Heritage Language Education in South Korea: Challenges and Demands

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HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION
IN SOUTH KOREA:
CHALLENGES AND DEMANDS

by

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ABSTRACT

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South Korea has long been considered one of the most homogeneous counties not only ethnically but also linguistically. However, over the past few years, it is rapidly becoming ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse for the influx of foreigners and immigrants.

The purpose of this thesis to study how Korean society deals with the recent change to multicultural population of immigrants, especially in terms of heritage language education. This thesis will begin by providing background information of South Korea, and reviewing a great deal of resistance toward heritage language learning. Then, I will examine some benefits of the heritage language learning not only for the multicultural individuals but also Korean society. Lastly, I will discuss intercultural education and its practice in schools.

Keywords: heritage language, intercultural education, multiculturalism and multilingualism
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INTRODUCTION

It is well known that a diverse array of languages is used in the United States. According to the data collected in 2014, the American Community Survey Reports (2014) indicates 62.9 million people aged 5 to 19 years spoke a language other than English at home and there were 380 possible languages reported (Gambino, et al., 2014).

As an international student from South Korea, when I started living in the New York City, the fact that these diverse languages were heard on every corner of my neighborhood was quite impressive and interesting to me. Korea is counted as one of the most homogeneous countries culturally, ethnically and linguistically so diverse languages were hardly used in daily life. English and more recently, Chinese has started to become recognized in language education, but it is mostly for people wishing to be equipped foreign language ability in order to become competent in job searching or academic achievement.

However, bi/multilingual people I have met in the United States do not necessary learn the language for those purposes. In many cases, they were naturally bi/multilinguals because their parents or neighborhood shared the language other than English. Also, the fact that there are some opportunities to have bilingual programs in schools help the children to develop and maintain their mother/minority/heritage language. Then, as I realized that Korea is also accepting more immigrants and foreigners with diverse languages, I questioned if I would be able to hear diverse languages in Korean society.

In this study, I would like to begin with background information of South Korea in terms of population and sociocultural characteristics. Then, I will look at the current issues and concerns about immigrants and their children. Especially, by looking at the language education I will extend
this discussion of benefits of heritage language learning and intercultural education in Korean society.
CHAPTER 1

Recent changes in population structure of South Korea (henceforth Korea) has influenced diverse aspects of communities and schools. Korea, as one of the most homogeneous countries linguistically, culturally and ethnically, has been sharing similar cultural practices and values and using the same language, Hangul (Korean). However, such homogeneity has changed rapidly within the last few decades. It is noted that the number of immigrants or foreign born people who are living in Korea are increasing for economical and sociopolitical reasons.

Population

The Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (MOGAHA) reported in a statistical research, that registered foreigners living in Korea are 1,741,919 in 2014 as of 3.4 % of the total population and this number is indicated about 4.5 times increased of 386,972 in 1997 (Eum, 2015). Additionally, according to the report released by the Korea Research Institute of Human Settlement researchers anticipate that this number will increase up to 4.09 million by 2050 that would be accounted for 9.2 percent of the total population (A. Kim, 2009).

There must be a lot of diverse cases, but this increasing immigrant population in Korea could be categorized by two distinctive occasions by large; one is migration workers from China, Philippines and Malaysia and the other one is referred as ‘migrant brides or immigrant brides’ through international marriage (Moon, 2015). By large, the latter is often caused by the shortage of young female population in rural areas (Moon, 2015). In this chapter, I will be providing background and consequences of this phenomenon.
International Marriage

Not only nationwide low fertility rates are a worry for Korean society but also the unbalanced gender ratio especially in rural area has come under scrutinizing. There are several reasons contributing to the unbalanced gender ratio, but here we may note a few points.

Korea has long been living with traditional preference for sons over daughters. This may influence on unbalanced men and women ratio partially but not significantly. However, the main reason for this seriously unbalanced gender ratio concentrated in rural areas stem from internal migration as a result of fast urbanization that started around 1945 (Yuan, 2014). Shortly after the end of Korean war in 1953, the country was suffering from the great economic depression. War orphans lost their homes and many people suffered from hunger and poverty. To end such tragedy, the country focused on the economic development.

The policymakers permitted international corporations to bring foreign currencies, allowing them to borrow funds at preferential rates. Furthermore, the government had set up a policy, known as import-substitution industrialization to prohibit manufacturing imports and protect domestic firms with productivity (Cha, 2008). This opened up many job opportunities and people began to move into the cities more and more, resulting shift of population from the rural areas. As shown in Yuan’s report, the urban population in Korea had rose from 14.5 percent to 65.4 percent of the total population during last 40 years between 1945 and 1985. Today, 82.5 percent of the total population of Korea lived in urban areas, reflecting rapid urbanization and change of population distribution in Korea (Yuan, 2014).

As a result of this change, population of rural area the proportion of elderly population in rural areas constantly outnumbered compared to the urban area for the last few decades (I. Kim, 1999). Additionally, considering that in many cases people living in the rural areas are doing hard
labor work for living and they live in traditional family lifestyle which following traditional gender roles and responsibilities, it may be understandable that women are less likely to stay in rural areas but more likely to live in urban areas to have more diverse options of educations and jobs. Hence, this decreased number of young women in the rural areas hindered the rural bachelors from finding their partners, resulting low fertility rate in these areas. To prevent this issue, various institutions, organizations and even television networking started to establish different platforms and matchmaking programs (H. Lee, 2008).

One of these programs was led by a federal organization (H. Lee, 2008), matching female Korean-Chinese residing in China with rural bachelor. These Korean-Chinese communities still spoke in Korean and has not the same but similar cultural background, making the match relatively easy and allowing the Korean-Chinese wife to adapt the traditional Korean society faster. After that, the program extended to other countries like Vietnam and Philippines, where people still shared similar ethnic background and skin color. Since then, the number of international marriages in Korea have increased exponentially. Iglauer (2015) observed that registered international marriages mostly started in 1990, implying that the idea of international marriage was definitely not something new. However, more than 95 percent of the numbers were counted during the recent six years from 2006 to 2012.

The statistical data reported that in 2008, international marriages with foreign-born women accounted to approximately 128,000 and this seems to be rapidly increasing even today (as cited in Olneck, 2011, p. 677). For example, in 2000, the proportion of international marriages was only 4 percent of entire newlywed couples, but it became 12 percent in 2006. Even more remarkably, 41 percent of the newlyweds residing in the rural areas was international marriage (as cited in
Olneck, 2011, p. 677), and Moon anticipates that this number would reach around one million by 2020 (Moon, 2015).

Consequently, the number of their children has reached over 200,000 in 2016. This number is eight times greater relative to what was observed 20 years ago (Iglauer, 2015). Even with increased number of international couples in Korea, the country still lacks any appropriate programs for the children of these families. Hence, it is important to look at how these linguistically, ethnically and culturally diverse immigrants and their children are treated and supported within Korean society that is not yet ready to preserve these children’s distinctive identity and background.

**Current Policy**

Language education policies have a close connection with immigration policies (Gay, 2010 p. 89). Ideologies and propaganda about immigration and diversity would influence the attitude toward diverse decisions for educational environment. In this sense, it is needed to look at immigration policies.

From 2000’s, immigration policies in Korea started trying to support globalism, *Segewha* (세계화, in Korean) and multiculturalism, *Damunhwa-jui* (다문화주의, in Korean). Kim, A. (2010) investigates how this process has been presented through Korean newspapers, mass media and academic publication. According to his article, the very first two articles mentioning *Damunhwa-jui* were published in 1986 and then, the frequency of referring the concept of multiculturalism and globalism suddenly raised from 2006 (A. Kim, 2010).

In 2006, Korean government came to emphasize and adopt globalism, *Segewha* and multiculturalism, *Damunhwa-jui* in describing government's policies (as cited in Seol, 2010, p. 597), thinking such acceptance was necessary in achieving international success and the future
prosperity. However, these were still confined to Korean ethnic nationality. In other words, rather than embracing diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity, their approach to globalism and multiculturalism was described as being superficial and external (Kim, 2010).

For instance, during Youngsam presidency, the government officially stressed Segewha in the goals of national policies, but their policies in relation to immigration has failed to accept the difference and instead promoted and emphasized heavily on the nation’s identity and values only (Shin, 2006). Thus, the country developed immigration policies based on strong Korean nationalism, disregarding the true meaning of globalism.

Shin’s book, *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea* (2006) discusses sociological and historical views on ethnic nationalism in Korea. He argues that Korea takes globalism without changing essential nature of nation and this ethnic nationalism and strong national identity fails to make a significant move to approach to globalism and multiculturalism (Shin, 2006). That may be one of the reasons why even after more than 20 years of efforts to implement globalism and multiculturalism into the society, the idea of immigration and bi/multiculturalism in Korea are still distant from what multiculturalism really stands for.

Investigators engaged in this debate on multiculturalism and its societal impacts define that in multicultural society, differences should be respected and encouraged to maintain so that diversity would be celebrated in the society (as cited in Seol, 2010, p. 603). However, Korea’s attitude of the current immigration policies is still encouraging the diverse population to be assimilated to ‘Korean’ rather than respecting their differences and encourage to maintain their unique culture and language (A. Kim, 2010; Seol & Seo, 2014).

It is definitely a timely discussion to reform and improve education policies with appropriate pedagogy and curriculum for the immigrants and this diverse population. Linguistic
diversity should be an important part of the support system; especially, the lack of minority/mother/heritage language education programs should be discussed and these programs should be incorporated to the current educational environment. As Skutnabb-Kangas (2002, p. 20) addresses that mother tongue medium education, also called as heritage language in this paper, is “the most important linguistic human right” as well as other basic human rights. Though relatively small population in Korea would be directly benefited with heritage language program, heritage language learning in school should be provided to the potential bi/multilingual individuals as a possible option to choose. Educational policies should not only represent and support majority population but also minority population. In the next chapter, I will further elaborate on the importance of heritage language and also on the country’s resistant behavior.
CHAPTER 2

As population structure changed, characteristics of Korean society has shifted. Ethnic and linguistic homogeneity that once represented Korea is not a valid description of the current Korean society. However, the country has not yet developed strong platforms for the immigrants to earn proper respect within the society. The strong Korean national identity that once helped them to unite Koreans together has conflicted with the new generations of multiculturalism and multilingualism in Korea. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the country is on the right track to find a solution to this problem, and the key to this is benefiting from the heritage language learning.

Heritage Language

A heritage language can be described in a few ways: in the discussion of heritage language in the Unites States, Fishman (2001, p. 89) referred to it as “languages other than English” by citing Michael Clyne’s definition or “related to family of the learner.” For immigrants in Korea it is defined as ‘language other than Korean’ or ‘immigrant mothers’ language’ mostly Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese. On the other hand, Cho (2000, p. 369) associated it with “one's cultural background.” In the case of immigrants’ offspring, they have a high potential to become a bi/multilingual because they will be naturally exposed to their mother’s language from early childhood.

The United States, Canada, and many European countries have a long history of immigration, multiculturalism, and multilingualism. However, this phenomenon of immigration is extended to many other countries which were once considered as ethnically or linguistically or culturally homogeneous countries (Seong, 2005). According to the UN’s report, *International*
Organization for Migration (2006), it says that “the number of people who live and work outside their countries of birth has doubled over the last thirty-five years with 191 million in 2005” (as cited in A. Kim, 2009, p.70). Thus, as a diverse population has come to coexist in the boundary of the same country, the more people are exposed to various languages; so research on bi/multilingualism and its education are increasing constantly.

However, unfortunately it is reported that after all, there are a lot of challenges and barriers for the children in Korea to become a fluent bi/multilingual speaker who speak and understand both their mother language/heritage language (henceforth heritage language) and host language, Korean (Chen & Kim, 2016). Maintaining and developing their heritage language, was often found with less positive enthusiasm and less demands by society and community (Chen & Kim, 2016; Seong, 2005).

Resistance of Heritage Language Learning

In Korea, there has been some efforts to provide Korean language learning programs for immigrants. Korea, because of the situation between North and South Policies for protecting and supporting residents escaping from North Korea has been made in 1997. Since then, the Support for Multicultural Families Act for foreign spouses, has been placed in 2008 in order to help them for smooth adaptation to Korean society (Seol & Seo, 2014). Since 2013, after Child Welfare Law was revised, Korean language learning programs have been not only provided to immigrants but also it is extended to the immigrants’ offspring. This was because numerous studies found that many immigrants’ offspring are experiencing low linguistic competency comparing to ones raised in monolingual families (as cited in Chen & Kim, 2016, p. 44). Immigrant mothers’ low fluency in Korean impacts on lowering the children’s Korean language development (as cited in Chen &
Kim, 2016, p. 44). From this viewpoint, school professionals and policy makers are providing Korean language learning programs to not only immigrant mothers but also their children through diverse institutions. Thus, it seems some efforts made to provide a supportive environment for immigrants and their children to develop their linguistic ability in Korean language. However, missing is a discussion about the importance of heritage language education (Chen & Kim, 2016).

The idea of helping them to become fluent in Korean language is definitely beneficial for immigrants and their children to succeed in their school achievement, however, lack of support for learning and maintaining heritage language may imply how the government policies introduce linguistic plurality (bi/multilingualism) into Korean society. Rather than embracing bi/multilingualism, it forces immigrants to assimilate to Korean mainstream language and culture but ignores or even prevents them from maintaining and developing immigrants’ heritage language and cultures. It somehow indicates that Korean society is not completely ready to embrace diverse languages or cultures but still see diversity and pluralism as “otherness.”

The concept of ‘otherness’ in the contexts of sociology and humanity implies concerns about how to understand societal characteristics and identities and how to view differences and similarities (Mengstie, 2011). It distinguishes minority from majority and brings a discussion about inclusion and exclusion. It could be explained in diverse aspects such as age, ethnicity, sex, physical ability, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, and other demographic factors (Mengstie, 2011). By emphasizing assimilation to Korean culture and language, minority population could be separated from mainstream population and further isolated or possibly discriminated.

In Korean society, it is observed that speaking in Korean helps immigrants to be welcomed and more belonged to the society. Often linguistic fluency in Korean works importantly for
immigrant to be fully accepted as ‘a Korean’ rather than their legal citizenships. In other words, when it comes to immigrants who are assimilated to ‘a Korean’ linguistically, this would make easier them to be accepted and welcomed in society and communities. However, this alone may not explain that lack of societal supports toward developing and maintaining minority or heritage languages.

There are some aspects to be reviewed; the reason why implementing heritage language learning programs is not an easy task to achieve the consensus of people in Korea. Here, I will discuss about this great deal of resistance toward learning heritage language in Korea. I will review this resistance in four aspects; historically, politically, economically and socioculturally.

**History**

In order to understand this resistance toward learning heritage language in Korea, we first need to review the basic history sociocultural characteristics of Korea. Korea has a small population, as approximately counted 50millions in 2017 comparing to the United States or India or China as counted approximately 325millions, 1,334millions and 1,382millions. That may contribute them to having one united language and shared culture in general. But more importantly sharing one culture and language maybe constructed by their experiences throughout the history.

Korea had been invaded by many other countries numerous times in the past. However, whenever the invasions occurred they kept them from others and fought back for their territories. As a result, they were able to preserve their territory and at the same time strengthen themselves by being united as a Korean.

Especially, considering that language is an important mean for expressing people’s identity and culture (Baez, 2002), emphasized that Korean language was considered critical for protecting
Korean identity and strengthening national unity. For instance, during the period of Japanese Occupation, Japan enforced that children be taught in Japanese language and the children had been even punished when they spoke in Korean. Furthermore, Koreans were forced to change their names into Japanese language. Thus, Japan, by restrictions imposed on use of Korean language, it tried eradicate Korean culture and identity, thus, maintaining power and easy control on the Koreans.

From this historical experience, Koreans may learn that protecting Korean language is critical to identify themselves as a Korean and a language other than Korean may be taken as threatening national unity and identity. Thus, the notion of being Korean, “Koreanness” was constructed tightly through historical experience and has been transferred and influenced on Korea's nationalism (Shin, 2006). Furthermore, this strong Korea’s national unity on some level make it difficult to embrace other languages and cultures in people's daily lives of Korean society. This attitude may become a foundation of the strong resistance of heritage language learning and discourage the children to become bi/multilinguals.

**Economics**

It has long been that English is taken as a required class in elementary school in Korea. Since English is one of the most universal languages worldwide, fluency in English is considered as a critical component of becoming a competitive employee in a job market. As a concept of lingua franca referred, English used in diverse people who have different first languages. English as lingua franca is defined in diverse ways; Jenkins defines as ‘an international language,’ Mair indicates ‘and Crystal address as ‘a global language’ (as cited in Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339).
Such definitions share the fact that English is used as an important means of communication across linguistic boundaries. Comparing that, immigrants’ heritage languages such as Vietnamese, Filipino and languages of the other underdeveloped countries are often ignored and discouraged to maintain and develop. People may not recognize these languages are useful in terms of societal or formal contexts. This lack of recognition is the one element of discouraging developing heritage language.

Some may claim that heritage language programs in public schools such as Chinese language classes are open in school. Chinese immigrant mothers are also minority population in Korea, so that Chinese language learning classes should be credited for encouraging to learn heritage languages. However, we need to acknowledge that there are differences between heritage language learning and foreign language learning.

Heritage language learning has emerged as separated area from foreign language learning in terms of linguistically and socio-psychologically (Comanaru & Noels, 2009) and their pedagogical strategies and approaches toward development is different as well (Chamot, 2004; Valdes, 2005).

In fact, Chinese language learning in Korea increased after the start of economic reforms in China. Since China opened the door to foreign business market and changed their economies, China has been recorded one of the rapidly developing countries. In this sense, it became a critical element to have linguistic ability in Chinese and this is the same sense that English is used as a world language so that became critical to learn. In this respect, Chinese language classes in school should not be necessarily understood in the same contexts of implementing heritage language programs in school. Thus, this lack of economic values of heritage language discourage bi/multicultural children to learn their heritage languages.
Previously, it is discussed that Korean nationalism was based on strong homogenous identity linguistically and ethically (Shin, 2006). Korea has long been proud of this ethnic homogeneity, which often referred as ‘one pure blooded’ (Kim, 2010, p. 13). People have been believed that this distinctive characteristic made Korean more powerful and united. In fact, this view worked in some ways.

This made people work together so that overcome the severe poverty after the Korean War within a short period of time (Cha, 2008) so that the sense of togetherness and unitedness became a strong identity for Koreans. In Shin’s book (2006), he cited Alford’s argument that globalization for Koreans viewed as dangerous because it threatens to destroy the ground of Korean social relation and fundamentally Korean ethnic identity of “one bloodedness.” He addressed that people think that diversity would bring chaos into the united society and destroy the system of the country (Shin, 2006).

In other words, accepting and embracing different language use, furthermore its diverse cultures are taken as a threat and challenge for the Korean society. Considering that, immigrants who do not have same ethnic identity, do not use the same language would confront isolation and separation from mainstream culture and language. So that, pressure of assimilation into the mainstream language and culture would become a huge struggle when they start their new life in Korea.

Moreover, images associated with minority languages have negative impact on encouraging to learn heritage language. Many heritage languages of minority population and immigrants in Korea are languages of underdeveloped or low economic countries. This may leave less positive views on speaking heritage languages. For instance, in 1990s Spanish speakers as an
immigrant heritage language user in the United States has been associated with many negative images. This was because the Spanish speaking parents often had low literacy skills and lived in low socioeconomic status, so that Spanish generally considered as ‘the dialectically splintered and socially stigmatized language of “low-class illiterates” (Fishman, 2001, p. 92). While Fishman (2001) investigates the history of heritage language learning in the United States, he claims that this negative image severely undervalued Spanish language as a language resources.

Also, he added that children who speak in Spanish felt shameful and disgraceful when they speak in Spanish. (Fishman, 2001). Thus, when a language is associated some negative images with people who speak the language is more likely to form a negative language identity, and on the other hand, when a heritage language is positively accepted in society, they are more likely to integrate their language identity positively.

Also, Kim who is an official at Yangpyeong Multicultural Family Support Center addresses his concern that the negative images associated with multicultural orientation in Korea connected to negative attitude and intolerance so that this became a societal issue these days (Kang, 2013). This article addresses that even after the immigrants lived for a while so that they speak in Korean and live following Korean cultural practices, sometimes they still confront with negative images in relation to ethnic and linguistic identities.

Furthermore, Recently, several crimes committed by foreign workers were reported and this make people feel resentful toward people with other ethnicities. Thus, negative images of foreigners and immigrants grow the resistance toward immigrants and multicultural population.

On the other hands, lack of positive public figures with non-ethnic background impact on images of minority and immigrant. Also, this allows people to see how unequally minorities and immigrants are positioned in Korean society. Of course, people agree that there have been
progresses. For example, there was a first non-ethnic Korean politician, Jasmin Lee was elected as a proportional representative in Korea’s National Assembly in 2012.

In Korean society, this became a milestone in Korean politics and her legislative activities still are the center of attention. Also, variety entertainments and documentaries, media try to portray foreigners and immigrants with different racial and ethnic backgrounds as positively. However, this seems not enough to ease the tension and resentment toward immigrants and people with other ethnic background living in Korea.

This on some level helped to change the negative perception about people with immigrants and minority population in Korea. However, this often criticized their biased view. Hwang criticized that media only show their expectation on foreigners and immigrants to become fully assimilated into Korean culture and language (as cited in W. Lee, 2013). She also added that media fails to show how this cultural diversity could bring great benefits into Korean society to become culturally and linguistically richer. W. Lee (2013) emphasizes that media needs to work on how to present a balanced view and attitude toward ‘multiculturalism in the wake of nationalism’ and this will help and flourish the future of Korea.

Recently, it is reported that Koreans are getting to ease the negative perception toward foreigner and immigrants, however interestingly the negative perception toward multicultural family has not been decreased as much (Kim et al., 2014). This ambivalence attitude contributes to difficulties of emphasizing the importance of heritage language learning. This also explains the reason why it is still hard to convince Korean society to implement heritage language classes in schools and to encourage our children to become bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural being.

The heritage language related agenda have not been discussed only in Korea but also many other countries. By looking at the case of the U.S., 19s century Spanish speakers had been silenced
and oppressed by English speakers at the governmental level. Of that, proposition 227 passed in 1998 stood for anti-bilingualism and as a result, delayed bilingual education in schools. Valdes (2006) claim that this bill pushed Latino students to learn the standard language, English and English speaking skill was taken as a pride by devaluing their heritage language, Spanish (Valdes, 2006). In the past and present, the discussion of multilingualism and multiculturalism is one of the most controversial societal issues in many countries.

For instance, one comparative study investigating educational policies indicate that France is one of the countries where had followed the assimilation model of acculturation in language education (Allemann-Ghionda, 2008). And currently their assimilation approach to immigration are raising a great deal of conflicts and tensions between diverse ethnic or racial groups. In so doing, they are recently shifting their approach and hope for solve the negative consequences. In this respect, Korea’ assimilation approach to language education resist heritage language learning.

Furthermore, such resistance can also be found among the policymakers, and lack of such power and voice to advocate heritage languages programs in public schools is another issue to be reviewed. The limited budget hinders schools to schedule such programs. People may want to spend money on English language learning or other extracurricular activities that applied to larger population. Considering the fact that Vietnamese or Filipino classes would be wanted by a small population, many people may question if it is appropriate to spend money on heritage language program. However, this issue need to be taken as realizing fairness and social justice which can be understood in the context of linguistic human right (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002).

Currently, language education in Korea are seen in lack of flexibility and openness toward diversity, so that heritage language development has not been promoted to the immigrants’ offspring. I, so far, analyzed the issues that make difficult to encourage children to develop and
maintain heritage language. There are historical, economic and sociocultural perspectives to understand the resiliencies. However, recent bi/multilingualism researchers largely agree on great advantages and positive influences of being a bi/multilingual on the both individual and society level: bi/multilingual individuals are associated with higher cognitive ability than monolinguals (Cummins, 1976; Hakuta, 1986), have in-depth understanding of diverse cultures and human life (Robertson, 1992), and are more likely to be exposed to broad options for career pathway in the future (Cho, 2000). Furthermore, those bi/multilingual individuals may even help to ease tensions and conflicts that people live with different cultures and value systems (as cited in Gay, 2010). In this respect, teaching immigrants’ offspring their mother/heritage language such as Chinese, Filipinos and Vietnamese in addition to Korean language seem beneficial not only for potentially bi/multicultural individuals, but also for the society and the community broadly.

Also, in an article investigating different types of bilinguals and bilingualism, Moradi (2014) claims that though there are many influential factors on children’s language development, simultaneous bilinguals who are exposed to two languages from birth can have a better chance to be a balanced bilingual who use and understand both languages with some degree of proficiency. Hence, we must understand in depth the role of heritage language learning in a multicultural society, and how it could benefit Korea.

Benefits of Heritage Language Learning

Function of language should not be limited to a skill for communication, but considered in life experiences that influence on child development. In this respect, the studies of children's language development discussed carefully by understanding this process. Especially, in terms of
heritage language, this intertwines with diverse concerns and issues of child development and its societal impacts.

Wiley (2001) agrees with its complexity and reviews the diverse ways of its definition. He insists that since the definition of heritage language could decide “the politics of identity” of the learners, investigators should be discreet and careful to discuss it (Wiley, 2001, p. 30). For instance, when definition of heritage language is only associated with an individual and private matter, this idea could leave out its necessity of formal education.

For example, we often observe that some immigrants’ offspring are only capable of speaking their heritage language with limited knowledge and understanding but not writing. Since heritage languages have been learned and maintained through informal situation such daily conversation with their parents or relatives without formal education, chances they become literate fluently are low. So that, it becomes difficult to achieve a full functionality in formal situation such as a business meeting or academic research.

In this sense, taking heritage language as an individual matter may devalue the purpose of developing and maintaining heritage languages (Montrul, 2008). Thus, heritage language learning should be carefully examined by understanding related issues. However, many investigators in the field of heritage language mostly agree that maintaining and developing heritage language is beneficial for children (Cho, 2000). I will review literature about the benefits of maintaining and developing heritage language in both individual and societal aspects: in terms of familial and ethnic group relationship; ethnic identity; academic performance and cognitive development; social equality and fairness; diverse cultures and values; and expanded career options.
Familial and Ethnic Group Relationship

In terms of parenting, communication is a crucial factor to develop and improve parent-child relationship. A genuine conversation allows them to share their feelings and concerns so that it builds a strong connection between them. This could become a foundation of forming positive relationship. In this respect, ability to communicate freely in a same language between parents and children would be beneficial for their positive relationship.

Portes and Hao (2002) analyze data on Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study which is of immigrant students in the metropolitan areas of Miami/Ft. Lauderdale in Florida and San Diego in the United States. This article investigates how children of immigrants adapt English [host language] and their family conflict, solidarity and personality become affected by this process. They conclude that there is a close relation between fluent bilinguals and foreign monolinguals [heritage language monolinguals] and English [host language] monolinguals (Portes & Hao, 2002).

Portes and Hao (2002) observe that fluent bilinguals and foreign monolinguals [heritage language monolinguals] are considerably less likely to encounter conflicts with their parents and this may result in having more family solidarity. Ability to communicate fluently in the same language with their parents whether they use a host or heritage language helps the children to build a strongly positive relationship with their parents. Considering that immigrant parents who have less competence in English [host language], children’s ability to speak in heritage language will help them to have a better communication with their parents. As a result, this will help parents and children to form positive relationship (Arriagada, 2005; Luo & Wiseman, 2000; Portes & Hao, 2002).
Especially, when it comes to South Korea, a society where child rearing is largely the responsibility of their mothers, communication between a mother and her children is important. So that, if the immigrant mothers are able to converse with their children in their heritage language, this will greatly help the mothers to deal with their parenting role easier. Moreover, during this process the children could be able to learn about mother’s culture. The shared knowledge and experiences in heritage culture help the children to connect their parents and to build their relationship stronger.

Furthermore, this experience could be extended to a group of people who speak the same heritage language and share the cultural values and practices. According to Cho’s study (2000) which examines one’s heritage language and their relationship with the ethnic group, she addresses that there is also a positive relation of developing heritage language on the relationship with the ethnic group.

Through an interview with the second generation of Korean immigrant, she analyzes that the interviewee’s competency in Korean language enable her to equip knowledge of her heritage cultural values, ethics and manners and this allows her to feel strong connection to their ethnic group (Cho, 2000). She points out the fact that another interviewee with limited heritage language competency often tried to avoid contacts with Koreans. As a result of his limitation on heritage language, he felt left alone when he was with other Korean language speaking people (Cho, 2000). Thus, heritage language competency will give a positive influence on not only children and parents relationship but also relationship with the ethnic group who speak the same language.
**Ethnic Identity**

As I discussed the above, heritage language learning allows children to engage with their parents and the group of people. Also, through this process, they could more profoundly understand its cultural values and practices (Cho, 2000). Thus, language learning situates people’s lives in diverse environments so that gives them a chance to restructure how they see themselves and others. This process could be further extended by understanding of *Language Socialization*.

The concept of *Language socialization* states language learning as an interactive process, helps the learners to achieve social functioning and to be accepted in a social setting (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Through this experience, their thoughts and characteristics would be constantly evolving and emerging in different ways.

According to an essay that contains a few interviews of immigrants who learn English in school in the United States, Ortmeier-Hooper (2008) addresses that during the language learning process students negotiate their cultural and ethnic identity. Their ethnic and cultural identity will be shaped by not only internal process by themselves, but also it occurs through social interaction in the classroom. Thus, language learning and identity are interconnected and interactive together.

Bankston and Zhou’s research (1995) supports this view. According to their study about heritage language use of Vietnamese American adolescents, it is found that Vietnamese American adolescents who show fluency in their heritage language are likely to state a higher level of ethnic identity (Bankston & Zhou, 1995).

Oh and Fuligni (2010) also agree that heritage language proficiency is the stronger predictor of ethnic identity. The research claims that the positive impacts and strong connection between heritage language learning and ethnic identity. On the other hand, they observe that heritage language loss is negatively associated with immigrant background children and
adolescents’ development (Oh & Fuligni, 2010). Thus, heritage language is important for ethnic identity formation.

However, some might wonder if cultural or ethnic identity should be mattered in this multicultural and globalized society. People might argue that for people living in 21st century, strong ethnic or racial or national identity would not hold much meaningful discussions anymore, rather these collective identities create stereotypical characteristics and biases on a certain group of people to be categorized as a minority and could become disadvantages for them. In this respect, it could be asked what it means of having ethnic identity.

Ethnic identity or any identities is a sense of oneself (Salomone, 2010). How people see themselves would not be separated from how see others, it could be other people, or community or nation or other societal institutions around oneself. And this recognition of oneself and others are all associated with culture, race, language and ethnicity. A strong sense of oneself allows them to recognize where they belong and how they function in these settings. In this sense, establishing and maintaining a sense of themselves, such having strong ethnic identity will help them to function in society.

**Academic Performance and Cognitive Development**

When it comes to heritage language learning, it could not be separated from bilingual study (Valdes, 2005). Since heritage language learners are situated in the environment where their heritage languages are not used as a dominant language in mainstream contexts, developing heritage language lead the children become bilinguals. Besides minority languages are stigmatized with negative images of low-literacy and low education level for their low socioeconomic living condition as immigrants, studies about bilingualism in the United States before 1960s’ were
generally associated with negative effects on children’s’ cognitive development and academic performance (Cummins, 1976).

In this response, it seems reasonable to prioritize immigrants to learn a host language but discourage to maintain or develop heritage languages. In fact, some immigrants in the United States had sacrificed their heritage languages for the sake of achieving a host language, English. However, later on Peal and Lambert (1962), in their study which investigated effect of bilingualism on intellectual functioning, found bilingual children considerably perform better on both nonverbal and verbal intelligence test than monolingual children. Thus, bilingualism became associated with positive cognitive development and school performance.

In a longitudinal study, Thomas and Collier (1997) found that students who took a bilingual program perform better in school than students who did not take bilingual program. This result shows that developing bilingual competence in the long run, will help immigrant children to succeed in school.

In more recent studies, there are more advantages found. For example, Greenberg et al. (2013), analyze bilinguals’ behaviors comparing to monolinguals in an experiment for complex spatial reasoning. They explain that since bilinguals activate both languages simultaneously they perform better on utilizing and controlling target tasks by more easily ignoring external interference, as a result, they become better at executive functioning (Greenberg et al., 2013).

Some researchers warn that these studies should be careful not to miss out many other influential elements on its analysis. For instance, Wright and Choi (2006) analyze that some studies resulted in negativities of heritage language learning need to include careful consideration about measurement. Children’s academic performance and cognitive development measured in only English proficiency may not draw a reliable conclusion (Wright & Choi, 2006). They criticize that
how to measure performance may lead the outcome in a certain way. Also studies should be carefully designed by considering other important elements such as socioeconomic class, parent’s education and so on. This is because it will lead the research outcomes in a certain way.

To illustrate, it is known that children’s academic achievement in school is positively related with socioeconomic status of child’s parents. Since parents in high socioeconomic status are more likely provide enough resources to their children to succeed in academics. If a study did not account this aspect and only see children’s linguistic capability of bilingual or monolingual, the outcome could not explain cause of relativity. This is because the study could not figure it out, an achievement gap between bilinguals who are from rich family and poor family.

When it comes to heritage language learners of offspring of migrant mother from other countries in Korea, they are often found living in low socioeconomic status (H. Lee, 2008). So that, their low academic achievement might be blamed for their bilingual capability hastily if there is careful consideration about other influential element on the research.

Practicing Diversity in Society

Besides those advantages for individuals, there are merits of learning heritage language for society and community broadly. In terms of sociocultural approaches to learning and development, it is needed to review Vygotskian researchers.

Unlike traditional approach to language learning overly emphasized on individualized and internalized mental processes (Firth & Wagner 1997), Vygotskian researchers view language learning as a process of creating meanings between a subject and the external world (Ahmed, 1994). According to Lantolf and Pavlenko’s (1995) discussion about sociocultural approaches to second language learning, Vygotskian researchers importantly focused on language learning and
development as “the transformation of innate capacities once they intertwine with socioculturally constructed mediational means” and then language is considered as one of the important means of “a socioculturally critical symbolic system” (p. 109).

In this sense, learning heritage languages is meaningful because diverse languages will be used in society by sharing its diverse cultures and knowledge at the same time. This may help Korean society to advocate diversity and ease the tension to accepting differences of immigrants.

Korea still conceive a negative perception toward ‘the otherness’ and pluralism. A recent survey reported by the Hyundai Research Institute, over 40 percent of surveyees do not consider immigrants or migrant workers as their neighbors (as cited in Kang, 2014). The report notes that this number is greatly higher than many other countries as 21 percent of Germans, 10 percent of Australians and just over 3 percent of Swedes reported the same (as cited in Kang, 2014).

This indicates how Korean society is still behind for transforming to multicultural and multilingual society. Considering that, learning heritage language could become meaningful by having a chance to grow the tolerance toward other languages and further its users and educating the children to become global citizens who can flexibly look across cultures and worlds beyond cultural borders.

Social Equality and Fairness

As I discuss about the presentation in policies for immigrants and multicultural population in Korea, minority and non-dominated population easily become invisible and ignored in societal concerns and issues. In this sense, finding their voices in society will be important to achieve social equality. If diverse language practice in daily life increase social acceptance and tolerance about diverse language and its cultures, this will help people to change their view on diversity as
normality. And further it could be extended to have a sense of fairness. And this would bring a
discussion of social justice, human rights and anti-discrimination on the table in our daily life.

According to an article about the current issues of multiculturalism in Korea, Kang reports
about an increasing bullying issue in school. In this report, Kang (2013) addresses that many school
professionals and educators express their worries about rapidly increasing school bullying between
classmates. These cases are often targeted children with different ethnic and cultural background.

This increases teachers’ and school professional’s concerns about how seriously it could
damage the victimized children psychologically and how the biases and discriminations based on
the ethnicity, language and culture could be learned in the early age in Korea. In this sense, if
children in their school age have a chance to learn how to respect and value of diversity it will
greatly help this bullying problem in school. Further, this will help to increase a sense of fairness
and equality in Korean society in the long run.

In sum, I discuss that there is a strong resistance of maintaining and developing heritage
language in Korea considering that historical background of Korean ethnicity and nationalism,
economic value of heritage language and sociocultural situation of Korean society. However, I
was able to discover such valuable benefits of heritage language learning not only individual but
also society level. In this respect, it can be concluded that heritage language learning should be
encouraged and promoted to multicultural children and also there should be more efforts made by
Korean society.
CHAPTER 3

Through the previous two chapters, it is discussed that difficulties of encouraging maintaining and developing heritage language learning and on the other hand, reviewed diverse advantages of heritage language learning. In so doing, it is concluded that heritage language education should be promoted and encouraged to multicultural population in Korea. In this chapter, I will suggest how language education should be taken by not only schools but also society and community. First, I will talk about the concept of *Culturally Responsive/ Sensitive/ Informed Pedagogy* or it could be also referred as *Intercultural Education* here. And then, I will discuss how we can implement this pedagogical principle on a teacher training program. Next, I would like to address the importance of supportive and positive attitude toward heritage language learning and further bi/multilingualism and bi/multiculturalism in society. Lastly, I will look into its practical concerns and issues briefly.

**Directions and Suggestions**

Koreans are not still familiar with living in an environment of diverse languages and cultures around. Educational environment seems not yet successfully supporting multiculturalism and multilingualism in their classrooms as well (Kim & Kim, 2012). However, during the last few years, increasing multiculturalism and multilingualism in Korea have pushed to make some progresses in language education.

For instance, since 2010, Korea Institute of Child Care and Education (KICCE) have been carried on bilingual education programs intended to support Chinese and Vietnamese language speakers of immigrants’ offspring. This could be considered as a great step on heritage language education, but simply having a heritage language class without proper principles and strategies
will be feasible to solve social conflicts and tensions during the period of transition to multilingual and multicultural society. A clear direction should be suggested and a detailed discussion should be made on pedagogical practices and strategies.

**Pedagogical Practices: Intercultural Education**

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, language education could not be separated from discussion about culture. According to UNESCO document (2009, p. 13), language is defined as “one of the most universal and diverse forms of expression of human culture, and perhaps even the most essential one.” In other word, culture is practiced through language and expressed in diverse ways. Based on where an individual or a group of people is affiliated in and socialized with, people could be observed in a certain expected way of linguistic expression and behavior. Thus, this is broadly agreed.

Agar (1994) addresses that language and culture cannot be studied separately but are interwoven together. He even introduces a term, *linguaculture* combining culture and language to stress the close relation between two. Also, Heath (1983) discusses children’s language learning and use in his comparative observational study. He concludes that language learning after all is about cultural learning (Heath, 1983). Therefore, language education program should be based on strong understanding of diverse cultures.

*Intercultural Education* insists that language education should be discussed in diverse cultural contexts which include race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic class and so on. For example, one study examines how linguistic expressions and behaviors differ among people with different ethnicity in English language learning program (Kubota, 1999). He notes that Japanese students are less expressive and reticent for the way of their shared cultural expression so that they
often seen as the opposite of Western cultural characteristics (Kubota, 1999). While it is reasonable to say this ethnographic research should be taken with caution because such perceptions could inhibit or limit students’ unique identity, still it is important to aware of linguistic expressions and behaviors could be varied by culture.

Gay (2010) is consistent with this view. Especially, she claims that in terms of students of color, diverse linguistic expressions and behaviors are often considered as great obstacles to be presented in schools. In a study of communication and race, Leonard and Locke (1993) note that African Americans are perceived as loud, ostentatious, aggressive, active, boastful, talkative, friendly, noisy. In fact, this may be seen as negatively in schools by teachers.

Thus, considering that diverse cultures are practiced through diverse languages and linguistic expression and behaviors, such a concept of ‘a standard or normal way’ and “one-size-to-all” methodology will not be suitable to build pedagogical principles and strategies for multicultural and multilingual students (Gay, 2010). In so doing, it is needed to find an appropriate pedagogy and its practical method to embrace multicultural and multilingual population.

Recent days, many researchers emphasize an importance of Culturally Responsive or Informed or Sensitive Pedagogy (Gay, 2010; Lopez & Bursztyn, 2013; Sleeter, 2012) or this is referred as Intercultural Education (Cummins, 2016; Gorski, 2008).

This idea is explained in a similar description but their focuses are different depending on researchers’ field of studies. Cummins (2016) defines Intercultural Education as a mean of creating educational environment that recognizes, respects and appreciates diversity. And further he introduced that two important points by using a report, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in 2005 Intercultural education 1) understands and embraces “the normality of diversity” in human life in broad contexts and encourages the students to learn and develop the
diversity naturally in their life experiences, and 2) this expects to achieve equality and human right and fight against discriminations and unfairness in our society (2016, p. 455).

In other words, the goal of *Intercultural education* is of pursuing a sensitive and responsive attitude toward diversity between groups or individuals living within diverse linguistic, ethnic, cultural and religious origins (Cummins, 2016) so that it will be ultimately able to ease the conflicts and tensions between them.

The concept of *Intercultural Education* should be implemented in practice with a few ways. At first, school curriculums should help students to learn not only informative knowledge about diverse cultures but also the way of how to connect their knowledge to human life. In other words, education should be engaged and connected to multicultural society. Children should be encouraged diverse community activities and discussion of societal issues and concerns which are relevant to oneself. In this regard, Canagarajah (2002) introduce an idea of *Local Knowledge*: while he describes *Local Knowledge* in diverse contexts such as anthropological, social, academic, and professional sense, he defined it as the knowledge about sociocultural and political understanding of one’s surroundings. He also notes that this will allow children to know themselves as well as society. Furthermore, through achieving this knowledge, students living in this multicultural society become equipped culturally relevant communicative competence to function in diverse relationships and interactions (Canagarajah, 2002). In so doing, it is expected that students would learn how to perceive naturally the normality of diversity so that this positive learning experiences will be transferred toward realizing social justice and unfair discrimination in society and community.

Schools in Korea started to acknowledge *Intercultural Education* recently. As it is reviewed in the previous chapters, increasing number of immigrants and their offspring cannot be
ignored and these days its issues and concerns are becoming prominent in educational environment. In so doing, it is needed to have appropriate and supportive system to solve its issues. However, in school this multicultural and multilingual population is mainly supported through the strategy of teaching culturally relevant and informative contents including conversations and discussions about food, weather, holidays, clothes and so on (W. Lee, 2013).

This is referred in different ways but some researchers called this approaches, ‘a Tourist Approach’ to Intercultural Education in multicultural environment (Ukpokodu, 2002). While Ukpokodu (2002) explains that this approach mainly focuses on educating diverse lifestyles. Especially, this is informative and culturally relevant because they examine similarities and differences between cultures (Ukpokodu, 2002). However, this approach is only limited and narrow so that it would be hard to reach out to a genuine understanding of diversity and embracing it into society. Knowing that informative knowledge may be a part of the intercultural education, but a further direction needs to be taught; how to meaningfully integrate and negotiate diversity and how to engage and connect diverse values and meanings to societies and communities. This will be what ultimately multicultural society aims for the future so that Intercultural Education should hold these principles.

The Tourist Approach is criticized by many other researchers. Sleeter (1996) criticized that ‘a Tourist Approach’ (in his study he referred it as ‘Tourist Curricula’) is only a superficial and ineffective approach to Intercultural Education. This is because this attitude only answers for curiosity without deeper understanding of meanings and values of the differences. Also, Banks (1994) claims this approach would not encourage students to have critical voices which reflect their knowledge on issues of social justices and human rights. In fact, Intercultural Education
should be meaningful not only for individuals but also a society broadly so that they become ones who can make positive social changes later on.

**Teacher Training**

Providing an appropriate teacher training program is urgent for *Intercultural Education*. As it is mentioned above, Korea have been exposed in multilingual and multicultural environment relatively for a short period time compared to the other European and Western countries. Therefore, it is acknowledged that there are not enough teachers and school professionals who have full knowledge and experience in multicultural and multilingual environment. In this reason, it is needed to have appropriate teacher training programs for prospective teachers to learn its knowledge.

Rodriguez (2012) address that enabling teachers to learn more about students’ home lives would help them to enrich their experiences within school and beyond school. He investigates academic achievement of minority youth from low-income family and finds that teachers effort to engage to their students is related to the students’ success in school. Moreover, Pappamihiel (2004) investigates that teacher should establish a comfortable and positive relationship with minority students because this helps the English language learning students to reduce anxiety in the mainstream classroom. By knowing culturally diverse cultures of students, teachers will be able to have close relationship and this will consequently help them to experience positive learning and outcomes. This is because it will encourage learners to participate and engage in learning activity more positively because the positive relationship is more likely motivate and inspire them to improve academic performance. When children are in environment that they feel welcomed and understood by not only their peers but also teachers may feel more safe and encouraged.
Thus, several researches indicate that children will be largely influenced by teachers and school professionals’ attitudes towards diversity in school environment (Ambe, 2006; Benson, 2004; Lee & Oxelson, 2006; Morgan, 2004; Nieto, 2009; Pai et al., 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). If teachers recognize and respect cultural differences, this will direct the students how to form their attitude towards diversity. In this sense, teachers should teach not only their academic knowledges but also create an environment where diversity should be appreciated. Pai et al. (2006) studies Asian American students in United Students.

They address that teachers’ attitude largely impact on how the students view their heritage languages and further ethnicity and linguistic identity. This research outcome is consistent with many other researchers. Villegas and Lucas (2002) claim that preparing culturally responsive teachers are important because they decide children’s attitude toward differences and diversity.

They insist three detailed disciplines for teachers’ training: sociocultural consciousness, affirming views of diverse students and construct and bring the knowledge about diversity into the classroom (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). For this, it is critical to have appropriate programs which able to train teachers and school professionals who understand and recognize linguistic, cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity in their classrooms.

Gay (2010) in her book, “Culturally Responsive Teaching” shares the same view. She claims that teachers’ negative attitude toward language diversity is closed related to misunderstanding of student's learning and development (Gay, 2010, p. 84). While she emphasizes the importance of teachers to know diverse cultural characteristics of student’s background by using diverse examples and thorough analyses, she worries what would happen when they did not do it:
The absence of shared communicative frames of reference, procedural protocols, rules of etiquette, and discourse systems makes it difficult for culturally diverse students and teachers to genuinely understand one another and for students to fully convey their intellectual abilities. Teachers who do not know or value these realities will not be able to fully access, facilitate, and assess most of what these students know and can do (Gay 2010, p. 81)

For the bi/multicultural and bi/multilingual students, it is important to feel that their culture and language recognized in school and society. This is because this will help them to see themselves as a fully accepted a member of society.

Especially, in South Korea where is considered as linguistically and ethnically homogeneous so that their bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural characteristics often looked as “otherness,” it is important children to learn the sense of acceptance by schools. In this sense, recognition of the immigrants’ heritage cultures and values by teachers would greatly help them to learn the sense of acceptance or welcome as a minority. School professionals should be aware of how it is important to include the culturally responsive, informed, and sensitive educational principles and its proper strategies in teachers training.

Societal Efforts: Supportive and Positive Attitude toward Immigrants

Multicultural society should be able to respect and actively support differences (Berry & Kalin, 1995). This message should be consistent in both school and society and community. Though in school environment multilingual and multicultural individuals feel accepted and embraced, if they repeatedly encounter to negative images about their linguistic and cultural
diversity outside of school, this would grow conflicts and confusion between two different atmospheres for children.

It is reported there are still great antipathy against the increasing influx of immigrants in South Korea (K. Kim et al., 2014). It seems somewhat natural because at the beginning of immigration influx in the history of other countries these tensions and conflicts have been observed. This is largely about fear of losing jobs and collapsing national unity and conformity (Y. Lee, 2009). However, we need to know that this should not be necessarily reasonable. For example, Korea, as one of the low birth rate countries is expected to be short of work eligible population soon. In this sense, immigrants would not be problematic but inevitable and positive to fill in the labor market. In this sense, Koreans should welcome immigrants to the society for their future.

How to approach to immigrants and multicultural population needs to be changed. Korean media often portray that immigrants and foreigners who well assimilated to Koreans are a positive figure. Sometimes, they become popular to star in several entertainment programs or dramas. Of course, we should appreciate their efforts to learn Korean culture and language but at the same time, we should not limit them as the only positive and appropriate idea. The media also should be able to make efforts to value on different languages and cultures in Korean society as well. In this way, how to respect disagreement and coexist with them together will be taught to Korean society. Pressuring to live like a Korean does not follow with the goal of multicultural society.

Also, media should more carefully acknowledge that the way of dealing with information could increase or decrease resistance toward immigrants and foreigners in Korea. These days there were a few crimes reported that committed by immigrants and foreigners living in Korea. It is true that information should be revealed with accurate details about cases, but sometimes, media emphasize the fact that offenders’ nationality or ethnicity are/were not Korean originally rather
than reports the crime itself. This may only increase negative images of immigrants to the extend. In this sense, media needs to take their reports with caution.

According to a report researched by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MOGEF), in 2012, 41.3 percent of multicultural families in Korea have experienced discrimination that was increased of 36.4 percent in 2009 (Kang, 2013). Such records are quite disturbing that many minorities and multiculturalism should deal with this negativity toward them.

**In Practice**

Supporting multilingualism and embracing multiculturalism would possibly be ideal in *Intercultural Education*. This is because this approach will help people aware and realize social justice and human equality. I believe that language education should be for all so that heritage languages should be respected in this regard.

However, in reality there may have some questions if it is really necessary to implement heritage language learning curriculum in schools. Some people might view heritage language as an individual’s responsibility and choice so that they argue that using limited budget and resources seem unnecessary. Instead of having a heritage language class in school, they may insist to have other classes such as Math or science classes, which can help to improve their academic performances. However, through schooling children not only learn how to become a competitive individual and achieving high score in school subjects but also they will learn how to understand and embrace diverse values in our society. Respecting diverse cultures and language could be understood through heritage language education. By providing heritage language education in school, it can teach children what it means to live in multilingual and multicultural society.
On the other hand, they may say besides that it is difficult to find appropriate resources for the heritage language classes such as trained teachers who can lead an effective heritage language learning program. This is because multilingualism and multiculturalism are relatively recent phenomena to recognize Korean society so that there are few trained and experienced bilingual teachers. Such concerns are also comprehensible in the current situation of the society.

However, implementing heritage language learning program and *Intercultural Education* in school should be understood as advocating basic human rights in a democratic society. Education is the basis of a democratic society. Children will learn values and meanings. So that, how to respect different culture and language should be learned from school. This process further allows Korean society to become flourish and make a successful transition to multilingual and multicultural society.

In sum, researches of multilingual and multicultural education are arising these days. Numerous studies and researches view this issue in many different angles. Some might approach to this theoretically or too abstractly. I believe that this should be discussed in practice with more clear directions so that it should be benefited to this new generation of children to become comfortable and confident with multicultural being in society.
CONCLUSION

Educational environment has long been struggling with diverse issues in South Korea. Moreover, recently culturally and linguistically diverse students who experience difficulties became the prominent concerns of school professionals. Given the situation, not only policymakers, school leaders, teachers but also parents and students are seeking diverse solutions in order to improve our education system. Diverse approaches and solutions could be made. In this study, I discussed heritage language education and *Intercultural Education* for that matter. Strong resistances of heritage language education are observed and reviewed in historical, economic, and sociocultural aspects. Then, it concludes that diverse principles and strategies of *Intercultural Education* should be carefully studied and then applied in a school system.
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