The meaning of bilingual education within the South Korean multicultural education policy
“The education of the child shall be directed to... his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living.”

Contents

1. Background: Multicultural context in Korea
2. Research questions
3. Methodology: Critical discourse analysis
4. Findings
5. Conclusions and implications
Background: Multicultural context in Korea

- The uniqueness of linguistic homogenization

- Gradually becoming multilingual through recent voluntary immigration: marriage-immigrants and migrant-workers. Women from South and East Asia get married to Korean men and have children, they and their children are considered multicultural families.

- Bilingual education: how to protect minorities' linguistic rights has been one of the crucial issues in Western countries.

- According to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All-Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (UNESCO, 1990), it states that "the teaching of their mother tongue" should be promoted.
Background: Multicultural context in Korea

- Two bilingual education programs in Korea: supervised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST). The project is targeted toward young children and their Chinese and Vietnamese mothers of young children who has married and immigrated to Korea.

- As Steiner-Khamsi and Quist (2000) argue, a educational model, practice or discourse is modified since agents frequently generate a different kind of discourse based on their social and political situation. Lee (2013b) reveals that Korean educational policy makers played a role in distorting the goals of multicultural education and promoted nationalist/assimilationist attitudes.

- It is significant to look at bilingual education policies and programs produced by the top national education organization, the MEST in Korea. This study attempted to see what ideologies are being promoted through bilingual education.
Research questions

1. How do policies conceptualize bilingual education for young children from linguistically diverse backgrounds?

2. What are the goals of bilingual education?

3. How bilingual education is implemented through the actual lesson plans?
Methodology: Critical discourse analysis

1) Collected data

(1) 2 interviews with bilingual education program staff and policy makers

(2) 4 written official policy documents

(3) 2 CD materials (lesson plans for teachers)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Please describe how you have worked with the bilingual education policies and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What are your thoughts of the bilingual education programs and policies for children from multicultural families? (concepts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How would you describe bilingual education? (concepts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How would you describe children from multicultural families? (concepts &amp; goals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What are the broad/specific goals of bilingual education programs? (goals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Please tell me the development procedure of bilingual education programs. How and why these themes are included in the lesson plans? (contents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What are challenges you face when developing the bilingual education programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to add?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3) BEP documents and CD materials examined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Documents and CD Materials</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Development of an Integrated Support Model Manual for Infants and Young Children from Socially Vulnerable Groups</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>KICCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Application and Monitoring of a Bilingual Program for Parents and Children from Multicultural Families</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>KEDI &amp; KICCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Plan for Improving of Efficiency of Support for Young Children from Multicultural Families</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>KICCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Developing and Maintaining a Bilingual Support Program for Parents and Young Children from Multicultural Families</td>
<td>2010a</td>
<td>KEDI &amp; KICCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CD Materials for Bilingual Support Program for Multicultural Families' Parents ad Young Children: Chinese Version</td>
<td>2010b</td>
<td>KEDI &amp; KICCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CD Materials for Bilingual Support Program for Multicultural Families' Parents ad Young Children: Vietnamese Version</td>
<td>2010c</td>
<td>KEDI &amp; KICCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4) Data analysis

• Fairclough’s (1989, 1992, 1995) Critical Discourse Analysis

• Text & Lexical Analysis: focusing on choices in vocabulary, frequency of use, and collocation of lexical items.

• Triangulation of the data
All data sources were analyzed together simultaneously and comparatively. I worked with two researchers having experiences of CDA.
Generally, children from multicultural families have difficulty in communication between the family. Since couples use two different languages, communication between children and parents as well as between couples is linguistic problems. (KICCE, 2011, p.28)

1) Compensatory framework:
Strengthening parenting skills and children's basic learning skills

Findings 1
Considering the reality of marriage-immigrant families, it is very difficult to promote uses of both languages in their homes. Mothers do not know how to teach either language. Most of them are very young, early 20s and they are uneducated. Whenever I meet them, I feel sorry and have sympathy for them. (P, 2011. 6)
Second, the bilingual program includes activities so that mothers can support children’s basic learning... This program helps mothers teach their children the basic concepts in both Korean and the mother tongue.

Third, the bilingual program gives an opportunity to learn Korean. The goal is for children, to learn the mothers’ language, and for mothers, to learn Korean...

Another important aspect of the bilingual support program is to strengthen information on how to play and interact with children, and to build a desirable child-parent relationship.

(KEDI & KICCE, 2010, p.54)

1) Compensatory framework
Findings 2

2) Korean-culturally and developmentally appropriate education

Bilingual education for school-level students was intended to close the achievement gap in the schools. Bilingual education for kindergarten-level children was intended to close the developmental gap. (P, 2012, 6)
3) The tourist approach within lessons

Korean Typical Foods

Vietnamese Typical Foods

Sample activity: 5. Typical Foods

Source: KEDI & KICCE (2010). CD material for Bilingual Support Program
3) The tourist approach within lessons

The myth of Korea’s birth
The myth of Chinese’s birth

Sample activity:
7. Country Symbols

The Korean flag
The Chinese flag

Source: KEDI & KICCE (2010). CD material for Bilingual Support Program
Gathering *cultural materials* was difficult. We got that from Internet. We asked professors. Sometimes we asked people from each country. They are bilingual since they live here for a long time... *Trained bilingual educators do not necessarily come from China or Vietnam because these people are not accustomed to the Korean national curriculum.*

(K, 2012, 6)
Conclusions and implications: Three conclusions

First, its role is primarily compensatory because targeted groups are only children from multicultural families. These children are classified as linguistically, educationally, and socially vulnerable.

Secondly, based on a Korean only framework, what the government pursue through bilingual education was an assimilation of these groups by teaching Korean-culturally appropriate learning skills and Korean language.

Third, the introduction of each culture and language is based on a strong tourist approach to multicultural education. Why? The lesson plans are written by Korean early childhood professionals.
Conclusions and implications: Three implications

1) BEP developers need to overcome strong assimilationist/nationalist attitude when making BEP. Without it, it can be distorted to the remedial Korean education based on compensatory mind.

2) Equitable curricular opportunities should be provided for both children and their parents by qualified teachers. The issues of social justice and human rights need to be included in the process of BEP developing.

3) BEP teachers need to be highly competent linguistically/educationally. Children need to be aware of the power differential between Korean & their mothers' mother tongue in the Korean society including schools. Critical bilingual program can be good practices.
Thank you!