

Korean Teaching Methods Based on Cultural Ideas: A New Way to Cultivate Cross-Cultural Communication Skills

Yang Dong*

Administration Department, Nanyang Institute of Technology, Nanyang, 473000,
China

nvboshi83417@126.com

Abstract: The decision to integrate cultural awareness into Korean language instruction stemmed from a desire to address real-world issues faced by students within their daily lives and learning environment. Our study investigated participants' experiences with TKSL programs, their perceptions of cultural elements in language learning, and potential strategies for improvement. We adopted a mixed methods approach involving participants at the Guangzhou Korean School. The findings indicate a generally positive view of the current integration of cultural elements, with participants acknowledging their value for deeper understanding, engagement, and motivation. The majority strongly agreed that cultural elements are essential for developing cross-cultural communication skills, and learning about Korean culture enhances their interest in the language. However, there is room for improvement, as some instructors struggle to balance cultural integration with core language skills. Overall, the findings suggest that TKSL programs can benefit from a stronger focus on integrating cultural elements. Collaborating with cultural experts, leveraging technology, and providing ongoing training for instructors, TKSL programs can create a more engaging and effective learning environment that fosters deeper understanding of both the Korean language and Korean culture.

Keywords: Korean, Culture, Teaching Methods, Communication, TKSL, Language

1. INTRODUCTION

The decision to integrate cultural awareness into Korean language instruction stemmed from a desire to address real-world issues faced by students within their daily lives and learning environment. Teaching cultural awareness is a dynamic and ongoing process, one that lies "at the very heart of what we strive to help others achieve" (Mayfield, 2020). This approach necessitates self-reflection on one's own cultural identity and pedagogical role. By combining this introspection with a strong theoretical foundation, educators can make informed decisions about course content and design, ultimately fostering a more enriching learning experience for students. South Korea stands out for its fervent embrace of Chinese language learning. Notably, it was the first nation to establish a Confucius Institute and currently has the highest number in Asia (23 Institutes and 5 Classrooms). This enthusiasm extends to standardized testing, with Korea

surpassing all other countries in the number of participants taking the Chinese Language Proficiency Test in 2016. Furthermore, Chinese language instruction is deeply integrated into the Korean education system, with courses offered across various institutions, from over 90 graduate schools to nearly 1000 high schools (as of 2017). Understanding why individuals embark on learning foreign languages is critical. Motivation is widely acknowledged as a fundamental factor influencing success in foreign language acquisition (Bagheri Nevisi & Farhani, 2022; Papi & Hiver, 2020). Recent research has emphasized the profound link between language and culture, highlighting its significance for foreign language teaching and curriculum design (Egitim, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2021). Research consistently demonstrates that student engagement in foreign language learning increases when the curriculum connects to their lives (Tong et al., 2022). Indeed, the close relationship between interest and motivation necessitates their consideration when designing any language curriculum. Respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds of learners is paramount in creating equitable and inclusive learning spaces. Such environments demonstrably enhance knowledge acquisition and skill development (Li et al., 2022). Education, particularly second language teaching (SLT), plays a vital role in empowering individuals and societies.

To ensure a fair and inclusive learning environment within SLT, educators must be attentive to cultural diversity and the unique backgrounds of their students. This approach not only facilitates knowledge construction grounded in the learner's identity but also equips them with essential intercultural communication skills. Both these elements are crucial for fostering sustainable language development. Second language learning (SLL) is a complex process deeply intertwined with a learner's identity. This identity encompasses the conscious and unconscious feelings and emotions that shape how learners perceive their relationship with the world during the learning process. Learners invariably bring their own sociocultural background to the table, influencing how they develop a connection with the target language's sociocultural environment (Takkaç Tulgar, 2019).

Emotions and feelings towards SLL are often closely linked to a learner's sociocultural context. Entering a new and unfamiliar culture can trigger feelings of uncertainty and anxiety, potentially disrupting a learner's established cultural coherence or sense of belonging. This psychological state can lead to a state of regression, diverting energy and focus away from SLL and hindering progress. "Affective filter" hypothesis suggests that high

anxiety levels can impede language acquisition by limiting a learner's ability to process language input and hindering their intake of target language messages (Krashen, 1982). Studies by Qi exemplify the benefits of Sino-Korean vocabulary for Korean learners (Qi, 2000). Li points out the inherent cultural and emotional connection Korean learners have with words reflecting traditional Chinese folklore and customs, stemming from their geographical proximity and historical ties. This familiarity facilitates comprehension, as Korean learners can readily associate Chinese characters with established Korean vocabulary (positive transfer). Li further emphasizes the advantage of homographs within Sino-Korean vocabulary, which Korean learners perceive as "positive twins," avoiding the initial unfamiliarity encountered with unfamiliar characters (Li et al., 2022).

These findings demonstrate how the historical connection between Korean and Chinese languages has not only shaped the vocabulary but also left a profound mark on the cultural understanding of Korean learners. By capitalizing on this inherent understanding, TCSL can create a more effective learning environment that facilitates knowledge construction based on learner identity and ultimately contributes to the sustainable development of Korean learners. While previous research has often highlighted the advantages Korean learners possess compared to others due to the shared cultural roots between Chinese and Korean languages, a gap exists in exploring the distinctive aspects of Sino-Korean vocabulary specific to Korean culture. These unique words hold the potential to not only bridge the psychological and social distance to the target language (Chinese) but also empower learners through a deeper understanding of their own cultural identity.

1.1 Rationale and Objective

Current methods for Teaching Korean as a Second Language (TKSL) provide a solid foundation for Chinese learners. However, these methods may not fully capitalize on the cultural understanding Chinese learners possess due to shared historical and linguistic roots with Korea. This study aims to explore how TKSL can be enhanced by incorporating activities and pedagogical approaches that are grounded in Korean cultural ideas. By fostering engagement with Korean culture within the learning process, we posit that Chinese learners can develop stronger cross-cultural communication skills, ultimately contributing to their long-term success.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design and Participants

Our study adopted a mixed methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of how Korean teaching methods based on cultural ideas can cultivate cross-cultural communication skills among Chinese learners. We employed focus groups as the primary qualitative method, facilitating discussions with Chinese learners to explore their experiences with TKSL programs, their perceptions of the role of cultural elements in language learning, and their suggestions for incorporating cultural ideas into teaching methods. This qualitative data will be complemented by a quantitative component, such as surveys or questionnaires, which will be used to assess the learners' current level of cross-cultural communication skills and gather broader data from a larger sample size. Our study recruited a total of 33 participants through purposive sampling from the Guangzhou Korean School. All participants were at least 18 years old and provided written informed consent after a thorough explanation of the study's objectives, data collection methods, and their rights as participants. The sample comprised primarily educators (teachers and instructors) currently involved in TKSL programs, with a smaller portion consisting of students enrolled in these programs. The research protocol was approved by the relevant ethics committee, ensuring adherence to ethical research standards.

2.2 Surveys

In the first phase of the study, we administered an online survey to participants after they were recruited and provided informed consent. Prior to completing the survey, participants received a detailed information sheet outlining the research objectives, data collection procedures, and their rights as participants. The survey instrument, which took approximately 20 minutes to complete, consisted of two sections. The first section included demographic questions using multiple-choice options, while the second section focused on participants' experiences with TKSL programs and their perceptions of cultural elements in language learning. This latter section utilized a combination of Likert scale questions and open-ended prompts to gather in-depth qualitative data. Following survey completion, all participants were debriefed and received a thank you note for their valuable contribution to the study.

2.3 Interviews and Focus Groups

We conducted semi-structured interviews with a smaller group of participants (5-8) to gain deeper insights into their experiences after administering the survey. These interviews, which included both TKSL instructors and Chinese learners, targeted a set of 15 focused questions. The questions delved into participants' experiences with TKSL programs, the perceived challenges in incorporating cultural ideas into teaching methods, and their suggestions for overcoming these challenges. The interviews lasted approximately 35-40 minutes and were conducted after participants provided informed consent. This approach fostered a rich dialogue and yielded valuable qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings from the survey. We conducted focus group discussions with 5-7 participants. These discussions centered on exploring the experiences and perspectives of both TKSL instructors and learners regarding the role of cultural ideas in fostering cross-cultural communication skills. The focus group format facilitated a dynamic exchange of ideas, allowing participants to build upon each other's responses and offer nuanced perspectives. The discussions lasted approximately 30 minutes and were audio-recorded with informed consent from all participants.

2.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data from the interviews and focus groups was analysed using thematic analysis, which involved a systematic process of identifying, categorizing, and interpreting recurring themes within the transcribed data. For the quantitative data obtained from the survey, we utilized GraphPad Prism version 9.5.1 to conduct descriptive statistics, summarizing the participants' demographic characteristics and their responses to the survey questions. Additionally, inferential statistics were employed at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ to explore potential relationships between variables and identify any statistically significant trends within the quantitative data set.

3. RESULTS

The study recruited a total of 33 participants. The age distribution was fairly balanced, with 18–24-year-olds comprising 15.2%, 25–34-year-olds at 36.4%, 35–44-year-olds at 30.3%, and those 45 and over representing 18.2%. Gender was nearly equal with 45.5% male and 54.5% female. The

majority (66.7%) were TKSL instructors, while 33.3% were students (See Figure 1 and 2).

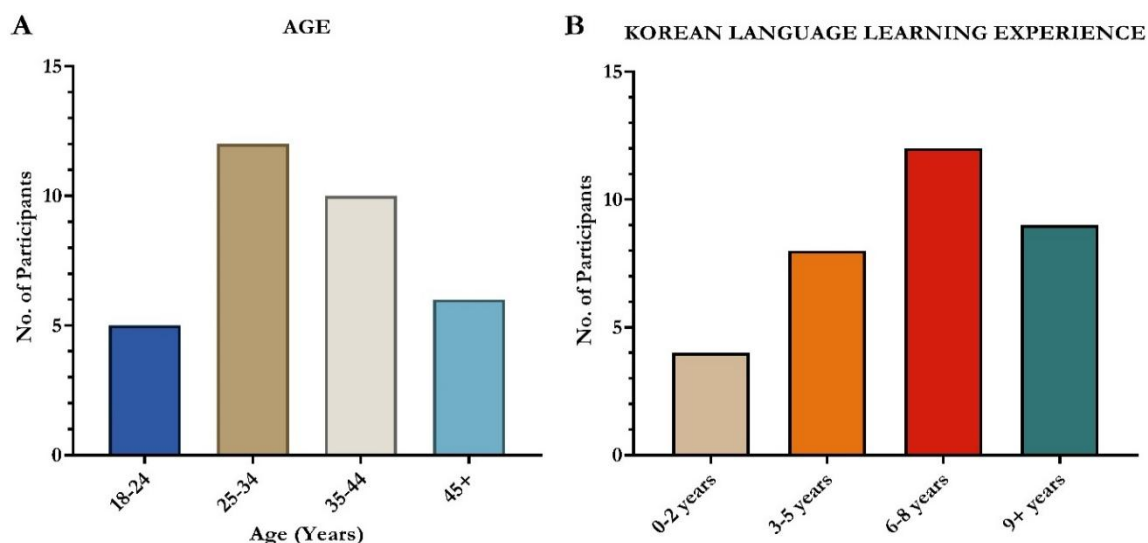


Figure 1: Column Charts Showing the Distribution of Participants based on Age groups and learning experience of Korean Language.

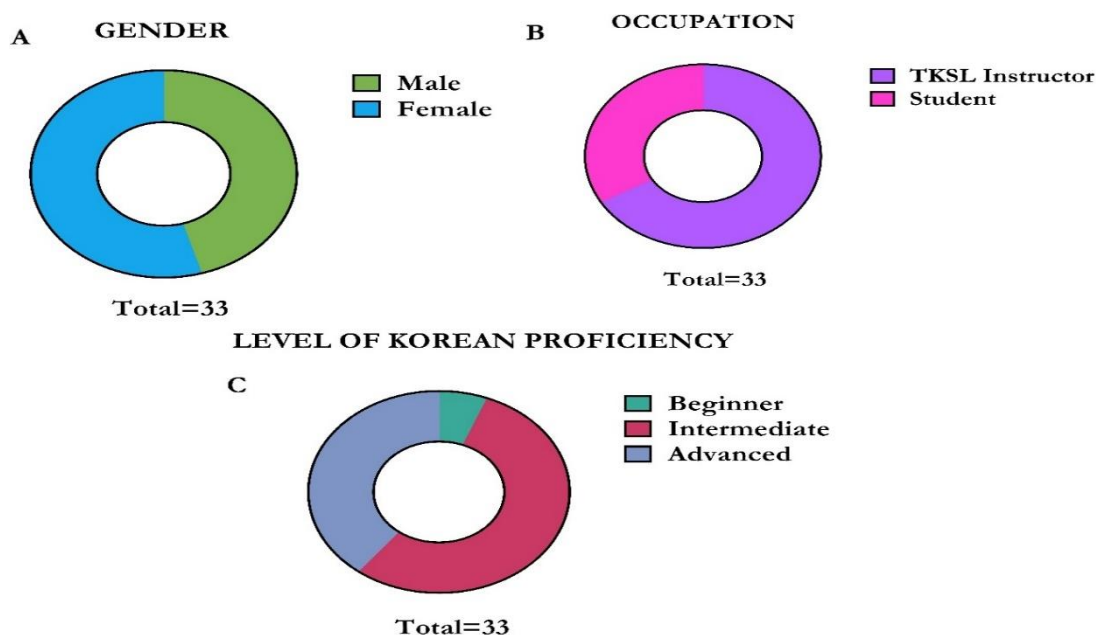


Figure 2: Pie Charts of Participant Distribution based on Gender (A), Occupation (B), and the Levels of Korean Proficiency (C).

In terms of Korean language learning experience, 12.1% had been studying for 0-2 years, 24.2% for 3-5 years, 36.4% for 6-8 years, and 27.3% for 9 or more years. Self-reported proficiency levels indicated 6.1% as beginners, 54.5% as intermediate, and 39.4% as advanced learners (see Figure 1 and 2).

Participants' Experiences with TKSL Programs

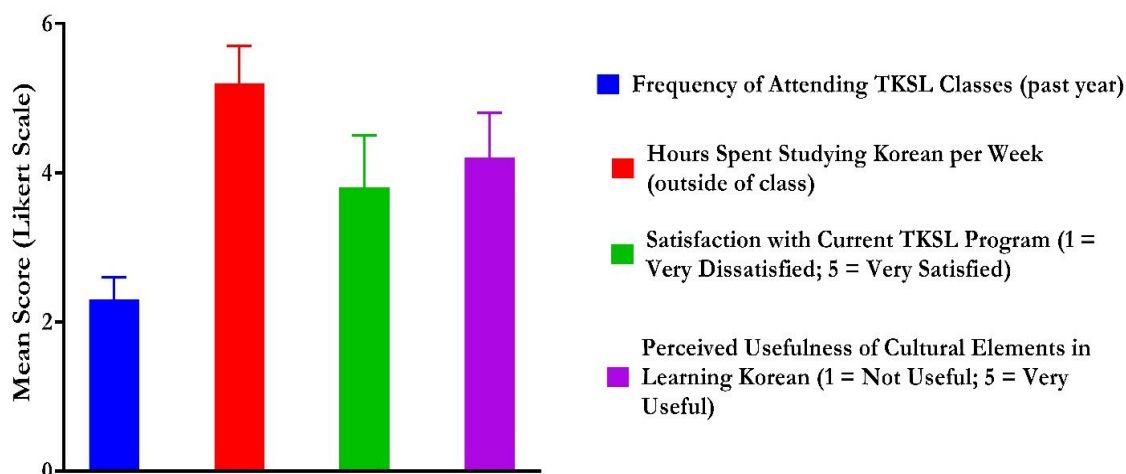


Figure 3: Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Experiences with TKSL Programs (N = 33) based on a 5-point Likert Scale.

In Figure 3, the descriptive statistics for participants' experiences with TKSL programs (N = 33) revealed an average attendance frequency of 2.3 classes (SD = 0.3) in the past year, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4 classes attended. On average, participants dedicated 5.2 hours (SD = 0.5) per week to studying Korean outside of class time, ranging from a minimum of 1 hour to a maximum of 12 hours weekly. Satisfaction with current TKSL programs yielded a mean score of 3.8 (SD = 0.7) on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Finally, the perceived usefulness of cultural elements in learning Korean averaged 4.2 (SD = 0.6) on a scale of 1 (not useful) to 5 (very useful).

PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN TKSL PROGRAMS

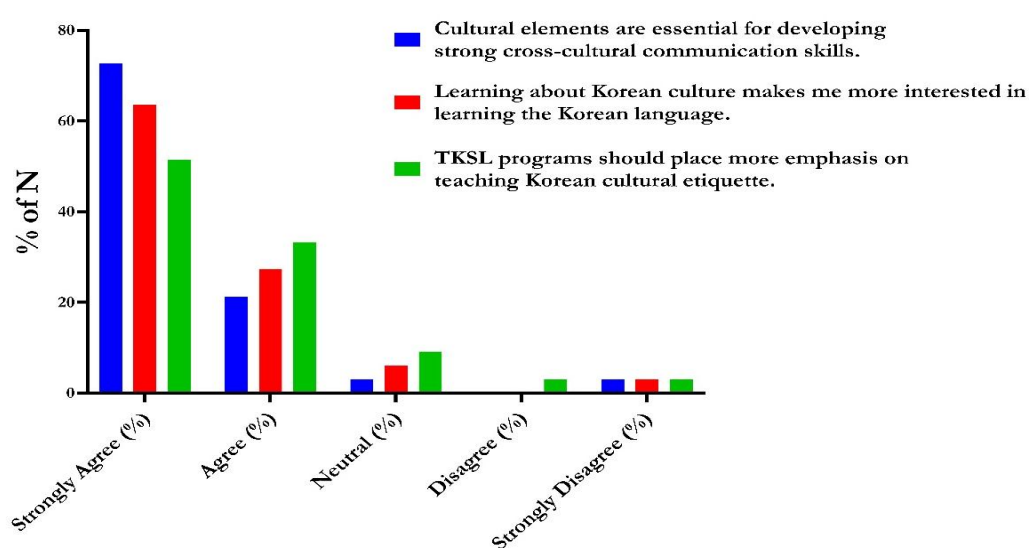


Figure 4: Perceptions of the Importance of Cultural Elements in TKSL Programs (N = 33) measured on a 5-point Likert Scale.

In Figure 4, over 72% strongly agreed that cultural elements are essential for developing cross-cultural communication skills, with an additional 21.2% agreeing. Similarly, a majority (63.6%) strongly agreed that learning about Korean culture enhances their interest in the language, with another 27.3% agreeing. While there was still recognition of the value of cultural etiquette, opinions were more divided. Over half (51.5%) supported placing more emphasis on teaching Korean cultural etiquette in TKSL programs, but a significant portion (33.3%) agreed with a moderate emphasis, and 9.1% remained neutral.

Table 1: Themes Emerging from Instructor Interviews

Theme	Description	Example Quote
Benefits of Culturally-Specific Integration:	Instructors highlighted the value of integrating specific cultural aspects like holidays and traditions to foster deeper understanding, engagement, and motivation among students.	"When I teach about holidays like Chuseok (Korean Thanksgiving) and incorporate activities like making traditional food, students become more curious about Korean family values and social customs. It makes learning vocabulary and expressions related to these celebrations more meaningful."
Challenges of Balancing Language Skills and Cultural Depth:	Instructors acknowledged challenges in striking a balance between teaching core language skills like grammar and vocabulary, and providing in-depth exploration of specific cultural aspects.	"I would love to delve deeper into Korean etiquette, but there's limited time in the curriculum. I try to find ways to integrate it subtly, like teaching appropriate greetings and honorifics when practicing conversation skills."
Strategies for Contextualized Learning:	Instructors shared successful strategies like using authentic materials that showcase specific cultural aspects. Examples include Korean films or music videos depicting traditional clothing (hanbok) worn during holidays, or incorporating role-playing exercises that simulate real-world social situations like ordering food at a restaurant or attending a cultural event.	"I find using short Korean movie clips with cultural references, like scenes from a historical drama where characters wear hanbok and perform traditional greetings, works well. It sparks discussions about Korean social hierarchy and helps students connect language to cultural context."

In Table 1, examining instructor experiences revealed the benefits of integrating specific cultural aspects (holidays, traditions) for student engagement, but also highlighted challenges in balancing these elements with core language skills like grammar. Successful strategies included using authentic materials (films, music) and role-playing exercises to create a contextually rich learning environment.

Table 2: Themes Emerging from Learner Interviews

Theme	Description	Example Quote
Importance of Culturally-Relevant Applications:	Learners emphasized the importance of cultural elements that are directly relevant to communication scenarios they might encounter, such as understanding social cues or navigating everyday interactions.	"Learning about Korean body language and nonverbal communication styles, like bowing or maintaining eye contact, helps me avoid misunderstandings when interacting with Koreans."
Desire for Focused Learning on Specific Aspects:	Learners expressed a desire for more exposure to specific aspects of Korean culture in TKSL programs, particularly those related to daily life and social interactions, such as Korean humour or etiquette in different social settings.	"I'd love to learn more about Korean table manners and how to properly use chopsticks during a meal. Knowing these things will make me feel more confident when interacting with Koreans in social situations."
Impact on Culturally-Sensitive Communication:	Learners felt that integrating cultural elements helped them develop a deeper understanding of Korean social norms and communication styles, ultimately fostering more culturally sensitive interactions.	"By learning about Korean hierarchy and the importance of respect in communication, I've become more aware of how to address elders or people in positions of authority appropriately."

In Table 2, Learners in the study valued cultural elements directly applicable to communication (social cues, etiquette) and desired deeper dives into specific aspects like humor or table manners. They felt this integration fostered culturally sensitive communication by improving their understanding of Korean social norms and communication styles.

Table 3: Examples of Cultural Elements for TKSL Programs (Based on Interviews, N = 10)

Cultural Element	Description	Example in Korean Language	Impact on Cross-Cultural Communication
Honorific Language (敬語 - Kyungeo)	Understanding different levels of formality and respect in speech.	존댓말 (Jondemal) - respectful language, 반말 (Banmal) - informal language	Helps avoid misunderstandings and portrays appropriate levels of respect in social interactions.
Non-Verbal Communication (비언어 소통 - Bi-eon Eo Sotong)	Recognizing the importance of nonverbal cues like bowing (인사 - Insa) and eye contact (눈맞춤 - Nunmajjchum).	절 (Jeol) - deep bow, 숙여 인사 (Sukh-yeo Insa) - slight bow	Improves understanding of unspoken social cues and avoids appearing impolite.
Gift-Giving Culture (선물 문화 - Seonmul Munhwa)	Learning about appropriate etiquette for gift-giving (선물 주기 - Seonmul Jugi) and receiving gifts (선물 받기 - Seonmul Batgi).	손 선물 (Son Seonmul) - small hand gift, 손님 (Sonnim) - guest	Navigates social situations involving gift exchange and fosters positive relationships.
Korean Holidays (한국 명절 - Hanguk Myeongjeol)	Exploring the significance of holidays like Chuseok (추석) and Seollal (설날) and related traditions.	떡국 (Tteokguk) - rice cake soup eaten on Seollal, 차례 (Charye) - ancestral rites performed on Chuseok	Provides context for cultural practices and enhances understanding of Korean social values.
Korean Food Culture (한국 음식 문화 - Hanguk Eumsik Munhwa)	Learning about Korean dining etiquette (식사 예절 - Siksa Yeseol) and common dishes (대표 음식 - Daehyo Eumsik).	젓가락 (Jeotgarak) - chopsticks, 반찬 (Banchan) - side dishes	Prepares learners for social dining experiences and avoids cultural faux pas.

In Table 3, Interviewees suggested incorporating specific cultural elements like honorific language (respectful speech, 존댓말 - Jondemal) and nonverbal cues (bowing, 인사 - Insa) to avoid misunderstandings. Learning about gift-giving etiquette (선물 문화 - Seonmul Munhwa) and Korean holidays (like Chuseok, 추석) provided context for social interactions. Exploring Korean food culture (including etiquette, 식사 예절 - Siksa Yeseol) helped navigate dining experiences.

Table 4: Thematic Analysis of Focus Group Discussions

Theme	Description	Supporting Quotes
Need for Collaborative Curriculum Development	Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration between TKSL instructors and cultural experts to develop effective and engaging curriculum materials.	"There's a need for more resources specifically designed for TKSL programs that integrate cultural elements in a structured way."
Leveraging Technology for Cultural Immersion	Participants discussed the potential of using technology to create immersive learning experiences, such as virtual tours of Korean historical sites or interactive language learning apps with cultural content.	"Imagine using VR headsets to explore Korean traditional villages and practice greetings in different social settings."
Importance of Ongoing Teacher Training	Participants highlighted the need for ongoing professional development opportunities for TKSL instructors to enhance their knowledge and skills in integrating cultural elements into their teaching methods.	"Regular workshops on incorporating cultural elements into lesson plans and using technology for cultural learning would be very beneficial."
Promoting Learner-Centered Activities	Participants emphasized the value of learner-centered activities that encourage active participation and exploration of Korean culture.	"Students learn best by doing. Role-playing cultural scenarios, participating in online discussions about Korean social issues, or creating projects about Korean artists could be very engaging."

In Table 4, focus group discussions highlighted the need for collaborative curriculum development with cultural experts, leveraging technology like VR for immersive learning, and ongoing teacher training to integrate cultural elements effectively. Participants emphasized learner-centered activities like role-playing and online discussions to promote active exploration of Korean culture.

4. DISCUSSION

Our results indicated a generally positive view of the current integration of cultural elements in TKSL programs. Participants reported valuing cultural elements for their role in understanding the Korean language and fostering interest in learning. However, some responses suggested a desire for more emphasis on cultural elements within the curriculum. Second language textbooks (SLT) play a crucial role in language acquisition, but their effectiveness hinges on catering to the specific needs and cultural backgrounds of learners. While textbooks strive for universality to reach a wider audience, neglecting cultural nuances can lead to disengagement and hinder learning for students from diverse backgrounds. This is particularly relevant for Korean learners of Chinese, as generic textbooks may not adequately address their cultural context or learning goals related to Korean identity. According to Li et al., *The Korean Version of Experience Chinese: Living in China (ECLK)* is a widely used Chinese language textbook for Korean beginners (Li et al., 2022). It emphasizes experiential learning and task-based instruction, featuring practical communication tasks designed to develop listening and speaking skills. The textbook is specifically tailored for Korean learners, including dedicated sections on Korean language interpretation, grammar explanations, and illustrative examples. However, to further enhance its effectiveness, the ECLK could benefit from incorporating a deeper reflection of Korean learners' cultural backgrounds. Second language teaching (SLT) increasingly recognizes the importance of integrating learners' cultural backgrounds. This approach not only facilitates knowledge construction through the lens of their identity but also equips them with crucial skills for cross-cultural communication, both essential elements for sustainable language development. According to Li et al., for Korean learners of Chinese, Sino-Korean vocabulary presents a unique opportunity (Li et al., 2022). These shared words not only represent Korean culture but also serve as a valuable tool for educators in the field of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL) to promote sustainable learning outcomes for Korean students. While existing research has explored how shared linguistic roots facilitate understanding and use of Sino-Korean vocabulary, less attention has been paid to the role of cultural Sino-Korean vocabulary specific to Korean culture. Our analysis of interviews showed that instructors highlighted the benefits of integrating specific cultural aspects like holidays and traditions to enhance student engagement and motivation. However, they also acknowledged challenges in balancing cultural exploration with core language skill development.

Successful strategies included using authentic materials and role-playing exercises to create a contextually rich learning environment. Learners echoed the importance of cultural relevance, emphasizing the value of learning elements directly applicable to communication scenarios, such as social cues and etiquette. They expressed a desire for more focus on specific cultural aspects and felt that integrating cultural elements fostered more culturally sensitive communication. Starinina (2020) observed that Learners are motivated by a desire to participate across cultures and borders, to express themselves effectively in diverse settings, and to navigate the complexities of intercultural communication. Beyond the impact on individual learners, the increasing interconnectedness of our global society underscores the need for intercultural communication skills. By paying close attention to the cultural backgrounds of their students, Second Language Teaching (SLT) can equip them with the necessary language proficiency and intercultural communication skills. This, in turn, fosters more peaceful and long-term participation in global dialogue, opening doors for collaborative exchange and ultimately contributing to sustainable development. Korean culture has been significantly shaped by its historical connection to China, evident in the influence of Chinese characters on the Korean language. The Korean lexicon is comprised of native Korean words, loanwords from other languages, and Sino-Korean vocabulary, which is derived from Chinese characters (Sohn, 2001). The Standard Korean Language Dictionary reports that Sino-Korean vocabulary constitutes a substantial portion (approximately 71%) of the Korean language, with an estimated 370,000 words out of a total of 510,000 (Choo & O'Grady, 1996). This extensive presence of Sino-Korean vocabulary reflects the long-standing cultural exchange between Korea and China. These words, pronounced according to Korean phonology, often correspond to specific Chinese characters. The relationship between these characters and their modern Chinese counterparts can be categorized as either homonyms (sharing the same pronunciation and meaning) or heteronyms (sharing the same pronunciation but differing in meaning). Sino-Korean vocabulary, words derived from Chinese characters with Korean pronunciation, constitutes a substantial portion of the Korean language. Examples include homonyms like "소채 (sochae)" and "蔬菜 (shucai)" (both meaning "vegetable") and heteronyms like "치약 (chiyak)" and "牙膏 (yagao)" (both meaning "toothpaste"). This significant presence necessitates Korean learners' proficiency in using Sino-Korean vocabulary

to effectively express themselves (mention specific studies if possible). Furthermore, Sino-Korean vocabulary inherently reflects aspects of Korean culture, presenting a valuable resource for Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL) to Korean learners. Our focus group discussions explored strategies for improving the integration of cultural elements. A key theme was the need for collaboration between TKSL instructors and cultural experts to develop effective and engaging curriculum materials. Participants also discussed the potential of technology for creating immersive learning experiences and the importance of ongoing teacher training to enhance instructor skills in integrating cultural elements. The discussions emphasized the value of learner-centered activities that encourage active participation and exploration of Korean culture. According to Lawson, learner identity, encompassing an individual's self-perception as a learner, plays a significant role in second language acquisition (SLA) (Lawson, 2014). Studies have shown that the emotional landscape learners encounter when entering a new language culture can significantly impact their progress. Facing a vastly unfamiliar or conflicting culture can trigger anxiety and apprehension, hindering motivation to learn the language. Conversely, learners whose home culture shares similarities with the target language culture, or even holds some historical connection, often experience positive emotions and a sense of familiarity, fostering a more favourable environment for language acquisition. Furthermore, when a learner's identity aligns (adapts) with the target language culture, it promotes greater engagement and interaction with the language itself (Pujol & Corrius, 2013). Römer and Pavlova suggest that Lexical corpora, vast collections of electronic text data, offer a valuable resource for various applications in language learning and resource development (Pavlova, 2021; Römer, 2011). In the realm of second language pedagogy, corpora can inform the design of effective learning materials and textbooks. Corpora can be used to identify frequently used words and common collocations, providing educators with a foundation for creating materials that reflect natural language usage. Moreover, corpora has a role in crafting dictionaries, grammar guides, and reference materials. Corpora can not only validate existing data in dictionaries but also reveal gaps in information regarding language use and word frequency, allowing for more comprehensive resources. The benefits of lexical corpora extend beyond adult language learning. Research suggests their potential utility in understanding children's second language acquisition. For instance, Nishikawa found that corpus studies have been used to identify optimal developmental periods for children learning specific verb-noun

collocations in a second language (Nishikawa, 2022). Studies such as Xing support this notion, highlighting how feelings of isolation and anxiety can pose significant challenges for international students pursuing academic studies in a new cultural environment (Xing, 2018). Furthermore, antagonistic relationships between cultures can also negatively impact learner psychology and hinder SLL. In the Saudi context, for instance, some argue that the perceived presence of Christian culture within the English language clashes with the values of Arabic and Islamic societies. Concerns exist that English, viewed as a tool for Westernization, threatens the preservation of Islamic faith and Saudi culture (Starinina, 2020). Research by Fahd Aljuhaish et al. explores the complex interplay between SLL, identity, culture, and motivation within the Saudi context (Fahd Aljuhaish et al., 2020). The findings suggest that various social factors, particularly religion, can influence students' motivation to learn English as a Second Language (ESL) and potentially discourage certain beliefs and practices associated with English language learning. Fostering positive attitudes towards learners' native language and culture within Second Language Teaching (SLT) can significantly contribute to their overall academic development (Cunningham, 2019). Studies have shown that incorporating elements of learners' native cultures into the curriculum can enhance their self-esteem and sense of familiarity, thereby promoting better learning outcomes. Pujol and Corrius research with Catalan students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) exemplifies this point (Pujol & Corrius, 2013). Their study found that an emphasis on understanding the students' own distinctive culture improved their reading comprehension speed in English. This suggests that a learner-centered approach that acknowledges and values their cultural background can not only mitigate the negative factors associated with learner identity but also leverage its positive aspects to facilitate successful SLA. By fostering quality SLT practices that embrace cultural diversity, we can promote sustainable development for learners, empowering them to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Cunningham proposes that Incorporating elements of learners' native cultures into Second Language Teaching (SLT) can significantly enhance their overall academic development and sense of self-worth (Cunningham, 2019). Research has shown that integrating aspects of learners' cultural heritage into the curriculum fosters a sense of familiarity and boosts self-esteem, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes. Pujol and Corrius investigation with Catalan students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) exemplifies this concept (Pujol & Corrius, 2013). Their study found that an emphasis on understanding the students' own

distinctive culture improved their reading comprehension speed in English. This underscores the importance of a learner-centered approach that acknowledges and values their cultural background. By mitigating potential negative aspects associated with learner identity and leveraging its positive dimensions, SLT can create a more effective learning environment. Promoting quality SLT practices that embrace cultural diversity empowers learners to navigate an increasingly interconnected world, contributing to their sustainable development.

5. CONCLUSION

Our study found that while participants generally valued the current integration of cultural elements in TKSL programs, there is room for improvement. Instructors and learners highlighted the benefits of culturally-specific learning and the need for practical applications. Focus groups emphasized collaboration for curriculum development, leveraging technology, and ongoing teacher training. However, the study was limited by a small sample size. Future research could explore the effectiveness of specific cultural integration strategies on language acquisition and cross-cultural communication skills in larger, more diverse populations.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.This article is a phased research achievement of the 2022 Henan Province Philosophy and Social Science Planning Project "Technological Empowerment and Overseas Communication of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Context of Globalization", with project number 2022BXW010;

2.The phased achievement of the 2023 Henan Province Higher Education Teaching Reform Research and Practice Key Project "Henan Province Applied Undergraduate University Joint Training Graduate Education Management Mechanism System and Practice Innovation Research", project number: 2023SJGLX098Y

References

- Bagheri Nevisi, R., & Farhani, A. (2022). Motivational factors affecting Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' learning of English across differing levels of language proficiency. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 869599.
- Choo, M., & O'Grady, W. (1996). *Handbook of Korean vocabulary: A resource for word recognition and comprehension*. University of Hawaii Press.

- Cunningham, C. (2019). 'The inappropriateness of language': discourses of power and control over languages beyond English in primary schools. *Language and education*, 33(4), 285-301.
- Egitim, S. (2022). Challenges of adapting to organizational culture: Internationalization through inclusive leadership and mutuality. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 5(1), 100242.
- Fahd Aljuhaish, S., Othman, J., & Senom, F. (2020). Saudi EFL teachers' identity formation in Saudi schools: a case study. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume*, 11.
- Kim, S., & Kim, H.-C. (2021). The benefits of YouTube in learning English as a second language: a qualitative investigation of Korean freshman students' experiences and perspectives in the US. *Sustainability*, 13(13), 7365.
- Krashen, S. (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition.
- Lawson, A. (2014). Learner identities in the context of undergraduates: A case study. *Educational Research*, 56(3), 343-356.
- Li, Y., Wei, H., & Li, Y. (2022). Second Language Teaching with a Focus on Different Learner Cultures for Sustainable Learner Development: The Case of Sino-Korean Vocabulary. *Sustainability*, 14(13), 7997.
- Mayfield, V. (2020). *Cultural competence now: 56 exercises to help educators understand and challenge bias, racism, and privilege*. Ascd.
- Nishikawa, T. (2022). Non-nativelike outcome of naturalistic child L2 acquisition of Japanese: The case of noun-verb collocations. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 60(2), 287-314.
- Papi, M., & Hiver, P. (2020). Language learning motivation as a complex dynamic system: A global perspective of truth, control, and value. *The Modern Language Journal*, 104(1), 209-232.
- Pavlova, O. Y. (2021). Linguistic corpora in foreign language teaching. *Yazyk i Kul'tura*, 54, 283-298.
- Pujol, D., & Corrius, M. (2013). The role of the learner's native culture in EFL dictionaries: an experimental study: lexicosurvey. *Lexikos*, 23(1), 565-584.
- Qi, H. (2000). The study on the transfer of Chinese-originated words in Korean language. *Chinese Language Learning*, 1, 46-50.
- Römer, U. (2011). Corpus research applications in second language teaching. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 31, 205-225.
- Sohn, H.-M. (2001). *The Korean language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Starinina, O. V. (2020). Self-identification Features of Russian-speaking Primary Schoolchildren in the Cultural Aspect of Educational Activity as a Way to Optimize Learning a Foreign Language. Proceedings of the VI International Forum on Teacher Education, Kazan, Russian,
- Takkaç Tulgar, A. (2019). Exploring the bi-directional effects of language learning experience and learners' identity (re) construction in glocal higher education context. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 40(9), 743-758.
- Tong, P., Yin, Z., & Tsung, L. (2022). Student engagement and authentic language use on WeChat for learning Chinese as a foreign language. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1-32.

- Xing, P. (2018). Education of Korean Values and Culture through Film-With a focus on intercultural competence. *JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR KOREAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE*, 15(2), 189-227.