

# Internet Resources for Korean Language Education

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## 1. Introduction

My presentation is about how to create a better learning environment for learners of Korean and how to create a better teaching environment for teachers of Korean by using Internet resources.

Of all technologies, the Internet has most potential benefits to the field of Korean language education. The benefits can be discussed from two aspects: teaching and learning. The aspect of teaching is all about cooperation and collaboration between teachers via the Internet and this can bring immediate benefits to them, consequently resulting in better learning for learners. In addition, many learning activities utilising Internet resources require students of different schools and institutions to carry out the activities together. Therefore, I will discuss the teaching aspect first and then the application of the Internet resources for learning.

## 2. Resources for teachers

Like other Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) Korean has fundamental problems such as lack of teaching resources and professional development opportunities (Sung, 1995; Kim, Y., 1994; Kim, N., 1994; Ogosi, 1994). These problems have all originated from the simple fact that there are not many students learning Korean (Cho, 1997). Due to the small number of students, commercial publishers are not enthusiastic about the development of Korean teaching resources. Not-many-students means not-many-teachers and, furthermore, these few teachers are scattered all over the place making it difficult to provide professional development opportunities.

Given the fact that there is no dramatic and significant increase in number of students expected in a short or medium term, one way of lessening these problems is to maximise the use of limited resources we have: human resources and teaching/learning materials. Unfortunately, this has not been easy in the past since we were geographically far away from one another and the cost of communication was high.

The tools of the Internet have opened up new opportunities for easy and inexpensive communication between teachers. The Internet allows us to exchange ideas, class activities, lesson plans, and so on with ease. We do not have to struggle in isolation from one another any more.

Here are some of communication channels set up by universities and associations of Teaching Korean as a Foreign Language in and outside Korea:

- Mailing lists for Korean teachers
  1. Name: TKFSL-L@arts.monash.edu.au  
Topic: Teaching Korean as a Foreign or Second Language  
Manager: Korean Studies, Monash University  
Further Information:  
<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/korean/teaching/index.html>
  2. Name: ICKL@listserv.uta.edu  
Topic: Korean linguistics  
Manager: University of Texas  
Further Information: <http://listserv.uta.edu/archives/ickl.html>
  
- Sites with Web BBS for Korean teachers
  1. Teaching Korean as a Foreign Language Program  
Graduate School of Education, Kyunghee University  
<http://www.kyunghee.ac.kr/~koredu/>
  
  2. Teaching Korean as a Foreign Language Program  
Graduate School of Education, Yonsei University  
<http://suny.yonsei.ac.kr/~koreaedu/>
  
  3. Department of Korean Language Education  
Ewha Womans University  
<http://www.korealo.com/>
  
  4. Association of Korean Language Education for Foreigners  
Seoul National University  
<http://www.aklt.net/>

These communication channels allow us to exchange ideas, class activities, lesson plans, and so on leading to a better teaching environment. In other words, we can maximise the use of existing human and teaching/learning resources. Therefore, I urge all the participants here to take part in creating a better teaching environment.

I also urge all the participants here to become more active in building up the Web presence of their schools and institutions. In general, Korean programs do not rank high in their Web presence compared to other LCTLs. The Web presence of Korean language programs is important in that it promotes not only your program but also Korean language education as a whole.

We also have to strive to create or increase Korean presence at the Web sites of national language organizations such as Language Australia and Modern Language Teachers Association.

### **3. Resources for learners**

Although there is a variety of Internet resources which can be used for learning or teaching of Korean, today I will just focus on ready-made learning materials which

are readily available. Here is the list of web sites which have substantial amount of learning materials:

1. Korean@Monash  
<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/korean/>
2. Korean Studies at Sogang University  
<http://korean.sogang.ac.kr/>
3. An Introduction to Korean by J. David Eisenberg  
<http://catcode.com/kintro/>
4. Korean Study Net by the Korean Ministry of Information and Communication  
<http://www.interedu.go.kr/>
5. Korean Language at Korea & Korean  
<http://parallel.park.org/Korea/Pavilions/PublicPavilions/KoreaImage/hangul/index.htm>
6. Korean through English by the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
<http://www.mct.go.kr/hangeul/index.html>
7. Korean Language Institute at the University of Bridgeport  
<http://www.bridgeport.edu/Indexhtml/Centers/Disted/crsmaterials/korn101/>
8. Mr. Oh's learnkorean.com  
<http://www.learnkorean.com/>
9. Korea for Kids  
<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/accessasia/korea/kids.htm>  
&  
Snapshots of Asia (Korea) at Access Asia  
<http://www.curriculum.edu.au/accessasia/snapshot/korea/korea.htm>
10. Learning Hangul with Soyongdori  
<http://library.thinkquest.org/20746/>
11. Audio files of Korean conversations and narrations at Indiana University  
<http://languagelab.bh.indiana.edu/korean101.html>
12. Korean Folk Tales for Kids at the Korean company 'LG' web site (This is not designed for language learning. But it has an English version as well as a Korean one. Excellent site!)  
<http://story.lg.co.kr/english/index.html>

There are also mailing lists through which learners of Korean can exchange e-mail messages in Korean with other learners and native speakers of Korean.

1. Name: LearnKorean1-L@arts.monash.edu.au  
LearnKorean2-L@arts.monash.edu.au  
Manager: Korean Studies, Monash University  
Further Information:

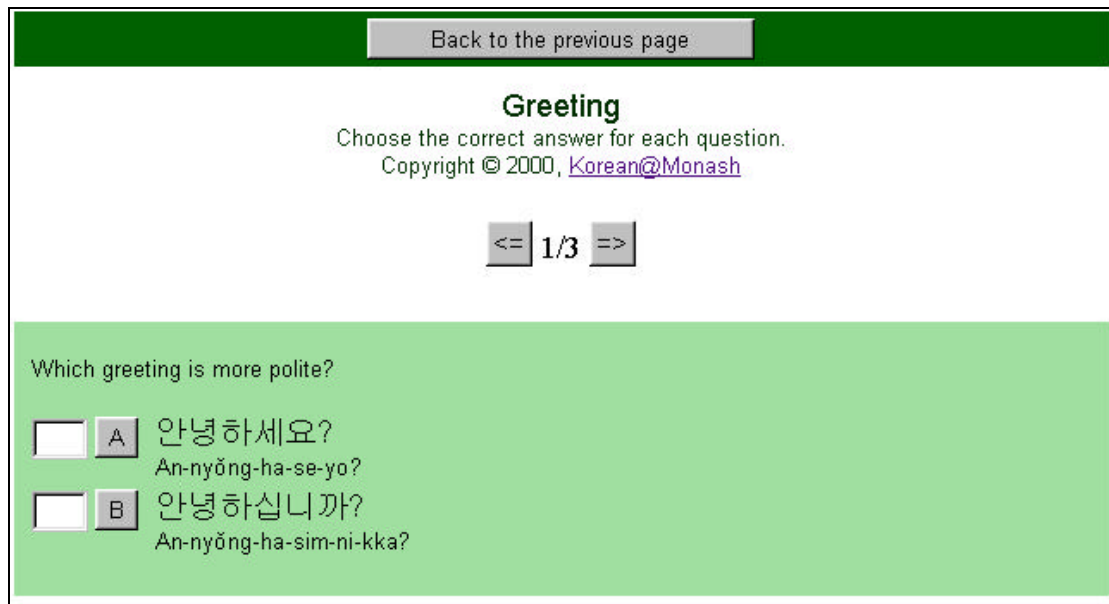
<http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/korean/learning/index.html>

2. Name: LearningKorean@yahoogroups.com  
Manager: Benjamin Barrett  
Further Information: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LearningKorean>

Although all of the above web sites allow anyone with Internet access to use their materials free of charge, I will talk about the Monash web site in detail. That's because the Monash site is specifically designed for other Korean educators to be able to use its learning materials with ease. In other words, it has been designed with sharing of materials between schools and institutions in mind.

The learning materials are designed to be flexible enough in content, structure, and the containing and navigation system to be easily incorporated into courses out side Monash. This high degree of flexibility has been achieved in the following ways:

- *Micro-components of learning materials.* Learning materials are made as small as possible. These micro-components can be compared to LEGO blocks. Just as we can construct an endless variety of structures with LEGO blocks, subject designers can construct an endless variety of courseware by interlinking the micro-components. This also allows students to construct their own learning path.
- *Web page as versatile container.* The learning material is represented in the form of Web pages. The Web page is a simple but powerful and interactive medium — simple because it is easy to create; powerful because it can contain a wide range of media such as text, audio and video; and interactive because it can contain a wide range of interactive learning materials written in computer languages.
- *Site independence of navigation system.* The navigation elements in the learning material should not assume any specific location or structure. It is essential that we can assemble micro-components in different configurations required by any particular courseware. The navigation system should allow multiple entry points and enable users to return directly to wherever they came from.



**Figure 1: Example of micro-components and its navigation system**

This 'plug and play' approach increases not only re-usability but also shareability. Shareability is important for easy collaboration not only within the school or institution but also between schools or institutions. Collaboration enables us either to develop more materials of better quality in any given time, or to shorten development time for a given amount of materials. Sharing between schools or institutions is very important for LCTLs such as Korean in which there is a dearth of resources. This will also help to avoid the 'not invented here syndrome'.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Although the field of Korean language education has many problems and obstacles, we should not despair and instead work together to overcome them. If we work together we can overcome them sooner. So I would like to finish my presentation emphasizing again the importance of cooperation and collaboration among Korean educators. Ehrmann (1996) said, "We educators advance as communities of inquiry, groping forward together through the dark. We help each other and advance, or else we fail to advance."

#### **References**

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