

## EDUCATIONAL METHODS FOR ONOMATOPOEIA AND MIMETIC WORDS FOR RUSSIAN-SPEAKING KOREAN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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**Abstract:** *Korean is a language in which onomatopoeia and mimetic words are highly developed, making them useful for vivid, rhythmical linguistic activities and emotional expression. However, for Russian-speaking learners, whose linguistic family and culture are entirely different, understanding and using their meanings is very difficult. This study examines the characteristics and learning difficulties of onomatopoeia and mimetic words, defines the significance of contrastive analysis, and explores effective educational methods based on an analysis of existing textbooks and various pedagogical studies.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Korean is a language where onomatopoeia and mimetic words are exceptionally developed, and they play a useful role in expressing emotions or feelings richly and vividly as a means of concrete and sensory expression. These sound-symbolic words (ideophones) are widely used not only in daily conversation but also throughout overall language life.

However, while native Korean speakers can intuitively understand and freely use onomatopoeia and mimetic words without separate education, it is a very difficult task for foreign learners to understand and use them. Russian-speaking learners, in particular, face great difficulty in grasping the implicit meanings embedded in Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words because their linguistic systems and cultures are entirely different. This is because Korean has a tendency to express sounds as they are heard or appearances as they are seen in a sensory manner, whereas in Russian, the mental images of sounds or shapes are combined and used in a more abstracted or conceptualized form.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the difficulties experienced by Russian-speaking Korean language learners and to present systematic and effective educational methods for onomatopoeia and mimetic words that consider their learning objectives and proficiency levels.

### II. Characteristics of Russian-speaking Learners and the Necessity of Education

#### 1. Characteristics and Learning Difficulty of Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words

In Korean, onomatopoeia are words that imitate sounds, while mimetic words imitate motions, states, or feelings other than sound. From a formal perspective, onomatopoeia and mimetic words exhibit a distinct phenomenon of vowel harmony, and they are characterized by

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<sup>11</sup> Kim Oksana, *A Study on the Educational Methods of Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words for Russian-speaking Learners*. Kyung Hee University Graduate School, Department of Korean Language and Literature, - Seoul, 2011, P. 1-3.

a change in meaning when vowels and consonants are alternated. Additionally, they are often used in repetitive forms to express continuity or repetition, or to make the intensity of a sound feel stronger.<sup>12</sup>

The main factors that make it difficult for foreign learners to learn Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words are as follows: First, onomatopoeia and mimetic words are vocabulary created through the socio-cultural experiences of Korea, with almost all of them being native Korean words. Russian-speaking learners experience difficulty due to a lack of this cultural background knowledge. Second, the Russian language does not have a separate concept or term corresponding to Korean mimetic words (words that imitate shapes or movements). Thus, while learning Korean onomatopoeia is already difficult, learning mimetic words feels even more so.<sup>13</sup> Third, whereas onomatopoeia express sound with sound, mimetic words convert non-auditory senses into sound.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, for mimetic words, the relationship between the object of reference and the linguistic form is entirely arbitrary. In contrast, onomatopoeia, at least in their imitation of sound, have a greater necessity in the association between the object of reference and the linguistic form compared to general words. However, for Russian-speaking learners, the interference phenomenon of their native language's phonological system occurs; for example, the sound of a dog barking is heard as "ГАВ-ГАВ" (GAV-GAV), not '멍멍' (meong-meong).<sup>15</sup> Fourth, in existing Korean language education, onomatopoeia and mimetic words have been treated neglectfully under the reasoning that they are supplementary components of a sentence, and the lack of systematic educational lists and application practices places a heavy burden on learners.

## 2. The Significance of Contrastive Analysis of Russian Onomatopoeia

To prepare educational methods for Russian-speaking learners, a contrastive analysis of Korean and Russian onomatopoeia is essential. Research on Russian onomatopoeia, approached through the concept of 'sustainable linguistic culture', can provide a new perspective for research in Korea.<sup>16</sup>

The quantity of Russian onomatopoeia is smaller than that of Korean onomatopoeia, and Korean expressions are much more diversely developed, especially regarding the sounds of animals and objects. From a word-formation perspective, Russian onomatopoeia have high productivity and can be derived into verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc. This could be a research

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<sup>12</sup> Chae Wan, *Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words*. Seoul National University Press. – Seoul, 2003, - pp. 127-130.

<sup>13</sup> Dzhushupbekova, *A Contrastive Study of Onomatopoeia in Korean and Russian*. Sangmyung University Graduate School, Master's Thesis in Korean Language – Seoul, 2016, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Chae Wan, *Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words*. Seoul National University Press. – Seoul, 2003, - pp. 126-127.

<sup>15</sup> Kim Oksana, *A Study on the Educational Methods of Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words for Russian-speaking Learners*. Kyung Hee University Graduate School, Department of Korean Language and Literature, - Seoul, 2011, pp. 1-3.

<sup>16</sup> Kim Tae-Jin, "A Proposal for the Study of Russian Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words as a Sustainable Linguistic Culture," 2023, vol. 14, no. 3, Issue 58, pp. 3419-3421.

topic similar to the characteristic of Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words forming new words by combining with suffixes (-*hada*( *하다*), -*georida*( *거리다*), -*daeda*( *대다*), -*ida*( *오다*)).

### III. Educational Methods for Russian-speaking Korean Language Learners

The education of onomatopoeia and mimetic words for Russian-speaking learners should go beyond simply presenting the meaning of vocabulary; it should proceed in a direction that stimulates learners' interest and emphasizes practical aspects linked to Korean culture.

#### 1. Composing Educational Content by Proficiency Level

It is necessary to resolve the issue of insufficient education at the beginner level, as pointed out in previous research, and to provide systematic education according to the level of difficulty.

##### Beginner<sup>17</sup>

Recognize the concept and Korean-specific characteristics of onomatopoeia and mimetic words. Learn basic, highly accessible vocabulary frequently encountered in daily life (e.g., *멍멍*(*meong-meong-woof-woof*), *뽕뽕*(*ppang-ppang -honk-honk*), *야옹*(*ya-ong - meow*), *휙*(*hwik - whoosh*)).

Education through pictures/photos, children's songs (e.g., "The Tadpole and the Frog"), and hand gestures (finger play). Guide conceptual understanding through comparisons with expressions in their native language (Russian).

##### Intermediate:

Learn vocabulary on social topics that expand from daily life. Understand the close collocational relationship with predicates. Recognize distinctions in meaning and differences in nuance.

Present words in forms combined with predicates within a context. Utilize cartoons or short sentence materials.

##### Advanced:

Understand and use vocabulary in professional and academic fields. Learn extended meanings and idiomatic expressions. Improve fluency through the ability to analyze and correct error types.

Utilize movies, poetry recitations, writing, and advertisements or newspaper articles (for understanding as culture-based vocabulary).

#### 2. Specific Teaching-Learning Methodologies

**1) Education Utilizing Comparison and Contrast** When teaching Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words to Russian-speaking learners, contrastive analysis data between the two languages should be utilized. For example, it is reasonable to first present items that can be

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<sup>17</sup> Kim Oksana, *A Study on the Educational Methods of Korean Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words for Russian-speaking Learners*. Kyung Hee University Graduate School, Department of Korean Language and Literature, - Seoul, 2011, p. 48.

easily connected due to phonological similarities between the native and target languages, such as animal sounds. Conversely, for unique Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words that are difficult to imitate in Russian (e.g., the sounds of *사물놀이-Samulnori*), it is necessary to investigate such cases of untranslatability arising from cultural differences and apply them in education.

## 2) Phonological, Morphological, and Etymological Approaches

According to Kim Jung-seop (2001), the education of onomatopoeia and mimetic words can be approached from three aspects: phonological, morphological, and etymological.<sup>18</sup>

① **Phonological Approach:** Onomatopoeia and mimetic words are very useful for making learners recognize the differences in nuance that arise from Korean vowel harmony and consonant alternation (plain/tense/aspirated sounds).

② **Morphological Approach:** The forms of combination with suffixes ('하다-*hada*', '대다-*daeda*', '거리다-*georida*', '이다-*ida*') and various reduplicated forms (repetitive forms) must be systematically taught. This helps expand the learners' vocabulary.

③ **Etymological Approach:** Since the stems of many onomatopoeia and mimetic words originate from concrete nouns, teaching them together with their etymological source nouns is efficient for understanding the Korean way of thinking.

**3) Utilization of Practical Materials** Onomatopoeia and mimetic words must be learned within a context, and activities using authentic materials are important to move beyond simple memorization.

① **Utilizing K-POP:** For general-purpose learners interested in the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*), the meaning and usage of onomatopoeia and mimetic words included in K-POP song lyrics (e.g., 'Gee' by Girls' Generation), such as *두근두근-dugeun-dugeun* (pit-a-pat), *깜짝깜짝-kkamjjak-kkamjjak* (startling), and *반짝반짝-banjjak-banjjak* (twinkle-twinkle), can be naturally learned.<sup>19</sup>

② **Utilizing Korean Novels:** For academic-purpose learners, utilizing Korean short stories (e.g., '소나기-Sonagi' [The Rain Shower] by Hwang Sun-won) helps them grasp the meaning of onomatopoeia and mimetic words in context and gain a deep understanding of Korean culture and sentiment.<sup>20</sup>

## IV. Conclusion and Suggestions

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<sup>18</sup> Kim, Jung-seop, *A Study on the Educational Methods of Onomatopoeia and Mimetic Words for Korean Language Learners*. The Study of Korean Culture, - Seoul, 2001, pp. 188-190.

<sup>19</sup> Lee, Sook-jin & Min, Ji-young. *A Study on the Selection and Educational Methods of Onomatopoeia and Mimetic words for KCI Korean Language Education*. The Society of Learner-Centered Curriculum and Instruction, Seoul, pp. 809-812.

<sup>20</sup> Lee Sook-jin & Min Ji-young. *A Study on the Selection and Educational Methods of Onomatopoeia and Mimetic words for Korean Language Education*. The Society of Learner-Centered Curriculum and Instruction, Seoul, pp. 812-815.

This study confirmed that the education of Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words is essential for expanding the vocabulary and enhancing the communication skills of Russian-speaking learners, and it sought to find customized educational methods for them. Considering the conceptual and morphological differences between Korean and Russian onomatopoeia (e.g., the absence of a concept for mimetic words in Russian, the rich phonological alternation and repetitive forms in Korean), there is an urgent need to establish a systematic educational plan based on contrastive analysis that goes beyond simply presenting vocabulary lists.

The proposed proficiency-level educational plan and the methods for utilizing practical materials (K-POP, novels, audiovisual materials, etc.) are expected to contribute to Russian-speaking learners learning Korean onomatopoeia and mimetic words more effectively and with greater interest.

In the future, work must continue to establish Russian onomatopoeia and mimetic words under the concept of a "sustainable linguistic culture" and attempt to formalize them through in-depth experiments. The results of such research should be continuously fed back into the expansion of follow-up studies and educational practices.

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