulsan	Spanish and Latin American Studies (1989)	
Portuguese and Brazilian	Dankook University	Portuguese (2014)
	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus	Portuguese (1966)



Studies	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Global Campus	Brazilian Studies (1981)
	Busan University of Foreign Studies	Portuguese (1986)

The curriculums of these four undergraduate Portuguese departments are similar; they offer a wide array of Brazil-related humanities and social sciences courses throughout their curriculums. During the freshman and sophomore period, these programs offer intensive Portuguese language courses, and a wide array of options exist for junior and senior students to learn Brazilian history, economics, politics, and culture, based on the proficiency of the language. For example, the department of Portuguese at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, the oldest Portuguese department in South Korea, specifically states:

The courses for freshmen and sophomores consist of the maximization of language skills to develop Portuguese proficiency... The courses for juniors and seniors aim to cultivate students who can work as Brazil area specialists through in-depth learning and research on Brazil and other Lusophone countries' economies, politics, societies and cultures based on Portuguese language capability (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, no date).¹

The Portuguese department at Busan University of Foreign Studies also provides a similar curriculum guideline:

During the freshman and sophomore stages, students take the required courses in Portuguese grammar, composition, conversation, practice, translation, history, culture, etc. necessary to acquire technical knowledge and understand Lusophone countries and their societies. For juniors, the department offers literature, linguistics, politics and economics courses that are practical and academic. Senior students learn practical and current Portuguese to equip them with the ability to carry out trade business with Portuguese-speaking countries (Busan University of Foreign Studies, no date).²

The curriculums in the other two departments are also similar to those stated above. To put it shortly, Portuguese education in South Korean universities consists of two central stages in their undergraduate curriculums. While nurturing Portuguese language capability

¹ This was originally written in Korean and translation is mine. Available at: <http://portuguese.hufs.ac.kr/>

² This was originally written in Korean and translation is mine. Available at: http://cms.bufs.ac.kr/portu/cor/html/04/sub01_01.aspx

is the principal goal during the first two years, the last two years focus exclusively on learning technical, practical, and area-specific knowledge based on language proficiency. It is also worth noting that each department complements its existing strength by providing courses related to Lusophone African countries. For instance, the Portuguese department at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies offered five Lusophone-Africa-related classes out of 31 courses during the spring 2020 semester: Introduction to Lusophone African Area Studies, Contemporary Lusophone Literature and Society, Lusophone Market and Korean Company, ODA in Lusophone Countries, and Interpretation of Lusophone Culture through Symbols.

The principal aims of the course offerings of these programs have been in line with the mission statements of the Portuguese departments in South Korea. All four programs offer similar undergraduate curriculums, and their respective departmental mission statements apparently present high similarity, as table 3 suggests.

Table 3. Mission Statements of Undergraduate Brazilian Studies Programs³

Dep./ Univ.	Mission Statement
Portuguese/ Dankook University	The Department of Portuguese was first established in 2014 and primarily focuses on cultivating area experts on Portuguese-speaking countries, including Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, and East Timor. An area expert is a specialist equipped with high erudition in terms of each country's politics, economy, society, and culture so that he/she can actively lead, research and pioneer the era of globalization (Dankook University, no date). ⁴
Portuguese/ Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus	The Department of Portuguese cultivates talented students who can contribute to national competitiveness by researching politics, economics, society, and culture of related countries based on a fluent command of Portuguese. Portuguese is the language used not only in Brazil in Latin America, but in Europe and Africa as well. Brazil occupies approximately 50% of the Latin American territory and its population is about 200 million; Brazil is rising from a regional power to a global power (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, no date). ⁵

³ All these mission statements are originally written in Korean and translation is mine.

⁴ Available at: <http://cms.dankook.ac.kr/web/portuguese>

⁵ Available at: <http://portuguese.hufs.ac.kr/>

Brazilian Studies/
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies,
Global Campus

Brazil's stable economic growth since the 1990s made the country the sixth biggest economy in the world around the late-2000s. Brazil's economic growth has rapidly expanded economic exchanges with Korea, and it naturally promoted political, social, cultural, and sporting exchanges between both countries. As a result, the relationship between Korea and Brazil is currently expanding at an unprecedented rate... Recently, we modified the department's name to the department of Brazilian Studies and we are strengthening area studies courses, particularly economics and business. This is because the demand for Brazil experts is increasing in Korea as the exchange between both is growing (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, no date).⁶

Portuguese/
Busan University of Foreign Studies

The Department of Portuguese, which was established in 1987 to cultivate talented students who can deal with the globalizing world, currently explores all sorts of problems related to Portuguese language acquisition and Portuguese-speaking countries. Due to the nature of the department, we focus particularly on the Portuguese language. Based on this, the department aims to nurture the Portuguese-speaking world specialist who possesses scholarly and practical knowledge. For this, the students of Portuguese learn not only the Portuguese language but also the cultures, histories, literature, linguistics, politics, and economics of the Portuguese-speaking countries (Busan University of Foreign Studies, no date).⁷

In terms of graduate education, only one master's program in Korea exclusively focuses on Portuguese—the Department of Portuguese Language and Literature at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul Campus. Students willing to pursue a doctoral degree or conduct research on humanities- and social-science-based Brazilian Studies further their education in the Ph.D. program in Latin American Studies at the Graduate School of International Area Studies (GSIAS) at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Other students in Korea who pursue a doctoral degree enter individual graduate programs such as linguistics, political science, economics, history, sociology, and anthropology, or they opt to study abroad.

The mission statement of the master's program in Portuguese Language and Literature at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies specifically states:

⁶ Available at: <http://hufsbrazil.hufs.ac.kr/>

⁷ Available at: http://cms.bufs.ac.kr/portu/cor/html/04/sub01_01.aspx

In the master's program, the departmental goal is both to develop the ability to conduct specialized academic education and research based on the knowledge acquired during undergraduate studies and to nurture high-quality experts with originality and creativity in Portuguese linguistics and Portuguese and Brazilian literature.

As the mission statement succinctly puts it, the program's course offerings are designed to provide concrete and solid knowledge on the linguistics and literature of Portugal and Brazil (See the table 4.)

Table 4. Portuguese Linguistics and Literature Master's Program Course Offerings

Specializations	Courses
Linguistics	Linguistic Variation of Portuguese
	Portuguese Syntax
	Portuguese Stylistics
	Portuguese Translation Theory
	Sociolinguistics
	History of Portuguese
	Portuguese Phonetics and Phonology
	Portuguese Semantics
	Portuguese Grammar
	Seminar in Portuguese Syntax
	Typological Studies of Portuguese
	Portuguese Morphology
	Topics in Portuguese Morphology
	Brazilian Modernism
Brazilian Modernism and Regionalism	
Literature	Modern Portuguese Literature
	Romanticism in Portuguese Literature
	Criticism of Portuguese Literature
	Realism in Portuguese Literature
	History of Portuguese and Brazilian Literature
	Portuguese Brazilian Poetry
	Portuguese Classical Literature
Portuguese African Literature	
Study of Os Lusíadas	

As table 4 shows, due to the graduate program's focus on cultivating future discipline-based scholars, the department concentrates exclusively on the linguistics and literature specializations, unlike the interdisciplinary natures of undergraduate programs.

Overall, undergraduate Brazilian Studies education has qualitatively developed since the first department was launched in 1966. Based on my analysis, I conclude these undergraduate programs are devoted to cultivating students engaged in multidisciplinary studies, combining humanistic and social scientific knowledge on European and African Portuguese-speaking countries, and Brazil in particular. However, Brazilian Studies programs in South Korea falls behind Spanish or Hispanic studies in terms of quantity. Far fewer endeavors have been made to provide undergraduate students an opportunity to learn both Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and Spanish and Hispanic studies simultaneously within one department or integrative curriculum, unlike in North America and Europe where a number of so-called "departments of Spanish and Portuguese" are present.

Issues and Trends in Research on Brazil in South Korea: Social Sciences and Humanities

It is particularly noteworthy that scholarly and research activities in Brazilian Studies in South Korea have evolved since the first publication of Park's (1968) article "A Viewpoint of Immigration on Latin America—Brazil." The purpose of this section is to explore the state of Brazilian Studies research in South Korea, focusing on the field of humanities and social sciences. To this end, this study will primarily navigate the trends and issues in Brazil-related research in South Korea from 1968 to 2019.

Table 5. The Number of Research Publications: Comparison of Each Latin American Country, 1965-2019

Field	BRA	MEX	CHL	ARG	CUB	COL	PER	VEN	Total
Social Sciences	952	829	451	391	197	174	171	146	3311
Humanities	304	222	68	87	81	52	37	20	871
Total	1,256	1,051	519	478	278	226	208	166	4,182

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020, using country names as keywords.



Table 5 shows the most actively investigated Latin American countries in South Korean journals up to 2019, according to my search of all Latin American countries in DBpia. It is noteworthy that studies on Brazil marked the highest research activity (1,256 publications) compared to other countries. Mexico was the second most researched country in Latin America (1,051 publications), followed by Chile, Argentina, Cuba, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela. Thirty percent of Brazil-related research was conducted among these seven Latin American countries, which is slightly higher than the ratio of existing Portuguese/Brazilian Studies departments (4) to Spanish departments (15) in South Korea, representing about 26.7%.

Table 6. Comparison of the Total Publications of Major Area Studies in South Korea, 1965-2019: Humanities and Social Sciences

	China	Japan	United States	North Korea	Russia	Brazil	Mexico
Total Numbers	53,207	42,772	33,475	15,524	7,495	1,256	1,051

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020, using country names as keywords.

Table 6 shows the number of major area studies published in South Korean journals to show how studies about Brazil in the area of humanities and social sciences compare with other countries of interest. In South Korea, China is the most researched country, followed by Japan, the United States, North Korea and Russia, which seems attributable to several reasons. First, these countries present major geopolitical issues and implications for the Korean Peninsula. Considering various political, economic and sociocultural issues or conflicts from the so-called Cold War era among these countries surrounding South Korea, high academic and social demands for in-depth research and information on these countries have attracted scholarly attention. Second, those countries are neighboring countries except for the United States. This geographical proximity has facilitated vigorous personal and intellectual exchanges and, by extension, research activities have been easier to conduct compared to other countries across the region.

Although Brazilian Studies has become a promising field of study in South Korea, the quantity of research is in its infancy. The large disparity between the number of research

publications on major countries and Brazil demonstrates how Brazilian Studies has gained less spotlight in South Korea. Considering the geographical distance between South Korea and Brazil, conducting field research for data collection is relatively difficult for scholars.

Although studies related to Brazil have been published in various discipline-based journals or area studies journals, there is solely one Brazilian Studies-specific journal in South Korea. According to the search of DBpia, Brazil-related studies from 1968 to 2019 have been published in more than 100 journals in Korea. However, among 1,256 Brazilian Studies publications within the field of humanities and social sciences produced throughout that period, 344 (27.4%) were published by three major journals (See table 7).

Table 7. Top Three South Korean Journals that Published Brazil-related Research

Journals (Publisher)	Number of Publications (%)
<i>Lusophone Area Studies</i> (Korean Association of Lusophone Area Studies)	186 (14.8%)
<i>Latin American and Caribbean Studies</i> (Institute of Latin American Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)	93 (7.4%)
<i>Asian Journal of Latin American Studies</i> (Latin American Studies Association of Korea)	65 (5.2%)

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results.

As table 7 shows, the *Lusophone Area Studies* journal, published by the Korean Association of Lusophone Area Studies (KALAS), has attracted 186 studies (14.8% of the total) on Brazil published in the country. The association changed its name in 2017, previously the Korean Association of Luso-Brazilian Studies, to promote the submission of research articles from foreign scholars, broadening the journal's scope. This association was launched in 2004 to contribute to invigorating research on Portuguese-speaking countries' politics, economies, societies, and cultures. Since the publication of the first issue in December 2004, the association has published the journal in February and August of each year. The Korean Association of Lusophon Area Studies has also held two academic conferences per year since 2007 after hosting one annual conference in 2005 and 2006. Due

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to its vigorous area studies research, the journal was indexed into the Korea Citation Index (KCI) by the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) in 2011. The journal *Lusophone Area Studies* has played a pivotal role in the promotion of research on Brazil in South Korea as home to Korean and foreign Brazilianists, since this journal considers articles written in Korean, English, and Portuguese. Although it varies depending on the situation, the journal has foreign experts as a part of the editorial board.

The journal *Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, published by the Institute of Latin American Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, attracted the second most Brazil-related studies in the country. Unlike *Lusophone Area Studies*, the scope of this journal is confined to research on the Latin American region. The institute was established in 1974 and the journal began publication in February 1976. Currently, *Latin American and Caribbean Studies* publishes four issues per year. Finally, the *Asian Journal of Latin American Studies* has published 5.2% of total Brazil-related research in Korea. The Latin American Studies Association of Korea (LASAK), created in 1986, manages this journal. The journal was first issued in 1988, and it currently publishes four issues per year. The journal was indexed into KCI in December 2004..

Table 8. Period-Specific Trends of Research Publications on Latin American Countries, 1965-2019

Year	BRA	MEX	CHL	ARG	CUB	COL	PER	VEN	Total
1965-1969	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	5
1970-1974	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
1975-1979	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	8
1980-1984	4	3	2	4	1	1	1	2	18
1985-1989	12	8	4	4	3	8	3	1	43
1990-1994	26	35	10	11	15	4	8	3	112
1995-1999	65	73	14	19	10	11	9	4	205
2000-2004	96	144	72	71	32	15	12	16	458
2005-2009	219	209	124	98	54	35	32	42	813
2010-2014	485	313	174	144	57	87	80	65	1,405
2015-2019	338	264	117	125	106	65	62	33	1,110
Total	1,256	1,051	519	478	278	226	208	166	4,182

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results



of the country name as a keyword in South Korean journals in the fields of social sciences and humanities.

The number of studies related to Brazil has shown significant growth since the first research on Brazil appeared in 1968 (See table 8). From the 1960s to the first half of the 1980s, the number of Brazilian Studies per 5-year period was merely a single digit. This can be attributed to the lack of interest in Brazil as a research subject and information about Brazil, including secondary sources and prominent scholars. Since then, studies about Brazil showed a steady increase throughout the 1990s and 2000s. From 2005 in particular, studies related to Brazil expanded sharply to hundreds of publications per 5-year period for the first time in the country's epistemic community. Although the growing trend continued until the mid-2010s, table 8 shows that the number of Brazilian Studies declined slightly during the second half of the 2010s.

Table 9. Average Annual Publications of Brazilian Studies, 1965-2019

Period	Quantity
1965-1969	0.6
1970-1974	0.4
1975-1979	1.2
1980-1984	0.8
1985-1989	2.4
1990-1994	5.2
1995-1999	13
2000-2004	19.2
2005-2009	43.8
2010-2014	97
2015-2019	67.6

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results.

Table 9 represents the annual average number of Brazilian Studies publications in South Korea. The state of Brazilian Studies prior to the mid-1980s can be considered its infancy. Zero to one Brazilian Studies articles were published annually during that period. As briefly stated beforehand, the low level of research activity at that time was due to the

non-existence of a social and academic environment favorable for Brazilian Studies research. However, as the second generation of Korean Brazilianists increased at an unprecedented rate, particularly during the late-1990s and throughout the 2000s, studies on Brazil had become highly stimulated. During 2005-2009 in particular, average annual Brazilian Studies publications exponentially increased 43.8%. Brazilian Studies in South Korea in the 2010s entered a mature stage, and Brazilian Studies became a competitive and established field of study in the country compared to the past, albeit it is still less common than other area studies such as China, Japan, the United States, and North Korea.

Table 10. Distribution of Brazilian Studies by Fields and Disciplines, 1968-2019

Fields	Number of Brazilian Studies (%)
Social Sciences	952 (75.8%)
Humanities	304 (24.2%)
Total	1256 (100%)
Disciplines	Number of Brazilian Studies (%)
Area Studies	242 (19.3%)
Linguistics	192 (15.3%)
Economics	143 (11.4%)
Journalism/ Mass Communication	90 (7.2%)
Geography	86 (6.8%)
Commerce and Trade	67 (5.3%)
Law	66 (5.3%)
Business	48 (3.8%)
Political Science	45 (3.6%)
Sociology	41 (3.3%)
Religion	26 (2.1%)
Public Administration	20 (1.6%)
History	15 (1.2%)
Others	175 (13.9%)
Total	1.256 (100%)

Source: DBpia, searched on January, 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results.

Studies on Brazil have been largely conducted within the social sciences disciplines, which account for 75.8% of total research, while humanities occupied about 24.2%. In terms of individual disciplines, interdisciplinary area studies is the largest home to scholars who published their research related to Brazil. Linguistics research on Portuguese makes up a significant portion (15.3%) of Brazilian Studies in South Korea. Apart from Area Studies and Linguistics, Economics, Journalism, Geography, Commerce, Law, Business, Political Science, and Sociology comprised the other top 10 disciplines that have vigorously engaged in Brazilian Studies. Except for linguistics, religion, and history, the other 10 disciplinary fields within the top 13 disciplines that were involved in the production of scholarly research on Brazil were social sciences.

Table 11. Brazilian Studies Key Research Topics within Humanities and Social Sciences

Research Topics (Title or Keywords)	Number of Publications
Culture	71
Immigration	59
Portuguese	44
Democracy/ Democratization	42
Lula	35
Economic (Financial) Crisis	28
Environment	24
Korean Diaspora	22
Korea-Brazil Cooperation	21
Resource	16
Neoliberalism	15
Mercosur	15
Race	14
Identity	14
Defense Industry	14
Afro-Brazilian	13
BRICS	12
Authoritarianism	12

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results.

Brazilian Studies have been conducted in various disciplinary fields, and key topics of research on Brazil vary greatly. Based on the search of titles and keywords of research publications and quantitative content analysis by checking word frequencies, I categorized primary Brazilian Studies research topics in table 11. The most frequently researched theme in South Korea is (Brazilian) culture, which includes, but is not limited to, Afro-Brazilian culture, national cultural identity, and popular culture such as *Carnival*, *Samba*, or *futebol*, as well as indigenous culture, and many others.

Immigration has also been one of the hot research topics within Brazilian Studies in South Korea. Immigration literature has focused primarily on two themes. First, scholars have largely navigated the Korean immigrant community in Brazil, in particular São Paulo. Interestingly, Korean researchers have particular research interests in the Japanese diaspora in Brazil. To be specific, Japanese immigration research accounts for 11 out of 59 immigration studies. Linguistic observations on Portuguese are the third most popular research theme in South Korea.

In many social-science-engaged disciplines, democracy and democratization represented a popular research topic within the studies related to Brazil after the country's democratization in 1985. Former President Lula has also been a prominent research subject. Brazil has also caught particular scholarly attention due to the theme of economic (financial) crisis within the economics circle. Studies on environmental issues, resources, neoliberalism, identity, authoritarianism, and other topics have been deeply investigated as well.

Table 12. Brazilian Studies Top Research Topics per Period within Humanities and Social Sciences

Period	Top Research Topics or Keywords (Number of Research Topics Studied)
1965-1969	Immigration (3)
1970-1974	Korean Church in São Paulo (2)
1975-1979	Current State of Brazilian Economy (5)
1980-1984	Defense Industry (3)
1985-1989	Defense Industry (4)
1990-1994	Labor Party (6)
1995-1999	Financial Crisis (11)

2000-2004	Lula (12)
2005-2009	Portuguese (13)
2010-2014	Culture (47)
2015-2019	Immigration (20)

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author's elaboration based on the search results.

This paper also analyzed the top research topics from 1965 to 2019 on a 5-year basis. As table 12 demonstrates, the most popular research topic by period was Korean and Brazilian political and economic circumstances of the times. In the second half of the 1960s, all three papers related to Brazil concerned immigration, which was in line with the history of Korean emigration to Brazil that first began in 1962. From 1970-1974, all studies concerning Brazil were associated with the theme of a Korean church in São Paulo. According to Kim and Ma (2011), the Korean United Presbyterian Church was established in São Paulo in 1965, 2 years after Koreans first arrived in the port of Santos in 1963. This research topic, as an extension of Korean immigration in Brazil, caught scholarly attention among South Korean epistemic communities, and Brazil first became a research subject housed within the theme of the Korean diaspora in Brazil.

From 1975 to 1979, five out of six research publications were related to the state of the Brazilian economy at that time. Without a doubt, Brazil had a high economic growth rate in the 1970s. The average GDP growth rate during the 1970s was 6%, which was approximately double compared to the 1960s (Araújo et al. 2008). The Brazilian economic boom seemed interlinked with Korea's rapid economic growth in that period, which attracted academic interest in information that could facilitate future cooperation between the two countries. In the 1980s, Brazil's defense industry was the key topic of research. The Korean military regime's high demand for knowledge of other countries' national defenses and related industries might have sparked the emergence of this research topic. In the first and second half of the 1990s, Brazil's financial crisis received intense spotlight by Korean scholars.

In the twenty-first century, Korean scholars have focused on various issues that have been neglected in the field. As Lula came to power in 2002, scholars began to illustrate the election, his leadership, and his various social and economic policies. From 2005 to 2009, linguistic research on Portuguese had been largely produced within the Brazilian Studies scholarship. To say that Brazilian Studies in South Korea in the 2010s marked a new era is not an exaggeration. Particularly, scholars began to focus on interdisciplinary topics of Brazilian cultural aspects and tried to understand and provide a deep analysis of Brazil from

the cultural framework. From 2015, “return to immigration” effectively describes the state of Brazilian Studies in South Korea. Particularly, scholars have re-examined the Korean diaspora in Brazil in line with more than 50 years of immigration history in Brazil.

Table 13. Comparisons between Countries: List of Countries or Regions Compared to Brazil, 1968-2019

List of Countries or Regions	Frequency
South Korea	28
Argentina	7
United States	4
Israel	4
China	3
India	3
Mexico	2
Indonesia	2
United Kingdom	2
Others	15

Source: DBpia, searched on January 2, 2020. Author’s elaboration based on the search results.

Finally, this study also analyzed how the comparative study of Brazil and other countries or regions has stood within Brazilian Studies scholarship. Among 1,256 research publications, comparative studies accounted only for 5.6% (70 research publications), revealing less weight given to it than given to the majority of the single Brazilian case-based studies. Among 70 scholarly studies, Brazil is most often compared with South Korea, which is an inevitable outcome considering Korean Brazilianists are not only familiar with Brazil, but the Korean case as well. Various topics were engaged in the comparison between the two countries, such as political institutions, democracy and democratization, authoritarian regimes, cultural idiosyncrasies, labor movements, development, economic reforms, and the internalization of neoliberalism, etc.

Among Latin American countries, the Argentine case was used in seven scholarly works that aimed to make a comparison with Brazil, whereas the Mexican case was used merely twice. All these articles are associated with social scientific research topics, including political economy, democratization, authoritarianism, social welfare, climate change policy,

and so forth. The American case was used in comparative studies four times and China and India were documented by only three comparative works.

Conclusion: the Road Ahead

Based on web-based methods, bibliographical analysis, and quantitative content analysis, this study explored the issues and trends in Brazilian Studies education and research in South Korea from the 1960s to 2019, focusing on the fields of humanities and social sciences. Brazilian Studies in South Korea has become a competitive field of study in terms of both education and research, particularly through the effort of pioneer Korean Brazilianists.

Although the development of Brazilian Studies in South Korea is still in progress, the current state of Brazilian Studies education and research is in its infancy in terms of quantity and quality, compared to its status in North America and Europe, which have traditionally guided this field of study based on solid economic and cultural ties with the Latin American region. Within South Korean epistemic communities, scholars have tended to study neighboring power countries surrounding the Korean Peninsula. As a result, much fewer studies on Brazil, not to mention other Latin American countries, have been produced than studies on China, Japan, the United States, Russia or North Korea.

The discrepancy is an inevitable outcome considering geographical or geopolitical factors involving South Korea. Brazil, as a research subject, is hard to study for Korean scholars and attracts less consistent scholarly interest due to its considerable distance and lack of distinct political and economic connections between the two countries. This geographical distance, I suggest, ultimately breeds psychological distance, which is an obvious obstacle to triggering interest. As an extension of this discussion, students have very little opportunities to practice Portuguese as a second language in South Korea, which has a significant lack of Portuguese instructors. English, Chinese, Japanese, and some European languages are preferred by Korean people, and in effect, the demand for these languages far outweighs others in Korean society. Because the language competency is one of the paramount factors when it comes to conducting area studies, this structural problem is becoming a constraint on the development of Brazilian Studies in South Korea.

Due to the reasons stated above, methodological constraints exist in Brazilian Studies in South Korea. Great distance between the two countries and limited scholars who have Portuguese fluency have hindered the process of active data collection, particularly through

field research. Without a doubt, various methods can be drawn from field research that enable scholars to conduct methodologically sophisticated research through elite or stakeholder interviews, field experiments, primary data collection, ethnographic observations, and many other approaches. Due to the lack of fieldwork, Brazilian Studies produced in South Korea have relied heavily on secondary data and many of these studies are descriptive to a certain extent. The overlooking of refined methods in Brazilian Studies might challenge the securing or extension of external readers.

I suggest that this study is meaningful and significant because it introduced and examined the globalizing Brazilian Studies in South Korea in a non-western context, as an Asian country that has been considered a backwater of Brazilian Studies. Nevertheless, this study has some limitations as well. First, I could not show whether and how Korean Brazilianists publish their studies abroad. Second, this study did not deeply analyze how foreign Brazilianists have been participating in Korean academia. These limitations should be examined in future research. Thoroughly comparing and contrasting the state of Brazilian Studies with other countries to analyze similarities and differences in issues and trends in Brazilian studies can also be a future research agenda.

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