

The Socialization of Children from Vietnamese - Korean Multicultural Families: A Case Study of Korean International Schools in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City

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Abstract: From the moment of birth, an individual exists as a biological entity. However, true integration into human society necessitates the acquisition of cultural norms, values, knowledge, and beliefs specific to their given community. This process involves adapting to social roles and cultural practices, ultimately enabling effective communication and fulfillment of societal responsibilities. Notably, language assumes a pivotal role in this intricate web of socialization and stands as arguably the most influential factor in the overall process. To delve into the current state of socialization among children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families residing in Vietnam and attending a Korean International School, this research employs socialization theory, descriptive statistical methods via questionnaires, and interdisciplinary research techniques.

Keywords: Socialization; Language Socialization; Children from Multicultural Families; Vietnamese - Korean Families.

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1. Introduction

At birth, a child is merely a biological entity. There have been instances where children have been abandoned in remote forests and raised among animal herds until they were eventually discovered and returned to human society. These children often struggle to integrate into their communities because they lack the ability to communicate using human language and do not possess knowledge of cultural behaviors and social interactions. To become functioning members of society, children must learn their community's culture, including language, norms, values,

and beliefs (Bilton et al. 1993; Pham Tat Dong et al. 1997; Pham Thi Tram 2016). They must also undergo a process of acclimatization and practice social roles and cultural values, which is essential to socialization. In essence, socialization is the process that enables individuals to communicate effectively, understand their social roles, and become integrated members of society (Macionis 1995; Little 2016; Murdock 1949).

In the context of Vietnamese-Vietnamese or Korean-Korean families, children engage in a multifaceted learning process. This encompasses acquiring skills related to listening, speaking, reading, writing, emotional expression, eating, sleeping, playing, and effective

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communication, all within the cultural framework of either Vietnamese or Korean norms. However, for children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families, socialization becomes more intricate. They must simultaneously familiarize themselves with both Vietnamese and Korean languages and cultures. This dual exposure to two distinct linguistic and behavioral systems confers inherent strength upon these children. They gain the ability to navigate and integrate seamlessly into both Vietnamese and Korean social contexts. Consequently, they enjoy expanded choices for residence and employment, while also serving as bridges connecting the people of Vietnam and Korea. It is essential that, while residing in Vietnam, these children maintain proficiency in Vietnamese language, cultural understanding, history, and appropriate behavior, without compromising their Korean identity.

Normally, we will be influenced by the language and behavior appropriate to the country in which we live. In order to maintain the Korean elements of children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families, this families have sent their children to study at a Korean international school. Thus, whether this group of children will be fully socialized with Vietnamese elements and still maintain Korean elements while living in Vietnam is a question that needs to be answered.

In this study, we hope to learn about the current state of socialization of Vietnamese elements focusing on the process of learning Vietnamese and knowledge of Vietnamese such as Vietnamese culture, history etc at Korean international schools for children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural family.

2. Studies on Vietnamese - Korean multicultural families in Vietnam.

A survey conducted by the *Vietnamese-Korean Multicultural Family Association* report to President of Korea¹ in his official visiting Vietnam, indicated that, as of June 2023, there are approximately 6,500 multicultural households in Vietnam. Significantly, the period following the COVID-19 pandemic has witnessed a notable increase in Korean investment in Vietnam. This trend suggests that the exchanges and cooperative efforts between the two nations are likely to expand not only in terms of quantity but also in quality. Consequently, it is anticipated that the number of marriages between Korean and Vietnamese citizens, along with the incidence of children born into Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families, will experience growth in the foreseeable future. The world is moving from armed struggles to a trend towards dialogue. Therefore, through communication and connection, children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families have a very natural advantage that comes from their background where, at the same time, they can learn the Korean cultural and language of one parent and the Vietnamese cultural, language of the other parent. These children can also be considered as very active 'citizen diplomats' because they were born in an environment of cultural interference between Vietnam and Korea.

¹ South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol and his spouse will pay a State visit to Viet Nam from June 22-26 (<https://en.baochinhphu.vn/south-korean-president-to-visit-viet-nam-this-week-111230619191710669.htm>) (2024.09.18)

The existing body of research on children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families residing in Vietnam remains notably limited when compared to the overall number of such families in the country. Most studies concerning multicultural families, particularly those involving Vietnamese-Korean dynamics, predominantly focus on Korea. Noteworthy among the few studies addressing this demographic in Vietnam are four key investigations: the research conducted by the Korean Institute of Social and Welfare Research (2018), the Korean Overseas Citizens Foundation (2019), Lee Dong Kwan (2020), and Hoang Huong Tra (2020).

From these studies, children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families can be categorized into three primary groups. The first group consists of children whose father is a Korean citizen and mother is a Vietnamese citizen. These children may have lived in Korea temporarily but returned to Vietnam with their mother following a divorce. Due to insufficient identification documentation, these children often face challenges in integrating into Vietnamese society while attempting to maintain their Korean heritage. The second group includes children whose father is a Korean citizen and mother is a Vietnamese citizen, who reside in Vietnam. The educational and developmental opportunities for these children are largely determined by their mother's decisions, leading them to attend Vietnamese public schools, which often results in a lack of exposure to Korean cultural elements. The third group encompasses children whose father is a Korean citizen and mother is a Vietnamese citizen, who are registered at birth in both Vietnam and Korea. These children enjoy full rights in both countries and typically attend international or Korean

international schools, providing them with opportunities to engage with both foreign and Korean cultural elements.

The studies conducted by Hoang Huong Tra (2020) and Lee Dong Kwan (2020) primarily surveyed the language use among children from multicultural families but did not assess the children's comprehension of Vietnamese language and culture. Research from Korean governmental organizations, such as the Korean Institute of Social and Welfare Research (2018) and the Korean Overseas Citizens Foundation (2019), has concentrated on the first two groups mentioned above, neglecting to examine the third group. Consequently, there is a lack of assessment regarding these children's understanding of critical factors influencing language acquisition, such as cultural background, history, and Vietnamese social norms. Furthermore, existing studies have not adequately addressed the level of socialization regarding the Vietnamese cultural elements among these children, which is essential for their integration into the Vietnamese environment. There is also a need to explore the balance between the assimilation of Vietnamese and Korean cultural elements, enabling children to develop their own Vietnamese-Korean intercultural communication skills.

The predominant focus of current research has been on the necessity for support from the Korean Government to facilitate these children's access to Korean language and culture, particularly for those not residing in Korea. However, the role of Vietnamese language and culture in their development has been overlooked in much of the existing literature. It is essential to recognize that the Vietnamese language and cultural practices play a significant role in shaping the identity and intercultural

communication skills of Vietnamese-Korean children.

In studies conducted in Korea, many researchers have shown that children in multicultural families in general and Korean-Vietnamese multicultural families in particular have the ability to communicate interculturally, which speaks to the importance of having a correct understanding of the culture of both domestic and foreign countries (Kyung Wha Oh 2011; Jang Jeng Ah 2022; Seok Eun Young 2013; Shin Yoo Kyung 2010). The fact that children know and use effectively languages and cultures of both their parents' countries is an important factor that helps them shape their ego and avoid psychological disturbances due to negative factors about the foreign nationality of their mother. Only when children are confident in themselves and steadfast about their own cultural identification, they will be able to adapt well to the society in which they live.

Korean local authorities, with many Vietnamese brides immigrating to get married to Korea, have organized many activities to help children in Korean-Vietnamese multicultural families² have the opportunity to learn more about Vietnamese language and culture (Yong Hee Hong et al. 2019). During the holidays, a small group of children from Korean-Vietnamese multicultural families were supported by Korean organizations to cover their airfares to travel to Vietnam to stay with their mothers' relatives and experience Vietnamese culture. However, because children mainly live in Korea, opportunities to interact with Vietnamese language and culture are still very limited in terms of

space and time. These are the studies that lead this research to direct attention to the third group of children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families to find out whether the group of these children living in Vietnam have enough access to education and are able to absorb both Vietnamese and Korean cultural elements equally or not.

Socialization is a broad concept that refers to all the ways in which people learn to become members of their society. This includes learning not just the norms and values of one's culture, but also the skills and knowledge needed to function in society (Tan 2014; Heo Cheong Ah 2014). Language will be the first tool which helps people speak with others and is essential for full support within social groups. Therefore, the main way people are socialized to act and interact in culturally appropriate ways is through the use of language. In fact, many scholars found that the way children are taught their social and communication roles, expectations, and repertoires related to their community's language practices, which are culturally specific. They found that through participation in everyday social life, children master the practices of their particular community and over time become more proficient in the social and language skills necessary to develop worldviews specific to their cultural context (Lee & Bucholtz 2015).

Equally, socialization is the process of learning norms and values of one's culture. Education is the process of learning academic knowledge and skills, while socialization is necessary for the stability and survival of any society. Education is therefore necessary for the advancement of society (Cromdal 2006). The process of socialization cannot take place on its own, but still requires the process of education

² Korean – Vietnamese Multicultural families mean the family of Korean man/woman marriage to Vietnamese woman/man and now living in Korea.

and training. When people acquire knowledge and attitudes, they can simultaneously learn the norms, beliefs, values and standards of society.

To foster a balanced bicultural identity, it is crucial to integrate both Vietnamese and Korean cultural elements into educational programs and community activities. This can include language classes that teach both Vietnamese and Korean, cultural exchange programs, and community events that celebrate both cultures. By doing so, children can develop a more comprehensive understanding of their heritage and learn to navigate between the two cultures effectively.

Moreover, parents and families should be encouraged to maintain their Vietnamese cultural practices at home while also embracing Korean customs. This dual approach can help children feel more connected to both sides of their identity, promoting a sense of belonging and increased self-esteem. Research should also explore the experiences of Vietnamese-Korean children in various contexts, such as schools, community centers, and family settings, to better understand how they negotiate their identities and cultural affiliations. By highlighting the importance of both Vietnamese and Korean cultural elements, we can create more inclusive environments that support the development of these children's intercultural communication skills and overall wellbeing.

Embracing a more holistic approach that acknowledges and appreciates both Vietnamese and Korean cultures is essential for the development of Vietnamese-Korean children. This approach will enhance their intercultural communication skills and empower them to celebrate their unique identities in an increasingly globalized world. This research will apply

socialization theory, using descriptive statistical methods through questionnaires as well as interdisciplinary research methods to learn about the current state of socialization in the three socialization environments in relation to the Vietnamese elements for children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families living in Vietnam and studying at a Korean International School.

3. Survey participants and questionnaire content.

3.1. Subjects participating in the survey

After gaining permission from the principal of Korean International School (Hanoi) and vice principal of Korean International School (Ho Chi Minh), the research was conducted via a survey, using the Google platform with a group of students who are children from Vietnamese and Korean multicultural families at the two above mentioned schools in Grades 6 to 12.

Students completing the survey were volunteers and therefore, the researcher did not apply the method of selecting a specific sample. It was assumed that students studying in elementary school (from Grades 1 to 5) may not fully understand the content of the questions, leading to answers that may not be objective. To ensure authenticity of the answers, the researcher sent the survey to only students studying in Grades 6 to 12 to complete. According to school statistics, the number of students from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families studying at the two schools in the 2023 school year was 311 students. In terms of this study, there were 135 students (43% of the student body from the two schools) who participated in the survey,

including 56.2% of respondents from Grades 6 to 9 and 43.8% of respondents from Grades 10 to 12.

3.2. Questionnaire form and content

Figure 1: Example of question on Google platform

[In general, follow the 1 to 10 ranking, how do these above events/activities help you to understand Vietnamese culture and people? 1 = events/activities don't help you understand Vietnamese culture and people at all. 10 = events/activities do help you understand Vietnamese culture and people. KPH = there is no event nor activity happened]

Câu 8: Nhìn chung, trên thang điểm 10 các em đánh giá các hoạt động nói trên giúp các em hiểu được văn hoá, con người Việt Nam ở mức độ như thế nào? (mức độ tăng dần từ 1 đến 10)

1= Hoạt động KHÔNG giúp các em hiểu về văn hoá Việt Nam

10= hoạt động giúp các em hiểu rất rõ văn hoá Việt Nam

KPH= không có hoạt động này

해당 내용 및 활동이 베트남어와 베트남 문화를 이해하는데 어느 정도 도움이 된다고 생각하십니까?
10점 만점 가운데 해당한다고 생각하는 점수에 선택해주세요.

(1= 도움이 안 전혀 안 된다,

10= 도움이 매우 된다.

KPH= 이 활동이 없음)

The survey content was divided into three parts. Part one was the general information on the respondents, allowing data to be collected about their year of birth and the class the student was attending. Part two had four (04) questions related to the content of their Vietnamese language and culture education at school, through which we discovered more about the school training program related to Vietnamese elements, including class hours and what kinds of classes the students attend. The survey aimed to uncover the students' evaluation around the amount of time, duration, and knowledge at school given to their Vietnamese education. The survey also tried to ascertain whether students themselves thought this educative component was helpful in increasing their

The survey was conducted via the Google platform, the question content was written in both Vietnamese and Korean languages, in which Vietnamese was written first and Korean was written afterward as shown in Figure 1.

understandings of Vietnamese culture and people. Part three had four (04) questions, which helped the researcher within understanding the children's self-assessed Vietnamese language proficiency. In addition, through survey questions, insights were garnered around their language use in daily life (e.g., which language did they use more) as this assisted the researcher in finding out which language and culture - Vietnamese or Korean - the students know and use more.

The survey was prepared in both Vietnamese and Korean, so the last question was 'In which language did you read the questions in this survey?'. The answers to this question may help the researcher in developing a clearer overview of the current state of Vietnamese language

ability, compared to Korean, in children from multicultural families who completed the survey.

To maintain data integrity, we implemented a system in Google Forms that prevented multiple submissions from the same registered email address. This measure ensured that each participant contributed only one set of responses, eliminating the possibility of duplicate data.

4. The process of socialization in the environment

Socialization, as both an anthropological and sociological concept, encompasses the lifelong process of social interaction through which individuals acquire and refine their human abilities while assimilating cultural patterns. In essence, socialization involves the perpetual integration of culture into an individual's personality, enabling them to function effectively as a member of society. Key socialization environments include family, educational institutions, social groups, mass media, and digital networks (Bilton et al. 1993; Macionis 1995; Little 2016; Murdock 1994).

4.1 Family environment

The family is often regarded as the most significant socialization environment for individuals, as the socialization processes experienced during early childhood profoundly influence and shape attitudes and behaviors in adulthood (Pham Tat Dong et al. 1997; Pham Thi Tram 2016). As noted by Lee & Bucholtz (2015) and Cromdal (2006), the primary language learning environment for children is within their family. Consequently, the language predominantly used at home significantly influences children's socialization patterns,

leading to a Korean or Vietnamese orientation in the context of Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families. Within families, the methods of imparting knowledge about both language and cultural behavior vary. Consequently, our study focused solely on measuring the amount of time children use language in their family environments. This allowed us to infer the potential influence of family factors, specifically Vietnamese or Korean cultural orientations, on language socialization.

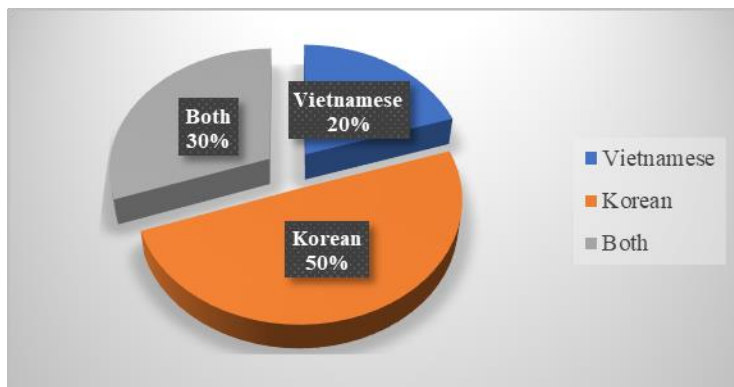
In the family environment, the survey found that the current status of language use in family communication. When asked about the language often used in family activities, 50% of the participating students answered 'Korean' is the language often used at home. 30% of students chose 'Korean and Vietnamese' to acknowledge that the languages were used in balance in family activities (e.g. when talking to the mother, one will speak Vietnamese, while Korean is used to communicate with the father). Only 20% of students answered that the language they mainly use when communicating and engaging in family activities was 'Vietnamese'. See Figure 2 below for a visual representation of this statistic.

The fact that students use Korean more when communicating within the family can be explained by the increasing number of Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families whose mothers, although Vietnamese, can speak Korean very fluently to the point that, within the family unit, the most used language will be Korean. In this case, the use of Vietnamese will not be frequent with children only communicating in Vietnamese with their grandparents or maternal relatives. Thus, in terms of frequency and daily use of Vietnamese in the family, it was not considered to be of

high frequency. Only in certain cases and situations when the mother uses

Vietnamese will a situation of communicating in Vietnamese form.

Figure 2: Status of family language use among children from multicultural families



An interesting consideration as children from 6th grade enter into puberty, they may be less likely to communicate with their mothers. Two classroom teachers, who directly communicate with students, also added that the reason why children do not develop their Vietnamese language skills to the fullest is because in a multicultural family environment, children do not yet have the habit of speaking the Vietnamese language often. Professionally, teachers say that because the language environments of children from multicultural families are not balanced between Korean and Vietnamese, whether at school or at home, children tend to use Korean. Therefore, Koreans' reflexes with Vietnamese are not quick, inaccurate, and they are not fostering the conditions to develop this further.

In the family environment, research focuses on surveys to measure the amount of time children use language. Through research with parents in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families, although parents in multicultural families consciously spend time teaching Vietnamese language and culture to children, when a comparison is made the Korean element is still more dominant. The content of history, customs, and behavior consistent with Vietnamese traditions is still

less than the corresponding content in the Korean dimension.

4.2. School environment.

As children progress through their education, they encounter increasingly social environments, expanding their range of interactions beyond immediate family. While preschool and primary school are crucial for solidifying foundational language skills, secondary and high school provide opportunities for deeper language practice and acquisition of more advanced linguistic knowledge. In the school environment, children are not only socialized linguistically but also acquire knowledge of history, geography, and academic literature in a systematic way.

By default, children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families are living in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city (Vietnam), but they are still receiving a full Korean-focused education due to studying at Korean international schools. The research focuses on understanding the level of awareness as well as evaluating the effectiveness of subjects related to Vietnam in schools.

First, regarding the level of awareness of subjects, according to survey results, 100% of responding students were learning

Vietnamese within the school's language program. Besides language, access to Vietnamese cultural elements was being taught at the two schools including: history, geography, culture, folklore, and ways of behaving in accordance with Vietnamese culture, national spirit, law, and organization of traditional holidays. However, only 1/3 of the total number of responding students have ever been or are currently learning content about Vietnamese history, such as the process of building country, defending the country, and fighting against foreign invaders to gain independence and autonomy for the nation. Most students (77%) were impressed by the festivals organized by the school to commemorate traditional Vietnamese days, such as Hung King's

death anniversary, Lunar New Year, and Vietnamese National Guest Day. However, other content including geography, culture, folklore, national spirit, and law were not distinct in the responses of the children participating in the survey.

It is evident from the survey responses that the two Korean International Schools in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city have made great efforts in bringing Vietnamese language, history, geography, culture and literature into their official education programs. But in reality, the group of children participating in the survey still wanted to have more classes related to Vietnam such as history, geography, culture, literature, and how to behave in accordance with Vietnamese culture as captured in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Students' evaluation about the instructional time and curriculum content of knowledge about Vietnam

Name of subject	Instructional time not meeting students' needs	Curriculum content not meeting students' needs
Language	29%	27%
History	59%	45%
Geography	51%	45%
Literature	61%	54%
Folk culture	53%	45%
Vietnamese style behavior	48%	50%
(Vietnamese) National spirit	56%	49%
Vietnamese law	62%	59%
Vietnamese culture experience events	29%	25%

As can be seen in the table above, the students reported, 62% and 59% respectively, comments that the teaching time and the curriculum content related to Vietnamese legal regulations, respectively, were did not meet their needs. More than 50% of responding students believed that the content knowledge and time spent on

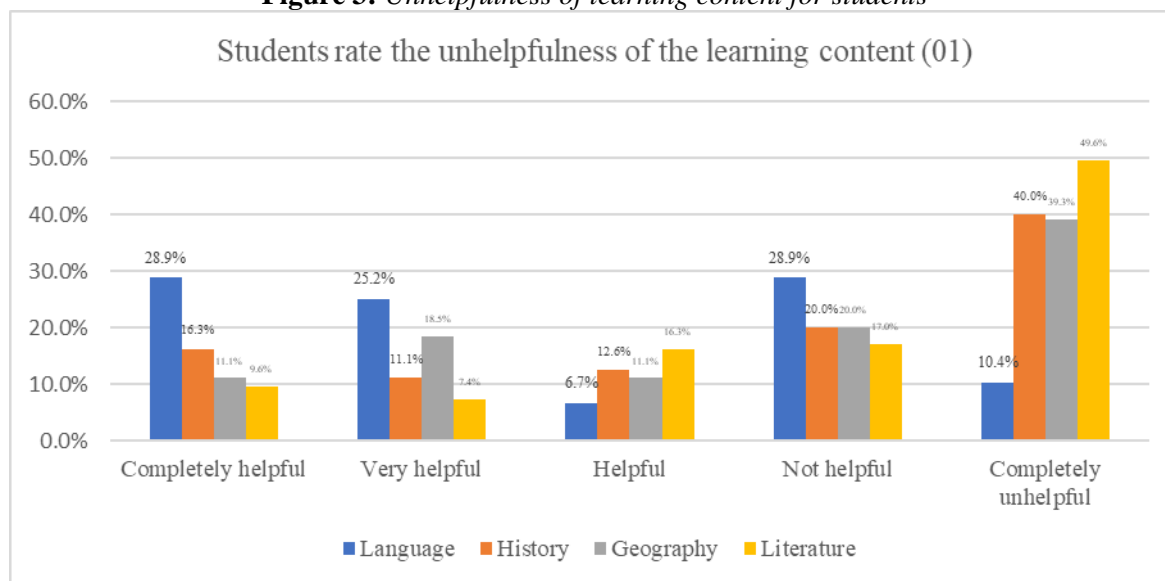
content helped them to understand and learn more about the national spirit and examples of Vietnamese heroes was also less than they felt they required. Similarly, more than 50% of students commented that the time and content related to history, geography, appropriate behavior for Vietnamese society, and Vietnamese

literary works was insufficient in meeting their learning needs at school. Finally, around half the students responded that the instructional time and learning content related to folk culture did not meet their needs in terms of instructional time (53%) and for the content being taught at school (45%).

Based on the above findings, it can be seen that the duration and volume of language teaching and the schools' focus on organizing programs and festive events for student body, in general, and children from multicultural families, in particular, to learn more about traditional Vietnamese culture, which is appropriate and meets cohort needs. However, subjects that develop knowledge of history, geography, literature, folk culture, understanding national heroes and ways of behaving in accordance with Vietnam's customs and legal regulations are limited.

The survey was set to a scale of 1 to 10, so that students could self-assess the usefulness of their subjects, in light of helping students better understand various Vietnamese factors. Accordingly, a rating of 9 to 10 points was considered 'very useful' learning content for students, while a rating of 7 to 8 points was seen as an equivalent to being 'moderately useful'. Moving to the middle of the scale, a rating of 5 to 6 points represented a level of 'usefulness' for students. On the opposite end of the scale, a rating of 1 to 2 points was equivalent to being 'completely unhelpful', with 3 to 4 points being considered by students as 'not very helpful'. From there, the overall survey results are depicted in Figure 3 below and described in the following paragraph.

Figure 3: *Unhelpfulness of learning content for students*



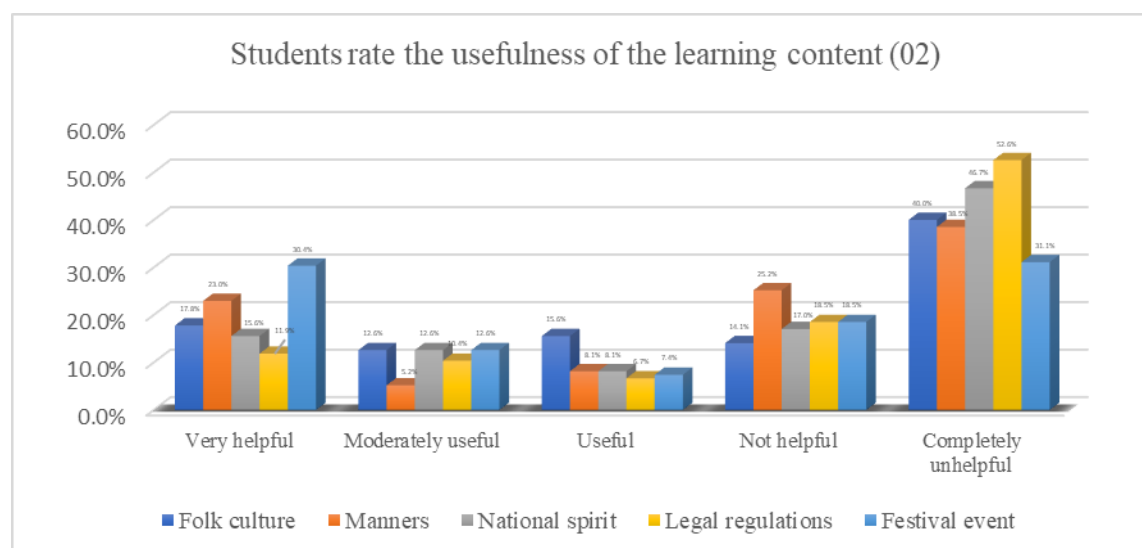
For the Vietnamese subject, which connects with linguistic content, students provided positive assessments about the usefulness of the learning content in terms of practical application. More than 60% of students rated the Vietnamese language course as 'helpful' for forming and developing their own Vietnamese language skills. However, it was still necessary to

pay attention to the figures of 28.9% and 10.4% for 'not helpful' and 'completely helpful' assessments for the Vietnamese subject, respectively. Except for language content, other content related to history, geography, and Vietnamese literature were not highly appreciated by students for their usefulness in enhancing their understanding in related fields. Specifically, nearly 60% of

students thought that the history and geography subjects did not help them better understand the history or the topography and geography of Vietnam's territory. Although Vietnamese literature was included the teaching, there were still many

limitations with more than 30% of the students considering themselves to have developed a better understanding of Vietnamese literature through the content learned at school.

Figure 4: Usefulness of learning content for students (2)



As captured in Figure 4 above, the findings evaluating the school curriculum, especially with subjects such as folk culture, understandings of Vietnamese standards and perspectives, and learning connected with the national spirit and legal regulations, show that the learning did not meet the needs of students with low rankings in terms of the usefulness of these subjects. By and large, survey respondents believed that these subjects did not help them develop and improve their understandings of the related fields. While the students highly appreciated the activities related traditional Vietnamese festivals, their perceptions from the survey suggested that only 40% of students evaluating the festival activities as helping them to understand more about Vietnam. Similarly, more than 50% of students rated the festival element negatively by stating it was not helpful for understanding Vietnamese culture and traditions.

From the above results, it can be seen that although the schools make great efforts in foregrounding the Vietnamese elements in their education programs, the effectiveness achieved for the group of students who are children of Vietnamese - Korean multicultural families was still not high. The balance of language acquisition and use among children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families studying at a Korean International School still favors the Korean elements. The students did not learn enough about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to balance the Vietnamese and Korean elements to form a more holistic Vietnamese - Korean intercultural communication capacity. Of relevance to this particular point, the survey asked the question, 'In which language did you read this question?' and obtained the result that 90% of respondents read the questions in Korean. This outcome was despite the survey being designed in a

bilingual format with the Vietnamese translation placed before the Korean translation. It could be suggested that, even though the students are living in Vietnam and are biologically 50% Vietnamese, they still do not achieve a balance between the Vietnamese and Korean language and cultural elements in their school environment. Overall, the amount of socialization around Vietnamese elements within school is much less than the amount of Korean elements the students were receiving.

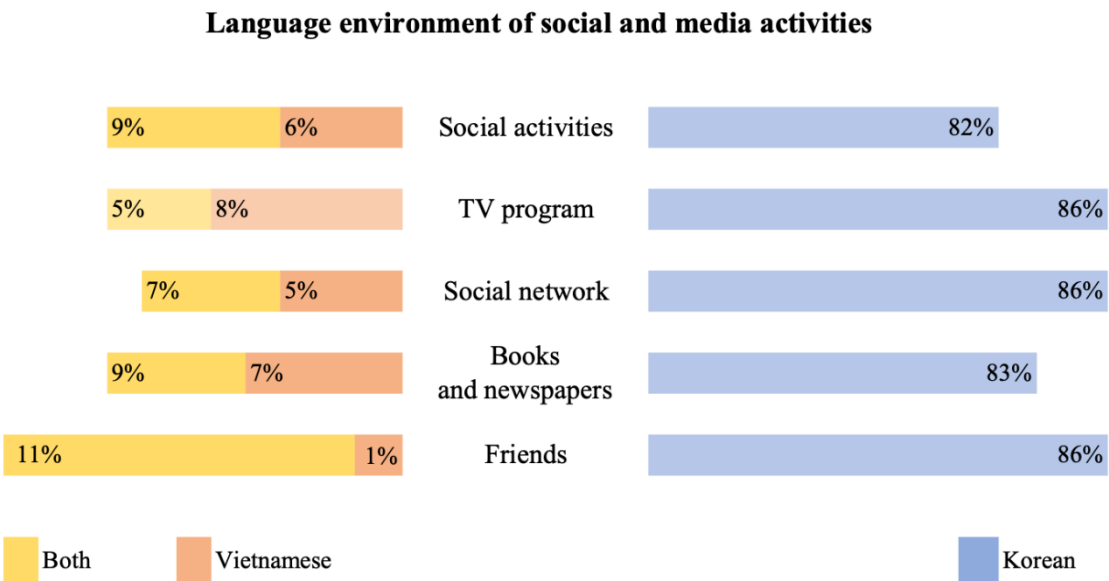
4.3. Environment of friends and social networks

The third significant socialization environment for school-age children, particularly those in middle and high school, is their peer group, social networks, and media. While children at this age are more independent than younger children, they are still influenced by their parents. In this environment, children have greater freedom to learn about behavior and language from their peers, social media

trends, and television programs. Unlike the structured and guided environments of school and family, this setting allows children more autonomy in choosing what to learn and how to access information.

As highlighted earlier, language plays a pivotal role in shaping children's socialization patterns. The predominant language used within their peer group - whether Vietnamese or Korean - significantly influences the socialization process, determining the extent to which Vietnamese or Korean cultural elements are integrated. When asked about the language ability of their group of friends, up to 85.2% of the respondents shared that 'Korean is the group's frequently used language amongst close friends'. Less than 5% of the responses received identified that 'Vietnamese is a frequently used language among close friends'. There was a slightly higher response rate at 10% of the option that 'Vietnamese and Korean are frequently used languages among close friends'.

Figure 5: *Language environment of friends group, social networks, and media*



As can be seen in Figure 5 above, 83% of the responding students read books and newspapers in Korean, however, the

number reading books and newspapers in Vietnamese was less than 10%. Only 9% of respondents try to balance their reading

ability in Vietnamese and Korean by accessing books and newspapers in both languages. Besides their group of close friends, many students have a very open contact environment in the form of social networks. In the past, children and young people would meet their friends at the playground after school, but now, they meet friends and receive information from social networks. As a result, this environment impacts on the socialization process according to Vietnamese or Korean characteristics in students. According to survey results, 86% of respondents were following Korean social networks with only 5% follow Vietnamese-focused social networks, and 7% following networks in both languages.

In addition to social networks and books, 86% of the students watched TV shows in Korean and again only a small percentage, 8% and 5% respectively, choose to watch TV shows in Vietnamese or in both languages. If the school organizes festive activities to create opportunities for students to experience both cultures, the students could also choose to participate in social activities in the form of clubs or summer camps. The question 'What style of clubs or summer camps do you usually participate in?' received an 82% response rate connected with "Korean style". Conversely, 6% of students responded that they had participated in 'Vietnamese style' social events and, 9% of responses captured participation in clubs, summer camps, and volunteer activities that reflect both cultural styles.

Based on Figure 5 above, a comparison of the language environment through connections with friends, social networks, and social activities leads to a common result. The findings suggest that the Korean

language environment is more dominant than the Vietnamese context although the students were from multicultural families living in Vietnam.

5. Conclusion

In examining the language environment across various contexts: home, school, friend networks, social networks, media, and research, it becomes evident that the Korean influence significantly outweighs the Vietnamese influence. Even within multicultural families residing in Vietnam, children find themselves immersed in a space that leans more toward Korean language, culture, history, and behavior. This situation is regrettable because children from multicultural backgrounds should ideally develop strong intercultural communication skills across all areas of their heritage. Early exposure to both Vietnamese and Korean languages and cultures through interactions with their parents provides a unique opportunity for these children. However, the family environment itself, which plays a crucial role in shaping intercultural communication abilities, tends to favor Korean language and culture over Vietnamese.

Although a group of children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families are living in Vietnam, the children are socialized with more Korean elements than Vietnamese elements in all three environments: family, school, and friends and social networks. To once again verify the Vietnamese language ability of children participating in the survey, the study asked the question, 'In which language did you read this question?', and obtained the following results: 82.3% of responding students read the questions in Korean or mainly in Korean (with Vietnamese

reference). Structurally, the survey was designed to be bilingual, with the Vietnamese section placed first and then the Korean translation following. With this answer, we can see that, although visually, when participating in answering questions, children will see the content of the question in Vietnamese first, but they still focus on reading the question in Korean, or read Korean first and then (may) refer to the Vietnamese version. Corresponding to the survey results, it can be concluded that the Korean language ability in children from multicultural families are better than Vietnamese language.

The situation faced by children from multicultural families in Vietnam presents significant challenges. Despite residing in Vietnam and having a Vietnamese mother, these children often demonstrate greater fluency in Korean and a stronger familiarity with Korean cultural behaviors than with their Vietnamese counterparts. The family environment plays a crucial role in establishing the foundational language reflexes for children; however, this environment also reflects a disparity between Vietnamese and Korean influences. Consequently, the mother's efforts to foster a connection with Vietnamese culture may prove insufficient, resulting in an imbalance in language use and cultural reception among children of Vietnamese-Korean families.

Upon transitioning from the familial context to the school environment - a broader social setting - these children continue to encounter an educational landscape that lacks a balanced representation of both Vietnamese and Korean content. Peer groups and social networks do not provide adequate opportunities for children from multicultural families to engage with and

utilize the Vietnamese language or to deepen their understanding of Vietnamese culture, history, and social norms.

The predominance of Korean language proficiency and cultural understanding among children in multicultural families poses challenges for their integration into Vietnamese society. This linguistic and cultural imbalance may hinder their ability to navigate both Vietnamese and Korean social spheres comfortably. While children from Vietnamese-Korean families residing in Vietnam must acquire proficiency in Vietnamese and knowledge of its cultural elements, those attending Korean International Schools may maintain their Korean language skills and cultural identity. Nonetheless, it remains imperative for these children to receive education that incorporates Vietnamese cultural elements while living in Vietnam.

The training of Vietnamese human resources is a critical focus in various policy documents issued by the Party and State. The 13th National Congress documents (Communist Party of Vietnam 2021) emphasize the importance of "preserving and promoting the cultural values and strengths of the Vietnamese people in the pursuit of national construction, protection, and international integration" (Communist Party of Vietnam 2021). Biologically, these children possess 50% of their DNA linked to Vietnamese heritage, underscoring the necessity of socializing them with Vietnamese cultural elements while ensuring that their Korean identity is not diminished during their development. This dual cultural identity represents a valuable potential human resource for the Vietnamese Government. With Vietnam's current talent attraction policies, children from Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families who are proficient in

Vietnamese and well-versed in Vietnamese culture will have enhanced opportunities for employment and citizenship, thereby contributing to the development of both Vietnam and Korea.

Efforts from families and schools alone may not achieve their maximum effectiveness without supportive policies from the Government. These policies are crucial in assisting children with 50% Vietnamese characteristics should maintain and develop their Vietnamese language and cultural capabilities while also balancing the Vietnamese-Korean elements within each individual. By striking this balance, not only can children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families benefit from unique developmental advantages, but the Governments of both countries can also harness and effectively utilize this potential high-quality human resource in the future. Growing up in a multicultural environment exposes children to both Vietnamese and Korean languages. This early exposure often results in bilingual proficiency, allowing them to communicate effectively in both languages. Bilingualism has cognitive benefits, such as enhanced problem-solving skills and creativity. Children in multicultural families learn to navigate different cultural norms, traditions, and customs. This adaptability fosters open-mindedness, empathy, and an appreciation for diversity. They can seamlessly transition between Vietnamese and Korean cultural contexts. Multicultural families often have connections in both countries. As a result, children benefit from a broader social network, which can be advantageous for personal growth, career opportunities, and cross-cultural collaborations. Balancing two cultural identities encourages cognitive flexibility. These children learn to switch between cultural frames of reference, adapt

to various situations, and appreciate different perspectives. This cognitive agility is valuable in an interconnected world. Exposure to both Vietnamese and Korean cultures provides a global perspective. Children understand that there are multiple ways of thinking, living, and solving problems. This mindset prepares them for an increasingly globalized society. Multicultural experiences stimulate creativity. Children draw from diverse cultural backgrounds, combining elements in unique ways. This creativity extends beyond language and culture to artistic expression, problem-solving, and innovation. Multicultural children often face challenges related to identity. However, these experiences also build resilience. They learn to navigate complex identities, appreciate their heritage, and forge a sense of self that transcends borders.

In conclusion, the intricate interplay between supportive Government policies and the unique developmental advantages experienced by children in Vietnamese-Korean multicultural families is pivotal. By maintaining a delicate equilibrium between Vietnamese language proficiency, cultural awareness, and Korean elements, these children emerge as valuable human resources for both nations. Their bilingualism, adaptability, and global perspective position them as contributors to an interconnected world. Despite the challenges of navigating complex identities, these children exemplify resilience and enrich our global community. Their multifaceted experiences transcend borders, fostering creativity and enhancing our collective understanding of diversity and cultural richness.

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