

## Analysis of Writing Errors in Korean Text of Intermediate Bulgarian Learners

*Ким Сеюн*

Софийски университет „Св. Климент Охридски“ (България)

*Kim Seweon*

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (Bulgaria)

*Kim Seweon.* ANALYSIS OF WRITING ERRORS IN KOREAN TEXT OF INTERMEDIATE BULGARIAN LEARNERS

<https://doi.org/10.60055/phl.2024.46.116-133>

**Abstract.** This paper analyzes the error patterns in the free writing style of third-year students in Korean Studies at Sofia University. The final examination of the free writing of 15 students who took 960 hours of Korean language classes, according to the curriculum of the Department of Korean Studies at Sofia University, was used as the subject of error analysis. The stylistic condition was to write in ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’<sup>1</sup> to differentiate from spoken discourse. In free writing, learners had to express their thoughts in written discourse based on the vocabulary and grammar they had accumulated. Due to the nature of the exam, learners were not allowed to look up words or use translators during the exam, so they had no choice but to write based on their inherent language knowledge when performing the final ‘free writing’ task during the exam. The free-written texts of the third-year students of the Department of Korean at Sofia University, produced in such a controlled environment, are the subject of this study.

The purpose of this paper is to classify free writings produced by intermediate Bulgarian learners of Korean into spelling errors, particles errors, ending inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence components agreement errors and to derive the level of difficulty by area and to present the pattern of errors. In addition, by identifying the error characteristics of intermediate Bulgarian learners of Korean, the aim is to enable teachers of Korean to strategically design their lessons and teaching methodologies, in order to strengthen more and more efficiently Korean language learning.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this paper, we follow the Korean-language romanization systems established by the National Institute of the Korean Language in 2000 – ‘Revised Romanization of Korean’.

The methods used are those of quantitative and qualitative analysis: we first calculated the number of word clauses for each learner. Then, the error patterns were categorized into five areas: spelling errors, particles errors, ending inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence components agreement errors. Particle errors were categorized into subject marking particles, object marking particles, complement marking particles, and adverbial marking particles, and ending inflections were categorized into connecting ending inflections and terminating ending inflections. We analyzed particles and endings by subdividing them into substitution, omission, and addition.

When analyzing the learners' errors, the particle error rate was the highest. Among the particle errors, the adverbial marking particle error rate was the highest, followed by the nominative particle error rate. Adverbial marking particle errors were high for all particles. Adverbial particles had an addition error rate of 16.8%, while subject, object, and complement particles had no addition errors. The next highest error rate was for the ending inflection. The error rate for connecting endings was higher than the error rate for regular endings. The /ㅏ/ and /ㅓ/, /ㅑ/ and /ㅕ/, /ㅓ/ and /ㅗ/, /ㅗ/ and /ㅛ/, /ㅗ/ and /ㅜ/, /ㅗ/ and /ㅝ/, /ㅗ/ and /ㅞ/ were error patterns produced due to a lack of vowel phoneme understanding. The consonant finale /ㄴ/ and /ㅇ/, /ㄷ/ and /ㄸ/, /ㅈ/ and /ㅉ/ were error patterns produced due to a lack of consonant phoneme understanding.

**Keywords:** Bulgarian intermediate learners, Korean language, error patterns, error analysis, error frequency

#### *Ким Сеюн.* АНАЛИЗ НА ГРЕШКИТЕ В ПИСМЕНИЯ КОРЕЙСКИ ТЕКСТ НА СРЕДНО НАПРЕДНАЛИ БЪЛГАРСКИ УЧАЩИ

**Резюме.** Настоящата статия анализира моделите на грешки в свободното писане на корейски език, в съчинения и есета по поставена тема. Моделите на грешки са изведени от работата на студентите от трети курс специалност „Кореистика“ към Софийския университет „Св. Климент Охридски“. За анализ на грешките е използван финалният изпит по част свободно писане към програмата за обучение по практически корейски език на 15 студенти, преминали 960 учебни часа по корейски език по учебния план на специалност „Кореистика“. Стилистичното условие беше да се пише на т.нар. стил *Hara-che* (하라체), за да се разграничи от говоримия дискурс. При свободното писане обучаемите трябваше да изразят мислите си в писмен дискурс въз основа на лексиката и граматиката, които са натрупали. Поради естеството на изпита на обучаемите не беше разрешено да търсят думи или да използват електронен преводач по време на изпита, така че те нямаха друг избор освен да пишат, разчитайки на натрупаните езикови познания, когато изпълняваха последната задача за „свободно писане“ по време на изпита. Написаните текстове на студентите трета година от специалност „Кореистика“ в Софийския университет, произведени в такава контролирана среда, са обект на настоящото изследване.

Целта на тази статия е да класифицира писмения корейски текст на средно напреднали български учащи – на правописни грешки, грешки при употребата на частици, грешки в края на флексията, грешки в лексикалния избор и грешки в съгласуването на компонентите на изречението, да се изведе нивото на трудност във всяка област и да се представи моделът на грешките. Чрез идентифициране на характеристиките на грешките на българските учащи на средно ниво, целта е да се даде възможност на

учителите да проектират стратегически своето преподаване и да се даде възможност на учащите да овладеят корейския език все по-ефективно.

Настоящото изследване се базира на количествен и качествен анализ на допусканите грешки като част от избраната методологическа призма. Първо е изчислен броят на клаузите с думи за всеки обучаем. След това моделите на грешки са категоризирани в пет области: правописни грешки, грешки на частици, грешки в края на флексията, грешки в лексикалния избор и грешки в съгласието на компонентите на изречението. Грешките на частиците са категоризирани в частици, маркиращи субект, частици, маркиращи обект, частици, маркиращи допълнение, и частици, маркиращи наречие, а крайните флексии биват категоризирани в свързващи флексии и завършващи флексии. Анализираните частици и окончания са разделени според спецификите на корейския език, свързани със заместване, изпускане и добавяне.

При анализиране на грешките на обучаемите процентът на грешки на частиците е най-висок. Сред грешките при тяхната употребата процентът на грешки на частиците за наречие е най-висок, следван от номинативния процент грешки на частиците. Грешките при маркиращите наречия частици бяха високи за всички частици. Наречните частици имат процент на грешки при добавяне от 16,8%, докато субектът, обектът и частиците на допълнението нямат грешки при добавяне. Следващият най-висок процент грешки, който се открие, е за крайната флексия. Процентът на грешки при свързващи окончания се оказва по-висок от процента на грешки при обикновени окончания. Моделите на грешки /ㄱ/ и /ㄷ/, /ㄴ/ и /ㄹ/, /ㄷ/ и /ㄹ/, /ㄷ/ и /ㅌ/, /ㅍ/ и /ㅍ/, /ㅍ/ и /ㅍ/, /ㅍ/ и /ㅍ/, /ㅍ/ и /ㅍ/ са произведени поради липса на разбиране на гласната фонема. Финалите на съгласна /ㄴ/ и /ㅇ/, /ㄷ/ и /ㅌ/, /ㅍ/ и /ㅍ/ от своя страна са модели на грешка, произведена поради липса на разбиране на фонемата на съгласна.

**Ключови думи:** български обучаеми, корейски език, видове грешки, анализ на грешките, честота на грешките

### *Research/Научно изследване*

The Korean Language is rich in writing styles and grammatical rules. In Korean, speech levels are divided into formal and informal styles, which are distinguished by their verb endings. Formal speech is used in professional or respectful settings, while informal speech is common in everyday conversations among friends.

Written Korean also follows specific stylistic conventions. The primary style that learners should master is ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)<sup>2</sup>’. This style is neutral – it does not address a specific person and neither honors nor degrades the subject, a distinction reflected in its verb endings.

<sup>2</sup> ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’ is a final form that gives a sense of neutrality between honor and degrade when the addressee is not a specific individual. It is usually used for written style in advertisements and declamation. (e.g. 하늘을 본다).

Intermediate learners of Korean should be proficient in writing using ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’. This study focuses on analyzing writing errors in this style among Bulgarian intermediate learners of Korean.

## 1. Increasing trend of Korean language learners - short introduction

The number of Korean language learners has increased rapidly due to the global Korean Wave as demonstrated by the growing number of applicants for the Korean Language Proficiency Test (TOPIK<sup>3</sup>) of the Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation. In the first test in 1997, the number of applicants was 2,692, but it raised to 206,778 in 2015. The increase slowed down in 2020 due to COVID-19, and continued to grow to 417,800 in 2023 and 493,000 in 2024. The number of Bulgarian Korean language learners in Bulgaria has also increased. Due to the demand for Korean language classes, several Korean language courses have been newly established in Bulgaria. The universities that will be offering Korean language courses as of March 2025 are as follows: Sofia University, New Bulgarian University, Plovdiv University, and Veliko Tarnovo University. In addition to the university institutions, Korean language classes are also offered at the 18th Secondary School “William Gladstone”, 138 High School for Western and Eastern Languages “Prof. Vasil Zlatarski”, 97 Secondary School “Brothers Miladinovi”, High School with Foreign Language Education “Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin” Varna and Sejong Institute -Sofia, which is affiliated with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Bulgaria.

Despite the processing trend of growth Bulgarian learners, discussions and research on curricula, syllabuses, textbooks, and teaching-learning methods suitable for Bulgarian learners are quantitatively and qualitatively lacking. Burt (1975) stated that “most teachers are not prepared for various errors.” In other words, teachers should be able to predict various error patterns of learners. Holley, King (1971) believed that teachers should be able to analyze the various error patterns produced by learners and correct the errors.

The purpose of this paper is to classify free writings produced by intermediate Bulgarian learners of Korean into spelling errors, particles errors, ending inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence components agreement errors and to derive the level of difficulty

---

<sup>3</sup> TOPIK is an abbreviation for Test of Proficiency in Korean (한국어능력시험). It is a Korean language proficiency test administered by the National Institute for International Education (국립국제교육원), a government agency of the Republic of Korea, and is a test directly administered by the government. TOPIK, Test of Proficiency in Korean, is a written test designed to measure the ability of non-native speakers for expression and comprehension in the Korean language. TOPIK test measures proficiency in reading, writing, and listening comprehension in the Korean language. The test has three different levels: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. Further accuracy is expressed through six grades, two matched to each level to evaluate proficiency. The general TOPIK consists of reading, writing, and listening sections. The Internet Base Test was introduced in 2023, and speaking section evaluations are also conducted in Korea.

by area and to present the pattern of errors. In addition, by identifying the error characteristics of intermediate Bulgarian learners of Korean, the aim is to enable teachers of Korean to strategically design their lessons and teaching methodologies, in order to strengthen more and more efficiently Korean language learning.

The methods used are those of quantitative and qualitative analysis: we first calculated the number of word clauses for each learner. Then, the error patterns were categorized into five areas: spelling errors, particles errors, ending inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence components agreement errors. Particle errors were categorized into subject marking particles, object marking particles, complement marking particles, and adverbial marking particles, and ending inflections were categorized into connecting ending inflections and terminating ending inflections. We analyzed particles and endings by subdividing them into substitution, omission, and addition.

### **Previous research on first and second year student's writing errors**

In 2020, we analyzed errors in 12 works of first and second- year students who won awards at The Korean Essay Writing Contest (백일장)<sup>4</sup> hosted by Sofia University between 2016–2018, gave us data to analyze errors in 12 works of the first and second- year students who won the contest (Kim, 2020: 202–203). In the paper, the errors were classified into phonetic errors, particle errors, syntactic errors, and orthographic errors. In the case of particle errors, they were classified into substitution, omission, and addition. In the paper, only error sentences were classified, excluding the appropriate sentences created by the learners. 74 sentences of first- year students and 133 sentences of second-year students were used as data. The number of periods was calculated as the number of sentences, and when there were various types of errors in a sentence, cumulative statistics were collected according to the error classification items. The percentage conversion based on the total number of learner errors was not performed. However, the work of classifying the produced errors by item and quantifying them by item was performed. The difficulty of the errors was examined by quantifying the error pattern. The purpose of the paper was to identify the patterns of high-frequency errors in order to prevent Bulgarian learners from unconsciously making mistakes that become fixed in the Beginner and Elementary levels.

The highest rate of particle errors for first-year students in Korean Studies was the substitution of the nominative particle ‘이/가’, while the highest rate of particle errors for second-year students was the omission of the objective particle ‘을/를’. In terms of syntactic errors, the highest rate of suffix inflection (connective suffix,

---

<sup>4</sup> The Korean Essay Contest hosted by Sofia University began in 2016 for Korean Studies students and will be held for the 10<sup>th</sup> time in 2025. Starting in 2018, third- and fourth-year Korean language majors from the Department of South Asian, East Asian, and Southeast Asian Studies also have been participating.

final suffix) was recorded for first-year students, while the highest rate of syntactic errors for second-year students was the selection of incorrect words.

The following is a classification of errors produced in Korean writing by first-year students who studied Korean for 350 hours and second-year students who studied Korean for 720 hours at the Korean Studies Department of Sofia University.

First, the phonemes that appeared in vowel errors among phonological errors appeared in the order of /ㅏ/ > /ㅓ/ = /ㅣ/ > /ㅛ/ = /ㅕ/ = /ㅗ/ , and the phonemes that appeared in consonant errors appeared in the order of /ㅇ/ > /ㅈ/ = /ㅊ/ > /ㄴ/ = /ㅎ/ = /ㅁ/. It was possible to see that the phonemes that appeared in phonological errors were transferred to orthographic errors.

Second, for particle substitution errors, the order was ‘이 > 과 > 가 = 은 = 에 > 도 = 에서 > 로 = 에 게’ for first-year students, and the order was ‘를 > 에 > 는 > 이/가 = 은 = 와 = 과 = 의’ for second-year students. For the omission of particles, the order of errors was ‘를 > 에 > 는 > 이/가 = 은 = 와 = 과 = 의’ for the first-year students and ‘은 = 의 > 가 = 에’ for the second-year students. For the addition of particles, the order of errors was ‘은 = 의 > 가 = 에’ for the first-year students, and ‘은 > 의 > 이 = 에’ for the second-year students. The frequency of omission of particles was much higher in the first-year students than in adding particles. Third, with regard to syntactic errors, the order of errors was ‘ending transformation errors > word choice errors > orthography errors = sentence structure errors > native language interference errors’ for the first-year students, and ‘word choice errors > ending transformation errors > orthography errors > sentence structure errors > native language interference errors’ for the second-year students. The most frequent error in the first-year students was incorrect transformation of connective endings and final endings due to their unfamiliarity with Korean grammar, followed by word choice errors. However, while the difference in the number of errors produced by each item was not large in the first-year, the frequency of word choice errors and word-ending transformation errors was overwhelmingly higher than other items in the second-year.

This seems to be an error produced in the process of having to produce sentences in the target language, Korean, when accumulated Korean grammar and vocabulary acquisition had not yet been fully achieved. Furthermore, it seems that the second-year students lacked sufficient grammar and vocabulary to express their thoughts in the abstract writing topics of the Korean Essay Writing Contest (백일장), ‘Empathy (공감, 2016)’, ‘Consideration (배려, 2017)’, and ‘Family (가족, 2018)’. In terms of the error pattern of the ending transformation, it was observed that the use of ‘-(으)니까’ was expanded due to the lack of accurate knowledge about the restrictions on the use of the connecting ending ‘-(으)니까’. In addition, it was observed that among the adjectives, errors were made in recognizing the ‘-하다’ form adjectives such as ‘편하다’, ‘필요하다’, ‘중요하다’, and ‘친하다’ as verbs and producing verb-ending transformations. It is necessary to repeatedly practice

the present-final transformation of adjectives in the ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’. Interference of the native language was found in word choice errors and word order errors, and cases were examined where the intended meaning was not properly conveyed in Korean when native language expressions were directly translated into Korean. In addition, it was recognized that although word order errors due to the native language are tolerable in speaking skills, writing skills must be performed in accordance with Korean grammar, and therefore, writing education in accordance with Korean grammar is necessary.

### Third year student’s essay writing errors

To analyze the writing errors of Bulgarian learners, the winter semester final exam writings of third-year students of Korean Studies at Sofia University in the academic year 2023/2024 were used as the analysis subject.

Academic Year	Semester Classes	Weeks	Weekly Class Hours	Total Hours per Semester	Cumulative Hours	TOPIK-Expected Level
1	Winter Semester	15	14	210	210	Beginner Level 1
	Summer Semester	15	14	210	420	Elementary Level 2
2	Winter Semester	15	12	180	600	Elementary Level 2+
	Summer Semester	15	12	180	780	Intermediate Level 3
3	Winter Semester	15	12	180	<b>960</b>	<b>Intermediate Level 3+</b>
	Summer Semester	15	12	180	1,140	Upper Intermediate Level 4
4	Winter Semester	15	12	180	1,320	Upper Intermediate Level 4+
	Summer Semester	15	12	180	1,500	Advanced Level 5

Table 1. Number of Hours of Practical Korean Language Classes of Korean Studies at Sofia University

The target students of the third-year Korean Studies of Sofia University are those who have completed the winter semester of the third-year, or 960 hours of practical Korean, according to the above <Table 1>. Usually, language education centers in Korea count 200 hours of Korean language classes as one TOPIK level. However, in the case of Sofia University’s students, it is difficult to naturally be

exposed to the target language, Korean, once they leave the classroom. Therefore, it is difficult to realize the language functions of listening, reading, speaking, and writing based on the language knowledge learned in the classroom. For this reason, the expected TOPIK level for third-year students of Korean Studies of Sofia University should be ‘Intermediate Level 3’, but there is a considerable difference in the acquisition of Korean among learners.

The first and second-year students study the textbooks and workbooks “New Yonsei Korean” (2019) vocabulary and grammar, speaking, and writing as the main textbook. The third-year students are taught vocabulary and grammar according to the topic without the main textbook, and take classes on speaking and writing language functions based on language knowledge. In the winter semester of the third-year, the subjects of ‘health’, ‘exchange and refund’, ‘loss’, ‘housing culture’, and ‘leisure life’ have been studied, and grammar items such as ‘even’, ‘-아/어 놓다/두다’, ‘-느라고’, ‘-고 말다’, ‘-아/어 버리다’, ‘-기 때문에’, ‘-다가<sup>5</sup>’, ‘-던<sup>6</sup>’, ‘-을지라도’, ‘-왔/었던’, ‘-기는커녕’, ‘-은/는 반면에’, ‘-(으)려던 참이다’ have been studied.

The free writing essays of 19 students who took 960 hours of Korean language classes according to the curriculum of Korean Studies at Sofia University were used as the target of error analysis. The topic was ‘Changes in housing culture(주거 문화의 변화)’ and they were asked to write more than 800 characters including spaces. The learners were informed that the content of the essay should be equivalent to ‘TOPIK Intermediate Level 3’. In addition, the writing style requirement was to write in ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’ to differentiate it from spoken discourse. In the free writing session, learners had to express their thoughts in the form of a written discourse based on the vocabulary and grammar they had accumulated so far. Due to the nature of the test, learners were not allowed to search for words or use a translator during the test. Therefore, learners had no choice but to write based on their inherent language knowledge when performing the ‘free writing’ assignment for the final exam. The free writing of third-year students of Korean Studies at Sofia University, produced in such a controlled environment, was chosen as the subject of this paper.

### **Analysis, methodology and summary of errors**

In the final exam of the winter semester of the third- year at Sofia University, 19 students took the test. The free writing topic was ‘Changes in residential life’, the length was over 800 characters, and the time given was 90 minutes.

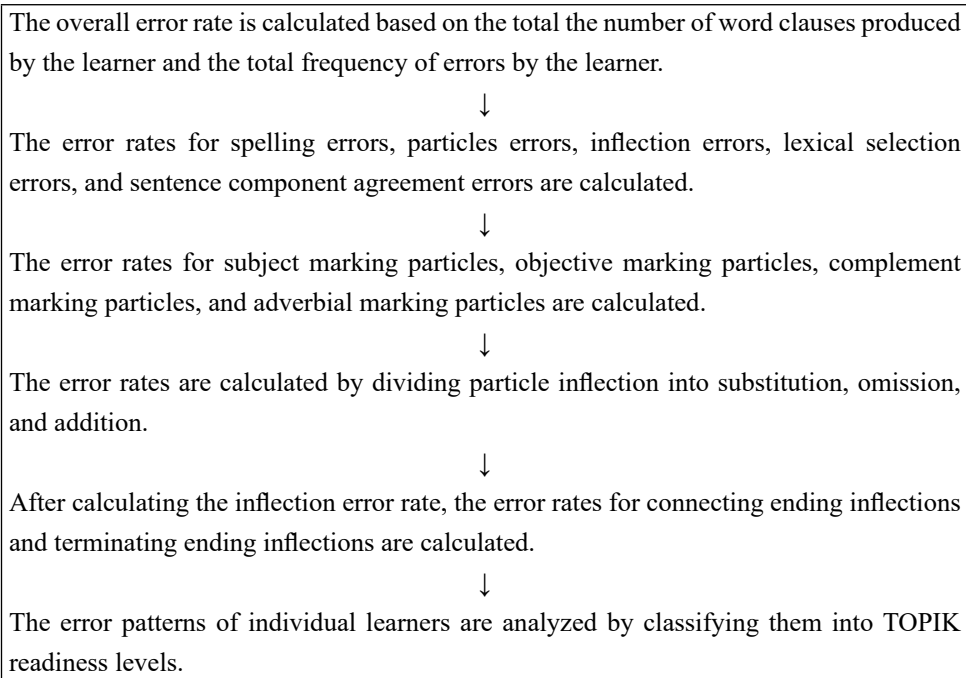
As a method of analyzing errors, the number of individual words was calculated. Then, the error patterns were classified into five areas: spelling errors, particles

---

<sup>5</sup> A suffix that indicates that an action or state is interrupted and changed to another action or state.

<sup>6</sup> A suffix that modifies a noun, recalls a past situation, or indicates that the situation has been interrupted without being completed.

errors, inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence component agreement errors. Particles errors were classified into subject marking particles, objective marking particles, complement marking particles, and adverbial marking particles, and ending inflections were categorized into connecting ending inflections and terminating ending inflections. The particles and inflections classified in this way were subdivided into substitution, omission, and addition and analyzed. Error analysis was conducted in the following order.



Since there was a requirement that the final ending be written in ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’, learners’ writings written in ‘*Haeyo-che* (해요체)<sup>7</sup>’ and ‘*Hapsyo-che* (합쇼체)<sup>8</sup>’ were excluded from the analysis of this study. Since there was a requirement that the writing should be more than 800 characters, learners’ writings written in less than 800 characters were also excluded from the analysis of this study. Students’ writings written in 800 characters but failed to convey the meaning, so the error pattern could not be examined, were also excluded from the analysis of this study. Out of 19 final exam takers, 15 writings were analyzed for errors, excluding 4.

The principles of error correction are as follows:

<sup>7</sup> ‘*Haeyo-che* (해요체)’ is one of the addressee honorifications, a level of speech, also functioning as a sentence ending, which raises the addressee moderately (e.g. 하늘을 봐요).

<sup>8</sup> ‘*Hapsyo-che* (합쇼체)’ is one of the addressee honorifications, a level of speech, also functioning as a sentence ending, which raises the addressee highly (e.g. 하늘을 봅니다).

1. Make minimal modifications.

Take into account the vocabulary and grammar produced by the learner as much as possible.

2. Reflect the learner's intention to express as much as possible according to the flow of the text.

3. When examining the aspects of lexical selection errors and sentence component agreement errors, reflect the corpus and preferred sentence patterns of native Korean speakers.

### Results of Analysis of Written Materials

The number of word clauses produced by 18 learners is shown in <Table 2> below. The writing topic for the final exam free writing is what they learned in vocabulary and grammar writing. Students S1, S3, S7, and S12<sup>9</sup> used extended sentence structures to write TOPIK intermediate level 3-compliant writing, even though they were more likely to make errors. The following are extended sentences produced by learners S1, S3, S7, and S12.

**[S1]**

이 감옥에서 어떻게든(→어떡하든) 벗어나야 한다고 생각하는 사람들이 집에서 여러 가지 활동을 하게 시작되었다.(→하기 시작하였다).

**[S3]**

친구들과 맛집(→맛집을) 탐방하거나 암벽 등반, 헬스, 승마, 수영 등 몸이(→몸을) 움직이는 취미, 콘서트나 공연 관람 중에서 고를 수 있기 때문에 집에 있을 시간이 적었다.

**[S7]**

옛날에(→옛날에는) 집에서 일을 하기는커녕 운동하기조차(→운동하는 것조차) 상상하지 못 했다.

**[S12]**

현재는 코로나가 없고(→없기 때문에) 사람들은 회사에 편하게 다니고 학생들도 수업에 출석하고 야위(→야외) 활동을 자주 할 수 있어서 집에서 일을 하는 사람들이나 온라인 수업이 있는 학생들이 많지 않다.

Students S17 and S18 did not succeed in writing 800 characters. Students S17 did not fill 800 characters with non-text, but only wrote as many sentences as he could with his inherent language knowledge. Student S18 did not understand how

<sup>9</sup> The texts produced by learners were assigned serial numbers from S1 to S18. The number of words was then calculated.

to use the literary style ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’, so he wrote in ‘*Hasipsho-che* (하십쇼체)’. These are all errors in the final ending. Learner S9 did write 800 characters, but since it was all non-text, it was difficult to identify the error pattern.

<b>[S9]</b> *그렇지만 내 어머니가 내 집은 깨끗했다.
<b>[S17]</b> 지금 집에서 하는 활동이 옛날보다 좀 다르다(→다르다).
<b>[S18]</b> 보통 집에 있을 때 사람들은 일을 하는(→한) 후에 소파에 쉬와(→쉬거나) 독서를 합니다(→한다).

The following are the number of word clauses and the frequency of errors produced by the learners in free writing. Student S9 produced a non-sentence due to an error in the correspondence of sentence elements. Since he could not understand the content of the text, he could not identify the pattern of errors. Student S17 wrote with 512 characters, and Student S18 wrote with 455 characters. Due to the insufficient number of word clauses, the frequency of errors could not be calculated on the same level as other students.

Student	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	*S9
Number of Word Clauses	300	274	244	238	234	227	224	217	217
Frequency of Errors	30	31	33	13	27	48	31	19	
Error Rate (%)	10	11.3	13.5	5.5	11.5	21.2	13.8	8.75	
Student	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	*S17	*S18
Number of Word Clauses	216	215	213	213	209	202	199	133	130
Frequency of Errors	44	52	26	51	48	27	25		
Error Rate (%)	20.4	24.18	12.2	23.9	23	13.4	12.6		

Table 2. Number of phrases, error frequency, and error rate per learner

### TOPIK Writing ‘Readiness’ Level

Among the third-year learners in the Korean Studies Department, the writings of S1, S3, S7, and S12 are considered to be equivalent to TOPIK Level 3+- Intermediate. However, S9 is considered to be equivalent to TOPIK Level 1- Beginner. Considering that learners who studied 960 hours of practical Korean in the Korean Studies Department are equivalent to TOPIK Level 3+- Intermediate, it can be seen that four learners met the expectations. It was also confirmed that there was a large difference in Korean language acquisition among learners.

The following are the number of word clauses, frequency of errors and error rate of learners who met the TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3+ – Intermediate.

<b>Student</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>S7</b>	<b>S12</b>
Number of Word Clauses	300	244	224	213
Frequency of Errors	30	33	31	26
Error Rate (%)	10%	13.5%	13.8%	12.2%

*Table 3. TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3+ – Intermediate*

The following are the number of word clauses, frequency of errors, and error rate of learners who met the TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3 – Intermediate.

<b>Student</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>S4</b>	<b>S5</b>	<b>S8</b>	<b>S15</b>	<b>S16</b>
Number of Word Clauses	274	238	234	217	202	199
Frequency of Errors	31	13	27	19	27	25
Error Rate (%)	11.3	5.5%	11.5%	8.75%	13.4%	12.6

*Table 4. TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3 – Intermediate*

The following are the number of word clauses, frequency of errors, and error rate of learners who met the TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary.

<b>Student</b>	<b>S6</b>	<b>S10</b>	<b>S11</b>	<b>S13</b>	<b>S14</b>
Number of Word Clauses	227	216	215	213	209
Frequency of Errors	48	44	52	51	48
Error Rate (%)	21.2%	20.4%	24.18%	23.9%	23%

*Table 5. TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary*

Below are the total number of words produced by the learners, the total error frequency of the students, and the average error rate of all learners.

<b>Total Number of Word Clauses</b>	3.425
<b>Total Error Frequency</b>	505
<b>Average Error Rate (%)</b>	14.74%

*Table 6. Total Number of Word Clauses, Total Error Frequency, Average Error Rate*

Learners at the ‘TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary’ showed an error rate higher than the average error rate of 14.74%. This is because the topic of ‘Changes in Housing Life’ is a familiar social and abstract topic that TOPIK Level 3 – Intermediate can write about. In addition, since they had to write in a literacy

style (하라체), it seems that learners at the TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary had difficulty using cursive endings.

### Error Analysis

As a result of analyzing the patterns of spelling errors, particles errors, ending inflection errors, lexical selection errors, and sentence components agreement errors, the particle error rate was the highest. Among the particle error rates, the error rate of the adverbial marking particles was the highest. Next was the error rate of the subject marking particles. Substitution errors were high for all case particles. The addition error rate of the adverbial marking particles accounted for 16.8%, while there were no addition errors for the subject marking particles, objective marking particles, and complement marking particles. Next was the inflection error rate. The error rate of the connecting ending inflections was higher than that of the terminating ending inflections.

Below is a list of error rates by category, in order of difficulty.

Difficulty	Area	Error Frequency Rate
1	Particles Errors	32.94%
2	Ending Inflection Errors	22.16%
3	Spelling Errors	20.78%
4	Lexical Selection Errors	13.72%
5	Sentence Components Agreement Errors	10.39%

Table 7. Error rate by difficulty level

The following is the error rate for particle errors with the highest error rate, categorized into subject marking particles, objective marking particles, complement marking particles, and adverbial marking particles.

Difficulty	Type	Error Rate
1	Adverbial Marking Particles Errors	51.19 %
2	Subject Marking Particles Errors	33.33 %
3	Objective Marking Particles Errors	11.3 %
4	Complement Marking Particles Errors	4.16 %

Table 8. Difficulty order of Particles Errors

Below is the error rate for each particle divided into substitution, omission, and addition.

Difficulty	Type	Substitution	Omission	Addition
1	Adverbial Marking Particles	63.95 %	19.77 %	16.28 %
2	Subject Marking Particles	65.45 %	35.54 %	0 %
3	Objective Marking Particles	73.68 %	26.32 %	0 %
4	Complement Marking Particles	62.5 %	37.5 %	0 %

Table 9. Error Rates for Substitution, Omission, and Addition of Particles

The following are the error rates for connecting and terminating ending inflections.

Difficulty	Type	Error Rate
1	Connecting Ending Inflections Errors	59.29%
2	Terminating Ending Inflections Errors	40.7%

Table 10. Error Rate of Connecting and Terminating Ending Inflections

### Error patterns according to Korean language level

		Number of Word Clauses	Frequency of Errors	Total Error Rate (%)	Spelling Errors (%)	Particles Errors (%)	Ending Inflection Errors (%)	Lexical Selection Errors (%)	Sentence Components Agreement Errors (%)
1	S1	300	30	10	20	43.33	13.35	16.66	6.66
2	S3	244	33	13.5	3.03	39.39	30.3	15.15	12.12
3	S7	224	31	13.8	16.13	29.03	32.26	16.13	6.45
4	S12	213	26	12.2	26.92	42.31	23.08	3.84	3.84

Table 11. Errors of TOPIK writing 'Readiness' Level 3+ – Intermediate

The following is an excerpt from S3's text.

<예문> 그리고 회사에서 하루 종일 열심히 일하고 집에 늦게 가면 시간이 별로 없어서 스트레스를 풀려고 TV 시청(→시청을) 하면서 밥을 바빠 먹는 사람들도 많다.

### Errors of TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3 – Intermediate

		Number of Word Clauses	Frequency of Errors	Total Error Rate (%)	Spelling Errors (%)	Particles Errors (%)	Ending Inflection Errors (%)	Lexical Selection Errors (%)	Sentence Components Agreement Errors (%)
1	S2	274	31	11.3	22.58	32.26	19.35	16.13	9.68
2	S4	238	13	5.5	23.7	23.7	15.38	30.77	7.69
3	S5	234	27	11.5	18.52	29.63	25.93	7.41	18.52
4	S8	217	19	8.75	42.11	15.79	26.32	10.53	5.26
5	S15	202	27	13.4	11.11	25.93	25.93	18.52	18.52
6	S16	199	25	12.6	12	32	32	8	16

Table 12. Errors of TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 3 – Intermediate

The following is an excerpt from S5's text.

<예문> 그 동안 우리 모두는 집에서 하는(→하던) 것만 해야 된다(→되었다).
--

### Errors of TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary

		Number of Word Clauses	Frequency of Errors	Total Error Rate (%)	Spelling Errors (%)	Particles Errors (%)	Ending Inflection Errors (%)	Lexical Selection Errors (%)	Sentence Components Agreement Errors (%)
1	S6	227	48	21.2	35.42	22.92	20.83	12.5	8.33
2	S10	216	44	20.4	11.36	38.64	27.27	11.36	9.09
3	S11	215	52	24.18	21.15	34.62	17.31	15.38	11.54
4	S13	213	51	23.9	27.45	27.45	17.65	19.61	7.84
5	S14	209	48	23	22.92	45.83	14.58	4.17	12.5

Table 13. Errors of TOPIK writing ‘Readiness’ Level 2 – Elementary

The following is an excerpt from S14's text.

<예문> 그래서 사람마다 자기의 집(→집에 대한) 의미를(→의미가) 다 다양한다(→다르다).
---

It can be seen that the error rate of the level Elementary learners is much higher than that of the level Intermediate learners. It can also be seen that Intermediate learners make errors when trying to use newly learned vocabulary and grammar, while Elementary learners cannot distinguish between the terminating ending inflections of adjectives in the ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’ and the terminating ending inflections of verbs in the ‘*Hara-che* (하라체)’.

## Conclusion

As a result of analyzing learners' errors, the particle error rate was the highest. Among the particle errors, the adverbial marking particle error rate was the highest, followed by the subject marking particles error rate. Adverbial marking particles errors were high for all particles. Adverbial marking particles had an addition error rate of 16.8%, while subject, object, and complement particles had no addition errors. The next highest error rate was for the ending inflection. The error rate for connecting endings inflections was higher than the error rate for terminating ending inflections. The /ㄴ/ and /ㄷ/, /ㄴ/ and /ㅡ/, /ㄴ/ and /ㅍ/, /ㅁ/ and /ㅂ/, /ㅁ/ and /ㅅ/ and /ㅅ/ and /ㅈ/ were error patterns produced due to a lack of vowel phoneme understanding. The consonant finale /ㄴ/ and /ㅇ/, /ㄷ/ and /ㅌ/, /ㅈ/ and /ㅊ/ were error patterns produced due to a lack of consonant phoneme understanding.

The analysis of individual learners' errors showed that five out of fifteen third-year students at Sofia University's Korean department met the TOPIK level 2 - Elementary level. This means that their Korean proficiency is low compared to their period of study. Six of them were at the TOPIK level - Intermediate 3, and four were at the TOPIK level - Intermediate 3+. Four of the learners had similar academic achievements to learners learning Korean at a language institute in Korea.

The results of the analysis of individual learners' errors in this paper will be a valuable resource for one-on-one counseling with learners. In order to write their thoughts and feelings in Korean grammar and with semantic completeness, some learners need to improve their particle knowledge, some need to improve their end inflections knowledge, and some need to strengthen their vocabulary. Learners at beginner levels 1 and 2 should develop a learning plan that includes practicing primary Korean sentence forms to prevent sentence component agreement errors.

The results of this thesis' analysis shall be taken into consideration when designing a third-year Korean language class in the Department of Korean Studies, which consists of learners at different levels of the TOPIK, from Beginner 1 to Intermediate 3+. It is hoped that various Korean language institutions in Bulgaria will also collect data on the errors of different groups of learners, analyze the different patterns of learners' errors, and accumulate the results. Based on the findings of this study, it is hoped that customized curricula, curriculum content, teaching materials, and teaching and learning developments will be made to help Bulgarian learners of Korean acquire the target language effectively.

## Bibliography

- 김세원 (2024), 불가리아인 학습자의 쓰기 오류 분석, in *Research and Prospects of Korean Studies in Eurasia, the 4<sup>th</sup> ERAKAM Korean Studies – International Conference, 2024*, Erciyes University, Kayseri, Turkey, pp. 152–172 (Kim, Sewon (2024),

- (Pulgariain hakseupjau sseugi oryu punseok. in *Research and Prospects of Korean Studies in Eurasia, the 4<sup>th</sup> ERAKAM Korean Studies – International Conference, 2024*, Erciyes University, Kayseri, Turkey, pp. 152–172).
- 김은혜 (2019), 모국어에 따른 KFL 초급 학습자 한국어 쓰기 오류 비교 연구, 인문사회, 21 제10권1호, pp. 217–228 (Kim, Eunhye (2019), Mogugeoe ttareun KFL chogep hakseupja hangugeo sseugi oryu pigyo yeongu. in *Inmunshahoe* 21, 10(1), pp. 217–228).
- 서수백 (2014), 외국인 유학생의 한국어 쓰기 오류 분석 – 학부 재학 유학생 백일장 작문을 대상으로-, 우리말글, 62, pp. 127–157 (Seo, Subaek (2014), Oegugin yuhaksaengui hangugeo sseugi oryu punseok – hakpu jaehak yuhaksaeng paegiljang jangmuneul taesangeuro. – In: *Urimalgeul*, 62, pp. 127–157).
- 이효영 (2013), 오류 분석을 통한 중국어 쓰기 교육 개선 방안, 中國言語研究, 第 45 輯, pp. 282–303. (Lee, Hyoyeong (2013), Oryu punseogeul tonghan junggugeo sseugi kyoyuk kaeseon pangan. – In: *Junggugeoyeonguwon*, 45, pp. 282–303).
- 이원경 (2012), 외국어로서의 독일어 학습에서의 언어능력 – 오류 분석과 쓰기 능력 향상을 위한 교수안, 외국어로서의 독일어, 제31집, pp. 135–158 (Lee, Wonkyeong (2012), Oegugeoroseoui togireo hakseubeseoui yeoneoneungnyeok – oryu punseokkwa sseugineungnyeok hyangsangeul wihan kyosuan. in *Oegugeoroseoui togireo*, 31, pp. 135–158).
- 홍은진 (2004), 영어권 학습자의 어휘 오류 분석과 교육 방안, 이중언어학, 제25호, pp. 331–358 (Hong, Eunjin (2004), Yeongeogwon hakseupjau eohwi oryu punseokkwa kyoyuk pangan. in *Ijungeoneohak*, 25, pp. 331–358).
- 석주연·안경화 (2003), 한국어 학습자 표현 오류 분석의 몇 가지 문제 – 정의, 확인, 기술을 중심으로, 한국어 교육, 14권3호, pp. 189–215 (Seok, Juyeon & An, Kyeonghwa (2003), Hangugeo hakseupja pyohyeon oryu punseogui myeot kaji munje – jongui, hwagin, kisureul jungsimeuro. in *Hangugeo kyoyuk*, 14(3), pp. 189–215).
- 이정희 (2003), 한국어 학습자의 오류 연구, 도서출판 박이정, 서울 (Lee, Jeonghui (2003), *Hangugeo hakseupjau oryu yeongu*. Seoul: Toseochulpan Pagijeong).
- Corder, S. P. (2011), 중간언어와 오류 분석 (*Error Analysis and Interlanguage*), 신승용 김지민 이순영 옮김, 도서출판 박이정, 서울 (Corder, S.P. (2011), *Jungganeoneowa oryu punseok (Error Analysis and Interlanguage)*, Sin, Seungyong, Kim, Jimin & Lee, Sunyeong omgim. Seoul: Toseochulpan Pagijeong).
- Kim, Sewon (2020), 불가리아인 한국어 초급 학습자 쓰기 오류 분석 연구 (Analysis of Writing Errors in Korean Text of Beginner Bulgarian Learners). in *Globalization in Korea, proceedings of the international conference on the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Korea*. Sofia: “St. Kliment Ohridski” University Press, 2020, pp. 202–215 (Kim, Sewon (2020). Pulgariain hangugeo chogep hakseupja sseugi oryu punseok yeongu. in *Globalization in Korea, proceedings of the international conference on the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Korea*, “St. Kliment Ohridski” University Press, 2020, Sofia, pp. 202–215).

**Kim Sewon, PhD, Researcher (R2)**  
sewon@uni-sofia.bg  
Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology  
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"  
15 Tzar Osvoboditel Blvd.  
Sofia 1504  
Bulgaria

**Ким Сеун, д-р, второ ниво изследовател (R2)**  
sewon@uni-sofia.bg  
Факултет по класически и нови филологии  
Софийски университет „Св. Климент Охридски“  
бул. „Цар Освободител“ 15  
София 1504  
България