

Korean ESL (English as a Second Language) Graduate Students'
Investments, Social Identities, and Imagined Communities

Jennifer Kim

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

University of Washington

2013

Committee:

Manka Varghese

Filiberto Baraja

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Curriculum & Instruction

Abstract

The purpose of this exploratory qualitative study was to examine Korean graduate students' investments in learning and using English in relation to their social identities and how these social identities are being negotiated as they adapt to different social contexts in their lives. In the field of SLA (Second Language Acquisition), prior studies have focused on motivation when studying the characteristics of good language learners. However, language learning and usage are intertwined with sociocultural factors in complex ways and are often influenced by the social identity of individuals. Therefore, drawing upon the theoretical framework of Norton (1995)'s notion of investment and social identity, two case studies of Korean graduate students at a Pacific Northwest university in the United States (US) were studied using questionnaires, write-ups, drawing tasks, and individual interviews. In addition, the concept of imagined communities was also drawn upon because it is considered as part of creating an imagined identity, which could influence the learners' investments in their target language as well as the educational practices that they are engaged in (Norton & Toohey, 2001; Norton, 1995).

Keywords: English as a Second Language (ESL), Korean, graduate student, social identity, investment, imagined community, language learning, language usage

Introduction

Many Koreans of all ages come to North America for various reasons such as to study English, pursue their studies, follow their family members, or for hopes to lead a better life than in their country of origin. According to the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (2012), the state of Washington welcomed 5,243 international ESL (English as a Second Language) students in universities and colleges with Korea as one of the top 3 leading countries of origin of international students (Burke et al, 2012). In addition, the Bank of Korea estimates the total expense incurred by students (both young students and adults) studying abroad in the US, including short-term language training, to be as much as 7.6 billion dollars in 2004, and 9.7 billion dollars in 2005 (Kim, 2006, p.128). Such statistics show how increasing numbers of Koreans are eager to learn and improve their English for both academic and language proficiency purposes. What motivates these Korean ELL (English Language Learners) to study abroad in the US regardless of the high costs and time?

When addressing the issue of what motivates language learners to learn a second language (L2), second language acquisition (SLA) researchers were primarily preoccupied with how motivation was processed in the individual's cognitive mind when learning a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 63). The study of motivation and attitude in learning a L2 for Koreans is not a new area in SLA. Many prior studies have attempted to identify motivation and attitude factors of Korean English learners by using Gardner and Wallace Lambert's (1972) instrumental motivation and integrative motivation constructs¹ (Lim, 2001; Kim & Seo, 2012; Kim, 2010). Although these studies considered socioeconomic and political contexts, most of them are insufficient to explain how English learning can be driven by complex

¹ Instrumental motivation is language learning for more immediate or practical goals and integrative motivation is language learning for personal growth and cultural enrichment (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

relationships between social contexts and identities of individual language learners. While Gardner and Wallace Lambert's concepts of motivation refer to "a unitary, fixed, and a historical language learner", Norton's (1995) notion of investment "conceives of the language learner as having a complex social history and multiple desires" (p. 10). Norton (1995) also states:

"..when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus, an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space (p. 18)."

Within this framework of investment and social identity, imagined communities² should also be considered as part of creating an imagined identity, which could influence the learners' investments in their target language as well as the educational practices that they are engaged in (Norton & Toohey, 2001; Norton, 1995). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate investment in learning and using English of Korean students whose English is a Second Language (ESL) in relation to their social identities and how they are negotiated according to changes in social context and time.

Research Question(s) to Be Addressed

This study will examine the academic, linguistic, and sociocultural experiences of two Korean ESL graduate students through case studies. In addition, their changing social identities and imagined communities will be identified. According to Norton (1995), "the conception of

² According to Kanno and Norton (2003), imagined communities refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible or accessible, with whom we connect through the power of our imaginations (p. 241).

social identity as a site of struggle is an extension of the position that social identity is multiple and contradictory (p.15)". The subject is not conceived of as passive but is conceived of as both subject of and subject to relations of power within a particular site, community, and society (Norton, 1995).

Therefore, the following questions will guide my study:

- 1) What are the students' investments in English learning and use in their everyday lives, and how are they related to their social identities?
- 2) What are their imagined communities and how do they affect their investments and identities?
- 3) What are their multiple social identities and how do they play in power discourse?

My hypothesis is that Korean ESL graduate students studying in the US have various social roles in various communities which require negotiation of social identities, such as being both an international and a graduate student who is advancing his/her education and professional career in an academic, English-speaking environment. This hypothesis was the main guiding force behind my research questions. Submission of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores is generally considered as a requirement for international students to get accepted into graduate programs. However, several questions lay on whether these students' investments in learning and using English are no longer a necessity for them after acceptance. Do they no longer have personal struggles with social identities and acceptance into imagined communities as a Korean ESL adult? Thus, their present and future investments in English in relation to their social identities can be more complex than presumed.

Many prior studies focused on L2 learning motivation in the participant's present state and overgeneralize this motivation as being a sole and fixed characteristic and may simplify the results to represent the whole Korean ELL population. However, like Norton, I find that this

methodology of quantifying data and analyzing correlations between motivation variables and English proficiency test scores variables reduces Korean ESL students to research subjects with fixed intrinsic traits of motivation rather than individuals with dynamic social identities that can change at various time periods. Firth and Wagner (1994) have also criticized this kind of research methodology stating that, “ the imposition of an orthodox social psychological hegemony on SLA has had the effect of reducing social identities to subjects. It gives preeminence to the research practice of coding, quantifying data, and replicating results”(p. 288). Therefore, studying the notion of investment and social identities from the sociocultural aspect is more appropriate to understand Korean ESL students' ongoing investments in learning English as they are involved in various social contexts throughout their lifetimes.

In addition, my goal for this study is not to limit the results to Korean English language learners in higher education, but to understand how investments in English can change in individuals throughout their lifetimes according to their changed social identities. Traditional views of adult motivation and participation are limited because they do not address the complex relationships among adult learners' identities, the social contexts of their daily lives, the classroom context, and investment in learning English (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002). In particular, there is little research done on the investments and social identities of Korean ESL graduate students, despite the fact that a large number of this population exists in higher education. Other than being graduate students, Korean ESL graduate students are also fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, teacher assistants, volunteers, etc. that affect their investments in learning and using English. My thesis also aims to emphasize the value of investigating the variety and commonality of ESL adult experiences within a single ethnolinguistic South Korean group, which is also a rationale influenced by the results of Skilton-Sylvester's (2002) multiple cases studies on Cambodian women participating in an adult ESL program.

In addition, most of the applied linguistics research pertaining to ESL university students

and adults has examined these students' experiences within college/university general ESL, composition, or academic programs. While my study also looks at students' past and current experiences in their university English courses, it goes beyond this formal classroom setting and explores the individual's comprehensive experiences and identity at a holistic level. By exploring the relations between Korean ESL learners' investments, social identities, and imagined community, I attempt to encourage ways to empower learners to have a sense of agency in English which, in turn, will help them access and participate in their imagined community. It is also hoped to inform policy makers and educators of these factors to better serve the diverse needs of Korean English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in both higher education and K-12 education.

Review of Related Literature

Historical and educational background of South Korea

Before reviewing prior studies on Korean ESL students' investments and imagined communities, it is very important to understand the unique educational background of South Korea because the participants in my study have had extensive educational experiences in South Korea before coming to the US.

Traditionally, Korea has been regarded as a homogeneous society in terms of its ethnic composition, language (Korean), and national creed (Confucianism) (Kim, 2010). This Confucianism affected the Korean people's value system and laid the groundwork for the *hakbul* orientation to continuously prevail in current Korean society. *Hakbul* refers to "the conceptual stratification of society based on an individual's university degree" and this orientation influences initial job placement and future success to a certain extent in the Korean society (Kim, 2006, p.166). The value of the *hakbul* orientation was reinforced after the Korean War because the country had rapidly transformed from a Confucian and agricultural nation to a Christian and

industrial one (Kim, 2006). In this rapid transition period, the easiest way to select the most competent workforce the applicant's *hakbul*, and thus, graduates from prestigious Korean universities were actively recruited by large conglomerates referred to as *chaebol*³ (Kim, 2006). *Hakbul* orientation is one major cause of the academic fervor amongst Korean parents who want to send their children to prestigious universities as well as for students who want to gain high-paying jobs and social status after university graduation. According to the Korean Ministry of Education (2000), English is one of the major four subject areas in the College Scholastic Ability Test) CSAT which is required for Grade 12 Korean students to take in order to apply for and enter universities (cited in Kim, 2010). Therefore, English is a crucial academic subject for Korean students in order to achieve a higher status of *hakbul*. Moreover, many prestigious universities have unique application processes for which high proficiency in English is based on international English proficiency test scores, is a crucial evaluation criterion for acceptance.

Globalization discourse is also incorporated into the *hakbul* orientation and English proficiency is a valuable capital in developing national competitiveness in the global market (Kim, 2010). In particular, from the historical view, the English language is valued because of the close political and economic alliance between the United States and South Korea after World War II (Seth, 2002, cited in Kim, 2010).

Instrumental and integrative motivations of South Korean learners of English

Many prior studies on identifying motivation and attitude factors of South Korean learners of English use Gardner and Wallace Lambert's (1972) instrumental motivation and integrative motivation as constructs. Instrumental motivation is language learning for more immediate or practical goals and integrative motivation is language learning for personal growth and cultural enrichment (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). In Lim's (2001) study of South Korean

³ They are large family-controlled groups, such as Samsung and LG, owning numerous international enterprises. The *chaebol* has also played a significant role in South Korean politics.

elementary school students, questionnaires were distributed to find which motivational factors were most prevalent amongst students (Kim and Seo, 2012). The study found out that instrumental motivation, importance of EFL, and communication with other language speakers were the most important motivation factors of Korean elementary school students. In addition, there was a strong positive correlation between learner attitudes and English proficiency level (p.164). Another study was also conducted using several constructs of motivation. Kim (2010) investigated 1,037 high school students in Korea using self-made questionnaires with 55 EFL motivation items and a modified questionnaire based on Gardner's (1985) Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (p. 214). Similar to Lim (2001)'s study, instrumental motivation was high for learning English. However, competitive motivation, identified as a relatively unique construct among Korean students, was also high which is excessive competition among peers (Kim, 2010). This seems to indicate that Korean students believe that they need to surpass their classmates in order to lead a successful academic life, which is also caused by the *hakbul* orientation. However, the study found that this motivation factor had small impact on earning a high score in the English proficiency exam while positive attitudes on learning English was highly correlated with English proficiency exam performance (Kim, 2010). Interestingly, positive attitudes towards Americans did not predict high motivation and English proficiency which was in contrast to a prior study's results (Kim, 2010). Kim (2010) anticipates that this result reflects unique sociopolitical incidents in Korea during the year 2002 when the data was collected. During this year, there was an incident during the Winter Olympic Games, in which a Korean ice-skater was disqualified because of an American skater while in another incident, the deaths of two Korean junior high school students were caused by American soldiers (Kim, 2010). Although these studies on Korean students' motivation in learning English considered South Korea's socioeconomic and political contexts, these studies were insufficient to explain how English learning can be driven by complex relationships of social contexts and identities of

individual language learners. According to Norton (2001), “such conceptions of motivation, which are dominant in the field of SLA do not capture the complex relationship between relations of power, identity, and language learning” (p. 17). Firth and Wagner (1997) have also criticized this kind of research methodology stating that, “the imposition of an orthodox social psychological hegemony on SLA has had the effect of reducing social identities to "subjects"... It gives preeminence to the research practice of coding, quantifying data, and replicating results (p. 288). In addition, motivation in learning English changes in a learner`s lifetime as she enters a different social context from the limited school classroom and develops a new social identity.

Investment in imagined communities of practice and social identity construction

Norton`s notion of investment in imagined communities is developed from Bourdieu (1977b)`s economic metaphors and Wenger (1998)`s community of practice (cited in King, 2008). According to Wenger (1998), “to socially participate is to become a member of a community of practice constructing identities in relationship to these communities” (p.4). Communities of practice relate to the different subject positions we adopt moment-to- moment, daily, and actually throughout our lifetime, depending on who we are with (cited in King, 2008, p. 235). Social identities are developed within these communities of practices and become a “nexus of multimembership” (King, 2008). For ESL adults with various social roles and responsibilities, these social identities in communities of practice can affect their investments in participating in adult ESL programs or studying English. In Skilton-Sylvester (2002)`s multiple cases study of Cambodian women participation in an adult ESL program, the women`s intertwined social roles as wives, workers, mothers, sisters, and daughters in their communities of practice inside and outside the ESL classroom were closely related to their investments in learning English and enrolling in an adult ESL classroom.

In accordance to how globalization discourse has become strongly related to the high value of English proficiency in South Korean society, several studies have focused on

“cosmopolitan⁴” learners of English who attempt to gain membership into an imagined cosmopolitan community where membership is often measured by proficiency in English and the ability to transverse cultural worlds (De Costa, 2011; Song, 2009; Kanno, 2003, 2008). In Kanno (2003)’s research, Japanese children from socially dominant communities were granted a more cosmopolitan vision of Japan while the least privileged children were granted a more impoverished imagined community which shows how social stratification can socialize people into certain imagined communities (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 247). Similarly in De Costa (2011)’s research, a Korean wife of a graduate student studying at an US university has abundant economic resources to invest in learning English as well as satisfy her desire to be a member in an imagined cosmopolitan community. This wife had the economic and cultural capital from her prior education to pay high tuition fees for ESL courses and understand American culture in media. However her capital did not always lead to positive learning outcomes and made her retreat to a more comfortable social circle of which consisted of similar Korean cosmopolitan learners. This repositioning impeded her language development in English (De Costa, 2011, p.71).

Such repositioning of communities of practice can often prove conflicting because granting access to a newcomer in a community of practice requires a mutual renegotiation of identities(Wenger, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2001). This statement was strongly reflected in King (2008)’s study of queer Korean ESL learners. All of the gay Korean ESL men initially invested in the western gay imagined community because they thought that their gay identities would be more accepted in Western culture compared to the Korean culture. For example, Pyo

⁴ According to De Costa (2011), “cosmopolitan learners appear to be equipped with capital (cf. Bourdieu, 1991) that vagabond learners lack; but on closer analysis, we realize that like their economically less advantaged counterparts, cosmopolitans also suffer from a symbolic capital deficit as instantiated through a lack of recognition by legitimate authority.” (p. 56)

went to Manchester to study English because he wanted to invest in a gay west imagined community and he was attracted to “white gay men” (p.239). However, during his stay in Manchester, Pyo felt uncomfortable talking in English to white gay men and preferred to talk to Filipino gay men. While Pyo had experienced marginalization in Korea because of his sexual orientation, he had to reconstruct his identity in an English-speaking society influenced by marginalization from the power relations between “native speakers” and “non-native speakers”. Power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers (Norton, 1995, p. 12).

However, L2 learners may “set up a counter-discourse which positions [him/her] in a powerful rather than marginal subject position” (Norton, 1995, p. 16). Norton (1995) refers to this powerful position as “taking a shift in human agency” and the encouragement of human agency for Korean ESL graduate students is a fundamental goal I hope to achieve through my research. King (2008)‘s case study of Tak shows a model case study example of how human agency can turn over the power discourse of English when prior investments in imagined community seem to be ineffective. Tak experienced the similar marginalization in San Francisco that Pyo had experienced but chose to challenge his position as an inferior gay man by employing fault to the native speakers if they misunderstood his English (King, 2008, p.241).

Both social and self-identity in language learning is fundamentally transformative; there are a series of changes, redefinitions, and renegotiations of identity (Morgan, 1997). For ESL adolescents whose identity construction is still in progress, their social transition from secondary education to higher education could affect and be affected by renegotiations of identities. In Kim’s (2008) study, Yellina invested herself in maintaining her Korean identity with her Korean high school peers in Canada, thus investing in access to the Korean imagined community. However, as Yellina attended university, her investments in English grew and finally decided to major in English literature. She identified herself as a “global citizen” because she negotiated

between her Korean identity and Canadian identity as well as her investments in English (p. 97). Kim (2008) presents another case of Sheila who also had to negotiate between her multiple investments and identities but in a more dynamic way that conflicted with her various social identities in different communities of practice. Sheila was constantly trying to negotiate and renegotiate her multiple investments in her identities as a member of her Korean peer group, future member of mainstream Canadian society, top student in Korea, Korean immigrant in Canada, and responsible daughter (Kim, 2008, p.97).

Research Methodology

For my master's thesis, I aim to conduct a qualitative exploratory study on Korean graduate students' investments in learning and using English in relation to their social identities and how these social identities are being negotiated as they adapt to different social contexts in their lives. Case studies on two Korean graduate students who use English as a second language will be conducted in order to explore in-depth issues of identity, investment, and personal history for each individual. Data was collected from questionnaires, individual interviews, individual write-ups, and informal observations. In line with Norton (1995), I aim to study the relationship between the individual and the social, while focusing on the everyday world of Korean ESL graduate students as well as their past language learning experiences. Like Norton, I assume that understanding social structures involves understanding inequitable relations of power which can change in different social contexts, especially in culturally different contexts such as in South Korea and the US. Following Norton, I take an interest in the way individuals see their own experiences at a holistic level. Since direct observations of the participants' learning English in class will not be conducted, data collected about each individual participant in terms of investment and participation in imagined communities will mostly be based on his/her self-perceptions and experiences. However informal observations outside the classroom, such as through casual meetings with the researcher, outings with mutual friends, and participation in

KGSA, were conducted as part of the analysis.

Data collection

Participants

I recruited research participants from the University of Washington Korean Graduate Student Association (KGSA). I purposively selected 2 Korean ESL graduate students who meet the following criteria: 1) Korean students pursuing their graduate studies at University of Washington; 2) Korean students whose English is a second language; 3) Korean students who have completed their primary, secondary, and undergraduate studies in a non-English speaking country; 4) Korean students who are currently learning/studying English independently or through academic English classes /Korean students who have taken ESL courses or English academic courses at UW for the past 2 years; 5) Korean students who have past experiences of learning English in formal/informal settings in a non-English-speaking country; 6) Korean students who are willing and able to participate in 1 questionnaire, 1 drawing task, 1 individual oral interview, and follow up interviews or write-ups (if necessary) during the term of April 1, 2013- April 30, 2013.

As shown in Table 1, the two participants were pursuing studies in their Ph.D programs at the University of Washington as international students for the past 2 years. Both participants were similar in terms of their backgrounds such as marital status, occupancy period in the US, undergraduate college level, and the knowledge of language in the order of dominance. Another significant similarity of the two participants, although not intentional on the researcher's part, was their Alma maters. Both participants graduated from the same university in South Korea for their undergraduate degrees while majoring in different subjects. Prior to their arrival in the US for pursuing graduate study, both participants have never traveled or studied to another country outside of South Korea.

Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

Participant Name ⁵	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Major and Current Degree level	Occupancy period in the US	Acquisition of Language in order of dominance	Knowledge of Language in order of dominance
Lina	Female	28	Single	Sociology/ Ph.D candidate	2 years	1. Korean 2. English 3. Japanese	1. Korean 2. English 3. Japanese
Minsu	Male	32	Single	English Literature/Ph.D candidate	1 year and 7 months	1. Korean 2. English 3. Spanish	1. Korean 2. English 3. Spanish

As a researcher, I knew both focal participants at a personal level so it was relatively easy to gain their trust and commitment in participating in data collection. On one hand, I kept personal notes of my experiences as a researcher throughout the data collection process, including some of the concerns I had regarding my own biases or my relationship with the participants. I believed that this would help me maintain an objective stance as an insider-outsider researcher. An insider-outsider is an effective border spanning communicator and even a respectful border-crosser (Symonette, 2000). I plan to create rapport with the focal participants but as a Korean-English bilingual graduate student, I will have to be careful of the issues of reciprocity. I was also a member of KGSA, lived an extensive time in South Korea, and started graduate school at the same time as the participants. However, my English acquisition experiences and living status in the US were different from the two participants since I was born and raised in the US until the age of 10 and have US citizenship. Both participants were aware of my own background but I tried to take into these differences in consideration when forming my interview questions around sensitive issues.

Data collection procedures

⁵ Pseudonym for the purpose of confidentiality

The timeframe for data collection was approximately April 1, 2013 – April 30, 2013. After receiving consent forms from selected participants via email or in person, I sent out questionnaires via email or in person. Prior to the individual interview, participants filled out a brief questionnaire via email in order for me to obtain a general sense of their language backgrounds and to activate prior memory of personal experiences in learning and using English. The questionnaires served as a pilot study for preparing questions and discussion topics for the interviews and to have some familiarity with the students' backgrounds prior to meeting them in person. During the beginning of the individual interview, I implemented a quick drawing task of which participants will be asked to express a typical day in the lives of themselves as a Korean ELL graduate student. Their personal thoughts and ideas of learning and using English, being a Korean ELL graduate student, and other social identities will be expressed when describing their drawings. The "Day in the Life" format is one which emphasizes daily life and circumstances—a key understanding goal of much social history and geography, and helps understand the daily life of someone to get a better understanding of another's perspective—an important social goal (D. B. Dabach, lecture, February 6, 2013). Not only was the drawing activity used as a risk-free springboard for the participants to answer and discuss questions during the oral interview, but can be used as a method for the researcher to imagine the participant's daily life and thoughts from his/her perspective. In addition, the integrated arts-based approach to instructing ELLs is an innovative ESL instructional method of which is gaining prominence (Dabach, 2013; Posner, 2010). Creating art provides a forum to delve into ideas that might not be readily through verbal discourse alone and it is through these processes that students can discover and reflect outward some aspects of themselves, their communities, and relationship to the world (Posner, 2010).

The participants were reassured during the drawing task process that their artistic abilities

would not be evaluated nor analyzed. The individual interviews were conducted of semi-structured and open questions. Each interview lasted 90 – 120 minutes. The majority of the interviews were carried out in Korean but interviewees preferred to use code switching during several parts of the discourse. Oral interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researchers afterwards. Follow-up informal interviews were also conducted after the first interview in order to review data if necessary.

Data Analysis

I analyzed data throughout the data collection process. For the questionnaires and writing tasks in my pilot study, I identified key ideas and prepared for focus group questions. For the drawing task at the beginning of the individual interview, the drawings alone were analyzed for this research. Instead participants' interpretations of their drawings in relation to their answers were focused on for the analysis. Finally, I listened to the audio-recordings and transcribed them for accurate recording. Transcribing was conducted in Korean and then translated to English. I then coded the main themes and ideas that were related to my research questions in my field notes. I analyzed each participant based on my collected data to make a case study, then identified and connected common and different themes and ideas across the individual case studies.

Findings

Lina

Lina is a single 28 years old Korean woman who is pursuing her Ph.D. degree in Sociology at a public university in Seattle. For my question about social identities in our interview, Lina answers that she currently identifies herself as a graduate student, woman, and daughter. According to Lina, her social identity as a daughter is the most significant because she

finds her parents as a major link to her social identity in South Korea. One of her drives that urge her to study hard as a graduate student in the US is her goal to graduate early so that she does not trouble her parents. Although Lina was single and had earned a scholarship, her parents often sent her allowances to support living costs.

Lina's prior language learning experience included both formal education and informal education. Prior to coming to the US, she has never studied abroad at another country but had learned English starting at the age of 5. Her mother had showed her videos of English songs and tried to develop Lina's listening skills in English. Lina mentions how her mother was very proud of her daughter's English listening skills at an early age (personal communication, April 15, 2013). However, from the questionnaire for the pilot study, Lina states that self-instruction through reading practices had contributed to her English learning the most (questionnaire, April 7, 2013). She emphasizes in her individual interview that learning GRE⁶ vocabulary words before applying to graduate school had helped her improve her English skills the most. When asked if she liked learning English from a young age, Lina answered that English was not her favorite subject. However, she decided to come to the US for graduate study for several reasons despite the fact that English was not of her personal interest. First, she thought it would improve her English proficiency abilities if she completed a graduate degree at a US university because college classes in South Korea are increasingly requiring professors and instructors to teach subjects in English. Second, Lina had won the Fulbright scholarship⁷ in South Korea, which is given only to applicants interested in pursuing graduate studies in the US. Last, Lina indicates that having a Ph.D degree from an US university, especially in the field of social sciences, is

⁶ General Record Examination (GRE)

⁷ The Fulbright Program is a program of highly competitive, merit-based grants for international educational exchange for students, scholars, teachers, professionals, scientists and artists. (Wikipedia)

preferred in South Korea. Although she spoke in a third-person perspective about how a graduate degree from a US university was preferred in Korean modern society, there was no doubt that her primary investment in studying her academic interests in English at a US university was due to desire to enter an imagined community of high academics. Excerpt A highlights this fact in detail:

Excerpt A

22-JK: Why did you decide to come to the States for your graduate studies?

23-Lina: First of all, for language aspects. There are a lot of times when you have to teach in English (at Korean universities as a professor). Second, because of my scholarship....Third, to get a job. If you have a Ph.D. from the US, you are recognized wherever you go ...Also..because everyone else around me is studying abroad in the US? It's like how people go to famous restaurants..

(Lina, personal communication, April 15, 2013)

As seen from Excerpt A, Lina has invested her time and money to pursue her graduate studies in the US mainly because she wanted to broaden her opportunities for a better job in South Korea and gain prominence in the academic community. This supports Norton and Bourdieu's (2001,1977b) view that "learners invest themselves in certain communities of target language speakers in hope of gaining resources that are either symbolic (language, education, friendship) or material (goods, money)" (p.312). However unlike the gay men in King's study, Lina's investment in English was not related to desire for access to a Western community but rather related to effort in forming a prominent social identity in the Korean academic and economic society.

Another interesting finding was how Lina had compared studying abroad in the US to

“going to famous restaurants” as if it was a social trend in South Korea in Line 23. According to Foucault (1980), “language learning occurs in both the macro level of powerful institutions and the micro level of everyday encounters” (cited in Norton, 2000). Lina’s investment in English prior to her graduate studies was influenced by the macro-level of the Korean society in terms of academic, economic, and cultural reasons led by the government and business sectors, and by the micro-level of interpersonal relations. Evidence of micro-level influences can be shown in Line 23 by Lina saying, “everyone else around me is studying abroad in the US”

After conducting the drawing task, Linda explained to me about her typical day as a L2 graduate student at an US university. As she talks about attending class, Linda talks about some of her anxieties. This is shown in Excerpt B:

Excerpt B

3-Lina: Then in the morning..I’m nervous because I try to remember what I read before class. Class itself is fun but after I feel like I stuttered like uhuhuh.. I feel bad when I didn’t speak well or I feel good when I do.

4-Lina: I think I hate it when I feel like a fool...

(Lina, personal communication, April 15, 2013)

As seen from Line 4, Lina briefly confesses that she does not like “feeling like a fool”. When I asked her to explain the last statement further, she starts to talk about a negative experience with a professor in Excerpt C:

Excerpt C

44-Lina: I hate it when someone talks to me like they assume that I’m not good. Like speaking slowly to me. Once, this professor turned on a video for us in class and he had Korean subtitles on. For me. I was so furious. There were other Europeans too (who were

also L2 learners). I felt like he didn't acknowledge my academic competence..

48-Lina: He should have turned on English subtitles! Turning on Korean subtitles means he is ignoring me! I mean..there was a Turkey girl and German guy. They don't speak good English either because they have heavy accents and broken English. I can't understand what they are saying in class...

(Lina, personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Throughout the whole interview, this was the first and only time I have seen Lanu upset and furious about a certain situation regarding her status as a L2 graduate student. I thought that this situation was an important turning point of the discourse and decided to analyze it more in-depth.

Line 44 clearly supports Norton (2001)'s viewpoint that gaining access to a community of practice requires renegotiation of identities which can create conflict if marginalized (p.). Lina wanted to become part of the community of an academic class but the professor's action of showing Korean subtitles, but not subtitles of other languages, in front of the class made her feel marginalized and caused conflict with her social identity as a Ph.D. student in a sociology class. This particular situation was a moment when her investment to enter an imagined community of high academics prior to starting her graduate studies in the US was in misalignment with the outcome of her social identity in an academic classroom of different ethnicities.

Lina's comment in Line 44 brought up a critical issue in the field of SLA (Pennycook, 2008; Kubota & Lin, 2006). The Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a "racism is deeply ingrained in the ordinary ways in which everyday life in our society operates" (Kubota & Lin, 2006, p. 482). Such racism can produce assumptions about someone's language proficiency (p.480). An experiment showed how people saw the image of Asian Americans who are native speakers of

English as foreigners regardless of their ability in English (Kubota & Lin, 2006). Compared to the European L2 classmates, Lina felt that her professor was assuming her language proficiency was not competent due to her Asian looks.

According to Norton (1995), “the conception of social identity as a site of struggle is an extension of the position that social identity is multiple and contradictory..Subjectivity is produced in a variety of social sites, all of which are structured by relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions” (p. 15). Lina speaks from an Asian L2 student subject position and experiences imbalance of power. The power struggle existed significantly between Lina and her professor, but also existed in the power relationship between her and her European classmates. This struggle is shown in Line 48. In order to recover her social identity and balance the power relationship, it seemed that Lina had to “level down” her European classmates in terms of language competence. Lina`s effort to counterbalance the power also occurred with her professor which is shown in Excerpt D. Ironically, the counterbalance was made in terms of race in her own discourse:

Excerpt D

49-Lina: In fact, the professor was Jewish..an old Jewish man..you know what I mean?

50-JK:What did you do next?

51-Lina: He called me to his office once..asking me if I understood his class. I hated the professor so I probably didn`t say much in class but he called me in because of a language problem.

(Lina, personal communication, April 15, 2013)

In Line 49, Lina implies how her professor fit the stereotype of “a Jewish old man” but I did not ask her further about what this stereotype was. According to Kubota & Lin (2006),

“ racism is not restricted to inferiorization of people of color in the White dominant society but is observed in, for instance, Japanese discrimination against non-White people including other Asians.”(p. 488). Although Lina was not discriminating her professor, she implicitly had a negative stereotype towards Jewish men. In addition, Lina says that she was not motivated to participate actively in the class because of her negative feelings towards the professor and her insignificant social identity within the classroom.

Human Agency. Although Lina felt marginalization from her sociology class, her position as a subjective L2 graduate student shifted in another class. During the time of data collection, Lina was taking a required course for international students who wanted to be prospective T.A (Teacher Assistant)s at the university. As shown in Excerpt E, Lina has invested her time in learning how to teach Sociology in English to other students and expressed her satisfaction with the course because she was able to “communicate” with other students in a meaningful way which can be seen in Line 41. Lina also continuously mentions throughout her interview that she valued efficiency over anything else when investing in English.

Excerpt E

40-JK: How is the TA course?

41- Lina: Some people advised me not take the course but it's actually fun for me. We had to teach our own subject (academic interest) for 5~10 minutes to the whole class and videotape our presentations...but when I presented my classmates loved it. They were like..I never knew that about sociology! They gave me feedback that my English pronunciation was not so good but my content was excellent. I felt very good. This keeps coming back to my values about English. I like learning English when I feel that I need

it....(talks about how she despised learning English for preparing TOEIC⁸ exam in South Korea because she felt that TOEIC English was useless in her daily life)...

(Lina, personal communication, April 15, 2013)

As shown in Line 41, Lina regained her confidence as a graduate student after she felt that her classmates accepted her as a competent member of the academic community. This is an example of Norton & Toohey (2001)'s concept of human agency in action. At first, Lina's social identity was situated as a L2 graduate student in the T.A class but she was able to shift her subjective position to a powerful position. Her T.A community recognized her for her content knowledge in sociology, not for her English proficiency or race. Subjectivity is produced in a variety of social sites, all of which are structured by relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions (Norton, 1995, p. 15). Lina took up different social positions in different social situations, which were chronologically occurring at a similar time period. These different social identities affected her investments in learning. In the T.A. class, Lina actively asked for feedback from her classmates and was more motivated to learn academic terminology for teaching sociology (personal communication, April 15, 2013). This example further supports the fact that motivation is not static and intrinsic but changes in different social contexts.

Minsu

Background-wise, both Lina and Minsu share some commonalities. Like Lina, Minsu is single, a Fulbright scholarship recipient, and has never studied abroad in another country prior to coming to the States for graduate study. Minsu has a unique background regarding his academic interests. His undergraduate major was originally in chemistry until he decided to change his major to English Literature right after he was discharged from the Korean Army⁹. Minsu

⁸ Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)

⁹ South Korean men over the age of 18, including American citizens of Korean descent, are subject to

majored in chemistry because his dream was to become a scientist since he was a young child. However, Minsu lost his confidence in becoming a scientist as he broadened his knowledge in science and met many classmates who were “science geniuses”. Minsu attended the most prestigious university in South Korea and his motivation in learning chemistry diminished as his identity experienced conflict in a highly competitive academic environment. Personally, I was interested in why Minsu changed his major from chemistry to a liberal arts major and asked him further to explore his initial investments in pursuing English literature as a L2 learner. Our discourse about the topic is shown in Excerpt F:

Excerpt F

19. JK: Why did you change your major?

20. Minsu: I always like to learn about languages and the English Literature field seemed to have more options in getting a job. In Korea, you can get any job if you majored in English language and literature. I actually wanted to take the national diplomat examination or the administrative examination. I think these are attractive. I like French literature and movies but I don't want to major in French because realistically...it's hard to get a job with that in Korea. So I choose English Literature and it turned out to be fun so I did my masters in English and then here I am doing my Ph.D.

(Minsu, personal communication, April 27, 2013)

In Line 20, Minsu says that he chose to major in English Literature mainly because of easy access to more jobs in South Korea. Like Lina, Minsu's initial investment in English was influenced by the macro-level demands from Korean society in terms of business and economic sectors. In particular, Minsu mentions that he majored in English literature because he wanted to

compulsory military service for a period of 2 years.

take the national diplomat or administrative examination of which he found attractive.

Considering the fact that diplomat and administration are two distinct jobs but have the commonality of being governmental official occupations in South Korea, I assumed that Minsu found the latter aspect to be attractive. Therefore, in line with the Norton (1995)'s concepts of investment and imagined community, Minsu's investments in academic English were initiated in an imagined Korean elitist community in hopes of obtaining high social status, money, and so forth. Although Minsu had personal interest in languages, his reason for choosing to learn the English language more in-depth over French was influenced by sociocultural aspects¹⁰. This evidence supports the sociocultural theory that "learning and development occur as people participate in the sociocultural activities of their community" (Rogoff, 1994, p. 209).

Non-participation and change of investments. Minsu's academic focus within the English literature field is 18~19 century British literature. His reasons for choosing to come to the US was very similar to Lina's but he had come to the States with more hopes of making American friends. However, his hopes prior to coming to US did not match with his current life. This finding is shown in Excerpt G during the drawing task:

Excerpt G

2-Minsu: I work out 3 times a week in the morning and watch the news in English..then I go to class or study at the library. In the evening I study with Hayoon (Minsu's girlfriend) and then I go home. My life is simple I guess..

5-JK: Who do you meet other than Hayoon?

6-Minsu: Some friends from my department or my friends from the Asian American

¹⁰ At the end of our interview, I came to understand that his reason for studying English mainly came from his identity as the only son from a low-income family. This part will be elaborated in the later portion of the analysis.

seminar, or some from the GO-Map..but in fact I don't meet a lot of friends lately, not even Korean friends. I like meeting my American friend one-on-one, maybe once a week. That way I can speak in English more comfortably and we can focus on each other. For the first two quarters after I came here, I wanted to be friends with Americans so I actively participated in happy hour meetings or approach them whenever I can. But now...after 1 year of being here, I don't go to those meetings consciously or put too much effort.

8-JK: What about your English proficiency skills?

9-Minsu: The English that I was hoping for was not just academic English but also conversational English, like slang that you learn by hanging out with American friends. This kind of English didn't improve as much as I hoped. I don't care anymore. I didn't come here to learn slang. I came here to learn academic English which is most important. That improved.

(Minsu, personal communication, April 27, 2013)

According to Wenger (1998), newcomers to a community of practice who have been granted some legitimacy yet stand on the periphery can use nonparticipation productively to learn (cited in King, 2008, p. 240). Without legitimacy and access, however, it can lead to marginalization. Minsu's case from Excerpt F supports this argument. As a newcomer in the American community, Minsu is granted some legitimacy as a Ph.D. student at an American university yet stands on the periphery as an L2 speaker. He gradually uses non-participation as his way of coping with identity conflict from denied access to the American community. His investment in learning and using English for social purposes in an American community of practice made a shift towards learning English for academic purposes.

Identity conflict and renegotiation. In terms of social identities, Minsu's case is a complex one. Like Norton, I believe that investments of L2 speakers are often highly challenging because they engage their identities in complex and contradictory ways. Minsu identifies himself as: 1) Korean 2) a person who studies liberal arts 3) international student 4) an international student from a low-income family who came to study abroad. These social identities seemed to intertwine with each other that influence his current investments, participation and non-participation in certain communities of practice. Minsu's complex social identities are shown in Excerpt H:

Excerpt H

37-Minsu: My identity as an international student seems to make various identities. Being away from a place where I lived for the past 30 years, my perspectives towards Korea, parents, my sister have changed. I wonder why I was so close-minded and selfish in Korea. Another important identity is being an international student who comes from a low-income family. My parents are from a farmer family and my siblings don't have jobs. I consciously think about my status as an international student who does not afford the money and luxury to be here. I sometimes see international people going on trips during breaks or have their parents visiting them here. I feel different from them. My parents have never been on an airplane so I can't talk to them about my life here. I just sometimes feel that my class status is different with other international students.

(Minsu, personal communication, April 27, 2013)

Ethnicity, gender, and class are experienced in complex and interconnected ways, implicated in the construction of identity and the possibility of speech (Norton & Toohey, 2001). This statement applies to Minsu's case. In Line 6 from Excerpt G, Minsu mentions that he does

not meet Korean friends. Knowing Minsu personally, I felt lately that Minsu was isolating himself from both the American graduate student community and the Korean graduate student community. Perhaps his perceived social identity in terms of economic class was one identity that was affecting his investments in both using English and socializing with Korean international students. His identities as a man, “a stranger in a foreign land”, and a non-native speaker of English were also interconnected with his non-participation in the American social community. This is shown in Excerpt I. Therefore, Minsu was constantly negotiating and renegotiating these different identities, which were changing as he experienced various social interactions in different social contexts.

Excerpt I

40-JK: Is there a change between your identity in Korea and your identity now?

41-Minsu: Here..I feel like I'm a stranger. In Korea, I had a social network, graduated from Seoul National university..I was the Center. I majored in English. I was in the center, I can vote, and I benefited from society, economy, etc. But here..it's not MY country. My economic activity is limited and I don't have money as an international student. Then there's the language problem. I can't be the center with American friends and I feel isolated. Seattle is a good place to live but my attachment to this place is limited because..well I'm going to leave eventually.

42-JK: Why do you want to leave? You can teach English here since you'll have a Ph.D. in English like the rest of your colleagues.

43-Minsu: I think its hard to get a English teaching job here as a non-native speaker. Plus..I know that this bad but the reality of the English teaching field in Korea is..MEN with Ph.Ds. from US universities are favored by employers. For example, let's say

they're trying to hire a new professor and it comes to between me and Tae (a female Korean colleague who is also a Ph.D. candidate in English). Who will they hire? They'll think that she'll marry and stuff.. I know that its wrong but they'll likely hire me.

(Minsu, personal communication, April 27, 2013)

As shown in Line 41 and 43, Minsu emphasizes his identities as a stranger, a non-native speaker of English, and a male of which affects his diminishing investments in learning and using English to become a member of an American community. Moreover, like Lina, Minsu's identities are developed from struggles of power. In Line 41, he constantly mentions about not being the "center" in his group of American friends and having to be in a subjective position. This role contradicts his powerful social position in South Korea. Therefore, Minsu experiences identity conflict from these different roles and reconstructs his investments and goals in hopes of returning to South Korea to regain his social identity as an individual in a powerful position.

Human Agency. L2 learners exercise their agency in forming and reforming their identities in social contexts where they learn the L2 (Norton & Toohey, 2001, p.380). Although Minsu retreated from learning English in his group of American friends, he decides to enter a new community where his social identities as an Asian in the US and as Hayoon's boyfriend are reformed. Minsu says that he feels most comfortable in interacting and using English with colleagues from the Asian American Association seminars in which he recently joined through his girlfriend's recommendation (personal communication, April 27, 2013). In this context, Minsu is exercising human agency. Excerpt J highlights this:

Excerpt J

31-JK: Why are you interested in Asian American studies?

32-Minsu: I think of myself as an Asian but I think being an Asian in the US and being

an Asian American are similar. I don't think my identity is far away from being an Asian American. Korean American issues come close to my heart. I think its natural that I gained interest in this area. I was always interested in liberal arts and Korean history. BUT I THINK WHERE I AM IS MOST IMPORTANT. That's why I'm interested in Asian American studies.

(Minsu, personal communication, April 27, 2013)

Minsu says that he focuses on learning academic English and terminology used in Asian American studies (personal communication, April 27, 2013). Using human agency, Minsu chooses to enter a new community of practice that counterbalance his position as a subjective L2 international student to a less-subjective one. As an Asian, Minsu finds a new social identity within the Asian American community in which his position motivates him to learn and use English related to the social practices of that community (Asian American studies).

Conclusion and Implications

Lina and Minus engage in ongoing identity construction in different social domains, experience personal struggles as graduate students whose English is a second language, and exercise human agency when they feel denied from a certain imagined community. As shown in the two case studies, their investments to learn and use English are highly affected by their multiple identities that change in various social contexts. Both participants' investments to use English are not merely to gain access to English speaking communities, but to gain access to certain communities in which their academic abilities and social competence are acknowledged. High English proficiency was not always their primary concern when gaining access to their desired imagined communities.

Further research on the identity construction, investments, and imagined communities of

Korean graduate students' whose English is a second language needs to be done on a more extensive and longitudinal basis. Identity is multiple and dynamic, which can change in different contexts and time periods. Lina and Minsu may have exercised human agency in balancing their social powers by joining other community of practices, but these new communities can provide other identity conflicts in the future, which can influence their investments in English. Therefore, this study only provides a "snapshot" of what these graduate students in a particular place at a particular time. In-depth narratives and observations in class or during social activities need to be conducted in order to complete the whole picture of the relations between identity constructions and language learning for Korean graduate students in a L2 setting. In addition, Korean graduate students from various socioeconomic backgrounds need to be studied because socioeconomic and political factors influence how their social identities are constructed and where their current investments are stemming from. Gender and race were also issues that came up in the two case studies indicating that language learning and usage are rarely separate from sociocultural contexts.

Although this study was not conducted with goals to improve ESL teaching methods or fuel motivation in language learning, it can pave way for ESL instructors and college professors to develop pedagogical methods that encourage L2 students and adults to learn efficiently in classroom and naturalistic contexts.

References

- Bourdieu, P. (1977b). Outline of a theory of practice. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Costa, P. D. (2011). Cosmopolitan and Learning English: Perspectives from Hye Lna Alias Joanne. *English*, 76, 55-76.
- Dabach, D. B. (Presenter). (2013, February 6). "A Day in the Life": Conveying perspectives through images and text. Lecture presented at College of Education EDC&I 548, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.
- Firth, A. and J. Wagner. (1997). On Discourse, Communication, and (Some) Fundamental Concepts in SLA Research. *Modern Language Journal* 81, 3: 285-300.
- Lightbown, P. and Spada, N. (2006). How Languages are learned, 3rd edition. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*. (L&S)
- Norton, B. and Toohey, K. (2001). Changing perspectives on good language learners. *TESOL Quarterly* 35, 2: 307-322.
- Norton Pierce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly* 29, 1: 9-31.
- Kim, J. (2008). *Negotiating multiple investments in languages and identities: The language socialization of generation 1.5 korean-canadian university students* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Doctor of Philosophy in Language and Literacy Education- The University of British Columbia.
- Kim, T. Y. (2010). Socio-political influences on EFL motivation and attitudes: comparative surveys of Korean high school students. *Asia Pacific Educ. Rev.*, 11, 211-222.
- Kim, T.Y., Seo, H.S. (2012). Elementary school students' foreign language learning demotivation: A mixed methods study of Korean EFL context. *The Asia Pacific*

- Education Researcher* 21(1), 160-171. <http://works.bepress.com/taeyoungkim/19>
- King, Brian W. (2008). "Being Gay Guy, That is the Advantage": Queer Korean language learning and identity construction, *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 7:3-4, 230-252
- Kubota, R., & Lin, A. (2006). Race and TESOL: Introduction to Concepts and Theories. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(3), 471. doi:10.2307/40264540
- Pennycook, A. (2004). Chapter 32: Critical Applied Linguistics. In Davies, A. and Elder, C. *Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Blackwell.
- Rogoff, B. (1994). Developing understanding of the idea of communities of learners. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 1(4), 209–229.
- Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2002). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Investigating Cambodian Women's Participation and Investment in Adult ESL Programs. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 53(1), 9-26. doi:10.1177/074171302237201
- Symonette, H. (2000). Cultivating self as responsive instrument: Working the boundaries and borderlands for ethical border crossing. In N.K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook for qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp.279-294). Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage)
- Yook, Cheong Min. (2010). Korean Teachers' Beliefs about English Language Education and their Impacts upon the Ministry of Education-Initiated Reforms" *Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language Dissertations*. Paper 14.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Research Participant Recruitment Flyer

Appendix B: Questionnaire Protocol

Appendix C: Writing task Protocol

Appendix D: Quick Drawing Task Protocol

Appendix E: Individual Interview Protocols

Appendix A

Research Participant Recruitment Flyer

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-SEATTLE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

- **PURPOSE:**
 - To conduct a qualitative research study on South Korean ESL (English as a Second Language) graduate students' investments in learning and using English in relation to their social identities and how these social identities are being negotiated in different social contexts and life periods.

- **ELIGIBILITY (Must meet all of the following criteria):**
 - South Korean students who are pursuing graduate studies at University of Washington
 - South Korean students whose English is a second language
 - Korean students who are currently learning/studying English independently or through academic English classes OR Korean students who have taken ESL courses or English academic courses at UW for the past 2 years
 - Korean students who have past experiences of learning English in formal/informal settings in a non-English-speaking country
 - Korean students who are willing and able to participate in 1 brief questionnaire, 1 writing task, 1 quick drawing task, and 1 focus group interview (with 2 other participants), during the term of April 1, 2013- May 15, 2013. The focus group interview will last approximately 1 hour and will take place in mid-April or early May.

- **COMPENSATION:**
 - Each participant will receive a \$10 Starbucks Coffee gift card after successful completion

- **CONTACT:**
 - Jennifer Soomin Kim,
206-495-8300
jennikim@u.washington.edu

Appendix B

Questionnaire Protocol

Name:

Age:

Gender:

(1) Please check your highest education level (or the approximate U.S. equivalent to a degree obtained in another country):

1. Less than High School 2. Bachelor's degree 3. Graduate and Professional degree

(2) How long have you lived in the US?

(3) What is your current occupational status?

1. Full-time (Please specify occupation: _____)
 2. Part-time (Please specify occupation: _____)
 3. Full-time student (Please specify major and current degree level: _____)

(4) Please list all the languages you know in order of dominance:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

(5) Please list all the languages you know in order of acquisition (your native language first):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

(6) Please list what percentage of the time you are currently and on average exposed to each language.

(Your percentages should add up to 100%):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

(7) When choosing to read a text available in all your languages, in what percentage of cases would you choose to read it in each of your languages? Assume that the original was written in another language, which is unknown to you.

(Your percentages should add up to 100%):

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

(8) When choosing a language to speak with a person who is equally fluent in all your languages, what percentage of time would you choose to speak each language? Please report percent of total time.

(EX: 1. Korean: 70% 2. English: 30%)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

Appendix C

Writing Task

1. Please describe a positive experience using English among a group of people who speak that language together. How did you feel? Was it a positive experience to learn English? How did you feel about the group? You can write either in Korean or English.

2. Please describe a negative experience using English among a group of people who speak the language together. How did you feel? During your time among those people, were you satisfied with your language learning?

Appendix D

Quick Drawing Task

“ A Day in the Life of _____ ” Quick Drawing Activity

“ The format of the Day in the Life of _____ task promotes the task of imagining, documenting, and/or representing someone or something else’s perspective, a challenge that will interest and excite many students. Perspective is also central to understanding the self and the relationship between the self and others. It is from our unique perspectives that our personal expression emerges, another idea central to the arts. The topic also potentially offers a way into the challenges of representation, including the socially problematic aspects of representation (for example: stereo-typing), which are important content ideas in contemporary visual arts, literature, history and multicultural education. Also, the “Day in the Life” format is one which emphasizes daily life and circumstances—a key understanding goal of much social history and geography.”

- Dr. Dafney DeBach at University of Washington, College of Education

- Rationale:

- To prompt participants to think of general issues of ESL learners, identities, and perspectives of others before answering group questions.
- To create a risk-free atmosphere of revealing personal thoughts to others during group interview with visual prompts.

- Instructions:

- Participants will create drawings of a day in their own lives
- Participants will create drawings of a day in the life of a typical Korean ESL graduate student
- Participants will describe and self-assess their own sequence of drawings.
- Participants will be reminded that their artistic abilities will not be evaluated at all means and their explanations of the drawings will focused.

Appendix E

Interview Sample Questions Protocol

Personal Background Questions

- (1) Please introduce yourself to me.
- (2) Do you live alone, with roommates, or with a family?
- (3) Tell me about your family. Are they in the US or in South Korea?
- (4) Please fill out the following spaces:
- “ I am a student, _____, _____, _____ (three words)”
- (5) How do you define your identity as a Korean at the current moment? Has it changed before you came to the US? How do you define your identity as an adult/university student who’s English is a second language? Are you an English learner or an English user??

Key Questions

- (6) Describe a good language learner. What does that person do? What is that person like?
- (7) What were your English learning experiences in South Korea? Did you take any academic English courses for the past 2 years since you came to the university for graduate study? What kinds of assignments were required in your classes? Have you ever asked for help from your instructors or TAs? Have you ever been to UW’s writing center to get help on your assignments? Do you ever ask other people to help with your assignments?
- (8) Please fill out the following spaces:
“ I am most motivated to learn English when _____”
“ I am less motivated to learn English when _____”
- (9) What is the best way for you to learn English? Has it changed throughout your life?
- (10) How much do you currently invest your time and money in learning English? Has this changed compared to the past?
- (11) Please listen to this opinion statement. “English is best learned by speaking in English native- speaking communities.” Do you think so or not? What influenced your answer? What communities do you define as “native-speaking communities”?
- (12) Is it important for you to learn and use English to accomplish your current and long time goals? What are your current and longtime goals?
- (13) Please fill out the following statements.
- “ Currently, I feel most comfortable using English when _____ or with _____”
- “ Currently, I feel most uncomfortable using English when _____ or with _____”
- (14) Think back to when you first started to learn English. Which English speakers did you want to speak to someday? Did this stay the same or change as time passed?
- (13) Think back to that time and describe your mind, goals, and desires.
- (14) Let’s think back to the experiences you wrote about. What kind of people wanted to speak with you? What kind of people avoided speaking with you? Did this change with time? What parts changed? What did you do to cause the change?

(15) In both cases, what was their attitude while you were speaking to them? How about when they were speaking to you? How did that make you feel? What happened to your attitude toward English at that time? What changed as time passed? What influenced that change?

(16) Did these experiences influence your investment in learning English?

(17) How would you define your self-identity as a whole with three words?