DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF KOREAN LANGUAGE TEACHING: INSIGHTS FROM KF E-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

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Abstract. *This study investigates the digital transformation of Korean language teaching through the implementation of KF e-School programs within a hybrid learning environment in Uzbekistan. The research is based on a four-month instructional period involving 14 undergraduate students enrolled in academic writing and speaking courses. A mixed-methods approach was employed to evaluate student performance, engagement, and perceptions of digital learning. The findings demonstrate that the integration of video-on-demand (VOD) lectures with face-to-face instruction significantly enhances language acquisition, particularly in writing structure, speaking fluency, and learner motivation. However, several challenges were identified, including technical limitations and the need for localized pedagogical support. Overall, the KF e-School model shows strong potential for expanding Korean language education through digital innovation and hybrid methodologies.*

Keywords: *Korean language education, digital learning, KF e-School, hybrid learning, language acquisition, e-learning.*

Annotatsiya. *Mazkur tadqiqot O‘zbekistonda gibrid ta’lim muhiti doirasida KF e-School dasturlarini joriy etish orqali koreys tilini o‘qitishning raqamli transformatsiyasini o‘rganadi. Tadqiqot akademik yozuv va nutq kurslarida tahsil olayotgan 14 nafar bakalavriat talabasi ishtirokida to‘rt oylik o‘quv jarayoniga asoslangan. Talabalarning o‘zlashtirish darajasi, faolligi va raqamli ta’lim haqidagi qarashlarini baholash uchun aralash metodologik yondashuv qo‘llanildi. Tadqiqot natijalari video-on-demand (VOD) ma’ruzalarini an’anaviy auditoriya mashg‘ulotlari bilan integratsiya qilish til o‘zlashtirish samaradorligini, ayniqsa yozma nutq tuzilishi, og‘zaki nutq ravonligi va o‘quvchilarning motivatsiyasini sezilarli darajada oshirishini ko‘rsatdi. Shu bilan birga, texnik cheklovlar hamda mahalliylashtirilgan pedagogik yordamga ehtiyoj kabi ayrim muammolar ham aniqlandi. Umuman olganda, KF e-School modeli raqamli innovatsiyalar va gibrid metodologiyalar orqali koreys tili ta’limini kengaytirish uchun katta salohiyatga ega ekanligi tasdiqlandi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *koreys tili ta’limi, raqamli ta’lim, KF e-School, gibrid ta’lim, til o‘zlashtirish, elektron ta’lim.*

Аннотация. *Данное исследование посвящено изучению цифровой трансформации преподавания корейского языка посредством внедрения программ KF e-School в условиях гибридной образовательной среды в Узбекистане. Исследование основано на четырехмесячном учебном процессе с участием 14 студентов бакалавриата, обучающихся на курсах академического письма и разговорной речи. Для оценки успеваемости студентов, их вовлеченности и восприятия цифрового обучения был применен смешанный методологический подход. Результаты исследования показали, что интеграция видео-лекций по запросу (VOD) с традиционными аудиторными занятиями значительно повышает эффективность усвоения языка, особенно в области структуры письменной речи, беглости устной речи и учебной мотивации студентов. Вместе с тем были выявлены определенные проблемы, включая технические ограничения и необходимость локализованной педагогической поддержки. В целом модель KF e-School демонстрирует высокий потенциал для расширения преподавания корейского языка посредством цифровых инноваций и гибридных методик обучения.*

Ключевые слова: *обучение корейскому языку, цифровое обучение, KF e-School, гибридное обучение, усвоение языка, электронное обучение.*

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Introduction. The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly reshaped modern education, particularly in the field of foreign language teaching. Korean language education has experienced notable global expansion due to the growing cultural and economic influence of South Korea. Despite this growth, many regions, including Uzbekistan, continue to face challenges such as limited access to qualified instructors and insufficient modern teaching resources.

To address these issues, digital platforms such as KF e-School have been introduced, providing access to high-quality instructional materials delivered by native-speaking professors. This study aims to examine the impact of digital transformation on Korean language teaching through the KF e-School program in Uzbekistan. The research focuses on how hybrid learning environments influence student performance, engagement, and overall learning outcomes.

Literature analysis. Digital learning has become an essential component of contemporary language education, offering flexibility, accessibility, and exposure to authentic linguistic input. In Korean language education, online platforms enable students to learn directly from native-speaking instructors, thereby enhancing both linguistic competence and cultural understanding.

Previous studies indicate that digital tools contribute to improved learning outcomes by integrating multimedia content, interactive activities, and learner-centered approaches. Unlike traditional methods that primarily focus on grammar and vocabulary, digital learning environments promote diversified instructional strategies, increasing student engagement and motivation.

However, in contexts such as Uzbekistan, challenges remain due to limited exposure to a natural language environment and reliance on traditional teaching practices. These factors highlight the importance of integrating digital technologies into language instruction to improve educational effectiveness.

The hybrid (blended) learning model combines online and face-to-face instruction, offering a balanced approach that enhances flexibility, learner autonomy, and interaction. This model is particularly effective in foreign language education, where exposure to authentic input and communicative practice is essential.

In this study, the hybrid model was implemented through asynchronous VOD lectures delivered by Korean professors and synchronous classroom sessions conducted by a local instructor. The online component allowed students to control their learning pace and revisit complex materials, while in-class sessions facilitated comprehension and practical application.

A Learning Management System (LMS) was used to organize course materials, monitor student progress, and provide feedback. This integrated approach aligns with

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constructivist learning theory, emphasizing active knowledge construction through interaction and experience.

Additionally, digital communication tools such as Telegram, Zoom, and Google Meet support synchronous interaction and collaborative learning. These technologies enhance communication, facilitate peer interaction, and extend learning beyond the classroom. During the pandemic period, these tools became essential for maintaining instructional continuity, enabling synchronous interaction and real-time communication between instructors and students. Even in the post-pandemic period, such technologies remain integral to teaching practices in Uzbekistan, particularly in Korean language education.

Research methodology. This study adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore the effectiveness of the hybrid learning model implemented through the KF e-School program. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' learning outcomes and experiences. The quantitative component focused on measuring students' academic speaking performance through midterm and final exam scores. The qualitative aspect included teacher observations and reflective feedback on student engagement, participation, and overall learning progress during the course.

Results and discussion. The study involved 14 undergraduate students enrolled in Korean language courses at Uzbekistan State World Languages University. The participants studied two subjects:

- Academic Writing in Korean
- Academic Speaking and Presentation Skills

The students' proficiency levels ranged from A2 to B1, representing lower-intermediate learners in Korean language education.

The course was conducted over a four-month period using a hybrid learning model that combined:

i. Video-on-Demand (VOD) lectures delivered by Korean professors
ii. Face-to-face classroom sessions led by a local instructor
iii. Learning Management System (LMS) for assignments, communication, and feedback

During the course, students completed writing and speaking tasks, participated in presentations, took both midterm and final examinations. This structure allowed students to engage with authentic materials while receiving continuous guidance and support.

Data were collected from the following sources:

a. Midterm and final exam scores (academic speaking)
b. Classroom observations
c. Teacher feedback on student performance
d. Informal evaluation of student motivation and participation

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The assessment system was based on a 5-point grading scale, commonly used in university evaluation systems.

i. To evaluate student performance and learning consistency, two statistical methods were applied:
ii. Paired samples t-test to measure improvement between midterm and final scores
iii. Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationship between students' performances over time

In addition, descriptive statistics were used to summarize overall trends in student achievement.

Indicator	Value
Number of Students	14
Midterm Mean Score	3.31
Final Mean Score	3.85
Improvement	+0.54
Students Passed Midterm	14 (100%)
Students Passed Final	12 (85.7%)
Students Failed Final	2 (14.3%)
Pearson Correlation (r)	0.82
t-test (p-value)	0.068

Table 1. Student Performance Summary (Academic Speaking)

The results show an increase in mean scores from 3.31 in the midterm to 3.85 in the final assessment. Although two students failed the final exam, the overall performance indicates a positive trend. The Pearson correlation (r = 0.82) demonstrates strong consistency in student performance, while the t-test results suggest a marginally significant improvement. (Table 1)

$$r = \frac{\sum(x-\bar{x})(y-\bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x-\bar{x})\sum(y-y^2)}}$$

To examine the relationship between students' midterm and final performance, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated using the standard formula presented above.

The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation (r = 0.82), indicating that students who achieved higher scores in the midterm assessment tended to maintain similar performance levels in the final examination. Furthermore, descriptive statistics showed that all 14 students passed the midterm assessment, while 2 students failed the final exam. Approximately 70% of participants demonstrated a high level of knowledge acquisition, whereas around 30% showed insufficient mastery of the course content. These findings suggest that the hybrid learning model supports consistent academic performance, although some variability remains among lower-performing students.

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$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{s_d/\sqrt{n}}$$

In addition, a paired samples t-test was conducted to compare mean differences between midterm and final scores.

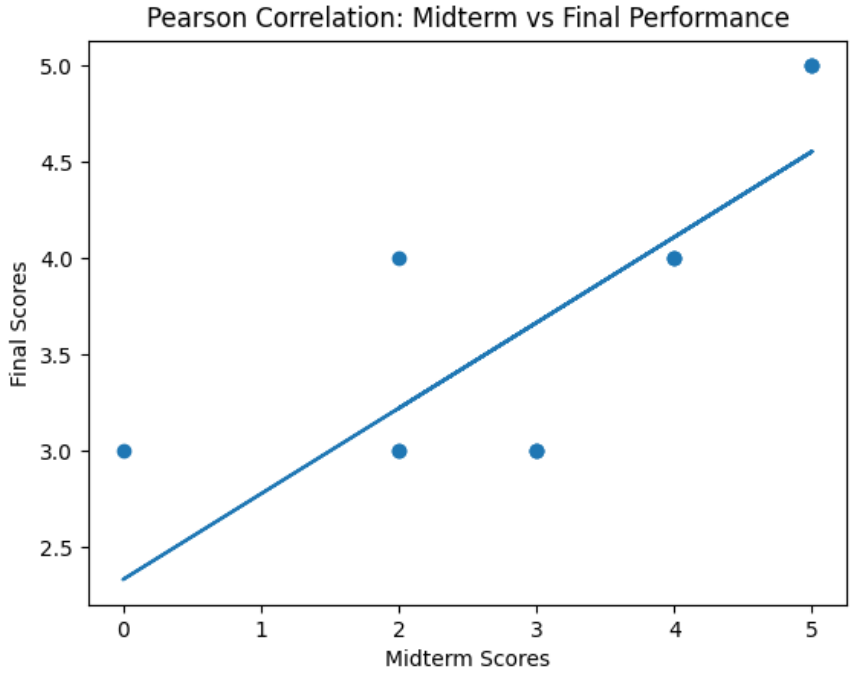

Figure 1. Pearson correlation; Midterm vs Final performance

This figure illustrates the strong positive correlation between midterm and final scores, confirming the consistency of student performance throughout the hybrid learning period. (Figure 1)

The results indicate a positive impact of the hybrid learning model on student performance and engagement:

- Improvement in academic writing structure
- Increased speaking fluency
- Higher levels of student motivation
- Active participation in both online and offline activities

Quantitative analysis shows that students demonstrated consistent progress throughout the course, while qualitative feedback highlights increased confidence and interest in learning Korean.

The strong positive correlation suggests that the hybrid learning model ensures consistency in student performance over time. Most students benefited from the integration of digital and face-to-face instruction, gaining valuable experience in both academic writing and speaking at A2–B1 levels. However, the presence of underperforming students (approximately 30%) indicates that not all learners were able to fully adapt to the hybrid learning environment. This may be due to differences in individual learning abilities, digital literacy, or engagement levels.

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From a pedagogical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of providing additional support for lower-performing students while maintaining the effectiveness of digital learning strategies.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the KF e-School hybrid learning model proved to be effective in enhancing Korean language proficiency among the majority of students. While most participants achieved significant learning outcomes, a minority still require additional instructional support. The combination of digital tools and traditional teaching methods offers a promising approach to improving foreign language education in non-native contexts.

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