
A Study on Multicultural Socialization and Cultural Adoption of International Migrants – Focused on (Russian-speaking) Migrant Youths

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Nice to meet you. My name is Kang Su Kyung. I received a doctorate in Russian literature from Moscow State University, and now I teach Russian literature at a university, and I am working on 20th century Russian novels, literature and journalism, and recently I am interested in multi-cultural education including Russian speakers.

In this “World Humanities Forum” I want to talk about the cultural adaptation of immigrants, as the title suggests, and specifically the Russian speakers-migrant youths are studied. I'd like to start my presentation with very sad news. The video I'm going to show you is from last October 21st. The title of the article is *Didn't catch the meaning of “Fire”...The burned-down of Koryoin family's “Korean dream”*. Let's watch a video.

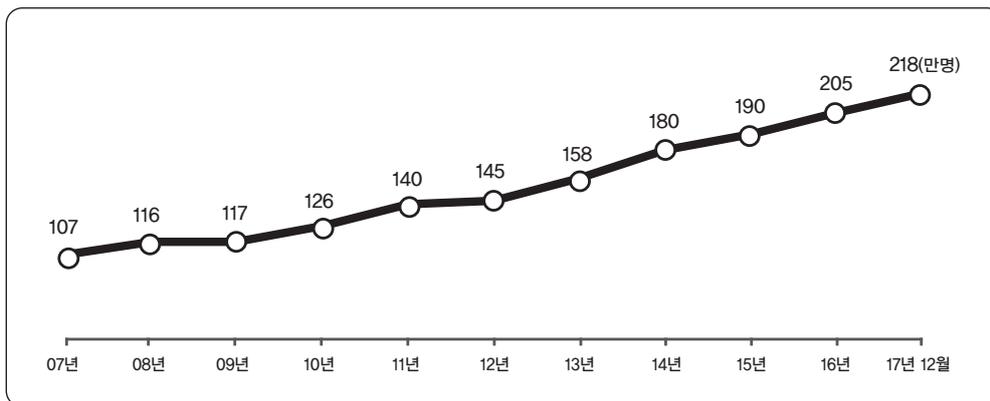
<https://youtu.be/X3uDjSFOb8Y>

On October 21, a fire broke out in a studio apartment in Busan's suburban city of Gimhae, and two children from four Koryo families living on the second floor died, and the other two children are now in critical condition. The adults were all out at the time of the fire. The parents of the victims arrived in Korea in late July 2016 and worked at a factory in Gimhae. In August this year, seven people, including aunts and nephews, who also entered Korea on a visiting visa, lived in a two-room studio apartment. Both the death toll and serious injuries were among these children, and police and the media raised the possibility that children could not understand “불이야(Fire)!” because they were poor at Korean.

The number of foreigners staying in Korea reached 1 million in 2007, and in the next 10 years, the number of foreigners staying in Korea has risen rapidly to more than 2.18 million, or 4.2 percent of the population¹.

1. Refer to the 2017 Immigration and Foreign Policy Statistical Yearbook (Registration 28 June 2018).

Table 1. The trend of foreigners staying in Korea (2007~2017)



자료 : 법무부

Also, the latest data shows that as of September 2018, about 2.3 million foreigners are staying in Korea, a visible number equivalent to about 4.5 percent of the total population. Now, the number of foreigners residing in Korean society is 4.5 out of 100 people, and multiculturalism in Korean society has become a daily, not a discourse.

If an individual's exposure to a multicultural environment is seen as a process of 'transgressing' (Bell Hooks), a multicultural society entails a process of changing disparate experiences. As cultural contacts become more frequent and adaptations of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds are becoming an important issue, interest in cultural adaptation is increasing. Especially for young immigrants, the problem of adapting culture is urgent and important. As they adapt to the new Korean culture, they are suffering from various psychological and social difficulties due to the confusion of identity and social distance as well as the burden of Korean language and study.

The focus of this study is on the cultural adaptation of 'Migrant youths'. Here the term "Migrant youths" refers to a teenager who entered Korea with a foreign parents after being born and raised in a foreign country or who later entered to Korea to live with a remarried parent with Korean spouse. After 2000, they came to Korea with a rapidly increasing number of international remarried families. In this group may include children from international marriages who have grown up and entered the country of foreign parents. The kids in the video that we saw earlier belong to the latter group.

Interest and research in government-related institutions and academia on Migrant youths began around 2000. However, it has been pointed out that the existing and ongoing education and government-level policies on immigrant youth are still sharing a level of authority. This is due to the lack of sophisticated, micro-studies that understand the learner characteristics of Migrant youths.

In response, the study will examine the existing cultural adaptation programs for Migrant youths and point out the problems associated with language education. In addition, I would like to take a look at the possibilities and prospects through an example of the Korean Cultural Adaptation

Program, which is being conducted on Russian youth. The research could be useful in developing a program to adapt Korean culture to Migrant youths in other languages as well as Russian.

In relation to the cultural adaptation of international immigrants, prior studies in Korea have been conducted largely in three aspects: social science psychology, counseling, multiculturalism, general education, education administration and Korean as a foreign language education. Here we looked at some of the preceding studies on cultural adaptation conducted from the viewpoint of Korean education. The research has been ongoing since the early 2000s. However, most of the studies are aimed at foreign adult students studying abroad, and we can see that not many are among the teenagers we are studying.

Table 2. A Study on the Cultural Adaptation of Youth from the Viewpoint of Korean as a Foreign Language Education

Researchers	Target of research	Tool/study problems	Results
Moon Y.H. (2012)	Relationship between Mongolian and Korean proficiency and cultural adaptation types of Mongolian youth	Mongolian and Korean proficiency test sites, cultural adaptation measures	Demonstrates that language proficiency is an important factor in cultural adaptation and social distance determination, and that language and culture have an interdependent relationship.
Kim J.N. (2016)	Korean overseas youths from Uzbekistan	A Study on the Change of Cultural Adaptation and Identity through School Life	Koryo teenagers generally strive for cultural adaptation through school life, but they have a unique identity as "Koryoin" rather than Koreans or Uzbekistanis.
Kim M.K. (2018)	Migrant youths	Scale of cultural adaptation	The biggest influence on academic achievement is an Korean proficiency, and the more Korean culture is assimilated, the higher the level of proficiency and academic achievement.

As you can see in the table above, the three keywords related to cultural adaptation of Migrant youths are the problems of 'Korean language,' 'school work,' and 'identity.' They will learn Korean as a second language. Earlier in the field of second language education, cultural adaptation has revealed an important personal variable that affects learners' language acquisition. As shown in the table above, preceding studies show that Korean language and cultural adaptation are closely interrelated. Professor Brown, who has done a lot of research in the field of second language

education, pointed out that it is important to understand the process of cultural acquisition because second language acquisition implies second culture learning. Brown went on to say that learning a second language involves learning a second identity. If a second language learner is a teenager, their cultural adaptation and identity change processes will be more closely related, and an in-depth analysis is needed.

The preceding studies on cultural adaptation state that it is necessary to maintain pride in your own culture and be more comfortable with Korean culture as a way to overcome and adapt to cultural stress. Then, it is necessary to look at how Migrant youths in Korea behave in their native languages, and whether they have a good environment for learning and using their own language.

To help us understand, I would like to refer to *the results of a survey on multi-cultural families conducted by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in 2015*. The following data are compiled by researchers who investigated children (from 9 to 24 years) of multicultural families. The survey is aimed at children from multicultural families, so it includes children from multicultural families born in Korea as well as Migrant youths. However, some data show significant results in the discussion of this study.

The tables below are compiled in part to the thesis of this study. We will focus on children who grew up mainly in foreign countries, or children whose fathers are Korean, mothers are foreigners, and parents are all foreigners. Because most of Migrant youths are children of these families. Let's first look at their foreign parent's native language abilities.

Table 3. Language skills of multicultural children: a language of foreign-born parents

(Unit: %, person, grade)

		1	2	3	4	5	Sum	Average
Background of growth	domestic growth	36.5	36.0	14.4	7.0	6.1	100.0	2.10
	foreign experience	17.8	27.2	22.1	14.5	18.4	100.0	2.89
	growth in foreign countries	1.0	3.7	13.4	17.8	63.9	100.0	4.40
the sex of foreign parents	A foreign father + a Korean mother	18.1	26.4	18.2	18.1	19.2	100.0	2.94
	A Korean father + a foreign mother	30.1	32.1	16.4	9.1	12.3	100.0	2.42
	A foreign parents	9.3	9.0	16.4	12.6	53.8	100.0	3.92

(*1: not at all, 2: not much, 3: in ordinary circumstances, 4: be a bit good, 5: be very good)

Children who have grown up mainly in foreign countries and are both foreign parents are more likely to use the language of their foreign parents. This is a very natural result. Now let's take a look at foreign parents' attitude toward their native language.

Table 4. Foreign parent's attitude toward their native language

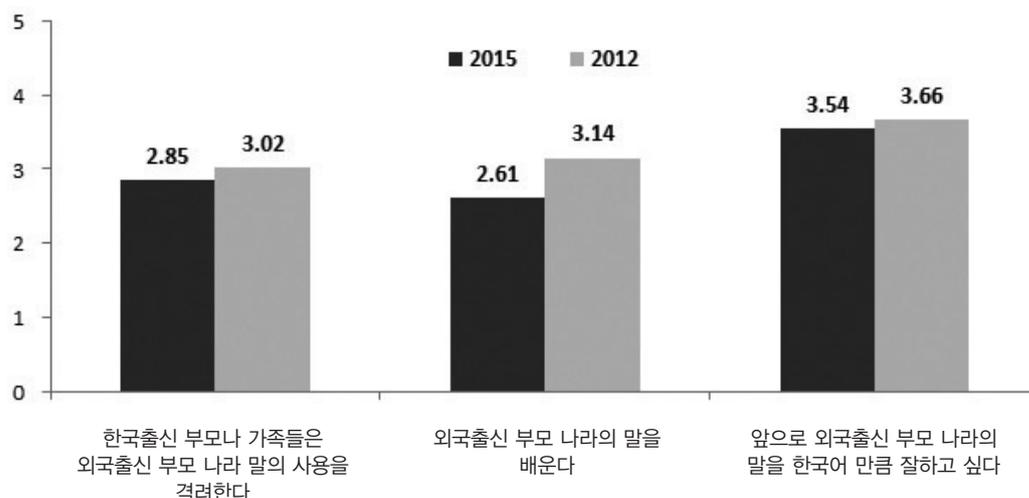
(Unit: %, person, grade)

	1	2	3	4	5	Sum	Average
Parents and families from Korea encourage the use of language from foreign countries.	19.5 (14,202)	20.4 (14,866)	30.0 (21,885)	15.5 (11,331)	14.5 (10,689)	100.0 (72,873)	2.85
Learn the language of one's parents from abroad.	28.9 (23,852)	22.3 (18,895)	21.0 (17,306)	14.7 (12,087)	13.1 (10,836)	100.0 (82,476)	2.61
In the future I want to speak the language of my parents from abroad as well as Korean.	11.4 (9,408)	11.2 (9,274)	23.1 (19,062)	20.2 (16,636)	34.1 (28,096)	100.0 (82,476)	3.54

*1: not at all, 2: not much, 3: in ordinary circumstances, 4: be a bit good, 5: be very good

The table above shows that the environment in which children from multicultural families learn the language of their parents from abroad is very poor. Only 30 percent of the respondents said they were encouraged to use foreign parent's native language. Fewer than 30 percent responded positively that they are learning the language of their parents from abroad. In addition, only 50 percent of the respondents said they want to learn the language of their foreign parents, and 22.6 percent said there is no need to learn it. What is even more surprising and unfortunate is that the attitude of foreign parents toward their native language has dropped significantly in all questions compared to the 2012 survey.

Table 5. Foreign parent's attitude toward their native language (2015, 2012)



Then, how about the attitude of multicultural children toward foreign parent's language? Let's take a look at the results of the response based on the growth background.

Table 6. The attitude of multicultural children toward foreign parent's language

(Unit: grade)

		Parents and families from Korea encourage the use of language from foreign countries.	Learn the language of one's parents from abroad.	In the future I want to speak the language of my parents from abroad as well as Korean.
Background of growth	domestic growth	2.68	2.33	3.33
	foreign experience	3.14	3.03	3.95
	growth in foreign countries	3.15	3.07	3.76
the sex of foreign parents	A foreign father + a Korean mother	3.08	3.00	3.90
	A Korean father + a foreign mother	2.82	2.55	3.62
	A foreign parents	3.01	2.89	3.76

According to the results of the survey, children of multicultural families are willing to learn the language of their foreign parents in the future, but they are not encouraged in the home, and they are even more unusual in practice. But for children who have grown up in a foreign country, which mostly consists of Migrant youths, you can see that they are more willing to learn the native language of their foreign parents. However, despite such willingness, you can see that the score of multicultural children who responded that they are learning the language of their parents from abroad is much lower. Despite the fact that we have provided bilingual education to multicultural children, the results suggest that the current bilingual language education system needs to be reviewed.

The question of bilingual education in a multicultural society has been studied in earnest since 2010. However, bilingual education should be applied differently depending on the characteristics of the learners. Parents of a typical multicultural family (The family is usually a case where a child was born and raised between a Korean father and a foreign mother from a married immigrant.) are improving Korean faster than learning two languages and desperately want their children to speak

Korean perfectly (Lee C.D., 2010).

Nevertheless, several researchers continued to raise the importance of bilingual education, and around 2010, Korea began offering bilingual education to multi-cultural and general-family children. In Busan, we conducted a bilingual education for immigrant women who applied for bilingual language instructors in 2012, and started to provide bilingual education centered on multi-cultural special classes and currently, we support bilingual education for general schools in consideration of budget and number of instructors.

The opinion is that bilingual education should be approached cautiously as it can change the identity, values and mindset of multicultural children. But if the target is Migrant youths, and the purpose of education for them is to be their Korean cultural adaptation above all, the Korean language education and the bilingual education goals and curriculum should be set differently.

Currently in Busan, there are three alternative educational institutes for children of multicultural families. Most of the students at this school are Migrant youths. According to the 'designation and operation guidelines' provided by the education office, these educational institutes are focusing on Korean language and culture programs to help Migrant youths adapt to Korean society in a short time. In addition, more than 50 percent of the classes must be taught in Korean according to the guidelines. This means that classes in other subjects besides Korean classes should be mostly taught in Korean. The curriculum also states that it provides native language education to help Migrant youths establish a healthy identity for their native culture. However, considering that most spend two hours a week on native language education and that the lack of thorough education and management of bilingual instructors, we cannot help but doubt the effectiveness of native language education in foster institutions. The Busan Metropolitan Office of Education conducted the first and last training of a bilingual instructor in 2012 and is currently managing bilingual language education by consulting schools with bilingual instructors once a semester.

As mentioned earlier, Korean cultural adaptation education and support for general multicultural children and Migrant youths should be conducted from a different level of perspective. It is very important for children from elementary school to high school to learn Korean quickly to adapt to the unfamiliar environment of Korea. So the Korean language education and native language education for these people are currently underway at a rate of about 8:2. However, it can be pointed out that the importance of native language education is too small in terms of their cultural identity, values, and mindset.

What's interesting is that from a completely different perspective, there is a school that provides education for Migrant youths to adapt to Korean culture. This is the Russian college, which was recently founded in Busan. The school conducts education in accordance with the standard curriculum in Russia. The basic direction of the school is that knowledge should be given to students as their native language. In relation to language education, the school, on the contrary, offers Korean and Russian education at a rate of about 3:7. However, they support senior students' TOPIK exams (Test of Proficiency of Korean) and help them get Korean language education in

after-school classes. In addition to Korean language education, it offers Korean culture education, but also teaches Korean history, culture and society in Russian that students can understand. For example, for a month in May 2018 Korean culture class was hosted under the title of «Korea is our second hometown ». The students studied the great people of Korea, modern Korean culture, Hallyu and experienced folk games and Hanji crafts.

This view of knowledge education and Korean cultural adaptation education for Migrant youths is very innovative and refreshing. In the meantime, Korea has emphasized 'integration', 'adaptation', 'diversity', and 'community' in education for Migrant youths. However, we should consider whether it was a one-sided multicultural education that emphasized 'assimilation'. Migrant youths may have felt relative frustration while taking classes in Korean, which they are not familiar with. It is important to adapt and incorporate the Korean society in a short time, but considering the background of their growth, the adjustment process itself needs attention and attention. Also I think we need to reflect on dual language education that has been perfunctory.

The Russian school I mentioned is about a year and a half old. The school's experimental attempts need to be carefully examined. This presentation is nothing more than a shared sense of problem and a direction for discussion. But I'm going to go further. Thank you for your attention.