

A study on Korean vocabulary education for multicultural family children

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Abstract. The term *multicultural family children*(MFC) is used in South Korea to describe a child born to a native Korean father and a foreign mother. On the dimension of foreign affairs in Korea, it's a unusual situation but an important matter in Korean society and education, because these children often have deficiencies in Korean language acquisition and development. In particular, they have a lot of problems using advanced language, which in turn may cause the problems they experience with school learning in general. These academic problems have a lasting impact on these children's lives. One such issue is lack of Korean vocabulary competence, and the key to tackling this problem is basic concept vocabulary. On reading task, multicultural children often concentrate easily on surface information and are content to stay at a lower or more superficial level. Therefore, we should pay particular attention to low lexical competence as a cause of language acquisition difficulty. Korean vocabulary consists of three groups of words: native Korean words, words derived from Chinese and written with Chinese characters, and words from foreign languages other than Chinese. A distinctive feature of Korean vocabulary is that many abstract words and advanced academic vocabulary are written with Chinese characters. This may make these words the most difficult aspect of Korean vocabulary to learn for multicultural family children. Therefore, we suggest concrete measures to be implemented to help these children learn Korean vocabulary and achieve high-level language acquisition to the same degree as children from fully Korean families. This study was based on the theory of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP; Cummins, 1979).