

Developing of Hangul Learning for beginners using Korean Consonant and Vowels Cards: Actual Korean Classroom Activities

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韓国語の子音・母音カードを用いた初級者向けハングル学習の開発
—韓国語授業における実践例—

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ABSTRACT

Korean as a second language is often first taught as a liberal arts in universities. The learner starts to learn Korean by learning how to pronounce Hangul and write it. The goal of teaching Korean as a second language in universities is to improve communicative competence. However, if we look at the research on Korean language education so far, there is a high proportion of research on grammar-centered instruction. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how the Hangul cards affect learning the characters of Korean and to suggest the process of learners' participation in communicative learning activities using Hangul cards. In addition, the goal is to share the experiences and results obtained from the class and to contribute to the management of Korean language classes by developing limitations. In this study, Hangul cards were used for the first four sessions of the course, and learners were encouraged to participate in the class activities using Hangul cards. As a result, it was able to see a way of learning that centered on communication between instructor and learner, and learner and learner.

Keywords: introductory Korean, Hangul cards, learner-directed learning

1. Introduction

In recent years, interest in Korean culture, represented by the Korean Wave, has spread beyond Korean music, drama, and movies to include Korean arts, sports, and food, and the demand for Korean language learning has exploded in overseas middle and high schools and universities (Kim, 2020). In a survey of Korean language students at Fukuyama University, the reasons for choosing Korean as a second language among Chinese, Korean, French, and German varied widely, including "I like Korean food," "Hangul is similar in pronunciation to Japanese," "I like Korean dramas and K-pop groups," and "I want to use Korean when I travel to Korea," among others.

Yang (2010) argued that for more efficient and successful foreign language teaching, a balanced consideration of the communicative and grammatical language systems is essential to adhere to the principles of

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communicative teaching methodology(ibid.). However, previous studies have shown that the goal of introductory Korean language classes in many universities is to teach learners grammar, rather than to improve their communication skills (Hasegawa, 2002; Ogino, 2015; Nakayagawa & Fujiwara, 2014). In particular, Yamaguchi & Sunaoka (2014) found that 43% of respondents said that the goal of introductory Korean language education in Japanese universities is grammar (ibid.). Based on the previous studies, it is difficult to say that Korean language education in universities is actively aimed at improving communication skills. Therefore, Korean language education at the introductory level should aim not only to provide a sufficient linguistic foundation in Hangeul but also improve communicative competence.

Learner-directed collaborative teaching and learning is characterized by a teaching approach that aims to give learner control, ownership, and accountability over their own education while the teacher acts as facilitator and resource person (Iversen, 2015). It has been developed to counter institutionalized traditional teaching and is based on theories about how to support learners in achieving better and more effective learning within a certain learning context (Ramsden, 2003). Consciousness-raising tasks refer to learning activities or exercises designed to increase awareness and understanding of certain learning targets, learning materials and teachers can best help learners develop awareness of the target language. (Bolitho, et al., 2003; Lewis, 1993,1997,2000; Schmitt, 2000).

This paper will discuss the use of Hangul cards in an introductory Korean language class as a way for learners to actively participate in class activities and for teachers to motivate learners' consciousness-raising. In addition, by introducing an actual Korean language class at Fukuyama University, this paper will suggest ways to utilize Hangul cards for introductory-level learners.

2. Characteristics of the Hangul System and what the Hangul cards are

Hangul is the written form of the Korean language commonly used in South Korea, North Korea, and the Chinese region of Yanbian. Hangul is a phonemic script, consisting of 14 basic consonants and 10 basic vowels by modern standards. A phonemic script is a system where each letter represents a single consonant or vowel, and the consonants and vowels are written together to form a single letter (Lee & Lee, 2022). Examples of phonemic scripts are Hangul and English as shown in the examples:

English: consonants 'H' + vowels 'O' = HO

Korean: consonants 'ㅎ[h]' + vowels 'ㅏ[o]' = 호[ho]

Japanese, on the other hand, is a script in which each syllable corresponds to a single letter, and each letter has a sound value of "consonant + vowel", which is different from phonemic scripts (Kim, 2008). This means that a single letter cannot be divided into consonants and vowels.

Hangul's consonants and vowels are very similar in shape and pronunciation. For many Japanese speakers, the phonetic difference between the Hangul vowels 'ㅓ [eo]' and 'ㅏ[o]' is unclear. Also, depending on the vowel its position in a character can be different. For example, in the case of the vowels 'ㅓ' and 'ㅏ', 'ㅓ' is written to the right of the consonant, while 'ㅏ' is written to the bottom of the consonant as shown in the following example:

Right-written vowels: 'ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ'

Bottom vowels: 'ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅗ, ㅛ'

Examples: 가구, 나무, 오리

If learners at the introductory level are simply asked to memorize Hangul without sufficient linguistic knowledge of the conceptual differences between the Hangul system and the Japanese system, they may experience confusion about vowels and consonants, find Hangul difficult, and eventually give up studying Korean. Therefore, the goal of an introductory Korean language class should be to master the Korean consonants and vowels based on an understanding of the Hangul system. With this understanding, Hangul cards were created to develop learners understanding. The Hangul cards used in Korean lessons include 19 consonants and 21 vowels. The cards are

shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Hangul consonant and vowel cards

Vowels: ㅏ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅣ, ㅖ, ㅙ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅣ

Consonants: ㄱ, ㅋ, ㆁ, ㆅ, ㄷ, ㅌ, ㄴ, ㄹ, ㅍ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅣ, ㅈ, ㅊ, ㅆ, ㅍ, ㅎ, ㅊ, ㅉ, ㅍ, ㅏ, ㅙ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅣ

3. Approaches to using Hangul cards in the classroom

The Korean language class in the context of examination is a one-year course, consisting of 30 sessions: 15 first-semester classes and 15 second-semester classes. The classes are held once a week and time for each session is 90 minutes, totaling 22.5 hours (1 class per week X 90 minutes X 15 weeks). For about 4 sessions of the 15 lessons, learners will learn Hangul. In the fifth session, the learners are tested on their understanding of Hangul. The learning goals and content for each session of the Korean classes are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Content of learning activities using Hangul cards in four learning sessions

Sessions	Learning Objectives and Learning Activity Content
Session 1	Learning objective: To familiarize Hangul consonant and vowel forms and understand characteristics of the Hangul system Learning Activity: Cut out paper with consonants and vowels printed on them
Session 2	Learning objective: Identify and pronounce the basic consonants and basic vowels Learning Activity: Identify and separate consonants and vowels from random genus cards Combine Hangul using consonants and vowels cards, read combined Hangul
Session 3	Learning objective: Learn and pronounce double consonants and diphthongs Learning Activity: Combine Hangul using double consonants and diphthongs cards, read combined Hangul Dictation quiz; combine letters pronounced by the instructor (group activity)
Session 4	Learning objective: Create a variety of Hangul using cards Learning Activity: Combine your own name using the cards and read your friend's name (group activity)

3.1. Classroom Activities

This section will outline the lesson plans and activities of the teacher and students briefly explained in Table 1. It will show the step-by-step use of Hangul cards in learner-directed led tasks motivating learner's conscious-raising. Therefore, this section describes how to use Hangul cards to teach beginner learners not only the basics of Korean, but also how to use the language communicatively to talk about themselves and their surroundings.

3.1.1. Hangul Lesson Session 1

Goal: To explain the characteristics of the Hangul written language system and familiarize Hangul consonant and vowel forms. This lesson plan will outline the process of introducing Hangul to beginner learners of Korean.

Introduction: Ask learners to look at the letter forms on the Hangul cards you have distributed. For example, ask learners to identify the difference between the consonant forms of 'ㄱ' and 'ㄷ' and the vowel forms of 'ㅏ' and 'ㅑ'. During the introduction phase, encourage consciousness-raising as much as possible.

Presenting Contents: (Writing on the blackboard)

Consonants (C)	+	Vowels (V)
g, n, d	+	a, o, i
ㄱ, ㄴ, ㄷ	+	ㅏ, ㅑ, ㅣ
Combine: C + V = CV		
Korean: ㄱ + ㅣ = ㄱㅣ		
Japanese: C + V ? CV, か[ka]、な[na]、た[ta]		

Explain the similarities between the characteristics systems of English and Hangul by writing on the backboard. Also, compare the differences between the Hangul system and the Japanese system.

Practice: Use the cards to present several consonants and vowels. Go over the differences in form with the whole class so that they can identify the consonants and vowels on their own. Do not pronounce the sounds for each consonant and vowel.

Expansion: In the application stage, learners use Hangul cards to distinguish between vowels and consonants based on their shape alone. On the left side of their desks, learners should put the letters they think are consonants and on the right side, categorize the letters they think are vowels. The teacher then presents the correct answers using the Hangul cards. At this stage, learners can check their classifications against the teacher's answers and the classifications of other learners. The correct classification of consonants and vowels on the cards can be seen in Figure 2.

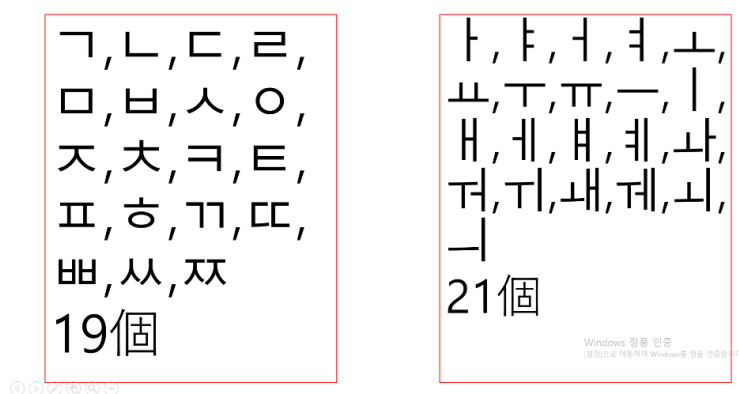


Figure 2. The classification of consonants and vowels using Hangul cards

Summary: Go over the Hangul system as a whole and review it again if learners have any gaps in their understanding.

3.1.2. Hangul Lesson Session 2

Goal: To learn the basic consonants and vowels and pronounce them. This lesson plan will present a brief description of the process of learning the pronunciation of basic consonants and basic vowels using Hangul cards

during the second week of Hangul lessons.

Introduction: Print the word *Fukuyama*. Ask students to distinguish between consonants and vowels. In particular, ask them to think about where the vowels are located. Motivate learners by introducing familiar words.

(Writing on the blackboard)

“후 쿠
야 마”
Basic
vowels: ㅏ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅣ
Basic
consonants: ㄱ, ㅋ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ,
C+V = ㅋ, ㆁ, ㆁ, ㆁ
Hangul

Presenting Contents: Use PowerPoint to demonstrate the pronunciation of the 14 basic consonants and 10 basic vowels, introducing them one by one. Pronounce them together and allow learners to write down their pronunciation. Allow learners to familiarize themselves with the forms and pronunciation by writing and reading them several times, and sounding them out with the teacher.

Practice: Use the Hangul cards to present the material with consonants from the textbook and have the whole class pronounce it, then check and say it with the teacher. For difficult pronunciations, present with English or Japanese transcriptions so that learners can understand them. Use a variety of methods to memorize consonants and vowels, such as presenting and pronouncing only in Korean, presenting only in English, and guessing in Korean, or presenting in Japanese and guessing in Korean.

Expansion: In the application stage, learners read the consonants and vowels one by one in order using the Hangul cards. The cards that the learners did not pronounce should be placed on the right side of the desk and read one more time. Have learners mark the cards they can't pronounce.

Summary: Go over the pronunciation of the consonants and vowels as a whole and review the letters that have been marked.

3.1.3. Hangul Lesson Session 3

Goal: To learn double vowels and diphthongs and pronounce them. This lesson plan will present a brief description of the process of learning the pronunciation of double vowels and diphthongs using Hangul cards during the third week of Hangul lessons.

Introduction: Ask learners to look at the letter forms on the Hangul cards you have additionally distributed. For example, ask learners to identify the difference between the diphthongs consonant forms of 'ㅑ' and 'ㅓ' and the vowel forms of 'ㅑ' and 'ㅓ'. During the introduction phase, encourage consciousness-raising as much as possible.

(Writing on the blackboard)

Double vowels:	ㅑ, ㅓ	ㅑ, ㅓ	ㅑ, ㅓ	ㅑ, ㅓ	ㅑ, ㅓ	ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅓ	ㅑ
Pronunciation	[e]	[ye]	[wa]	[wo]	[wi]	[we]	[eui]
Diphthongs:	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅓ	ㅓ	ㅓ	ㅓ	ㅓ
Pronunciation	[ㅑ k]	[ㅓ t]	[ㅓ p]	[ㅓ s]	[ㅓ s]	[ㅓ s]	[ㅓ j]

Presenting Contents: Use PowerPoint to demonstrate the pronunciation of double vowels and diphthongs, introducing them one by one. Pronounce them together and allow learners to write down their pronunciation. Allow learners to familiarize themselves with the forms and pronunciation by writing and pronouncing them several times, and sounding them out with the teacher.

Practice: Use Hangul cards to present material with double vowels and diphthongs in the textbook and have the whole class pronounce them. Check and say them with the teacher. Focus on the differences in pronunciation between diphthongs and basic consonants and provide phonetic representations of difficult-to-pronounce letters in English or Japanese to help learners understand them. Use various methods to help students memorize double vowels and diphthongs, such as presenting and pronouncing basic consonants and diphthongs that are similar in shape and presenting and pronouncing double vowels with the same pronunciation.

Expansion: In the application stage, learners pronounce the double vowels and diphthongs using Hangul cards. In the case of diphthongs, consonants with similar shapes should be pronounced together to help learners recognize the differences in pronunciation. For example, the difference between the pronunciation of 'ㄱ', 'ㅋ', and 'ㄲ'. For double vowels, double vowels with the same pronunciation, such as 'ㅏ' and 'ㅑ', should be grouped so that learners can recognize the same pronunciation. Mark the cards learners can't pronounce.

Summary: Go over the pronunciation of the diphthongs and double vowels as a whole and review the letters that have been marked.

3.1.4. Hangul Lesson Session 4

Goal: To create a variety of Hangul letters using Hangul cards and encourage active participation by combining learner's name with the cards. Furthermore, learners write their own name on paper.

Introduction: Using PowerPoint, show some words that is familiar with Japanese learners, such as Hiroshima, Osaka, and Kyoto. Show a photo representing each words and ask students to think about the meaning of the word. By choosing words that are familiar to learners, instructors can motivate them and help them build consciousness-raising.

Presenting Contents: While presenting additional photos and textbook content, the teacher should present the key points of the textbook's Hangul content to the whole class. Finally, listen to the textbook audio to check the pronunciation of all consonants and vowels and encourage learners to pronounce them with the teacher.

Practice: As a group activity, students work to make up their own names and then read group member's name and get confirmation from the other learners in their group. At the end of the group activity, the teacher will ask some learners to read the letters written on the blackboard.

Expansion: After the group activity, talk about all consonants and vowels again. In groups, talk about the consonants or vowels that learners have difficulty pronouncing and encourage learners to give feedback to each other. For the final activity, have the students write their names on paper. The writing should be completed and turned in during class time. The teacher can check their work and return it to them in the next class for feedback.

Summary: After a full review of the material, ask learners if they have any questions and have them hand in the written work.

4. Merits of Hangul Cards

The first merit of Hangul cards is that they are portable. The cards are much smaller and lighter than textbooks, so learners can use them to learn at any time. The second merit is that learners could correct the errors easily, so they can be reducing the fear of writing Hangul. For example, Hangul cards allow learners to experience various errors in combining the cards of consonants and vowels and those process positively affect learning. The third merit is that classroom activities utilizing Hangul cards enable multi-faceted interaction between instructor and learners or learners and learners. Through the classroom activities, a classroom atmosphere in which students could communicate interactively was generated and also encourage learners to actively participate in the activity of making Hangul.

5. Conclusion and Points for further improvement

Korean language education as a liberal arts class in Japanese universities requires a change in teaching and learning methods that take into account the needs of the current generation of learners. Previous studies have focused on grammar teaching methods, which have many differences from the communicative teaching methodology required by the current Korean education. This study aimed to find out how the use of Korean consonants and vowels cards affected beginner learners' Hangul learning. The observations showed that utilizing the cards as a classroom activity tool induces learner-directed learning where learners actively participate in the class.

On the other hand, there are some improvement were found through the class room activities in using the cards. First, Hangul has similar consonant and vowel shapes and is ordered like an alphabet, which confuses learners in the early stages of learning to put the cards in order. Second, there were no pronunciation markings on the cards, which made it difficult for learners to check themselves that they were pronouncing the cards correctly when they read them. Furthermore, during group activities, learners seemed to rely on the teacher rather than actively checking each other's pronunciation. Finally, there was no analysis of learning outcomes between the groups that used the Hangul cards and those that did not.

In conclusion, the purpose of this study is to develop a method of learning Hangul using consonants and vowels cards for beginners and to check its suitability. However, it is regrettable that this study was not able to investigate the effect of the consonants and vowels cards on the learning of Hangul. Therefore, in future study, there is a need to conduct surveys and interviews with learners about how the use of Hangul cards has affected their learning of Hangul.

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