

# Korean Language Education and Korean Studies in Central Europe : Focusing on Korean Studies Program for the Degree Students in the Czech Republic

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## I. Introduction

The educational curriculum of European universities has been following the Bologna Process, which was established in 1999 to increase the international competitiveness of universities. The curriculum of European universities divide the degree program into a three-year bachelor's degree, a two-year master's degree, and a three-year doctoral program, giving independence to each degree program level. In addition, the University credit Transfer System enables the free of classes between countries and operates based on the standardized education system for the European region established by the European University Association. The Bologna Process is to focus on practicality with the occupation market, rather than academic and methodological studies.<sup>1</sup>

The position of Korean studies in the universities of Central and Eastern Europe affiliate to the academic division of Asian Studies. For instance, in the case of Czech universities, the department is operated

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<sup>1</sup> Kawk, B. M., & Zaynulin, J. G. (2016). A comparative study on the Korean studies curriculum in European university and Russian Federation university, *Journal of Korean Language Education Research*, 51(3), 71-72.

as a major in Korean studies at the center for Korean studies in the Department of East Asian Studies, and as a Korean Section in the Department of Asian Studies. There are bachelor's degree and master's degree programs. In the case of Polish universities, the Department of Korean Philology operates as a Department of Korean Philology is affiliated to the Department of Oriental studies. Hungarian universities also operate the Department of Korean Studies at the Institute of East Asian Studies. The University in Slovakia has a Korean Section that is affiliated to the Department of East Asian Studies.

This study analyzed the current state of Korean studies education in Czech based on data obtained directly from Czech universities where Korean language courses and Korean Studies degree programs were established. For the current status of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic, It can be divided into the following three-level universities of Korean studies educational situations.<sup>2</sup>

First, the first-level of the university is an early stage of Korean studies with only Korean language courses and no full-time teachers.

Second, the second-level of the university is in the stage of development of Korean studies, with a full-time faculty members who operate a bachelor's degree and master's degree program and teach Korean social, economic, and Korean cultural focus on the Korean language.

Third, the third-level of the university of Korean studies, with master's degree and doctoral degree programs, and several full-time faculty members operating curricula in various fields such as Korean history, politics, and religion.

The Metropolitan University in Prague and the University of Ostrava in Ostrava are the early stages of Korean studies and only offer Korean language courses for beginners. Palacky University in Olomouc is a developing university of Korean studies that operate

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2 Kwak, S. M. (2012). Analysis of international Korean studies and research on development factors. *Korean Studies*, 35, 218.

practical Korean language of bachelor's degree and master's degree programs in individual academic divisions. And Charles University in Prague, the oldest history in Korean studies in the Czech Republic, is in the process of reorganizing Korean studies into regional studies. This study is meaningful in that it analyzes the current issues of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic, presents new data, and suggests ways to develop the Czech Republic of Korean studies education. And the current status of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic discussed in this study can be common to many universities in Eastern Europe as well as in Central Europe. It is therefore that this paper will be a useful resource for establishing the Korean Studies degree program in Europe.

## II. History of Korean Studies Education in the Czech Republic

The Korean studies education began at the Charles University in the Czech Republic, the first Korean language course opened in 1950 at the faculty of oriental language and history at Charles University for exchange and cooperation with North Korea. The curriculum was included for the students of the Department of Korean Studies, it has made learning materials such as basic Korean language, introduction to Korean language, conversational Korean language, and introduction to the economy of Korea.<sup>3</sup>

In 1993, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic) and the investment of Korean companies led

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3 Horák, T. (2018). The system of Korean language program in Czech Charles University and Korean teaching method. *Effective Korean Teaching Method and Speaking Assessment Method, The International Association for Korean Language Education & The Korea Foundation, Overseas Korean Educator Workshop 2018*, the University of Comenius in Slovakia, 53-54.

the Korean language course about North Korea to become a Korean studies course that teaches about South Korea. The history of Korean studies in the Czech Republic has been more than 60 years, but from 1950 to 2014, only one of the 62 universities in the Czech Republic was the only Korean studies program for degree students. The driving force behind the long history of Korean studies at the University of Charles is firstly led by Prof. Vladimir Pucek, who was responsible for teaching Korean language and Korean studies at the University of Charles from 1972 to 2004. It is because they have been cultivating continuously regarding Korean Studies. And also, financial project support from the Korean government, such as the Academic of Korean Studies, Korea Literature Translation Institute, and the Korea Foundation, has been steadily continuing.

Compared with the University of Charles, the history of Korean studies education at Palacky University is short history. The Czech Republic is divided into Bohemia region, Moravia region and Silesia region. In 2007, many Korean companies entered the Czech market with the completion of Hyundai Motor's factory in the Moravia region. This led to the opening of the first Bachelor degree program of Business Korean among European universities in September 2015. And in September 2019, the master's degree program of Korean Language was established.

In 2017, Korean language courses were offered at the University of Ostrava in Ostrava and Metropolitan University in Prague. Korean language courses were offered at the University of Ostrava by the Department of Latin Literature and at the University of Metropolitan by the Department of Asian and International Relations.

### III. Korean Studies Program for Degree Students in the Czech Republic

According to the Korea Foundation's 2018 White Paper on Overseas Korean Studies, there is the Korean Studies program in 464 in-

stitutions in 87 countries, all over the world (Korea Foundation, 2018, p. 8). In this study, the current status of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic was analyzed focusing on Korean studies courses for the degree students at each university, the teachers in charge of Korean studies, and the courses for Korean studies.

### 1. The current of Korean studies education at Charles University (the third-level of Korean studies)

The current status of Korean studies education at Charles University, which has the longest history of Korean studies in the Czech Republic, is the Korean Studies education program being in charge of one native Korean teacher and seven local teachers. There are currently 54 undergraduate students, 14 master's programs and 5 doctoral students. In the 1950s, the bachelor's degree program for Korean studies was forcibly assigned to students. Since the 1980s, new students were selected every five years. And since the 2000s, new students were selected every other year (Horak, 2018, p. 54). The following tables show the course of the Korean Studies program and the current status of teachers in charge of the Korean Studies program for the degree students.

**Table 1.** Korean Studies degree program of Charles University

Official Name	Degree Programs	Program Objective
Univerzita Karlova v Praze	Korean Studies of Bachelor degree program  Korean Studies of Master degree program  The Ph.D. degree program of Korean Studies is not an independent operating system of Korean studies, it is integrated and operated in the 'Asian-African Language degree program'	Educating students of human resources of Korean studies  Professionals through Korean language  Literature, and history education

**Table 2.** Korean Studies degree program students and teachers

Number of Students	Teachers	Position	Degree and Teaching responsible subject
Bachelor's degree program: 54 <sup>4</sup>	Miriam Löwensteinová	Head of the program	Ph.D./ Korean literature
	Tomáš Horák	Professor	Ph.D./ Korean language
	Marek Zemánek	Professor	Ph.D./ Korean religious
Master's degree program: 14	Vladislava Mazaná	Full-time Instructor	M.A./ Korean language
	Jung, Yeon woo	Full-time Instructor	M.A./ Korean language
Ph.D.'s degree program: 5	Jolana Blažíčková	Instructor	M.A./ Korean language
	Karolina Šamáňková	Instructor	M.A./ Korean language
	Markéta Popa	Instructor	M.A./ Korean history

In the department of East Asian Studies of Charles University operate Chinese studies as the name of ‘Sinology’, Japanese studies as the name of ‘Japanese Studies’ and Korean studies as the name of ‘Koreanistika’.<sup>5</sup> The curriculum of Korean Studies in various subjects, including Korean language, literature, history, and culture, is currently being reorganized into regional Asian studies. In the undergraduate program, lecture presentations, reports, and thesis writing are conducted in the Czech language and are operated as a curriculum that emphasizes reading skills rather than Korean communication skills. The compulsory subjects of the master’s degree program are in-depth Korean language knowledge as the academic field of Korean studies.

4 In 2018, 82 students applied for Korean Studies BA-program, and 16 of whom were entered.

5 It means basically Korean studies but with a focus on language.

Emphasis is placed on building the necessary background knowledge for understanding Korean language and Korean culture, including Korean history and pre-modern Korean thought. The required subjects for Bachelor's and Master's Korean Studies degree programs are as follows.

**Table 3.** Korean Studies compulsory subjects of degree program

<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	Introduction to Korean Studies, Introduction to Korean Studies Seminar, Introduction to Korean (phonology, literary), Korean Grammar 1, Korean Grammar 2, Korean Literature 1, Korean Literature 2, Korean History 1, Korean History 2, Practical Korean 1, Practical Korean 2, Practical Korean 3, Hanja and Hanmun, Hanja and Hanmun Reading, Today's Korea, Reading Korean Literature, Reading Korean Text, Press and Professional Korean Reading, Audiovisual Practice (listening), Bachelor's Thesis Seminar, Korean Vocabulary, Oriental Philosophy
<b>Master's degree</b>	Korean Writing Style, Korean History, Professional Reading Korean Text, Classical Korean Understanding, Korean theory Grammar, Korean Translation, Translation Practice, Translation Seminar, Advanced Korean Speaking, Korean Historical Interpretation, Korean Literature Creation, Thesis Seminar, Introduction to Literature, Religion, Philosophy Language Studies

## 2. The current of Korean studies education at Palacky University (the second-level of Korean studies)

Since 2007, more than 30 Korean companies have entered the Czech Moravia region.<sup>6</sup> Korean-speaking local Czech employees were required to serve as intermediary managers between Korean managers and Czech employees at Korean companies. In this necessary situation, for the first time, the Bachelor's degree program of Business Korean was established at Palacky University in Europe in September 2015. There are five major sections in the department of Asian Studies such as the Korean Section, the Chinese Section, the Japanese Section, the Indonesian Section, and the Vietnamese Section. The major of Business Korean in the Korean Section is a practi-

6 Machková, H., & Collin, P. M. (2015). Market entry strategies of passengers carmakers: the case study of the Czech Republic. *Central European business review*, 4(3), 24.

cal Korean language course designed for educating talented professionals who can speak Korean and have knowledge of economics. Currently, in the curriculum of Business Korean, 68% of practical Korean studies subjects and 32% of economics subjects are operated. In 2019, the Master's degree program of the Korean language and culture was established.

The current status of Korean studies education at Palacky University is the Korean Studies education program being in charge of two native Korean teachers (one native teacher is a student of a Ph.D. course), an Austrian teacher, and four local teachers. There are currently 84 undergraduate students, 8 master's degree program students. And Czech professors of the Department of Applied Economics, Jaroslava Kubatova, Pavla Slavickova, Richard Pospisil, and Martin Drastich are in charge of economics classes for a Business Korean degree program. Up to now, there are no professional teachers who have the degree of Korean economy to teach the field of the Korean economy. The current status of Korean studies education at the University of Palacky is as follows.

**Table 4.** Korean Studies degree program of Palacky University

Official Name	Degree Programs	Program Objective
Univerzita Palackého v Olomouc	Business Korean of Bachelor degree program  Korean Language of Master degree program	To acquire knowledge about Korean language and economy, and to education experts in the Korean government and Korean companies and Korean-related companies for developing the relationship and exchanges with the Czech Republic and the Republic of Korea.

**Table 5.** Korean Studies degree program students and teachers

Number of Students	Teachers	position	Degree and teaching responsible subject
<b>Bachelor's degree program: 84</b>  <b>Master's degree program: 8</b>	David Uher	Head of the Korean Section	Ph.D./ Hanja and reading
	Kawk, Bumo	Professor	Ph.D./ Business Korean, Korean language, and Korean Linguistics
	Blanka ferklová	Professor	Ph.D./ Korean translation
	Andreas Schirmer	Professor	Ph.D./ Hanja and culture
	Martin Šturdík	Instructor	M.A./ Geography and economy of Korea
	Petra Sváková	Instructor	M.A./ Korean language
	Youngran Baštanová Kwak	Instructor	M.A./ Business Korean

The Korean section of the bachelor's degree program of Business Korean at the University of Palacky operates 68% of the total 180 credits of business Korean and general Korean linguistics. There is an internship course among the compulsory electives that is distinguished from other Korean studies degree programs in Europe. Internships will be recognized as 14 credits if the students work 160 hours as an internship program in a Korean company or a related Korean company and receive an internship certificate. In addition, the students who get the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK) Level 3's certificate can receive 3 credits. The students who have the major of Business Korean must pass the required courses in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Accounting, Business Administration, International Economics and European Union Economics and Economic Regulations, as well as required courses in Korean and linguistics, to get a

Bachelor degree of Business Korean Studies. In the third year of the students must pass the state test and write a thesis. From September 2019, a master's degree in the Korean language has been opened, and essential courses such as advanced Korean language, Korean literature, Asian history and culture, and acquisition of a second language are offered (Teaching the Korean language). In 2019, 188 students applied for the Business Korean Studies degree program and 25 students were entered in 2019. The following are the compulsory courses for the Bachelor's degree program of Business Korean and the Master's degree program of the Korean language.

**Table 6.** Korean Studies compulsory subjects of degree program

<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	<u>Compulsory courses in relation to Business Korean</u> Korean Conversation 1, Korean Listening 1, Korean Writing 1, Korean Reading 1, Korean Conversation 2, Korean Listening 2, Korean Writing 2, Korean Reading 2, Business Korean Conversation 1, Business Korean Conversation 2, Business Korean Conversation 3, Business Korean Reading 1, Business Korean Reading 2, Business Korean Reading 3, Translation 1, Translation 2, Korean culture, Korean economy, Geography and Economy of Korea, Thesis Seminar 1, Thesis Seminar 2
	<u>Compulsory courses in relation to economics</u> Introduction to Law 1, Introduction to Law 2, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Management 1, Management 2, Marketing 1, Marketing 2, Business economy, Accounting 1, Accounting 2, Finance1, Finance 2, International Economy 1, International Economy 2, Human Resource Management 1, Human Resource Management 2, Civil Law 1, Civil law 2, Project management
<b>Master's degree</b>	Korean 5, Korean 6, General Linguistics, Asian History, Korean Literature, Applied Linguistics, Communication Strategy, Asian Culture, Acquire Second Language (teaching the Korean language), Thesis Seminar 1, Thesis Seminar 2, Introduction to Religion and Philosophy Theory

### 3. The current of Korean language education in Ostrava University and Metropolitan University (the first-level of Korean studies)

Comparing with Korean Studies degree programs at Charles University and Palacky University, the Korean language courses at the

University of Ostrava and Metropolitan University are at the beginning of Korean studies.

In Ostrava University, since 2017, there are only Korean language courses, and no degree programs of Korean Studies have been established. The current status of Korean language courses at Ostrava University is as follows.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 7.** Korean language courses of Ostrava University

Official Name	Courses and enrolled students	Course Objective
Ostravská Univerzita	Korean Language1: 12 students  Korean Language2 : 9 students  Korean Language3: 3 students	Learning objectives for the Korean, 1, 2, and 3 courses are the A1 level according to the all common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR for L): learning, teaching, assessment of the CEFR for L. Beginner (A1, A2), Intermediate (B1, B2), and Advanced (C1, C2).

A local Czech teacher, Marcela Šimonidesová, who teaches Korean language courses as an elective C credit course (4 credits per semester), teaches Korean 1 and Korean 3, and Ondřej Kodytek teaches Korean 2. Both teachers have a bachelor's degree in Japanese studies. According to the head of the Department of Latin language and literature, who is in charge of the Korean language program, the number of students who want to enroll is decreasing and the Korean language course is likely to be closed.

Metropolitan University offers an introductory course of Korean language for the Asian language course as an elective in the Asian Studies and International Relations' curriculum. According to the deputy head of the Department of Asian Studies, who is in charge of the program, the course will not be opened until there is a certain num-

<sup>7</sup> This data was helped by Professor Anna Pumprova who is head of the Department of Latin Language and Literature at the University of Ostrava.

ber of enrolled students.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 8.** Korean language course of Metropolitan University

Official Name	Courses	Course Objective
Metropolitní Univerzita Praha	Introduction of Korean Language for beginner	To acquire basic knowledge about the Korean language for understanding International Relations

#### IV. Future Prospects of Korean Studies in the Czech Republic

The Korean government's financial project support is important for the development of Korean studies at European universities, but it is important to cultivate local teachers who can teach Korean studies in order to make an environment where they can operate the Korean Studies program without the Korean government's support. And, in order to prepare a Korean studies curriculum that appropriates the local education system, it is necessary to understand the actual situation and status of Korean studies education in each country and to build a curriculum considering the local situation. This study analyzes the present of Korean studies education at Czech universities and suggests the following directions for the development of Korean studies for the future.

The first, a deeper understanding of the internal situation of Korean studies in the Czech Republic, which can help in the development of Korean studies and the direction of future development, is needed. For instance, in Poland, the Polish Korean Educator Association was established in 2018 to hold regular meetings on how to develop Korean studies in Poland. Even in the Czech Republic, which has a long

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<sup>8</sup> The data was helped by Professor Michal Kolmas who is the deputy head of the Department of Asian Studies, Metropolitan University.

history of Korean studies education, it is necessary to hold regular meetings in order to find ways to develop Korean studies centered on Korean studies education experts and researchers.

The second, although the Korean government's project support of Korean studies should help oversea Korean studies, care must be taken not to flow in the direction of universities' dependence. To this end, it is necessary to continuously monitor Korean Studies programs that create synergy between local Czech universities and Korean universities. For example, the Erasmus + (Plus) program, a European scholarship program, is a European scholarship program that allows non-European countries to apply to European universities selected for the Erasmus + program. The Erasmus + program is designed to foster the teaching and research capacity of universities in Europe by supporting exchanges not only for exchange students but also professors and experts. Faculty visiting through this program can be provided during the semester by providing research capabilities that provide research capability by collaborating with the faculty at the University or through the mobility for teaching and mobility for training. It is necessary to design projects of Korean studies in the form of joint research and joint education through utilization. Overseas Korean studies support for European universities will be most important in helping Korean studies universities take root in their own region.

The third, it is necessary to raise the standard of Korean studies overseas. In particular, some of the leading researchers or co-researchers in Korean studies-related projects supported by the National supporting may be professors who major in Japanese or Chinese studies who do not speak Korean at all. Korean language teachers and researchers should also be required to have the Korean language ability equivalent to Japanese and Chinese levels required by scholars studying Japanese or Chinese studies in Europe. This will help us to study Korean studies at least as a comparative study of Asian studies.

The fourth, in order to cultivate Korean studies local experts and professors, the National project supporting should be supported ac-

cording to the situation of development and dissemination of Korean studies. The local teachers and researchers should be the main in oversea Korean studies. The universities that operate the degree program of Korean Studies will be developed continuously with support and cooperation through that.

## V. Conclusion

This study analyzed the current status of Korean studies education at Czech universities, examined Korean Studies education degree programs at each university and suggested ways to develop Korean studies. In particular, the current of Korean Studies degree programs was divided into students, teachers, courses, and other situations, focusing on Korean language courses and Korean Studies education for the degree students at the University of Charles, the University of Palacky, the University of Ostrava, and the Metropolitan University of Czech Republic were analyzed. And also, It was examined how Korean Studies is organized in the Asian Studies department and operated in universities, and where Korean Studies are affiliated. The main Korean studies in the Czech Republic are local professors, scholars, and students from the Czech Republic who continue their studies in relation to Korean studies. Korean studies in the Czech Republic is the way to cultivate the human resources that connect the Czech Republic and the Republic of Korea, and it takes more time and effort than in the past.

Finally, this study is expected to be a useful resource for universities that want to solidify their Korean studies courses in Europe and open a new Korean Studies degree program.

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## ABSTRACT

# Korean Language Education and Korean Studies in Central Europe

: Focusing on the Korean Studies Program for  
the Degree Students in the Czech Republic

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The objective of this study is to review how universities in the Czech Republic operate the Korean language courses and Korean studies education program for degree students concretely. There are two detailed points in the study. One is the process of establishment and current status of the Korean Studies degree program at the Asian or East Asian Studies department in universities in the Czech Republic. Another is the curriculum of the Korean language courses and Korean studies degree program.

The Metropolitan University in Prague and the University of Ostrava in Ostrava are the early stages of Korean studies and only offer Korean language courses for beginners. Palacky University in Olomouc is a developing university of Korean studies that operate practical Korean language of bachelor's degree and master's degree programs in individual academic divisions. And Charles University in Prague, the oldest history in Korean studies in the Czech Republic, is in the process of reorganizing Korean studies into regional studies. This study is meaningful in that it analyzes the current issues of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic, presents new data, and suggests ways to develop the Czech Republic of Korean studies education. And the current status of Korean studies education in the Czech Republic discussed in this study can be common to many universities in Eastern Europe as well as in Central Europe. It is therefore that this paper will be a useful resource for establishing the Korean studies degree program in Europe.

**KEYWORDS** Korean Language, Korean Studies, Degree Program, Asian Studies, Regional Studies, Central Europe