

Exploring the Current Status and Development Potential of Korean Language Education in the Platform Era

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Abstract: This study explores the current state and development potential of Korean language education in the platform era and proposes successful platform development strategies. (1) Background/Purpose: With the global spread of Korean popular culture (K-Pop, K-dramas, K-films) and the internationalization of the Korean economy, interest in learning Korean has increased worldwide. The advent of the platform era has eliminated barriers of time and space and opened new possibilities for Korean language education. This study aims to analyze the impact of platform technology on Korean language education, compare various platform types, assess user satisfaction, and propose a strategic roadmap for platform development. (2) Study Design/Methodology/Approach: The study employed literature review, platform case analysis (focusing on the King Sejong Institute Foundation's five platforms), market analysis, and a questionnaire survey of 52 foreign Korean language learners from 11 Asian countries conducted via Google Forms in November–December 2024. (3) Findings: Platform technology significantly impacts Korean language education, with diverse platforms providing varied learning experiences. Analysis of Sejong-Hakdang platforms identified key problems: insufficient interconnectivity, content shortages and delayed updates, limited learner interaction, insufficient personalized learning features, and inadequate promotion. Survey results showed learners prefer free platforms, value diverse content and user-friendly interfaces, and have high demand for AI-based conversation, writing correction, and VR/AR learning features. (4) Originality/Value: Based on the findings, this study proposes six strategic directions for Korean language education platform development: (1) technological innovation and global collaboration using AI, big data, VR/AR, and metaverse technologies; (2) personalized learning experiences through AI-based adaptive systems; (3) enhanced learner interaction and community activation; (4) content diversification and quality improvement; (5) increased user convenience; and (6) continuous feedback and improvement cycles.

Keywords: Korean language education; digital platform; AI-based learning; Sejong-Hakdang; personalized learning; VR/AR; metaverse; learner satisfaction; platform era; K-wave

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

In the 21st century, the global spread of Korean popular culture and the internationalization of the Korean economy have significantly increased worldwide interest in learning Korean. K-Pop, dramas, and films provide opportunities for people around the world to encounter the Korean language and culture, acting as major drivers of the Korean learning boom. Psy's 'Gangnam Style' garnered enormous views on YouTube, introducing Korean pop music to the world; the drama 'Jewel in the Palace' aired across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa; and most recently, the Netflix drama 'Squid Game' achieved worldwide popularity, once again demonstrating the power of Korean content. This global success of Korean popular culture is stimulating curiosity and desire to learn Korean, driving rapid growth in the Korean language education market.

Furthermore, the global expansion of Korean companies and increasing international exchange are growing the number of people who need Korean language proficiency. Korean companies such as Samsung, Hyundai, and

LG occupy major positions in the global market, making Korean language ability an essential element for business cooperation, investment attraction, and technology partnerships with these companies. With the strengthening of Korea's international standing, the importance of Korean in international organizations and diplomatic fields is also becoming highlighted, and the number of people learning Korean for purposes of studying in Korea, tourism, and cultural experience is increasing.

In this context, online and mobile platforms are making significant contributions to dramatically improving accessibility to Korean language education. While in the past one had to physically attend offline academies or universities to learn Korean, now anyone with an internet connection and smartphone can learn Korean anytime and anywhere. The advent of the platform era presents new possibilities for Korean language education by eliminating constraints of time and space, providing learner-centered customized learning environments, and enhancing learning effectiveness through diverse learning content and interaction features.

In particular, the emergence of diverse types of Korean language education platforms is noteworthy. Platforms like Duolingo and Memrise incorporate game elements to support fun Korean learning; Talk To Me In Korean provides systematic curricula and diverse learning materials; and Sejong-Hakdang, operated by the Korean government, provides reliable content as an online Korean language education platform. Beyond these, various platforms have emerged including immersive learning platforms utilizing VR/AR technology and personalized learning platforms using AI-based tutors, providing diverse options for Korean learners.

Korean language education platforms are digital platforms that provide learners wishing to learn Korean with diverse learning tools and materials, leveraging the advantages of online learning to provide opportunities to learn Korean globally. They offer various benefits including flexible learning unconstrained by time and space, personalized learning content matched to individual levels and learning objectives, and enhanced learning immersion through diverse multimedia materials and interaction features.

1.2. Research Purpose

This study aims not merely to identify the current state of Korean language education in the platform era, but to explore the future development potential of Korean language education platforms and ultimately propose a successful business model.

First, the study comprehensively analyzes the impact of platform technology advancement on Korean language education, and compares traditional Korean language education methods with platform-based education to clearly identify paradigm changes in Korean language education in the platform era.

Second, the study analyzes various Korean language education platform types—including web-based platforms, mobile apps, game-based platforms, and VR/AR platforms—and comparatively analyzes the strengths and weaknesses, learning effects, and user satisfaction of each type to evaluate each platform's unique characteristics and suitability for Korean language education. The study also presents the current status and future prospects of the Korean language education platform market through analysis of market size, growth rates, major competing platforms, user demographics, and latest technology trends.

Third, through analysis of successful Korean language education platform cases, the study derives success factors including content, technology, marketing, and operational strategies, and explores development potential through convergence with future technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and metaverse.

Finally, the study concretely presents platform operation methods, revenue generation models, marketing strategies, and content development strategies, aiming to construct a Korean language education platform business model capable of securing competitive advantage in the market and achieving sustainable growth.

1.3. Research Methodology

This study employs various research methods to achieve the research objectives. First, it conducts in-depth analysis of the current state of Korean language education in the platform era, theoretical background, related policies, and latest technology trends by collecting diverse literature including academic papers, research reports, government publications, and related books. Domestic and foreign literature related to Korean language education, online education, platform business, and educational technology is broadly reviewed to establish the theoretical foundation.

Second, successful Korean language education platform cases from Korea and abroad are selected for in-depth analysis of business models, content strategies, operational methods, marketing strategies, and technology utilization. Through case analysis, success and failure factors are derived to provide implications for developing new Korean language education platform business models.

Third, the scale, growth rate, competitive landscape, and trends of the Korean language education market and online education market are analyzed using statistical data, market research reports, and industry trend analysis materials published by government agencies, market research institutions, and research organizations.

Additionally, a questionnaire survey of foreign Korean language learners is conducted to understand learner needs, learning methods, platform usage experiences, and satisfaction levels, incorporating these findings into the research. This comprehensive approach provides a holistic understanding of the current state and development potential of Korean language education in the platform era and derives strategic implications for the successful execution of the Korean language education platform business.

2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Background

Platform-based Korean language education enables learners to actively participate in the learning process and construct their own knowledge. Platforms provide learners with rich learning materials and interactive tools, allowing learners to choose their learning path and method according to their learning objectives and needs. This learner-centered environment is effective in enhancing learning motivation and immersion, helping learners construct meaning through their own learning experiences and internalize knowledge.

Platforms also create learning environments that connect diverse learners and teachers, share information, and promote interaction. This views knowledge not as existing in isolation within individuals, but as formed through interaction and networks among people. Collaborative learning, community activities, and information sharing through platforms contribute to strengthening connections among learners, sharing diverse perspectives and experiences, and forming collective intelligence.

Language learning is not merely the acquisition of grammar or vocabulary rules, but a process of creating meaning within the society and culture that uses the language. Accordingly, the importance of social interaction and cultural context in language learning is emphasized. Platforms provide environments where learners with diverse cultural backgrounds can interact with each other, experience Korean culture, and use Korean in authentic contexts. This helps improve not only learners' linguistic abilities but also their cultural understanding and communication skills.

2.1.1. Types and Characteristics of Korean Language Education Platforms

Korean language education platforms can be broadly divided into web-based platforms, mobile apps, game-based platforms, and VR/AR platforms, each with unique characteristics and strengths and weaknesses.

Web-based platforms are accessed via PC and are advantageous for providing diverse learning content and features. The Sejong-Hakdang website is a representative example, abundantly providing Korean language learning materials, online lectures, and learning communities, optimized for the PC environment for effective utilization of learning materials. Web-based platforms are also easy to accommodate and manage large numbers of users and relatively convenient for system updates and maintenance. However, they have constraints of lower portability compared to mobile devices and requiring internet connection.

Mobile apps can be used on smartphones or tablets, with the advantage of easy learning while on the move. Apps like 'Memrise' and 'Duolingo' are designed for intensive learning in short periods, focusing on increasing learning enjoyment by incorporating game elements. Mobile apps can collect and analyze user learning data to provide personalized learning experiences and continuously encourage learning through push notifications. However, screen size constraints may limit the quantity and diversity of learning content, and they may not be suitable for extended learning sessions.

Game-based platforms are designed to enable natural Korean language learning through games. They are effective in increasing learner immersion and interest using game elements, and motivating learning through competition and reward systems. For example, learners can improve Korean skills by exploring virtual worlds and communicating in Korean, or by solving quizzes and completing missions. However, focusing on games may cause learners to lose sight of learning objectives, and there are limitations in implementing all learning content in game format.

VR/AR platforms use virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) technology to provide immersive learning environments. Through VR/AR technology, learners can experience situations using Korean in virtual spaces, or learn through virtual Korean language learning content overlaid on real environments. For example, wearing a VR headset to order food at a virtual Korean restaurant, or using an AR app to translate real street signs into

Korean. VR/AR platforms can enhance learning effectiveness by providing vivid experiences as if actually in Korea, but require high technology and costs, and still lack content.

2.1.2. Key Features and Services

Korean language education platforms provide various features and services to offer learners effective and engaging learning experiences. These can be broadly divided into learning content provision, learning activity support, learning management, community features, and additional services.

Korean language education platforms provide diverse forms of learning content. They use multimedia content including text, images, audio, and video to attract learner interest and participation. They provide diverse content suited to learner levels, from basic pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar for beginner learners to reading, writing, speaking, and listening practice for intermediate and advanced learners. Content introducing Korean culture, history, and society broadens learners' understanding of Korea and provides learning motivation. Some platforms use Korean drama, film, and music content to enhance learning enjoyment and help learners indirectly experience actual Korean language usage environments.

Korean language education platforms support various activities to enable effective learning. Diverse learning activities such as flash cards, quizzes, and games allow review of learned content and familiarization with vocabulary and grammar rules. Speech recognition technology is used to correct learner pronunciation, and AI-based chatbots support Korean conversation practice. Some platforms provide features supporting collaborative learning among learners, enabling improvement of learning outcomes through joint problem-solving or project completion.

In terms of management, platforms provide features for systematic management of learners' learning processes. Learning goal setting, learning plan formulation, learning progress checking, and learning achievement evaluation help learners proactively manage their learning processes and establish efficient learning strategies. Learning data is analyzed to identify learner strengths and weaknesses, providing personalized learning content and feedback. Some platforms provide learning analysis reports to help learners understand their learning patterns and improve learning methods.

Community features for interaction among learners are also an important function of Korean language education platforms. Learners can ask questions, share learning information, and maintain learning motivation by encouraging each other through community boards or chat rooms. They can also practice Korean conversation with other learners or form study groups for joint learning. Community features contribute to learners sharing learning experiences, motivating each other, and creating positive learning environments.

Finally, Korean language education platforms provide various additional services for learning convenience, including Korean language learning materials, Korean cultural information, and Korean study abroad information. They also provide information on online Korean proficiency examinations, Korean learning app recommendations, and Korean learning material purchases. Some platforms provide services that comprehensively support learners' Korean language learning journeys, including connections to Korean language educational institutions, Korean language teacher search, and Korean cultural experience program guides.

2.2. Literature Review

A 2024 journal article entitled 'Comparison of Language Learning Platforms to Choose a Suitable Platform for Korean Language Learning' (Jacqueline et al., 2024) compares three Korean language platforms: Duolingo, Lingodeer, and Drops. All three platforms have both online platforms and mobile apps.

2.2.1. Duolingo

Duolingo is a leading language learning platform with over 300 million users worldwide, covering over 40 languages. Duolingo's distinctive feature is that it provides an educational experience similar to game dynamics, converting the learning process into an enjoyable and immersive experience. Available for free, this platform has positioned itself as a benchmark in the field of language learning, clearly demonstrating the fusion of education and entertainment. Duolingo also offers a Pro version that allows users to customize their learning experience more deeply.

Duolingo sends users daily reminders and tracks learning progress. It shows current learning records and accumulates 'gems' and experience points (XP) in each lesson. The following items can be purchased with gems: (1) Heart refills: users can purchase this item to immediately recharge hearts needed for more lessons, starting with 5 hearts that are removed one by one when mistakes are made during lessons; (2) Streak freeze: this

element maintains the current streak record even without activity for one day; (3) Double or Nothing: maintaining a 7-day streak with this item doubles 50 gems. XP can be used to advance in the weekly league leaderboard, with competitions starting every Monday and top participants advancing to the next league at weekends.

2.2.2. Lingodeer

Lingodeer is an online platform focused on language education, easily downloadable from app stores. The platform offers rich free content with options to elevate the educational experience to a new dimension through paid subscriptions, enabling access to more extensive lessons and resources. Each Lingodeer lesson contains an informative 'Learning Tips' section allowing users to preview grammar they should study before entering the lesson.

Lingodeer sets daily goals for users to cultivate consistent learning habits, and provides a robust tracking system monitoring various aspects of progress, including daily streaks measuring learning consistency and cumulative progress over time. The platform also tracks total time spent learning, implementing an achievement system as 'gamification of the learning process,' providing a total of 32 achievements combining learning time, consistency, languages, and levels achieved. To further motivate users, Lingodeer provides a tier system based on XP accumulation with 110 extensive levels.

2.2.3. Drops

Drops is an online platform owned by the well-known Norwegian company Kahoot!, positioning itself as a specialized tool for language learning, offering over 50 language courses with particular focus on vocabulary expansion. It focuses on enabling acquisition of over 2,500 words on various topics related to each language. Drops' careful design is created to visually facilitate easy memorization of new words. By presenting streaks and personal statistics, the platform motivates users to maintain consistent practice, contributing to continuous progress in vocabulary acquisition. Drops displays words in the selected language with translations, shows pictures for each word, and teaches pronunciation, providing 5-minute lessons where users match individual words and phrases to corresponding images.

Table 1. Comparison of Content Coverage of Korean Language Education Platforms.

No	Content Category	Duolingo	Lingodeer	Drops	Coverage Type
1	Learning Content – Korean consonants/vowels	O	O	X	Content Type
2	Learning Content – Vocabulary	O	O	O	
3	Learning Content – Grammar	O	O	X	
4	Learning Content – Conversation and expressions	O	O	O	
5	Activity Support	O (gamification, challenges)	O (exercises, review)	O (visual learning)	Platform Feature
6	Learning Management	O (goal/progress management)	O (learning statistics)	O (progress management)	
7	Community Features	O (forum, friend adding)	X	X	
8	Additional Services	O (Duolingo Stories, podcast)	X	X	

The core purpose of this research is to evaluate the features of various Korean language learning platforms currently available. When comparing the three analyzed platforms, Duolingo stands out most prominently as it comprehensively covers the aspects considered in the evaluation. It is recommended to select a Korean language learning platform that best reflects users' specific needs and completely covers the essential content for effective

and comprehensive learning.

3. Analysis of Korean Language Education Platforms

It is important to select a platform appropriate to the user's learning objectives, learning style, and preferences. Understanding the current state of platforms in operation through analysis of the characteristics and problems of Korean language education platforms provided by the 'King Sejong Institute Foundation'—which provides free services to Korean language learners worldwide from an authoritative institution—is essential.

3.1. Current Status of the King Sejong Institute Foundation's Korean Language Education Platforms

3.1.1. Types and Characteristics of Platforms

Table 2. Current Status of the King Sejong Institute Foundation's Korean Language Education Platforms.

Platform	Function	Year Developed	Year Launched	Operation Type
Nuri Sejong-Hakdang	Korean language and culture information portal	2020 (reorganized)	2020	Web
Online Sejong-Hakdang	Non-face-to-face Korean language learning site	2019	2021	Web, App
Metaverse Sejong-Hakdang	Metaverse space for real-time Korean communication	2022	2023	Web
Sejong-Hakdang in Your Hands	Comprehensive Korean language learning app	2023	2024	App
Sejong-Hakdang AI Teacher	AI-based Korean language practice app	2020	2021	App

The King Sejong Institute Foundation provides five Korean language education platforms: Nuri Sejong-Hakdang, Online Sejong-Hakdang, Metaverse Sejong-Hakdang, Sejong-Hakdang in Your Hands, and Sejong-Hakdang AI Teacher.

(1) Nuri Sejong-Hakdang is a Korean language and Korean culture resource portal site for Korean language learners and teachers, providing diverse educational materials needed for Korean language learning and teaching. Learners can utilize textbooks and learning materials appropriate to their level and objectives, and enjoy diverse Korean cultural videos. Teachers can find and use Korean language and Korean culture educational materials for use in Korean language classes, and attend free online Korean language teacher training courses. The platform also provides multilingual services in English, Chinese, Japanese, and other languages in addition to Korean.

(2) Online Sejong-Hakdang is a Korean language learning platform operated by the King Sejong Institute Foundation, providing a free online Korean language learning service accessible anytime, anywhere on PC and mobile. It enables fun and easy Korean language learning through multilingual instruction by online teachers, with customized learning matched to learner levels from beginner to advanced. The Korean language learning menu provides educational materials classified into lecture-type, assignment-type, and self-study types. Korean language culture course menus provide diverse learning content including Korean language crafts, food culture, weddings, and clothing courses. The platform also provides Korean language diagnostic evaluations to enable learners to begin Korean language learning matched to their level.

(3) Metaverse Sejong-Hakdang is a Korean language learning and cultural experience space in the virtual world operated by the King Sejong Institute Foundation. Built on the ZEP platform, it provides diverse content and programs enabling anyone worldwide to experience Korean language and Korean culture in real-time. The main spaces of the metaverse are divided into 'Campus' and 'Village.' The campus consists of lecture buildings, cultural experience buildings, and event buildings. Korean language classes based on textbooks used in actual Sejong-Hakdang are held in the lecture building. The cultural experience building is a space where various Korean cultures including K-Pop, Korean dramas, and Korean films can be experienced. The village is a space for virtually experiencing everyday Korean life, with representative Korean landmarks such as Dongdaemun

Design Plaza (DDP), Seoul Station, Han River Park, and Gwangjang Market set up for Korean language speaking practice.

(4) The Sejong-Hakdang in Your Hands app is a mobile app operated by the King Sejong Institute Foundation, providing diverse content for learning Korean language and Korean culture anytime, anywhere. The app's home menu shows learning progress, consecutive learning days, and learning time at a glance, and recommends diverse learning content including vocabulary, grammar, and conversation matched to the user's learning level and interests. The learning menu enables learning of vocabulary, grammar, and conversation based on textbook content used at Sejong-Hakdang. The vocabulary book menu allows bookmarking of important or confusing words during learning to create personal vocabulary books.

(5) The Sejong-Hakdang AI Teacher app is an AI-based Korean language learning app providing an experience as if having a personal Korean conversation teacher. Its biggest feature is that various situations can be set up for Korean conversation practice with AI. This app focuses on helping beginner learners acquire Korean language expressions frequently used in everyday life and confidently use Korean in actual situations. Various situations are covered, including greetings when first meeting, self-introduction, weather conversations, ordering food at restaurants, shopping at stores, asking for directions, and using public transportation. The app also comprehensively evaluates user pronunciation, detecting inaccurate pronunciation and providing correction guidance.

3.1.2. Problems of the Platforms

Table 3. Comparison of the King Sejong Institute Foundation's Korean Language Education Platforms.

No	Content	Nuri	Online	Metaverse	In Your Hands	AI Teacher	Coverage
1	Content – Consonants/vowels	O (basic)	O	O	O	O	Content Type
2	Content – Vocabulary	O	O	O	O	O	
3	Content – Grammar	O	O	O	O	O	
4	Content – Conversation/expressions	O	O	O	O	O	
5	Activity Support	O (quiz, exercises)	O (diverse activities)	O (games, missions)	O	O (custom feedback)	Platform Features
6	Learning Management	O (progress mgmt)	O (history mgmt)	O (record mgmt)	O	O (data analysis)	
7	Community Features	O (Q&A board)	O (online community)	O (metaverse community)	X	X	
8	Additional Services	Korean learning materials	Customized course learning	High-immersion via VR	X	AI-based customized learning	

Based on comparative analysis, the King Sejong Institute Foundation's Korean language education platforms have the following key problems requiring improvement.

First, interconnectivity between platforms is insufficient. Although various platforms exist—Nuri-Sejong-Hakdang, Online Sejong-Hakdang, Metaverse Sejong-Hakdang, Sejong-Hakdang in Your Hands, and Sejong-Hakdang AI Teacher—connectivity between platforms is lacking. Learners experience inconvenience in having to use multiple platforms separately, and learning data is not managed in an integrated manner, making it difficult to maximize learning effects.

Second, content shortage and delayed updates require improvement. Some platforms have insufficient content quantity or delayed updates. In particular, content for intermediate and above learners is lacking, and content updates reflecting the latest trends are inadequate. Individual personalized learning content and features matched to learner levels and learning objectives are also insufficient. Learner community activation and collaborative learning features need strengthening for learners experiencing difficulty learning alone.

Third, from a technical perspective, some mobile apps have inconvenient user interfaces or limited features. For example, the Sejong-Hakdang in Your Hands app has the advantage of providing diverse learning content including vocabulary, grammar, and conversation in a single app, but this may make the menu structure feel somewhat complex. Mobile environment-optimized UI/UX design and feature improvements are needed to enhance user convenience.

Finally, insufficient promotion of Sejong-Hakdang-related platforms means that many potential learners do not know about the platforms. Proactive promotion and marketing activities through various channels are needed to increase platform awareness and expand users.

3.2. Learner Usage Satisfaction Survey

3.2.1. Survey Method and Questionnaire Development

A survey on Korean language education platform usage was conducted among foreigners from 11 Asian countries who are studying Korean in November to December 2024. The survey was conducted via Google Forms online survey format. 60 students participated, and analysis was based on data from 52 respondents who completed responses from start to finish. Survey participants included Korean language students at Yonsei University's Global Talent College, Seoul School of Integrated Sciences and Technologies' Korean Education Management, Kyung Hee University's International Education Institute, and Sejong-Hakdang attendees in Vietnam, Brazil, and Japan.

Table 4. Content of the Korean Language Education Platform Usage Satisfaction Survey.

Category	Survey Items
Personal Information	Nationality, age group, current educational background
Korean Language Learning Background	Korean language learning duration, Korean proficiency level
Platform Usage Status	Currently used Korean language education platforms, reasons for platform selection
Platform Usage Experience	Class loading speed, video content provision status, photo/illustration material provision status, most useful learning content
Platform Improvement & Budget	Desired additional features, monthly budget willing to pay

3.2.2. Survey Result Analysis

The following summarizes key findings from the survey across the 10 main areas investigated:

Table 5. Nationality Distribution of Survey Participants.

Nationality	Number	Percentage (%)
China	22	42.3
Vietnam	16	30.8
Nepal / Taiwan / Mongolia / Myanmar / Bangladesh / Sri Lanka / Uzbekistan / Japan / Cambodia	14 (1–3 each)	26.9
Total	52	100.0

Chinese nationals comprised 42% (22 persons) and Vietnamese 30.8% (16 persons), reflecting that China and Vietnam rank 1st and 2nd for international students studying in Korea according to the Ministry of Education's 2023 data.

Table 6. Age Group Distribution of Survey Participants.

Age Group	Number	Percentage (%)
Teens (10s)	3	5.8
20s	36	69.2

30s	11	21.2
40s	2	3.8
Total	52	100.0

Table 7. Educational Background Distribution of Survey Participants.

Educational Background	Number	Percentage (%)
High school student	2	3.8
University student	34	65.4
Working professional	8	15.4
Other	8	15.4
Total	52	100.0

Table 8. Korean Language Learning Duration of Survey Participants.

Learning Duration	Number	Percentage (%)
Less than 6 months	4	7.7
6 months to less than 1 year	8	15.4
1 year to less than 3 years	12	23.1
3 years to less than 6 years	9	17.3
6 years or more	19	36.5
Total	52	100.0

Those who have studied Korean for 6 years or more were most numerous (19 persons, 36.5%), suggesting that Korean language education platform users are often those who have built some Korean foundation. The low proportion of learners with less than 6 months of study suggests many platform users already have basic Korean skills.

Table 9. Korean Proficiency Level (TOPIK Level) of Survey Participants.

TOPIK Level	Number	Percentage (%)
Level 1	1	1.9
Level 2	2	3.8
Level 3	7	13.5
Level 4	8	15.4
Level 5	14	26.9
Level 6	15	28.8
None / No response	5	9.6
Total	52	100.0

TOPIK Level 6 holders were most numerous (15 persons), followed by Level 5 (14 persons), suggesting platforms are primarily used by intermediate to advanced learners. The relatively low proportion of beginner learners may indicate that platforms focus more on intermediate-advanced learning, or that beginner learners prefer other learning methods.

Table 10. Currently Used Korean Language Education Platforms (Multiple Responses).

Platform	Number of Responses	Notes
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ChatGPT	27	Rank 1 – AI chatbot widely used for Korean practice
Hello Talk	8	Rank 2 – Language exchange app
Duolingo	11	Rank 3 – Gamified learning platform
King Sejong Institute Foundation (Sejong-Hakdang)	7	Rank 4 – Official government platform
Not using any platform	10	Various other learning methods used
Others (YouTube, Lingodeer, Papago, Gemini, etc.)	various	Low individual usage rates

ChatGPT ranked overwhelmingly first (27 responses), suggesting it is widely recognized as a useful tool for Korean language learning. This high usage rate indicates ChatGPT is acknowledged as an effective Korean language learning tool through AI-based chatbot conversation. Duolingo remains popular as a Korean language learning platform. The large variation in usage rates among platforms is interpreted as reflecting differences in learner needs and preferences.

Table 11. Reasons for Korean Language Education Platform Selection (Multiple Responses).

Reason	Number of Responses	Rank
Free to use	42	1st
Diverse learning content provided	27	2nd
Convenient interface	18	3rd
Made by authoritative institution (Korean government)	10	4th
Detailed explanation of Korean basics	7	5th
Active community	6	6th
Guidance on polite forms and situational expressions	1	7th

Free availability ranked overwhelmingly first as the most important reason for platform selection. Learners prioritize cost and content when selecting Korean language education platforms. User-friendliness and credibility also influence platform selection.

Table 12. Class Loading Speed of Korean Language Education Platforms.

Loading Speed	Number	Percentage (%)
Fast	15	28.8
Normal	26	50.0
Slow	5	9.6
No response	6	11.5
Total	52	100.0

The majority (78.8%) rated loading speed as normal or fast, suggesting most Korean language learning platforms do not cause major inconvenience in terms of loading speed. Consideration of country-specific internet environments is important when developing platforms for overseas users.

Table 13. Video Content Provision Status of Korean Language Education Platforms.

Video Content Status	Number	Percentage (%)
No video	27	51.9
Normal quality video	13	25.0

High quality video	7	13.5
No response	5	9.6
Total	52	100.0

The fact that 52% responded 'no video' suggests many Korean language education platforms do not provide video content or provide insufficient video. Given overseas users' internet environments, developing content at standard quality for international markets may be more effective than pursuing high-definition video.

Table 14. Photo/Illustration Material Provision Status of Korean Language Education Platforms.

Photo/Illustration Status	Number	Percentage (%)
None	19	36.5
Normal resolution	18	34.6
High resolution	7	13.5
Low resolution	2	3.8
No response	6	11.5
Total	52	100.0

Table 15. Learning Effectiveness of Korean Language Education Platforms.

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	19.2
Agree	15	28.8
Neutral	15	28.8
Disagree	3	5.8
Strongly disagree	2	3.8
Don't know / No response	7	13.5
Total	52	100.0

Over 77% of respondents positively evaluated the learning effectiveness of Korean language education platforms, with 10 responding 'strongly agree,' 15 'agree,' and 15 'neutral.' However, individual differences exist in learning effectiveness. Factors such as learner characteristics, learning methods, and platform types may influence learning outcomes.

Table 16. Monthly Budget Willing to Pay for Korean Language Education Platforms.

Budget	Number	Percentage (%)
Free only	35	67.3
Less than \$10/month	10	19.2
\$10–30/month	2	3.8
\$30–50/month	1	1.9
\$100–200/month	1	1.9
No response	3	5.8
Total	52	100.0

67.3% of respondents overwhelmingly preferred free-only use. Among those willing to pay, low prices are preferred. Paid platforms need to provide high-quality content and features differentiated from free platforms to secure competitiveness.

Table 17. Desired Additional Features for Korean Language Education Platforms (Multiple Responses).

Desired Feature	Number of Responses	Rank
AI Korean conversation class	29	1st
Korean writing correction	24	2nd
Grammar lectures	13	3rd
Real-time Korean classes	13	3rd
VR/AR-based classes	16	4th
Korean conversation and travel Korean	11	5th

AI Korean conversation class features were most desired (29 responses), demonstrating high interest in AI technology-based Korean learning. Korean writing correction (24 responses) and VR/AR classes (16 responses) were also highly demanded. These results indicate high learner demand for AI technology, writing ability improvement, and immersive learning experiences.

Table 18. Useful Content Provided by Korean Language Education Platforms (Open-ended).

Useful Content Category	Number of Mentions
Vocabulary and grammar content	6
Korean holidays and culture	2
Korean conversation	2
Korean pronunciation	2
Korean history and politics / Korean writing / Meeting friends through platforms / New words and expressions	1 each

Table 19. Most Difficult Aspects of Korean Language Learning.

Difficult Aspect	Number	Percentage (%)
Korean grammar	8	22.9
Korean writing	6	17.1
Korean pronunciation	5	14.3
Korean listening	3	8.6
Korean is a difficult language to learn alone	3	8.6
Other responses	10	28.6
Total	35	100.0

Korean grammar was identified as most difficult (8 responses), followed by Korean writing (6 responses) and pronunciation (5 responses). Cross-referencing with Table 18, vocabulary and grammar were identified as the most useful content, yet grammar remains the most difficult aspect. This suggests that if Korean language education platforms can improve the educational effectiveness of Korean vocabulary/grammar and help resolve the difficulties of Korean writing, they can advance to a higher level of platform functionality.

Summary of survey results:

- Users from diverse nationalities use Korean language education platforms, with Chinese and Vietnamese users being most numerous.
- Platform usage rates were high among those in their 20s and university students, while teens, 40s, and high school students showed relatively low usage.
- Long-term learners of 6+ years were most common, and intermediate-advanced learners at TOPIK Levels 5–6 predominated.

- Various platforms including ChatGPT and Duolingo were used, but with large variations in usage rates between platforms.
- Reasons for platform selection ranked in order: free use, diverse content, convenient interface.
- Most were generally satisfied with platform loading speed, but video/photo/illustration content provision was perceived as insufficient.
- Many opinions that platforms help learning, but individual differences existed.
- Free use was preferred; when paying, low prices were preferred.
- AI Korean conversation classes, writing correction, and VR/AR class features were most desired.
- Vocabulary/grammar content was most usefully utilized, while difficulties were felt in grammar/writing learning.

4. Development Potential of Korean Language Education Platforms

4.1. Technological Innovation and Global Collaboration

4.1.1. Future Education Trends from Technological Innovation

The 21st-century educational field is rapidly changing with the introduction of cutting-edge technologies including artificial intelligence, big data, and virtual/augmented reality. Korean language education platforms must actively embrace these trends. Survey results from Chapter 3 also confirmed that Korean language learners desire the addition of AI Korean conversation class and VR/AR class features, necessitating more proactive introduction of cutting-edge technologies to Korean language education platforms.

Artificial intelligence (AI) provides learners with personalized learning experiences like a personal teacher. AI chatbots perform roles helping Korean language learning through real-time conversation with learners. In AI Korean conversation classes, learners can freely converse with chatbots on diverse topics from everyday subjects to Korean culture and history. Chatbots analyze learner responses to correct errors, suggest more natural expressions, and support individual personalized learning. AI can also analyze learner pronunciation, intonation, and grammar to identify individual weaknesses and provide personalized feedback. Platforms like Duolingo and Babbel already use AI to identify grammar or vocabulary errors learners frequently make and recommend additional learning materials. AI automatic translation and subtitle generation features help learners of diverse nationalities easily understand Korean and access learning materials.

Big data plays an important role in personalizing Korean language education platforms, maximizing learning effectiveness, and improving operational efficiency. Learner history data, error notes, learning time, and content usage patterns are analyzed to understand learner levels, strengths, and weaknesses, providing individual personalized learning content and pathways. For example, learners weak in specific grammar receive more related practice problems, while learners needing pronunciation correction are recommended pronunciation practice content. Interest-based recommendations are also possible, such as K-Pop lyrics-based learning materials for K-Pop enthusiasts or drama scene conversation practice for drama fans. Learning motivation is also supported by analyzing progress and providing praise, encouragement, and rewards at appropriate times.

Big data can also be applied to improving and developing Korean language education content. Content with high learning effectiveness is identified, difficult areas for learners are analyzed, and new learning materials are developed based on findings including popular new words. Error prediction systems can be constructed from error data analysis to help learners prevent errors in advance.

Virtual Reality (VR) creates immersive learning environments providing vivid Korean language learning experiences. Wearing a VR headset, learners can walk virtual Korean streets practicing Korean in various situations including finding directions, ordering food, and shopping. AR apps can display virtual Korean food on actual desks for practicing Korean food names, and VR games enable natural Korean acquisition through conversations with virtual Korean friends and cultural experiences. VR environments also enable role-play conversation practice—such as playing customer and server roles at restaurants, or doctor and patient roles at hospitals. Korean cultural heritage sites, tourist attractions, and natural scenery can be provided in 360° VR videos, with interaction with characters in the videos for Korean listening and speaking practice.

Augmented Reality (AR) enables interactive Korean language learning. AR word learning apps display Korean names of surrounding objects when the smartphone camera is pointed at them. AR-based flashcards use AR technology to provide virtual flashcards that move and interact like actual cards for learning vocabulary, grammar, and images. AR cultural experiences enable virtual experiences of Korean traditional clothing, food,

and architecture with related information in Korean. AR games can also make Korean language learning enjoyable through missions in Korean using methods similar to 'Pokémon GO.'

Metaverse, a concept more expanded than virtual reality, means a three-dimensional virtual world where the real world and virtual world are fused for interaction and communication. Building virtual campuses in metaverse platforms allows learners to feel as if they are in actual university campuses, with classrooms, libraries, study rooms, and cafeterias supporting various activities. Metaverse platforms can use game elements to attract learner interest and participation through Korean language quiz competitions, word matching games, and role-play games. They can also serve as effective tools for collaborative learning and community activation, with learners forming study groups, teaching and learning from each other, and sharing learning materials. Real-time interaction through avatars enables authentic communication experiences. Metaverse can also be utilized for Korean language teacher virtual training programs and learning material sharing platforms.

4.1.2. International Collaboration and Partnerships

Korean language education platforms play an important role in meeting globally increasing Korean language learning demand and effectively spreading Korean language and culture. International cooperation and partnerships are key to elevating Korean language education platforms to world-class levels.

Collaboration with educational institutions where Korean language education is active, such as the US and Japan, provides important opportunities for platform development. Educational material sharing and joint development can secure quality improvement and diversity of educational materials. For example, customized textbooks reflecting learner characteristics of each country, online courses, and learning apps can be jointly produced. Teacher training and exchange programs through workshops, seminars, and training programs provide opportunities to share new ideas and knowledge in teaching methods, educational technology, and learning assessment methods.

Learner exchange programs enhance learning motivation and promote cultural exchange through online or offline exchange programs between Korean learners and overseas learners. Collaboration with translation platforms like Google Translate and Naver Papago to provide real-time multilingual translation of Korean language learning content also helps learners easily understand Korean in their native language.

The King Sejong Institute Foundation can collaborate with prestigious overseas universities such as Harvard University (US) and University of Oxford (UK) to establish online Korean language courses and operate credit recognition and certificate issuance programs. This increases learner motivation and improves the international recognition of Korean language education. International cooperation makes Korean language education platform content richer and more diverse, and contributes greatly to quality improvement of education and enhancement of teacher expertise.

4.2. Personalized Learning and Policy Support

4.2.1. Individual Personalized Smart Learning Systems

AI provides learners with individual personalized smart learning systems in Korean language education platforms, supports the entire learning process, and enables objective evaluation. Like a personal teacher, AI provides optimized learning experiences tailored to each learner's characteristics, analyzing learner level, learning speed, learning style, and preferences to present customized content and learning strategies.

Unlike uniform learning methods, AI can provide personalized learning considering individual learning speeds. Advanced learners receive more in-depth content, while slower learners are given sufficient time to fully understand content. AI accurately diagnoses learner levels and can provide higher difficulty problems to challenge fast learners while providing more practice opportunities and simpler explanations to struggling learners to encourage learning motivation.

AI pronunciation analysis systems record and analyze learner pronunciation, compare with native speaker pronunciation, provide pronunciation similarity scores, and highlight mispronounced parts for accurate pronunciation acquisition. AI also excels at grammar error correction, automatically detecting and correcting grammar errors in learner writing or speech. For vocabulary learning, immediate translations of unknown words with examples, synonyms, and antonyms help improve vocabulary, supported by flashcards and quizzes. AI chatbots enable immediate question and answer sessions whenever questions arise during learning.

Building objective and efficient learner evaluation systems is also necessary. Automatic grading of multiple-choice, open-ended, speaking, and writing evaluations reduces teacher workload while providing individual feedback evaluating diverse aspects including pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, and content. AI

comprehensively analyzes learning data to accurately assess learning levels and support learning goal setting and planning. Online examination management can also utilize facial recognition technology for identity verification and cheating detection.

4.2.2. Government Policy and the Role of Educational Institutions

Government is an important supporter for Korean language education platform development. Through financial support, legal and institutional foundation building, technology development support, international cooperation promotion, and awareness improvement and promotion, government can stimulate platform growth and contribute to improving Korean language education quality.

The Korean government announced the 'Sejong-Hakdang Innovation Plan (2024–2027)' responding to globally increasing Korean language learning demand. The core of this plan is building 'I-Sejong-Hakdang' utilizing digital new technologies to enable anyone to receive Korean language education of the same level as on-site Sejong-Hakdang without constraints of time and space. This involves advancement of AI-based personalized learning apps, building integrated operation systems, and expansion of remote Sejong-Hakdang. The plan also includes science-based statistical expansion to 300 locations by 2027, hub Sejong-Hakdang-centered local support management system reorganization, expanded role as 'small cultural centers,' Sejong Korean Language Assessment (SKA) expansion, teacher capability strengthening, and learner career development support.

For future platform development, government should expand budget support for introduction of future technologies including metaverse and VR/AR. Increasing support projects for diverse content production including immersive cultural experience content and game-based learning content is needed. International cooperation with overseas Korean language educational institutions should be supported to expand platform overseas expansion and distribution, and partnerships with major overseas educational institutions should be actively pursued to introduce Korean language education platforms into regular curricula of those countries.

For healthy platform development, government should establish legal and institutional foundations for development, distribution, quality management, and personal information protection. Enacting the 'Act on Promotion of Korean Language Education Platforms' should facilitate platform development and distribution, with quality standards ensuring reliable services for learners. International standard-compliant Korean language education platform certification systems should be established to enhance platform reliability. Regulations on platform accessibility and copyright protection should be strengthened, and big data and AI-based personal information protection regulations should comply with international standards.

Educational institutions should actively utilize platforms in educational settings, supporting online lectures, assignment submission and feedback, learning material sharing, and discussion activities. VR/AR-based realistic online classes and metaverse platform-based virtual reality classes should provide learners with more immersive learning experiences. Platforms should be integrated into pre-service Korean language teacher education and in-service teacher training programs, with platform-based teaching methods and assessment methods taught during practical teaching practice. Teacher training in cutting-edge technologies including AI, big data, and VR/AR should be strengthened to prepare for future educational environments.

Educational institutions should also collect learner opinions on platform operation and content development and use them as a basis for continuous platform improvement. Regular surveys and in-platform forums should be used to understand learner satisfaction and requirements, and big data analysis should be used to understand learner behavior patterns and preferences for platform improvement.

5. Conclusions and Implications

5.1. Summary and Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the current state and development potential of Korean language education in the platform era and to propose a successful business model. Using diverse research methods including literature analysis, platform case analysis, market analysis, and questionnaire surveys, the study deeply analyzed changes in Korean language education in the platform era.

Research results confirmed that platform technology advancement is having a major impact on Korean language education, with diverse types of Korean language education platforms—including web-based platforms, mobile apps, game-based platforms, and VR/AR platforms—providing learners with diverse learning experiences.

In particular, analysis of the Sejong-Hakdang platforms identified key problems including insufficient interconnectivity between platforms, content shortage and delayed updates, insufficient learner interaction, need

for mobile app feature improvement, insufficient personalized learning features, and inadequate promotion.

Survey results revealed that Korean language learners prefer free platforms, value diverse content, convenient interfaces, and fast loading speeds, and have high demand for features such as AI-based learning, writing correction, and VR/AR learning.

Based on these research results, this study proposed the following strategies for developing Korean language education platforms: technological innovation and global collaboration; personalized learning experience provision; learner interaction and community activation; content diversification and quality improvement; increased user convenience; and continuous feedback and improvement.

5.2. Implications

This study provides the following implications through comprehensive analysis of the current state and development potential of Korean language education in the platform era.

First, proactive utilization of platform technology is needed. Korean language education platforms should actively utilize technologies such as AI, big data, VR/AR, and metaverse to improve learning effectiveness and enhance user satisfaction.

Second, learner-centered platform construction is necessary. Platforms must provide diverse content and features meeting learner needs and offer personalized learning experiences.

Third, international cooperation and partnership strengthening is required. Cooperation with domestic and foreign institutions should be used to share excellent educational content and technology, strengthening the global competitiveness of platforms.

Fourth, government support and the roles of educational institutions must be strengthened. Government should encourage platform development and distribution through policy support, while educational institutions should provide high-quality content and services and strengthen learner support.

This study is significant in suggesting future directions for Korean language education in the platform era. However, research limitations include the limited sample size and concentration of survey subjects on Asian region learners. Future research should conduct surveys targeting more diverse regional, age, and national learners, and additionally conduct research on measuring actual learning effects of platforms and developing platform business models.

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Appendix: Korean Language Education Platform Usage Survey Questionnaire

The survey was designed to assess learner satisfaction and usage patterns regarding Korean language education platforms. The questionnaire covered the following areas:

- Section 1 – Personal Information: Nationality, age group, current educational background.
- Section 2 – Korean Language Learning Background: Duration of Korean language study, Korean proficiency level (TOPIK level).
- Section 3 – Platform Usage Status: Platforms currently being used, reasons for selecting a platform.
- Section 4 – Platform Usage Experience: Class loading speed, availability of video content, availability of photo/illustration materials, most useful learning content.
- Section 5 – Platform Improvement and Budget: Desired additional features, monthly budget willing to pay for a platform.