

일반

Place-making of Vietnamese Married Immigrant Women in South Korea

The Case of Vietnamese Language Classes for Multicultural Children*

한국 내 베트남 결혼이주여성의 장소 만들기:
아이들을 위한 베트남어 교실을 사례로

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This article explores the place-making of Vietnamese married immigrant women in South Korea through Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children. Utilizing mixed qualitative research methods, including participant observation and narrative interviews, the study presents several findings. The paper first contends that Vietnamese language classes constitute one kind of place-making for Vietnamese married immigrant women and explores the meaning of place-making among these women. Accordingly, these women face certain barriers in performing place-making, as their gender roles as foreign wives and mothers are deeply embedded in the discourse of the host society. Thus, it leads to the desire to engage in place-making in a form as simple as speaking their language, along with their engagement with Vietnamese language classes for their children. This study contributes to the feminist discussion as well as place-making discussion by combining gender, race, and ethnicity in the consideration.

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1. Introduction

The study explores the politics of place-making among married immigrant women. Place-making has an extraordinary meaning for immigrants, as an important way to retain their identity or to share their homesickness in the destination country (Gill, 2010). Through the case of Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children, this article investigates the making of ethnic places of Vietnamese married immigrant women in South Korea (hereafter, Korea). By bringing a gender lens into ethnic place-making discussions, this study contributes to enhancing our understanding of feminist research as well as migrant studies.

Since the mid-2000s, the number of Vietnamese women getting married to Korean men started to grow significantly. The number increased from only 95 in 2000 to 10,175 in 2006, and since then, there have been always thousands of new marriages every year (Statistics Korea, 2020). Notably, when the number of Vietnamese women first accounted for the largest percentage among married immigrant women in Korea in 2015, their share was only less than 1% higher than the percentage of Chinese married immigrant women (including Joseonjok).¹⁾ However, in 2019, Vietnamese women accounted for 37.9% of married immigrant women in Korea, which was well above the percentage of

Chinese foreign wives, at only 20.6% (Statistics Korea, 2020).

As the topic of Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea has been receiving greater attention from both academia and the public over the last decades, researchers from a wide range of disciplines have focused on structural migration forces, the great contributions of these women to their natal families and communities, and their linguistic and cultural difficulties while settling into Korean society (Hoang, 2013; Kim and Shin, 2018; Kim and Kim, 2021; Lindquist et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2016; Yang, 2011; Yi, 2021). However, it seems like these academic approaches rarely see these women as Vietnamese nationals living abroad; instead, the focus has been on their position as foreign wives and mothers in Korea. Thus, this paper unfolds a new perspective to revisit the position of Vietnamese married immigrant women in practicing their ethnic place-making through the case of Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children.

Since 2017, the Association of Vietnamese Community in Korea has operated Vietnamese language classes for the increasing number of Vietnamese-Korean children, as well as the children of Vietnamese immigrant parents in Korea. The classes opened every Sunday afternoon in order to help the second generation learn the Vietnamese language and culture. The classes opened in several locations in Seoul and nearby areas. At each location, there were two classes: one for students from 6 to 10 years old and the other for students aged 11 to 14

1) According to Statistics Korea, Chinese married immigrant women (including Korean-Chinese or Joseonjok) had always accounted for the largest percentage of foreign wives in Korea until 2014 (except 2011).

years. This research focused on married immigrant mothers of children belonging to the first group, since most of them took their children to class each time (in some other cases, the students were taken to the class by their fathers or grandfathers). While waiting for the children taking Vietnamese classes, mothers usually got together and exercised other activities such as learning the Korean language.

The author, who has long engaged with the Vietnamese language class project, has acquainted herself with the interviewee pool. Ten interviewees were recruited based on the author's social resources and internal relations with the project. For privacy reasons, the author used pseudonyms for all participants in the study. All interviewees were under the age of 40 and had been living in Korea for 10 to 16 years. The oldest interviewee has been in Korea since 2006, while the most recently arrived interviewee came in 2012. Among the interviewees, two were housewives. The rest work at a company or factory in Seoul. Among them, two work at the same factory, so they knew each other prior to sending their children to the same Vietnamese language class. One interviewee is divorced and currently lives with her daughter. All of our interviewees had naturalized as Koreans and some maintained dual citizenship status. Further details regarding the interviewees can be found in Appendix 1. All the interviews were conducted in Vietnamese; the interviewees therefore encountered no difficulty in telling their stories. The interview questions asked included how they balance their job and family, how often they meet their Vietnamese friends and relatives in Korea, and why they take their children to the Vietnamese class every Sunday afternoon, despite it being the only day off in the week for some of them.

Through participant observation and narrative interviews with Vietnamese married immigrant women, the article aims to explore the desire and practice regarding place-making of these women who are deeply immersed in the host society. The research asks the following questions: 1) What does place-making mean for married immigrant women? 2) How do married immigrant women exercise their own place-making?

Immigrants living in a foreign country seem to have the desire to assuage their homesickness by creating a place, which also helps to retain their national identity within the host society (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). This can be accomplished by speaking their mother tongue, participating in community events, or gathering for religious activities. Vietnamese married immigrant women are not the exception. However, it seems like they have less time and leisure to commit to community activities or strengthen their identities as Vietnamese. Instead, they are expected to perform their best to learn the Korean language, acculturate, and integrate into the host society (Ahn, 2013; Kim and Shin, 2018; Lee et al., 2015).

In making the above arguments, the rest of the article is organized as follows. The literature review suggests the concept of place-making and critically reviews previous studies on place-making across immigrant communities. Next, the first finding will explore the meaning of place-making for Vietnamese married immigrant women as well as certain barriers of these women in performing place-making due to their gender roles as foreign wives and mothers in Korea. The second finding explores special characteristics of place-making among married immigrant women which witness the participation of the second gene-

ration and the indirect intervention of the government. The conclusion will detail the contribution of this article on enhancing place-making discussions by adding a gender lens into the consideration.

2. The politics of place-making in migration scholarship

Places can be in a physical form, but the term *place* can also refer to a feeling about the place. Massey (2004) refers places to moments by which social interrelations on all scales are constituted, invented, coordinated, and produced. To emphasize the interrelations involved in building places, this study employs Gupta and James's (1992) definition of "place-making", which refers to the formation of feeling based on space, time, and memory constituted on a particular place. According to this definition, the space where people get together contains an important meaning for them due to it housing many memories collected over time.

Place-making especially has an extraordinary meaning among immigrants, as an important way for immigrants to retain their national identity in the destination country (Finney and Jivrai, 2013; Gill, 2010). Furthermore, it is not only about the identity of each individual but also as members of groups (Brown and Perkins, 1992). This community identity, which is formed by personal experiences and the public image of native culture, is essential for social integration and environmental experiences (Hummon, 1992). Thus, immigrants of the same origin tend to get together.

Many immigrant groups, especially disadvantaged immigrant groups,

have a strong need to create their own places in order to face discrimination and create their own opportunities. Pemberton and Phillimore (2018) show how immigrant place-making are places where immigrants with “visible” differences can feel blended in. Ethnic places are also fertile lands to find networks and job opportunities, especially for newcomers, due to their limitation in language or employment opportunities (Coe et al., 2020). For example, the Yeonbeon village in Garibong-dong, Seoul, where Joseonjok²⁾ account for half of the Garibong-dong population, provides immigrants with opportunities to search for jobs right on the street or cheap accommodations (Cho, 2018). In this case, Cho (2018) argues that ethnic groups construct “everyday life networks” in their neighborhood in the host society to strengthen their identity and lifestyle. Rather than assimilation, separation and coexistence are more dominant since immigrants may fear losing their identity and autonomy (Cho, 2018).

Besides studies on the role of immigrant place-making, previous studies have long focused on the formation of these special structures which highlighted the role of community leaders and immigrants (Faist, 1995; Gieryn, 2000). Answering the question of who contributes to place-making, Juan (2005) describes place-makers as the people, industries, and social formations. In particular, they are local governments, planners, developers, architects, realtors, bankers, local media, and community leaders. Gill’s (2010) research further refers the factors of

2) Joseonjok refers to the population of ethnic Koreans in China. Their ancestors left for China during the 1850s and 1950s due to the Japanese colonization and famine (Shin, 2017).

successful place-making to a history of cosmopolitanism, an economy in need of migrants, an elderly population, and a political system.

In particular, there are two main groups of actors that participate in creating place. The first group is considered as the *upstream* group which involves policies on immigrants (Gieryn, 2000). It refers to the arrangements in economy and politics between urban elites, such as public officials, realtors, and bankers (Gieryn, 2000). Instead of having a direct influence on immigrant place-making, the government tends to affect international migration on the macro scale. Second, the *downstream* group consists of the cultural context of the host society, social resources, and immigrants themselves. The local conditions determine whether the new immigrant community and its identities are accepted. Social resources, including non-governmental organizations and immigrant activists, strongly affect the communities through their activities that embrace immigrants, especially those who lack experience (Hsia, 2009; Moon, 2012). Last, immigrant actors, which include community leaders and members, play the most important role in directing the formation of ethnic places (Faist, 1995; Gieryn, 2000).

The combination of these two groups performs place-making and creates the unique characteristic of each immigrant place. For example, in the case of Vietnamese-American place-making in Orange County and Boston, despite similar efforts by leaders in both places, place-making has ended up being in different styles (Juan, 2005). In the case of Orange County, the Vietnamese community has successfully established Little Saigon — a distinct and identifiable place of Vietnamese Americans. Meanwhile, Boston's Fields Corner only contains a little Vietnamese village which is even dispersed throughout

different non-adjacent neighborhoods. Even though each place constitutes its own uniqueness, Juan (2005) asserts that they produce the same distinctive group identity, which is considered as “to stay Vietnamese”. However, this distinctive group identity could be questioned in the case of female marriage immigrants.

Female immigrants are not a minority in international migration; especially previous studies have long mentioned the gender imbalance in which mostly women underwent marriage migration (Yang and Lu, 2010). For example, in the case of international marriage between Vietnamese women and Korean men, Vietnamese women have been always accounted for more than 90% of the total number of marriages every year. However, in the past, migration theories only considered female immigrants as dependents of men (Purkis, 2018). Only until recently, gender was mentioned in several areas, such as the feminization of the workforce, migratory movements, and poverty (Purkis, 2018).

During the last two decades, Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea have become a popular topic in both academia and the public (Hoang, 2013; Kim and Kim, 2020; Kim and Shin, 2018; Lindquist et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2016; Yang, 2011; Yi, 2021). Whereas a number of studies have focused on various aspects in the lives of married immigrant women in both the sending and receiving societies, there has not been enough attention paid to the individual spatial mobility and place-making based on their perceptions of the surroundings (Kim and Shin, 2018). Notwithstanding, the scale of space for many female married immigrants has been considered desolate, due to not only their own limitations in the Korean language but also their otherness, which was viewed under the eyes of the members of the host society (Jung, 2012). Furthermore,

scholars have found that the Korean government has guided married immigrant women to focus on their roles as wives and mothers and to assimilate into Korean society (Ahn, 2013; Baek and Koh, 2018; Kim, 2013; Kim and Kim, 2020; Kim and Shin, 2018; Lee et al., 2015).

Notwithstanding, recent studies have paid attention to exploring place-making among married immigrant women, but the focus has been on places that reflected their positions as foreign mothers and wives in the host society. In particular, their places are “home”, where they interact with Korean husbands and in-laws (Jung, 2012; Kim, 2010; Moon, 2021), or multicultural support centers/communities, where they participate in the Korean language and cultural education or struggle consultancy (Kim, 2010; Koh, 2019). In addition, Kim and Shin (2018) study place-making in the work-places of Vietnamese married immigrant women working at non-governmental organizations in Seoul. Nonetheless, it seems that the making of ethnic places among these women, which considers their background as being Vietnamese, has rarely been mentioned. Meanwhile, race and ethnicity (nationality) have long been considered in the discussions of immigrant place-making (Moon, 2021). Thus, through the specific case study of Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children, this paper aims to explore the ethnic place-making of Vietnamese married immigrant women. The following sections will articulate the dynamics and processes of place-making among Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea through Vietnamese language classes for their children.

3. Place-making for married immigrant women: To speak the language

Immigrants always have a desire to create places of belonging in the host society. It is the same for Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea. However, they meet certain barriers in performing ethnic place-making due to their gender roles as wives and mothers as well as their economic responsibilities to both the natal and marital families. Thus, their desire in place-making performs in a form as simple as speaking their own language. This is shown through their enthusiasm in sending their children to Vietnamese language classes.

This paper recognizes that “*speaking the Vietnamese language*” has a special meaning among married immigrant women. Although many of them have naturalized as Korean nationals, they still have the desire to stay Vietnamese just by speaking their mother tongue. As a wife to a Korean husband and a mother to children who were born and raised in Korea, each of these women felt pressured to speak Korean all the time: at home, at work, and with their own children.

I do not teach Vietnamese to my children at home; instead, I speak to them in Korean all the time. It is for their future because they go to school, study, and hang out with friends—all situations where they need to speak Korean. I want them to be fluent in the Korean language first. _ **Vu Ho**

Vu Ho’s response to the author’s question about why she does not teach her son Vietnamese at home can be viewed as a voluntary act to develop her children’s Korean language proficiency. In addition, many

women also communicate in this language at their work-places, besides speaking Korean at home with their children, husband, and in-laws. Thus, they are expected to perform the Korean language all the time and raise their children in a language other than their mother tongue. Notably, these pressures in the Korean language and cultural performance of foreign spouses have long been referred to the strong inclination of the Korean government toward assimilation and social integration of marriage immigrants in Korea (Ahn, 2013). Thus, this leads to the desire to speak Vietnamese among these women, which they can do in the waiting room of the Vietnamese class with other Vietnamese mothers.

However, it is not only these women who are faced with the choice of which language to speak. One interviewee shared “*my in-laws do not like when I speak Vietnamese to the kid*”; this revealed another barrier that came from the local cultural context. Logan’s (2002) assertion that “*the neighborhood has long been considered a key facet of migrant life*” is significant in this case of married immigrant women since they have a closeness to the “*neighborhood*” that surpasses everyone else’s — their own family and in-laws. The local cultural context is important in recognizing the culture of immigrants. In this study, this impact is pivotal as some women could not even speak Vietnamese with their own children. Their freedom of language choice was limited by their own family. One interviewee shared that she had convinced her in-laws to bring their child to the class every weekend. Other women did not have that luck: one interviewee shared that her husband disagreed with the idea of teaching the children Vietnamese. Nguyen Na explained the reason her daughter could not attend the class for two weeks as follows:

I really want to bring my children to the class; my daughter is excited to learn Vietnamese with friends as well. …… But I can only bring her to the class when my husband is not at home. _ **Nguyen Na**

It is not uncommon for many married immigrant women to have to seek permission from their families, not only because of the traditional Confucian culture but also because many of them lack financial resources. They, therefore, need financial support from their husbands or other in-laws, not only to shop for themselves and families in Korea, but also to send money back to Vietnam. For example, one interviewee mentioned having to ask her mother-in-law for money to pay the tuition fees of the children. Furthermore, the government's focus on the importance of Korean language and cultural education in the lives of foreign wives and multicultural families could also be a reason, as Kim (2012) referred it to the reproduction of the cultural hierarchy between Koreans and non-Koreans. Many married immigrant women, then, translate and interpret the differences in their social relations to the decision of becoming "*devoted housewives*" which they consider as a strategy for better lives in Korean society, including their own homes (Koh, 2019).

Despite the above-mentioned difficulties, married immigrant mothers who participated in this study tried their best to engage with the class. Their contributions are as follows: they shared class expenses, persuaded their families to let their children attend, and continuously brought the children to class every Sunday afternoon, even though it was the only day off in the week for some of them. They hoped that by bringing their children to class, they could one day express themselves and talk

to their children in their mother tongue, Vietnamese.

Sometimes I felt miserable because even though I am Vietnamese, my son cannot speak the language. When he visited our family in Vietnam, he could not communicate with his grandparents. I do not need him to speak Vietnamese perfectly, but if he could talk to me in Vietnamese on a basic level, it would be the best. _ **Le Na**

As these women patiently bring their children to class week after week, their active engagement yields results both in the form of helping children study the language and creating an environment where they themselves can share the language with other mothers. As wives, mothers, and in some cases, employees at Korean companies, married immigrant women are pressured to learn the Korean language and culture in order to integrate into Korean society according to the wishes of their family in-laws and the plans of the Korean government. For married immigrant women, speaking Vietnamese with their peers and seeing their children educated about the Vietnamese language and culture constitute one of the ways they assuage their homesickness. The Vietnamese class provides this, even though they could only meet once a week. During an hour of the Vietnamese class, the waiting area became a place where married immigrant mothers shared difficulties and opportunities. In particular, it was a place where they could speak Vietnamese to each other.

Notwithstanding that speaking the mother tongue is the common desire and practice of any immigrant, we need to avoid taking it for granted since in this case, married immigrant women could not freely

speak their language with their own children. The choice of language could belong to these women, but at the same time, this study shows several barriers from the host society that affect their choices. Thus, the study argues that the Vietnamese language classes are the places for these women to practice their mother tongue with other peers and with their children. At the same time, these places contain the hope of married immigrant women about the future of speaking their language with their children. The article, therefore, considers Vietnamese language classes as a form of place-making for married immigrant women. The case of Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children further witnesses the enthusiasm of married immigrant women in creating a common place of belonging in Korea. This active role of immigrants in making ethnic places has long been mentioned in the literature (Faist, 1995; Gieryn, 2000). However, the place-making of married immigrant women is further different in terms of actors participating in the process as well as the forms of these places. The next chapter will discuss these special characteristics of place-making among married immigrant women.

4. The diverse practices of place-making among Vietnamese married immigrant women

Previous studies on place-making among immigrant groups have examined the two groups of actors that participated in this process. These groups are governmental and non-governmental. However, in the case of Vietnamese language classes organized by the Vietnamese

Community Association in Korea, the role of the government is rarely seen. Instead, the roles of community leaders and social resources are well recognized. The idea for Vietnamese language classes for the second generation comes from the leader of the community. The leader and the members of the community then actualize the idea by drafting the project, looking for financial sponsors from non-governmental organizations, and recruiting teachers as well as students. Regarding the role of social resources, it is first shown in textbooks used in the class that were provided by a non-profit organization. Furthermore, classrooms were provided by other non-governmental organizations, of which some had previous experience working with immigrant groups from other backgrounds.

Most of our interviewees joined the labour market at a company or a factory where many other Vietnamese married immigrant women also work. For example, working at garment factories is a popular occupation among married immigrant women because the job is considered to be female-friendly and easy to learn. This could also be their initial ethnic place-making space given that it is where they meet other Vietnamese women, are introduced to other friends, and are inducted into groups and community events. As previously mentioned, two of the interviewees worked at the same factory in Seoul at the time of the study. This was also how one introduced the other to the Vietnamese class for their children. Since most of our interviewees have jobs, they are accumulating their own savings and have become more financially independent. However, for married immigrant women, this kind of financial and decision-making independence often happens after the first several years in Korea.

During their first several years in Korea, as married immigrant women spend the majority of their time learning Korean and completing their female vocation of giving birth, they are likely to be financially dependent on their husbands. However, this does not mean that married immigrant women isolate themselves from their community in the host society and only interact with their husbands and in-laws. In the early years of their marriages, even though many married immigrant women are somewhat limited in terms of networking in the host society, they have their networks with Vietnamese relatives and friends in Korea.

Pham Ly shared that she was introduced to her Korean husband through her sister, who is also a married immigrant woman in Korea. Since her sister is in the same neighborhood as her family, they meet quite often. She usually got help from her sister during the early years of her marriage. Pham Ly has two children, but since the children are quite young, she is a full-time mother. She spends most of her time taking care of her family; in terms of hanging out with Vietnamese friends, she mostly socializes with her sister and with the other mothers every time she brings her daughter to the Vietnamese class. Many other cases resemble that of Nguyen Dung, whose sister also came to Korea to work. However, because her sister lives quite far, she says they mainly maintain contact online.

In addition, in the very first few years of marriage, many immigrant women meet Vietnamese friends from their local multicultural centers. The network of Multicultural Family Support Centers (MFSCs) provides Korean language and cultural classes for foreign brides, and sometimes, classes on the language of the mothers for multicultural children.

During the first several years of marriage, many married immigrant women attend these centers and create their networks with other Vietnamese women here. One interviewee shared about her networks created in these MFSCs as follows:

When I go to multicultural family support centers, there are women like me; they look at me as someone with experiences and as one of their seniors. They ask for my advice and we share about our lives in Korea with each other. _ **Nguyen May**

As time passes by, Vietnamese immigrant women might start to work and form their own networks outside of their homes and neighborhoods. However, their engagement with MFSCs and their place-making through these centers remain as they register their children here for education purposes. For example, recently, as the Korean government began to encourage the other culture in multicultural families, many women send their children to these centers where organize Vietnamese language classes for the second generation. Through the participation of the children in multicultural centers, they continue their networks with their old peers and continue to perform place-making.

Furthermore, the participation of the second generation in place-making of married immigrant women could be seen in the cases where these women bring their children to community events. For example, the Vietnamese community in Korea has celebrated Vietnam Independence Day annually at the Gwanghwamun Plaza in Seoul, and this has been an opportunity for many married immigrant women to introduce the Vietnamese culture to their children and in-laws. Some further

participate in activities such as parades and traditional performances. This physical event is also a place where married immigrant women can meet their peers, speak their native language, eat traditional foods, and create or expand their ethnic networks.

In addition to the above-mentioned characteristics of place-making of Vietnamese married immigrant women, this paper also considers social media as a place for these women to share their thoughts in Vietnamese and keep in touch with their relatives and friends, especially during their early years in Korea. As more than two-thirds of the married immigrant mothers in this study learned about the class through Facebook, social media proves its important role in connecting the lives of married immigrant women in Korea. In the early stage of recruiting students for Vietnamese language classes, the project was advertised via social media, specifically Facebook. An introduction to the project was posted on the Facebook page of the community association, which has more than 200,000 followers. It quickly received attention from the community, especially from Vietnamese mothers in Korea. Most of the interviewees in this study as well as mothers who send their children to Vietnamese language classes of this project were notified through Facebook and registered through this channel.

Furthermore, Facebook contains a number of groups for Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea, with tens of thousands of members each. Married immigrant women use these online groups to share their stories and thoughts about social issues or to get advice from others. In some other cases, they use this platform to promote their small businesses in Korea, such as homemade Vietnamese food, Vietnamese goods, Vietnamese vegetables, etc.

This section emphasized the various forms of getting together among married immigrant women, of which many related to the participation of the second generation. Being limited in exercising ethnic place-making, many married immigrant women choose online platforms or Vietnamese friends within their neighborhoods to share their thoughts and experiences of living in Korea. Once in a while, they also bring their children, husbands, and families-in-law to in-person community events to introduce their culture. These connections further lead to their engagement in the Vietnamese language classes with the participation of their children. As these mothers continue to send their children to classes through the years despite certain barriers, these classes have constituted one kind of ethnic place-making as it contains a special meaning for these women—a promising future of speaking the Vietnamese language with their children, of “staying Vietnamese.”

5. Conclusion

This research explores the place-making of Vietnamese married immigrant women in Korea through Vietnamese language classes for multicultural children. First, the paper reveals that married immigrant women have fewer chances to sustain their identities as Vietnamese, for example by speaking their mother tongue, due to their gender roles as foreign wives and mothers in Korea. While the act of speaking the mother tongue has been found as common among immigrants, this study found that this argument is different in the case of married immigrant women. Thus, their desire in place-making is actualized

through their enthusiasm in sending their children to Vietnamese language classes. In these classes, while waiting for the children, they could gather with other Vietnamese mothers, talk, and share about their lives in Korea in their own language. Nonetheless, Vietnamese language classes as place-making for Vietnamese married immigrant women refer to not only the meaning as a place of getting together and speaking the language but also the accumulation of their hopes for the future of speaking their natal tongue, of exercising the homeland cultures with their own children.

Second, the paper illustrates actors participating in the making of ethnic places of married immigrant women which highlights the significant roles of community leaders, immigrants, social resources, and the local context. Despite certain restraints from the surroundings, the constant efforts of married immigrant women, together with the active role of community leaders and other social resources, have successfully formed a sense of place that helps them to “stay Vietnamese.” At the same time, the article recognizes other forms of place-making among married immigrant women that regard social media and offline community events. Notably, all of these forms of place-making among married immigrant women witness the participation of the second generation. On the other hand, in this case of the Vietnamese language classes, the role of the Korean government is rarely seen in cooperation with the immigrant community in creating ethnic places. Instead, the government indirectly intervenes in the place-making of married immigrant women through the network of MFSCs. As the Korean government emphasizes the Korean language and cultural education for foreign brides by the establishment of the MFSCs

throughout the country, these centers became places where Vietnamese immigrant women from the same area interact with each other. These networks are found to be important as supporting and guiding these women in their post-migration lives, especially throughout their early years in Korea. Many married immigrant women continue to exercise these networks through the participation of their children, such as attending Vietnamese classes at MFSCs. Thus, the article argues that the government does create zones wherein married immigrant women form networks with other peers from their areas. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to keep in mind that it is not the initial intention of the government to create ethnic place-making or networking through the MFSCs network.

Ethnic place-making has long been studied in migration scholarship. However, it has been usually referred to as the place that represented the whole group and without the consideration of the intra-group diversity (Moon, 2021). This paper is especially indicative of the significance of place-making among married immigrant women that values the simple practice of speaking the native language as well as the participation of the second generation. By bridging the gender lens and place-making discussion, the article highlights that gender and the way immigrants perceive their gender roles in the host society could lead to the diversification in the form and practice of ethnic place-making. This analysis on the ethnic place-making of married immigrant women hopes to open further discussions on the internal dynamics that stimulate the divergence in place-making not only among immigrant groups but also within one group. To this end, this article suggests considering the diverse backgrounds of immigrants, such as race, ethnicity, gender, or class to enrich the studies on immigrants in

general as well as on the making of places among immigrants in particular.

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Abstract

**한국 내 베트남 결혼이주여성의 장소 만들기:
아이들을 위한 베트남어 교실을 사례로**

뷔티미향

본 논문은 베트남 결혼이주여성의 자녀들이 다니는 베트남어 교실에서 장소 만들기를 실천하는 현상에 대해 탐구하고 있다. 본 연구는 참여관찰법 및 내러티브 인터뷰법을 포함한 질적 연구 방법을 사용하여 다음과 같은 결과를 제시하고 있다. 본 논문에서 베트남어 수업이 교실이라는 하나의 장소에서 열림으로써 아이들이 배울 수 있는 공간뿐만 아니라, 베트남 결혼이주여성들 사이에서 모일 수 있는 장소로서의 의미도 있다고 주장한다. 또한, 본 논문은 결혼이주여성이 가지는 젠더 모빌리티가 집 근처로 제한된다는 점 때문에 이들이 모일 수 있는 자리를 만드는 데 장벽이 있음을 강조한다. 이러한 이유로 아이들을 위한 베트남어 수업에 같이 참여함과 동시에 간단한 형식으로 장소 만들기에 동참하려는 욕구로 이어진다. 본 연구의 함의는 젠더, 인종, 민족을 복합적으로 고려하여 페미니스트 논의와 이주민 장소조성 논의에 이바지한다는 점에 있다.

주요어: 결혼이주여성, 장소 만들기, 결혼 이주, 베트남, 한국

Appendix 1. Summary table of interviewees' information

Pseudonym	Year of entry	Type of job	Relatives in Korea
1. Pham Ly	2011	Housewife	Sister
2. Nguyen Dung	2006	Company	Friends
3. Vu Ho	2007	Garment Factory	Friends
4. Vu Ha	2010	Company	—
5. Nguyen Na	2011	Housewife	No mention
6. Le Do	2012	Company	Friends
7. Trinh Nhu	2009	Garment Factory	Friends
8. Le Na	2010	Factory	—
9. Dong Ha	2009	Garment Factory	Friends
10. Nguyen May	2008	Company	Relatives

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