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**HOW TWO KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS  
PERCEIVE AND MEET THE NEEDS OF  
THE 2.5 GENERATION KOREAN CHILDREN**

A Dissertation in

Curriculum and Instruction

by

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## Abstract

Kindergarten teachers must meet the needs of the relatively new 2.5 generation of Korean children (children with one foreign-born parent) and help them overcome their difficulties as students in South Korean schools and later on as adult members of Korean society. The research questions are as follows:

1. How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children?
2. How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?

This study employed an evaluative case study research design, in conjunction with semi-structured interview questions oriented toward the concept of context of reception from U.S.-based literature and the imported pedagogical constructs (*i.e.*, ZPD and L2 DA) from the Vygotskian tradition.

The two teachers observed and interviewed for this case study research, had a tendency to link the 2.5s' needs and meeting these needs to professional roles or duties. Although the teachers minimally had to 'perceive' the needs to meet the needs of the 2.5s, meeting the needs of the 2.5s had more relation to the teachers' own characteristics (professional dispositions and beliefs), attitudes, and views on the 2.5s and their family members than other factors such as the knowledge that the teachers had about their 2.5s as students. Elucidatingly, the ideal situations in which teachers could perceive as well as meet the needs of the 2.5s require 1) going beyond any knowledge that teachers might possess concerning them and teacher roles, and 2) examining teachers' attitudes and beliefs about their population of students and their families as well.

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2.5 generation Korean children and become important assets to their country, South Korea.

# CHAPTER 1

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Permit me to begin by sharing a reflection on somewhat common occurrence I experienced again recently.

*Two international undergraduate students were sitting facing each other across a table at a fast food restaurant located in a well-known university town in South Korea. One was an Eastern European and the other from Southeast Asia. The sound of their talking was subdued tone even though they were not having a particularly private discussion. I wondered what was going on and was even curious about what language they were using. So I intentionally sat at a table right next to their table. Surprisingly, they became conscious of my presence and stopped talking. Then, they started to speak in even lower voices. Unfortunately, I could hardly catch what they were saying and was not able to figure out what language they were using. What I did glean from this situation was that they were using either Korean or English, a language which was not their first language, but because they had no option but to use one of the two in order to communicate since their first languages probably were different. At the same time, they seemed embarrassed about their second language fluency perhaps because a native South Korean, like me, was nearby.*

In universities in the United States, however, international students seem to be more confident in speaking English in public places even when their English is not that fluent. This subtle difference between South Korea and the United States should be examined since it can explain a great deal. In fact, it also relates to this dissertation.

## **Background**

Even though South Korea has not been traditionally a country that welcomed immigrants, in recent decades the number of foreign-born residents and their children has rapidly increased. The number of foreigners who entered or re-entered South Korea rose from 1,446,000 in 1985 to 9,766,000 by 2011 (Han & Lee, 2013), and the percentage of foreigners living in South Korea reached 2.8% of the total population in 2012 (Ko & Lee, 2013). However, most foreigners who take up residence in Korea are foreign brides or immigrant workers and their children (Jung & Kim, 2013). The implementation of a government policy of globalization in the late 1990's resulted in an increase of low-waged immigrant workers and foreign brides (Han & Lee, 2013; Kim, Joe, & Chough, 2012; Lee & Lim, 2012). In addition, while the number of international students and invited lecturers has also increased, most of them are short-term residents who intend to return to their home countries after they complete their studies or contract period (Jang & Lim, 2013; Kang & Lee, 2013).

Traditionally, South Korea has been a racially homogeneous nation with policies not designed with the capacity for tolerance. The minds of native Koreans' tend not to be receptive toward newcomers (Kim, 2011; Lee & Lim, 2012). For example, some schools in South Korea refuse to admit students from immigrant families. This is usually due to native South Koreans' strong prejudice against foreigners who are from countries which have lower GDP (gross domestic product) per capita than South Korea, for example, the nations of Southeast Asia and China (Kim, 2011). This is very different from the federal policy in the United States that "requires public elementary schools to enroll immigrant

children regardless of their legal status no matter where they live” (Marrow, 2005, pp. 790-791).

Nevertheless, a similar phenomenon was found in the United States (Parra & Pfeffer, 2006) that “one of the most important reasons for this sentiment is a lack of contact with, and knowledge about, the new community members” (pp. 81-82) and “newcomers often find themselves in communities that have not had a significant immigrant presence for a century and have only relatively recently experienced an increasing presence of American minorities” (p. 81). Tellingly and disappointingly, South Korea waited until September 2008 to implement policies helping immigrant families (Lee & Lim, 2012).

While the number of cultural and ethnic minorities in South Korea has increased rapidly, the number of immigrant youth who were brought to South Korea or born in South Korea has also grown. Although those aged 17 years or below among the first or second generation immigrants was 0.25% of the population in 2012 (Jang & Lim, 2013), this percentage rose to 1% in 2014 (Chung, 2014, September 23). Among those first or second generation immigrants, 26% were the children aged 4 to 9 years in 2012 (Jang & Lim, 2013). Reports indicated that these children had difficulties adapting themselves to Korean schools due to discrimination and their limited ability in Korean (Jung & Kim, 2013). They are often bullied simply because at least one of their parents is a foreigner, regardless of their personalities (Jang & Lim, 2013).

Obviously, South Korean teachers might be less prepared to teach children from immigrant families than are American teachers (Lee & Kim, 2013). Under these circumstances, the fact that immigrants and their children suffer from discrimination in

Korean society and schools (Jang & Lim, 2013) should not be overlooked. There is a need to create a receptive educational context. If the immigrant presence is constant, it "cannot be avoided by natives through discriminatory practices" (Gimpel & Lay, 2008, pp. 180-181); and schools and teachers can provide children from immigrant families with "a more receptive educational context" (Marrow, 2005, p. 790).

Providing children from immigrant families with a more receptive educational context can be realized by educating the public in the host country rather than educating the immigrants. Specifically, South Koreans do not demonstrate readiness to regard every immigrant or their children with respect. This holds true whether it be in terms of their integration into Korean society as a whole or as part of the education process. Native-born South Koreans, irrespective of age, have a tendency to discriminate against immigrants or their children based on their nationality, ethnicity, and race (Kim, 2011). These native South Koreans, including teachers and students, need to change their attitude toward immigrants. One way this could be done would be to create a more receptive educational context.

In fact, studies on immigrant families in South Korea mostly focused on children who have a foreign-born mother and a native South Korean father (Han & Lee, 2013; Oh, 2012), that is the 2.5s. The 2.5 generation Korean children are the children who were born in South Korea but one of their parents is a native-born South Korean and the other is a foreign-born parent. Actually, South Korea is the one of the best sites to conduct a study on the 2.5s in that these families, with a foreign mother and a native South Korean father, accounted for 76.7% of all international marriages and international marriages were 10.4% of the total marriages in South Korea in 2010 (Kang & Sohn, 2011). In 2012,

their children who were younger than seven years old accounted for 62.1% of total number of children from this type of family (Ko & Lee, 2013; Yang, Kim, & Kim, 2013). For three years in a row (2010-12), most of the foreign brides were either Chinese, Vietnamese, or Filipina (Chung, Goh, Cha, & Park, 2012; Kang & Sohn, 2011; Lee & Lim, 2012).

Children from these families are minorities in that they have far more classmates from native South Korean families than those from immigrant families. Children and parents from this kind of family and their school teachers have been widely studied by South Korean researchers. Most of the studies (Kim, Kong, and Lee, 2007; Park & Ohm, 2007) have focused on how and how much the 2.5s, their parents, and school teachers relate to each other and how and how much they are having difficulties in each of these different relationships as well as how and how many challenges each group faces. Another characteristic of the 2.5 families that differentiates them from the usual Korean families is that a native South Korean man with a foreign wife takes on the role of a mediator between two cultures (his wife's and Korea's) and he tends to have more worries about money (Lee & Lim, 2012).

In fact, most South Korean men who are considering marriage with a woman from a foreign country have low socioeconomic status and are not highly educated (Lee & Lim, 2012). Except for Korean-Chinese immigrants (Oh, 2012), foreign-born mothers have limited ability in the Korean language (Yang et al., 2013). They have difficulty in understanding Korean culture as well (Yang et al., 2013). Similar to their native South Korean husbands, they are not well educated (Ko & Lee, 2013). Both native South Korean fathers and foreign-born mothers are known to be anxious about the possibility of

native South Koreans discriminating against their children (Lee & Lim, 2012; Yang et al., 2013).

Given changing circumstances and popular interpretations about immigration, one cannot imagine a teacher teaching a kindergartener from a 2.5 family without considering the child's background. These children and their family members, especially their parents, cannot be viewed as separate entities. Finding a kindergarten teacher who does not consider their students' backgrounds is highly unlikely in South Korea. Teachers need to consider circumstances outside the classroom when they teach children inside the classroom. Korean teachers who teach these children need to understand not only the children themselves but also their family backgrounds in order to better help the 2.5s improve their linguistic abilities and adapt themselves to South Korean schools and society. In fact, South Korean parents (especially mothers) are highly involved in their children's education and the teachers expect this kind of involvement.

### **Need for the Study**

Studies (Han & Lee, 2013; Lee & Lim, 2012) have documented the difficulties that South Korean teachers face when teaching children from immigrant families. Studies have sought to define teachers' roles and how important those roles are in teaching. Teachers found communicating with a foreign parent the most difficult challenge they face in teaching the 2.5s (Han & Lee, 2013; Lee & Lim, 2012). This is extremely important in light of research showing communication between the kindergarten teacher and parents is essential for the healthy development of the 2.5 generation (Lee & Lim, 2012).

Kindergarten can be and often is the 2.5s' first school in which they can socialize with people other than their family members (Oh, 2012). Thus, it is the kindergarten teachers who need to start helping children from native South Korean families understand the 2.5 generation without prejudice. Also, teachers need to help the 2.5 generation overcome difficulties they will face when they become part of South Korea's primary and secondary educational system and society. Even if it is true that young children have no prejudice toward immigrant families (Kim, 2011), it does not mean that the teachers' work is done. In addition, teachers themselves need to be conscious of their own bias toward children who have at least one foreign-born parent. Research indicates some teachers do exhibit prejudice toward immigrants (Han & Lee, 2013; Kang & Lee, 2013) resulting in discrimination in school and a lack of communication between the teacher and the foreign-born parent (Oh, 2012).

Considering these facts, the 2.5s are at most risk for academic failure than children from native South Korean families. Early childhood teachers' attitudes toward immigrant families are pivotal because this is a critical period for child development (Kang & Lee, 2013). A teacher's attitude toward immigrants and immigrant issues has an effect on the kind of education they will provide to their students (Lee & Kim, 2013). According to Shin (2013), "societal and school structures have a significant impact on students' identity" (p. 114), and "students whose identities are affirmed by educators are more likely to succeed academically than those whose voices are silenced" (p. 115). Thus, it is challenging for teachers to also consider their identities, emotions, motivations, and feelings while giving teaching.

On the other hand, the fact that children from immigrant families may have limited linguistic ability in Korean has been extensively discussed (Jang & Lim, 2013). Generally, the language development of these children is delayed when the foreign-born mother has limited ability in Korean (Jung & Kim, 2013). As mentioned before, these children's limited ability in Korean causes difficulties in their adaptation to Korean schools. Specifically, studies (Jang & Lim, 2013; Kim, 2011; Kim et al., 2012) report that school-aged children from immigrant families experience more difficulties in schoolwork, which is based on fluency in Korean, and in the process of adjustment to their social life in schools than do preschool-aged children from immigrant families. The academic skills gap between children from immigrant families and those from native South Korean families widens when these children become school-aged children while the peer rejection phenomenon occurs more often among school-aged children than kindergarteners (Yang et al., 2013). As a result, the school dropout rate of children from immigrant families is much greater than that of children from native South Korean families (Jang & Lim, 2013). However, such negative aspects that have been highlighted by these studies are a bit problematic. If the child is bilingual, then language acquisition may be delayed, but in the long-term the child ends up bi-or-tri-lingual, which is certainly not limited linguistic ability.

Studies that explored the 2.5 generation and their parents and school teachers mostly deal with school-aged children, who are older than kindergarteners (Jung & Kim, 2013), and report that these children are having a hard time in schools because of discrimination and their weak academic skills (Kim, 2011). Further, these studies often describe the characteristics of the 2.5 generation and those of the first or second

generation inclusively. When they address those adjustment issues, in other words, these studies do not clearly differentiate the 2.5 generation who are “native-born children of mixed parentage” (Portes & Rivas, 2011), from children of immigrant workers, who are either first- or second-generation with both a foreign mother and a foreign father. For example, the characteristics of the families of immigrant workers and their school-aged first or second generation immigrant children include parents who have low incomes, an disadvantaged home and educational environment and children lacking in both linguistic and academic abilities (Han & Lee, 2013; Jung & Kim, 2013; Kim, 2011) and social skills (Jung & Kim, 2013). These characteristics were often used as a general description of children from immigrant families even when they were trying to identify the characteristics of the 2.5 generation preschool-aged Korean children.

Even if the first generation immigrant youths, second generation native-born children and the 2.5 generation Koreans have some characteristics in common, those three groups should be examined separately since they differ in the places they were born and the number of foreign-born parents they have. Actually, teachers have reported that they experience more difficulty in communicating with parents in the case when the mother and the father are both foreigners than when only one parent is a foreigner (Han & Lee, 2013). If we even consider the age when the first generation immigrant youth entered the host country, some of them can be defined as 1.5 generation immigrants if they migrated at an early age (Lichter & Johnson, 2006; Portes & Rivas, 2011).

Thus, it is important to clearly differentiate the 2.5 generation who they teach (or have taught) from children of other generational statuses (e.g., first, 1.5, second, or even higher generations). Also, a researcher should keep in mind that the 2.5s in a kindergarten

classroom are younger than school-aged children. Thus, in this study, I focus on kindergarten teachers with current or past experience teaching at least one Korean child of the 2.5 generation.

This study was carried out based on three premises: 1) the kindergarten teacher might perceive needs of the 2.5 generation and compare these to those of children from native South Korean families; 2) the kindergarten teacher might either meet the needs or fail to meet the needs of the 2.5 generation; and 3) the kindergarten teacher can be evaluated by judgements on the part of an evaluator concerning the quality of teaching, by using data sources (Nolan & Hoover, 2011). This study allows for the possibility that such needs cannot be met even when the teacher perceives and tries to meet the needs of the 2.5 generation. In sum, this study focused mostly on the 2.5 generation and how their teachers perceived and met their needs.

## **Purpose and Research Questions of the Study**

The purposes of this study were: 1) to examine how do kindergarten teachers perceive and meet (or fail to meet) the needs of the 2.5s; and 2) evaluate the kindergarten teachers by judging the teachers by (or with the aid of) Nolan & Hoover's 2011 evaluation standards. Furthermore, a part of this study was to question the principals and the lead teacher of the same kindergartens at which the teachers were working about the same issues discussed with the teachers. This was because "sources of evidence in an evaluation using case-study approach may be integrated using observation of participants, program staff, and other key stakeholders; informal or structured interview of key informants" (Borman, Clarke, Cotner, & Lee, 2006, p. 126). In addition, another teacher

from another kindergarten was interviewed in order to compare certain practices of the two kindergartens. This was to understand the teachers' viewpoints and the policies that the kindergartens had adopted.

This study borrowed analytical tools from Western- and Russian-based literature and transferred and applied them to South Korean settings. By applying the concept of the context of reception to this research, it was possible to ask pertinent interview questions to the teachers and fully assess their responses since the concept helped better explore and understand South Korea-bound migration and immigration issues, which were closely related to the needs of the 2.5 generation Korean children and their family members. Similarly, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT) also suggested the strategies for asking relevant interview questions, examining the participants' responses, and questioning the language supporting practices because the theory appreciates students' mental abilities more fully than the mainstream psychological perspectives do (Poehner, 2007). To be specific, it was assumed that language ability was one of the needs of the 2.5s and that the teachers might have been supporting language development of the 2.5s by utilizing various methods. Thus, how they were supporting the 2.5s' language development had something to do with meeting the perceived needs for language abilities of the 2.5s. Vygotskian theories partially explained how teachers evaluated the 2.5s' language abilities and the way they supported the 2.5s' language development accordingly. The research questions are as follows: (1) How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children? (2) How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?

## **Glossary of Key Terms**

The terms used in the context of this study are defined as follows :

Children from immigrant families : Children who have either one or two foreign-born parent(s).

Concept of context of reception : A set of circumstances that make the immigrants' lives easy or difficult, the conditions in the host country, society, or community, which can be either favorable or unfavorable: "government policies toward immigrants from specific countries, the structure of economic opportunities, and features of preexisting ethnic communities" (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010, p. 278) or the "economic structure and demographic composition" that "affect how immigrants are incorporated into local labor markets, social groups, and local political systems" (Marrow, 2005, p. 790).

Cultural capital : "One of the late Pierre Bourdieu's signature concepts" that "had enabled researchers to view culture as a resource – one that provides access to scarce rewards, is subjected to monopolization, and, under certain conditions, may be transmitted from one generation to the next" (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 567). It can exist in the forms of the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state (Bourdieu, 1986).

Human capital : Capital which can be accumulated by forms such as schooling, citizenship, weeks worked (Chiswick & Miller, 2002), educational attainment (De Jong & Steinmetz, 2004), and "acquisition of skills in the dominant language" (Chiswick & Miller, 2002, p. 33).

Immigrant's social integration (or incorporation) : "The process by which immigrants accumulate" social experience in the host society "as their tenure in the host country increases" (Marrow, 2005, p. 784).

Joint activity co-constructed with learners : The activity in which "teachers/assessors, or mediators negotiate the tasks with learners as co-participants" (Poehner & Compernelle, 2011, p. 184), while learner interpretation is made through cooperation and interaction with the learner (Poehner, 2008a).

Linguistic minority enclaves : "An area in which many others speak their origin language" (Chiswick & Miller, 2002, p. 32).

Mediator : The one who is expected to mediate in various ways with their students by bridging assessment (what assessors do) and teaching (what teachers do).

Network ties : Social relationships and resource provision (Chiswick & Miller, 2002) which can include formal and informal social connections (*e.g.*, kith and kin as well as social agencies).

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) : The extent to which abilities improve when mediation is offered: "the distance between the actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

The 1.5 generation children : "Children born abroad, but brought to the host society at an early age, making them sociologically closer to the second generation" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 220).

The 2.5 generation Korean children : Children who were born in South Korea but one of their parents is a native-born South Korean and the other is a foreign-born parent.

Second language dynamic assessment (L2 DA) : One of the most effective teaching methods for teaching children second language teaching which constantly changes teaching strategies or methods in the middle of educational activities by appreciating learners' abilities and creating their ZPDs.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT) : A perspective which “differs both ontologically and epistemologically from the mainstream psychological perspectives on mental abilities that inform other approaches to assessment” (Poehner, 2007, p. 324), assuming that “assessment occurs not in isolation from instruction but as an inseparable feature of it” (Poehner, 2007, p. 323).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Generational Status**

The 2.5 generation Korean children are “native-born children of mixed parentage” (Portes & Rivas, 2011). The 2.5s are different from first or second generation children who have both a foreign mother and a foreign father. First or second generation children’s foreign-born parents are mostly called immigrant workers in South Korea. As a matter of fact, lower generations than 2.5 (first, 1.5, or second generations) have no legal status and are expected to be sent back to their parents’ country in the future while their human rights are regarded as being limited to a minimum according to a law introduced in 2007 (Cho et al., 2012). Even for second generation children, the fact that they were born in South Korea cannot guarantee their legal right to be a South Korean citizen when their parents are both foreigners.

The U.S.-based literature shows that children from immigrant families differ according to their generational status. For example, Lichter and Johnson (2006) describe first generations as the foreign-born or immigrant population “who were not U.S. citizens at birth” (p. 116). Portes and Rivas (2011) said first generations are the ones who are “born and educated in a foreign society and whose outlook and plans are indelibly marked by that experience” (p. 220).

Second generations are the children of immigrants who "commonly become full-fledged members of the host society with outlooks and plans of their own" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 220). They are more likely to identify themselves with the host country

than 1.5 generations (Portes & Rivas, 2011), but they are the ones who are "more likely to experience segmented assimilation than straight-line assimilation" (Levels, Dronkers, & Kraaykamp, 2008, p. 839). This means that the second generations are under the influence of their foreign-born parents and the connections of their foreign-born parents with co-ethnic communities, even though they are not likely to speak the dominant language with an accent and have a preferences for the everyday food and language of the country they were born.

Crosnoe and Turley (2011) call 1.5 generation children "adolescents who came to the United States early in their lives" (p. 134) while Levels, Dronkers, and Kraaykamp (2008) call these children "foreign-born children who migrated before age 12" (p. 840). Portes & Rivas (2011) defined them as "children born abroad, but brought to the host society at an early age, making them sociologically closer to the second generation" (p. 220). Lichter and Johnson (2006) describe 1.5 generations as "children of U.S. citizens born abroad" who are "defined as the native-born population along with others born in the United States or its island territories (such as Puerto Rico)" (p. 116).

These definitions may be applicable to South Korean settings except for the citizenship issues since being born in South Korea is not enough to obtain citizenship. Without considering such legal status issues, a fundamental principle applied to U.S.-based generational status calculation system is that the higher the generational status is, the sociologically closer they are to the native-born. Thus, higher generations are more likely to show mainstream behaviors (*e.g.*, speak Korean language fluently and prefer Korean food) but also understand Korean culture better. If such a system is adopted in South Korea, the first generations are the foreign-born or immigrant population. They

speaking Korean with an accent, are likely to have food preferences from their country-of-origin, and prefer to use the language of the country they lived in as a child. They might have limited knowledge about Korean society and culture compared to higher generations (e.g., their children who were born in South Korea). In short, two foreign-born parents of first, 1.5, or second generation children are the first generations. However, if these children came with their parents when they entered South Korea, they are the 1.5 generation foreign-born children. According to Han & Lee (2013), these foreign-born children had difficulties in making native South Korean friends at kindergarten due to cultural differences. Nevertheless, they were young enough to earn 0.5 point ( $1+0.5=1.5$ ) and their early arrival might make them sociologically closer to the second generations in the long run. For example, a foreign-born child who came to South Korea as a kindergartener or an elementary school student and spent his or her school days in South Korea may be more knowledgeable about Korean culture (language) and society than a foreign-born immigrant worker who came to South Korea as an adult. The 1.5 generations are less likely to be detected as a foreign-born immigrant than adult immigrants, putting their physical appearance aside for now.

The second generations are the children of immigrants, but were born in South Korea. As mentioned, they are not considered to be South Koreans even though they were born in South Korea because both of their parents are foreigners. The reason why the children born in South Korea who have one native-born parent and one foreign-born parent (native-born children of mixed parentage) are the 2.5 generation Korean children is because they not only have earned an extra 0.5 point and became 2.5 generations ( $2+0.5=2.5$ ), making them sociologically closer to third generations, but also have gained

legal status. Their families include the 2.5 generation child (the child), a first generation parent (the foreign-born parent), and a native-born parent (the native South Korean parent) all together as family members. In South Korea, however, children who have at least one foreign-born parent are generally called ‘multicultural children.’ This is because South Koreans are not used to use such a generational status calculation system.

Nevertheless, the definitions of 2.5 generation children in U.S.-based literature rarely include the characteristics of the 2.5s, compared to those of other generational statuses. They mostly focus on the fact that their two parents’ county-of-origin is different from each other. For example, Hernandez (2004) calls these 2.5 generation children “children in a newcomer family with one foreign-born parent.” Levels et al. (2008) call these children "children born in their host country who have one native-born and one foreign-born parent" (p. 840), and Portes and Rivas (2011) call these children native-born children of mixed parentage.

## **Previous Studies on the 2.5s**

### Parents’ Viewpoint

As mentioned earlier, native South Korean fathers take a role as a mediator between two cultures (Lee & Lim, 2012). However, some fathers even isolate their foreign-born wives from South Korean society by overprotecting them. This is because the fathers consider their foreign wives be something they should be ashamed of (Park & Ohm, 2007). Foreign-born mothers of the 2.5s are likely to experience at least three types

of difficulties, due to: (1) gender inequality; (2) their foreignness; and (3) economic hardship.

Gender inequality in South Korea is based on a traditional way of thinking that assumes that it is the mothers who will take the main responsibility for child rearing (Lee & Lim, 2012; Oshio, Nozaki, & Kobayashi, 2013; Yang et al., 2013). The foreign-born mothers are stressed and bare a heavy burden because Korean society emphasizes the role of the mothers in child rearing. They are more likely to be unsatisfied with doing the household duties expected of them in Korea because they were used to the males in their country-of-origin assuming a larger portion of the housework (Oh, 2005).

Although both the native South Korean fathers and their foreign-born wives seem to have “difficulty balancing work outside the house and housework” (Oshio et al., 2013, p. 219), the foreign-born mothers who work outside the house seem to suffer more. It is reported that, in South Korea, “about 35% of husbands and wives did not usually arrive home from work until after 8:00 P.M., leaving relatively little time for family life” (Tsuya, Bumpass, & Choe, 2000, p. 206). The wives “tend to work longer hours when their husbands also spend longer hours in the labor market” (Tsuya et al., 2000, p. 203). It will be more difficult for the wives who work outside the house “to balance work and family responsibilities” due to “the virtual absence of part-time employment,” resulting in “long work hours” (p. 202) as mentioned in Tsuya et al. (2000). That is, “the market and society impose on women’s ability to reconcile employment and family responsibilities” (Tsuya et al., 2000, p. 216). However, native South Korean males tend not to be supportive even of wives who work both outside and inside (housework) the house (Oshio et al., 2013). According to Oshio et al. (2013), “Korean husbands are sensitive to

having a higher share of housework, thereby suggesting that they are still supportive of traditional specialization” (p. 221). For example, native South Korean husbands spend most of their time at their workplaces and this reduces the time that fathers could devote to their children (Lee & Lim, 2012).

A few studies indicate the relatively old age of the 2.5s’ fathers (Cho & Cho, 2011; Kim et al., 2007; Lee & Lim, 2012). Although the ways of child rearing of some fathers are generally not in accordance with standard practices, the fathers take the leadership in child rearing and exercise influence over their wives (Cho & Cho, 2011; Chung et al., 2012; Lee & Lim, 2012). However, studies emphasize the importance of the father’s role as supporters of foreign-born mothers (Lee & Lim, 2012; Kang & Sohn, 2011).

Secondly, the foreign-born mothers’ foreignness has an influence upon their experience in South Korea. Huh (2009) reports the experiences that foreign-born mothers underwent, including the discrimination they encountered when they interacted with native South Koreans. They felt slighted since they had distinctive physical features and limited ability in the Korean language and poor communication skills.

Many foreign-born mothers do not know how to take care of their children in the same way Koreans traditionally do. This is unfortunate because parental support is typically required, especially in the case of homework for elementary school-aged 2.5 students (Oh, 2005; Yang et al., 2013). These mothers find that the way Korean society expects them to bring up their children is different from that of their country-of-origin. This is because most of them first enter South Korea at the same time they become wives (Yang et al., 2013). For example, foreign-born mothers from Mongolia, China, and

Kazakhstan in Yang et al.'s 2013 study thought that native South Korean mothers tend to overprotect their children. Their babies are likely to be born and in need of infant care even before the new moms acclimate themselves to a new environment, which is South Korean society (Chung et al., 2012). Moreover, the foreign-born mothers are considered to be the only family member who has to be assimilated into Korean culture, causing complications. Paternal family members (*e.g.*, paternal grandmothers) are likely to take the initiative in rearing their 2.5 child (Yang et al., 2013). According to Cho and Cho (2011), the foreign-born mothers take more initiative in child rearing as their Korean language ability improves. On the other hand, the paternal grandparents of the 2.5s seem to be supportive of the foreign-born mothers since they are “resources in household production” in South Korea (Oshio et al., 2013, p. 218).

Economic hardship is another issue for foreign-born mothers. As mentioned, studies (Lee & Lim, 2012; Oh, 2005) report that most of the parents of the 2.5s have low socioeconomic status, are not highly educated, and hence have more worries about money. The foreign-born mothers usually have a hard time covering educational expenses for private education (Kang & Sohn, 2011). This is unfortunate because private education is considered a requirement for rearing children in the South Korean educational system.

According to the latest statistics, half (approximately 2 billion U.S. dollars) of the total expense of bringing up and educating preschool-aged children in South Korea (approximately 4 billion U.S. dollars) was private education expenditures (Choi, 2014, May 21). Understandably, mothers of families that have a low socioeconomic status would be hard up for money regardless of their foreignness. In Kang and Sohn's 2011

study, troubles have arisen between native South Korean husbands and foreign-born wives due to money problems.

In 2009, 59.7% of total families of the 2.5s had monthly income less than 1,800 U.S. dollars (21.3% had less than 900 U.S. dollars and 38.4% had between 900 and 1,800 U.S. dollars). Their income is compared to the average income of families of South Korea which was 3,000 U.S. dollars (Lee & Lim, 2012). On the other hand, Oh (2005) cautiously suggests also giving consideration to families of the 2.5s that have relatively high socioeconomic status since making a conclusion that all families with 2.5s experience economic hardship can lead to stereotyping the 2.5s.

#### Teachers' Viewpoint

Studies (Han & Lee, 2013; Lee & Lim, 2012) have documented the difficulties that teachers face when teaching children from immigrant families. Studies have sought to define teacher's roles and how important those roles are in teaching. Teachers found communicating with a foreign parent the most difficult (Han & Lee, 2013; Lee & Lim, 2012). Also in Kim et al.'s 2007 study, teachers reported that they were unable to communicate with foreign-born mothers in Korean even though the foreign-born mothers had lived in South Korea for more than five years. They found more difficulty in communication when it was a telephone conversation. In fact, it is not reasonable for us to expect high proficiency in the Korean language from them since "arriving later in life is associated with lower odds of proficiency" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 264).

Similarly, teachers in Park and Ohm's 2007 study sought complementary cooperation between teachers and parents in order to cultivate the daily habits of the 2.5's and for the purpose of giving them individual instructions. They thought that information

about the 2.5's family background was needed in order to better educate them. However, they found difficulty in developing close relations with their foreign-born mothers because of the differences in language and culture. In Kim et al.'s 2007 study, the teachers even assumed that foreign-born mothers would have hard time associating with neighbors since they could speak only a limited amount of Korean. The teachers turned to other family members (*e.g.*, fathers, grandmothers, or older siblings of the 2.5s) for assistance when the foreign-born mothers did not respond to the letters that had been sent to the 2.5s' homes. However, they faced limitations regarding their expectations of the fathers since fathers were busy with their own work, sometimes had abused alcohol and even were violent to their wives. Those fathers were not concerned about the fact that their wives could not read the letters from their children's kindergartens.

In Park and Ohm's 2007 study, teachers did not specifically focus on the foreignness of 2.5 students' mothers because there were many other children from low-income groups. This was because the 2.5s were concentrated in districts with low-income populations. Nevertheless, teachers thought that something was lacking in the 2.5s both economically and in terms of their family circumstances. In Lee's 2011 study, teachers chose their words cautiously when they described children from immigrant families because specific characteristics (such as a lack of experience, lack of concentration or problem-solving ability, hyperactivity, and a strong desire to possess toys) can be also found in children from low-income families. However, Oh (2005) argues that assuming that the 2.5s came from a low-income group is also an example of bias. In fact, it was reported that the 2.5 children of a large income earner had no educational issues (Kim et al., 2007).

The relatively advanced age of the 2.5's native South Korean fathers is mentioned in Kim et al.'s 2007 study. Teachers in their study reported that the fathers' methods of bringing up children did not meet the teachers' expectations and the teachers attributed this to the fact that the 2.5s' fathers were older than other fathers. The teachers also mentioned the fathers' educational backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and lack of interest in educating their children as the reasons for the fathers' falling short of their expectations.

According to Lee (2011), this is the discordance between 'the cultural characteristic that is influenced by the 2.5's home environment' and 'the shared cultural value in education.' Gu (2010) argues that teachers are likely to consider such cultural differences as a problem or deficiency of their ethnicity rather than allowing for the possibility that the parents do not fully understand the mainstream culture. This phenomenon is addressed by Lareau and Weininger's (2003) alternative interpretation of cultural capital, which is the extent to which families could "comply (or fail to comply) with the evaluative standards of dominant institutions such as schools" (p. 568). For example, "students and their parents enter the educational system with dispositional skills and knowledge that differentially facilitate or impede their ability to conform to institutionalized expectations" (p. 588) since school personnel appraise students by means of formal and informal expectations (Lareau & Weininger's 2003). The parental cultural capital comprises the first-hand knowledge that "they do not get from schools" (p. 583) and "specialized skills that are transmissible across generations, are subject to monopoly, and may yield advantages or profits" (p. 597). In the case of the 2.5's family (a combination of a foreign-born mother and an older father), the foreignness of a

foreign-born mother, the age of a native South Korean father, and their socioeconomic status could affect their “ability to meet the standards held by educators” (p. 588).

On the other hand, the teachers in Park and Ohm's 2007 study found difficulty in sharing information about the 2.5s with other classmates from native South Korean families. Teachers perceived cultural differences in the 2.5s. However, a few studies (Park and Ohm, 2007; Park & Lee, 2008; Lee, 2011) argued that giving information to or educating children from native South Korean families should be translated into action on a daily basis, not just by preparing lesson plans.

### The 2.5's Viewpoint

Some 2.5 kindergarteners considered having a foreign-born mother to be a source of shame and even looked down upon their foreign-born mothers (Kim et al., 2007). School-aged children were ashamed of their foreign-born mothers and this even negatively influenced their relationships with others (Oh, 2005).

The language development of these children is delayed when the mother has limited ability in Korean (Jung & Kim, 2013). However, Lee (2013) argues that there may be more variables that affect the 2.5's language development, thus, it will be useful to carefully examine the environment in which the 2.5's are living.

### **The Limitations on Previous Studies on the 2.5s**

Studies that explored the 2.5 generation Korean children and their parents and school teachers mostly deal with school-aged children, who are older than kindergarteners (Jung & Kim, 2013), and report that these children are having hard time

in schools because of discrimination and their lack of academic skills (Kim, 2011).

However, the 2.5s in a kindergarten classroom are younger than school-aged children.

As previously mentioned, studies on the 2.5s often describe the characteristics of the 2.5 generation Korean children and those of first or second generation as a group. For example, characteristics of the families of immigrant workers and their school-aged first or second generation immigrant children include parents who have low incomes, the children's home environments and educational environments as being not favorable and children lacking in both linguistic and academic abilities (Han & Lee, 2013; Jung & Kim, 2013; Kim, 2011) and social skills (Jung & Kim, 2013). These characteristics were often used for the general description of children from immigrant families even when they were trying to identify the characteristics of the 2.5 generation preschool-aged Korean children.

Even if the first generation immigrant youths, second generation native-born children and the 2.5 generation Koreans have some characteristics in common, those three types of children must be examined separately since they differ in the places they were born and the number of foreign-born parents they have. Even 1.5 generation children must be considered separately. It is important to clearly differentiate the 2.5 generation Korean children from children of other generational statuses.

### **The Concept of Context of Reception**

The term context of reception refers to "government policies toward immigrants from specific countries, the structure of economic opportunities, and features of preexisting ethnic communities" (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010, p. 278). That is, "economic

structure and demographic composition affect how immigrants are incorporated into local labor markets, social groups, and local political systems" (Marrow, 2005, p. 790).

First, co-ethnic community plays an important role in context of reception (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010; Marrow, 2005). An ethnic group is defined by language, goods, and services that differ from other groups (Chiswick & Miller, 2002). Whether or not immigrants live in their linguistic minority enclaves with co-ethnics determines a large part of their destiny in the host country. In other words, the context that they find themselves in will change their way of living in the host country. García Coll and Pachter (2002) discuss social position factors, which have differential effects in minority groups: "other individual, family, and community level resources (*e.g.*, neighborhood with a shared cultural identity) that may act to buffer the effects of economic or material disenfranchisement for parents and families who live in segregated and disadvantaged communities" (p. 9).

In order to apply the concept of context of reception to South Korean setting, an example of co-ethnic community in South Korea is examined here based on Lee's 2011 study. Wongok-dong in Ansan City (described as Town C of the City B in other chapters) is one of the biggest residential districts for foreign-born immigrants in South Korea. Wongok-dong is where approximately 15% of total immigrant workers in South Korea live. Forty-percent of total population in the district is immigrants. If we look into the country-of-origin of the foreign-born residents in Wongok-dong, 70% are Korean Chinese. Native Chinese comprise 10% of the total immigrants in this town. Six percent of the remainder are Vietnamese, 4% are from the Philippines, 3% from Indonesia and "other" comprises 7%. Among the other 7%, Mongolians are a majority. Though there

are a lot more immigrant workers than marriage immigrants in this district, 90% of foreign-born parents of students in schools and nursery schools in this district are marriage-based immigrants, who are the parents of the 2.5s. This explains a difference between the 2.5 generation Korean children and lower generation children. The families that include the 2.5s show more tendency to settle down in South Korea as a family unit by sending their children schools than families of immigrant workers. In nursery schools in this district, 60-66% of children are from immigrant families.

In that district, there is a zone called '*Ansan Multicultural Village Special Zone.*' As an attempt to explain what happened and what is going on in this zone, research done with populations in the U.S. and its findings will be extended to South Korea. These are speculative hypotheses needing empirical support. Nevertheless, applying U.S.-based literature to a South Korean setting is a promising start in understanding South Korea-bound migration and immigration issues. Such speculations must be examined and evaluated in future research in South Korean settings.

The first assumption is that this zone is where "the flight of native-born populations" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 112) might have taken place by native South Koreans. In fact, such flight can be accelerated after the minority population reaches a critical tipping point (Lichter & Johnson, 2006). Consequently, native-born population can be "relocated to areas with low concentrations of immigrants" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 111). This zone is the local hangout where immigrants and their co-ethnics to stop-by and socialize similar to Mexican immigrants found in Pfeffer and Parra's 2009 study. There are almost no native South Korean residents in this area. This opens up the possibility that the urban immigrant minorities have tried to "convert any gains in

socioeconomic status (*e.g.*, education and income) into improvements in housing and residential location" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 112). In other words, the urban immigrants might have converted their socioeconomic gains into better housing, while in turn the original residents have moved away.

Wongok-dong's early stage of population deconcentration can be compared to a phenomenon found in the U.S. in that it provided "new evidence of emerging enclaves in the suburbs" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 112). Such spatial deconcentration can be a "symbolic of economic incorporation of the immigrant population" into mainstream society" and "it implies much greater exposure to native-born" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 112). However, immigrants in Wongok-dong have not yet provided that much "evidence of assimilation" (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 111).

Wongok-dong once showed the most rapid economic growth in Ansan City; however, it is currently the most underdeveloped neighborhood. Even though the immigrants are the economic mainstays of this area, they are the ones who suffer from economic problems. The parents of the 2.5s are mostly low-skilled and lower-paid workers. Teachers of nursery schools in this district reported that children found the nursery schools to be more spacious than their own homes (Lee, 2011). In De Jong and Steinmetz's 2004 study, they found that "individual-level human capital, as measured by increased educational attainment, is strongly and positively associated with managerial/professional and negatively associated with service/labor occupational positions for both male and female workers" (p. 101). Actually, most of the foreign-born parents of the 2.5s are not highly educated (Ko & Lee, 2013) and it is probable that their low educational background meant that they were more likely to work in the

service/labor sector. According to Cho and Cho (2011), the reason why immigrant families are increasing in South Korea is because foreigners have growing desire to get a job in South Korea at the same time native South Koreans refuse to take jobs which are classified as 3D (*i.e.*, dirty, difficult, and dangerous).

According to Lichter and Johnson (2006), “in the United States, spatial assimilation has usually been defined by population deconcentration within the urban region, from economically self-contained ethnic enclaves (e.g., “Little Italy” or Chinatown) to the suburbs where most whites live” (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 112). However, in Wongok-dong, immigrants are mostly be locked into the district rather than making regular appearances in the big cities where many native South Koreans live, such as the capital city, Seoul. It is similar phenomenon to Lichter and Johnson’s (2006) description of “newly segregating rural immigrant communities” that “may reinforce ethnic identity and cultural boundaries, while slowing upward economic mobility and full incorporation into American society” (p. 111).

If South Korea follows the patterns of the U.S., Wongok-dong will show more spatial deconcentration in the near future. According to Marrow’s 2005 study, such lower co-ethnic concentration levels give immigrants a more negative perception of the host society, but also higher levels of information about the mainstream society. The view of the traditional melting point theory suggests that "cultural and political assimilation continues to take place today just as it has in the past and that immigrants assimilate not into specific segments of society, but rather into a broad mainstream that is simultaneously changed by them" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 223). As lower generation immigrants (lower than the 2.5s) keep on entering or re-entering South Korea and their

offspring increases in number, native South Koreans are being increasingly challenged to figure out ways to coexist with them as they are more and more part of the fabric of their society. No matter what type of immigrant, South Koreans will have no option but prepare a responsible policy for integrating them into society.

Native South Koreans are now exerting all possible effort for economic development in cooperation with many immigrants. What is more, the recent decrease in birthrates in South Korea places an emphasis on education of children from immigrant families because these children could well make up the deficiency in the economically active population and therefore partially solve manpower problems in South Korea. In addition, this helps children from immigrant families stand on their own two legs in Korean society.

A few theories suggest that the immigrant residents in Wongok-dong will meet the needs of the times by assimilating into a broad mainstream if they get along with more native South Koreans and attend local schools. Pfeffer and Parra (2009) suggest the possibility of newcomers in the United States overcoming limitations by schooling and developing weak ties with local white residents in the local society, just as their co-ethnic predecessors once did, and eventually becoming able to play an intermediary role for other community members. Specifically, Pfeffer and Parra (2009) suggest the relationships among co-ethnics with better human capital, immigrants with less human capital, and local white residents. Co-ethnics with better human capital provide social relationships and resources to immigrants with less human capital. The network ties between these two are strong and motivate the immigrants' social integration. For example, those immigrants receive "assistance in gaining access to a variety of goods and

services" from the co-ethnics (Pfeffer & Parra, 2009, p. 244). On the other hand, the relationship between co-ethnics with better human capital and white local residents are relatively weak and this weak network ties serve as a source of information found outside the ethnic group.

Thus, depending upon the destination community for such support, there will be limits on immigrants with less human capital opportunities to enter mainstream labor markets (Pfeffer & Parra, 2009) and opportunities to acquire destination language skills (Chiswick & Miller, 2002). Newcomers with little social capital will take ethnically bounded opportunities such as working at places like ethnic grocery stores or restaurants, and this will inhibit their ability to find other opportunities (Pfeffer & Parra, 2009).

In Wongok-dong, for example, less educated Chinese immigrants tend to work in places like the Chinese markets or Chinese restaurants there. If they are employed as a clerk at a Chinese grocery store or as waiter or waitress at a Chinese restaurant, they have little or no problem in communicating with most of the customers and their employers as both will be using Chinese. Understandably, those who work at Chinese grocery stores in Wongok-dong will have less reason to learn Korean than those who work at native South Korean grocery stores in Seoul. Even more troubling is the fact that these employees will have far fewer chances to experience and gain understanding of the mainstream culture of the country they have just entered.

According to Chiswick and Miller's 2002 study, which was conducted in a U.S. setting, "linguistic concentration may also have an indirect influence on earnings through their negative impact on the acquisition of destination language skills" (p. 34). Specifically, "the economic penalty from not speaking English is smaller among those

who live in a linguistic concentration area” (Chiswick & Miller, 2002, p. 43). Gonzalez’s 2000 study also pointed out that “persons that live in ethnic enclaves potentially face less pressure to learn English because everyday communications and activities do not necessarily require English ability” (p. 265).

Second language acquisition plays an important part in this process and associated with higher earnings since “acquisition of skills in the dominant language can be viewed as a form of human capital accumulation” (Chiswick & Miller, 2002, p. 33). In the United States, for example, “acquiring English language fluency is a means of increasing the international transferability of previously acquired forms of human capital” (p. 40), and there is a complementarity between forms of human capital (e.g., schooling, citizenship, and weeks worked) and English language fluency” (Chiswick & Miller, 2002). Moreover, “the favorable effect on earnings of English language fluency is greater in areas in which fewer people speak the worker’s origin language” (Chiswick & Miller, 2002, p. 43).

It is possible that parents’ education, earning, language proficiency and literacy skills may affect the parenting behaviors and skills of immigrant parents. According to economic theory in the United States, “immigrants learn English as long as incentives exist to do so”, such as “greater labor income” (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 259). While more time in the United States increases the odds of oral proficiency, “each additional year of schooling increases the probability of literacy more than the probability of oral proficiency” since literacy skills are more specialized and technical skills (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 265). Literature in the United States shows that “the immigrant wage assimilation is explained by the increase in English-speaking skills resulting from more

time in the United States" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 259), and "time spent in the United States increases immigrants' structural assimilation in terms of language acquisition" (Marrow, 2005, p. 785). In short, English language proficiency and fluency, and literacy skills are associated with higher earnings (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Gonzalez, 2000) as "immigrants in professional occupations require high levels of vocabulary and literacy skills" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 260). Thus, another hypothesis that can be suggested here is the following: how much and how well foreign-born parents learn how to speak, understand, read, and write Korean should be positively related to the earnings as well as the level of education of their children.

In fact, foreign-born mothers' language abilities in Korean are often discussed in South Korea-based literature since it is assumed that it has something to do with their 2.5 children's language development. For example, it is reported that the level of foreign-born mothers' language abilities is not high enough to support the schoolwork of their 2.5 children. This is even true for the foreign-born mothers who lived many years in South Korea. According to Oh (2005), the foreign-born mothers find no difficulty in daily conversations; however, they still do not know how to write complete sentences because they neither learned how to read or write nor received any formal education in South Korea. In fact, it was reported in the U.S.-based literature that "the acquisition of literacy skills requires greater investment beyond simple exposure to the language" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 265) and "schooling is more important for literacy skills than for oral skills" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 265). For example, "education is a major factor determining reading proficiency" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 260).

Another factor that affects their adaptability is the hostile and prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants that are produced by native-born racial prejudice of the native-born (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Kim, 2011) considering that many foreign-born mothers are from Southeast Asia. However, the skin colors of foreign-born mothers from certain countries in Southeast Asia (*e.g.*, Vietnamese, Filipino) are different from those of native South Koreans while the skin colors of foreign-born mothers from East Asian countries like China or Mongolia are not different from native South Koreans. For that reason, it is reported that foreign-born mothers from Southeast Asia are more reluctant to form personal relationships with native South Koreans or participate in public gatherings (Kim et al., 2007). This is because South Korea has been traditionally a racially homogeneous nation.

Oropesa and Jensen's 2010 study suggests that "discriminatory treatment stems from the racialization of immigrant groups as undesirable others based on their phenotypical characteristics" (p. 278). In the case of the United States, "those who believe immigrants to be unintelligent, dirty, unwilling to learn English, or unwilling to work as hard as natives are more likely to oppose immigration than those who do not have such beliefs" (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 204), and such discrimination can exist in host societies. Discrimination refers to "unequal treatment based on inadequately justified factors that has a disparate impact on a group," which is "treatment that violates basic principles of fairness" (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010, p. 282). According to Oropesa and Jensen (2010), "assimilation is problematic when local institutions and local populations are unreceptive to immigrants and engage in various forms of discrimination" (p. 275).

Institutional discrimination (formal discrimination) is "the actions of organizations and the agents of organizations that are deemed unfair" (p. 282), such as facing disadvantage in hiring, being stopped and searched by police for crimes, and disadvantages in criminal courts. On the other hand, interpersonal discrimination is "such treatment in the context of everyday life" (p. 282), and such discriminatory treatment "stems from the racialization of immigrant groups as undesirable others based on their phenotypical characteristics" (p. 278). For example, being "treated with less courtesy and respect than others," "being called names or insulted," "being disrespected," and "receiving poorer service than others in commercial establishments" (p. 280), for example in restaurants and stores. Furthermore, being "threatened or harassed," "treated as if they are not smart" (lack of intelligence), "dishonest," "as if other people are afraid of them," and "as if others are better than them" (p. 283) are also types of interpersonal discrimination.

Putting all accounts together, foreign-born mothers may not that readily adapt themselves to the new environment even if they have lived many years in South Korea. The discrimination they experience will instead increase if we consider the following few points. In Oropesa and Jensen's 2010 study on Dominican immigrants in Reading, PA, those who spent more time in the area and who were citizens, were more likely to experience both institutional and interpersonal discrimination because they are more likely to expect equal treatment. In the same study conducted in Reading, it is found that "English proficiency may increase the cultural competence of immigrants by making them more aware of differential treatment and better able to pick up cues" that less fluent speakers might miss (p. 291). This may be also true for foreign-born mothers of the 2.5s

who spend many years in South Korea since they improve their oral communication skills and obtain citizenship. Highly educated immigrants may suffer even more since most highly educated immigrants were more likely to perceive negative interpersonal treatment (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010).

How teachers and teacher educators understand or create the reception context of their own educational settings would also affect native Korean students' attitudes toward immigrants in the long run since "symbolic prejudices formed in pre-adult years may create the basis for highly stable, relatively fixed attitudes toward immigration and immigration policy" (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 202) and "the contribution of education to liberal attitudes on racial policies has often been associated with the learning of tolerance (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 205).

According to Parra and Pfeffer (2006), "integration can be achieved only if certain disadvantages rooted in the social origins of the newcomers are acknowledged and addressed" (p. 82). By discussing the concept of the context of reception as a theoretical framework, it is expected that South Korea-bound migration and immigration issues related to these families can be better explored and understood and this will eventually be of help to Korean teachers teaching children from these families. Since immigrants' experiences are determined not only by their individual skills or attributes but also by a set of circumstances that make the immigrants' lives easy or difficult, the conditions at the host country, society, or community, which can be either favorable or unfavorable, should be considered when we discuss immigration issues.

According to Wasik and Van Horn (2012),

Immigration has a direct influence on the host country, giving rise to educational, social, health, financial, and political issues. Many countries have worked to help

immigrants gain language and literacy skills in the dominant language of the home country, but many efforts are hampered by the low literacy skills of immigrants in their own native country. Given that the literacy skills and educational attainment of many immigrants are below those of their host country, these individuals experience multiple obstacles, from difficulty communicating, finding suitable employment, and providing their children with the kinds of early experiences that can help ensure school success (p. 13).

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT), borrowed from Russian-based literature, is another analytical tool that has been transferred and applied to South Korean settings. The theory was used in this study to ask interview questions, assess and examine the interviewee's responses, and question the language supporting practices in South Korean classrooms.

### **Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT)**

From the viewpoint of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT), assessment and teaching are dialectically fused and instructional intervention functions primarily through understanding learner abilities. In other words, teaching and assessment are inseparable, and teaching strategies or methods can be changed constantly in the middle of educational activities by appreciating learners' abilities and creating their zone of proximal development (henceforth, ZPD).

According to Poehner (2011a), "the learner independent performance reveals only a part of their capabilities and that greater insights are gained through interaction intended to support their development" (p. 100). That is, without a two-way interaction between a teacher and a learner, learners' abilities cannot be fully recognized and it will be hard for teachers to know how the instruction should be carried out to promote student

learning. As Poehner (2011a) noted, "the instructional quality of the interaction begins the process of helping learners move toward overcoming current difficulties" (p. 100).

A few studies have investigated processes of L2 development from a Vygotskian perspective. The theory forms the basis of Dynamic Assessment (henceforth, DA) (Poehner, 2008). Poehner and Lantolf (2010) and Poehner (2011a) provide an introduction to DA and Poehner (2007, 2008a, 2011b), and Poehner, and Compernelle (2011) elaborate on it. Additionally, Ableeva and Lantolf (2011) carried out developmental experimental studies in DA.

Among the studies above, studies conducted by Ableeva and Lantolf (2011), Poehner (2007, 2008a, 2009, 2011b), Poehner and Lantolf (2010), Poehner and Compernelle (2011) were based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT), and employed concepts and principles from the theory by conducting DA. These studies provide both theoretical background and examples of mediator-learner interaction. The mediators carried out DA, based on the theory, and the transcripts were qualitatively analyzed. As this recent work in the L2 field have used Vygotskian theory and employed concepts and principles from the theory, they provide an analytical framework which leads us to design instructional activities and materials: DA and concept-based pedagogies (henceforth, CBP).

According to the studies above, three sets of guidelines can be suggested to teachers teaching a second language to their students, conducting DA. The first guideline is to give students enough educational opportunities. We must provide students who have less control over their second language with ideal educational opportunities with "the opportunities to appropriate the mediational means of development" (Poehner, 2011a, p.

102) by "an intentionally organized (*i.e.*, artificial) activity that restructures mental behavior" (Poehner & Compernelle, 2011, p. 315). In other words, the educational system must increase their access to available forms of mediation by "determining the sources of difficulty individuals experience and the forms of mediation to which they are most responsive" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 103). Thus, the kinds of opportunities for engaging in activities in the classroom that children have can be examined. Teachers should be aware of how language is important for students' daily experiences in their classrooms and the ways in which these second language learners negotiate that. As a part of classroom activity, opportunities for language use and development should be created. According to Poehner (2008a), more open-ended approaches "attempt to interpret unpredicted features of performance that emerge" (p. 46). For example, a mediator may not immediately respond to a learner's attempt to use a certain feature of language, but rather allow the learner an opportunity to reformulate and try to improve their performance by intervening simply to request clarification or asking the learner to repeat the utterance (Poehner, 2008a).

The second set of guidelines is about the teachers' perceptions about students' linguistic abilities. Since Sociocultural Theory of Mind has different ideas on student's abilities than the ideas that traditional non-dynamic assessments have, Dynamic Assessment requires alternative point of view on students' linguistic ability. According to Poehner (2008b), "the purpose of psychoeducational assessment, from Vygotskian perspective, is to understand the full range of individuals' abilities" (p. 42). Guidelines relating to Students' Linguistic Ability are composed of three themes, which are Separate

ZPDs, Developmental Stages, and Differences between individuals (The Size of ZPD and Transcendence).

To start with, teachers should be able to classify their students' linguistic abilities into a few different ZPDs; that is, separate ZPDs, as "it is more appropriate to distinguish separate ZPDs for (different) linguistic features" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 324). As Poehner & Lantolf (2010) noted, "there is no reason to assume that individuals have a single ZPD that extends across all domains of learning or even that encompasses all knowledge and abilities relevant to a given field" (p. 328), and learners' level of ability is not constant for every feature of language but is highly variable (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010).

Next, teachers should not only know whether a student's control over certain features of language is within his or her ZPD but should also know at what stage it is if it is within his or her ZPD. If it is within his or her ZPD, it can be still at an early stage of development (not fully developed) or it can be at an advanced state of maturity (nearly fully formed) (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010). In the latter case, the feature of the L2 will be "at an advanced stage of development" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 325) in his or her ZPD.

Finally, teachers should be aware that students differ not only in their abilities but also in "the extent to which an individual's performance of specified tasks improves when offered mediation" (Poehner & Compernelle, 2011, p. 185), which is ZPD. In other words, "interpretations of their abilities are necessarily based upon their responsiveness to the mediation that was offered, recognizing that any given form of mediation might be more helpful to some individuals than others" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 328).

According to Poehner and Compernelle (2011), "observed differences in individuals' contributions during activity with others is not indicative of fixed capacities but rather proximity - at that specific point in time - to more autonomous, self-regulated functioning" and "this proximity is marked by instability, as individuals may appropriate new means of regulating their functioning even during the course of an interaction" (p. 186). In sum, "two individuals with the same level of actual development, determined by what they are able to do independently of mediation, can project very different future development, determined by their responsiveness to mediation" (Ableeva & Lantolf, 2011, p. 136); that is, "the more responsive children were said to have a large ZPD and the less responsive students a small ZPD" (Poehner, 2008b, p. 35).

In order to "determine how far individuals can extend their new understandings as they encounter novel problems," tasks can be "intentionally rendered more challenging and complex" and "in classroom settings, the principle of continually rendering tasks more challenging as learners improve is essential to continuing to promote development through ZPD activity" (Poehner, 2011a, pp. 106-107). The ability to maintain control over a certain feature of language even when the task has become more complex is "a powerful indicator that this feature of the L2 is at an advanced stage of development" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 325) in one's ZPD. The ones who are able to maintain it will "be expected to attain fully independent level of control over this feature of the language" before the ones who are not able to and the latter "will likely need continued remediation" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 327). That is, some individuals will require more extensive interaction with the mediator and this will take more time. These are the relationships between the differences between individuals and the Size of ZPD and Transcendence.

The last set of guidelines for instruction activities which can be suggested to teachers teaching second language teachers is about mediation. Teachers are required to identify three themes to give proper mediation to their students, which are Implicit to Explicit, The Distribution of Responsibility, and Responsiveness.

To begin with, mediation should be given from implicit ones to explicit ones. According to Poehner and Lantolf (2010), "DA systematizes examiner-examinee or teacher-learner interactions such that individuals may benefit from a range of both implicit and explicit mediation that is attuned to their emergent abilities" (p. 327). In other words, the support offered to the students should be "sufficiently explicit to be helpful to the learner but not so explicit that the mediator takes over more of the activity than is necessary" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 102). Some features of language, which are predicted to be used appropriately far later than other language features, "will likely require extended explicit instruction" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 324). On the other hand, "if learners are able to respond appropriately to an implicit form of mediation, they have already attained a greater degree of control over the educational object than if they require more explicit assistance," and the learners "will require fewer hints and less explicit mediation, an indication that they are improving" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 318). Through participation, "individuals come to rely less exclusively on external forms of mediation and more on representations of mediation that they have internalized" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 101).

Sometimes, a "mediator can be overly explicit in the support he or she offers, and it is not certain whether less explicit mediation would have sufficed" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 324). In this case, by "moving quickly toward a very explicit form of support, a

relevant insight into the learner's knowledge of this type of structure" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 323) can be lost by the mediator. For example, "a more explicit move, such as pointing out the error and asking the learner to correct it, would in fact obscure an important feature" of the learner's abilities (Poehner, 2011b, p. 258). In fact, "the challenge faced by mediators is to provide support that is neither too implicit and therefore ineffective, nor too explicit such that it threatens learner agency and self-regulation" (p. 35), and "mediators should offer the most implicit form of support to which learners respond and should only become more explicit when necessary, thereby ensuring that learners remain as agentive as possible" (p. 40) as Poehner (2008a) noted.

Mediator should also be aware of that "learners' needs are in flux and mediation that is appropriate at one moment may not be at the next" and "must be attuned to learners' reciprocating acts" (Poehner, 2008a, p. 40). For example, "a learner may require very explicit mediation to overcome a problem at one point in a DA session but later, when the same issue arises, much less support is needed" (Poehner, 2011b, p. 260). Secondly, the mediator should ensure the distribution of responsibility between the mediator himself/herself and the learner while the mediator gives mediation to the learner. According to Poehner and Compernelle (2011), "teachers/assessors, or mediators, negotiate the tasks with the learners as co-participants" in a joint activity co-constructed with learners (p. 184). For Feuerstein, "assessors are active modifiers whose priority is to undo predictions based on assessment performance by cooperating with individuals to create a new developmental trajectory" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 102). In other words, "the ZPD is predicated upon a dynamic social situation wherein mediator and learner contributions and responsibilities are in flux, with the forms of mediation changing in

step with learner needs and with learners assuming greater responsibility for performance as they are able" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 101).

While a mediator's responsibility is "engaging as a coparticipant with learners" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 100), "learner participation is far more extensive than simply responding to the mediator" and "the process may be more appropriately described as co-regulation and involves learners' explicit or implicit moves to request, reject, or clarify mediation" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 102). Specifically, learners can "realize the mediation that has been offered is not adequate but must be supplemented with further explanation or additional information and attempt to elicit from the mediator" (Poehner, 2008a, p. 42). In this case, learners can refuse to accept mediation and even request additional support or a specific kind of support. For example, learners can prompt the mediator to further elaborate the mediation he or she had offered (Poehner, 2008a). As a matter of fact, "learners are not yet fully autonomous but they are exercising a form of self-regulation: they know the mediation they require and they know that they are not able to provide it for themselves so they turn to the mediator as a knowledgeable interlocutor" (Poehner, 2008a, p. 44). In other words, the learner is aware of the linguistic resources he or she needs although the learner is not yet able to perform completely independently (Poehner, 2008a).

Thus, "the mediator's responsibility for interpreting a learner's behavior in order to provide appropriate mediation is distributed between the mediator and the learner" (Poehner, 2008a, p. 44). Learners can take over more responsibility according to the situation. For example, mediator's contributions are minimal when he or she initially prompts learner to make selection and seeks only to understand the learner's reasoning. In

this case, responsibility for the performance, resides primarily with the learner (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010). In other words, "responsibility for this performance rests squarely with the learner," when the mediator's efforts are aimed initially at encouraging the learner to make a selection and then "at inquiring into the reasons for the learner's choice" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 321).

According to Poehner (2008a), the mediator's reasoning can "provide important insights into their level of understanding of the underlying principles involved and also helps mediators to fine-tune their support" (p. 39). In fact, "an open-ended approach to mediation carries with it the responsibility to continually reflect upon the range of alternatives that might prove beneficial to specific individuals" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 328). However, "imposing a strict set of categories for interpreting learners' behavior during DA risks overlooking or misunderstanding their contributions" (Poehner, 2008a, p. 41).

Additionally, the chief contribution of the mediator can be only his or her presence as a knowledgeable interlocutor, when the learner turns to the mediator for help evaluating his or her performance, the learner ultimately does not use the mediator's support (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010). In other words, "simply knowing that the mediator was present to offer pedagogical support may have served a mediational function" (Poehner, 2007, p. 329).

Sometimes, on the other hand, the mediator may play an evaluative role. For example, the learner might produce a correct form without help from the mediator, but still need the mediator to determine the acceptability of his or her performance. In this case, the learner "is not yet able to perform completely independently (Poehner, 2008a,

pp. 49-50)", and may use "repetition of the construction with a questioning intonation", inviting "the mediator to provide an evaluation" (Poehner, 2008a, pp. 49).

Lastly, we can consider two kinds of responsiveness, which are mediator's responsiveness and learner's responsiveness, and teachers should understand both mediator's and learner's responsiveness. Participation in an activity of mediator and learner "is mediated in a manner responsive to learner needs" (Poehner, 2011a, pp. 101-102). In other words, "mediation must be aimed at those abilities that are in the process of ripening (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 317), and we can "take stock of processes that are now in the state of coming into being, that are only ripening, or only developing" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 316).

On the other hand, a learner's responsiveness is their responsiveness to mediator's mediation. According to Poehner (2011a), "the purpose of DA is to gauge responsiveness to mediation during the procedure, and therefore changes in learner performance are intended outcome," and "it is a complete lack of responsiveness that would be problematic in DA" (p. 106). In other words, "interpretations of learner knowledge and abilities are broadened beyond observations of independent performance to include their contributions to, and responsiveness during, joint activity with a mediator" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 100). According to Poehner (2008b), "through analysis of their responsiveness during joint problem solving, the researcher can assess their proximal level of development, understood as those cognitive functions that have not yet matured but are only in the process of maturing and which are required for the next age period" (p. 32).

A learner's responsiveness should also be considered when we give the learner new and more complex tasks since an "individuals' responsiveness to mediation as well

as their success in transferring their abilities to new and more complex tasks are necessary to fully understand their development" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 328). In other words, "the evidential basis for interpreting learner abilities is thus expanded beyond a single observation of independent performance, as in most conventional assessments, to include learner responsiveness to mediation as well as their success in recontextualizing their abilities as they encounter new problems" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 316).

In interactionist DA, "mediation is not prefabricated but is instead negotiated with the individual, which means it is continually adjusted in accordance with the learner's responsivity" (Poehner & Lantolf, 2010, p. 318). In DA, "the layering of mediation in the cake metaphor is highly systematic with support negotiated during joint mediator-learner activity and varying in its explicitness depending upon learner responsiveness" (Poehner, 2011a, p. 104). According to Poehner (2011b), "changes to either the forms of mediation required or learner responsiveness is an important feature of DA because it may signal that development is in fact occurring during the session itself" (p. 259).

By applying these guidelines to their teaching, and recognizing children's learning potentials, South Korean teachers could not only become sensitive to but also become able to meet the language needs of Korean children including the 2.5s. This is possible because "learning potentials rather than actual performance levels are indicative of the future success or failure" of "children in school learning" (Kozulin, 1998, p. 41).

In addition, implementing theoretical learning programs (learning models based on Concept Based Pedagogies) (henceforth, CBP) in countries other than the Soviet Union, while considering cultural-historical context, was suggested by Kozulin (2008).

Along with DA, CBP can also play an important part in designing instructional activities and materials. CBP suppose that there are two kinds of knowledge, which are spontaneous concepts and scientific concepts. The former type of knowledge is acquired through and derived from everyday life experience, and such concepts are often unsystematic, inaccurate (Poehner, 2008b), not conscious, and often wrong (Karpov, 2003). According to Karpov (2003), spontaneous concepts are "the result of generalization of everyday personal experience in the absence of systematic instruction" (p. 65). The latter type of knowledge is gained from formal schooling and such concepts "represent the generalization of the experience of humankind that is fixed in science, understood in the broadest sense of the term to include both natural and social sciences as well as humanities" (Karpov, 2003, p. 66).

In order to design instructional activities and materials based on CBP, it is more important to deal with the relationship between the two types of knowledge than simply defining them each. According to Poehner (2008b), spontaneous concepts "provide a basis for the development of scientific concepts" (p. 30). Similarly, Karpov (2003) noted that "spontaneous concepts play an important role in children's learning as a foundation for the acquisition of scientific concepts" (p. 65).

On the other hand, scientific concepts "transform individuals' everyday knowledge by making them aware of their spontaneous concepts but also restructuring them" (Poehner, 2008b, pp. 30-31). In other words, "once scientific concepts have been acquired, they transform students' everyday knowledge," and "the students' spontaneous concepts become structured and conscious" (Karpov, 2003, p. 66). Now, scientific concepts begin to mediate students' thinking and problem solving, and their thinking

"becomes much more independent of their personal experience," thus, "the acquisition of scientific concepts creates ZPD of spontaneous concepts" (Karpov, 2003, p. 66).

Moreover, scientific and theoretical concepts serve as symbolic tools for doing concrete and systemic practical activity (Ferreira & Lantolf, 2008).

Even though scientific concepts are psychological tools which mediate individuals' understanding of the world, the tools should be developed through conceptual studies such as foreign languages and mathematics, and concepts of domains of knowledge and content areas are also unique since they have their own underlying, conceptual and organizational logic (Poehner, 2008b). For example, tense, aspect, and mood are linguistic concepts which Spanish L2 learners should understand (Poehner, 2007). According to Karpov (2003), scientific concepts "should include procedural knowledge relevant to these concepts as well" in order to retain such features like "a high level of mastery, broad transfer, and intentional use by students" (p. 69). Procedural knowledge is subject-domain strategies and skills (Karpov, 2003).

In "the sociocultural view on teaching and learning," the teacher takes a prominent role (Haenen, Schrijnemakers, & Stufkens, 2003, p. 249) by providing students formal definitions and explicit explanations (Karpov, 2003). Scientific knowledge is "the combination of scientific concepts and relevant procedures" and "serves as a powerful mediator of students' subject-domain thinking and problem solving" (Karpov, 2003, p. 69). In order to move learners from the abstract to concrete, "conceptual knowledge is not offered to students solely in verbal form, but it must be materialized in an easily accessible, integrated and concise format" (Ferreira & Lantolf,

2008). Haenes et. al (2003) also adopted a method, using visualization, verbalization, and students' prior knowledge.

## **Applying Vygotskian Theories to Early Childhood Education**

As second language (henceforth, L2) Vygotskian research has not generally addressed questions of L2 development during early childhood, therefore this is an attempt to bridge the findings and insight discussed in Vygotskian research with early childhood education contexts. This is a suggestion to use Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind and the concept of ZPD, which will enable Second Language Dynamic Assessment (henceforth, L2 DA) to be conducted in South Korean settings. As "DA research in the L2 field has been pursued predominantly in classroom settings (Poehner, 2011b, p. 247), it is possible to apply the theory to South Korean classrooms and to conduct a L2 DA for children from immigrant families. They can be either the 2.5, first generation, second generation, or 1.5 generation children. In this case, Korean will be their second language and the language of their country-of-origin or the language of their foreign-born parent's country-of-origin will be their first language. For children from immigrant families, L2 Korean language can be a necessary means to survive as citizens or residents in a host country and overcome the cultural mismatch between their home and the school (Kim et al., 2012), where they are in a different position from Americans learning French as their second language. Children from immigrant families in South Korean classrooms might have more classmates from native South Korean families than those from immigrant families.

Secondly, studies and findings discussed earlier are mostly based upon studies that involve learners older than kindergarteners. Kindergarteners seem to grasp concepts more by everyday experience than by hearing a course of lectures. According to Karpov (2003), how preschoolers acquire spontaneous concepts can be contrasted with how students receiving "properly organized school instruction" (p. 65) acquire scientific concepts, as scientific knowledge is being "directly taught to students rather than being discovered by them" (p. 71). This does not mean that teachers cannot teach scientific concepts to kindergarteners. The problem is how to teach and what to teach when teachers teach Korean language to children from immigrant families. One might argue from a Vygotskian perspective that something which is missing from many teacher education programs is the opportunity to develop a scientific conceptual understanding of one's teaching field. All too often, this level of development must wait for advanced graduate study. As a result, this suggests that such knowledge is not making its way in to pre-K-12 contexts very often.

Since "the acquisition of spontaneous and scientific concepts is the result of fundamentally different types of learning" (Karpov, 2003, p. 69), teachers should understand the difference between empirical learning and theoretical learning. Since both the process and content of school instruction play a decisive role in meeting education goals (Karpov, 2003), CBP can be introduced to kindergarten teachers in South Korea, so that they can take advantage of the underlying principles of CBP.

Lastly, group DA (henceforth, G-DA) seems to have practical implications for kindergarten classrooms in South Korea where have a relatively a high student-teacher ratio and where children from both immigrant families and native South Korean families

coexist. G-DA can provide "a theoretically grounded framework for interactions" (Poehner, 2009, p. 488) for teachers, and enable them take account of a group's ZPD (Poehner, 2009) as well as individuals' ZPD, "by organizing instructional activities around the group's ZPD" (Poehner, 2009, p. 477).

Teachers should not to overlook "the developmental dynamics of groups" (Poehner, 2009, p. 473), since "moving from a one-to-one model of teaching and assessment to a group-focused approach requires an understanding of the relation between development of individuals and development of the group" (Poehner, 2009, p. 474). According to Poehner (2009), "the shifting dynamics of individual relations and goals within the group transform the group into much more than an assemblage of individuals (P. 475)," and "development of the group and development of the individual are increasingly interconnected" (p. 476). South Korean classes which have a relatively high student-teacher ratio can gain insight from the idea that "the development of the group and the individual are interrelated" (Poehner, 2009, p. 477). Teachers can "track development of the individual's ZPD within the broader group ZPD by foregrounding the support offered to an individual within the group and to examine his or her responsiveness" (Poehner, 2009, p. 477).

Teachers take the leading role:

“by engaging learners in tasks that are challenging to all and providing support to benefit all, teachers may foster a more cohesive orientation to classroom activities on the part of students, an orientation in which learners share a common goal of solving problems at hand and appreciate the contributions of others for the realization of both this common goal as well as more individualistic goals" (Poehner, 2009, p. 477).

As a perspective of cumulative G-DA, the mediating potential of the exchange for the rest of the class is of critical importance (Poehner, 2009, p. 484) since the class can participate in exchange as "secondary interactants" (Poehner, 2009). Teachers can "include the other students in the discussion at various points" (Poehner, 2009, p. 484), or "conduct a series of one-to-one DAs" (Poehner, 2009, p. 485). A student having a one-to-one interaction with the teacher in front of other classmates can turn from the teacher and reposition his/her body to face the class for their support, and several other learners (*i.e.*, other classmates) can remember or know what the student cannot and volunteer their support for the student who takes the floor (Poehner, 2009). As children from both immigrant families and native South Korean families coexist in classrooms in South Korea, teachers can encourage native South Korean children to be supporters. Teachers can use their own "inventory of mediating prompts and a mediation chart" (Poehner, 2009, p. 489).

## **Summary**

These topics are covered since they relate to the research questions of this study. For research question number one (How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children?), the topic 'Generational Status,' 'Previous Studies on the 2.5s,' and 'The Concept of Context of Reception' are reviewed. First, by comparing the definition of the 2.5s to that of the other three types of generational statuses (*i.e.*, first, 1.5, second generations), this study forms a clear definition of the 2.5s, the focus of this study. Reviewing other South Korea-based literature on the 2.5s provides a chance to compare the viewpoints of the parents, the teachers, and the 2.5s.

Since the three subjects are interrelated, such comparison helps me understand the dynamics among the three interactants.

Also, this study attempts to apply the concept of context of reception to the South Korean setting in order to (a) explain and understand South Korea-bound migration and immigration issues, and (b) discuss the concept with the participants of this study since the teachers are expected to establish relations with foreign-born parents. It is assumed that the teachers' views and attitudes toward the foreign-born parents could be informed by the concept during interpretation and discussion of the findings.

For research question number two (How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?), Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT) is applied to the South Korean school setting. Specifically, SCT helps examine how the participants of this study support the 2.5's language development and suggests providing South Korean teachers with professional development workshop opportunities in the future in order to help them adopt more effective and efficient teaching strategies. In addition, the application of Vygotskian theories to the Early Childhood setting is also suggested.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODS**

This chapter describes the methodology used to conduct this study and includes the following sections: (1) research design, (2) methods and data collection procedures, (3) participants and setting, and (4) data processing and analysis. The purposes of this study were to examine how do kindergarten teachers perceive and meet (or fail to meet) the needs of the 2.5s and to evaluate the kindergarten teachers by judging the teachers with the aid of Nolan & Hoover's 2011 evaluation standards.

The research questions were as follows:

1. How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children?
2. How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?

## **Research Design**

### An Evaluative Case Study

This study employed an evaluative case study research design and aimed for examining and evaluating how early childhood teachers in South Korea perceived and met the needs of the 2.5 generation Korean children.

A few definitions of a case study are proposed by Stake (1994) and Mitchell (1983, 1984). According to Stake (1994), “As a form of research, case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry use” (p. 435). In other words, “case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied” (p. 435). Thus, designing the study to learn from a single case and to optimize understanding of the case is the case study (Stake, 1994).

Mitchell (1983) defined case study as “a detailed examination of an event (or series of related events) which the analyst believes exhibits (or exhibit) the operation of some identified general theoretical principle” (p. 170). According to Mitchell (1984), case studies are “the detailed presentation of ethnographic data relating to some sequence of events from which the analyst seek to make some theoretical inference” (p. 237) and “the inference from case studies is based on analytical induction” (p. 239).

Mitchell (1983) stated that “the emphasis on case studies is used to relate theoretically relevant characteristics reflected in the case to one another in a logically coherent way” (p. 177). In other words, “the validity of extrapolation” depends on “the theoretically necessary linkages among features” and “cogency of the theoretical reasoning” (p. 183).

To be a case study, it needs specificity, boundedness, and behavior patterns (Stake, 1994). According to Stake (1994), “each case study is a concentrated inquiry into a single case” as “meager resources are concentrated on trying to understand its complexities” (p. 436). “A case study is both a process (the practice of calling the final report) of inquiry about the case and the product (a case record) of that inquiry” (p. 436).

By applying Stake’s 1994 identification system of case study, the case study presented in this paper is instrumental since they were the teachers of the 2.5s who faced educational issues. Though two teachers were examined, comparison between the two was minimized and each teacher’s uniqueness and complexity (Stake, 1994) was highlighted.

Standards may “offer guidelines for evaluators in planning the design of evaluative studies” (Borman et al., 2006, p. 126). From the outset of this case study, some hypothesized patterns of findings were stipulated (Yin, 2006) with the aid of Nolan & Hoover 2011 evaluation standards and example indicators: the teacher “sets high expectations for all students and respects the dignity of each student” (p. 64); the teacher “communicates regularly with families concerning their children’s performance” (p. 64); the teacher “uses effective questioning to promote and assess student understanding of content” (p. 63); and so forth. Data were collected to determine whether this pattern had actually occurred (Yin, 2006). In addition, both the concept of context of reception and Vygotskian theories were applied and used as the analytical lens for this study, as mentioned earlier.

## **Recruitment Process**

A professor at the university from which I had graduated introduced the two kindergartens to me. I had a brief talk with the principals of two kindergartens. I received a letter on official stationary indicating permission for me to do dissertation research from 2014 through 2015. I asked one of the two principals to be a participant in this study, and she agreed and was later called on the telephone and interviewed.

When I got the IRB approval, I asked the principals of two kindergartens to help me make appointments with the teachers who worked for these kindergartens. This was also a telephone conversation.

Since the children whom I intended to observe were present at the kindergarten, I asked the principal of the kindergarten to forward the informed consent forms to the parents of the children so that I could observe the children when they were at the kindergarten.

The consent process for the teachers took place when the principals of the kindergartens introduced the teachers to me right before the first cycle. The consent process for the principal took place right before the first session of the interview. The consent process for the students took place when I asked the principal to forward the informed consent forms to the parents of the children.

I met the principals of the kindergartens instead of directly contacting the teachers. The teachers were informed about participating in the research in a more familiar atmosphere rather than being informed by a stranger. Besides, the principals performed the part of mediator by protecting their teachers from any undue influence from the

research or me. The principal also played the same role of mediator in the case of the parents and the children.

### Consent Documentation

Oral information was provided to the teachers and the principals by me. The consent process was based on HRP-590 - ORP Summary Explanation Research (Exempt Research). Informed consent forms were forwarded to the parents of the 2.5s and other parents by the principal. Since the ages of children ranged from 4 to 5, consent and signature of children's legally authorized representative, who were the parents of the children, was obtained. In other words, consent to participate in this research was documented by the use of an informed consent document that would be signed by the participants' legally authorized representative. Specifically, I asked the principals to forward the informed consent forms to the parents of the students. (See Appendix A) The parents of the students let the principal know by sending back to form with their signatures if they did not want their child to be observed or video-recorded by me. A copy of the signed and dated consent document was provided to the parents. The consent process was based on HRP-590 - ORP Summary Explanation Research (Exempt Research).

## **Participants and Setting**

### Selection of the Schools

Before taking into account the influx of immigrants into South Korea, the influx of native South Koreans into the national capital region in the past should be considered first. Many native South Koreans from other provinces moved to Seoul and Gyeonggi Province (the national capital region) a few decades ago. Large-scale migration occurred from 1981 through 1985 but to decrease since 1992. Especially, satellite cities in Gyeonggi Province started to play a substantial role as host cities for newcomers from other provinces (Lee & Kim, 1996). For example, City B is a planned city that was built to disperse the population and decentralize industries in the capital city, Seoul.

Similar to what happened among native South Koreans a few decades ago, Gyeonggi Province recently has been the most popular destination province for marriage-based immigrants; that is, the marriage-based immigrants there are numerically superior in absolute numbers to the same in any other region. Actually, marriage immigrants started to increase in urban communities from the late 1990s (Park & Ohm, 2007). As mentioned before, Gyeonggi Province is in the national capital region. School A is located at the border between Town A of City B and City A. Town A of City B and City A are the top two administrative districts in terms the number of marriage-based immigrants and the most in Gyeonggi Province. School B is located in the administrative district (Town B of City B) which is one of the top few administrative districts which have the marriage-based immigrants in Gyeonggi Province but not as many as the top two administrative districts which have the most marriage-based immigrants.

According to the National Statistics Office (2012-2013), the number of marriage-based immigrants in Gyeonggi Province (41,293) is greater than that of any other metropolitan city. Among cities and counties in Gyeonggi Province, the number of marriage-based immigrants is greatest in Town A of City B (3,709) and City A (2,559), compared to other administrative districts in Gyeonggi Province.

School A, where Teacher A, teacher B, the principal, and the lead teacher worked, was located in City A at the border between Town A of City B and City A. City A is one of the cities in the national capital region. 30.9% of the land is forested and 28.8% is farm land. The local people resides of the city are involved in fruit farming, pasturing cattle, as well as the floricultural and manufacturing industries. Especially, the floricultural industry has expanded in the district where school A is located (“Encyclopedia of Korean Culture,” 2009).

Teacher C worked for School B in Town B of City A. City A is also one of the cities in the national capital region. The city is filled with residential areas and the local people in the city are mostly engaged in industry and commerce. There is an industrial complex in the district where School B is located (“Ansan Grand Culture,” 2009).

### Selection of The Teachers and The 2.5s

Certain combinations of a teacher and a 2.5 generation Korean child were chosen when I or the teachers had alternative means of access to information about the 2.5 generation child and his/her family members. For example, teacher A was teaching the 2.5 generation Korean child Hyungchul who had an older sister who attended the same kindergarten in 2013 and I had the access to the teacher who taught this older sister. She was the lead teacher for the 2014. This helped me gather more information about

Hyungchul's family background since both children (Hyungchul and his older sister) had the same mother and the father (*e.g.*, the older sister of Hyungchul who went to elementary school and was reported to be having a hard time because of her schoolwork). Teacher B had taught the 2.5 generation Korean child Jieun for two consecutive years so she was expected to have more information about her student and her family members than teachers who have taught their 2.5 generation students for only one year.

These alternative means of access to the information of children and their family members helped me, the teachers, the lead teacher, and the principal better understand the children whom the teachers taught and made interviews more productive. In other words, the teachers, the lead teacher, and the principal likely had comprehensive knowledge of the target child and his/her background with every opportunity to do something by using that knowledge and information. At least, they might have felt the necessity of doing something by using that knowledge or information even if they had not put their motivation into practice yet. For me, I was able to maximize the use of resources available in order to fully explore the complexity of teacher/children/parents/principal/lead teacher relationships.

Thus, I intended to observe the classroom practices of teacher A and teacher B and their students Hyungchul and Jieun, and interview all three teachers (teacher A, teacher B, and the lead teacher) and the principal as well. A combination of a classroom teacher and a 2.5 student was considered as one case. Thus, there were two cases in this study. Each class had only one 2.5 student. According to the principal, there was no specific reason why each classroom had only one 2.5 student. There were a total of four 2.5 students in the school and each one was in different classrooms. Two of them were

four-year-olds and the other two were five-year-olds. The possibility was high that they would be in different classes unless someone intended to put them together since there was little difference in their ages, and there were three or more classes for each age group.

In addition, teacher C was chosen simply because the principal of school B encouraged me to keep in touch with the teacher. Background and demographic questions were asked during the interview in order to collect information relating to years they taught kindergarteners, the years they taught the 2.5 generation Korean children, education, and so forth. Table 2 and 3 provide information about the adults and children in this study, respectively.

**Table 1 Teachers**

Teacher (pseudonym)	Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Teaching the 2.5	Age	Educational Background	Number of Years Employed in the School	Certification	Workshop Experience about the 2.5s
Teacher A (Eun-ha)	2 years	1 year	24	4-Year University	2 years	Teacher's License from Ministry of Education (MINED)	No
Teacher B (Yi-seul)	3 years	2 years	24	3-Year College	3 years	Teacher's License from MINED	No
Lead Teacher (Joo-im)	6 years	2 years	25	4-Year College	6 years	Teacher's License from MINED	Yes
Principal (Won-jang)	22 years	None	46	Master's Degree	10 years	Principal's License from MINED	Yes
Teacher C (Yoon-ji)	4 years	None	25	Master's Degree	4 years	Teacher's License from MINED	No

**Table 2 The 2.5 Generation Korean Children**

Name (pseudonym)	Sex	Language	Age	Mother's Occupation and Country-of-Origin	Father's Occupation	Number of Siblings
Hyungchul	Boy	Korean (Monolingual)	5	Factory Worker (The Philippines)	Bus Driver	1 (Older Sister)
Jieun	Girl	Korean (Monolingual)	4	Homemaker (Mongolia)	Unknown (worked at a provincial town)	0

## **Methods and Data Collection Procedures**

### Interviewing

Semi-structured interview questions were oriented toward the concept of context of reception from U.S.-based literature and the imported pedagogical constructs (*i.e.*, ZPD and L2 DA) from the Vygotskian tradition. How I framed follow-up questions were also oriented to the concept of context of reception and Vygotskian theories. Some interview questions were intended to probe for the interviewees' understanding about the concepts or the constructs since their knowledge about concepts or theories was assumed to be related to their perceptions about the needs of the 2.5s. For example, if a teacher had

known about the existence of co-ethnic communities that a foreign-born parent had a connection with, the teacher might have noted some kind of help that the parent could have been receiving from the community. On the other hand, if a teacher responded that the language ability of the 2.5s was delayed, the teacher would have been asked to clarify how and how much it was delayed in follow-up interview questions. Also, the teacher would be asked about the features of language the 2.5 had found difficult.

In such ways, the interview questions were carefully phrased in order to elicit comments, responses, and information from the interviewee that would help answer the research questions. The interview questions were differently phrased by using terms that were assumed to be easier for them to understand. For example, rather than them asking questions like ‘Could you compare a 2.5 generation Korean child to an 1.5 generation child?’ the researcher asked, ‘Could you compare a Korean child who has only one foreign parent to a foreign-born child who migrated to South Korea at an early age?’

The interview questions aimed to get the teachers to talk more specifically about how they perceived the needs of the 2.5 generation Korean children compared to other children and how they were or trying to meet the needs of the 2.5 generation Korean children. However, certain interview questions were intended to elicit information to see whether the teachers seemingly were using the concept and theory as a basis for practice, or were they seemingly teaching in a way that runs counter to or violates the basic principles of the theory. In other words, some interview questions had the intention of trying to discern discrepancies or practices incompatible with the concept of context of reception or the theory of Lev Vygotsky with respect to ZPD and L2 DA.

Topical interviewing is to “conduct interviews to obtain data that will be instrumental for understanding teacher conceptions.” In other words, interviews can be carried out in search of teachers’ “opinions, perceptions, and attitudes toward some topic” (Glesne, 2011, p. 104). Thus, in this study, teachers’ opinions and perceptions about the needs of the 2.5s and views and attitudes about the 2.5s were explored by interviewing them.

Since the interview was semi-structured, the order of interview questions varied somewhat based upon considerations having to do with the natural flow of the interview as a conversation. The interview questions were carefully framed and shaped based on Glesne (2011), Patton (1990), and Seidman (2006). The interviewer’s logical order may “be sundered by the psychological order that emerges” from the interviewees’ order (Glesne, 2011, p. 109). For example, the respondent might bring up a topic of a later item so it will become for them an earlier occurring topic to discuss in the interview.

According to Seidman (2006), “the interviewers arrive with preset questions to which they want to gather data” (p. 91), however, “the questions most used in an in-depth interview follow from what the participant has said” (p. 92). Nevertheless, the interviewer may refer to the interview guide and raise an issue that has not been touched upon (Seidman, 2006).

### Observation

Classrooms were observed by me a few days prior to each interview session. Observations were made for a few purposes. First, it was for obtaining observational data for in-depth/follow-up interviews. Specifically, some interview questions were based on

the observations and were asked of the teachers, with probes and follow-up questions. According to Glesne (2011), “the main outcome of participant observation is to better understand the research setting, its participant, and their behavior” (p. 66) and “interview questions that develop through observations are connected to known behavior, and their answers can therefore be better interpreted” (p. 63).

One of the participant observer’s roles is “being present in everyday settings that enhances” the observer’s “awareness and curiosity about the interactions taking place” (Glesne, 2011, p. 91). Since South Korea has a relatively high student-teacher ratio, extra children were present who were out of the teachers’ sights. However, I was able to observe the performances, speeches, and behaviors of those children. Since I video-recorded the occurrences at the same time I observed them, some video streams included some blind spots of the teacher. I wore a necklace camera and kept the camera turned on as long as I could during the observation. Those video streams were shown to the teachers when needed. I picked video streams which were considered significant enough to likely elicit useful information from the teachers that could help answer the research questions. According to Glesne (2011), “videotapes may be played and replayed, analyzed frame by frame, as a means for close observation aimed at uncovering the practices by which people perform some aspect of their everyday lives” (p. 81) and observation can be used “as a guide for question development” (p. 81) for interviewing.

The second purpose of observing the classroom was complementarity. Complementarity refers to “the overlap as well as differences in data that may emerge” (Borman et al., 2006, p. 128). It is to “measure overlapping but also different facets of a phenomenon, yielding an enriched, elaborated understanding of that phenomenon”

(Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989, p. 258). It also “seeks elaboration, enhancement illustration, clarification of the results from one method with the result from the other method” (Greene et al., 1989, p. 259). Thus, observations reduced the possibilities of the teacher giving false or inaccurate information to me since I had seen the classroom activities and the contexts with my own eyes. Observations would not only discourage teachers from telling a deliberate lie, but also would enabled me to detect inconsistencies between what I had observed in the classroom and what I heard from the teachers during the interview. In such cases, teachers would be asked to explain why such inconsistencies were seen by me. Actually, inconsistency is a frequently occurring outcome from a triangulation strategy (Mathison, 1998). Triangulation refers to “the designed use of multiple methods, with offsetting or counteracting biases, in investigations of the same phenomenon in order to strengthen the validity of inquiry results” (Greene et al., 1989, p. 256). According to Stake (1994), triangulation “has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (p. 443). In other words, it reduces “the likelihood of misinterpretation” (p. 443). It is “used for the purpose of convergence” (Borman et al., 2006, p. 128), corroboration, and correspondence (Greene et al., 1989) of results.

The combination of one observation (5 hours) and one interview (90 minutes) was considered as one cycle. The number of observation-interviewing cycles was four for each teacher. Some sensitive questions (*e.g.*, background and demographic questions) were asked only after the researcher built trust and rapport with the teachers. Some artifacts of the 2.5 generation Korean children were requested of two classroom teachers respectively.

Considering the purpose of observation as complementarity, the purpose of interviewing the principal and the lead teacher was data triangulation, which involves “using different sources of information in order to increase the validity of a study” (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011, p. 1). The matters that were addressed to the classroom teachers or that brought up by the teachers were also asked of the principal and the lead teacher as well. Though the principal and the lead teacher were not necessarily expected to be more straightforward or more knowledgeable, interviewing them was an attempt at inquiring into the true state of things. Furthermore, the views and attitudes of the principal and the lead teacher helped me better understand what was going on in the kindergarten as a whole. This was possible since the expected responsibilities pertaining to principal and the lead teacher’s jobs were not the same as those of classroom teachers. The principal was the director of the kindergarten and had decision-making authority in the kindergarten. The lead teacher’s job was undertaking secretarial work in the principal’s office including taking care of guests to the kindergarten. Since children came to and left the kindergarten either by the school bus or in company with their parents, the lead teacher had to meet parents and direct children to and from the school bus. The principal’s office was located on the first floor, close to the main entrance of the kindergarten. The lead teacher and the principal stayed at the office most of the time but the principal stayed away from the office from time to time. The principal and the lead teacher of the kindergarten were interviewed twice, each time individually. First interviews (90 minutes each) were carried out when the classroom teacher observation-interviewing cycles were about a half done, and the second interviews (90 minutes each) were held after all cycles were done.

The purpose of interviewing another teacher (teacher C) from another kindergarten was initiation. Initiation “describes the contradiction as well as fresh perspectives that emerge in the data” (Borman et al., 2006, p. 129). In other words, initiation is seeking “the discovery of paradox and fresh perspectives may well emerge rather than constitute a planned intent” (Greene et al., 1989, p. 260). I interviewed this teacher to compare some practices of the two kindergartens. This was helpful to the inquirer in understanding by comparison the teachers’ viewpoints and the policies that two kindergartens had adopted. To be specific, the perspective on “the systems” that the kindergartens adopted was emerged which was an alternative perspective in evaluating the two classroom teachers. She was interviewed twice (60 minutes each) when the researcher needed some information from the teacher. Table 1 shows the timetable of this data generation.

**Table 3 Observation and Interview Schedules**

<b>Teacher A : November, 2014 – February, 2015</b>	
11/18/2014	First Observation
11/20/2014	First Interview
12/1/2014	Second Observation
12/4/2014	Second Interview
1/12/2015	Third Observation
1/16/2015	Third Interview
2/2/2015	Fourth Observation
2/5/2015	Fourth Interview

<b>Teacher B : November, 2014 – February, 2015</b>	
11/25/2014	First Observation
11/27/2014	First Interview
12/8/2014	Second Observation
12/15/2014	Second Interview
1/23/2015	Third Observation
1/30/2015	Third Interview
2/10/2015	Fourth Observation
2/16/2015	Fourth Interview

<b>Principal : January, 2014 – February, 2015</b>	
1/19/2015	First Interview
2/16/2015	Second Interview

<b>Lead Teacher : December, 2014 – February, 2015</b>	
12/18/2014	First Interview
2/16/2015	Second Interview

<b>Teacher C : April, 2015</b>	
4/24/2015	First Interview (by telephone)
4/25/2015	Second Interview (by telephone)

Note that the academic year in South Korea starts at the beginning of March and ends at the end of the February. Thus, spring semester was the first half of the academic year and fall semester was the latter half of the academic year. As a result, this study was carried out when the 2014 academic year had almost reached its end. The classroom teachers had already spent almost a year with the children when the researcher first visited their classrooms. As a result, classroom teachers' time spent with their 2.5

students already reached what might be described as a saturation point making this the best time for this study to be conducted. In this study, the word ‘last year’ meant 2013 and ‘this year’ meant 2014. In the same way, the word ‘next year’ was used for 2015. The ages of the children and the teachers were based on the year 2014.

Korean language was used by a bilingual researcher for data generation. Specifically, terminology from U.S.-based literature was translated into Korean so that the teachers could understand the interview questions.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Raw data generated in Korean were translated into English by me, a bilingual researcher. For accurate translation, a mother of two 2.5 generation school-aged Korean children proofread two versions of transcripts, both Korean and English. This editor’s country-of-origin was North America and has lived in South Korea longer than I have. For that reason, she well understood Korean culture as well as Korean language, thus, an accurate translation was possible.

The transcripts were qualitatively analyzed based on Glesne’s (2011) and Seidman (2006). I created a framework of relational categories for my data by doing a thematic analysis and making connections among stories (Glesen, 2011). Specifically, I organized “excerpts from the transcripts into categories” and searched “for connecting between the various categories that might be called themes” (Seidman, 2006, p. 125). As a result, four themes were identified: (1) Communication with the 2.5’s family members, (2) Care from the 2.5’s family members, (3) Language ability, and (4) Gathering and sharing information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's family members.

Though these were common themes for both case 1 and case 2, results are presented separately. For example, for the theme Gathering and Sharing Information, results for case 1 are interpreted according to the ways teacher A collected the information while case 2 provided the results by organizing information teacher B gathered about each family member. This is because teacher A was collecting limited information by using a few alternative methods since she had a poor relationship with her 2.5 student's family members. On the other hand, teacher B gathered information mostly by directly interacting with her 2.5 student's family members; thus, there was almost no other method she had to use to collect information about her 2.5 student's family members.

The concept of context of reception, Vygotskian theories and other relevant materials were also used in data analysis, interpretation, and discussion. As mentioned, the teachers' responses were specifically examined by looking through the lens of the concept and the theory. On the other hand, "analytic technique of pattern-matching the collected evidence against the initially stipulated pattern" (Yin, 2006, p. 118) was used with the aid of Nolan and Hoover's 2011 evaluation standards and example indicators.

### **Data Quality and Trustworthiness**

To increase credibility of this research work a few procedures were used. First, my subjectivity was monitored based on 1980s and early 1990s' interpretivist paradigm that my subjectivity could be either bias or as integral part of research (Glesne, 2011). The way of monitoring was that self-awareness increased through self-questioning and self-reflection. My intention to evaluate classroom teachers (whether they were taking good care of minority children and effectively teaching them in a culturally sensitive

way) was based on my deeply rooted belief that educators must meet the needs of all children taking into account individual differences in ability and background. What fostered such beliefs has its origin in my experience of belonging to many kinds of minority groups throughout my life as a kindergartener, an elementary school student, a senior high school student, and both an undergraduate and a graduate student in universities. (See Appendix B for more information about me) This subjectivity, created over my lifecourse, leads me view minorities through such personal, just, and caring lens (Glesne, 2011). I might have been biased while conducting this research and feeling uncomfortable when I saw a teacher who does not care for her minority student as much as I would have expected. Nevertheless, it was possible for me to generally devote myself to an intensive and objective study of the teachers. Having such lofty expectations about the teachers, I was more than ready to make a thorough investigation into teachers' sensitivity toward minority students. It cuts both ways.

Secondly, for a more trustworthy research, multiple perspectives were used for data interpretation, which was a theory triangulation (Guion et al., 2011). To be specific, to judge whether the teachers perceive or meet the needs of the minority students, the concept of context of reception, Vygotskian theories, and evaluation standards were all used. The concept of context of reception informed the nature of the needs concerning education and school transition in the lives of lower generation minority students and their family members. Their special needs were addressed and suggested by the concept. Vygotskian theories suggested how teachers could perceive minority students' needs in terms of their abilities. The theory also informs how teachers may become effective in supporting their language development and learning. Also, some ideal language

supporting practices are recommended. Finally, a set of teacher evaluation standards offered guidelines for evaluating teachers. According to Glesne (2011), “analyzing work from more than one framework (theoretical triangulation) can lend trustworthiness” to interpretation” (p. 212).

Lastly, limitations were identified in the data collection process. The participants were expected to become defensive in justifying their behaviors since their classrooms were observed and interview questions questioning their practices were asked. For example, questions asking teachers how sensitive they are to the needs of the 2.5s can be interpreted on some levels as being judgmental. As an alternative approach, I pretended to give undivided attention to the children, not to the teachers. By doing this, I was able to elicit responses, information, and comments from the participants without giving offense to them.

Another limitation was that member checking was almost impossible. I did not even think about asking the participants such questions like, “I think you are not sensitive to your 2.5 student. Is my interpretation correct?” because the participant would be offended. Thus, I had asked some follow-up questions from previous interviews to verify the accuracy of the data I gathered from the past interviews.

## **The Relationship between the Researcher and the 2.5s**

Though the researcher entered the classrooms for the purpose of collecting data, children viewed the researcher as a student teacher. This was also true for the 2.5 generation Korean children. As the researcher showed interest in the 2.5s, the 2.5s started to turn to the researcher for support. They came closer to the researcher to interact and

play with the researcher, and receive help from the researcher. There was no necessity for the researcher to follow the 2.5 children around because it was the 2.5s who often approached the researcher. They liked to talk with the researcher. Both children told the researcher what they did during the weekends. Also, they talked about their family members. For example, teacher A shared her impression about the relationship between the researcher and Hyungchul:

Hyungchul is dependent on you because he thinks that someone is concerned about him. So he is pleased to see you and even expects to see you as he feels affection toward you. [...] He is dependent on you because you are tutoring him individually. Since you were providing instruction, and at the same time he has demonstrated a growing interest in Korean, he wanted to learn more from you and desired to understand Korean more accurately with your aid.

(Teacher A, Interview, 12/15/2014)

In Jieun's case, on the other hand, she wanted to play with the researcher all the time. She often took the researcher by the hand and walked hand in hand when children had to move to another classroom during the recess. She wanted to have lunch or a snack at the seat right next to the researcher. The researcher was a participant as observer (Glesne, 2011) in that he interacted with the children in the classrooms and took a role as a student teacher.

My relationship with the children reduced my apprehension of being an "awkward newcomer" since "new participant observers often feel timid, sensing that as invaders of someone else's territory, they are unwanted and unnecessary" (Glesne, 2011, p. 92). However, my close relationship with the 2.5 children justified the reason why I was there, making me feel as if I was contributing to their classes.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CASE 1: EUN-HA and HER 2.5 STUDENT, HYUNGCHUL**

This chapter presents the results showing how teacher Eun-ha perceived and met the needs of her 2.5 student, Hyungchul. Four themes identified are discussed: (1) Communication with the 2.5's family members, (2) Care from the 2.5's family members, (3) Language ability, and (4) Gathering and sharing information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's family members.

#### **Communication with the 2.5's Family Members**

In general in South Korea, mothers are expected to be in close contact with their children's kindergarten teachers. However, Eun-ha does not have the phone number of Hyungchul's mother. From the beginning, she only received the phone number of Hyungchul's father from the principal of the kindergarten.

Eun-ha said:

Since the phone number and the address were forwarded to me just like that, I thought I had to talk mostly with his father on the telephone and consult with him about matters related to Hyungchul.

(Interview #1)

Eun-ha even asked the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year about this phone number issue but the only answer she got from her was that it would be better to

just leave it as it stood. Eun-ha reported that contacting a father by phone is an uncommon occurrence:

Researcher: Is it the mother that you usually call on the phone?

Eun-ha: Except Hyungchul's mother.

Researcher: So, one hundred percent of the time you're talking to the mothers except in the case of Hyungchul?

Eun-ha: Yes. It is unusual to call the father.

(Interview #1)

So Eun-ha decided to contact Hyungchul's father instead of his mother. However, she found it hard to have meaningful conversations with his father even when she made the effort to do so:

Teacher-parent conferences can be held either in person or by telephone. Hyungchul's father chose telephone conference both times. [...] Even when I try to provide information concerning Hyungchul and discuss related matters with his father during the teacher-parent telephone conference, the only words I hear from Hyungchul's father are 'Thank you for all the trouble you have taken' or 'You need not go to that trouble' and he hangs up the phone immediately. He never asks me about the level of Hyungchul's reading and writing abilities although this is a question that is frequently asked by mothers.

(Interview #3)

Here Eun-ha seems not to reach an important evaluation standard by not communicating "regularly with families concerning their children's performance" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). In the fourth interview, Eun-ha clarified her attitude toward this matter:

I wish I were good at foreign languages. If I were a good speaker of English, I would talk freely with Hyungchul's mother. But I can't speak English that well so I tried to

get in touch with his father. When I hear, ‘there is no necessity to call me for this reason’ from his father, the only thing I can do is to call him only when something serious happens or just ask Hyungchul to forward messages to his parents. Besides, I encourage Hyungchul to help himself and I tell Hyungchul not to say such things like ‘It’s not my fault, it is mom’s/dad’s fault’ since he is old enough to take care of himself. Under such unavoidable circumstances, though it is not giving up, since teachers are obligated to, I am just doing what I am able to do. [...] I believe that extra attention should be given to him.

(Interview #4)

In this kindergarten, parents have to keep contact with teachers and make necessary arrangements for their child. Communication between the teachers and the parents facilitates complementary cooperation between teachers and parents which tends to benefit the child. Specifically, there are many types of care parents give their children in the form of various types of supplementary support especially providing their child with their own school supplies and helping out with homework. Eun-ha’s perceived needs for these kinds of care, which can be provided by the 2.5’s family members, will be addressed in the next section. Furthermore, the need for Korean language abilities on the part of foreign-born mothers, which Eun-ha brought up, will be considered in the subsequent sections. We will learn more about Hyungchul’s father through in Chapter 6 and a few other sections in Chapter 4.

## **Care from the 2.5’s Family Members**

### Birthdays

This kindergarten celebrates the children’s birthdays with their classmates. On birthdays, both the birthday child and the rest of the children are expected to bring

something, but each a different thing, to the kindergarten. The quality and quantity of the gift a child brings to the birthday party suggests how and how much his or her parents or other family members are involved in this gift giving process. Specifically, the birthday boy/girl must bring a birthday cake which will be cut into pieces and be distributed to every child in the classroom after lunch. The rest of the children are encouraged to bring a birthday present which will be given to the birthday boy/girl. Besides, the birthday boy/girl is allowed to bring return presents which can be given to classmates; however, this culture has been developed by parents, not by the kindergarten or the teachers; and it is not considered to be a requirement among teachers.

Eun-ha shared two kinds of anecdotes: when Hyungchul was not the birthday boy and when he was the birthday boy. First, in the case when Hyungchul was not the birthday boy, she shared her impression of what happened with an air of satisfaction. Eun-ha began her talk by letting the researcher know how many times he brought birthday presents for birthday children when he was not the birthday boy:

Hyungchul brought a birthday present five times when he had 22 chances throughout the year. I think Hyungchul's mother is taking good care of him. Hyungchul said, 'I asked my mom.' The teacher who taught him last year told me that the number of presents he brought last year was close to zero. From the end of spring semester, he seemed really trying to bring a present. He said he had asked his mother though the gift wrapping seemed not to be new. Even though the wrapping was worn off in places, I felt a sense of gratitude to his mother. What was praiseworthy was that he said it was his duty. When Hyungchul forgot to bring a birthday present, he said 'Oh! I forgot.' Then I just told him that that's okay because some children bring the present on the next day. Birthday boys and girls also bring return presents, such as cookies or snacks. Some teachers think that some children do not have a sense of shame when they receive return presents without bring a birthday present. I think what Hyungchul thinks is the most important. His mother might have been making an effort in her own way. How can I know all the details what is going on in his house?

(Interview #1)

A few months later, Eun-ha shared some more thoughts about what had happened recently:

I do not know the reason but the number of birthday present children bring to the kindergarten has decreased slightly. Because we are reaching the end of this academic year, because most of the children had already celebrated his or her own birthdays, because parents just lost their interest, or because they do not check the letter from the kindergarten? So for the first time, I sent memos to the parents, by sticking them on the children's lunch boxes or their pocket notebooks, which said, 'Tomorrow is XX's birthday, so with sincerity, please send us a small present.' The next day, everyone brought a birthday present. Hyungchul also brought his. He said that the present, a ruler, is the one that he brought back from the presents he had received when it was his own birthday. He said that his mother gift-wrapped it for him. I think Hyungchul is very good at forwarding messages and he is trying to take care of himself.

(Interview #4)

On the other hand, when Eun-ha was talking about the case when Hyungchul was the birthday boy, she touched on some issues relating to return presents and the birthday cake. Since the return present is not a requirement, Eun-ha just informed Hyungchul's father that only one birthday cake was needed in order to celebrate Hyungchul's birthday. Specifically, since 'giving return presents' is a culture developed by the parents, Eun-ha did not mention the return present at all. At the same time, Hyungchul's father did not ask such questions like 'How many return presents should my child bring to the classroom?' which is the question often asked by other parents.

Before examining the issues that Eun-ha had touched on, three points are addressed here. First, the maternal role in making arrangements for her child's birthday party is a pattern of gender inequality in South Korea. (See *Previous Studies on 2.5s* in

Chapter 2, p. 18) However, Hyungchul's father took over a portion of the work that was assigned to Hyungchul's mother by discussing the event with Eun-ha; the father usually answered Eun-ha's phone call in Hyungchul's case. Secondly, the birthday party required some kind of knowledge about birthday cakes and presents, which can be described as a form of cultural capital that parents must have to meet the educational institution's formal and informal expectations. Thirdly, Eun-ha did not consider whether Hyungchul's parents had this knowledge in that she only provided minimal birthday party information on this.

The first issue was about the absence of a return present. Actually, the child who had celebrated his birthday right before Hyungchul also did not bring return presents. One classmate, who is a girl, asked the teacher why Hyungchul and the earlier one did not bring the return presents. Eun-ha told me that she had taught the girl who brought up the question about absence of return presents that a return present is not a requirement and we should not think of return presents as being a matter of course. At this point, Eun-ha seemed to take a skeptical view of the return present culture. However, right after that, Eun-ha started to make contradictory statements to me, as if she was fostering the return present culture, by having a regard for Hyungchul's feelings and by considering the return present in relation to the size of the cake.

Eun-ha said:

When that girl asked me about the absence of return present, children were all together and were about to do an activity. The classroom was a little noisy. Since I heard what the girl said, I was reading Hyungchul's face. I thought Hyungchul failed to hear what the girl was complaining about so I thought that was the fortunate part about this return present issue.

(Interview #2)

Eun-ha continued:

Still, the child who celebrated his birthday right before Hyungchul brought a very big birthday cake. Some was even left over despite the fact that each child had a big slice. However, Hyungchul's cake was kind of small. Naturally, the amount of cake a single child could have was not that much. Children even complained, 'This is it?' I just told the children that they should accept the piece of cake thankfully regardless of the size, but I was again studying Hyungchul's face.

(Interview #2)

When children complained about the absence of return present and the size of the cake, Eun-ha taught the children that those are not the things to question; however, something else was in Eun-ha's mind. On the teacher's premise that Hyungchul should have had done something better, she was having a regard for Hyungchul's feelings, such as studying or reading his face, when children complained about Hyungchul's cake and return present preparation. In other words, if the teacher had a firm belief that the presence of return present and the size of the cake is really not a problem, she might have not studied Hyungchul's face when the children complained. Eun-ha even went further by comparing Hyungchul's parents with other mothers. Eun-ha said, "Very big cakes should be ordered few days before the party day. Some mothers who do not know this and fail to prepare in advance either purchase the biggest one in the shop or buy two cakes." (Interview #2) In this way, Eun-ha expressed a lack of satisfaction as if Hyungchul's parents did something wrong.

Though I did not ask Eun-ha about the birthday presents Hyungchul received, she stepped the line by saying, "The amount of birthday presents did not decrease due to the fact that it was Hyungchul's birthday." (Interview #2) This statement reminds us a quote from the first interview (Interview #1) when Eun-ha said, "Some teachers think that some

children do not have a sense of shame when they receive return presents without bringing a birthday present.” We can assume that Eun-ha as well as ‘some teachers’ who Eun-ha mentioned seek the balance between what the birthday boy/girl brings and what party guests bring. When Eun-ha was asked who was involved in choosing Hyungchul’s birthday cake she replied that it was Hyungchul himself who picked the small cake and he had indicated his preference in the design of the cake, not the size of the cake. If the teacher did know that the quality and quantity of the item a child brings to the birthday party clearly shows how and how much his or her parents or other family members are involved in the process of supplying a gift, couldn’t she have had informed Hyungchul’s parents about the expected size of the cake and the existence of return present culture? If not, she should have been more firm in her belief that that the presence of return present and the size of the cake is really not to be a problem. However, she did not explain such details to Hyungchul’s parents and, at the same time, she failed to maintain such convictions to the end. This issue will be explored again in the subsequent sections or in other chapters.

### Homework

Another type of supplementary support children are expected to receive from their parents is helping out with homework. In Eun-ha’s classroom, there are three kinds of pocket notebooks which are used for homework: ‘*Play with Words and Letters notebook*,’ ‘*I Love Books notebook*,’ and ‘*Play Record notebook*.’ *Play with Words and Letters notebook* is divided into four sections: weekly promise [making a statement that a child will do something within the week and checking whether or not that prediction has

been fulfilled at the end of that week], English, corresponding with parents, and children's poem. *I Love Books* is kind of a book review notebook. *Play Record* notebook is for planning and evaluating one's own play. All three notebooks should be brought back to the teacher once a week with parents' comments and signature. Without parents' support, homework is generally left unfinished:

In the case of *Play with Words and Letters* notebook, when their children do not know how to write letters, mothers usually write letters on an extra sheet of paper and then the child copies them onto his or her notebook. These days, children mostly write letters by themselves. At the beginning, 22-23 children among 29 brought back *Play with Words and Letters* notebooks. But these days, since it is the end of this academic year, 15 or fewer brings back the notebook. However, from the beginning Hyungchul didn't bring back any of his notebooks.

(Interview #4)

In the case of *Play Record* notebook, mothers usually review their children's play and sign the notebook though some parents think that it is a bother. Some children bring the notebooks back without doing anything. Hyungchul often forgets bringing back his *Play Record* notebook. When Hyungchul did bring his back, I noticed that there were very few times that his parents actually signed the notebook.

(Interview #1)

On the fourth interview day (Interview #4), Eun-ha reported that Hyungchul completely stopped bringing back his *Play Record* notebook. I also could not see Hyungchul planning or evaluating his play with his *Play Record* notebook during all four observations. Eun-ha has already shared her thoughts on the support parents provide for their children in the first interview (Interview #1) few months ago:

There is no parent who does not care for his or her child. But I know that some parents are just placed in kind of difficult situations. There is no parent who will ignore when their child requests, 'I have to take a birthday present to the kindergarten.' By some

means or another, they will try and send a gift to the kindergarten. Perhaps, Hyungchul is subjected to the influence of his foreign mother. There are some children whose parents are too busy to take care of their child but, in Hyungchul's case, in addition to the help needed for *Play with Words and Letters* notebook, he still needs someone else's help, but his mother does not know how to read or write in Korean. A lack of complementary cooperation between teachers and parents, like homework notebooks, lasted for almost two years and how Hyungchul deals with them also lasted for two years up to now. Of course there are some children who bring those notebooks by themselves and there are some children who do only when the teacher mentions it, however, Hyungchul is just continuing what he was doing for a long time. He is just not doing it.

(Interview #1)

Again, Eun-ha mentioned the language ability of Hyungchul's mother. This will be explored in the next section.

## **Language Abilities**

### How Eun-ha Perceives and Tries to Meet the Needs in Hyungchul's Language Abilities

Eun-ha said Hyungchul is one of the students who still find reading and writing difficult. She argued that Hyungchul's low reading and writing ability level is not necessarily related to his mother's foreignness and it rather is a matter of parents' character and the educational environment of the child. Eun-ha reported that there are some other students whose reading and writing abilities are similar to those of Hyungchul. When Eun-ha talked about Hyungchul's speaking, on the other hand, she argued that it is difficult to detect the existence of foreigner as Hyungchul's mother only by listening to Hyungchul's speech for the reason that his foreign mother speaks Korean as well as

foreign language. Similarly, how Eun-ha makes connections between Hyungchul's language ability and the foreignness of Hyungchul's mother is inconsistent with Hyungchul's ways of using Korean. In other words, she argued that Hyungchul's written language has nothing to do with his mother's not being a native South Korean, however, she believed that his spoken language is connected to the language usage of his mother. At this point, we cannot know whether the teacher was trying to deny any possibility of negative impact of mother's foreignness on child's language ability. At least, we can assume that Eun-ha acknowledges the influence of parental quality of being native on that of the child by her statement, "Hyungchul seems to spend more time with his father than his mother and this obscures the fact that his mother is a foreigner" (Interview #1). The teacher's attitude and views on the influence of having a foreign-born mother on Hyungchul's language development will be further explored while suggesting the language abilities of Hyungchul's foreign-born mother according to Eun-ha. Now, it is time to see how Eun-ha assessed the level of Hyungchul's reading and writing ability, either together or separately, and how she sought to support Hyungchul's language development.

Children at this kindergarten were doing reading and writing activities as one of their extra-curricular activities. The kindergarten made it a rule to use Korean alphabet textbooks from the point when children become 3.5 years old. Eun-ha defined her attitude toward these reading and writing activities as an order given from the principal of the kindergarten:

I am a teacher just out of university. Even though I got some practical experiences while being trained to be a teacher, I really didn't know what was actually going on in

the field. When I first came to this kindergarten as an in-service teacher, there were a lot of extra-curricular activities I needed to undertake. Reading and writing activities were some of the ones that begin in the second semester of three-year-old classrooms. They were using Korean alphabet textbooks. That's why I am doing this activity in my classroom though I don't take these activities seriously. When I listened to the mothers, however, they had such a high educational aspirations and asked me when such reading and writing lessons begin. They were the mothers of the children whom I taught last year [taught three-year-olds last year]. I think this is why this kindergarten started to provide those lessons. I am doing it anyway but I don't even know well about the nature of the textbooks and neither do I think that these activities are important. I set my sights low. Even if the textbooks are too difficult for the children, that's okay. Learning will come natural to the children. Anyway they will start learning the Korean alphabets when they become elementary school students.

(Interview #2)

Like this, Eun-ha reported that she was compelled to teach the Korean alphabet to her students, regardless of her will. She talked about how Hyungchul was doing with these activities:

The level of the textbooks that Hyungchul is using is not that high. What the textbooks require from him is to be able to read the following characters: ‘가’ [sounds like GAH], ‘나’ [sounds like NAH], ‘다’ [sounds like DAH], ‘라’ [sounds like RAH], ‘마’ [sounds like MAH], ‘바’ [sounds like BAH], ‘사’ [sounds like SAH], ‘아’ [sounds like AH], ‘자’ [sounds like JAH], ‘차’ [sounds like CHA], ‘카’ [sounds like KAH], ‘타’ [sounds like TAH], ‘파’ [sounds like PAH], and ‘하’ [sounds like HA]. The aim of the lesson for him is to know which words have these letters as a component. In addition to the reading and writing activities you may have observed in my classroom, which were done as a large group, I call them on the next day separately during their play time or picturebook reading time for one-on-one teaching and help them write correctly or explain things that they find it difficult. Those word components are still above Hyungchul's comprehension even if I tutor him individually. Other students might have been taking private lessons outside the kindergarten because their mothers worry about schoolwork that their children might have to do after entering elementary

school. In Hyungchul's case, however, what he does at kindergarten is everything. As I heard, he spends a lot of time with his older sister at home. Since Hyungchul is very much interested in learning Korean word components and his older sister will have a favorable influence upon his learning, I think Hyungchul will become aware of those components soon. As I told you, he is now learning word components such as '아' [AH], '자' [JAH], '차' [CHA], '카' [KAH], '타' [TAH], '파' [PAH], and '하' [HA]. He keeps on learning them but still finds it difficult. I am also teaching him how to write correctly. When he is learning the word component '차,' we look at the word '유모차' [which means a baby carriage, and it pronounced YOU-MO-CHA], then I read aloud '유' [YOU] and '모' [MO] for him, so that he can read the next component '차' [CHA]. At this point the only thing he needs to know is '차' [CHA]. One day, an elementary school teacher made a visit to give a lecture to the parents. I learned from the lecture that children will start over learning the Korean alphabet from the first consonant when they become elementary school students. Hyungchul shouldn't have trouble to do his schoolwork then. For now, I have no option but to try and do what I can do for him, using those textbooks.

(Interview #2)

Eun-ha's attitude toward those activities seems to be quite clear; however, how she assesses the level of Hyungchul's reading and writing abilities and how she sought to support Hyungchul's language development require further examination with more examples. I had a few chances to observe activities in her classroom, including reading and writing activities, and examine carefully at Hyungchul's performance, speech, and behavior. After the observation, I asked the Eun-ha about what I had observed. Some video streams were shown to the teacher, when needed.

In the first interview (Interview #1), the teacher saw a video stream from the first observation (Observation #1) that Hyungchul trying to read, but failing to read, three-letter words, '마림바' [marimba, pronounced MAH-RIM-BAH] and '당비파' [a Korean

traditional musical instrument, pronounced DANG-BEE-PAH], written in some teaching materials. They were the names of musical instruments. Eun-ha shared her thoughts:

Hyungchul doesn't know how to read well yet. These days, since mothers teach their children ahead of school curricula by sending them to private institutes or have them take private lessons, every child in my classroom, except for five or six, knows how to read. But Hyungchul is one of the five or six children who cannot read. When I give Hyungchul one-on-one lessons, I see Hyungchul figuring out what the words are not by reading the letters but by looking at the pictures drawn right next to the words. He tries to read relatively simpler words, such words that only include letters without consonants placed under a vowel [words that only include letters with one consonant]. I think he is guessing rather than reading. I think Hyungchul picked those three-letter component words [names of musical instruments] because he might have thought that such relatively short words would be easier than reading sentences in a picturebook.

(Interview #1)

For now, the teacher mentioned at least one feature of component that Hyungchul finds difficult, which is the letter with 'consonants placed under a vowel.' Each Korean word component is made up of combination(s) of consonant(s) and vowel(s). For example, the letter '가' is composed of a consonant 'ㄱ' which is pronounced like G and a vowel 'ㅏ' which is pronounced AH. Thus, the component '가' sounds like GAH because it is a combination of G sound (ㄱ) and AH sound (ㅏ). Consonants placed under a vowel, which Eun-ha mentioned, is an additional consonant that can be placed under a vowel. For example, if we add a consonant 'ㄴ' which sounds like N to the letter '가,' it becomes '간' and it is pronounced like GAHN because it is a combination of GAH sound (가) and N sound (ㄴ). Eun-ha thought that Hyungchul finds components without such extra consonants easier. She gave an example of a word that is challenging for

Hyungchul when the teacher saw the video stream (Observation #2) in the second interview (Interview #2) that shows Hyungchul struggling to read the letter ‘장’ [JANG] by repeating loudly ‘자’ [JAH] and ‘장’ [JANG] again and again.

She commented:

In case of ‘자장가’ [lullaby, pronounced JAH-JANG-GAH], Hyungchul might know how to read ‘자’ [JAH] and ‘가’ [GAH]. When he tries to read ‘장’ [JANG], he might become aware of the existence of consonant ‘ㅇ’ [sounds like ANG when it is placed under a vowel] that is placed under the letter ‘자’ [JAH]. He is going through these kinds of cognitive processes. He is progressing gradually.

(Interview #2)

She continued:

When Hyungchul cannot figure out what the letters are by looking at the picture, it is purely a question of the letters. He knows how to read letters that have the vowel ‘ㅏ’ [AH] and ‘ㅑ’ [UH]. These are the ones he tries to read. But there are some letters that he is still at a loss for. ‘ㅓ’ [OH], ‘ㅠ’ [YOU], ‘ㅡ’ [EU], and ‘ㅣ’ [EE] are the vowels that pose difficulty for him.

(Interview #2)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions about the features of the letters that Hyungchul finds it difficult were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: How is Hyungchul doing with vowels these days?

Eun-ha: He is at the stage of learning vowels such as ‘ㅓ’ [OH] and ‘ㅡ’ [UE], however, he isn’t really studying the shape or the usage of those vowels. Rather, he understands the letter as a whole. I knew this when I gave him some dictation.

Researcher: Then how about consonants such as ‘ㄱ’ [G], ‘ㄴ’ [N], ‘ㄷ’ [D], and so forth?

Eun-ha: I am not sure about that but when he looks at a word, for example ‘가지’ [eggplant, pronounced GAH-JEE], He might learn the component as a whole rather than

having difficulty with certain consonants. Hyungchul learns Korean characters even in the after-school program. He was repeatedly exposed to the first few consonants 'ㄱ' [G], 'ㄴ' [N], and 'ㄷ' [D] and the first few letters '가' [GAH], '나' [NAH], and '다' [DAH]. However, he might have not been familiar with the last few consonants such as 'ㅈ' [CH] and 'ㅎ' [H]. When I gave him some dictation last Tuesday, I found that he had prepared only one word fully for the examination. I think he wrote the name of the kindergarten correctly. When he learns the Korean alphabet, either vowels or consonants, the first consonant 'ㄱ' [G] always comes first. It has been taught to him frequently. However, the consonants which come later in the alphabet such as 'ㅈ' [CH] and 'ㅎ' [H], might be difficult for him unless he becomes eager to go over to the last part of the list of consonants.

Researcher: When I observed him doing reading and writing activities few days ago [12/01/2014], he was having hard time reading '하모니카' [harmonica, pronounced HA-MO-NEE-KAH]. Why do you think he was not able to read '니' [NEE]?

Eun-ha: I think the consonant was difficult for him.

Researcher: Do you mean the consonant 'ㄴ' [N]? Didn't you say that 'ㄴ' [N] is relatively easy consonant for him since he has had a lot of exposure to it?

Eun-ha: Oh, I mean the combination of consonant 'ㄴ' [N] and the vowel 'ㅣ' [EE]. He is not thinking about such combinations. He wouldn't think, 'I know 'ㄴ' [N] but I don't know 'ㅣ' [EE],' rather, he might not know the letter '니' [NEE] itself as a whole. He might have been studying the shape as a whole, not breaking it down into a vowel and a consonant.

Researcher: When we teach Korean to adult foreigners, we might break letters down into vowels and consonants and they might find this way of learning easier than learning the letters as a whole. But you mean Hyungchul is just learning the letters as a whole?

Eun-ha: Yes. That is what I have learned from the children. Even for the children who know a lot of Korean, not many of them will be able understand that '가' [GYAH] is a combination of a consonant 'ㄱ' [G] and a vowel 'ㅏ' [YAH].

Researcher: Would you tell me little more about the dictation you gave to the children?

Eun-ha: We started giving dictation last Tuesday as preparation for elementary school. On today's exam, Hyungchul was able to write at least one among the five given,

though I do not know whether he received any help from his older sister when he was preparing for the exam. The first question was ‘우리는 하나’ [‘We are one,’ pronounced WOO-REE-NEUN HA-NAH]. He succeeded in writing this one. However, he failed to write ‘친구야 안녕’ [‘Hello my friend,’ pronounced CHIN-GOO-YA AHN-NYEONG] and ‘화가’ [painter, pronounced HWA-GAH]. In case of ‘나의 꿈’ [‘My dream,’ pronounced NAH-EUEE GGOOM], he was able to write only ‘나의’ [NAH-EUEE], as I remember. And the last one was ‘좋아해’ [‘(I) like (it),’ and is pronounced JOE-AH-HAE]. This question had already been asked in Tuesday’s exam but it was also a question for today’s exam because I gave them this question today again since a lot of students in my class failed to answer it correctly last Tuesday. However, Hyungchul wasn’t able to write it correctly either of the times.

Researcher: Among the questions Hyungchul answered correctly, I see few letters with a consonant placed under a vowel, for example, ‘는’ [‘is (are),’ pronounced NEUN]. You once mentioned that Hyungchul is not used to those letters, haven’t you? How was Hyungchul able to write it this time?

Eun-ha: Information on test questions was given to the children in advance. Hyungchul might have not been considering such consonants as a unit. I am not sure whether he received any help from his older sister but I think he practiced them in his own way. When he writes ‘활동’ [activity, pronounced HWAL-DONG], he is not thinking about the structure, but he is seeing and tracing the shape. There are a few other students who do the same thing.

Researcher: How would you compare his reading ability to his writing ability?

Eun-ha: Reading. Most of the children reach the upper-stage levels by skipping a few volumes of the textbook series. For example, each A, B, C, and D textbook is subdivided into A-1, A-2, and so forth. Other children sometimes jump from A-1 to A-5. However, two children in my class, including Hyungchul, always move up to the level of right above the prior one. Since children show a tendency to recognize a word component as a whole, when Hyungchul looks at a word composed of few components, he may think that he is familiar with the word but he knows just one of the few components. At this point, it seems that he is guessing what the word is. About the writing? He is learning the whole word as a unit. When I see him doing dictation, it seems that he is kind of motivated.

Eun-ha reported that in relation to Hyungchul's reading that he has a tendency to consider the word components as a unit, not separate vowels and consonants. She argued that this is also true for other children. According to Eun-ha, once Hyungchul recognizes one of the components in a word, he tries to figure out what the word is by guessing the rest of the components that he is not familiar with. Nevertheless, the Eun-ha acknowledged the fact that some vowels and consonants are more familiar to him than other ones, depending on how much he has been exposed to them. On the other hand, she shared her some insights on Hyungchul's writing that she got after giving dictation to her students. She argued that Hyungchul was able to write words that are composed of letters he finds it difficult since he had memorized the words as a whole, not breaking them into vowels or consonants. In the third interview, she has mentioned some similar patterns in Hyungchul's way of learning, considering a word as a unit, though this one was about his reading. Her point was that Hyungchul as well as many other children have developed a tendency to regard a whole word as a unit and they try to figure out what the word means by guessing. To be specific, the teacher saw a video stream that Hyungchul correctly reading '사람' [human being, pronounced SAH-RAHM] in a graphic novel, when Hyungchul was not able to read many other words in the graphic novel.

She said:

Hyungchul had finished with another textbook. There are some children who learn Korean word components one by one, in regular sequence, by receiving help from their mother. On the other hand, there are children who memorize a word as a whole. I heard that children learn how to read before they know how to write. So there are some children who are almost ready to read though they cannot write. When I see

Hyungchul learning Korean, it seems that he is very much interested. He is one of my students who try to memorize words as a whole. Among many words, these children easily recognize the words that they have regular contact with. For example, every morning we check the daily schedule all together at the carpet area. When they see the word ‘자유선택활동’ [‘child-selected play activities,’ pronounced JAH-YOU-SUN-TAEK-HWAL-DONG] on the white board, they guess and understand what the word means, even though they know only ‘자’ [JAH] among the six components.

(Interview #3)

Having shown that how Eun-ha has assessed the level of Hyungchul’s reading and writing ability, it is time to see how she sought to support Hyungchul’s language development accordingly. In the second interview, she saw a video stream showing Hyungchul having hard time reading ‘스카프’ [scarf, pronounced SEU-KAH-PEU] and ‘하모니카’ [harmonica, pronounced HA-MO-NEE-KAH] when Hyungchul was looking at his textbook. The teacher was asked whether Hyungchul’s familiarity has something to do with the loanword [a word of foreign origin] orthography features of both words.

Eun-ha replied:

These are all reading and writing activities we do. When teachers let children know the schedule of the day at circle time, other teachers might stick cards on the board. In that case, the names of activities might have already been written on those cards. But I do it differently. In order to let the children know the order of making strokes, I write directly on the white board. Sometimes, I write things in the wrong order as a result of being in haste or being pressed for time. In this case, I erase and rewrite them. Children will soon be aware of the words that they have daily contact with, for example, ‘간식’ [snack, pronounced GAHN-SIK], ‘점심’ [lunch, pronounced JUHM-SIM], some names of activities, days of the week, and so forth. I write them on the white board for the students who are still having difficulty with Korean. These are the most reading and writing activities that we do. For words like ‘하모니카’ [HA-MO-NEE-KAH], I think children will not be able to point out such loanword orthography

features yet. We just call this musical instrument '하모니카' [HA-MO-NEE-KAH]. I think the textbook was intend to teach children at his level the letters such as '카' [KAH] and '하' [HA] and that is why such words like '스카프' [SEU-KAH-PEU] and '하모니카' [HA-MO-NEE-KAH] were mentioned in the textbook. I also want him to learn just the letters, (*i.e.*, '카' [KAH] and '하' [HA]), that the textbook encourages the children to learn.

(Eun-ha, Interview, 12/4/2014)

Actually, these comments came right after she expressed her attitude toward the reading and writing activities. She had briefly mentioned already how she helped Hyungchul when he was learning the word component '차' with the word '유모차' [which means a baby carriage, and is pronounced YOU-MO-CHA]. As quoted above, we have already heard that she read aloud '유' [YOU] and '모' [MO] for Hyungchul so that he need only read the next component '차' [CHA]. The teacher's point was that the only letter Hyungchul had to know was '차' [CHA]. Similarly, both the teacher and the level of the textbook did not necessarily require Hyungchul to learn such components as '모' [MO] and '니' [NEE] in '하모니카' [HA-MO-NEE-KAH] nor '스' [SEU] and '프' [PEU] in '스카프' [SEU-KAH-PEU].

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher to ascertain how she sought to support Hyungchul's reading and writing respectively:

Researcher: How are reading and writing related to each other when you seek to support his language development?

Eun-ha: Right before doing writing activity, I ask the class to read aloud some words that we used as examples for writing. When some children are not able to read those words, I learn that those children have difficulty with their Korean. When we have a writing activity, there are two blanks children should fill in: their own names and the name of our class. At first, Hyungchul was not able to write the name of the class. After that, I wrote a sentence that contains the name of the class on a bulletin board. From that point, Hyungchul started to write the name of the class by copying from the bulletin board.

Researcher: How about other children?

Eun-ha: Ones who do not know how to write mostly do like that.

Researcher: Then how do you support them specifically?

Eun-ha: I give them a chance to read. I ask them some questions one by one. As I told you before, I let them know only the words [letters] that they should know at that level. The rest, I read aloud for them. Whether they know these extra words [letters] is a matter of differences between individuals. The more they are interested in them, the sooner they will be aware of them. Of course, they will ask me more questions. I do not take learning Korean characters seriously nor do I think it is important even though mothers would be displeased with my attitude if I expressed it to them. So I am primarily using the textbooks in class. I hope that the children do not get sick and tired of learning Korean due to these activities. I am not a Spartan-style educator.

(Interview #4)

Such instructional strategies of Eun-ha were also described in the same interview (Interview #4) when I showed her a video stream (Observation #4) that showed Hyungchul hiding the entire page of a picturebook with his hands, showing me just a few letters through a gap in his fingers and saying, “Please read aloud only these letters you see” and even repeated my words when I complied with his request. Some questions were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: Why do you think Hyungchul asked me to read aloud only a portion of the book for him?

Eun-ha: We were doing reading and writing activities, and he was learning the letter ‘사’ [SAH]. He had to know that ‘사’ [SAH] is a letter that belongs to the word ‘사과’ [which means an apple, and is pronounced SAH-GWAH] or ‘사자’ [which means a lion, and is pronounced SAH-JAH]. In the textbook, there were some sentences such as ‘사자가 잠을 잡니다’ [which means ‘A lion is sleeping’, and is pronounced SAH-JAH-GAH JAHM-EUL JAHM-NEE-DAH] or ‘사자가 뛰어잡니다’ [which means ‘A lion is running’, and is pronounced SAH-JAH-GAH DDWEE-UH-GAHM-NEE-DAH]. I asked him, “What word component is it?” Then he replied, “사” [SAH]. Then, I read aloud the rest of the sentence for him. And then we go over to the next sentence. In the case of the children who are able to read the whole sentence, I just let them do it. For some children who are at even higher levels, I even touch upon a period or the proper spacing of the words. But for the children who are at the level of Hyungchul, I just let them read ‘사’ [SAH] and then, I read the rest. We just don’t go further. Hyungchul still has difficulty with Korean but it seems that he is very much interested, and I think this is why he asked you to read the book like that. Did he often ask you to do this?

Researcher: No. it was his first time placing his hands over the page.

(Interview #4)

Hyungchul’s putting his hands on the page and asking me to read supports Eun-ha’s argument that Hyungchul was very much interested in Korean. On the other hand, Eun-ha was considering the different kinds of lessons that Hyungchul was receiving. For example, she mentioned language activities that he did in her own classroom and in the afterschool program. She even gave thought to the fact that Hyungchul was not receiving any private lessons, connecting this to Hyungchul’s relatively delayed language development. Parenthetically, receiving private lesson is a widespread occurrence among kindergarteners (See *Previous Studies on 2.5s* in Chapter 2, p. 21). Eun-ha may have

thought that not relying on private education may have slowed his language development even though she seemed to be not in favor of the mothers who taught their children ahead of school curricula.

Nevertheless, she coped with this situation by just teaching him at his own level, giving him tasks that were relatively easier than those given to other children. Here Eun-ha is bringing her teaching practices up to an evaluation standard found in the literature, namely she “differentiates instruction to accommodate the needs and strengths of all learners” (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). However, whether she actually accommodated Hyunchul’s needs and strengths is not clear. This is because simply giving easier tasks to a student at a lower level of performances or understanding, only considering their zone of actual development, would mostly not be effective teaching. Still, the teacher achieved another standard, “uses a variety of instructional strategies that are developmentally appropriate” (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 63). Note also that the recommendations from the National Curriculum Guide of the Nuri-Curriculum Guide Book for Age 3-5 (2013) of South Korea also values children's interest in a subject and recommends that children not be forced to read or write correctly. This is because it is regarded as a more developmentally appropriate approach than that of private education that only emphasizes the effectiveness of teaching without considering children’s interest. The following is a picture of Hyunchul’s writing (Observation #4). The task was to copy sentences from the screen onto his paper. In the fourth interview (Interview #4), the teacher told me that she had made the children copy the sentences in order to train and prepare the children for elementary school:

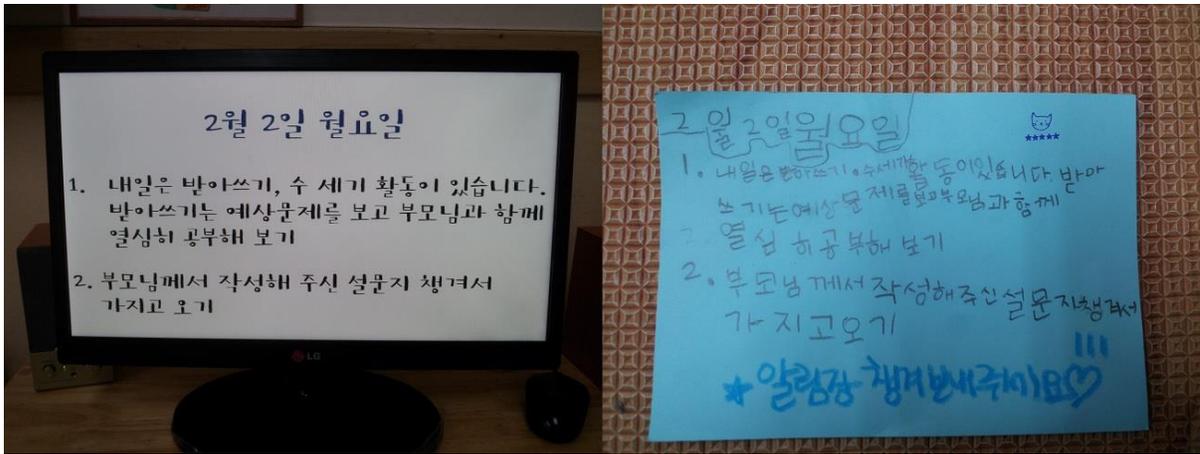


Figure 1. Copying task.

### The Relationship between Having a Foreign-born Mother and Hyungchul's Language Development

Finally, it is time to go back to the question brought up earlier in this section: what are the teacher's attitudes and views about the relationships between having a foreign-born mother and Hyungchul's language development? How the teacher evaluates the language abilities of Hyungchul's foreign-born mother will help answer this question. First, it was in the second interview (Interview #2) that the Eun-ha argued that Hyungchul's low reading and writing ability levels were not necessarily related to his mother being a foreigner; it rather was a matter of the parents' character and the educational environment of the child, as mentioned above:

It depends on what kind of mother and father they are for the child and what kind of environment is provided when the child is being educated. The difficulties that Hyungchul is having in reading and writing Korean are not caused by his mother being a foreigner. There are some other students whose reading and writing abilities are similar to those of Hyungchul. They are the children who were seated around the same table. The fact that Hyungchul's mother is a foreigner may have little or no impact on his learning abilities.

Here she might be trying to suggest another reason why Hyungchul's language development is relatively delayed, in addition to his mother's foreignness. As seen in the previous section, for example, Eun-ha acknowledged the influence of private education on children's language development. In fact, private lessons and institutes must be paid for, thus can strain fiscal resources. This is speculation because we cannot know for sure whether Eun-ha directly linked this to the socioeconomic status of Hyungchul's family; Eun-ha only mentioned 'the character of the parents' and 'the educational home environment' of a child.

Nevertheless, both his mother's language proficiency and literacy skills and his parents' socioeconomic status can affect overall parenting behaviors and skills (See *The Concept of Context of Reception* in Chapter 2, p. 33). How much Eun-ha understands Hyungchul's home environment and her attitude toward this matter will be explored in Chapter 6.

### Maintaining the Kindergarten-provided Notebooks Require Reading and Writing

#### Abilities

Even though the teacher barely acknowledged the influence of his mother not being native South Korean on Hyungchul's abilities in writing and reading, in the first interview (Interview #1), she did recognize the necessity of having a parent who could help him learn Korean through one-on-one teaching:

From the beginning, neither of Hyungchul's parents took on the task of teaching him to read and write. For that reason, the principal of the kindergarten called him

separately for one-on-one teaching and tried to give him some help. Since then, I thought that I should be more concerned about him if his home environment was like that.

(Interview #1)

In the same interview (Interview #1), Eun-ha also mentioned that such help is needed for doing his homework such as writing in his *Play with Words and Letters* notebook, however, his mother is incapable of taking the role since his mother cannot read or write in Korean as previously quoted:

Perhaps, Hyungchul is subject to the influence of his foreign mother. There are some children whose parents are too busy to take care of their children but, in Hyungchul's case, in addition to the help needed for *Play with Words and Letters* notebook, he still needs someone else's help, but his mother does not know how to read or write in Korean.

(Interview #1)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked in order to determine how the teacher perceives the extent of the language abilities of Hyungchul's mother when it comes to helping out with homework:

Researcher: What if Hyungchul wants to do his homework by himself, regardless of his foreign mother's help or her language abilities?

Eun-ha: But, he might have difficulties in doing homework such as filling in answers to items in the *Play with Words and Letters* notebook.

Researcher: What does the homework require from him?

Eun-ha: In case of *Play with Words and Letters* notebook, first, there is a 'weekly promise' section. In this section, children fill in a blank, indicating whether or not they have kept the promise of the week. The second section is 'English.' Children should write down the message from their English teacher that should be

forwarded to the parents. Each week, children will get a new message. The third section is ‘corresponding with parents.’ In this section, parents may give me suggestions or let me know their family circumstances by writing letters to me. There is also a blank space where I can reply to their letters. These three are on the left-hand page. The last one is ‘children’s poem.’ On the right-hand page, I stick a small piece of paper with a poem we shared in class. There, I give them a question so that they can write down their thoughts after reading the poem. This week, for example, I wrote a poem titled ‘The First Day of Elementary School’ after writing the month and the week. The question I gave them was ‘How might you feel on the first day of elementary school? Write down your thoughts.’ Then, the children filled in the blanks that look like a cubed radish kimchi notebook [a notebook that has many square boxes so that children can fill each box with word component] by writing down their thoughts. When they bring the notebook back on Wednesdays, I write a reply, put a stamp on it, and then send them back to their homes on Thursdays. Secondly, in case of *I Love Books* notebook, children do either ‘finding a word that starts with the first word’s last letter,’ ‘drawing a scene that remains in their memory,’ or ‘making a concept map by picking words from the book.’ They do this book review homework with two books each week that they have checked out from the kindergarten and they bring back the books on Wednesdays.

(Interview #1)

As the teacher described, this homework requires reading and writing abilities in Korean. This explains why the teacher thought that Hyunchul “might have difficulties in doing homework such as *Play with Words and Letters* notebook.” As quoted previously, this teacher has said that other mothers “usually write the words on an extra sheet of paper and then the child copies them into his or her notebook.” Realistically, it would be difficult for Hyunchul’s mother to do this for her son if the teacher’s evaluation that “his mother does not know how to read or write in Korean” is true. The state of things also

suggests why Hyungchul “didn't bring back any of his notebooks from the very beginning.”

The follow-up questions were:

Researcher: How much do his parents help him with the notebooks?

Eun-ha: It is not working at all.

Researcher: How frequently did he bring back his notebooks?

Eun-ha: Zero. I sent them all at the beginning of the academic year. But he never brought them back. I think he did the same thing last year as well. Though I tell the children to bring them back, some children do this by themselves and some of them do it only when their mother tells them to do it. There are some mothers do not care that much; however, children will not bring them back when both the mother and the child are both not interested in doing it.

Researcher: If parents are encouraged to take part in those activities, what do you think the relationship would be between the parents' involvement and a child's homework performance?

Eun-ha: Every parent may be concerned in some way about their child's homework. There are some children who bring back the *Play with Words and Letters* notebook without anything written by the mother but with only their own part of the homework done. Thus, there are children who think that they must do it and bring it to the kindergarten regardless of their mother's participation. On the other hand, there are some mothers who make their child do the homework by saying such words like 'You carried out your promise,' 'Fill in the blanks,' or 'What is the English message for this week?' In Hyungchul's case, I think his father is kind of busy with his own work and I have no idea how his mother is helping him.

(Interview #1)

The teacher's answer suggests another possible reason why Hyungchul is skipping all the notebook homework, which is a lack of parental interest in the child's homework. His parents' indifference toward Hyungchul's learning, if it really exists, can be another reason why Hyungchul is not doing his homework along with the lack in language abilities of his mother. In the next section, we will see how and how much

information the teacher gathered about Hyungchul and his family members. This shows the teacher's way of thinking and how she views the needs of Hyungchul and Hyungchul's family members. In addition, exactly how and what the quantity of information the teacher shared about him and his family members with the other teachers and children from native South Korean families will also be explored since she the way she either protects, passes on, or makes available this information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's family member reflects the teacher's views and attitudes about Hyungchul and his family members: his mother, his father, and his older sister.

### **Gathering and Sharing Information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's Family Members**

#### Learning from Other Teachers

One way Eun-ha gathered information about Hyungchul or his family members was learning from other teachers at the same kindergarten:

Since the chances I could talk with Hyungchul's father or his mother were very rare, I mostly learned about Hyungchul's home background either from the lead teacher or from the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year. This is how I came to know about Hyungchul's home background.

(Interview #1)

In the second interview (Interview #2), Eun-ha was asked to tell more about gathering information from the teachers who work at the kindergarten about Hyungchul and his family members:

Researcher: You told me that you learned about Hyungchul's home background from the teachers you work with. Would you tell me a little more about this?

Eun-ha: First, there is a teacher who taught Hyungchul last year. She is the teacher who is currently in charge of the classroom right next to teaching preparation room. In

the case of Hyungchul's birthday party, since I had been worrying about celebrating his birthday this year, I asked her what happened last year. I had to ask her, 'How was last year?' At the beginning of this academic year, I also asked her about the absence of a phone number for Hyungchul's mother and whether I should talk only with his father on the phone. She told me that it would be better if I just leave it as it stands. This is all I have learned from her. If I want to know in full about him and his family, then I will ask the lead teacher.

Researcher: How about the principal?

Eun-ha: So long as it is not a serious issue, I think I will ask the lead teacher if I get curious about him or his family. The lead teacher taught Hyungchul's older sister last year and it is also the lead teacher who is on the first floor and meets Hyungchul's father. So it is better for me to ask the lead teacher.

(Eun-ha, Interview, 12/4/2014)

For Eun-ha, collecting information from other teachers at the same kindergarten functioned as windows through which she could look at Hyungchul's family without observing or interacting with Hyungchul's family members. Eun-ha listed the teachers in order of preference in terms of from whom she wanted to collect information the most: (1) the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year; (2) the lead teacher; (3) the principal. The higher the person ranked in the kindergarten, the lesser she preferred to gather information from the person.

One of evaluation standards found in the literature is interacting "tactfully and ethically with colleagues and families" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). As seen, Eun-ha was anyway interacting with her colleagues. However, it is not certain whether or not the interaction was tactful or ethical. For now, we will suspend the judgement on this matter until we see how she interacted with Hyungchul's family members and how her relationships with them were. The judgement will be made in Chapter 6.

## Learning from Observation or Experience

Another way Eun-ha gathered information about Hyungchul or his family members was learning from what she directly observed or experienced. For example, Eun-ha shared the impressions about his mother she got when she visited the kindergarten to participate in a parent-involved activity. The activity required children to speak English, the language in which Hyungchul's mother was fluent:

Researcher: As you know, almost all native South Korean mothers speak Korean better than English but you told me that Hyungchul's mother is rather more fluent in English than in Korean. Interestingly, you also told me that the language that Hyungchul's mother was fluent in had been used in that activity. How might Hyungchul or his mother have felt about this?

Eun-ha: Anyway the foreign language might have been easier for his mother to speak rather than Korean. Though this is my opinion, five-year-olds are already highly intelligent. Besides, there are large differences between individuals; some of them are kind of precocious while others are still like babies. Mature ones sometimes try to teach the ones immature and even think that their immature classmates are beneath them. This is also true when it comes to materialism. Some mothers distribute presents to their child's classmates on special days, though it is a pity that the children take their mothers' efforts for granted. For example, on Pepero day [A Korean version of Valentine's day when stick-shaped cookies, called Pepero, are exchanged on November 11th], some children even talk to their moms in this way: 'You got Peperos for my friends, haven't you?'

Researcher: To their moms?

Eun-ha: Yes. Those children hearts are filled with pride when they give those presents to their classmates. If I were Hyungchul's mother, I wouldn't be that willing to be a participant in regular parent-involved activities. Other mothers normally interact with their child's classmates and I wonder what other friends might think if Hyungchul and Hyungchul's mother took part in those activities, though I haven't met his mother that often. However, when Hyungchul's mother participated in the parent-involved activity that required speaking English that day, which we called it a market day, I thought Hyungchul's heart was also filled with pride. At the beginning, I thought his mother wouldn't come because she was busy doing her own work.

Researcher: Would you please let me know more what happened that day?

Eun-ha: Like going through immigration, children were encouraged to reply in English when they were asked by a native speaker in English such questions like ‘How old are you?’ or ‘Where are you from?’ It was only the children who passed through immigration, and mothers were encouraged to exchange Korean money 3,000 won [approximately 2.75 U.S. dollars] into 11 dollars at a change booth. They were supposed to spend only one dollar in each shop. Since it was a day of using English, Hyungchul’s mother might have had expected coming across people she already knew there; and she was engaged actively in the activity. I thought, ‘Little did I expect that I would see Hyungchul’s mother doing this.’ It was my first time meeting her. I think she often brings Hyungchul to the kindergarten in the morning. I saw his mother two or three times when I came to the kindergarten in the morning. We just said hello to each other.

Researcher: What do you mean by ‘people she had already known?’

Eun-ha: Each booth had a teaching assistant. All but the kindergarten teachers came from the same foreign language institute; the activity was held under the sponsorship of that company. They might have been the employees of that company. Those native speakers in English undertook the activity and the kindergarten teachers were just helpers.

Researcher: What exactly was the role that Hyungchul’s mother played?

Eun-ha: I was staying at another booth so I was not able to see what she was doing that much. But I saw her laughing and taking with the employees in English. She even helped children when they forgot expressions that they had practiced during English class at the kindergarten.

Researcher: Then this was not formal teaching?

Eun-ha: No.

Researcher: To what extent could the given context in which she could speak English have motivated her to participate in the activity, do you think?

Eun-ha: I thought it might somehow have affected her decision but I’m not sure.

Researcher: Were there any other chances where she could speak English at the kindergarten?

Eun-ha: No. She did not have any chances other than that day.

(Interview #1)

As Eun-ha suggested, the language a foreign mother can speak during parent-involved activities may have affected the extent of her participation. Nevertheless, the teacher gave an indefinite answer (*e.g.*, I'm not sure of that) when she was asked whether or not the English speaking context have affected her decision. Such information that Eun-ha collected by her direct experience will be compared to the experience and opinion the lead teacher shared. In other words, by listening to the lead teacher who had taught Hyungchul's older sister last year, the issue related to Hyungchul's mother's motivations or decision making will be shared, elaborated upon, and discussed in Chapter 6.

The teacher reported that she had some chances to interact with Hyungchul's mother though it was not that often. As quoted previously, she said in the first interview (Interview #1), "It was my first time meeting her. I think she often brings Hyungchul to the kindergarten in the morning. I saw his mother two or three times when I was coming to the kindergarten in the morning. We just said hello to each other." In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher in order to determine whether or not she had any other conversations with Hyungchul's mother:

Researcher: Did you have any other chances to talk with Hyungchul's mother other than just saying hello?

Eun-ha: I will tell you what happened two days ago. I went down to the first floor to get myself ready to go home from work, and who did I came across but Hyungchul's mother! I asked her about the purpose of her visit and she replied that she came to take Hyungchul home. However, Hyungchul was not in the afterschool classroom at that moment and he had already been sent home by school bus. The teacher who had been in charge of the school bus has dropped him in front of his house. The problem was that Hyungchul didn't have the key to his house. Hyungchul was supposed to take the bus only the days his father calls the kindergarten and requests it. But that day, Hyungchul got on the bus even though his father didn't make any phone call to the kindergarten.

Researcher: What was the cause of such miscommunication?

Eun-ha: He was using the bus frequently these days. It was only from habit that he was doing so recently.

Researcher: Who was in charge of making such decisions?

Eun-ha: The office. [the lead teacher and the principal stayed at the office most of the time but the principal stayed away from the office from time to time].

Researcher: What happened to Hyungchul while he was alone after being dropped in front of his house?

Eun-ha: I think he just waited there for an hour. The lead teacher knows about this incident but I do not know whether the principal knows it.

Researcher: Who was in charge of making the decision again, specifically?

Eun-ha: It was the lead teacher's job and I think she said sorry to one of his parents. That day, when I met Hyungchul's mother, she was talking to me by speaking in sentence fragments. Another teacher was with me at that moment and we both were not able to understand what Hyungchul's mother was talking about. I said to her, 'Would you please say that again?' But despite our request, she couldn't make herself understood. Not until I had a phone call with Hyungchul's father was able to grasp the real situation.

(Interview #4)

There is another example of the teacher gathering information on her own. In the second interview (Interview #2), Eun-ha commented that the reading and writing activities that Hyungchul was doing at kindergarten were all the learning that he was doing in this area in contrast to the cases of other students who might have been taking private lessons in addition to attending kindergarten. She also mentioned that she had heard that Hyungchul spent a lot of time with his older sister at home, as quoted in the previous section.

In the third interview (Interview #3), some follow-up questions about the source of such information were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: How did you know that Hyungchul is not doing any reading or writing activities outside the kindergarten? How did you rule out the possibility of that he was taking private lessons like other children?

Eun-ha: Just before holding parent-teacher conferences, I talked with the children and asked them questions like, ‘What else do you do other than study room activity, Hye-jin?’ I wanted hear from the children about the activities that they were engaged in in advance of my discussions with their mothers. At that point, Hyungchul said that he was not doing anything.

Researcher: Then, who told you that Hyungchul was spending a lot of time with his older sister at home?

Eun-ha: Though Hyungchul mentioned his older sister, he did not tell me that much about her. When I asked him what he did on the weekend, he replied, ‘I drew pictures with my older sister.’ My assumption was that he was spending a lot of time with his older sister.

Researcher: When I asked the lead teacher about this, she told me that Hyungchul and Hyungchul’s older sister go to church on Saturdays and stay home on Sundays. Considering that, do you mean he is spending the time with his older sister at home mostly on Sundays?

Eun-ha: Yes.

(Interview #3)

As shown in this exchange, Eun-ha was having conversations with children when she needed information that could be used for the future teacher-parent conferences. For example, she was learning about what Hyungchul had been doing outside the kindergarten by talking directly to Hyungchul. She even used the information that she had collected directly from the Hyungchul when she was exploring Hyungchul’s language learning environment and the influence of his older sister. She said, “I have heard, he spends a lot of time with his older sister at home. Since Hyungchul is very much interested in learning to read and write in Korean and his older sister should have a favorable influence upon this, I think Hyungchul will be able to learn to read and write soon,” as quoted previously. (Interview #2)

In the third interview (Interview #3), Eun-ha was asked to share some stories that illustrate such parent-teacher conferences:

Researcher: You told me that you hold teacher-parent conferences. Would you share some anecdotes with me about the children's performance or competence that was brought up during teacher-parent conferences?

Eun-ha: With the entrance into elementary school just ahead, many (although not all) parents ask me many questions concerning education. Those who are interested often compare their child to another child. For example, there was a boy and a girl. The boy was using a level C Korean alphabet textbook and the girl was using a level D. Not only the boy and the girl but also their mothers were close friends. One day, the mother of the girl said to the boy, 'Why are you still at the level C? My daughter is at the level D already.' The mother of the boy also heard what the mother of the girl was saying and felt shock that the girl was ahead of her son. The mother of the boy asked me what the reason could be because her son's textbook was above the level of that of the girl last year. I told her, 'Children took a placement test at the beginning of this week and then I grouped the children so that each group member could be seated around the same table and do reading and writing activities, though I cannot know the level of each individual. That is how I coordinated the activities in order to give them step-by-step instructions. However, there are children who learn very quickly and also ones whose reading and writing abilities are improving gradually. In addition to this, I think she learned quickly because she is a girl.' Like this, mothers ask me questions relating to what they are curious to know. Then, I let them know what I have seen or heard about the matter. For example, I could say, 'Based on what I have seen, I think he needs this or that type of help.' Sometimes, I bring up some questions. But in Hyungchul's case, even when I try to provide information concerning Hyungchul and discuss related matters with his father during the teacher-parent telephone conference, the only words I hear from Hyungchul's father are 'thank you for all the trouble you have taken' or 'you need not go to that trouble' and he hangs up the phone right away. He never asks me about the level of Hyungchul's reading and writing abilities though this is a frequently asked question by the other mothers.

(Interview #3)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher to find out what point of view she was adopting about the questions which other mothers had asked frequently:

Researcher: You told me that Hyungchul's father never asked you about the level of Hyungchul's reading or writing abilities though this was a frequently asked question by the other mothers. What do you think about that?

Eun-ha: It would be premature to determine a child's reading and writing abilities. I think those children are precocious and they all have reached an advanced level already. Rather, the level that Hyungchul is at is reasonable. So I never introduce the subject of the level of their reading or writing abilities unless the mothers bring the matter into conversation. I talk about the subject only when the mothers bring the matter up for discussion. They often compare their child to another.

Researcher: That means that you never talked about this issue with Hyungchul's father since he never asked you about it?

Eun-ha: Correct. I think the fact that Hyungchul is having a pleasant day at the kindergarten is sufficient to satisfy Hyungchul's parents.

(Interview #4)

This is another example of Eun-ha failing to reach a commonly recognized evaluation standard, “communicates regularly with families concerning their children’s performance (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). She never talked about the level of his reading or writing abilities with his parents even though she knew that Hyungchul’s abilities in this area were relatively delayed. By explaining that the level that Hyungchul was at was reasonable and that his parents did not bring the matters into conversation, she tries to justify the reasons why she did not discuss those matters with his parents. At the same time, Eun-ha even falls short of the standard to “set[s] high expectations for all students and respect the dignity of each student” (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64) by

saying that Hyungchul's having a pleasant day at the kindergarten would have been sufficient to satisfy his parents.

There is another example of the teacher gathering information directly from the child. When the teacher was asked who was involved in making choice of Hyungchul's birthday cake, she replied:

Hyungchul told me yesterday that it was a cake of his own choice. I call the birthday boy/girl a hero/a heroine of the day and give a priority to the birthday child so that the hero/a heroine becomes the first in line when children line up in queue or they have breakfast or lunch. Yesterday on Hyungchul's birthday, he grew restless and was even asking, 'I am the hero today. What did you bring for me?' as if he looked for birthday presents and as if it was his long-looked-for day. And then he talked about his birthday cake. He said that it was himself who chose the cake and then another boy said to Hyungchul, 'You are too old to choose Tayo cake.' ["Tayo" is the name of a popular Korean animated character, which is also a bus.]. Hyungchul said to the boy that he liked the cake anyway.

(Interview #2)

In this case, information concerning who selected the cake can be critical because Eun-ha was concerned about the size of the cake as mentioned in one of the previous sections. To be specific, the teacher felt inconvenienced by the lack of sensitivity concerning who prepared the cake since she had had the same expectations for all children. (See *Previous Studies on 2.5s* in Chapter 2, p. 24) By knowing who was involved in making choice of the cake, she might have been able to better understand the nature of such insensitivity. The fact that Hyungchul was involved in choosing the birthday cake and that he had preference in the design of the cake, not the size of the cake, can somehow be interpreted as being an excuse for bringing a relatively small cake. However, since the teacher had mentioned that it is the mothers who either purchase the

biggest one in the shop or buy two cakes (in order to make sure that the expected number of servings can be provided) the teacher might still find fault with such perceived insensitivity on the part of Hyungchul's mother. In other words, the teacher might still think that Hyungchul's mother should have brought a cake of the size that reaches her expectation regardless of the preference of the child. Thus, the information Eun-ha collected directly from the child and the conclusion she drew reveals her views on his parent(s). Eun-ha's expectation and attitude about children's birthday party preparation will be compared to that of the lead teacher in Chapter 6.

### Name Brands

Eun-ha brought up another issue about the care given to Hyungchul by Hyungchul's parents based on her observations and experience:

Even though I was just informed of his family environment, what I have learned from Hyungchul himself is that his mother and his father do not function that well as parents of a student since it is not easy for his mother to take care of him and his father goes out to work. [...] I wonder how and what Hyungchul might think when he grows up. In the long run, what if his peers talk about name brands? Even kindergarteners sometimes talk about articles made by well-known manufacturers. What if he experiences emotional injury?

(Interview #1)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked to find out why she brought up the name brand issue:

Researcher: You said that children talk about name brands these days. Would you please tell me a little more about that?

Eun-ha: Not that frequently, but one child in my class once mentioned name brands. Even last year, when I was teaching three-year-olds, one boy said, in reference to a

pair of tennis shoes, ‘Oh, yours are New Balance, mines are New Balance too!’ At that point I thought ‘Children catch on fast these days.’ What is more, I heard that young mothers are even giving cell phones to their children when they become an elementary school student. However, when I see Hyungchul, I wonder whether or not his parents would get one for him. Children these days are so quick to pick up on things like that.

Researcher: Why are you so worried about Hyungchul?

Eun-ha: Hyungchul often plays with some lively children in the classroom. But children in his group rarely mention name brands. I am wondering what Hyungchul might think when someone teases him in the future.

Researcher: I still don’t get why you are anxious about Hyungchul. Can you tell me more specifically?

Eun-ha: I did not intend to specify Hyungchul but I think that was something that came to my mind.

Researcher: What came to your mind?

Eun-ha: I have seen him for a year. For example, in the coldest season, I had compassion for Hyungchul when he once came to the kindergarten wearing just a padded vest, though he was wearing gloves. When I consider what I saw throughout the year, I don’t think he would be quick to understand or meet the requirements of the times.

Researcher: Wouldn’t be there any reason for that?

Eun-ha: I cannot tell what the reasons are and I do not know how his parents would think. But so far as my observations go, I do not think his parents would get a cell phone for him that early.

(Interview #4)

Name brands are one of the “standards of responsibility for parents” that were established by the teacher, “covering different aspects of children’s lives” (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 589). Those can be “status signals” in that they “form one element of the competencies that students and parents are able to leverage” (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 588). Eun-ha judged that Hyungchul and his parents lacked an understanding of material/economic conditions by her observations, experience, and such standards of parents’ responsibility. Since they do not exhaust the cultural capital issue (Lareau &

Weininger, 2003), the teacher might have acquired only some fragmentary knowledge on the cultural capital that Hyunchul's family have. In other words, Hyungchul and Hyungchul's parents' a lack of familiarity with such name brands cannot fully explain the cultural capital that they have.

#### Learning from both 'Other Teachers' and 'Observation or Experience'

Sometimes, Eun-ha gathered information about Hyungchul or his family members from what she directly observed or experienced but related it to the prior knowledge that she had acquired from other teachers at the same kindergarten. For example, when Eun-ha talked about the number of birthday presents Hyungchul brought for birthday children, she was comparing this with the number of presents he brought last year that as mentioned by his former teacher. She was lowering her standard of judgment as if she was thinking that she should not expect too much from him by saying "Hyungchul brought a birthday present five times when he had 22 chances throughout the year. I think Hyungchul's mother is taking good care of him. [...] The teacher who taught him last year told me that the number of present he brought last year was close to zero."

(Interview #2) Such a comparison by the teacher may have lowered the teacher's expectations about the number of birthday presents Hyungchul might bring throughout the year. In other words, being told of an extremely low number of presents that Hyungchul brought last year, any number bigger than zero would have become sufficient to satisfy the teacher's expectations about Hyungchul, which was five. Again, Eun-ha fails to reach an acknowledged standard, "sets high expectations for all students and respect the dignity of each student" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). There is another example showing that the teacher learned from both 'other teachers' and 'her own observation or experience' at the same time:

I do not know whether he was three years old or four years old when he first came to this kindergarten but he had successfully adapted himself to kindergarten life. There

are some children in my class who were Hyungchul's classmates last year and Hyungchul is getting along well with these children. Thus, even if another teacher visited our class and saw Hyungchul, she might not pick up on the fact that one of his parents is a foreigner.

(Interview #1)

Eun-ha might have gotten the information from another teacher about the children who were in the same class with each other last year; however, the teacher was gathering information about Hyungchul and his family mostly by her direct experience. Specifically, the judgments about Hyungchul's social adjustment were based on her own experiences and observations.

#### When Eun-ha Received Supplementary Information from the Researcher

What Eun-ha talks about and thinks about when I report on what happened in the classroom when I was looking mindfully at Hyungchul's performance, speech, and behavior were examined. This was to see how the teacher incorporates the information that I made available. Some questions were asked of the teacher about what I had observed and some video streams were shown to the teacher, when needed.

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), the teacher saw a video stream from the fourth observation (Observation #4) showing Hyungchul having a talk with two classmates while drawing a picture related to elementary school. He was saying to his classmates, 'Elementary school has plenty of money. Kindergarten also has a lot of money because my father gave kindergarten money.' Hyungchul was saying to his classmates that the kindergarten he attended may have amassed wealth because his father had paid his kindergarten tuition. After watching the video stream, Eun-ha shared her thoughts:

Anyhow, his father engages in an occupation. Though I do not know whether his father or his older sister mentioned it, I think Hyungchul said this because he might have been aware of that fact that some amount of the money his father earned goes to the kindergarten. Today, Hyungchul came to the kindergarten at 8:30 a.m. and he was the first who came to the kindergarten, as he kept on coming early throughout this week. Another girl, whose name is Yoon-jin, also came at 8:30 a.m. and told Hyungchul that her father had gotten gum for her friends and she had felt pity for her father. When Yoon-jin was asked why, she said that that is because her father spent his money. Hyungchul was replying “Yes! Yes!” as if he was with her on that point. I think children at this age are now aware of the fact that their father’s hard-earned money goes to somewhere else, though the concept they have is not that clear.

(Interview #4)

The video stream shown to the teacher reminded her of another anecdote she was able to share with me. However, she commented as if she had already known about the nature of the children’s discussion. Specifically, by relating the video stream to her prior knowledge of her students’ sense of economy, she did not interpret the information that I made available as additional information that she could utilize or add to her database. Similarly, in the first interview (Interview #1), when the teacher saw a video stream from the first observation (Observation #1) that showed Hyungchul talking about his father’s age, she did not act on that information but rather used it to explain children’s ways of thinking:

Researcher: Right after Hyungchul heard that the age of his classmate’s father is 36, Hyungchul argued that the age of his father is 37. But I heard from the principal that his father is much older than Hyungchul mentioned.

Eun-ha: Yes. Actually, Hyungchul’s father is at his fifties.

Researcher: Why do you think Hyungchul gave his classmate incorrect information?

Eun-ha: I don’t think Hyungchul would know his father’s age, even approximately. Just as children often argue that their father is stronger than their friends’ fathers, I

think Hyungchul just gave a number that is bigger than 36. I don't think he knows his father's age or deliberately told a lie.

(Interview #1)

### Sharing Information with Children from Native South Korean Families about the 2.5 and the 2.5's Family Members

In the first interview (Interview #1), Eun-ha was asked how Hyungchul might think about his foreign-born mother:

Researcher: You told me that Hyungchul's heart might have been filled with pride when Hyungchul's mother participated in the parent-involved activity that required English. Then how might he think about having a foreign-born mother?

Eun-ha: Hyungchul hasn't talked about that that much. I also didn't mention that to the other children. Hyungchul didn't bring up stories about his mother. Basically, Hyungchul did not talk about himself that much. He does that only when he is asked to do. Since he is a lively even hyperactive child, he is talkative while playing with classmates. When he shared stories about what he did last weekend with the whole class, he did say where he was on the weekend but he did not mention his mother specifically. Thus, I have no idea how he thinks about his mother as being a foreigner.

Researcher: Then what do you think about you sharing the information that Hyungchul's mother is a foreigner with other children from native South Korean families?

Eun-ha: If I do, it may somehow have an influence on him. I think it would be better if I discuss that with Hyungchul when he comes to the kindergarten early in the morning. But I really didn't think about doing that that much. When I first met Hyungchul at the beginning of this academic year, I was having a hard time managing a classroom with 29 five-year-old children. Last year, I was in charge of a relatively small class with 16 three-year-olds. When I took charge of 29 children this year, worry was killing me. I just didn't think that much about taking such actions. However, I enter into conversation with Hyungchul a lot these days and he talks more, makes jokes, and plays tricks since he has adapted himself to the environment. I think I just faltered in making a decision whether or not to mention this to the other children at the beginning of this

academic year. It has been only recently that I wondered what Hyungchul might think about this matter. I think how he thinks is the most important. However, Hyungchul is a child who has not expressed his feelings on this matter and I am a person who takes cautious attitude in such matters. I move with caution and care and worry a lot.

(Interview #1)

When the same question was asked again to the teacher in the second interview

(Interview #2), she replied:

I haven't mentioned Hyungchul's foreign mother to other children yet. Had I not spoken with you, I would not have taken this matter into consideration. After I began to talking with you, many things started to come into my mind. But I am hesitating because I am of two minds as to whether I should ask him or not, for example, with a question like this: 'How about sharing stories about your mother with the class, what do you think, Hyungchul?' I need time to think it over.

(Interview #2)

Earlier, some probing questions were asked about the information the teacher might have had collected, regardless of how she had gathered such information.

The following conversation took place in the first interview (Interview #1):

Researcher: What would be the meaning of having a foreign-born mother for Hyungchul and his family members?

Eun-ha: If Hyungchul's mother is a foreigner, wouldn't it widen all his family members' mental horizons? If both of his parents were native South Koreans, they might have made a profound study of South Korea. However, since one of his parents is a foreigner, they might get a broad experience of both his mother's country and South Korea though it wouldn't be a deep exploration of both two countries.

(Interview #1)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were finally asked of the teacher:

Researcher: What kind of resources might his foreign mother use for her cultural adaptation to the new environment?

Eun-ha: Couldn't she adjust quickly if she has many contacts here? I am not sure because I do not have any experience of being a foreign mother and the number of foreign mothers near me is not that big. There are some centers. In the case of city A or city B, town C is where she can meet and communicate with many foreigners who are in the same circumstances. They might be able to share not only their own stories and but also information or ideas with each other. Also near subway station B, there are many of them who are adjusting, living, and working.

Researcher: You mean foreigners?

Eun-ha: Yes. But there might be also some people who are not foreigners there. Among the groups of Chinese or people from other countries, I found that there are also some native South Koreans. Then, though it takes time, under such surroundings, those who are the foreigners in the same situation will have social gatherings and adjust to such communities. That is what I can see from town C and subway station B; place like these. I have witnessed foreigners gathering together and talking to each other there. I think they just meet all together there and have dinner or something there even if they do not live there.

Researcher: You mean some networks have been established by foreigners?

Eun-ha: Yes. Networks were formed and these networks will be expanded as time goes by.

Researcher: Then what do you think the relationships might be between those who have created such networks and the native South Koreans you mentioned?

Eun-ha: Those Koreans might be the people like the owners of grocery stores.

Researcher: Then how would the ties be between such native South Korean owners and the foreigners regardless of how long the foreigners lived there?

Eun-ha: I think it depends. It is not guaranteed that they will become close to each other since individuals tend to vary in personalities.

Researcher: Then how about the foreigners who lived longer in South Korea?

Eun-ha: Since the foreigners who lived in those communities might have promoted friendly relations between each other, they might not have built such relationships with native South Koreans. Though foreigners are adjusting to Korean society while they spend time with other foreigners at their workplaces such as industrial

complexes, I think how much they develop relationships with people depends on how much they tried to do that. If a foreign community exists, would a native South Korean like me have business with them? I don't think so.

Researcher: What I hear from you is that foreigners are relatively close to each other.

Eun-ha: They might be. And they will anyway adapt themselves to this society. But when it comes to their relationships with native South Koreans, there are some foreigners who visit cultural centers to learn yoga, computer, or something else. I think those foreigners build relationships with South Koreans there. A female Chinese once visited our kindergarten because she had made an appointment with one parent who sells insurance. The Chinese woman was here to ask that mother questions about the insurance. Since the Chinese woman felt at home with the mother, the mother also opened her mind to the Chinese woman. I heard that they are still keeping touch and formed a friendship with each other. What I learned from this case was that depending on how much the native South Korean is open to the foreigners and how much the foreigner is expressing his or her desire to get along with native South Koreans determines the possibility of having close relationships between a foreigner and a native South Korean.

(Interview #4)

In the last part of the fourth interview (Interview #4), the teacher was asked to say what she should say in conclusion.

These are her last words:

Even though Hyungchul has no particularly distinctive physical features, I believe that extra attention should be given to him. But paying special attention to him is not that easy for me because we have such a high student-teacher ratio. However, children are all ready to receive any kind of information that I make available. Everything hinges on what the teachers do. If Hyungchul did have such distinctive features and if I did talk about him to the rest of the children in the manner of not being quite comfortable about it, other children certainly might have treated Hyungchul just as I might have done. That is why the teachers' role is important. If the child has distinctive physical features, the teacher should decide whether or not to request the help of other children or just help the child without letting others know. This decision can be made by asking

the child concerned. If the child wants something to be kept secret, the teacher must give him help from behind the scenes or privately. As I found, there is no alternative for notebooks that were not being properly kept up by the student and/or his/her parents. However, teachers must do the things that they are able to do, such as giving medicine to the child. I heard that some teachers don't do even the things they are able to do only because the parents of the child are not interested in or not giving any attention to it. Even if they are prejudiced against the 2.5s, such prejudice should not affect the list of priorities. For example, teachers shouldn't place a low priority on the 2.5s. Teachers must do their jobs despite such prejudice. Teachers should try and do their jobs somehow or other.

(Interview #4)

Eun-ha's communications with Hyungchul's family members were not successful because Eun-ha remained passive in her role as a teacher when the 2.5's family members were uncooperative. Hyungchul's foreign-born mother was not able to provide Hyungchul with the same amount of support as native South Korean mothers. Eun-ha barely acknowledged the possibility of the 2.5's mother having a negative impact on the 2.5's language development. Eun-ha gathered, used, and shared information about Hyungchul's family members according to her poor relationships with Hyungchul's mother and her attitudes toward Hyungchul and his family members.

## CHAPTER 5

### CASE 2: YI-SEUL and HER 2.5 STUDENT, JIEUN

This chapter provides the results to the research questions of how teacher Yi-seul perceive and meets the needs of her 2.5 student, Jieun. Four themes are seen to emerge from the data and they are discussed: (1) Communication with the 2.5's family members, (2) Care from the 2.5's family members, (3) Language ability, and (4) Gathering and sharing information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's family members.

#### **Communication with the 2.5's Family Members**

Yi-seul is in close contact with Jieun's mother. They often hold telephone conversations.

Yi-seul said:

We hold telephone conversations. Jieun is often absent when she goes to the hospital because of her nasal inflammation. Jieun's mother calls me and lets me know beforehand. It is not that difficult for me to have conversation with her. In the case when she cannot understand clearly what I am talking about, such as information on field trip which planned for the next day, I just explain to her carefully one more time or tell her the next day in person when she brings Jieun to the kindergarten. Sometimes, Jieun's mother calls me in the morning when she is not sure about which school supplies she should provide for her daughter.

(Interview #1)

Jieun was absent today but Jieun's mother didn't call me, so I called her this time and Jieun's mother told me that Jieun was sick today and she apologized to me for not letting me know ahead of time.

(Interview #4)

Yi-seul found it easier to talk with Jieun's mother in person. When she explains the school supplies that Jieun's mother should purchase for her daughter, Yi-seul can show Jieun's mother an object as a sample, which might facilitate her understanding. Furthermore, Yi-seul can figure out whether or not Jieun's mother understands her words since Yi-seul is able to see her face. What is more, when Yi-seul meets Jieun's mother, more thoughts occur to her so that Yi-seul is able to talk more about the things she really wanted to say to her. Yi-seul also reported that she feels friendly toward Jieun's mother when she is talking to her in person.

Teacher-parent conferences are held twice a year. Jieun's mother attends teacher-parent conferences in person which can be held either in person or by telephone. Yi-seul reported that it was herself who had struck up the conversation when Yi-seul and Jieun's mother held the first teacher-parent conference.

Yi-seul said:

I thought Jieun's mother had a lot of things to ask me and a lot of things to talk about. But I knew that she was not talking as much as she wanted to as she was accompanying her speech with gestures. So I asked her if she had anything she wanted to ask me but she still didn't know what to say. She did not ask me anything until I gave her some examples of questions that other parents frequently ask such as 'Is my child getting along well with friends?', 'Is my child eating well?', or 'Is my child concentrating on his or her attention on schoolwork?' She really wanted to ask those questions of me.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul reported that Jieun's mother often shows up right in front of her classroom door, which is a type of behavior which the other parents do not engage in. Actually, Yi-seul's classroom is located on the second floor. Other parents, who have

business in the classroom or with the teacher, normally talk to the lead teacher or the principal who stays at an office which is located on the first floor. Yi-seul said that this often happens when Jieun's mother brings Jieun to the kindergarten late.

Yi-seul said:

Other parents seldom come up to the second floor. But Jieun's mother brings her daughter to the classroom when she is late and talks about what she wants to say and then leaves, such as asking me to give a medicine to Jieun.

(Interview #4)

However, Won-jang (Principal, Interview, 2/16/2015) had negative impression about Jieun's mother's this type of behavior.

### **Care from the 2.5's Family Members**

#### Notebooks

In Yi-seul's classroom, there are three kinds of pocket notebooks which are used for homework: '*Face-to-face Story notebook*,' '*Forwarding Message notebook*,' and '*Play Record notebook*.' *Face-to-face Story notebook* is homework for mothers. Mothers pick and write spoken words from one of the face-to-face conversations she had with her child. *Forwarding Message notebook* is to see how well the child can convey the teacher's message verbally to his or her mother and the mothers write the message they receive. The fact that the mother is responsible for helping out with their child's homework is a pattern of gender inequality in South Korea (See *Previous studies on 2.5s* in Chapter 2, p. 18). The message is given to the children every day throughout the week and the mothers may write it down by Wednesday and send the notebook to the

kindergarten on Wednesdays. Both notebooks require writing skills in Korean, thus, in the case of a foreign mother, she would be writing in her second language. *Play Record* notebook is for planning and evaluating one's own play. As was true for Eun-ha's classroom, all three notebooks should be brought back to the teacher once a week with parents' comments and signature. Without parents' support, homework will be left unfinished. Yi-seul shared one face-to-face conversation with Jieun's mother she remembered:

One story remains in my memory. Jieun's mom said, 'Jieun, would you give me a massage? I have stiff shoulders. Jieun replied, 'No, today is not Parent's Day (The Korean version of Mother's Day and Father's Day; which are celebrated on the same day).' I think Jieun thought that daughters should practice filial piety toward their parents only on special days such as Parent's Day. It moved me to laughter.

(Interview #2)

This example shows that Yi-seul is able to understand Jieun's mother's written Korean. Yi-seul reported that Jieun's mother took Korean lessons (reading and writing) last year and Jieun's father was also supporting Jieun's mother. The language abilities of Jieun's mother and the role of Jieun's father will be explored in the following few sections. Now, it is time to listen to what Yi-seul said and share her view on how and how much Jieun's mother is supportive of her daughter's homework.

Yi-seul said:

Jieun seldom brings 'Face-to-face Story notebook' and 'Forwarding Message notebook.' Those are the notebooks that should be brought on Wednesdays. What Jieun is doing is just like what she did last year. Jieun's mother called me the other day and asked me whether or not Jieun's 'Forwarding Message notebook' was at the kindergarten. But I didn't have it. After that, she found the notebook in Jieun's

grandmother's house and sent it to the kindergarten last week. The notebook made a belated appearance. This was her story.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul shared her final thoughts on the support Jieun's mother is providing for her daughter:

Researcher: Is there anything you want from Jieun's mother?

Yi-seul: There is nothing much to it. Jieun is doing well in kindergarten. But Jieun is a girl who can do even better. Jieun has a strong will. Jieun knows how to concentrate her mind on her work. But Jieun's mother leaves something to be desired. Jieun needs more care from her mother. Compared to other mothers, Jieun's mother is not skillful enough in parenting.

Researcher: Where does such a lack of skill come from?

Yi-seul: First of all, she is not used to the names of the school supplies with that she needs to provide Jieun with. It might be her first time hearing the names for such object although such names are easily understood by other mothers.

Researcher: You told me that Jieun's mom forgets things. Would you tell me why she is forgetting things?

Yi-seul: Jieun's mom told me that she forgets even when she knows what she should do. Jieun is a latecomer all the time. I always ask Jieun's mother to help Jieun go to bed early so that Jieun could come early in the morning. But her mother always comes late, half awake. Most of Jieun's classmates show up by 9:30 a.m., at the latest. However, Jieun makes her appearance at 10:30 a.m. and sometimes, 11 a.m. Jieun's mom said that Jieun wakes up early but it is the mother herself who gets up late. It is the mother's responsibility to help her daughter. It is not necessarily because she is a foreigner. That might be just her personality. There are some other mothers just like Jieun's mother. For example, there is another mother who is much younger than other mothers. That mother left her child in the care of the child's grandmother. With a mother's support and encouragement, that child would be outperforming. The child really needs a mother's care. That child and Jieun, they both seem just the same to me. Jieun can do even better if her mother provides her with better care.

Researcher: As the the reasons why Jieun's mother cannot take better care of Jieun, you mentioned both her language ability, especially the listening comprehension part, and her forgetfulness/laziness. Would you determine the ratio of her language ability to her forgetfulness/laziness?

Yi-seul: I will say her forgetfulness/laziness 60% and her language ability 40%.

(Interview #1)

Yi-seul said it is the mothers' responsibility to take care of their children, for example getting children up on time. She thought that such efforts by the mothers would benefit children. Thus, it seems that Yi-seul is evaluating Jieun's mother according to gender stereotypes. Actually, South Korean mothers are highly involved in their children's education and Yi-seul expects the same kind of involvement from Jieun's foreign-born mother. On the other hand, the following quote is what Yi-seul said when she was asked about the birthday party issue, which Eun-ha touched on:

Jieun brings birthday presents very well. By sticking memos on children's lunch boxes, I usually send letters to every parent. Jieun even writes extra birthday cards which are not a requirement. Only 5 to 10 children among 25 children give such extra birthday cards and Jieun is one of them.

(Interview #1)

### **Language Abilities**

In this section, how Yi-seul appreciates the language abilities of Jieun's foreign mother as well as those of Jieun, the teacher's attitudes and views about the relationships between the foreign-born mother and Jieun's language development, and how she sought to support Jieun's language development are explored.

## The Second Language Writing of Jieun's Mother

Yi-seul gave a general overview on the writing abilities of Jieun's mother:

Jieun's mother had great difficulty with writing in Korean when Jieun was three years old. We send notebooks called '*Face-to-face Story* notebook' and '*Forwarding Message* notebook' to homes every Wednesday. Mothers are encouraged to write sentences on the notebooks before they send them back to the kindergarten. Since Jieun's mother is a foreigner, she was very awkward writing in Korean. We use the same notebook throughout the whole academic year. When I turn over the sheets of the book, though not judging her, I felt that Jieun's mother had made big effort to learn Korean. I heard that she even studies Korean for the sake of Jieun. Her writing has improved. Early on she did not know well the rules of Korean spelling, such as consonants placed under a vowel; however, she has increasingly become aware of the spelling system of Korean. She makes only a few mistakes in the writing now. Though I cannot judge her by what she had written, what I am thinking is that Jieun's mother shows she cares a lot about her daughter by working hard at her Korean studies.

(Interview #1)

Some follow-up questions were asked:

Researcher: Can you tell me a little more about the *Forwarding Message* notebook?

Yi-seul: We send the notebook to homes on Wednesdays. Throughout the week, I repeatedly give a message to the children every day. For example, last week's message was '소중한 나무를 지켜주세요' [which means 'Look after our precious trees']. I created the message and the children forwarded the message to their mother. Mothers may write the message as they might hear it from their child. Children bring back the notebook on Wednesdays. It is a matter of whether or not the children forward the message to their mother.

Researcher: Then what the children say, which is spoken language, is being changed to what mothers write, which is written language.

Yi-seul: Correct. I give the message to the children and say, 'Please tell this to your mom.' Then the children do it when they are at home and the mothers write it down.

Researcher: Then, it can be second language writing for Jieun's mother, something like dictation.

Yi-seul: Yes. Like last year, when Jieun was 3 years old, Jieun's mother said she didn't know how to do it. So I explained it to her a few times separately. She wrote it down the way it sounds without applying the rules of Korean spelling. But she was doing it anyway.

(Interview #1)

Again, Yi-seul considered taking care of the child to be the mother's responsibility. Helping out with homework is just another example of the duties that are imposed on Jieun's mother. Yi-seul kept on using the word 'mother' because she thinks that it is a matter of course that mothers do all those things since Korean mothers actually do so. As a result, the task required second language writing in the case of a foreign-born mother. Conversely, this would not have been the case if the 2.5 had a foreign-born father and a native South Korean mother instead.

#### Having Difficulty with Using Polite Expressions

She continued by talking about Jieun's mother's way of speaking:

When she speaks Korean, on the other hand, she mixes up the low forms of speech with honorific expression when she talks to me. [It is the social norm for both the teacher and the parents to only use polite expressions to each other when teacher-parent conversation are being held] Nevertheless, we came to understand each other.

(Interview #1)

Yi-seul answered some follow-up questions about the forms of language that Jieun's mother had used:

Researcher: How do you feel about the forms of language she uses?

Yi-seul: I became accustomed to it. She stammers but I have been meeting her since last year. I think Jieun's mother has a lot of things to talk about but she is just not fluent in Korean. I think I should listen attentively to what she says. She says like “-했어” [which is an impolite form of 'did (something)', and is

pronounced HAE-SSUH] while other mothers may say “-했어요” [which is an honorific expression of 'did (something),' and is pronounced HAE-SSUH-YO]. At that time, I just replied, “아, 그러셨어요?” [which is an honorific expression of ‘Oh, you did?’ and is pronounced AH, GEU-RUH-SHUH-SSUH-YO].

Researcher: What can be the reason for that? I mean her linguistic patterns?

Yi-seul: It is not strange at all if we consider how long she has lived in South Korea. I think that she came to South Korea after she got married. She is kind of old if I consider Jieun’s age. Jieun is five years old now, that means Jieun’s mother has been married for seven years. I think it is a possible consequence of her living in South Korea for nearly seven years.

(Interview #1)

In the second interview (Interview #2), follow-up questions about the same issue were asked:

Researcher: Can you tell me a little more about the Korean language fluency of Jieun’s mother?

Yi-seul: She still has difficulty in using polite expressions.

Researcher: You have been meeting her for two years. Do you have any stories to share, related to that?

Yi-seul: I am okay with that. Even if she uses the low forms of speech [not only pronoun use but also other expressions] to me, I don’t feel offended. I am trying to make allowances for circumstances and always willing to lend an ear. But I heard that other teachers were offended and embarrassed when they had heard such expressions from Jieun’s mother. For example, when I was not able to answer the phone, Jieun’s mother left a message for another teacher and after that, when that teacher came up to me, the teacher looked embarrassed and told me that she had heard Jieun’s mother speaking in low form. I felt something similar at the beginning, but I am okay with that now because I got used to it. Actually, it is herself who is having a hard time trying to make other people understand what she wants to say.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul has a deeper appreciation of Jieun's mother's speaking abilities. First, Yi-seul informed me that Jieun's mother not only stammered but also had difficulty with using polite expressions. In Korean society, failing to use an honorific expression in the situation one should use it, is considered to be extremely rude. Thus, a person can be easily offended by such impolite expressions.

Yi-seul mentioned some other teachers who had been intolerant of Jieun's mother's low forms of speech. Yi-seul seemed not to project her opinion onto other teachers but she was actually expressing that fact that she had tolerance for Jieun's mother's impolite speech. First, she told the researcher a real-life story about what happened among other teachers who heard such expressions from Jieun's mother. Secondly, Yi-seul acknowledged that it might have been hard for her to expect such high proficiency of Korean from marriage immigrants like Jieun's mother since, "arriving later in life is associated with lower odds of proficiency" (Gonzalez, 2000, p. 264). Yi-seul thought it was a possible consequence of her living in South Korea as an adult for less than seven years.

### Linguistic Habits

As quoted earlier in the previous section, Yi-seul thought that Jieun's mother had a lot of things to ask her and a lot of things to talk about. When Jieun's mother was accompanying her speech with gestures, the teacher knew that she was not talking as much as she wanted to. Some questions about the language preference of Jieun's mother were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: What language do you think Jieun's mother feel comfortable to use?

Yi-seul: She is from Mongolia. But she has never spoken the language of that country. Had she spoken that language, I certainly would not have understood her words.

Researcher: How about with Jieun?

Yi-seul: Neither.

Researcher: Just disappeared?

Yi-seul: I think Jieun's mother is not using that language. She did not speak the language even when she was with Jieun. I think she purposely tries to use Korean. I do not know what language she is using outside the kindergarten since I am not staying with her all day long, however, she did not speak any language other than Korean, at least when she was talking with me and Jieun.

Researcher: What can be the reason for that?

Yi-seul: Because we are in South Korea now. I think that's why she is trying to speak more Korean.

Researcher: What can be the relationships between the fluency in Korean language of Jieun's mother and that of Jieun?

Yi-seul: It is high time for Jieun to learn but Jieun might imitate her mother's accent unintentionally when she is with her mother. So it will be better if her grandmother, her father, and other family members take care of her. But her father comes home only in the weekends and she spends most of the time with her mother. Nevertheless, she can learn more here at the kindergarten by interacting with peers. At the beginning, she spoke with a stutter and her way of speech was very similar to that of her mother. Though she still retains her mother's accent, Jieun and her peers are very much alike now.

Researcher: So you are saying that her mother's linguistic characteristics had an impact on those of Jieun?

Yi-seul: That is because Jieun listens to her mother and observes her mother at home, though this is my personal opinion. For example, when a mother speaks with a provincial accent, the child will do the same thing. Just like that, it seems that Jieun's accent is similar to her mother's. Jieun's mother is also aware of this situation and often says that she wants to teach something more to Jieun as a mother, but she couldn't, so feels sorry for Jieun. She desires to teach Jieun a lot of things by sending her to private institutions but I told her not to force Jieun to learn those things because it would cause Jieun stress.

(Interview #1)

Yi-seul gave her honest views on the negative effect of the foreign-born mother's speaking ability on the 2.5 child's speaking ability. Yi-seul argued that it was appropriate for her to be concerned since Jieun's mother's linguistic characteristics had an impact on those of Jieun. Yi-seul said this was because Jieun listened to her mother and observed her mother at home and imitated her mother's accent, albeit unintentionally. Yi-seul spoke plainly enough to say that it would have been better if her grandmother, her father, and other family members had taken care of her. This seems like a bold assertion as if Yi-seul was not considering what impact such separation would have on mother-child relations. Nevertheless, Yi-seul was worried enough about the long-term impact of the mother's accent on Jieun's accent to compare it to how having a provincial accent might affect a child's future.

In the third interview (Interview #3), Yi-seul saw a video stream (Observation #3) that showed Jieun mentioning the word '건조' [dryness, pronounced GUN-JO], a word that most of the children might find it unfamiliar. In other words, it is uncommon for a four-year-old child to use such a difficult word.

Some questions were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: Isn't '건조' [GUN-JO] kind of a difficult word for a four-year-old? She even made a mistake when she used this word by saying “건조했어요” [GUN-JO-HAT-SUH-YO] since “건조해졌어요” [GUN-JO-HAE-JUT-SUH-YO] is a proper use of the word '건조' [GUN-JO].

Yi-seul: Perhaps, she has learned that word from her mother. Jieun's mom brought a moisturizer the other day and asked me to apply it to Jieun's hands throughout the day. She is kind of sensitive about her daughter's illnesses. I think her mother takes Jieun to the hospital whenever Jieun becomes sick and tries to do exactly what the doctor tells her to do. She even asked me to apply chapstick to Jieun's lips, but Jieun was able to do this by herself.

Researcher: Oh, she shared the doctor's messages with you.

Yi-seul: Yes. She made a request for such medication by quoting the doctor directly.

Researcher: But how did you know that Jieun had copied her mother's word, '건조' [GUN-JO] ?

Yi-seul: Because her mother used the same word '건조' when she was talking to me. She emphasized the necessity of applying such moisturizers to her whenever Jieun had skin problems; that is, the dryness. But I never used the word '건조' [GUN-JO] to Jieun.

(Interview #3)

Yi-seul was even able to detect the effect of Jieun's mother's linguistic habits on that of Jieun when I showed Yi-seul a video stream of Jieun using an unusual expression. Yi-seul traced the origin of that expression to what a doctor had said. The fact was that Jieun's mother made a request to Yi-seul to help Jieun with some medication by quoting the doctor directly that included the expression. The word Jieun used reminded Yi-seul that Jieun's mother had used the same word when she was talking to her. This convinced Yi-seul that Jieun had copied her mother's words. Another thing the teacher discovered was that Jieun had learned that word from a person outside the kindergarten. Jieun made a mistake when she was using the word by saying "건조했어요" [GUN-JO-HAT-SUH-YO] while "건조해졌어요" [GUN-JO-HAE-JUT-SUH-YO] was a proper use of the word '건조' [GUN-JO]. It cannot be known whether Jieun's mother was properly using the word to Jieun; however, Jieun might have not learned that word at kindergarten since '건조' [GUN-JO] was a difficult word for a four-year-old to learn. The probability was low that the teacher or her peers used that word around Jieun. Since Jieun's mother took Jieun to the hospital when Jieun was sick, it is also possible that Jieun might have learned

that word from the hospital while the doctor was talking to Jieun's mother. The National Curriculum Guide of Nuri-Curriculum Guide Book for Age 3-5 (2013) of South Korea says that it is important for children of Jieun's age to practice using the words in their daily lives that they hear from someone else using those words. What is more, they would properly use the words that they have learnt recently in order to express their feelings and thoughts, make requests, and share their experiences, according to the guide book.

Considering what the guide book says, tracing the origin of the words that a four-year-old child uses seems useful to teachers of the 2.5s if and only if the 2.5's linguistic habits somehow are developed by their foreign-born mothers. If any impact, either negative or positive, of the 2.5's foreign-born mother is noted by the teacher, the teacher should pay special attention to this and take special care of the 2.5s to make sure their special needs are met.

Yi-seul thought that such negative impact of Jieun's mother on Jieun can be mitigated by interacting with peers. The teacher said, "She can learn more here at the kindergarten by interacting with peers." (Interview #1) Yi-seul reported that there actually were some improvements in Jieun's Korean: "At the beginning, she spoke with a stutter and her way of speech was very similar to that of her mother. Though she still retains her mother's accent, Jieun and her peers are very much alike now." (Interview #1) Yi-seul once said, "In every respect, children who are sent to kindergarten by their parents learn more. [...] What comes to my mind these days is that children should get along with peers as much as they can. I think differences might exist between the children who just stay home and the children who come to the kindergarten." (Interview #2).

## Jieun Helps Mom

The teacher was also asked whether there are instances when Jieun helps her mother:

Researcher: Then how about the examples of Jieun helping her mother?

Yi-seul: Yes. Jieun's mother once mentioned that Jieun even knows how to do things better than she does. Jieun lets her mother know what her mother does not know well.

Researcher: What is the content that Jieun provides her mother?

Yi-seul: Information about school supplies. The day before we went on a field trip, such as visiting a vegetable garden, I told the children to wear boots and sports clothes. Even though parents can find out about these requirements by checking the monthly schedule, some children tell their moms and others do not. Some parents forget and send their child without dressing him/her as requested. Nevertheless, I think Jieun transmits my message very well to her mother. Her mother calls me in the morning of the next day and asks me whether she has the correct information. Wouldn't that be a help to her mother? On looking back into the past phone calls that I had with Jieun's mother, she often told me that she had forgotten to provide Jieun with school supplies even when Jieun had given her the message.

(Interview #1)

In the second interview (Interview #2), some follow-up questions were asked:

Researcher: You told me that Jieun is very good at letting her mother know what her mother does not know well but which Jieun herself knows well. Is there anything else? The way Jieun could help her mother?

Yi-seul: Writing and reading Korean.

Researcher: Specifically?

Yi-seul: Jieun has been having private lessons in Korean. The tutor visits her home once a week and Jieun is encouraged to do some homework throughout the week. It is natural that mothers help their children with these kinds of worksheets but I have heard from her mother that Jieun said to her, 'You don't even know this?' Jieun's mother told me that she even learns from her daughter.

(Interview #2)

In the third interview (Interview #3), Yi-seul was asked for more information on the context when Jieun's mother learns from her daughter.

Yi-seul replied:

After the tutor's visit, Jieun asked some questions of her mother about the homework the tutor gave it to Jieun. However, Jieun's mother was not able to answer those questions. I heard this from Jieun's mother and she was smiling while she was telling me this story. Jieun likes to teach others. She even teaches her mother.

(Interview #3)

Yi-seul also reported that she had heard from Jieun's mother that Jieun even helps her mother with both conveying information from the kindergarten and with her Korean. The first help that Jieun's mother had been receiving from Jieun was a type of help that any child from any type of family could provide to their mothers. This is because very often students serve as conduits between teachers and parents, thus, it becomes the child's role to act as go-between. The only thing that can be questioned is the accuracy of information delivered since kindergarteners are still learning Korean. Nevertheless, Yi-seul said Jieun's mother called her in the morning of the next day and asked her whether she had the correct information. This made up for the weak points of Jieun's speech at home.

On the other hand, the second type of help that Jieun was giving to her mother, teaching her mother Korean, was not a normal activity among the other children in her class. This is because what language is spoken to a 2.5 child by a foreign-born mother is a complex one. There may be several different cases: 1) the mother speaks to the child in

her native language only, 2) the mother attempts to speak to the child in Korean (even if she is a learner herself), and 3) the mother does both (this is generally the case when the children are little, but after the time they reach certain grade in elementary school, their Korean might be better than the mother, so the mother may stop speaking only Korean to them at all). Thus, what language is spoken to a child by a foreign-born mother depends on the circumstance of the individual child, but in most cases in South Korea, it would have to be Korean.

In Jieun and Jieun's mother's case, Yi-seul reported that she had never seen Jieun's mother using her native language Mongolian even when she was with Jieun. Yi-seul even thought that Jieun's mother had been trying to use Korean purposely though the Eun-hallowed some other possibilities for what language might have been spoken to Jieun by her mother outside the kindergarten. When I asked Yi-seul what could be the reason for the language preference of Jieun's mother, she replied that it was because Korean was spoken here in this country. Thus, '2) the mother attempts to speak to the child in Korean (even if she is a learner herself)' may had been the case for Jieun and Jieun's mother. However, only by listening to what Yi-seul had said, it is not known whether '3) the mother does both (this is generally the case when the children are little, but after the time they reach certain grade in elementary school, their Korean might be better than the mother, so the mother may stop speaking only Korean to them at all)' would also be the case for certain times or locations in the case of Jieun and her mother.

Anyhow, the second type of help that Jieun's mother was receiving from her daughter, leaning Korean from her daughter, was not a normal activity found in native South Korean families unless the mothers' language development was delayed. To better

support the language development of the 2.5s, such information can be used to understand the 2.5's needs for language ability. Thus, acknowledging and considering the possibility of the negative impact of mother's foreignness on child's language ability should not be regarded as an expression of prejudice but as showing sensitivity to the needs of the 2.5s. For example, parking lots for handicapped drivers are not an expression of prejudice toward people with special needs but it is a just convenient facility for the disabled offered to them in order to meet their needs.

On the other hand, given that Jieun's mother was receiving help from her daughter, the amount of security the mother provided her daughter could be questioned. Perhaps, Jieun turning inward to help her mother impeded her exploring and mastering the social and physical world. But perhaps not, maybe it even motivated her to explore more. Maybe the mother reciprocated her help with strong emotional support. Even though Yi-seul once mentioned that forming stronger attachments to mother would have been beneficial for a child who just stayed home, she did not touch on the issue about security. Nevertheless, Yi-seul reported that Jieun's mother had been aware of this situation and often said that she wanted to teach something more to Jieun as a mother, but she could not, so she felt sorry for Jieun. Yi-seul was even aware of the fact that Jieun's mother had taken this situation seriously and considered teaching Jieun a lot of things by sending her to private institutions. However, it had been Yi-seul herself who told Jieun's mother not to force Jieun to learn those things because it would cause Jieun stress.

### Jieun's Writing Abilities

Teacher gave a general overview on Jieun's writing abilities:

Researcher: How is Jieun doing with learning Korean?

Yi-seul: She understood well and followed what I taught even when I explained it to her only once. I think she has a good memory. She even comes up to me during the play time and asks me how to write certain letters that she does not know how to write. Then, I usually write those letters for her on an extra sheet of paper so that she could copy them. She has a desire to learn those letters.

Researcher: You mean that Jieun asks you when she knows those letters as a spoken language but not as a written one?

Yi-seul: Correct. She knows how to speak them out but finds it difficult when it comes to reading and writing.

Researcher: Would you give me an example?

Yi-seul: When she wrote a letter to her mother, she wanted to write ‘엄마 사랑해요’ [which means ‘I love you, Mom’]. She knew how to write it except the component ‘랑.’ I taught her how to write the component and she asked me the same question once more on another day. After that, she was able to write the letter by herself.

Researcher: Have you seen any gradual improvements?

Yi-seul: I felt that when I saw her writing letters in her *Play Record notebook*. When she wrote the date and a day of the week, she often left out some consonants placed under a vowel or flipped some vowels and consonants. When I turned over the pages of her notebooks, in both the ones of the first half and the ones of the second half of this academic year, they showed gradual improvement, though the first half notebook had already been sent to her home.

(Interview #1)

Yi-seul also gave a general overview on Jieun's writing abilities. Yi-seul thought Jieun had no problem doing the activities. She reported that Jieun understood well and followed what she had taught even when she explained it to her only once. She thought Jieun had a good memory. According to the teacher, when Jieun knew some letters as a spoken language but not as a written one, she often came up to her and asked her how to write certain letters that she did not know how to write even during the play time. Yi-seul said Jieun had the desire to learn those letters. As the teacher usually did for the other

students, she wrote those letters for her on an extra sheet of paper so that she could copy them. Yi-seul reported that Jieun once left out some consonants placed under a vowel or flipped some vowels and consonants when she wrote the date and a day of the week but showed gradual improvement afterwards. She said she knew these aspects of Korean Jieun found difficult when she turned over the pages of her notebooks of this academic year.

In the same interview (Interview #1), Yi-seul mentioned her 2.5 student Jieun's special interest in drawing:

In the case of Jieun, she has been very much interested in drawing since she was three years old. When I saw her drawings, I thought that they were elaborate works. And her drawing skills have even improved.

(Interview #1)

In the second interview (Interview #2), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: Why do you think Jieun's ability to draw has been improved?

Yi-seul: She visits the art table every day. By seeing her doing that, I came to know that she likes drawing. Her drawings and coloring show her elaborate workmanship. I have been watching her drawing for two years and there have been some improvements. I found that children who do not like drawing make no progress.

Researcher: Can you compare writing activities to drawing tasks?

Yi-seul: Drawing is just doing whatever they want to do. However, children have the desire to write down what they can say. You know, adults like us can do it with perfect freedom. I think children feel marvelous when I express my thoughts freely on the whiteboard. They might think, 'How come she can write and read all those things?'

Researcher: Are there any examples of children finding difficulties in writing?

Yi-seul: If they find difficulty in writing, they can just draw the letter as if they are drawing a picture. When children were writing birthday cards, I asked them to copy an

additional sentence from the whiteboard onto their birthday card ‘우리 사이 좋게 지내자’ [which means, ‘Let’s be good friends’] on the top of the original sentence ‘누구야 생일 축하해. 사랑해’ [which means ‘Happy birthday, NAME, I love you’]. However, some children said that they were not able to write the additional sentence even before trying it.

(Interview #2)

Children had chances to make birthday cards. Yi-seul asked children to copy some sentence from the whiteboard onto their birthday cards. The following is a picture of a birthday card made by her 2.5 student Jieun during the fourth observation (Observation #4). It is written, ‘지훈아 일곱번째 생일을 축하해 사랑해’ [which means, ‘Happy seventh birthday to you, Ji-hoon. I love you’]. Even though the sentence was the same sentence that the children have been writing throughout the year, Jieun was actually drawing the letters rather than writing. When the researcher questioned the teacher about this in the fourth interview (Interview #4), she was surprised at my opinion that Jieun was drawing the letters. This was because the teacher considered Jieun to be a student who was at a more advanced stage (that is, capable of writing letters, rather than drawing the letters). She responded, “Really? Jieun was drawing the letters?”:



Figure 2. A birthday card made by Jieun.

The sentence '누구야 생일 축하해. 사랑해' [which means 'Happy birthday, NAME. I love you.'] was the same sentence that the children have been writing throughout the year. Yi-seul once reported (11/27/2014) that Jieun did not know how to write only the word component '랑' when she wanted to write '엄마 사랑해요' [which means 'I love you, Mom.']. and finally she got to know how to write after she taught her how to write. This partly explains why the teacher was surprised at the researcher's opinion (2/16/2015) that Jieun was drawing the letters, not writing, when she wrote (2/10/2015) '지훈아 일곱번째 생일을 축하해 사랑해' [which means, 'Happy seventh birthday to you, Ji-hoon. I love you.']. The teacher might have considered Jieun to be a student who was at a more advanced stage (that is, capable of writing letters, rather than drawing the letters).

Actually, writing letters and drawing letters can be distinguished by observing a child's letter production process and by discerning the style of handwriting. It is similar to a monolingual adult copying the address for an expected dwelling place written in foreign language (e.g., Address in Japan, Residence in Taiwan R.O.C.) into their disembarkation cards. Not only the motion of writing, but also the style of handwriting will be different from those of native-born residence of the destination country. For example, the amount of time they gaze the original copy will increase compared to the case where they had already internalized the targeted language. Also, there will be a moment when they keep on looking at the original copy at the same time the ink is being applied to their disembarkation cards. What is more, the style of handwriting will be out of joint as if the writer's spatial intelligence was low.

My opinion that Jieun was drawing the letters not writing them is based on such distinguishing attributes. By synthesizing the whole situation, the task given to the children (copying the letter from the white board into their birthday cards) might have encouraged the children to draw the letters even for children who knew how to write the letters. The National Curriculum Guide of the Nuri-Curriculum Guide Book for Age 3-5 (2013) of South Korea also says that such copying task is difficult for kindergarteners.

### Jieun's Reading Abilities

Yi-seul gave a general overview of Jieun's reading abilities as well. She said Jieun was in the average group and tried to read words in her daily life. In the third interview (Interview #3), Yi-seul saw a video stream (Observation #3) that showed Jieun relating a word in her textbook ‘주사기’ [syringe, pronounced JOO-SAH-GHEE] to ‘이 창기’

[Korean version of the researcher's name, pronounced YEE-CHANG-GHEE] because both had a common component, which was 'ㄱ' [GHEE].

Yi-seul: Jieun tries to read words in her daily life. When I was reading a picturebook to the children, Jieun tried to read at least the title of the book that was printed in large type since other letters printed in small type were too small to be read from the carpet area. However, she still has difficulties in reading components with consonants placed under a vowel [letters with more than one consonant].

Researcher: Oh, the components with consonants placed under a vowel.

Yi-seul: Yes. A lot of students find this difficult. They try to read them in order but often make mistakes. They have an interest in reading letters but very few children are able to read them correctly.

Researcher: Are there any other aspect of reading that Jieun finds difficult?

Yi-seul: Jieun is just an average student. If she makes mistake in reading, I just let her know how to read correctly. She really tries to read the word components but sometimes she reads just the part that she knows. For example, she may be familiar with the word component 'ㄱ' [GAH], so if she finds this word component from a picturebook, she might try to read it and this is also true when she reads a poem for children. Almost all children have difficulties in reading components with consonants placed under a vowel.

(Interview #3)

According to the teacher, when she was reading a picturebook to the children, Jieun tried to read at least the title of the book that was printed in large type since other letters printed in small type were too small to be read from the carpet area. She reported that Jieun still had difficulties in word components with consonants placed under a vowel [letters with more than one consonant].

During the interviews, the teacher often mentioned Jieun's other family members while she talked about Jieun and Jieun's mother: Jieun's father, parental grandmother, parental aunt, and even relatives of Jieun's mother. Information on Jieun and her family members may have affected the answers that the teacher provided in the previous

sections because those are the needs perceived by the teacher. Thus, how the teacher perceives the 2.5 and the 2.5's family members should be also considered in order to validate the stated beliefs of the teacher. In the next section, how and how much information Yi-seul is gathering about Jieun and her family members and sharing it with other teachers and children from native South Korean families will be explored.

### **Gathering and Sharing Information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's Family Members**

The teacher gathered information about not only Jieun's mother and father but also Jieun's paternal grandmother, parental aunt, and Jieun's cousins. What is more, she even had some information on Jieun's Mongolian relatives.

#### Gathering Information about Jieun's Mother

As noted in the previous section, Yi-seul collected information about Jieun's mother's writing ability by observing the progress in her writing skills as evidenced in Jieun's notebooks. Since the teacher also knew that Jieun's mother had been studying Korean, in the second interview (Interview #2), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: How did you know that Jieun's mother was studying Korean?

Yi-seul: Jieun's mother told me. She even went somewhere to learn Korean last year.

Researcher: How about this year?

Yi-seul: I think she is just staying home this year.

Researcher: Staying home?

Yi-seul: She worked last year though.

Researcher: How do you know that she is staying home this year?

Yi-seul: Because her mother picks up Jieun early from kindergarten these days. Last year, she took Jieun home at 5:00 p.m. but these days, 3:00 p.m.

(Interview #2)

Her answer shows that she gathered some information directly from Jieun's mother since the teacher replied that Jieun's mother had told the teacher that she had been learning Korean. On the other hand, she thought that Jieun's mother stayed home this year because the time she made her appearance in the afternoon had changed. In the third interview (Interview #3), a few more follow-up questions were asked of the teacher for clarification;

Researcher: You told me that Jieun's mother worked last year but not this year. How did you know that?

Yi-seul: I think I just heard from Jieun's mother though I didn't ask her about it. At that time, she once brought Jieun late in the morning and said, 'I have been busy these days with my work so I often came home from work late. Last night, since I left for the day late, Jieun went to bed late and woke up late this morning. That is why we are late today.' I knew that she was working when I heard this.

(Interview #3)

Also in the third interview (Interview #3), some probing questions were asked to the teacher;

Researcher: You told me that you had come to know what Jieun's mother had been doing such as working, staying home, or going somewhere to learn something. You said what she had been doing affected the time she takes Jieun to and from the kindergarten. Are there any other examples?

Yi-seul: I think she goes to centers like a cultural center time to time. I heard that she will attend a cooking school to learn how to cook Korean food from mid-February. These days, Jieun is not taking afterschool classes though she once had attended the afterschool program. [...] So Jieun's mother recently told me that she will take her home at 2:30 p.m. and Jieun will go to a private institute on Mondays and Wednesdays. However, she also told me that she will pick up Jieun from kindergarten late from mid-February because Jieun's mother will come back late from the cooking school from that point on. She has once learned something from the center though it was not cooking at that time.

Researcher: Are the classes given particularly for foreigners? I mean the classes that Jieun's mother had attended or will attend in the near future.

Yi-seul: I don't know.

Researcher: I forgot to ask you what kind of work Jieun's mother did last year.

Yi-seul: She worked with her mother-in-law for a while at a restaurant last year. You know, last year, when I couldn't reach Jieun's mother on the phone, I called her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law picked up the phone and told me that she will send Jieun's mother to the kindergarten. I think both of them were somewhere close to each other last year.

(Interview #3)

In this way, the teacher reported that Jieun's mother had informed her about what she had been doing or what she would do in the near future when she had mentioned the time she would take Jieun to or from the kindergarten. In other words, the teacher was able to collect some information about Jieun's mother while discussing what time she would bring Jieun to school and what time she would pick her up with Jieun's mother.

Earlier in the second interview (Interview #2), some probing questions were asked of the teacher in order to find out what impression the teacher had gotten about Jieun's mother. It was assumed that her answers to such questions might contain the information she had gathered from Jieun's mother:

Researcher: You told me that she had been living in South Korea nearly seven years since she came here after she got married. During the seven years, she might have done something other than just adjusting herself to a new environment. What would she have been doing here for nearly seven years?

Yi-seul: I just thought that she came here because she got married to a Korean.

Researcher: You mean she is just a marriage migrant?

Yi-seul: Yes. She lives life to the fullest for the sake of Jieun. She even went somewhere to learn something.

Researcher: Do you know her educational background?

Yi-seul: I do not know.

(Interview #2)

Furthermore, Yi-seul gathered some in-depth information about Jieun's mother. For instance, Yi-seul knew that Jieun's mother was only a married immigrant rather than a married immigrant worker though she did not know her educational background.

### Gathering Information about Jieun from Her Mother

While she was talking to Jieun's mother, the teacher collected additional information about Jieun. Earlier in the second interview (Interview #2), the teacher shared some stories that she heard from Jieun's mother. The following conversation took place right after the teacher saw a video stream (Observation #2) showing Jieun asking the researcher questions. She did so while writing the shapes of the consonant components of Korean letters and when she made a figure with her fingers and then asked the researcher to figure out what her fingers represented:

Researcher: She was writing those consonants and making a heart shape with her fingers. I am wondering if she does this regularly.

Yi-seul: I heard that Jieun spends hours at home pretending to be a teacher. I also saw her enjoying asking questions. She once made letters with blocks and asked me to figure out what those represented. It was similar to what she did in the video. Today, she even made a shape with her fingers when she raised her hand in the carper area.

Researcher: Who told you that she pretended to be a teacher at home?

Yi-seul: I was talking to Jieun's mother on the phone. While we were talking about something or other, she told me that Jieun put many dolls in front of her and read picturebooks to the dolls.

Researcher: What can be the meaning of such pretend-play?

Yi-seul: I think she tries to ask questions about what she knows well. And there are moments when children pretend to be teachers when they are with their classmates. I found that children like having a chance to speak to the whole class because their classmates might give ear to the presenter. I try to be

discreet in words and deeds since Jieun will model herself upon me and do the same thing when she goes home.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul even heard from Jieun's mother about the things that had been going on at Jieun's home. For example, Yi-seul was informed by Jieun's mother that Jieun had been spending hours at pretend-play at home. Yi-seul was able to relate what she had heard from Jieun's mother to what she could have seen in her classroom while spending time with Jieun. To be specific, Yi-seul linked Jieun asking questions to the teacher herself to Jieun's pretend-play at home, noticing that Jieun was mimicking a teacher. Yi-seul even used such information for her own teaching practice by saying, "I try to be discreet in words and deeds since Jieun will model herself upon me and do the same thing when she goes home" (Interview #2).

### Gathering Information about Jieun's Father

The teacher reported in the first interview (Interview #1) that Jieun's father was supporting Jieun's mother;

Researcher: What kind of role would Jieun's father play as a native South Korean in his family, especially the roles he would not have played if he also had been a foreigner?

Yi-seul: He might read the letters sent from the kindergarten to the child's home. Even if Jieun's mother is learning Korean, she might find difficulties in understanding all of the words perfectly. So on special days, I call her or talk to her in person when she comes to kindergarten to take Jieun home and tell her to do some things for her daughter. Nevertheless, I heard that Jieun's father reads these letters in place of Jieun's mother. However, as far as I know, Jieun's father comes home every weekend or every other weekend. Though Jieun takes home the letters on Fridays, on the weekends that Jieun's father cannot come home, Jieun's mother gets into difficulty. Nevertheless, in case of Jieun, the

kindergarten always sends out a timely reminder since Jieun's mother's limited ability in reading had already caused some incidents such as Jieun's mother failing to make the proper preparations when the class went on a field trip or something. I hope her father could be with her mother at such moments. It will be great if Jieun's reading ability improves more quickly.

Researcher: Why does his father come home every weekend or every other weekend?

Yi-seul: I think he works in the provinces and stays at his workplace on weeknights.

Researcher: So Jieun can spend time with her father only in the weekends when he comes home?

Yi-seul: Yes. When Jieun was three years old, her grandmother and aunt lived close to her. But they were a long way off after she became four.

Researcher: Can you compare her father's role to her mother's role?

Yi-seul: Her father's role is just helping her mother when she needs help, such as with reading. Playing with his daughter can also be a father's role.

(Interview #1)

Yi-seul was aware of the fact that Jieun's father could be helpful to Jieun and Jieun's mother. Specifically, Yi-seul knew that Jieun's father helped Jieun's mother with her Korean reading. Yi-seul had compassion for Jieun and Jieun's mother because they had limited access to Jieun's father, who was one of her native South Korean supporters, because he came home only on some weekends. In fact, Yi-seul defined the father's role as just helping the mother and the daughter, on the premise that the mother had primary responsibility for child rearing.

In the second interview (Interview #2) some follow-up questions were asked about the role of Jieun's father:

Researcher: You told me that Jieun's mother gets into difficulty on the weekends that Jieun's father cannot come home. What I can understand from you is that his 'every weekend home visit' is better than his 'every other weekend home visit'. What will be the reason for that?

Yi-seul: Of course it will be better for Jieun to be with her father. Other children may see their father every day. But Jieun cannot. She might miss him.

Researcher: When it comes to the father's role, is there anything about which you feel something is wanting?

Yi-seul: When Jieun shared stories about what she did last weekend with the whole class, she never told stories about going on an outing. Other children often talk about a zoo, a hot springs resort, and the like. However, Jieun says that she went to her grandmother's house most of the time.

Researcher: How might Jieun feel about that?

Yi-seul: I don't think she was depressed. She was proud of what she did. I think she has a positive outlook on life.

Researcher: What is her father's occupation?

Yi-seul: I don't know.

Researcher: What are the living conditions of Jieun's family?

Yi-seul: They seem ordinary. I think Jieun's mother gets things for Jieun, whatever Jieun wants.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul thought that Jieun's family made a relatively good living because Jieun's mother got things for Jieun whatever Jieun wanted. As measures of cultural capital, however, Yi-seul used indicators "by means of which a measure is constructed primarily" by making note of participation in cultural activities (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 575). For example, other children's going on an outing (e.g., zoo, a hot springs resort) was compared to what Jieun was doing most of the time (visiting her grandmother's house). Similar to name brands, these are also the "standards of responsibility for parents" that were established by teachers, "covering different aspects of children's lives" (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 589).

### Gathering Information about Jieun's Other Family Members

In the second interview (Interview #2), the teacher saw some video streams from the second observation (Observation #2) showing Jieun talking to the researcher about her family members. Note that older cousins can be called either brothers or sisters when it comes to Korean language:

Jieun: My mom is Mongolzecheck and Mong-soy in Korean.

Researcher: Mong-soy?

Jieun: Yes. I have a cousin in Mongolia. And there are sister Chine [cousin], brother Onarld [cousin], aunt Narzzi [Jieun's mother's sister], and an uncle [Jieun's mother's brother].

(Interview #2)

What Jieun told me was not clear enough to draw a family tree. Nevertheless, she was talking about her Mongolian family members. While she was watching the video, the teacher noticed that the name Jieun had mentioned, either Mongolzecheck or Mongsoy, was her mother's name.

The teacher saw another video stream:

Jieun: On holidays, by way of killing time, I visit my grandmother's house and play with my sister [cousin].

Researcher: What kind of play?

Jieun: Play with dolls, E-Mart and Jinro-Mart play, princess and a beggar play,

(Interview #2)

The sister Jieun mentioned in the second video stream was a native South Korean cousin who is from her father's family, not a Mongolian. Right after showing these two video streams, some questions were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: Jieun often talks to me about her Mongolian family members and her grandmother. As you have seen in the video, Jieun talked about her family

members even though I didn't ask her. Actually, I heard her talking about her family members few more times even though I failed to video record all of them. But it is hard for me to draw her family tree only by listening to what Jieun said. I don't even know whether those people live in South Korea or Mongolia or somewhere else. Have you heard anything like this from Jieun?

Yi-seul: Yes. She has mentioned her family from time to time. One day, her grandmother and her sister [cousin] came to the kindergarten. Sometimes, her sister [cousin] came to the kindergarten alone to take Jieun home. I know this much about her family members and Jieun doesn't talk about her family members that much.

Researcher: Will the grandmother be her father's mother?

Yi-seul: Yes. And Jieun also talked about her aunt. She once mentioned that her aunt went out beautifully dressed up. Jieun talked to me about them whenever she remembered them.

Researcher: Did she ever mention the ones who live in Mongolia?

Yi-seul: Once when Jieun visited Mongolia, but she didn't mention them after that.

Researcher: How much do you know about her family members according to what Jieun said?

Yi-seul: She told me that she had met her sister [cousin] in Mongolia. She brought some candies to the kindergarten and she said she had chosen the candies with her sister [cousin] in Mongolia.

Researcher: As her teacher, what significance do you find in such information about her family members, regardless of where they live?

Yi-seul: Just as children talk to their parents about what happened at the kindergarten, they may want to let the teacher know what happened at their homes.

Researcher: Do you mean that you are just using this information for communication purposes?

Yi-seul: Yes.

(Interview #2)

At this point some follow-up questions from the first interview were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: But what I heard from you in the last interview was that her grandmother [Jieun's parental grandmother] and aunt [Jieun's father's sister] once lived close to Jieun when Jieun was three, but after Jieun became four they moved far away. How are you using that information while you teach Jieun?

Yi-seul: I think Jieun visits her grandmother's house often these days. I think it is not that far. But last year, whenever Jieun's mother was not able to take Jieun home because of her own work or of being sick, Jieun's grandmother often took Jieun home. However, these days, Jieun is mostly taken care of by her mother.

Researcher: Can you think of some other examples of Jieun's family members being genuinely helpful to Jieun or her mother other than just taking Jieun home?

Yi-seul: Jieun's grandmother or her aunt could help Jieun's mother with the things that she is not good at, such as reading. I think it would be better if Jieun's grandmother stays with Jieun's mother but what I found out was that Jieun's mother didn't like that.

Researcher: You mean Jieun's mother didn't like her mother-in-law staying with her though she could receive help?

Yi-seul: Once Jieun's mother told me that her mother-in-law often scolded her.

Researcher: What for?

Yi-seul: Also her mother-in-law said to me, 'Jieun's mother didn't prepare something for Jieun even though I asked her to do it.' Jieun's grandmother talked about Jieun's mother in this manner since Jieun's mother didn't prepare something for Jieun when Jieun had to bring that to the kindergarten.

Researcher: You know, conventionally, one's mother and wife don't get along so well.

Yi-seul: Ha-ha.

(Interview #2)

In the third interview (Interview #3), one more question was asked as a follow-up question from the second interview (Interview #2) though it received only a terse reply:

Researcher: What kind of help could Jieun's grandmother have provided to Jieun's mother?

Yi-seul: She might have learned a lot from her mother-in-law, especially when they lived together.

(Interview #3)

Yi-seul was collecting information about Jieun's other family members such as Jieun's father, Jieun's grandmother, Jieun's aunt, Jieun's cousins of Jieun's father's family and even some Mongolian relatives from mother's home. Yi-seul recognized that Jieun

and her mother stayed near to Jieun's grandmother last year but not this year by discussing matters about taking Jieun home last year. Yi-seul even had contact information for Jieun's grandmother. Yi-seul knew that such native South Korean family members (*i.e.*, Jieun's grandmother and Jieun's aunt) could also be helpful to Jieun and Jieun's mother.

Yi-seul reported that Jieun's grandmother also had taught Jieun's mother a lot of things although the two had some issues just as the Korean proverb says: 'One's mother and wife don't get along so well.' Actually, such psychological warfare between foreign-born mothers and their native South Korean mother-in-laws was also reported in Gu's 2007 study, Huh's 2009 study, and Woo, Juong, Choi, Yi, and Lee's 2009 study. Yi-seul felt pity for the limited access of Jieun and Jieun's mother to Jieun's grandmother and Jieun's aunt since they moved far away after Jieun became four. In fact, the paternal grandparents are resources in household production in South Korea (See *Previous Studies on 2.5s* in Chapter 2, p. 21).

The following conversation took place when the teacher was asked how Jieun might think about her foreign mother:

Researcher: What would Jieun think about her mother being a foreigner?

Yi-seul: Jieun might not take it that seriously and neither would the other children since they don't know that Jieun's mother is a foreigner. However, Jieun once visited Mongolia during the summer break. She was proud of being there and was not ashamed of it. When she shared stories about what she did during the summer break with the whole class, she told the other children that she had been there and she even brought candies to share with the whole class.

Researcher: You mean Mongolian candies?

Yi-seul: Yes. She distributed the candies to the children. But she didn't consider Mongolian candies shameful.

Researcher: How long did she stay in Mongolia?

Yi-seul: Two or three weeks.

Researcher: It has been almost two years since you took charge of Jieun. Was this her first time visiting her mother's country?

Yi-seul: Yes. I think so.

Researcher: How did you first get to know that she had been to Mongolia?

Yi-seul: Jieun's mother had informed me in advance that she would be sending Jieun to the kindergarten a few days after the start of fall semester.

(Interview #1)

In the third interview (Interview #3), the teacher saw two video streams from the third observation (Observation #3). In the first video stream, Jieun was talking to me about her one-piece dress. Jieun said to me, "Yesterday, mom bought this dress for me and there is another one." In the second video stream Jieun is talking about her father. She was saying, "My father smoked a lot. And he plays online games a lot. I also played games a lot. But I don't have bad eyes. I don't wear glasses."

Then, the teacher was asked some questions:

Researcher: When Jieun talks about her family members, I assume that you may collect information about them directly from Jieun. Do you have an example?

Yi-seul: Yes. I get to know about them when she talks about them. When Jieun begins to share a story, I listen to it, and then I ask her some questions. I heard that her Mongolian relatives once visited South Korea during the winter break. As I heard, they all went to Lotte World [an amusement park in Seoul]. She also mentioned that she had received a dress from someone from another country. She said the dress was from another country.

Researcher: What will be the significance of such information to you?

Yi-seul: I get to know where the dress had come from. And about Lotte World as she mentioned, she was absent for few days even after the winter break since her Mongolian relatives stayed a few more days in South Korea before they went back to Mongolia. I heard that Jieun went to the airport. Though I hear from Jieun, I also hear these things from her mother when she

brings Jieun to the kindergarten in the morning. When I hear the stories about her family, I feel that perfect peace reigns over her family. Though her father comes home just on the weekends, he manages to find time for Jieun. I think Jieun had a great time at the Lotte World. She told me that she went to a *Maze Room* and an *Ice Room* there. She even brought a picture.

Researcher: Do you talk with Jieun privately?

Yi-seul: She shared the stories with her classmates as well. I found the picture in the *Winter Break Album* so I asked Jieun where the photo was taken. She replied that that was the *Maze Room* and said she loved it because her father was with her and she felt from the picture that they live in perfect harmony.

(Interview #3)

### People Jieun's Mother Gets Along with in South Korea

The following conversation was continued in the same interview (Interview #3):

Researcher: You may have been collecting information about other children and their family members as well. How meaningful was it to gather information about Jieun and her family members compared to that of other children?

Yi-seul: It sure is meaningful because those relatives were not her father's family. They were her mother's family from her mother's native home. They all had to travel from Mongolia to South Korea. Jieun also once visited Mongolia. I think she spends time with Mongolian relatives during almost every break.

Researcher: Do you think Jieun's mother gets along with other native South Koreans?

Yi-seul: I am not sure but I think that would not happen that much. I saw Jieun's mother talking to So-eun's grandmother at the bench outside the kindergarten. In the summer, mothers often sat outside on the bench right next to the playground and watched their children playing. I saw her talking to So-eun's grandmother few times. But I never saw her having conversation with other mothers. She might have been talking to So-eun's grandmother simply because their children are classmates.

Researcher: How many times did Jieun's mom talk to So-eun's grandmother?

Yi-seul: Twice or three times.

Researcher: Wouldn't there be any Mongolians around her other than her family members?

Yi-seul: I do not know but I guess there will not be any Mongolians, I think.

(Interview #3)

In the fourth interview (Interview #4), some follow-up questions were asked to know how the teacher might think about the resources Jieun's mother might use and the people she would get along with:

Researcher: What kind of resources might her foreign-born mother use for her cultural adaptation to the new environment?

Yi-seul: Since she lives here, she might learn something from Korean traditional markets when she passes by them. She might be under the influence of her husband's family members who also live here. Or she can learn things from the cultural centers that she attends.

Researcher: So what kind of people do you think she would get along with to acquire such resources?

Yi-seul: I guess Koreans? I do not know whether there will be foreigners from who she could learn things from.

Researcher: Why do you think they are native South Koreans?

Yi-seul: Because they are numerically superior.

(Interview #4)

When I asked Yi-seul whether there were any Mongolians around her other than her family members, she replied, "I do not know but I guess there will be no any Mongolians, I think" (Interview #3). When I asked Yi-seul about the kind of resources Jieun's mother might use for her cultural adaptation to the new environment, she mentioned Korean traditional markets and her husband's family members who also lived in South Korea. She talked about cultural centers that Jieun's mother had attended. Even

when the researcher gave Yi-seul another chance to talk about co-ethnic communities, she kept on talking about native South Koreans. When the researcher asked Yi-seul the reason why Jieun's mother would get along with native South Koreans, she innocently replied, "Because they [native South Koreans] are numerically superior" (Interview #4).

### Sharing Information with Children from Native South Korean Families about the 2.5 and the 2.5's Family Members

Also in the first interview (Interview #1), Yi-seul was asked what she would think about sharing the information that Jieun's mother is a foreigner with other children from native South Korean families.

The teacher replied:

I think even Jieun doesn't know such things. When I see Jieun, she does not look like a foreigner or something and other children might feel the same thing. When I see Jieun's mother, her physical appearance also doesn't have any particularly distinctive characteristics though I can discern her foreignness when I come to have a conversation with her since she speaks slowly and hesitantly. Jieun's mother visits the kindergarten very often to take Jieun home. So other children all know Jieun's mother, but none of them had questions about or mentioned her mother.

(Interview #1)

In the second interview (Interview #2), some follow-up questions were asked:

Researcher: You have once told me that Jieun is not ashamed of her visit to Mongolia or the candies she bought from Mongolia. Suppose there is another child at a different kindergarten who also has a foreign-born mother. His or her mother's country-of-origin might be different from that of Jieun's mother. But if it is reported that the child feels shame because of his or her mother, what can be the reason be for having such a sense of shame?

Yi-seul: Because the child might feel that he or she is somewhat different from other children. Actually, kindergarteners really don't know such things. But when they become elementary students or above, they would certainly tease Jieun since kids are immature. If her classmates make fun of her, Jieun will feel that something should be wrong with herself even when Jieun would have been living in comfort with an unconcerned air. I am anxious about the influence of others on Jieun.

Researcher: If the one who teases Jieun is a child from a native South Korean family, how might that child view Jieun?

Yi-seul: Jieun has no particularly distinctive physical features.

Researcher: I am asking why the child would tease Jieun. Can you think of any other possible reasons?

Yi-seul: Physical appearance, if there is a marked difference. Though it is not a thing to be made fun of, kids might joke about it.

Researcher: How about Jieun? As we know, Jieun is a child who talks a lot about Mongolia. Will there be a point of in time that Jieun would decide to stop talking about that anymore?

Yi-seul: I am not sure of that. What if she continues to talk about Mongolia casually and with pride? I think it depends on what kind of classmates she will meet. Some friends might find it interesting because Jieun visited the country which other children have never been to. Having a foreign-born mother can also be seen with curiosity. However, if her classmate teases Jieun by saying, 'Her mother is from another country,' Jieun might regret giving the classmate the information about her mother. Then, Jieun will certainly tell her mother what her classmate had said to her when she goes home.

Researcher: What was your first impression about Jieun?

Yi-seul: When I first reviewed her application last year, I was surprised at her mother's name though I thought nothing of Jieun's name. I wondered whether her mother was a foreigner or something. It put a burden on me at the beginning, even before I went through such experience of having a foreigner's child as a student. However, after having a personal experience of taking charge of her, I found that that really made no difference. Actually, I am a person who is frightened by casually meeting a foreigner. But when I hear from my friends who met foreigners at their workplaces,

they reported that foreigners are kindhearted. I think only the person who has gone through it himself may know about it since we are prejudiced against foreigners at the start.

Researcher: I am curious about your word choice 'burden.' Can you get at the root of such a burden?

Yi-seul: I was a teacher just out of college and meeting parents was anyway a burden for me. Even worse, meeting a foreign-born parent was an added burden for me. I was worrying about particularly the language. I was wondering how I could inform the foreign-born mother when something serious happens. Nevertheless, it proved conclusively that nothing was the matter with me. At the beginning, the only thing I saw was her mother's foreign name and the only thing I heard was that she is a foreigner.

Researcher: Had you learnt the language that the foreign-born mother speaks, how would you have felt? In other words, how it might have been if the language that the mother speaks had been the language you are fluent in?

Yi-seul: I might have been pleased to find that.

Researcher: So you mean the language barrier was the major threat to you?

Yi-seul: Yes. That's why I was that nervous.

Researcher: How it might have been if you had not been able to communicate with her till the last? Would you still say that nothing was the matter with you?

Yi-seul: No. In that case, I might have talked to Jieun's father instead and if that had not worked, I might have talked to the principal or the lead teacher. Or I might have had to learn or speak the language that Jieun's mother speaks.

(Interview #2)

Yi-seul was thinking that four-year-olds in her classroom would not do anything mean to Jieun with the information about the 2.5's foreign-born mother. She said, "Actually, kindergarteners really don't know such things" (Interview #2).

In the third interview (Interview #3), the teacher saw a video stream from the third observation (Observation #3) showing Jieun talking about her foreign cousin:

Jieun: Do you have a Mongolian cousin?

Researcher: I don't have a Mongolian cousin.

Jieun: Oh, you don't? I do have one, called brother Hizzes [a cousin from mother's family].

Researcher: Where does he live?

Jieun: In the United States.

(Interview #3)

Right after the video stream was shown to the teacher, some follow-up questions from the second interview (Interview #2) were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: As is shown in this video, she talks about a Mongolian relative who lives in the United States. Do you know about him?

Yi-seul: She also talked about him to me but I do not know the details.

Researcher: Anyway, she again talked about Mongolian relatives when her classmates were around her. But you have mentioned before that when Jieun becomes an elementary student or above, other children from native South Korean families might tease her. What I can assume from your words is that you think the meaning of saying 'I have a Mongolian cousin' will have different meanings when it is said in a kindergarten classroom, in an elementary school classroom, or in a middle/high school classroom respectively. How might those be different from each other?

Yi-seul: It depends how the children respond to her. Now the children might be interested in it but the children in my classroom don't even know the fact that Jieun's mother is a foreigner. I think Jieun also doesn't think that way. Even though Jieun didn't talk about her foreign mother, she did talk about her visit to Mongolia and that is her pride and joy. But I am not sure what might happen when she says the same thing in an elementary school classroom. I hope Jieun to be indifferent to children who respond to her coolly. It would be sad if she takes such ridicule seriously and cries when she gets back home.

Researcher: Wouldn't someone among your students in your class know that Jieun's mother is a foreigner? How did you rule out the possibility of such quick-witted children in your class?

Yi-seul: I do not know exactly what kind of conversations are taking place in my classroom but no one asked me questions like ‘How come Jieun’s mother is a foreigner?’

Researcher: Have you ever thought about sharing that information with other children? You may have some plans or opportunities to share it, or sometimes you may feel the necessity to do it. What would you say?

Yi-seul: I have never thought about or tried to do it but, it might have been a good idea if I had done it.

Researcher: You have been in charge of Jieun for nearly two years. If you get to be in charge of her even next year, would you try to share the information with the class?

Yi-seul: Actually, May is the month that we do a project on family, exploring the subject of family. We might have shared such information when we spent time introducing children’s family members. However, since children usually talk about their mother’s hairstyle or length of the hair, information about foreignness of the mother might not be mentioned. In that case, I think I can let the children get the information by saying, ‘Jieun’s mother is not a native South Korean’ when it is Jieun’s turn to introduce her family members.

Researcher: What might have happened if you have had done that already?

Yi-seul: The children might have shown a great interest.

Researcher: I was asking you whether you would try to share the information with the class if you get to be in charge of her even next year.

Yi-seul: Yes. And I can even try that within this year if I have the opportunity.

(Interview #3)

Yi-seul thought that the children in her classroom might take an interest in it. She said, "The children might have shown a great interest." (Interview #3) However, Yi-seul was worrying that Jieun would face peers who would make fun of her foreign-born mother from the point Jieun would enter elementary school. Similarly, Yi-seul often emphasized to me that Jieun was not ashamed of her mother's country Mongolia. Her

words suggest two possibilities. First, Yi-seul might have been aware of native South Koreans' receptivity toward foreigners from other Asian countries. Secondly, Yi-seul herself might have considered having a Mongolian mother as something to feel ashamed of. This will be unpacked in Chapter 6.

### Prejudice

Also in the third interview (Interview #3), some follow-up questions were asked of the teacher to try and ascertain her attitude and views on the concept of 'prejudice':

Researcher: What do you think about prejudices that native South Koreans might have?

Yi-seul: I think kindergarten is the very beginning of the education children might receive throughout their lives. Though their first teacher should be a good example to them, even I was the person who got frightened by Jieun's mother's foreign name and felt the burden of taking charge of Jieun, as I mentioned before. I shouldn't have done that because that was a kind of prejudice.

Researcher: Weren't you in fear of the language barrier?

Yi-seul: If there are more children whose mothers were foreigners, we could better serve them but Jieun is the only one in my class. A person's mental attitude will be a variable.

Researcher: I found that there are a total four children whose mothers are foreigners in this kindergarten. But they are all in different classes. Did someone disperse them?

Yi-seul: I don't think so. I think they are too few to be placed in the same class. But I heard of a school in town C that has many students who have foreign-born parents in the same classroom. I think that school might have prepared more ways to help students who have foreign-born parents.

Eun-ha considered taking charge of the 2.5 students to be a burden. What Yi-seul referred to as prejudice about her 2.5 student's foreign-born mother was simply about a

language barrier. She overcame it right after she knew that the foreign-born mother could speak Korean.

### Taking Charge of Jieun for Two Years

Also in the third interview (Interview #3), questions about the meaning of taking charge of Jieun for two consecutive years were asked of the teacher:

Researcher: As you have been in charge of Jieun for two years, what do you think the significance of that is in comparison to just teacher her for one year?

Yi-seul: At the beginning of this academic year, since it was my second year taking charge of Jieun, I was pretty familiar with her rather than being curious about her. There were also some new members of this kindergarten who were assigned to my class. Shouldn't I have known a lot more about Jieun than such four-year-old newcomers?

Researcher: What if Jieun goes up to five-year-old classroom next year and another teacher takes charge of Jieun? Do you think you can help that teacher?

Yi-seul: Only when they ask me about Jieun in the first place. I cannot provide information about Jieun unless they ask me first. If I intrude where I am not wanted, she might feel badly about it.

(Interview #3)

In the last part of the fourth interview (Interview #4), the teacher was asked to give her final comments:

Yi-seul: Jieun is very good at art and has no difficulty in reading or writing. I think she is a girl with strong intentions. She tries to complete tasks that are assigned to her. She barely hesitates when she is doing physical activities.

Researcher: Just like other children?

Yi-seul: Jieun is even livelier than other children.

(Interview #4)

Yi-seul's communication with Jieun's family members was facilitated when Yi-seul tried to be sensitive to the needs of her 2.5 student and also when the 2.5's family members were supportive and communicative. Jieun's mother's Korean language ability was not sufficient to provide Jieun with the same amount of support as a native South Korean mother. Eun-ha acknowledged the possibility of the negative impact of her mother on Jieun's language development. Eun-ha's close relationship with Jieun's mother helped her gather further information about Jieun's family members. Her attitudes on Jieun and her family members determined how much she used or shared the information.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **DISCUSSION**

Hyungchul and Jieun were just two of many Korean children who attended the kindergarten. What was assumed to be special about Hyungchul and Jieun was the existence of their foreign-born mothers. When the two children were sent to the kindergarten, each classroom teacher was in charge of each child. Some issues concerning the 2.5 generation Korean children the teachers faced may have arisen from their foreign-born mothers; however, it may have been the teachers who created such issues relating to the foreign-born mothers. In other words, the key persons in this study were the teachers and they told the stories about the foreign-born mothers and their 2.5 generation Korean children. Hyungchul's mother and Jieun's mother were neither interviewed nor observed by me but are central figures of this exploratory study of how the teachers perceived and met the needs of the 2.5 generation Korean children and their family members. The research questions were:

1. How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children?
2. How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?

## **Communication with the 2.5's Family Members**

The first theme that emerged was the teacher's perceived needs for communication with the 2.5's family members. Teachers and mothers were expected to be in close contact with each other. This is a pattern of gender inequality in that the mothers are assumed to be the ones who should and would communicate with the teachers and discuss matters about their children. Coincidentally, among the fathers and the mothers of the 2.5 generation Korean children, it was the mothers, not the fathers, who were the foreign-born parent. Due to unavoidable circumstances, the teachers had to communicate with foreign-born mothers to fulfill this expectation. In other words, the duty to contact the foreign-born mothers by phone and to interact with them was imposed upon the classroom teachers.

Eun-ha reported that she had not only been faced with a language barrier to communication but also had been encouraged to adopt, so called, 'the second best policy,' which was contacting Hyungchul's father. In fact, if Hyungchul's father had been successful in taking the place of his mother, Eun-ha would not have seen 'contacting a father' as an issue unless the teacher had a gender bias. However, the teacher was not that satisfied with the way Hyungchul's father had responded to her when she tried to make contact with him. Compared to Eun-ha, Yi-seul was in relatively close contact with the foreign-born mother of her 2.5 student Jieun. Though Yi-seul also encountered language barriers, she managed to overcome them by talking with the mother in person.

What kind of relationships existed between the mothers and the teachers? When the researcher asked each teacher how they established relations with the parents, Eun-ha

often explicitly and rigidly defined her role as a teacher as if she was drawing a line at impinging upon a parent's authority or at violating parent's privacy. She said such words like, "Since teachers are obligated to, I am just doing what I am able to do," (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) "Teachers must do thing that they are able to do," (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) "He will stay with his parents when he is at home though I do not know the details" (Eun-ha, Interview, 12/4/2014) , or "How can I know all the details what is going on in his house?" (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014)

Her words suggest that she would have done no more than she was supposed to do or able to do. However, if a teacher defines her role too rigorously, she will regard any other actions that are not stated plainly as a teacher's role as trespassing on parental province. Eun-ha talked about increasing her role only when I asked the teacher to suppose how it would be to take charge of a 1.5 generation child instead of the 2.5s. She said, "In the case of the foreign-born child, I think teachers should take on some specific roles of their foreign parents, such as helping the child cultivate his/her daily habits or giving the child affection, though it will be a laborious work for the teacher. However, in addition to that, complementary cooperation between teachers and parents will certainly be needed." (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) Her statements appear to open up the possibility of expanding her role, however, instead it is excluding such a possibility because that would have meant that she would not have done that for higher generations than 1.5, not to mention the 2.5s. What is more, if she is arguing that '*a complementary cooperation between teachers and parents will certainly be needed*' only in the case of the 1.5s, she seems to be implying that such cooperation would have not been necessary for higher generations such as the 2.5s.

On the other hand, Yi-seul defined her role as a teacher rather broadly. When Yi-seul was asked what could have been the ideal way to establish and maintain relations with the parents, she replied, “Since the parents have put me in charge of their child, it is my duty to report everything I know about the child. However, if a child misbehaves, I would wait until the child gets over such bad habits before I report those to his or her parents.” (Yi-seul, Interview, 11/27/2014) When she was asked how she had thought about her relationship with Jieun’s mother, she replied, “I think my relationship with her mother is kind of healthy. I cannot force Jieun's mother to improve her Korean. The only thing I want from her is just that she gives her daughter more care with better parenting skills.” (Yi-seul, Interview, 11/27/2014) Yi-seul felt that she should fulfill her responsibility by reporting all the details of things the mother might not know since the mother had committed her child to the care of the teacher herself. Yi-seul even considered withholding some sensitive information as if the responsibility for the child were something that would be exchanged back and forth between the parents and the teacher. The Yi-seul described the lack of Jieun’s mother’s parenting skills as if she were calling Jieun’s mother to account.

How the teachers thought about their role as a teacher may have had an impact on the actions they might have taken with the 2.5s and the parents of the 2.5s. The ways the teachers dealt with teacher-parent conferences also suggest what their attitudes and views on the role of a teacher are. As mentioned previously, teacher-parent conferences were held either in person or by telephone twice a year. Hyungchul’s father chose to hold telephone conferences both times. After Eun-ha found out that the manner in which Hyungchul’s father received the phone call was not as she expected, she gave up on the

idea of having meaningful phone conversations with him. She said, “The only thing I can do is to call him only when something serious happens or just ask Hyungchul to forward messages to his parents.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) What is more, she attributed such poor communication with Hyungchul’s mother to herself being poor in English.

On the other hand, Jieun’s mother chose in-person conferences. When Jieun’s mother did not know what kind of questions she had to ask in the conference, Yi-seul gave Jieun’s mother some examples of questions that are frequently asked by mothers so that Jieun’s mother could talk more freely. By observing the body language of Jieun’s mother, Yi-seul even noticed that she had a lot of things to say. What is more, the teacher showed signs of concern, sensitivity, and empathy even when she recalled other conversations that she had had with Jieun’s mother. Specifically, Yi-seul reported that she had shown an actual object while she was explaining what some school supplies were to Jieun’s mother. She even found the strength of talking to a foreign mother in person by comparing this experience to telephone conversations. When I asked Yi-seul what might have happened if she had not been able to communicate with Jieun’s mother in Korean, she replied, “I might have had to learn or speak the language that Jieun’s mother speaks.” (Yi-seul, Interview, 12/15/2015) This is an in striking contrast to what Eun-ha had felt about her own foreign language skills.

Of course the state of affairs in which each teacher was in were not the same. However, teachers cannot use an extreme situation as an excuse for neglect of duty, if the teacher considered certain actions to be her duty. In fact, carrying out noninstructional duties and interacting professionally, tactfully and ethically with families are required to meet evaluation standards (Nolan and Hoover, 2011). Before making a hasty conclusion

about the teachers, it is time to move on to the next theme, the teacher's perceived needs for care from the 2.5's family members.

### **Care from the 2.5's Family Members**

The issues relating to care were raised mostly with respect to birthday parties and homework notebooks. Issues concerning birthday parties were discussed at length with Eun-ha as the central figure. (See Birthdays, p. 81; Learning from Observation or Experience, p. 109; and Learning from both 'Other Teachers' and 'Observation or Experience,' p. 119 in Chapter 4) Eun-ha has been already criticized by me in this paper for falling short of evaluation standards (e.g., for expecting a very low number of presents from Hyungchul by counting the number of birthday presents Hyungchul brought throughout the year, for having low expectations about Hyungchul and Hyungchul's parents, for not talking about the level of his reading or writing abilities with his parents), for not informing Hyungchul's parents about expected size of the birthday cake or the return present culture of other parents, and for questioning the parental preparation for Hyungchul's own birthday party. Overall, she failed to reach the standard, "understands and respects different family beliefs, traditions and values" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 64). However, before evaluating the teacher, the way the kindergarten organized birthday parties could have been questioned first.

The definition of care used here was the involvement of the child's parents or other family members in item supplying processes for birthday parties, which slightly deviated from the original meanings of care. In other words, letters that asked parents to be involved in birthday parties functioned as a test challenging both the parents and the

teachers. It might have been impossible for a five-year-old child to earn or save enough money to buy classmates' birthday presents throughout the whole year, purchase a birthday cake to share with every classmate, or prepare return presents for the whole class. Thus, such system invited the parents to enter into competition with other parents in order to show that they are involved in the item supplying process by spending money for their child. Though Yi-seul was not as serious and did not call the matter to account, it can be assumed that similar patterns might have been emerged in Jieun's class as well.

For comparison purposes and to suggest a positive option, note that Yoon-ji from kindergarten B reported (Teacher C, Telephone Interview, 4/24/2015) that the kindergarten she worked for had a system so such issues would not arise at all. Here, the present the birthday child received was provided by the kindergarten itself, not the parents. Moreover, they used a toy birthday cake for birthday boy and girls. Furthermore, such return presents were not allowed in the kindergarten Yoon-ji worked for.

Another issue which emerged concerning care from both Eun-ha and Yi-seul was about homework notebooks. The definition of care adopted here was similar to that proposed for birthday party issues. Homework would be left unfinished without parental involvement. In this situation, teachers might have expected the mothers to help out with their children's homework; however, teachers failed to come up with an alternative idea when the parents did not cooperate with their children in their homework.

Inferring from what Eun-ha mentioned, bringing back the homework notebooks to the kindergarten once a week was another duty for the children. If the children did not bring them back or forgot to bring them back, the teachers felt that the homework had not been done. Conversely, even when the children did bring back the notebooks, sometimes

children brought them back without doing anything. Furthermore, there were some cases where children did their own part of the homework but without receiving any written comments from their mothers. This study found the utilization of the homework notebooks had to do with the language abilities of the 2.5s and their foreign-born mothers. Detailed discussion on the theme of language abilities follows in the next section and has emerged implicitly already both from the first theme and the second theme.

### **Language Abilities**

Eun-ha was consciously aware of what was going on in her classroom. Eun-ha was even able to think of a few different cases when children did bring back the notebooks. First, it was when children brought those notebooks by themselves. The second case was when teachers reminded the children to bring them back. The third was when mothers made their child do the homework.

As previously mentioned, Eun-ha did not take any action except reminding the children to bring back the notebooks when children's parents did not help with their children's homework. What she had been doing was just counting how many times each child brought back each different notebook. For example, she said, "At the beginning, 22-23 children among 29 brought back *Play with Words and Letters* notebooks. But these days, since it is the end of this academic year, 15 or fewer bring back the notebook."

(Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

In Hyungchul's case, Eun-ha reported that Hyungchul did not do any homework from the very beginning. Eun-ha knew that Hyungchul had difficulties in doing homework by himself and she also knew that his mother was not able to help him

because she did not know how to read or write in Korean. Eun-ha just guessed what was going on in Hyungchul's house by saying, "I think his father is kind of busy with his own work and I have no idea how his mother is helping him." (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014)

Homework issues are critical because homework is assumed to promote student learning if it is being checked by the teacher, returned to students, and gives them educational feedback. In fact, "impacting student learning positively is the teacher's primary mission" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 75). The first objective of these notebooks might have been supporting children's language development while turning to parents for assistance. However, if parents did not help enough with their child's homework, it became hard to expect their children to learn what the teacher had intended the children to learn. Again, the way the kindergarten gave homework to the children can be questioned.

Just like the birthday party issues, asking parents to participate in such homework activities functioned as a litmus test for both the parents and the teachers with the challenge associated with teaching the children including the 2.5s. Had every parent been engaged in the activity, it might have been an ideal scenario but would not be realistic. In other words, there were various reasons why parents had failed to help their children with homework. As Eun-ha guessed, some parents might have been busy with their own work or could not be bothered with helping out with homework. Some parents might have lacked interest in their child's homework. When it comes to the 2.5s, another possibility can be suggested, which is that parents lacked in ability in Korean.

As it can be suggested from the case of birthday presents, lower expectations can be set by a teacher if a limited partnership with a certain parent continues for a long time.

For example, Eun-ha mentioned, “A lack of complementary cooperation between teachers and parents, like homework notebooks, lasted for almost two years and how Hyungchul deals with them also lasted for two years up to now.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) Force of habit can deeply influence the way a teacher thinks about a child. A child can be labelled by a teacher as being ‘a child who does not bring a birthday present’ or ‘a child who is not doing his/her homework.’ What was a manifest absurdity was that the teacher was testing the parents at the same time she was testing the child. What is more, the teacher was also being tested on the ways she dealt with such birthday party issues or homework notebook issues while also having to manage the classroom.

Note that Yoon-ji from kindergarten B informed (Teacher C, Telephone Interview, 4/25/2015) me that the kindergarten she worked for adopted a system so that homework issues would not be as likely to arise. Rather than encouraging the children to keep notebooks, this kindergarten sent out a sheet of paper every other Friday that had texts that children were encouraged to study throughout the following two weeks. One day out of the following ten weekdays, the children could volunteer to talk to the whole class about the subject. The children who had a chance to study the texts with their parents might have been more ready to give a presentation to the whole class even on the early few days of ten weekdays. Even if the children who did not receive help from their parents would have been ready to talk about the subject by the end of ten weekdays since he or she would have already had the opportunity to hear dozens of presentations from his or her classmates or comments from the teacher.

Compared to Eun-ha, Yi-seul did not give me a general overview of how the children in her classroom were doing their homework. She neither provided enough

reasons why children brought or did not bring the notebooks. How she dealt with the notebook homework might have been similar to Eun-ha in that she just left the matter as it was. Nevertheless, Yi-seul's attitudes and views on the language abilities of her 2.5 student's foreign-born mother can be compared to those of Eun-ha. Yi-seul not only knew how much Jieun's mother's writing had improved but also tried to correlate Jieun's mother's Korean with Jieun. In other words, Yi-seul had observed closely the improvement of Jieun's mother's writing by turning over the leaves of the notebook that included Jieun's mother's writing, and considered that to be an effort on the part of Jieun's mother to help her own daughter. Yi-seul's judgement were based on not only her observation but also what she had heard directly from Jieun's mother who said that she studied Korean for the sake of Jieun.

However, Jieun's mother's homework was not something which Yi-seul got by chance. In other words, it was not just Yi-seul's luck to meet a hard-working mother. In fact, Yi-seul had taught Jieun's mother how to do the notebook homework early in the first year she took charge of Jieun. Yi-seul said, "Like last year, when Jieun was 3 years old, Jieun's mother said she didn't know how to do it. So I explained it to her a few times separately. She wrote it down the way it sounds without applying the rules of Korean spelling. But she was doing it anyway." (Yi-seul, Interview, 11/27/2014)

In the case of a foreign-born mother, such homework provided an opportunity for a foreign-born mother to write in her second language and get feedback from the teacher. Yi-seul shared an example of homework that Jieun's mother did on Jieun's *Face-to-face story* notebook which suggests that such notebook homework required second language writing from a foreign-born mother. However, Yi-seul left something to be desired in that

she had never thought about coordinating any other activities that could promote Jieun's mother's language development. Actually, teachers in Cho and Cho's 2011 study reported that foreign-born mothers' Korean language proficiency was improved and that the mothers started to take the lead in the education of their children because the teacher themselves supported the mothers. Yi-seul found satisfaction just from the fact that Jieun's mother somehow participated in the activity.

Since language abilities were suggested to be the needs of the 2.5s that teachers had perceived, how did the kindergarten teachers seek to support the 2.5s' language development is discussed here. In other words, content on reading and writing activities from the theme language ability will be discussed here to see how two kindergarten teachers met the needs for language development of the 2.5s. Thus, the data relating to what the teachers did during reading and writing activities are explored. Both Eun-ha's class and Yi-seul's class were doing reading and writing activities. Reading and writing activities were one of the extra-curricular activities where Korean alphabet textbooks were being used from the school age 3.5, as the kindergarten made it a rule.

Examining what Eun-ha did during children's reading and writing activities is a last chance for finding evidence to counter the researcher's emerging hypotheses for her not being that sensitive to the needs of her 2.5 student. Eun-ha's general classroom practices were as the following.

She said she tutored children individually when she had chances to do it. This was for helping the children write correctly. She divided the children into groups according to a placement test. Each group members were seated around the same table. She told me that the reason why she grouped the children was to give them step-by-step instructions.

She even wrote letters with her own hand on the white board so that children might know the order of making strokes. Before doing writing activities she read aloud some words to see who had difficulties with those words.

Though she said, “I cannot know the level of each individual one by one,” (Eun-ha, Interview, 1/16/2015) Eun-ha had assessed Hyungchul’s reading and writing abilities and somehow supported his language development accordingly. For reading, she knew that Hyungchul was at the level of learning a certain group of letters that were relatively simple and easy. She let Hyungchul read aloud only those letters he should read and she read the rest of the letters for him when a word consisted of both the ones Hyungchul were focusing on and the ones at a higher level. She considered the rest of the letters that Hyungchul could not read as being a matter of differences between individuals. Eun-ha was also aware of the fact that Hyungchul was often guessing rather than reading while he tried to figure out what the letters were. For example, Eun-ha knew that Hyungchul was looking at the pictures that were drawn right next to the words. When Hyungchul was familiar with just one letter from a word, he generally guessed the rest of the letters and tried to figure out what the whole word was, according to Eun-ha. Eun-ha was also aware of what kind of cognitive process Hyungchul was going through, especially when Hyungchul had a hard time reading letters that had an additional consonant under a vowel. She knew which vowels were the ones that Hyungchul found difficult.

Eun-ha discovered that children, including Hyungchul, had a simple strategy of learning word component as a whole rather than breaking it down into vowels and consonants. The teacher reported that the same strategy had been used by the children even when they had been reading words: learning a word as whole. Eun-ha believed that

Hyungchul had been using the same strategy when he was given dictation and that enabled Hyungchul to write words that included letters that were known to be difficult for him. She said, “He is not thinking about the structure, but he is seeing and tracing the shape.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

As shown, Eun-ha was closely coordinating the reading and writing activities by assessing Hyungchul’s reading and writing abilities. However, she had the belief that Hyungchul would not have any trouble with his schoolwork when he became an elementary school student. She said it would be premature for her to determine her students' reading and writing abilities. She thought that her students were precocious and that they all had already reached an advanced level. She even argued that the level Hyungchul was at was reasonable. Her thinking was based on the information she received from an elementary school teacher who had made a visit to the kindergarten to give a lecture to the parents. This teacher mentioned that children will relearn the Korean alphabet from the first consonant when they become elementary school students. Eun-ha also thought that there were children who learned very quickly and there are also some children whose reading and writing abilities were gradually improving.

There may have been another reason why Eun-ha did not push the children too much. This was because Eun-ha is a teacher who considered the interests of her students. She believed, “The more they are interested in them, the sooner they will be aware of them.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) She also said, “I wish they do not get sick and tired of learning Korean characters due to the activities.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) For example, Eun-ha said Hyungchul was repeatedly exposed to the first few consonants 'ㄱ' [G], 'ㄴ' [N], and 'ㄷ' [D]; however, she thought that he would get familiar with the last

part of the list of consonants, such as ‘ㄷ’ [CH] and ‘ㅎ’ [H], only from the point when he becomes eager to go over to the last part of the list of consonants. This example suggests that she valued the interests of the children when she had given Hyungchul tasks. Based on her own observation, Eun-ha thought that Hyungchul was very much interested in Korean though he still had difficulties in this subject. When she saw him taking dictation, her impression was that Hyungchul was motivated.

How Eun-ha supported Hyungchul during the reading and writing activities suggests that she was a teacher who was doing her best when it came to her regular work. On the top of that, her optimistic views on her students’ progress in reading and writing might have led the teacher to somehow overlook the needs of her 2.5 student. Here, Eunha fails to meet one the Nolan and Hoover’s 2011 evaluation standards, which is “carries out noninstructional duties effectively” (p. 64). For example, while she did her best at undertaking reading and writing activities, she went to the opposite extreme and was allowing Hyungchul to skip all his homework.

One of Nolan and Hoover’s 2011 evaluation standards is “the teacher understands and responds to a wide variety of student diversity, including cultural differences and special-needs students” (p. 64). Accordingly, appreciating the 2.5s’ mothers’ language abilities should be also encouraged while assessing the 2.5s’ language abilities to meet their needs for language abilities. This is because their mothers’ foreignness opens up the possibility that the 2.5 having special needs in terms of language abilities and development. During the interviews, the researcher received the impression from Eun-ha that she was trying to deny all possibility of there being a negative impact due to the mother not being a native speaker of Korean on Hyungchul's language ability. In order to

come up with the evidence that Eun-ha had, despite the impression she gave to the researcher, been thinking about the negative impact of his mother not being a native speaker of Korean Hyungchul's language development, the researcher had to reason by syllogisms. To be specific, Eun-ha said distinctly "His mother does not know how to read or write in Korean" (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) and "He might have difficulties in doing homework. (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) However, she never mentioned that Hyungchul could not receive help from his mother for the reason that his mother cannot read or write in Korean. With the major premise and the minor premise that the teacher had provided to the researcher, this researcher was able to reach the conclusion that Hyungchul, who had found difficulty in reading and writing, could not have been receiving any help from his mother because she was not able to read or write in Korean. Certainly, the teacher could have known that there was a link between the mother's literacy abilities and their children's schoolwork (Smythe & Isserlis, 2004).

In the first interview (11/20/2014), Eun-ha mentioned that Eun-ha had the intention to tutor Hyungchul individually when Hyungchul came to the kindergarten early in the morning since Hyungchul was usually the first child to arrive to the kindergarten at 8:30 a.m. For that reason, the researcher went to the kindergarten about that time on the two observation days (12/1/2014 & 1/12/2015). However, the researcher was not able to see Eun-ha giving any private instruction to Hyungchul these two days since Hyungchul arrived to the kindergarten a little later on those days. What is more, other children started to arrive at 9:00 a.m. Thus, the only possible amount of time the teacher could have given such instruction was limited to 30 minutes or less. However, this would have been possible only when he came to the kindergarten early and when the

teacher had nothing else to do. In light of her statement, "Paying special attention to him is not that easy for me because we have such a high student-teacher ratio," (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) the feasibility of a high dosage or great frequency of teaching Hyungchul one-on-one can be questioned.

Won-jang (Principal, Interview, 2/16/2015) showed me some of Hyungchul's written work after she had taught him privately for a month. She did this because she heard that Hyungchul's older sister was having a hard time doing with her schoolwork in the elementary school. However, the reason why Won-jang taught Hyungchul only for a month was that she thought Hyungchul was writing Korean letter components quite well. However, what I thought was that Won-jang had been fooled by the child's false positives since she had only focused on his articulation of external symbols (manifest performance and overt behaviors; see Johnson & Hooper, 1982), which was his writing. According to the researcher's observation, Hyungchul was just copying the letters by drawing the letters. Hyungchul was actually good at copying. When I encouraged him to read the letters that he just wrote more than ten times, he did not know how to read.

Yi-seul had a deeper appreciation of Jieun's mother's speaking abilities, compared to Eun-ha who just described Hyunchul's mother's speaking ability as "speaking in sentence fragments." Also, in comparison to Eun-ha who mostly avoided commenting on the negative effect of the foreign-born mother's speaking ability on the 2.5 child's speaking ability, Yi-seul gave her honest views on this matter.

Yi-seul also gave me a good sense of her general classroom practices. When Yi-seul was supporting children's language development, especially writing, she said she had usually been writing letters for them on an extra sheet of paper so that children could

copy them. According to Yi-seul, she sometimes helped children write just by talking to the children by using children's prior knowledge. This was when she supported children's language development verbally in a similar way that Haenes, Schrijnemakers, & Stufkens (2003) adopted a teaching method, using visualization, verbalization, and students' prior knowledge. She said she had been tutoring children individually those who were not able to understand what she was talking about during the lesson. When children did not follow the proper order of making strokes in writing Korean, by not following the instructions which were written in their textbooks, she corrected their mistakes by showing them her writing. She did this on the whiteboard even in circle time.

Yi-seul divided children into groups for reading and writing activities because mothers of the children wanted their children to use textbooks tailored to their own levels. Among 25 students, 20 of them were at the similar level. Jieun was in this group. She said differences within the group existed since she had seen some students who were doing better and faster (but not half-heartedly) relative to her observations of other students.

Three of the children were at the level above the twenty students and one of the three was at the highest level. She occasionally helped the boy at the highest level when he asked her questions about he found difficult. The other two students who were at the higher level were using a textbook at the level right below the highest one. Yi-seul supported these two just as she helped the boy at the highest level.

The remaining two students were the ones who needed help using the textbook at the level below the one used by the other twenty children. The two had no option but do the activity separately with the teacher. She seated them right next to her. When the

teacher was asked whether there were certain teaching strategies more effective to a certain group, she said she did not know.

### **Gathering and Sharing Information about the 2.5 and the 2.5's Family Members**

Eun-ha was gathering information about her 2.5 student Hyungchul either from other teachers or by her own observation or experience, or both ways concurrently. Eun-ha said she collected information about Hyungchul and his family members from other teachers since she had only a few chances to talk with his parents. Eun-ha mostly talked with the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year. However, the birthday party issues were touched on even when she gathered information about Hyungchul and his family members. Specifically, she asked the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year about Hyungchul's birthday party because she was anxious about his birthday party this year. The fact that Eun-ha was worried about Hyungchul's birthday party again suggests that the policy that the kindergarten adopted was flawed. This can be an example of how teacher was put into a testing stand under such policies.

On the other hand, being Hyungchul's classroom teacher allowed Eun-ha to collect information about Hyungchul and Hyungchul's family members by her observation and experience throughout the year. Eun-ha assumed that Hyungchul's mother would not have been that willing to be a participant in regular parent-involved activities. Eun-ha's judgement was based on her assumption that Hyungchul's mother would not have been able to interact with Hyungchul's classmates as other mothers do. Eun-ha even worried about her other students' response. She said, "I wonder what other

friends might think if Hyungchul and Hyungchul's mother took part in those activities.”  
(Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014)

However, when Hyungchul's mother actively participated in an English speaking parent-involved activity, Eun-ha saw how English (as a form of linguistic cultural capital) being used as a buffer against ‘reluctance to participate’ for a foreign-born mother. Specifically, Eun-ha associated Hyungchul's mother's English abilities with presents that were being distributed to the children by other mothers. In other words, Eun-ha thought that both ‘the English ability that Hyungchul's mother had’ and ‘material goods that other mothers provided’ had served a similar function in her class. Eun-ha thought that both kinds of capital, regardless of what form it took, would fill the capital investors' children with pride. Since Eun-ha had a low expectation for Hyungchul's mother's participation in parent-involved activities at the beginning, the teacher might have thought that the situation was reversed as she had seen her English and Korean offsetting each other.

When the researcher asked Joo-im (Lead Teacher, Interview, 12/18/2014) about the English speaking parent-involved activity, she told me that it had been Joo-im herself who had encouraged Hyungchul's mother to participate in the activity. Joo-im talked to Hyungchul's mother when she came to the kindergarten to take Hyungchul home. She told me that Hyungchul was present when Joo-im and the mother were having a conversation and Hyungchul was also the person who persuaded his mother to participate in that activity. Joo-im said these were all possible because the language that his mother was fluent in was expected to be used in the activity. Joo-im said she also had a conversation with the principal about making use of Hyungchul's mother ability for other activities in the kindergarten. However, when I asked about this matter to Won-jang

(Principal, Interview, 2/16/2015), her response was that being an English teacher at her kindergarten required obtaining qualification for it. In fact, Joo-im reported (Lead Teacher, Interview, 2/16/2015) that English speaking parent-involved activity is not common, only once in two years. Gu (2007) reported that what language a foreign-born mother could speak had an impact on their relationships with her husband's family and obtaining employment. According to Gu (2007), foreign language other than English or Chinese would not function as a buffer against 'rejection by native South Koreans' for a foreign-born mother.

Joo-im shared her last year experience when Hyungchul's mother once again made her appearance at a regular parent-involved activity classroom as the mother of Hyungchul's older sister. Joo-im reported that Hyungchul's mother was made to feel awkward because the other mothers stared at her and her daughter's faces because both had distinctive physical features compared to Hyungchul. In fact, people from the Philippines usually have darker skin and this was also the case for Hyungchul's older sister though her father was a native South Korean. Though it cannot be affirmed that their darkness of skin or race is the root cause of such discriminatory treatments, it seems relevant to apply Oropesa and Jensen's (2010) argument that "such discriminatory treatment stems from the racialization of immigrant groups as undesirable others based on their phenotypical characteristics" (p. 278).

Eun-ha said she had very few chances to meet Hyungchul's mother. Mostly, it was when she ran into her either at the kindergarten while she came to the kindergarten to take Hyungchul home, or in front of the kindergarten while she was going to work in the morning. Even when she had the chance to have a conversation with Jieun's mother, Eun-

ha did not make the best use of such opportunities to get intimately acquainted with her. She either said hello to her or was just finding that she were not fluent in Korean.

Eun-ha also learned a few things about Hyungchul and his family members directly from Hyungchul. Eun-ha got some impressions about Hyungchul's home environment by observing Hyungchul throughout the year. She said, "What I have learned from Hyungchul himself is that his mother and his father do not function that well as parents of a student since it is not easy for his mother to take care of him and his father goes out to work." (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) By sharing what Eun-ha had seen from Hyungchul, she told me that she had been anxious about the care that his parents had given to Hyungchul. She gave a living description of child neglect by saying, "In the coldest season, I had compassion for Hyungchul when he once came to the kindergarten wearing just a padded vest, though he was wearing gloves. When I consider what I saw throughout the year, I don't think he would be quick to understand or meet the requirements of the times." (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) She also received an impression from Hyungchul that he would have hard time with peers in the future because she thought that Hyungchul would not easily assimilate his peer's materialistic culture. Eun-ha's statements were based on her observation in that the group of children Hyungchul gets along with had rarely mentioned name brands.

Though Eun-ha did not address it explicitly, Hyungchul's parent's socioeconomic status and Hyungchul's father's age would partly explain what Eun-ha had seen from Hyungchul and Hyungchul's family members. Both Won-jang (Principal, Interview, 1/19/2015) and Joo-im (Lead Teacher, Interview, 2/16/2015) had mentioned that his family was not making a good living. They said Hyungchul's father was a bus driver and

his mother was a factory worker. Both mentioned that Hyungchul's father often made divided or deferred payments for Hyungchul's tuition. Won-jang and Joo-im found the reason for this to be the low economic status of the family due to the occupations of the parents.

Joo-im (Lead Teacher, Interview, 2/16/2015) argued that the age of Hyungchul's father had an impact on the way of bringing up his children. Her point was that the methods of bringing up children his father had adopted were different from those of other parents especially in how he spent his money for his children. She said Hyungchul's father dressed their children in cost-effective ways and would not consider buying name brands. Joo-im (Lead Teacher, Interview, 12/18/2014) also found the reason for the birthday party issues from the age of Hyungchul's father. She felt something wanting in Hyungchul's father, however, took no notice of the birthday party policy of the kindergarten she was working for.

As mentioned previously, Eun-ha never connected such name brands issues or birthday party issues to the age or socioeconomic status of Hyungchul's father as if she wished to avoid making any comments on Hyungchul's father's personal affairs. Though she did mention the age of Hyungchul's father and raised name brand issues, she never linked the two to each other. All she said was that Hyungchul's father was in his fifties but Hyungchul might have not known his father's age, even approximately. She also did not give any reason for the birthday party issues but just explained what happened when the parties were going on. Jang (2014) describes such an outlook as color-blind attitudes which do not appreciate the extent of negative experiences that 2.5 children might have

and their cultural differences. According to Jang (2014), these attitudes can create and perpetuate inequality between cultural groups.

Eun-ha reported that Hyungchul had provided Eun-ha the information about what he had been doing outside the kindergarten. Eun-ha assumed that Hyungchul had been spending a lot of time with his older sister by listening to Hyungchul say that he had drawn pictures with his older sister.

In the case of Eun-ha, considering what kind of information she had gathered, how she compiled such information, and what she had done with the information, one is tempted to conclude that she might have done more by using the information than what she actually did. If an analogy can be made between Eun-ha and a medical doctor, she was very good at making diagnosis but poor at treatment. Just as she did not do anything when Hyungchul did not do his homework while knowing almost everything that was going on in her classroom, she did almost nothing with the information she had gathered throughout the year. In other words, the information was not being utilized successfully to satisfying the needs of her 2.5 student Hyungchul.

For example, she learned from the teacher who had taught Hyungchul last year about the absence of Hyungchul's mother's phone number, however, she just followed the teacher's recommendation that she should just leave it as it stood. Till the end of the academic year, Eun-ha continued a very poor relationship with Hyungchul's mother. She almost did nothing even after she had known that Hyungchul's father was not functioning as a supportive parent. When Eun-ha guessed that Hyungchul was spending a lot of time with his older sister at home, and assumed that his older sister could have a favorable influence upon his learning, she didn't try anything to encourage Hyungchul to receive

help from his sister as if she was allowing things to take their own course. During the interviews, Eun-ha often used phrases like, “I am not sure whether Hyungchul is doing this with his older sister” or “I don’t know whether his older sister told this to Hyungchul.” Sensibly, it might have been possible for Eun-ha to encourage Hyungchul to do his homework with the assistance of his older sister. However, what the teacher said to me was, “As I found, there is no alternative for notebooks that were not working.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

Eun-ha had her own principle that she should not introduce the reading and writing abilities of a child to parents unless the parents asked her first since she thought it would be premature to determine children’s reading and writing abilities at their ages. She did not even take reading and writing activities seriously. She stuck to her own principle even when she had a telephone conversation with Hyungchul’s father. Since Hyungchul’s father did not mention such subject, Eun-ha also did not talk about Hyungchul’s reading and writing abilities. When I questioned this, Eun-ha replied, “I think the fact that Hyungchul is having a pleasant day at the kindergarten is sufficient to satisfy Hyungchul’s parents.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015). Actually, this could to be Eun-ha’s own opinion since it was Eun-ha who were satisfied with Hyungchul having a pleasant day at the kindergarten. Eun-ha said few months ago, “When he is having a pleasant time at the kindergarten, I am more than satisfied with him.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 12/4/2014)

Considering the information Eun-ha had collected from Hyungchul and his family members, a question can be posed whether she really had to adhere to such a principle at the sacrifice of Hyungchul’s rights to a proper education. First, Hyungchul was skipping

all his homework for the whole year. Actually, the homework was designed to support the children's language development, especially their reading and writing abilities. Thus, Eun-ha might have predicted the impact of not doing the homework for a whole year. Secondly, Eun-ha was aware of the fact that both Hyungchul's parents were busy with their own work and his mother was not able to read or write in Korean. As a matter of fact, Eun-ha knew that other children were receiving step-by-step instructions by their mothers. She said, "There are some children who learn Korean characters one by one, in regular sequence, by receiving help from their mother." (Eun-ha, Interview, 1/16/2015) What is more, she heard from Hyungchul that he was not doing any reading or writing activity outside the kindergarten. She also knew that the level of Hyungchul's reading and writing textbook he was using was at the lowest level in her classroom. She had mentioned that Hyungchul was one of the students who still found reading and writing difficult.

With such information that was available to her, she might certainly have felt the needs of this 2.5 student for language ability. If an analogy can be made between Hyungchul and children with special needs, Hyungchul was treated by Eun-ha as a child without special needs even when he was the child with special needs. It is a matter of common knowledge that individualized education should be considered as well as universal education when it comes to children with special needs. In other words, teachers may provide children with special needs with not only uniform educational opportunities but also individualized instruction.

The fact that the teacher did not inform Hyungchul's father that questions about the level of a child's reading or writing abilities were frequently asked questions among

other parents reminds me about the return present issue and cake size issue that arose from Hyungchul's birthday party. (See Birthdays in Chapter 4, p. 83) Eun-ha did not inform Hyungchul's parents about the existence of return present culture that had developed by other parents because she had a principle that the kindergarten should not bring this up unless parents asked how many students receive such return presents. Furthermore, Eun-ha did not let Hyungchul's parents know the expected size of the cake. Eun-ha knew that an order for such big cakes should be made in advance and some parents purchase the biggest cake in the store or buy two cakes. Since Hyungchul's birthday was in December which was the end of the academic year, the teacher might have known the expected size of the cake. As mentioned, she had even gathered information from Hyungchul's former classroom teacher about his birthday party last year. Whatever information she had collected from the former teacher, the information was not used to inform Hyungchul's father about some possible consequences that might occur if Hyungchul's parents did not have the knowledge about materialistic culture of the birthday parties that existed in the kindergarten she was working for.

Considering all these factors, I reached the conclusion that Eun-ha did not use the information effectively enough that she had collected to meet the needs of her 2.5 student Hyungchul. It might have been difficult for her to be more sensitive to all the needs of her 2.5 student Hyungchul. Eun-ha was a person who felt that expanding her role as a teacher meant increasing her workload. When I asked the teacher to imagine taking charge of a 1.5 generation child, she replied, "I think teachers should take on some specific roles of their foreign parents, such as cultivating the child's daily habits or giving child affection, though it will be a laborious work for the teacher. (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) A few

months later, she also mentioned, “Paying special attention to him is not that easy for me because we have such a high student-teacher ratio”. (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

Leaving something to be desired of Eun-ha, now, it is time to see what Yi-seul did for her 2.5 student Jieun.

Compared to Eun-ha, Yi-seul was having relatively intimate conversations with Jieun’s mother either face-to-face or by telephone. By coming into personal contact with Jieun’s mother, Yi-seul collected information about Jieun and her mother simply by talking with Jieun’s mother. Sometimes, Yi-seul gathered such information by having a conversation with Jieun. Since Yi-seul had been in charge of Jieun for two years, she gathered more information than she could have collected in the case of just one year. When Yi-seul was asked about the significance of taking charge of Jieun for two years, she replied, “I was pretty familiar with her rather than being curious about her. There were also some new members of this kindergarten who were assigned to my class. Shouldn’t I have known a lot more about Jieun than such four-year-old newcomers?” (Yi-seul, Interview, 1/30/2015) Her response suggests that she had already collected enough information about Jieun and her family members during the first year even before it became her second year taking charge of Jieun.

Yi-seul learned what Jieun’s mother had been doing and even what she would do in the near future. Specifically, she realized that Jieun’s mother had worked and learned something by attending somewhere else last year but she neither worked nor attended anywhere this year. What is more, she knew that Jieun’s mother would attend cooking school next year. As a matter of fact, this information was mostly passed on to Yi-seul when Jieun’s mother was informing Yi-seul what time she would bring Jieun to school

and what time she would pick her up. In other words, such personal information like the occupation of Jieun's mother and lessons that Jieun's mother would take were mentioned casually while the teacher and the parent were discussing matters related to Jieun.

The teacher thought Jieun's mother were sensitive about her daughter's illnesses and took her to the hospital whenever she was sick. What is more, Yi-seul could discern Jieun's mother's language abilities by various methods, such as recognizing her writing abilities from what she wrote throughout the year in the notebook or her speaking abilities from the conversations she had with Jieun's mother.

As mentioned before, Yi-seul was collecting information about Jieun's Mongolian relatives as well. For example, when Jieun spent time with her Mongolian relatives, either in Mongolia or in South Korea, she skipped the kindergarten and Yi-seul was informed of this by her mother in advance. However, Yi-seul was not able to hear in detail about such Mongolian relatives from Jieun's mother. For that reason, what Jieun said about her Mongolian relatives was not clear enough for either the Yi-seul or me to draw a family tree of Jieun's mother's Mongolian relatives.

As examination of two cases suggests that teachers' attitudes and views on their 2.5 students and how they defined their role as the 2.5's classroom teacher had an influence on the kind of relationships the teachers developed with the parents of the 2.5s and how they collected or used the information about the 2.5s and the 2.5's family members. As a matter of fact, the relationships the teachers had maintained with the parents also had an impact on what kind of additional information the teachers were able to explore further.

The last chance to see what kinds of attitudes or views the two teachers had on their 2.5 students is to compare each teacher's decision that they made on sharing information about their 2.5 students with other children from native South Korean families. Both teachers argued that their 2.5 student had no particularly distinctive physical features and assumed that this could be the reason why other children from native South Korean families were not aware of the existence of their foreign-born mothers. Anyhow, the two teachers didn't share the information that their mother was a foreigner with other children. However, it would be useful to make a careful comparison of the two teachers' responses that they made when I asked each teacher whether they would share the information with the children in the future.

Eun-ha said she would first ask Hyungchul about the matter and follow his decision. However, she was not even sure whether asking such question to Hyungchul would have been a good idea when I asked the same question to the Eun-ha few months later. Her responses can be assessed in two ways. First, her intention to obtain the opinion of the person concerned can be considered as showing her sensitivity in dealing with the matter. She said, "If the child wants the secret to be kept, the teacher must give him help from behind the scenes or privately." (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) However, another way to examine her responses is to questioning her true motive. Eun-ha might have not wanted getting into any trouble by making available the information to the other children. She said, "I was having a hard time managing the classroom with 29 five-year-old children. [...] When I took charge of 29 children this year, worry was killing me. I just didn't think that much about taking such actions." (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) What

is more, her consideration that such information would be the 2.5's, so called, 'secret' suggests her point of view that having a foreign mother is something to be kept private.

On the other hand, Yi-seul replied that she was quite willing to share the information that Jieun's mother was a foreigner with other children in her class. She said, "I have never thought about or tried to do it but, it might have been a good idea if I had done it". (Yi-seul, Interview, 1/30/2015) Her view looks slightly naïve but it implies that she had such confidence in herself that she were capable of carrying out it, compared to Eun-ha.

Teachers' expectations regarding how their other students would respond to the information about the 2.5's foreign-born mother backs their concern that the fact that a student has a foreign-born mother should be kept secret. Both teachers might have been considering "civic society and public opinion toward immigrants" (Marrow, 2005, p. 783) which was one of the reception contexts. Teachers might have been aware of the general population's view on immigrants based on racial prejudice (Burns & Gimpel, 2000). Teachers might have thought their ethnicity and race increase the probability of having a negative experience such as receiving unfair treatment, as an institutional form of discrimination (Oropesa & Jensen, 2010). The teachers might have been worrying about the 2.5s' assimilation into mainstream behavior (Paxton & Mughan, 2006, p. 550). This is an argument that hostile and prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants are produced by native-born's racial prejudice (Burns & Gimpel, 2000). At this point, it would be useful to know about two teachers' attitudes and views on the concept 'prejudice'. As quoted previously, Eun-ha said:

I heard that some teachers don't do even the things they are able to do only because the parents of the child are not interested in or not giving any attention to it. Even if they

are prejudiced against the 2.5s, such prejudice should not affect the list of priorities. For example, teachers shouldn't place a low priority on the 2.5s. Teachers must do their jobs despite such prejudice. Teachers should try and do their jobs somehow or other.

(Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

Eun-ha's responses were almost like answering a moral question. In other words, her statements can be an acceptable answer to the question, 'what should be done and what teachers should do?' rather than a part of her own story. She might have been projecting herself onto other teachers since such consistency of speech and action had not been found from Eun-ha. It was Eun-ha herself who had not done even the things she was able to do only because Hyungchul's parents had not been interested in or had not paid any attention to the matter. This was not her first time projecting herself into other teachers. She did once already when she talked about the balance between what the birthday boy/girl should bring and what party guests should bring. As previously quoted, she said, "*Some teachers* think that some children do not have a sense of shame when they receive return presents without bringing a birthday present." (Eun-ha, Interview, 11/20/2014) though she was thinking in the same way that '*Some teachers*' did.

In fact, examining a teacher's opinion or perception can be challenging since better educated respondents, like teachers, are "better able to cloak their prejudice when confronted with questions about race and ethnicity" (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 220) though "the well-educated may harbor many of the same views and stereotypes as the less well-educated" (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 205). Similarly, when the well-educated "express less racist attitudes and express more generous views about immigration policy than the less educated" (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 205), this may occur simply because

better educated people are “trained to avoid sounding bigoted when they express opposition to racial policies” (Burns & Gimpel, 2000, p. 220).

On the other hand, Yi-seul said:

I think kindergarten is the very beginning of the education the children might receive throughout their lives. Though their first teacher should be a good example to them, I had been the person who got frightened by Jieun's mother's foreign name and even felt burden of taking charge of Jieun, as I mentioned before. I shouldn't have done that because that was a kind of prejudice.

(Yi-seul, Interview, 1/30/2015)

Yi-seul’s reply also looks like an answer to a moral question, however, her message is consistent with her words that she mentioned previously: "I try to be discreet in words and deeds since Jieun will model herself upon me and do the same thing when she goes home." (Yi-seul, Interview, 12/15/2014) What is more, her comments on the concept prejudice were a fragment of her own story since she reviewed her conduct, having been prejudiced against Jieun’s mother. In other words, Yi-seul explained her actions and motivations in her own words. The reason for Yi-seul’s reaction that she got frightened by Jieun's mother's foreign name and felt burden of taking charge of Jieun might have been “a lack of contact with, and knowledge about, the new community members” (Parra and Pfeffer’s 2006 pp. 81-82).

How much the teachers were knowledgeable about immigrant issues and the concept of context of reception was also tested by me. Eun-ha had some knowledge about “the presence, size, and organization of the co-ethnic community” (Marrow, 2005p. 783) which are one of the reception contexts. In this context, Eun-ha said, “In the case of city A or city B, town C is where she can meet and communicate with many foreigners who

are in the same circumstances. They might be able to share not only their own stories but also information or ideas with each other. Also near the subway station B, there are many of them who are adjusting, living, and working.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

Eun-ha also knew that network ties between co-ethnics are strong and motivate the immigrants’ social integration. In fact, those immigrants receive "assistance in gaining access to a variety of goods and services" from the co-ethnics (Pfeffer & Parra, 2009, p. 244). Eun-ha continued:

Then, though it takes time, under such surroundings, those who are the foreigners in the same situation will have social gatherings and adjust to such communities. That is all what I can see from town C and subway station B, somewhere like these. I have witnessed foreigners gathering together and talking to each other there. I think they just meet all together there and have dinner or something there even if they do not live there.

(Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015)

Eun-ha was also aware of the fact that the relationship between such co-ethnics and native South Korean residents are relatively weak and this weak network ties serve as a source of information found outside the ethnic group (Pfeffer & Parra, 2009). She said, “They will anyway adapt themselves to this society. But when it comes to their relationships with native South Koreans, there are some foreigners who visit cultural centers to learn yoga, computer, or something. I think those foreigners build relationships with South Koreans there.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) Eun-ha also knew that a foreigner and a native South Korean in such relationships often become parties to a contract. Eun-ha said, “Those Koreans might be the people like the owners of grocery stores.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) In fact, the “substitution effect” is seen when “the

labor of foreign-born workers is substituted for the labor of native-born workers” (Lichter & Johnson, 2006, p. 113). According to Burns and Gimpel (2000), “with a cheap labor supply guaranteed by a generous immigration policy, managers and corporate executives can increase the profitability of their enterprises by hiring out of a surplus labor pool consisting of both low-skilled natives and immigrants” (p. 206).

Surprisingly, Eun-ha mentioned another variable which was not stated plainly in the concept of context of reception, that is, ‘the personality of the immigrant.’ She argued that how much the foreigner is expressing his or her desire to get along with native South Koreans opened the possibility of having close relationships with a native South Korean. In other words, her argument was that how much they developed relationships with native South Koreans depended on how much the foreigner had tried to do that. Also, Eun-ha explained the fundamental principle of the concept of context of reception; that is, how much a native South Korean might be receptive to a foreigner. By linking those two parties, Eun-ha gave an example of a Chinese immigrant who made friends with a native South Korean.

While Eun-ha was talking about her idea, however, she showed her true colors at last by saying, “If a foreign community exists, would a native South Korean like me have business with them? I don't think so.” (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) Her words explained many things that the researcher had been wondering about concerning what Eun-ha had been saying or doing and the reasons or motives for them.

Some possible reasons can be entertained for Eun-ha’s and Yi-seul’s answers. Yi-seul had focused solely on Jieun’s mother when I asked the teacher about Jieun's mother. Compared to Yi-seul, Eun-ha had lost her focus and changed the foreign-born mother

into foreigners in general while she was answering the question. Although Eun-ha might have been focusing on just foreigners (*e.g.*, first generation immigrant workers who have no children, parents of the first, 1.5, second, and 2.5 generation children all mixed up, and so forth) Yi-seul might have been talking about a married immigrant who was the mother of her 2.5 student Jieun. Probably it is my fault that he did not consistently standardize the interview questions. Nevertheless, Hyungchul's mother did not come into Eun-ha's head even when my question was "What kind of resources his foreign mother might use for her cultural adaptation to the new environment?" Eun-ha's reply started with words like, "Couldn't she adjust quickly if she has many contacts here? I am not sure because I do not have any experience of being a foreign mother and the number of foreign mothers near me is not that big." (Eun-ha, Interview, 2/5/2015) Eun-ha might have been thinking Hyungchul's mother as a foreigner before considering her as a parent.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The concept of context of reception and Vygotskian theories have influenced this study. This study attempted to apply U.S.-based literature to a South Korean setting because I had assumed that (a) the concept of context of reception would partially explain the complexities of the unique situation that the 2.5 generation Korean children would find themselves both in schools and the South Korean society and (b) Vygotskian theories would give insights to ‘teacher educators’ and ‘teacher educator educators’ about developing teacher education programs for supporting the language development of the 2.5s. According to each idea, two research questions were posed respectively: (1) How do two kindergarten teachers perceive the needs of the 2.5s as compared to other children? (2) How do two kindergarten teachers meet the needs of the 2.5s?

The answers to the research questions are the following: 1) Teachers’ communication with the 2.5’s family members was facilitated when Yi-seul opened her heart to the 2.5’s family members and also when the family members adopted a progressive attitude, but prevented when Eun-ha remained passive in her role as a teacher while the 2.5’s family members were uncooperative. 2) Because some foreign-born mothers lacked sufficient Korean language ability, they were not able to provide their children with the same amount of support as native South Korean mothers could. The fact that neither the teachers themselves nor the policies of the kindergarten made allowances for such circumstances made matters worse. 3) The teachers’ attitudes and views on the

2.5s and their family members influenced how much the teachers acknowledged the possibility of negative impact of the 2.5s' mothers on the 2.5's language development. The teachers' recognition of the needs for additional language training and support for the 2.5s and their foreign-born mothers also affected what kind of actions the teachers took. Furthermore, the 2.5s participated in reading and writing activities according to the educational goals of the kindergarten (emphasizing correct reading and writing, grouping the children by their level of actual development in Korean) and the teachers considered the 2.5s to be normal students requiring no special treatment. 4) The relationships between the teachers and the foreign-born mothers affected the quality and quantity of information the teachers gathered from the 2.5s' family members. The teachers' attitudes on the 2.5s and their family members determined how much the teachers used or shared the information.

Having provided a basic summary of the content of each theme, I arrived at a few conclusions. First, a teacher's own personal attributes, characteristics, attitudes, and views on the 2.5s and their family members can be compared to the knowledge that the teacher has about her 2.5 student. Although the teachers minimally had to 'perceive' the needs to meet the needs of the 2.5s, what the teacher actually did had more to do with the teacher's characteristics rather than what the teacher knew. That is, knowing is one thing, practice is another. It is assumed that practices not only revealed professional dispositions and beliefs but also revealed personal convictions and biases, arguably important components of teacher's personality and character.

This point can be understood by analogy with a multiple-choice question test that was given to elementary school students when I was a first year elementary school

student in South Korea 25 years ago. The subject of the test was morality since it was an exam for 'A Good Citizenship Class.' When correct answers described exemplary conduct such as 'an act of kindness,' 'standing by the weak,' 'respecting parents,' and so forth, the distracters were a description of either undesirable, unacceptable, or even antisocial behaviors such as 'dumping garbage illegally,' 'using violence on friends,' 'spitting anywhere,' and so forth. A ceiling effect was found from the result of the test since children did not choose such silly distracters. However, the test could not guarantee that the children who achieved a perfect score would actually show the same behavior in their daily lives that they had chosen in the test. The children who obtained perfect score on the test might have thrown away dirt or spat on the streets, or hit friends. Even smarter children might have changed their behaviors from time to time as the occasion called for.

This is what I felt while continuing this study. Considering what the teachers told me, the teachers knew well what exemplary conduct for a teacher was and they knew that they had to teach children in accord with perceived social norms. However, when they took charge of a student who had special needs (either physically, economically, culturally, or linguistically), they had to make decisions on whether or not to apply their knowledge to their practice. This was because it often required additional input to satisfy the child's special needs. The greater the discordance between their knowledge and actions, the more the teachers might have viewed the researcher as being a threat. They might have felt the sting of conscience because they had not been doing everything that they should have been doing. They might have felt as if they were under investigation because the researcher asked questions about their practices regarding a student who had special needs whose special needs were not being met.

In my own judgment, in Eun-ha's case, there was a large gap between her knowledge and actions. This was not simply because she was not that sensitive to her 2.5 student. She was too knowledgeable and intelligent to act on all information she had had. She had too much information to deal with competently. What she perceived to be uncooperative behavior on the part of the parents of her 2.5 student may have aggravated the situation. In other words, she might have given up on the idea of exerting herself to the utmost. Instead, she fell victim to a feeling of frustration. Her empathy for her 2.5 student and his family on one level was not enough to provide motivation for her to act in a more professional capacity.

On the other hand, in case of Yi-seul, her actions roughly corresponded with her thoughts. A relatively favorable situation rarely caused complications between her conscience and her practice. In other words, her 2.5 student's family members were relatively supportive and what she thought she could do to her 2.5 student and her family members were not beyond her capacity. She was naïve enough to be satisfied with her own conduct. Her standard of morality was not that high as that of Eun-ha. Her relatively friendly attitude toward the 2.5 student and her family members might have worked as a catalyst to sensitize her to her 2.5 student's needs.

According to the concept of context of reception, the general population's views on immigrants are determined either by their economic insecurity or racial prejudice, if we consider only the negative aspects of the reception context. However, these did not explain satisfactorily what happened with the two teachers. The two teachers had a tendency to link the 2.5s' needs to their roles or duties. As mentioned before, the two native South Korean teachers might have considered taking charge of the 2.5 students to

be a burden. In Yi-seul's case, for example, her prejudice about her 2.5 student's foreign-born mother was simply about a language barrier. She overcame it right after she knew that the foreign-born mother could speak Korean. Since she did not have any other kind of prejudice, there was no anticatalyst [a substance that retards a chemical reaction or diminishes the activity of a catalyst] working.

Whether they will bear or avoid the burden was mostly up to the teachers themselves. Eun-ha's prejudice toward the 2.5 and his family members might have functioned as an anticatalyst. In other words, a more prejudiced teacher might have easily given up on the idea of taking on an additional burden in regards to his education.

The issue is that teachers' views and practices and relationships with the 2.5 students form part of the context of reception for the 2.5s and their families. However, I attempted to make a diagnosis or judgement of what the teachers knew or know about the context of reception to get insights about the application of the concept to the educational context in South Korea. As a result, it was found that the teachers' knowledge of the concept of context of reception did not transfer to their teaching practices. For example, Eun-ha possessed considerable knowledge about the existence of co-ethnic communities of immigrants. When I asked questions about the resources the foreign-born mothers might utilize, Eun-ha brought up the fact that such support services were available. However, she thought that the question of how much the immigrants could get along with South Koreans depended on the personalities of both immigrants and native South Koreans. She even defended her attitude by saying that she was not a person who got along with immigrants. On the other hand, Yi-seul was satisfying her 2.5's needs without any knowledge about the concept of context of reception.

Thus, in order to examine the applicability of the concept of context of reception to South Korean school settings, we should go beyond relying on any knowledge that teachers might possess. Simply knowing about issues related to immigrants does not necessarily mean that this knowledge would make the teachers any more sympathetic to them. This reminds the researcher of Marrow's 2005 study that reported lower co-ethnic concentration levels gave Mexican immigrants "a more negative perception of U.S. society" (p. 787). As the number of immigrants increase, immigrants will meet people who do not view them favorably. Blaming the teachers for having prejudice toward the 2.5s and their family members is not the best way to deal with such issues. Furthermore, gender inequality that exists in South Korean schools, in other words, teachers expecting that it is the mothers who will take care of their children, is based on teachers' fixed ideas rather than knowledge they acquired as they were being trained as a teacher.

It is perhaps the teacher educator and teacher educator educator's role to deal with these issues. In practical terms, matching a certain 2.5 child and their family with certain teachers can be a way to implement this. For example, Yi-seul got along with her 2.5 student Jieun better than Eun-ha did with her 2.5 student Hyungchul. I do not think that this was accidental. I do not assume that Yi-seul was a better teacher for the 2.5s. I have a firm belief that there might have been some factors that affected a teacher's accord with a certain 2.5 student and his or her family members. In other words, the data collected from Eun-ha might have been totally different if she had been teaching another 2.5 student other than Hyungchul. Eun-ha was doing analytic thinking about the needs of Hyungchul and Hyungchul's family members. She might have come to an early diagnosis and have concluded, "In this case, I cannot help you."

Secondly, the application of Vygotskian theories to the two teachers demonstrated their capacity for improvement. Although they did not show enough comprehension of the theory and did not make full use of the theory as a basis for practice, they were doing the best thing they thought they could do under the circumstances. Then, how about changing their idea of what can be the best?

The fact that the 2.5s were participating in reading and writing activities as the other children did means that the kindergarten and the teachers were mainstreaming the 2.5s even though their home environment was not the same as that of the other children. The 2.5s were Korean children whose verbal communication skills were almost the same as other children. The only thing that was special about the 2.5s was that they were thought to be receiving less input in terms of Korean from their mothers compared to the other children. Even if the 2.5 is bilingual and considers his or her mother's mother tongue as his or her first language (and Korean as his or her second language), there is no reason to separate the child. This is because the teachers can teach the 2.5s more effectively and efficiently by mainstreaming them. Hasson, Camilleri, Jones, Smith, & Dodd (2012) pointed out that the use of a DA enables the assessment to be conducted in a child's second language, "regardless of the first language of the child," as the assessment is not of the child's already acquired language; it is of his/her ability to learn his/her second language (p. 60). They have also mentioned that some exposure to the second language is a prerequisite for bilingual children because the assessment is being carried out in their second language. In fact, the 2.5s are exposed to Korean language because they are Koreans and live in South Korea. Thus, native South Korean teachers are expected to make up for the deficiency by giving them explicit second language

instruction even before they master their mothers' language since some 2.5s might be in the process of developing their skills in their foreign-born mothers' language.

The teachers taught in a manner suggesting they were supporting the children's language development mostly out of accordance with the basic principles of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind. In other words, teachers focused primarily on the children's zone of actual development and the mediations that were given to the children were poor in quantity and quality. Children's responsiveness to the mediation was not considered enough and the responsibilities of being co-participants of language learning activities were not equally distributed to the children. For example, children had to get through each volume in a series of textbooks in order to proceed to the next level of textbook. Teachers thought that finishing a volume was equal to giving mediation. Even worse, Eun-ha thought that the reason why Hyungchul was always reading each book in the series rather than skipping a few in order to quickly move up to the next level was just a matter of his own personality. Such determinism concerning children's abilities might have discouraged the teacher from trying to mediate in a way that would have been sufficiently explicit to encourage or enable the children to jump up to a higher level. Children might have been able to reach the higher levels even without finishing the whole book if the teachers' series of sufficiently explicit mediations were given to the children. Whether it was actual or proximal, the developmental zone the teachers considered was only the textbooks in the children's hands. In other words, the unit of analysis of children's abilities was just one volume in the series of textbooks. By sticking to the textbooks (which was the symbol of the children's level of their actual development) teachers did not consider the children's ZPDs.

It is not strange that the teachers ran counter and violated the basic principles of DA, did not have sufficient knowledge of the theory, and had only a shallow understanding of the subject. They might rarely have attempted to connect the theory to language teaching practices in classrooms, even though they were taught the concept ZPD since almost every pre-service teacher in South Korea learns, to a certain extent, about Vygotsky and his theory related to the concept of ZPD when being trained as an in-service teacher.

What we need to provide to the teachers are some professional development workshop opportunities. By designing and implementing a project that offers teachers professional development, they will be able to show their comprehension of the theory and their use of the theory as a basis for practice. As it is difficult to imagine a teacher simply 'inventing' DA on his or her own and implementing it, first thing the teacher educators need to do is spend time with teachers, helping them understand the theory. However, before introducing Vygotskian theory and DA to the teachers, teacher educators can first ask teachers questions which they can answer without considering the theory, such as "What kinds of opportunities for language use and development, should be created (or did you create) as a classroom activity?" or "In your classroom, have your student(s) ever refused to accept mediation or requested additional support or specific kind of support?" Even though their responses to hypothetical interviews would not easily be categorized as Vygotskian or non-Vygotskian, teachers' responses to these questions can be either Vygotskian or something else. In order to ask these questions, teacher educators can either carry out interviews or ask them to complete a questionnaire.

These answers will show their comprehension of Vygotskian theory or some other theories and their use of the theory as a basis for practice.

Then, professional development workshop opportunities can be provided to teachers, during which teacher educators spend time helping the teachers understand Vygotskian theory. Only after this, will they become able to understand the theory and have discussions with teacher educators. At this point, teacher educators can ask the same questions again to the teachers and see if they respond to the questions differently or if they reference concepts from Vygotskian theory.

However, teachers' answers to these questions will not necessarily tell us whether they understand Vygotskian theory or are using it in practice. Even though open-ended interview questions can ask the teachers whether they understand DA or if they are using or able to use the underlying principles of DA, this could only be determined by examining their actual practices. Teachers would need to have an in-depth knowledge of the theory to really be expected to use it as a basis to meaningfully guide their practice. More likely, they will be left with only a set of terms they can refer to while discussing their practice. Thus, teacher educators will have to spend time in their classrooms as well.

### **Limitations and Recommendations**

The strength of this study is that it examines both the teachers' perception about their 2.5 students and what they were actually doing in the classroom at the same time. By a close examination, I detected inconsistencies between their thoughts and actions. The degree of such discordance shows how much such imbalance between their conscience and reality can cause complications. Thus, this examination goes beyond

testing the knowledge they possessed. Also, this study does not solely focus on their practices but questions their true motives.

Despite these findings, there remain two basic limitations inherent in this approach. First, the foreign-born mothers and other family members were neither interviewed nor observed by the researcher but were central figures of this exploratory study. Interviewing and observing them can be another type of data triangulation.

Secondly, the research method used in this study caused the participants to become defensive in justifying their behaviors. As mentioned, questions asking teachers how sensitive they are to the needs of the 2.5s can be interpreted on some levels as being judgmental. It is necessary for us to work out measures to counter this perception.

The current research and its findings should be considered to be an initial step for future work examining other combinations of teacher and 2.5 student. I hope that there will be more studies on teachers teaching other 2.5s. With detailed inquiries into these teacher-student combinations, it will be possible to identify more factors that determine the inconsistency between the teachers' moral consciousness and the practical side of education. After getting to the bottom of these cases, I can take a few additional factors into account for quantitative analysis as well. In the long run, teacher educators may take the role of matchmaking between the 2.5s (and their family members) and the teachers so that they can 'fall in love' without disharmony.

Both Eun-ha and Yi-seul supported the 2.5s' language development as the rules in their classroom prescribed. In other words, the teachers considered the 2.5s to be normal students who expected no special treatment. The two classrooms emphasized correct reading and writing. Actually, those reading and writing activities were extra-curricular

activities in that they do not follow the recommendations from the National Curriculum Guide of the Nuri-Curriculum Guide Book for Age 3-5 (2013) of South Korea. To be specific, the guide book values children's interest in a subject and recommends that children not be forced to read or write correctly. It seems that Eun-ha was doing something similar what the guide book suggested in that she also valued the children's interest in a certain subject. However, she was still encouraging the children to read and write correctly. This was because the textbooks the children used were designed for that specific purpose.

Nevertheless, the strict instruction and training given to the children allows the researcher to see how the 2.5s could cope with such challenging tasks. The teachers divided the children into groups based on their zone of actual development. Though Jieun did manage to get into an average group, Hyungchul was struggling in his reading and writing. Although ranking them according to performance was the consequence of the extremely education-oriented parents of the kindergarten, the work the 2.5s would encounter after they become elementary school students will not be that different from the reading and writing they did in kindergarten. Despite Won-jang's comment (Principal, Interview, 2/16/2015) that Hyungchul's older sister was poor at her studies in her elementary school, the fact that Hyungchul's mother was not a native South Korean might not have been the sole reason for her struggles (Lee, 2013). What kind of parents they have, what kind of teachers they meet, what kind of schools they go to, and what kind of competitions they come to participate in, and so forth, will influence the destinies of the 2.5s. The type of language learning activities they encounter in kindergarten are

just the first taste of what they will experience in the rigid examination-based South Korean educational system.

## Appendix A

### Informed Consent Form for Parents of the Children

연구참여 동의서

I am Changkee Lee, Penn State researcher.  
Penn State 연구자 이창기입니다.

The study is being conducted for research purposes.  
이 연구의 목적은 연구입니다.

These are the procedures that your child will undergo as part of the study.  
당신의 자녀가 이 연구에 참여하는 절차는 다음과 같습니다.

Your child will be observed and video-recorded by the researcher.  
당신의 자녀는 관찰될 것이며, 비디오로 녹화될 것입니다.

Your child's participation is voluntary.  
당신 자녀의 참여에는 강제성이 전혀 없습니다.

You child may end his/her participation at any time.  
당신 자녀는 언제든지 참여를 그만둘 수 있습니다.

Your child may choose not to answer specific questions.  
당신의 자녀는 연구자의 특정 질문에 답을 하지 않을 권한이 있습니다.

If you do not want your child to participate in this study, draw a circle in the blank below and give this form to the principal.  
당신의 자녀가 이 연구에 참여하기를 원하지 않을 시, 아래 공란에 동그라미를 치고 유치원장에게 이 양식을 전달하세요.  
(            )

A copy of the signed and dated consent document will be provided to you.  
서명날인된 이 양식은 사본으로 당신에게 제공 될 것입니다.

이름 (서명) :  
날짜:

## **Appendix B: Autobiographical Statement**

One theme that has run throughout my life is that of “minorities.” I have been a minority while also learning about what it is like for others to be a minority. Thus in the following pages I would like to explore how this has impacted my life and future plans as well as this dissertation.

I graduated from Anyang University (South Korea) in 2007, with a major in Early Childhood Education. In 2009, I received a master's degree in ECE from Chung-Ang University (South Korea). Even before I entered post-secondary education, I had a growing interest in both my own early childhood and ECE as an academic subject. This was probably influenced most greatly by the fact that I had lived in the United States as a young child. Specifically, I was born in Korea but was taken to Cambridge, MA to live for two years when I was five years old. I returned to South Korea when I was seven.

The experience of living in a foreign country at that age was only the beginning of what I think of as my “destiny.” In other words, I feel that I was destined to experience many kinds of minority groups starting with experiences I had when I first left Korea as a five-year-old. When I initially came to the United States I was both a minority student (my family was classified as a minority family in American society) and an English language learner in kindergarten. I learned from this experience what it was to be a minority. I consider this to be my first experience as a minority.

When I came back to Korea, I became an elementary school student and I quickly became aware that not only Korean students but also Korean parents are highly competitive when it comes to entering well-known universities or colleges. In Korea, obtaining a good score in the entrance examination for universities or colleges (the Korean version of the SAT) was regarded as the ultimate objective in education and the focus of coursework starting from elementary school and intensifying in junior high and senior high school. Even more daunting was the fact that I had to adjust to classes in Korean. Paradoxically, I felt my mother tongue to be a foreign language and often could not figure out what the teachers were talking about. Even that brief period in my early childhood would prove to have put me at a disadvantage in competitive examinations for universities and colleges. I believe the root cause of this disadvantage was mostly about the cultural differences between the two nations I have lived in. In this way, even after returning home, I possessed the characteristics of a minority in my home country. This was the second experience for me as a minority.

I had a hard time catching up on school work until I was in senior high school. However, I barely managed to be accepted to a university and to major in ECE. Studying this subject was the third experience for me as a minority since female students formed an overwhelming majority in the ECE department.

Based on his personal experience, I obtained a master's degree in ECE by presenting a thesis that explored the process of cultural adaptation to Korean society by children who lived abroad in early childhood. I not only investigated my own experiences, I also carried out research in the form of a case study on another child who had just returned from the United States to Korea. Though he was 20 years younger than me, I found that we both faced similar situations. Early childhood is a critical period of child development and living abroad does seem to impact on development. In addition, I found

that individuals who spent their early childhoods in a sociocultural environment different from their own have a specific process of adjustment after returning home. Consequently, I was certain that there is an impact on a child's education after returning from abroad.

After obtaining a master's degree in ECE, I had to fulfill the obligations of my military service. While I was doing my military service, I planned and prepared to study in the United States from fall semester 2011, with the goal of obtaining a doctorate in ECE. Having the experience of being in at least three types of minorities in the course of my life, I came back to the United States after a 20 year absence. Living again in the United States as an international student became the fourth opportunity for me to be a minority.

Coincidentally while I was concentrating on a discussion about minorities, the number of minorities in South Korea has been increasing rapidly. Currently there are many more immigrants, especially from China and the nations of Southeast Asia than at any other time in Korean history. This has become a serious issue in South Korean society. On the one hand, it is a personal or family problem if they find it difficult to adapt to South Korean society due to discrimination resulting from country-of-origin and their limited ability in Korean language. There is a more urgent problem in South Korean schools, which is the issue about second or higher generation children who have at least one immigrant parent, especially from the nations of Southeast Asia, because they also suffer discrimination.

Under these circumstances, I am particularly interested in minorities' sense of identity and how and why majorities discriminate against minorities. In South Korean society, immigrants from countries which are perceived to have less global standing than South Korea has, especially the nations of Southeast Asia, suffered discrimination based on nationality and sometimes, race.

While making preparations for becoming a qualitative researcher, I had a chance to examine my own subjectivity and reflexivity and went through a few qualitative research traditions. I had a desire to conduct a qualitative research on immigrants living in South Korea and find ways to help them without subscribing to a deficit model that assumes that they will be in a disadvantageous position due to discrimination and their limited ability in Korean language. They certainly possess knowledge and strengths. However, this is a more complicated matter than it looks like because, as a native Korean researcher, I need to pay attention to my own subjectivity and reflexivity.

The fact that I am not a person who treats immigrants with discrimination does not necessarily mean that I would treat everyone equally. In other words, in the realm of my subconscious, I have a deep-seated belief that I am a majority of their host country and this subconscious attitude shapes and reinforces a determined attitude toward cultural, racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities. Therefore, feeling compassion or sympathy for them would not make me a better qualitative researcher. It would be rather dangerous for me to think highly of myself simply for the reason that I do not discriminate against immigrants. If a researcher assumes that immigrants are "the people who always need thoughtful consideration from the majorities of a host country." the very action of "trying to give a helping hand to immigrants" itself would look like a discriminating treatment, if seen from the immigrants' point of view.

Lastly, I have opinion on 'validity' from my point of view. Though acknowledging 'validity' in a qualitative study has been a controversial issue, I think the

validity will be questioned if I developed hypotheses without inquiring into the facts of the case. I think this is where it would be helpful to have interview data so that participants can explain their actions and motivations in their own words. It would somehow give 'validity' to my writing.

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