

Chaewon Baek
Seoul National University

Reading the Hangeul letters exchanged between royal family members during the Joseon Dynasty

Abstract

How did people communicate with each other in an era where the Internet and mobile phones were not as developed as they are now? Letters were the only way people who lived far apart could stay in touch. Some types of letters are still well-preserved to this day, even though hundreds of years have passed. These letters can help us understand how people lived in the past, what their language was like, and more. In particular, letters are likely to reflect spoken language, so they can be used to observe the natural language spoken at the time.

Accordingly, we would like to observe aspects of their lives and the language used at the time by reading Hangeul letters from the Joseon Dynasty. During the Joseon Dynasty, Hangeul letters in Korean were exchanged not only among the royal family but also among commoners. Among them, we pay attention to letters exchanged in the royal family. These letters are somewhat easier to read than those written by commoners. Therefore, they can be used as a good learning resource for those who are new to Hangeul letters. In addition, Hangeul letters sent and received by royalty are also of great cultural and historical value as they allow us to understand their daily lives.

The lecture includes the following contents: introduction to Hangeul letters, introduction to royal Hangeul letters, introduction to royal characters, reading royal Hangeul letters, and writing a Hangeul letter yourself (Lectures will be in Korean.). Through this course, you will learn about the language and life of the Joseon Dynasty, which will enhance your understanding of Korea and the Korean language.