

Research trends in Korean language education for learners from multicultural families

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Research on Korean language education for multicultural background learners has been actively conducted since 2006 with an expansion of research areas as demands for Korean language education in our soon-to-be multicultural society began to be discussed in earnest. This paper identifies these recent research trends in Korean language education for multicultural background learners that are married immigrant women, children from multicultural families, migrant workers and North Korean defectors. A total of 171 research papers was analyzed, including academic journal articles and doctoral dissertations in the fields of Korean language education and multicultural studies published over the past five years from January 2014 to December 2018.

The research areas of those previous studies were also categorized into 'current status and policy', 'language acquisition' and 'language education'. The research area of 'current status and policy' consists of studies that analyzed the current status of Korean language education for multicultural background learners, Korean language policies and history of Korean language education. The second area of 'language acquisition' includes studies of contrast analysis, error analysis and interlanguage research, which investigates Korean language learners' systematic language development in their target language learning. Lastly, the research area of 'language education' comprises studies on pedagogy, learning strategies and classroom materials and teaching and learning of grammar and vocabulary that constitute language knowledge.

According to the results of our meta-analysis, the research on Korean language education for learners from multicultural families has been mainly focused on curriculum, teaching syllabus, teaching techniques and student and teacher factors within the studied period. It is encouraging that the media such as robots and social networking sites was used in curriculum development and teaching. On the other hand, there was a lack of studies on the analysis of multicultural background learners' language use and pedagogy development based on the precedent language acquisition studies. As it is noted, more language acquisition studies should be actively conducted as they lay the foundation for development of learning materials and teaching methods. Also, studies that are currently divided by learner groups and linguistic strata such as morphology, syntax and discourse need to be expanded in a way they address the correlation between different study results, learners' language use in interaction and the language use of bilingual learners.