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Koreanizing Marriage Migrant Women: A Critical Review of *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*

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I. Multicultural Families in the Korean Media

1. The Emergence of a New Social Group, Multicultural Families

Korean society has witnessed a growing number of biracial children along with the increase of interethnic marriages between a Korean and a foreign spouse from the beginning of the 21st century. The number of such marriages in Korea surged up to 43,121 in 2005 as compared to 12,319 in 2000, and around 14% of all new marriages in 2005 were cross-national marriages (K. S. Lee 246).

In contrast to the fast demographic change, a conservative sentiment that puts homogeneity as a nation's pride still prevailed, and typically having negative assumptions toward biracial Koreans remained as a rigid idea in the society. As noted in the report of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD),

> [t]he principle of the 'pure-blooded,' based on the Republic of Korea's pride in the nation's ethnic homogeneity, has incurred various forms of discrimination, largely invisible and not illegal, against so-called 'mixed-bloods' in all areas of life including employment, marriage, housing, education and interpersonal relationships. This is particularly serious since such practices are passed down from one generation to the next. (10)

When Hines Ward, an American football player whose mother is an ethnic Korean, visited Korea in April 2006 with his mother after he was awarded MVP by the American National Football League for his contribution to his team's Super Bowl winning, the Korean media and public paid great attention to his

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ethnic background. The media quickly released the story of Ward's Korean mother, who had to migrate to the United States due to a strong sentiment of Koreans' stigmatization toward and discrimination against her biracial child. Ward's story motivated the government and mass media to begin to eliminate discrimination and prejudice against ethnic minority groups in Korean society.

In 2006, the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development Republic of Korea reviewed the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools (*The Measures* 15). As a result, phrases describing Korea as the state of "ethnic homogeneity" or "single ethnic state" have been removed from textbooks. The Korean government's efforts to eliminate discrimination and prejudice against ethnic minorities are mentioned specifically in the reports submitted to UN CERD:

> With a view to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnic groups, the Government has, as explained in full in previous reports, included the following subjects in elementary and secondary school curricula: (a) The diverse characteristics of different races and ethnic groups; (b) Respect for human dignity, regardless of race, colour, sex, religion and belief; (c) Measures and efforts to eliminate racial prejudices and discrimination. (18)

All these actions are profoundly related to the demographic increase of biracial children in Korean education, particularly, the children of Korean fathers and Southeast Asian mothers.

As for the term "a child of mixed-blood"—*honhyeol'a* (혼혈아) in Korean—it has been commonly used when referring to a biracial child but it has been problematic, as the term represents the stigma attached to these children. Scholars and practitioners have had to put an effort into searching for a substitutable term for the group and have coined diverse appellations. Most appellations did not get much attention from the public and faded away, but among them, *damunhwa gajok ja'nyeo* (다문화 가족 자녀, a child of the multicultural family) has gained recognition. Indeed, the term created another new categorization of family groups with a term *damunhwa* (다문화, multicultural). The migrant parent, particularly foreign mothers who married Korean men and migrated to Korea have been named in various ways. Likewise, various terms for foreign mothers, among more than 65 appellations, including marriage migrant mother, international marriage migrant, and so

forth, *gyeol'hon iju yeoseong* (결혼 이주 여성) has been used the most widely (Yi 256).

The so-called *damunhwa gajok* (hereafter, multicultural family) has suddenly emerged as a representation of multiculturalism of Korea, and the group has received nation-wide attention and support by the Korean government. After the government initiated the Multicultural Family Support Act in 2008, the groups that include foreign migrants as family members are categorized as multicultural families. In fact, besides a family consisting of a Korean husband and a migrant wife, the multicultural families also include the families of a migrant husband and a Korean wife, or legally residing families of migrants such as the families of migrant workers, international students, and North Korean defectors. However, the governmental support for foreigners' migration to Korea has mainly concentrated on the multicultural families of biracial children and marriage migrant women. According to the Committee for Migrant Policy in 2012, more than 85% of the budget for the migration policy of Korea was spent for supporting these multicultural families and 18% on the multicultural education and in developing its contents as of 2011 (10).

2. The Representation of Multicultural Families on Television

Along with the active practices by the government, the media actively delivered the public-awareness campaigns through public television channels. However, these campaigns rather functioned for producing the stereotypes and preconceptions about the marriage migrant women. A large proportion of the public campaigns for promoting cultural diversity and awareness of multicultural families offered representations of Southeast Asian ethnic women as dependent, isolated, and linguistically deficient (J. W. Kim 24–27).

The representations of this particular group can still be found but in a more complex way, particularly in the television documentary format. Scholars have critically examined the representations of multicultural families in these programs. These studies claim that the ways that documentaries produce representations of multicultural families consequently result in othering the group (Cho 75; H. J. Lee 178) or imposing Koreans' familial values on migrants (K. S. Lee 267–69; I. Y. Kim et al. 90; H. J. Lee 179; Jang 82–83; S. H. Lee 32; Jung and Choi 118). Scholars have raised concerns that the programs approach their issues from ethnocentric perspectives (Hwang 205; Hong and Kim 572; Kwon 199). The studies selected one or two of the documentary programs that

portray ordinary people of multicultural families and analyzed the programs' discourses (I. Y. Kim et al.; Hong and Kim; Jang), their narrative structures (Cho; H. J. Lee; Kwon; K. S. Lee; S. H. Lee; Jang), and their characters (Kwon; Hwang; K. S. Lee). The selected and analyzed documentaries were KBS's *Ingangeukjang* (인간극장, *Human Theatre*) or *Leobeu in Asia* (러브 人 아시아, *Love in Asia*), EBS's *Damunhwa Hyumeondakyu Gajok* (다문화 휴먼다큐 가족, *Multicultural Human Documentary: Family*), and *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon* (다문화 고부열전, *A Mother-in-law versus a Daughter-in-law in the Multicultural Family*).

In particular, EBS[1] launched the independent website *Durian* (두리안) in 2011 to support multicultural families by providing online Korean language learning programs. According to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, EBS produced six programs and aired 236 episodes with educational messages about multicultural awareness in 2014 (11). It has produced documentary series with real multicultural families, including the two EBS programs mentioned above, as well as *Damunhwa Sarang* (다문화 사랑, *Multicultural Love*), and *Global Gajok Jeongchak'gi: Hanguk'e Sanda* (글로벌 가족 정착기: 한국에 산다, *The Story of Global Family's Settlement: Living in Korea*) which are currently airing each week through its channel. These television documentary series have performed as cultural apparatus that define who these people are. By repeatedly utilizing the real families within their factual stories, it has influenced people to change how they see the subject from an abstract notion into concrete reality.

Ⅱ. Methodological Outline of the Research

1. The Television Documentary Series *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*

This paper focuses on the EBS's television documentary series *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*. The program's rating started from 1% when it first aired and had risen to 4% as of February 2015 ("A'ung Da'ung"). As its popularity is on the rise, it is important to discuss the ways of presenting the participants and its potential influence on developing commonly held notions about the multicultural family.

1. EBS (Educational Broadcasting System) is a major public television and radio network in Korea specializing in education.

The title reflects its theme: the conflicts between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law of multicultural family. It airs on Thursdays and features different conflicting members of multicultural families in every episode. Each episode can be divided into four narrative events (Jang 76). Here in this paper, each episode's four events will be: "Introduction," "Conflict," "Journey," and "Resolution." In "Introduction," it usually begins with introducing two main participants, a Korean mother-in-law and a marriage migrant daughter-in-law, with their names, ages, nationalities, the current location of their house (names of city and province), and the characteristics that cause the conflict between the two. In "Conflict," a main conflict that two women are facing is more visibly presented through scenes of their interaction and through the narration. When the conflict reaches intensity, the two women begin their 7-day journey to the daughter-in-law's homeland. In "Journey," they come across the moment of understanding each other's thoughts, which leads to the ending. Lastly in "Resolution," it includes the scenes that explain how their relationship has changed after the journey.

Though the program is framed as a documentary, there is a grey area that makes *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon* hard to regard purely as factual. It has a fixed theme based on a given setting—visiting the hometown of the daughter-in-law. Instead of merely documenting the lives of multicultural families, the program producers engage indirectly in the family issues by providing a trip and giving them an opportunity to solve their problems. They do not merely document the real life of the multicultural families but occasionally exaggerate the situation and give a humorous effect to the stories with the narration.

The programs with entertainment do more than merely entertain the viewers. They also influence the shaping of values indirectly and the ways in which viewers interpret the embedded messages. A message embedded in the television programs generally is an active practice of creating and representing a repertory of "what we think reality ought to look like" (McKenna 17). During the editing process, a producer's decision on what is included and excluded is very much based on individual values as well as the expectations of the public. Producers interpret the descriptive reality, and reshape it into socially perceived meaning and deliver the message through visualization (Y. H. Kim, *Munhwawa* 175). However, people regard the documentary format programs as informative, educational, and something that delivers a certain degree of reality. Viewers tend hardly to resist or dispute the factuality of what they see unless its credibility is questioned. In this respect, investigating the

documentary programs' effect and its embedded messages is a critical task.

2. Theoretical Approaches

Discourse analysis has clearly become one of the key approaches used in media research on the representation of multicultural families. Jang has used critical discourse analysis to analyze *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*, focusing on its characters, narrative structures, and the participants' discourses. In this research, she claims that the similarity of two participants' geographical backgrounds plays a significant role in their discourse changes: the daughters-in-law transform from outsiders to settlers, while the mothers-in-law transform from supporters or objectors to companions (79). The existing analyses show that this program reflects a limited understanding of multicultural families in Korea (Jang 83; Jung and Choi 119).

While the studies have raised concerns that the program reflects a culturally biased interpretation of multiculturalism, this paper examines the program focusing on its texts and discourse through discursive psychology. Following the notion of Wittgenstein, who basically views language as the vehicle of thought (qtd. in Edley 190), discursive psychology sees language as a topic that does not only deliver messages from people's minds or on how they perceive the world, but also as connected to their values, thought, history, and experiences, that is "highly context-specific" (190). While Foucauldians have interests in interrogating the ideological effects of people's accounts and understand ideology as a social practice and power that is operated within discourse, discursive psychologists focus on the daily utterances and language use that are occasioned and context-bound and view discourse constructed by individuals in their own particular ways of culture, race, gender, and more through social interaction (Jørgensen and Phillips 96–97).

The three principal concepts within discursive psychology—*interpretative repertoires*, *subject positions*, and *ideological dilemmas*—evidently reflect its understanding of discourse as context-specific and its notion of ideology as dynamic and unstable. The concept of *interpretative repertoires* is a distinctive way of talking. Borrowing the words by Potter and Wetherell (1987), *interpretative repertoires* constitute "basically a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterize and evaluate actions and events" (Edley 198). *Subject position* is the way speakers identify themselves with other participants. Its focus is on "what position they take up and in what story, and

how they are then positioned" (246). The third concept, *ideological dilemmas*, refers to a pair of contrasting common values, which are discursively developed and reflected in situated language use. The concept allows consideration not only of what is selected in what circumstances but also of which contrasting idea is discarded due to what reason. These concepts will be applied in detail with specific instances later in the implication of the paper.

Ⅲ. Participants and Demographic Features

In terms of nationality, the foreign participants—as a daughter-in-law in each episode—in 75 episodes from the first episode on October 18, 2013 up to April 2, 2015, are all Asians. Ninety-six percent of migrant participants are migrants from the Southeast Asian region, the countries including Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Indonesia. So far, the Vietnamese women have dominantly participated in the program. Almost half of the multicultural families, 37 out of 75, were Vietnamese migrants, while Chinese—the largest group of marriage migrant women in the actual population of Korea—appeared in only two episodes. Both Cambodians' and Filipinos' families have also shown similar numbers of participation. A Japanese multicultural family—the third largest group in actual data—has been featured in only one episode.

Table 1. Program participants and actual population of marriage migrant women comparison, by nationality

Country	*Participants*	*Actual Population*
Vietnam	37 (50%)	30%
Cambodia	17 (23%)	4%
Philippines	16 (21%)	7%
China	2 (0.3%)	40%
Laos	1 (0.1%)	≈0%
Japan	1 (0.1%)	9%
Indonesia	1 (0.1%)	≈0%

Source: *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*, EBS Online, 2013. Web.; The Ministry of Public Administration and Security Republic of Korea, *Statistics of the Foreign Residents in Korea*, 2012.

The nationalities of marriage migrant women are largely concentrated

on Vietnam followed by Cambodia and the Philippines (see Table 1). Some Vietnamese migrant women's purpose of migration to Korean and marrying Korean men are known to be due to economic reasons. Hoi Loan Nguyen explains that they expect to come to be in better economic conditions and to support their family by sending money to their parents in Vietnam, which reveal their exceptional family ties (24). People in Vietnam share the Confucian ideology with other Northeast Asian countries including Korea, China, and Japan. Unlike in the Philippines where there is no patriarchal family culture, in Vietnam, the people follow the Confucian customs of social relations in accordance with age, gender, and class. Likewise, the Vietnamese familism is often found in the program's portrayals of family life. For instance, one of the Vietnamese brides formed a double in-law family with her sister through inviting her to come to Korea, where the sister was introduced to her brother-in-law with the suggestion to get married. Another woman from Vietnam was living with her parents-in-law and grandparents-in-law as a multicultural and multigenerational family. The higher possibility of living with in-laws is seemingly due to the fact that Vietnamese have grown up with strong familial ties and similar family culture.

The demographic concentration and a disparity of demographics between the program and the actual population (see Table 1) are basically due to the program's restrictions in terms of migrants' nationalities. Specific criteria and guidelines[2] for program participation are given as in the following:

(1) The eligibility: A *Korean mother-in-law and a migrant daughter-in-law* (no age limitation). Even if you already have visited your home country, you can still apply for participation if you want to take the trip with your mother-in-law.
(2) Nationality: *Asian* region (*Chinese or Japanese will not be considered due to the cultural similarities*).
(3) Language: Command of Korean language in daily life conversation.
(4) Family type: In-laws living (a) *in the same house*; (b) in the same town; (c) in the same city; or (d) a mother-in-law living in a suburb and a daughter-in-law living in a city area (preferred types listed in order)

2. These guidelines were retrieved on May 12, 2015 from the Masan Multicultural Family Support Center's website, where they were posted on the board on September 18, 2014, and translated into English by the author. Italics are added for emphasis.

("EBS *Damunhwa*").

(1) 출연조건-한국인 시어머니와 이주여성 며느리 (나이 제한 없음)
친정에 다녀오신 경험자 중, 시어머니와 함께 하는 소통의 시간을 만들어보고 싶은 분들도 신청 가능합니다.
(2) 출신국가-아시아 지역 (일본, 중국 제외: 한국과 문화가 비슷해 문화 차이를 경험하긴 어려움)
(3) 한국어-한국어로 일상적인 대화 가능
(4) 거주 방식-(1순위) 시어머니와 며느리가 한집에 사는 경우
(2순위) 시어머니와 며느리가 한 동네에 사는 경우
(3순위) 시어머니와 며느리가 같은 도시에 사는 경우
(4순위) 시어머니가 시골, 며느리가 도시에 사는 경우

The second criteria of the rubric given by the program explains the reason for restriction of Chinese or Japanese: the cultural similarities. While Chinese and Japanese had been exceptionally restricted in participation, the criterion has limited the participants' nationalities only to the countries in Asia. In fact, this criterion has resulted in concentrating migrant participants to certain race and ethnicity. Other factors, such as a travel expense budget, may have influenced a particular limitation of the migrants' countries only to near regions. Due to the fact that migrant women from other parts of Asia such as Middle East Asia or South Asia rarely migrate to Korea, the program's main focus has been on the families of Southeast Asian women.

In terms of family types, the concentration to the multigenerational and extended families not only excludes nuclear families, it also consequently focuses on the limited groups in regard to economic status and geographical location. Some migrants in the program, who displayed difficulties living with their in-laws, mentioned that they have no other option but to live with their parents-in-law due to their economic dependence. They were expecting to obtain independence when they achieve economic sufficiency. As for the location of residency, only one family was living in Seoul while most of the participants were living in rural farming or fishing villages where the traditional culture still prevails, or local regions where more unskilled laborers are required.

While focusing on two women, male members—including a father-in-law or a husband—have trivial roles and hardly engage in the stories. Documenting the two women in conflict in multicultural families as the program's main theme inevitably structures the story of female-centered

narratives. Unlike vulnerable and marginalized women in public campaigns or advertisements, the women in the program share their personal stories through their own voices. The documentary allows tracing back to the time when the participants were younger. It also pays attentions to individual and different identities in the broader spectrum. However, having the specified eligibility as a "Korean" mother-in-law and a "foreign" daughter-in-law is also reducing the range of multicultural families to a particular type in terms of migrants' gender, age, and role in the family.

In aggregate, the program is mainly about (a) the multicultural families of Southeast Asian marriage migrant women, (b) living in rural Korea, and (c) living with their Korean mothers-in-law. Considering that producing a television program is "to select the information that seems important to us, and leave the rest out" (McKenna 17), the demographic features reflect that the program has a purpose to serve as a medium for this focused group. It is apparent that the program prefers certain groups of multicultural families that satisfy the given criteria in terms of participants' family type, gender, and nationality. Additionally, it has excluded other families implicitly with regard to race, ethnicity, and class. Through framing the selected participants, the program is creating its own concept of what a "multicultural family" is.

Ⅳ. Representation of Marriage Migrant Women

1. Selected Characteristics of Daughters-in-law

Each episode has its own title with words and phrases that represent the main characters. Episode titles give a hint of each participant's personality or a behavior that is considered to be causing the conflict and that represents one of the most important characteristics that will contribute to making the story. With few exceptions among 75 episodes, the mothers-in-law's characters come first in the titles. For instance, "Stingy Mother-in-law and Disputing Daughter-in-law" (Gudusoi Sieomeoni'wa Maldaedap'haneun Myeoneuri, 구두쇠 시어머니와 말대답하는 며느리) is a conventional format of the subject title. However, some titles occasionally describe the daughters-in-law first and then the mothers-in-law, a reversed order, such as "Queen Daughter-in-law and Maid Mother-in-law" (Wangbi Myeoneuri'wa Musuri Sieomeoni, 왕비 며느리와 무수리 시어머니). This reversed order implies how the life of a mother-

in-law has changed—mostly in negative ways—after living with her daughter-in-law. Some of the descriptors on daughters-in-law in the titles and their representations are given in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Examples of descriptors of daughter-in-law in the episodes

Descriptors		*Representations*
Childish, haphazard, too innocent, speaking without filter, shameless, annoying, fell in love with her smart phone	⇒	Immature
Unresponsive, retorting, speechless, angry, defiant, talking back, stubborn, fiery	⇒	Aggressive
Irresponsible, insisting not to work, liar, denying her duties in the house	⇒	Irresponsible
Isolated, left-out, having no one on my side, suffering, insisting to live separate from her in-laws, staying home all day	⇒	Struggling
Insisting Vietnamese life style, eating with hands	⇒	Foreign

Source: *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*, EBS Online, 2013. Web.

In general, the subject titles tend to imply or highlight the negative aspects of participants' characters. Unlike the representation of migrant women as weak, vulnerable, and linguistically deficient in public advertisements, their representations vary and are possibly categorized into five characters: immature, irresponsible, offensive, struggling, and foreign (see Table 2). The "Introduction," the first narrative event, begins with one of the most important instances that viewers can instantly recognize the participants' main issues or problems. It also visualizes two women's contrasting characteristics, which usually correspond to texts in the title. Below are extracts of the typical narration describing mothers-in-law interacting with their daughters-in-law:

Extracts (italics added)

(1) Though the mother planned to enjoy her late years she met an *obstacle three years ago*, which is her daughter-in-law from Cambodia (episode 34).

(2) The mother says she can find *more wrinkles* in her face as she tries to correct her daughter-in-law's childish behavior (episode 59).
(3) She expected to have some peaceful time in her late age, *but* there is someone who *bothers* her expectations—her daughter-in-law who married her son and came to Korea six years ago (episode 63).
(4) The mother-in-law expected a peaceful and restful late 70s, *but* Mrs. Sohn is busy preparing her grandchildren for school (episode 76).

The narration describes how the participants' situations have changed since they started living with their daughthers-in-law. From the mother-in-law's perspective, the narration divides time into two parts—the time before and after her daughter-in-law came into her house. Generally, it depicts the daughters-in-law as obstacles in the family, or as someone who makes the mother suffer, who broke her peaceful life. The narration compares the situations with an ideal picture of mother-in-law; that is, a mother-in-law living with a daughter-in-law enjoying her old age, not working but having a restful time in her house. This idealistic life as a mother-in-law and a peaceful location also contradict the condition of the mother's current situation and her house. The characters' houses are depicted as busy and loud with fighting members, whereas the house settings—mostly located in rural villages in Korea—are often described as "peaceful," or "a beautiful village where the traditional culture is still alive," "the home of noblemen," and "the place well-known for an abundance of friendly people."

The next narrative event, the "Conflict," consists of stories that epitomize the tensions and conflicts between two opposing participants. As displayed previously in Table 2, the daughters-in-law's characters that are regarded as offensive are largely related to their communicative behaviors that are depicted in the "Conflict." Particularly, talking back or discursively disputing the elders has been one of the main issues in the program.

The program tends to approach the issues from the mother-in-law's perspectives. In many cases, the actual tensions between the participants are heavily involved with economic issues. Some marriage migrant women have displayed complaints about their mothers-in-law, who are controlling their husband's income, which they perceive as a sign of "mistrust" and exclusion as a family member. The mothers-in-law—women who were mostly controlling the house income—have often censured their young in-law's excessive spending of money, and they were concerned about the financial consciousness of their

daughter-in-law. By depicting the migrant daughters-in-law spending money and by displaying the scenes in which they spend resources unselfconsciously, the narrative justifies the mothers-in-law's financial control in the house.

2. Shifting Representations of the Participants

After the "Conflict," two participants shift their setting to the daughter-in-law's home country. Korean mothers-in-law, who were likely to perform a strong and authoritative power in Korea, are set in a position as outsiders, while the daughters-in-law become insiders. In this "Journey," the program portrays the mothers-in-law losing control, experiencing different customs, and struggling in an underdeveloped environment, which weakens their power.

Such reversed position does not exert an influence on changing the daughters-in-law's representation instantly but it shifts viewers' attention away from their pre-existing characteristics—immature, irresponsible, aggressive, struggling, and foreign—towards opposite qualities. In the "Journey," particularly when the time reaches the ending, the program highlights the positive characteristics of the daughters-in-law, including the ones that the mothers-in-law expected but failed to see from their daughters-in-law in the earlier narrative events. The ones that the migrant women refused to perform during the "Conflict" are demonstrated and depicted positively through narration, for instance, when they were cooking Korean food, or serving an exceptionally big meal and organizing a surprise party for their mothers-in-law. The moments of visiting a nearby park, or going sightseeing with their mothers-in-law also serve as metaphors of good daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law. Highlighting opposing qualities performed by daughters-in-law signifies that they are willing to fix and change their behaviors and practice virtues for their mother-in-law.

V. Implications

Focusing on the program's narration,[3] the ways in which the discursive

3. With few exceptions in some episodes, the narrator is a famous voice actress. She was a guest speaker from 2012 to 2014 in the TV talk show *Welkeom tu Si'weold* (웰컴 투 시월드, *Welcome to In-law's World*) and has obtained a 'cool' image as a mother-in-law.

practices perform in constructing the stories, and shaping the identities and social relations within multicultural families, the narration provides additional information, describes the situation, and it sometimes gives comments and advice. The narrator's role in this program is especially significant in delivering stories and setting the overall mood. Within the notion of discursive psychology, it uses the three concepts in the analysis: *interpretative repertoires*, *subject positions*, and *ideological dilemmas*.

1. Interpretative Repertoires

Discursive psychologists understand discourse as more flexible and dynamic resources that are actively constructed through texts and talk within a situated context. Unlike the common discourse theory, the concept of *interpretative repertoires* comparatively allows us to focus on people's daily utterances and specific cultural and historical contexts (Jørgensen and Phillips 107).

In the first two narrative events, "Introduction" and "Conflict," the narration pays attention to the daughters-in-law's inappropriate behaviors. For instance, it problematizes migrants' communicative behaviors such as talking back or discursively disputing with their parents-in-law. The descriptors that represent the migrant participants' characteristics are exceptionally perceived as inappropriate and undesirable to the elders (see Table 2). Hence, the conflicting characteristics of migrants are depicted as something that has to be fixed, and it portrays the mothers-in-law as responsible for the migrants' education.

As Benjamin Bailey explains, "When Koreans say the word 'education'—*Gyoyuk* in Korean—implies not only academic school learning, but—just as importantly—one's training in the proper forms of social and personal conduct" (93). He further explains the cultural interpretation of communicative behaviors in which Koreans perceive a person who controls emotions and expresses less feeling as highly educated. Reversely, when a person fails to control emotions and displays aggressive communicative behaviors, particularly toward elders, one is perceived as immature or less educated and in need of refinement. In the program, overall representations of marriage migrant women battling with an elder of the family are portrayed as immature and uncultured, which allow the narration to talk about education as in the following:

There once was a long-term substitution of the narrator, but she has taken the role again after having viewers' requests through the program's website for her return.

Extracts[4]

(1) In Korea (.) when parents are eating (.) youngsters serve them. (…) [The daughter-in-law's behavior when she does not do her job] makes her upset but Jeong-*yeosa* just endures her anger. Look how she thinks about her daughter-in-law. (…) At least, [you'd better] teach [your daughter-in-law] the basics (episode 15).

(2) When something seems to be unclear (.) she needs to ask to her mother-in-law but since she does not ask (.) the mother-in-law is getting frustrated (…) it has already been five years since she married but I don't understand why she [daughter-in-law] can't still do this (episode 27).

As these extracts reflect, the narration regards Korean mothers-in-law as people who are responsible for teaching their migrant daughters-in-law. The narration assumes that the lack of communicative and cultural competence can be bridged through education. In these regards, the dominant representations of mothers-in-law participants, such as scolding, nagging, nitpicking, and controlling the migrant daughter-in-law are interpreted as somewhat required and inevitable in order to educate their in-laws.

2. Subject Positions

The concept *subject positions* indicates a discursive practice in which a speaker identifies the interlocutors and their positional status compared to that of the speaker. In Korean society, with its strict social hierarchy, using an honorific form is one of the principal ways of establishing social identities and relations within the discourse. In the program, the narration has been placing parents in the primary position and daughters in lower positions. The narrator places herself in between the two participants. Her mediating positioning is rhetorically practiced throughout the episodes. The narrator uses *yeosa* (여사, Madame) with surnames or full names in honorific forms for mothers-in-

4. All extracts in this paper are transcribed using Gail Jefferson's symbols as simplified by Nigel Edley (*Discourse as Data* 228):
   (.) Short untimed pause
   (…) Material deliberately omitted
   [text] Clarificatory information
   text Word emphasized

law, whereas in addressing daughters-in-law by name she uses a different kind of honorific suffix, *-ssi* (씨), which is a conventional way of referring to a person who has a position equal to or lower than oneself. With regard to age differences, the narrator—who is discursively positioning herself in the higher position than the daughters-in-law—offers comments or critiques on certain daughters-in-law's behaviors.

The narration makes a relatively clear distinction and puts great emphasis on cultural differences between Korean and foreign culture when a migrant participant displays culturally inappropriate behaviors:

> In our country (.) we consider that it [rat] is transferring the virus (.) so we avoid rat. But rat meat is (.) one of the exceptional foods (.) in southern region of Vietnam. Hieng says that (.) the food she missed so much (.) during her pregnancy (.) was rat meat. In Korea (.) there is no place to eat rat meat and (.) people tend to regard a person who eats rat meat as weird. Because of rat meat (.) the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law are having a meal (.) in the same table. Wow (.) just like gnawing a *Korean rib* [*galbi*, 갈비]] (.) [Hieng] is eating the rat meat.[5]

The extract above shows various linguistic devices, including intonations, pauses, and emphases used in the depiction of the incident. These devices create dramatic effects to capitalize the cultural differences. Through such a process, one positions the migrant's culture as exotic. Generally, when documenting exotic culture or foreignness on Korean television, program producers often place themselves in a position and reflect their ethnocentric notions, which result in reproducing stereotypes and preconceptions about the target culture (Y. H. Kim, "Cheheomeul" 230). Similarly, the voice-over narration in the episode such as "Wow, just like gnawing a Korean rib" with surprise and exaggerated tone of voice reveals the program's ethnocentric perspective. The narration obviously reflects a certain distance and differentiates the subject from Korean culture with words and phrases such as "[i]n Korea" or "[i]n our country," and "we."

The narration represents the program's perspectives but also that of the anonymous Korean viewers. The number of comments by viewers on this

5. In episode 15, transcription symbols (Edley 228) are added to indicate the narrator's intonation and emphasis.

episode is exceptionally high. This episode not only consists of exotic cultural aspects of the migrant's country, but it also portrays her refusing to eat with her Korean in-law, insisting on not assisting her in-law in keeping the household, and spending an excessive amount of money and resources for the house. These representations of the woman interpreted her as immature, which is explicitly and constantly stated by both the narrator and mother as "because she is not mature enough." On the website, most of the critiques are about the migrant daughter-in-law's misbehavior towards her mother-in-law. Several opinions also note the mother-in-law's failure to educate her daughter-in-law. The narration reflects its own position through language and the ways in which it interprets the fear of uncertainties based on cultural frameworks.

3. Ideological Dilemmas

Instead of understanding ideology as stable and consistent, *ideological dilemmas* treat language use as a principal social practice that results from individual choice among different ideologies. From this point of view, ideology is culturally constructed and possibly subjected to various competing interpretations. The options are contradictory, but choice occurs through social interactions within particular contexts. In this sense, *ideological dilemmas* focusing on what contrasting common senses, or beliefs, values, and practices, are reflected in the discourse.

An episode with a migrant participant who received much praise by viewers on the program's website board epitomizes the good qualities as a daughter-in-law. This arguably reveals the program's perception of an ideal marriage migrant woman. The narration illustrates the way the woman spends quality time with her parents-in-law every weekend with her family, which is discursively depicted as "considerate," the way she cares about her mother-in-law's health and living condition, and the way she has reasonable methods of keeping the household. Although she displays 'talking back' to her mother-in-law—which is typically problematized—this is not regarded as a problem in this episode, but rather perceived as something required for the mother-in-law's well-being. Such positive perception is reflected in the narration with metaphors such as her speaking manner with a word *norae* (노래, singing). It states that "[s]he [marriage migrant woman] is always *singing* to her [mother-in-law] but she [mother-in-law] doesn't listen." Similarly, desirable relational duties of marriage migrant women proposed in the stories are profoundly

related to the virtues of *hyo* (효, filial piety). The behavior that is discursively interpreted as "considerate" of the marriage migrant woman—spending time with parents regularly, showing concern for her parent's living conditions, and more—are the virtues of filial piety, particularly, related to *bongyang* (봉양, supporting parents' sustenance) or *anlak* (안락, physical comfort) (K. W. Kim 214).

Interestingly, *hyo* is positioned in the mindset within this quasi mother-daughter relationship, and *hyo* practices, evaluates, and resolves the intercultural relationship of *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*. Although the participants are not child-parent but 'in-law' relations, the narration often equalizes their relationship to mother-daughter relations or as something that they need to achieve. Historically, Korean *hyo* first started as the relations of father and son but was extended to the daughter (Kim and Choi 78). Even though some of the aspects of filial piety are universal, the ways that *hyo* performs and influences the relations of Korean parents with their children is relatively significant (K. W. Kim 220).

In the "Resolution," the last narrative event in each episode, participants perform several repetitive metaphors of filial piety. For instance, spending quality time with the parent-in-law—by visiting an amusement park or by going sightseeing—plays out as metaphors for practicing filial piety. Koreans tend to regard it as a good virtue in which a child can serve the parent, and they refer to it as *hyodo gwangwang* (효도 관광, filial tour). Cooking Korean food, serving a big meal, and taking care of the comfort of the parents-in-law in the "Resolution" also function as visualizing good virtues with regard to the norms of filial piety. These practices for parents' physical and emotional comfort—the ones that had hardly been witnessed in the first part of the episodes—are portrayed in large numbers, particularly in the last part, as a reference to being an ideal migrant daughter-in-law.

It is apparent that filial piety is deeply rooted in the program and consistently influences the interpretation of the participants in certain behavior and conflict issues. However, it shows that *hyo* ideology often struggles with what Edley states as "lived ideology" (203) and confronts the norms of traditional Confucian customs as inefficient and outdated. For instance, Confucian values such as putting inequality between men and women or valuing grandsons over granddaughters are denounced by the narrator.

The program has another ideological dilemma in dealing with the issues of multicultural families and in fulfilling the ideological expectations

of multiculturalism. The program's title and its theme of *damunhwa* or "multicultural" often confuse viewers who expect to find the message of multiculturalism and provoke criticisms from scholars (Jang; Jung and Choi). A relatively newly aired program on the same channel is titled, *Global Gajok Jeongchak'gi: Hanguk'e Sanda* (글로벌가족 정착기: 한국에 산다, *The Records of Global Families' Settlements: Living in Korea*), instead of following EBS's conventional way of using "multicultural" in the title. This television documentary comparatively documents the lives of various migrants in Korea—the main characters in the first five episodes were male migrants focusing on their work and family life—through the voice of a male narrator. By contrast, *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*, focusing on a conflict between a Korean mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law, reveals the ideological dilemmas between *hyo* ideology versus post-Confucianism. In addition, the program has to deal with criticisms by people who expect to find the spirit of multiculturalism in the program.

Ⅵ. Conclusion

The messages embedded within the stories need to be analyzed since these are unrecognizable and implicit, but also powerful in ways that can shape the viewer's perceptions. As a documentary program on Korea's public educational channel, *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon* has presented important cultural contents about multicultural families in Korea.

It has featured more than 150 Korean and migrant women of multicultural families who are having conflicts with their mothers-in-law. The program's purpose is to give conflicting in-laws time to solve problems by visiting the daughter-in-law's homeland. Such a "journey" serves for them to have a better understanding of each other's cultural differences. However, the cultures of Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Philippines—the dominant participant groups in terms of migrants' nationalities—are the main cultures that are repeatedly focused upon throughout the program. Documenting the cultural variety is not the focus of the program; rather, it is to demonstrate much about the intrinsic cultural aspects of being a Korean for the certain group of marriage migrant women.

The aim of this paper's analysis is to critically examine a discursive practice, specifically, how the program understands and creates the multicultural

families and how it creates meaning through communication. As a result, the interpretation that this program constructs and the ways in which it produces discourses are deeply dominated by the cultural conventions and ideology. Throughout the episodes, the *hyo* ideology has been undertaking a key role in making the stories sensible with regard to the participants' conflict and its solution. As a result, this program claims to support multicultural families; however, it ultimately invests in the change and assimilation of a migrant marriage woman into a desirable "Korean" member of society according to the traditional *hyo* ideology.

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Abstract

During the first decade of the 21st century, the increase of interethnic marriages between Korean men and Southeast Asian women was a sensational phenomenon in Korea, where there was a strong sentiment of ethnic nationalism. Instantly, these so-called "multicultural families"—*damunhwa gajok* in Korean—have represented the multiculturalism of Korea, and they received nationwide attention. Recently, the pre-existing images of marriage migrant women have changed into more complex images on television. The documentary series on Korea's Education Broadcasting System (EBS), titled *Damunhwa Gobuyeoljeon*, illustrate those shifting images. The paper critically examines this television documentary series following the principal concepts of discursive psychology. As a result, the program's demographic features show that the program has reinforced the representation of multicultural families in terms of gender, class, and ethnicity. Shifting representations of marriage migrant women in each episode reflect the ways in which the show creates, negotiates, and represents an idealistic standard of the foreign daughter-in-law. The paper argues that *hyo* (filial piety) ideology has predominantly influenced the ways that the program interprets participants' characteristics and behaviors throughout the episodes.

Keywords: documentary, multicultural, marriage migrant women, filial piety, ideology, discourse

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