

Introductory Korean

Student taught Course, fall 2010

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Motivation:

Being multilingual can be an extremely advantageous trait in this global world. Proficiency in more than one language can be very helpful not only in improving one's work and business opportunities, but also in giving us insight towards understanding people from different cultures. Caltech offers several different options for language classes; however, Korean has never been offered. I would like to fill the gap in the Caltech curriculum by offering a Korean language course and in doing so, give students at Caltech a chance to learn Korean. Korean has been acknowledged by many linguists to be one of the most scientific languages. Learning Korean can aid students in learning other Asian languages such as Japanese and Chinese because all three languages share many similarities. Learning basic Korean will also provide interested students with a better understanding of Korean popular culture.

Course Description:

This class is made for students who are interested in speaking and understanding Korean. This includes students who would like to gain some basic speaking skills for traveling or students who would like to gain a basic understanding of songs and movies from Korean popular culture. No background knowledge is required. This course will put special emphasis on Korean characters, pronunciation, basic grammar rules and simple conversations. Students will be able to read and write Korean characters, make simple sentences in Korean, and understand basic Korean lyrics and dialogue by the end of the course.

Each week, students will learn new grammar rules, five basic words, and five basic expressions. In addition, a short section of each two-hour-lecture will be devoted to teaching students about Korean culture through video clips, introduction to Korean popular songs, etc. There will be review sessions that will go over previously covered material, and sessions for practicing the material covered in class. Homework will be assigned to help students memorize characters, words and expressions. Grading will be based on attendance, class participation, homework, quizzes, and a final project.

Qualifications of instructor:

I am a native Korean speaker who took Korean classes in Korea through the 9th grade. My Korean classes covered advanced grammar, expressions, and vocabulary. All of my test scores in these topics were above the 98th percentile for Korean high school students. In addition, I have a wealth of background knowledge in Korean culture because I was taught to play six different Korean traditional musical instruments, and I have been very active in introducing people from other cultures to Korean culture since I first came to America. For example, I formed a Korean traditional musical group in both my high school and at Caltech. Each music group performed every year during International Week.

I attended a private high school in Oregon starting my sophomore year of high school. I

took at least one English course per semester and earned A's in every course. I have spent the last six years of my life in the US and have no problem understanding or speaking English. I have also taught Korean to three different foreign students who have all reached the level of writing, speaking, and understanding simple Korean sentences.

I have taken Japanese language course since high school. These classes have given me a good understanding of the difficulty involved in learning new languages other than English. As mentioned above, I also have experience successfully teaching Korean to native English speakers. My father, who has passed the Korean national qualification exam for teaching Korean to foreign students, has given me advice and helped me develop techniques for teaching Korean. In addition, I have spoken with Siripat Sumanaphan and gotten advice from her on determining fair grading policies and a grade distribution. She is responsible for teaching the student-taught Thai course offered this past winter term.

Course Materials:

Handouts¹ will be given out in the first two weeks. Starting in week 3, Introduction to Korean Language by Seoul National University Korean Language Research Association (~\$30) will be used. Homework assignments will be distributed in class. All handouts for the class will be prepared by the instructor.

Grading:

3 units (2-0-1): 2-hour class each week, 1 hour homework. Students can take this course only on Pass/Fail. A passing score is at least 75% of the total score.

Class participation/attendance 40%

Homework 20%

Final Project 20%

Quizzes 20%

Class participation and attendance (10x4%)

Students may be absent from the class once without receiving a deduction in their score.

However, additional work will be assigned to ensure that the student catches-up in the material they missed. After the first absence, 4% of their total grade will be deducted for each additional absence.

Homework (10x2%)

There will be 10 homework assignments. Each assignment will require the student to write 5 sentences using the grammar, words, and expressions learned during class that week. In addition, memorizing the Korean characters, words, and expressions covered in each class will be required for quiz preparation. For the first week, there will be a handout distributed in the beginning of the class and due at the end of the class, which will be counted as the first homework assignment.

¹ I have used this handout to teach the three foreign students previously mentioned. After using the handout multiple times, I have been able to revise it so that students can understand the Korean it teaches easily. I know from my experiences that this handout can be a good source for students when they are just beginning to learn Korean.

Final Project (20%)

For the final project, students will have a choice of 1) taking a conversation test, 2) giving a presentation, 3) writing a short essay, or 4) taking a final exam. Options 1 and 2 will concentrate on the words, expressions, and grammar learned in the first 9 weeks of class. Options 1 will be an in-class test and option 2 will consist of an in-class presentation. Options 3 and 4 will cover the materials learned in all 10 weeks of classes. Students will be able to choose the topic for both options 2 and 3. The short essay will be due at the same time as final exam. The final exam will be distributed at the end of class in week 10 and the students will have one week to take the exam before it is due back.

Quizzes (10x2%)

At the beginning of each class, a short quiz will be distributed to be completed in class. These quizzes are meant to test whether students have memorized the materials covered in the previous week. For the first week, a short quiz about Korean culture will be given at the end of the class. That quiz will only cover material from the first class.

Topics by week:

Week 1:

Introduction (Brief history of Korean characters, history of Korean language)
Learn/practice Korean characters (14 consonants + 10 basic vowels + combinations)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 basic expressions

Week 2:

Practice reading/writing Korean characters
Learn basic grammar (structure of sentence, personal pronoun)
Pronunciation lesson
Learn 5 basic words & 5 basic expressions

Week 3:

Learn Korean grammar (making sentences using words, grammar from last week)
Introduce Korean culture (video introducing representative and unique Korean culture: 30 mins)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 basic expressions

Week 4:

Learn Korean grammar (conjunctions and many different applications of conjunctions)
Introduce Korean culture (interesting proverbs representing unique Korean culture)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 5:

Learn Korean grammar (demonstrative/possessive pronouns, making interrogative sentences)
Introduce Korean culture (translate/learn one verse of Korean song: "Neng-myon" by Myung-ka-drive)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 6:

Learn Korean grammar (making sentences using words, grammar learned so far)

Introduce Korean culture (short clip of a popular Korean TV show: 30 mins)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 7:

Learn Korean grammar (making request sentences, formal/informal sentences)
Introduce Korean culture (part of the most famous Korean movie in America: My Sassy Girl)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 8:

Learn Korean grammar (making sentences using words, grammar learned so far)
Introduce Korean culture (part of the most famous Korean movie in America: My Sassy Girl)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 9:

Learn Korean grammar (passive/active sentences)
Introduce Korean culture (part of the most famous Korean movie in America: My Sassy Girl)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions

Week 10:

Learn Korean grammar (making sentences using words, grammar learned so far)
Introduce Korean culture (part of the most famous Korean movie in America: My Sassy Girl)
Learn 5 basic words & 5 expressions
Final Project

Extra Thoughts

Karaoke/movie/drama nights will be planned for students who want more chances to learn about Korean language and culture. During movie and drama nights, the instructor will watch requested Korean movies or dramas with students. The main purpose of this event will be to provide an opportunity to show how words and expressions students have learned so far can be used in daily conversation. These events are also meant to encourage students by showing them how much they will be able understand in Korean movies and dramas after learning new words and expressions. Karaoke night will involve a short, planned trip to Korea Town. The trip schedule will be planned out based on requests from the students. The trip may include 1) a Korean traditional meal, 2) visiting a Korean popular music store, 3) visiting a Korean karaoke, and/or 4) having a Korean traditional dessert. Attendance at these events is not required for the course. These events are planned to encourage students who would like to spend extra time on the course.