

FRAGILE BILINGUALS: RESCALING 'GOOD' AND 'BAD' SOUTH KOREAN  
BILINGUALS

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## Abstract

My dissertation explores how U.S.-based multilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean negotiate their positions in the over-crowded and complex linguistic market, and try to stake a claim to being legitimate bilinguals through the process of metapragmatic typification (Agha, 2007). First, I investigate how tensions between Koreanness (nationalism/tradition) and cosmopolitanism (national betrayal) are exercised and displayed through mediatized discourses. Using discourse analysis, I then analyze interactions among a group of transnational South Korean graduate students who attend a North American university. By analyzing naturally occurring data from their social meetings and computer-mediated conversations, I examine how they consume circulating language ideologies, and locate themselves through the selective production of ideological representations or language registers associated with certain models of personhood. In particular, I focus on the process of metapragmatic typification, which shows how participants discursively typify linguistic registers, linguistic practices and models of personhood as indexical emblems of ‘good/successful’ or ‘bad/failed’ bilinguals as an attempt to legitimize themselves. By analyzing both macro- and micro- contexts, my dissertation highlights how such tensions have been reconstructed and rescaled in society, and how individuals participate in the process of developing sense-making discourses (Heller & Duchêne, 2012) in order to secure their positions and marginalize ‘other’ English speakers (e.g., Agha, 2003; Inoue, 2006).

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

As a result of neo-globalization and late-capitalism, English has spread widely across the world and become a key element for success in various countries. Many scholars have examined how the global spread of English has generated a new English-oriented market and created new hybrid forms of languages. Although some scholars explain the English frenzy and the increasing number of transnational students in relation to neoliberal globalization, I take the position that globalization alone cannot generate such ‘new’ changes and delicate tensions between ‘new’ and ‘old’ regimes, between ‘global’ and ‘local’ and between ‘modern’ and ‘tradition’. Since neither multilingualism nor different language varieties are new, we cannot argue that globalization itself has led to the emergence of ‘new’ social phenomena, including ‘new’ forms of hybrid language varieties and ‘new’ groups of global elites who equip themselves with foreign language skills and overseas study. Rather, the circulation and recycling of recognizable chronotopic representations of events, people and linguistic practices and their ideological discourses reshape and reorder the ‘new’ ways we understand languages, language speakers and language practices. These stereotypical language registers and identifiable historical figures (Agha 2007a) have been used as the authentic tool to legitimize a certain linguistic variety and speaker, and marginalize others in contemporary linguistic markets.

As one of many countries that have experienced rapid sociopolitical change, contemporary South Korean society has placed a high value on English skills because they are thought to signify the speaker’s ability to participate in global communications and to show their constant effort to develop their skills and meet the needs of neoliberal logics (Park, 2009; Park & Lo, 2012). Since the United States has remained the “object of material desire and moral approbation, longing and disdain” (Abelmann & Lie 1995, p. 62) in the post-war period, the

same bifurcated gaze has been cast upon multilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean. As the linguistic market is becoming crowded with growing numbers of multilingual speakers who try to claim their legitimacy, this bifurcated view has created a thin boundary between the categories of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals. It treats intense investment in learning/using English and being a global subject as a sign of devaluing Koreaness/tradition or betraying the nation (Park, 2009). In addition, it problematizes English speakers who are ‘too cosmopolitan’ or ‘too Americanized’, and often questions their morality and the ways of learning or using English (Abelmann & Kang, 2013). In other words, a Korean speaker’s English language proficiency can be understood as a ‘valuable’ and ‘marketable’ resource only when it is accompanied by a careful display of ‘balanced’ Koreaness (c.f., Besnier, 2011; Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Lo & Kim, in press).

Many scholars in applied linguistics, education and linguistic anthropology have explored the tensions between the global and local, and between tradition and modernity. Terms such as glocalization (Robertson, 1995) and translocalization (Blommaert, 2010) have been introduced in order to conceptualize these tensions, and have urged researchers to pay attention to the multiple tensions between local and global discourses rather than simply focusing on the dominant power of global discourses. More recently, attention has turned towards the dynamic process of (re)localization and its production of hybrid forms (Alim et al., 2008; Blommaert, 2010; Pennycook, 2012, 2010). As these complex tensions between the global and local, and between tradition and modernity are rescaled and relocalized over time and across spaces, they come to measure one’s ‘appropriate’ modernity (e.g., Besnier, 2011), or to decide who is viewed as a more ‘authentic’ language speaker in a crowded and precarious market (e.g., Heller & Duchêne, 2012). In this context, the two types of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals are located on “axes of

differentiation” (Irvine & Gal, 2000) where contrasts in linguistic forms are mapped onto social differences and different models of personhood (Gal, 2012). Korean and English, for example, are associated with contrasting models of personhood (nationalist/national betrayer, global citizen/faker), and with contrasting social values (tradition/cosmopolitan, pride/profit) in contemporary South Korean society. The axes of differentiation put bilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean in a fragile position, where they need to negotiate the delicate balance between contrasting categorizations of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals, and ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competences. In other words, bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society need to actively adopt different language ideologies that portray what counts as marketable social and linguistic resources, and to carefully displace socially expected language registers, language practices and models of personhood that are associated with ‘good’ bilinguals in order to secure their legitimacy.

Drawing on historical research and ethnographic fieldwork in South Korean graduate students at a North American university, my dissertation aims to unravel the historically constructed and contingent models of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals, and ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competence in South Korea. It also explores how South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean try to stake a claim to being legitimate bilinguals by evoking, reproducing and remaking historically and socially locatable models of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competence and speakerhood. The construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and bilingual competence have always reflected delicate tensions between modern and tradition and between global and local, and generated the discourse of properness to determine one’s ‘proper’ balancing work between these axes of differentiation (Irvine & Gal, 2000). To examine the ideological formation of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and their language competence in South Korea and the precarious

position of South Korean bilinguals, I first investigate various historical narratives and mediatized discourses focusing on historically constructed portrayals of English and English speakers and the ways contemporary models of personhood associated with English become linked to historical figures of multilingualism and construe structures of ‘linkness’ (Silverstein, 2005). In particular, I seek to examine the historical process in which tensions between modern and tradition, West and East, and colonizer and colonized get transposed onto binary construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals who are associated with historical figures of ‘nationalists’ and ‘national betrayers’ respectively. I also explore how such construct has generated ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competences, which are mapped onto ‘good/nationalists’ and ‘bad/national betrayers’ models of bilinguals. I then analyze ethnographic fieldwork including qualitative interviews and interactions among a group of transnational South Korean graduate students in order to understand how South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean navigate and negotiate their positionality in relation to these delicate tensions and different ideological constitutions. The microscopic analysis of naturally occurring interaction data shows the agentive process where participants actively participate in the act of developing sense-making discourses (Heller & Duchêne, 2012) and the act of distinction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) in order to distinguish themselves from ‘other’ bilinguals and hence secure their position in a given speech community (e.g., Agha, 2003; Inoue, 2006). In particular, I focus on the process of metapragmatic typification, which shows how participants discursively typify linguistic registers, linguistic practices, language competence and models of personhood as indexical emblems of ‘good/successful’ or ‘bad/failed’ bilinguals as an attempt to legitimize themselves. By looking at various historical, social and ethnographic data, my dissertation seeks to account for the discursive formation of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and bilingual competence

that has been dynamically constructed and remade by different historical actors and individuals including participants of this research.

Despite the dramatic increase of bilinguals and global spread of English, second language acquisition (SLA) research seems to have paid more attention on the acquisition of linguistic competence than to the acquisition of sociolinguistic, metasociolinguistic and discursive competence. It has generally assumed that the acquisition of ‘native-like’ linguistic competence or ‘standard’ language competence would be an ultimate goal of second and foreign language learners (Doerr, 2009; Jaffe, 2013). The emphasis on the acquisition of linguistic competence then has been transferred to language classrooms through various language policies and practices, and imposed upon language learners without looking at the actual goal of these language learners in their daily lives. In problematizing such essentialist approach of understanding language acquisition, my dissertation claims that second/foreign language learners themselves might not consider the acquisition of ‘native-like’ or ‘standard’ language competence an ideal goal to achieve. Rather, they seem to make an intense investment in acquiring and displaying socially expected and valued sociolinguistic, metasociolinguistic and discursive competences that are closely associated with ‘good’ and ‘ideal’ bilinguals in a given language community. Throughout interview and ethnographic data, participants of my research try to distance themselves from particular types of language registers, language competences and models of personhoods associated with ‘native’ speakers because such emblems could run the risk of framing them as failed bilinguals who abandon their Koreanness and Korean identity. My exploration of bilinguals’ selective investment in different language competences thus presents a challenge to traditional research in the field of SLA, education and applied linguistics, and urges researchers to look at the actual needs and practices of second/foreign language learners and

users who are constantly navigating their positionality in relation to different ideological constitutions beyond their language classrooms. It also stresses the role of informal linguistic environments and social spheres where second/foreign language learners are located in.

### **Research Questions**

#### **a. Historical-level (analyzing historical and media discourses)**

- (a) How have different historical discourses and language ideologies formulated shared meanings for specific languages, linguistic registers and semiotic display?
- (b) How have historically constructed chronotopic representations and their socially recognizable attributes created models of personhood associated with particular languages and linguistic registers?
- (c) How have historically constructed chronotopic representations and speakerhood affected the binary construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society?
- (d) How have such historical constructed discourses reflected various sociopolitical tensions, language ideologies, gender politics and social inequalities?

#### **b. Individual-level (analyzing ethnographic data)**

- (a) How do the US-based multilingual South Korean speakers of Korean and English negotiate circulating language ideologies and historically constructed chronotopic representations associated with English and multilingual speakers?
- (b) How do they stake a claim to being legitimate multilingual speakers in relation to the binary construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals?

### **Theoretical Framework**

Since my dissertation examines the dynamic process of differentiation and authentication produced by language speakers, I adopt critical perspectives from critical applied linguistics

(e.g., Pennycook, 2009) and language ideology studies (e.g., Silverstein, 1979). These views allow me to situate languages, language practices and language speakers within social contexts, and hence to examine their ideological construction.

### **a. Situating Languages and Language Speakers in Social Relations**

Scholars in language ideology studies emphasize the ideologically and socially constructed nature of language and language practices. As a pioneer in language ideology, Michael Silverstein defines language ideology as “sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use” (1979, p. 193). In other words, language ideologies are broadly defined as shared understandings about the nature of language in society (Rumsey, 1990). Rather than merely viewing language as automatic linguistic structure, language ideologies highlight the importance of examining not only linguistic structure and its usage but also language users, group membership, social organization and other fundamental social institutions (Woolard, 1998).

Many scholars have examined how language ideologies formulate reflexive models of linguistic forms, linguistic patterns and language speakers based on large-scale cultural beliefs about particular linguistic forms and social groups (Agha, 2007; Park, 2009; Silverstein, 2005), and how language users as active agents selectively produce certain language forms in order to assert certain subjectivities to legitimize their positions (e.g., Agha, 2003; Inoue, 2006; Wortham et al, 2011). This perspective is particularly important in a globalized world where the linguistic market is becoming crowded with growing numbers of multilingual speakers who try to stake a claim to their legitimacy. In order to fully capture the dynamics of the current linguistic market, I find this perspective useful to examine the fragile position of bilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean, and their construction as ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals.

## **b. Situating Language Competence in Social Relations**

In problematizing the simplistic approach that views a competent language speaker as an individual fluent in a particular language, recent research focuses on the ways that linguistic competence is socially and contextually constructed through the interactive processes of reconstructing what constitutes ideal competence and evaluating language use (Blommaert, 2005, 2007). Such research has shown how language ideologies connect languages with certain images of language users, linguistic practice, registers and paralinguistic features (e.g., Bucholtz, 2011; Inoue, 2006). This complex relationship is well-conceptualized in Agha's (2007, 2011) notion of the "language-culture-people" hybrid, which describes the inextricable connections between languages, cultures, models of personhood and language practices as an ensemble. In other words, his notion of hybrid views language and speech choices as indexical emblems that contextually link models of personhood, characterological figures and other attributes associated with a particular language, and vice versa. Agha's notion of hybrid offers an analytic framework to examine how bilinguals relate to socially recognizable linguistic registers, linguistic practices and models of personhood. This notion is also useful for understanding the fragile position of bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society where they are required to constantly engage in producing and reproducing metapragmatic typifications to index the values of their linguistic practices in order to differentiate themselves from others.

## **Chapter 2. Methodology**

As many scholars point out, we need to investigate various scales of social organization, discourses and events in order to fully understand how individuals use and perform a certain language and language register, and position themselves in a given speech community in relation to these stratified sociolinguistic scales (Blommaert, 2007; Collins, 2012; Lemke, 2000; Rymes, 2012). In problematizing previous research that only examine speech events or make an overgeneralized connection between ‘micro-level’ events and ‘macro-level’ structure, Wortham (2012) argues that we must look beyond the essentialist micro- and macro-dichotomy, and explore different scales and “a continuum of timescales” (p. 133). Lemke (2000) also claims that human semiotic processes need to be understood in relation to various timescales and their cumulated values and evaluative stances.

In order to move beyond the micro-macro dichotomy and to fully conceptualize the positionality of South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean, this dissertation analyzes both media discourses and ethnographic data including an in-depth qualitative interview with participants, audio-recorded conversations and computer-mediated conversations among focal participants and field notes. As media is one of the most powerful institutions that reflect sociopolitical tensions and dominant groups’ interests and reproduce them through mediatized discourses, analyzing media discourses aims to demonstrate various spatiotemporal discourses that construct and determine what counts as valuable and invaluable language, language speakers, language registers and language practices in contemporary South Korean society (e.g., Agha, 2007; Bucholtz, ; Lo & Kim, 2012; Park J., 2009). In addition, naturally occurring conversation and online-discourse data show practically and empirically how participants fashion

and stylize their positions in discourse (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006) through the situated and reflexive use of linguistic forms, and through different metapragmatic labor.

### **Research Site**

Midwest University is one of the largest U.S. public research-oriented universities located in the twin towns of Springfield and Shelbyville in the Midwest region. Since it is one of the top ten universities in number of annual Ph.D. graduates and enrollment of international graduate students, it has a relatively large number of South Korean alumni and students. The university is one of the top 50 national universities/colleges in terms of its undergraduate program, and it is ranked between 1 and 30 depending on majors in national graduate school rankings (U.S. News & World Report, 2013). In 2013, international students comprised 15% of the total undergraduate students enrolled in Midwest University, and 36% of graduate students. Students from South Korea make up 17% of the undergraduate international student population and 11% of the graduate international student population. Due to the large South Korean student population, there is a relatively large South Korean community within Springfield and Shelbyville including Korean churches, Korean restaurants, and Korean student clubs and organizations. The fact that there are nine different South Korean student soccer teams with a regular South Korean soccer league shows how large and active South Korean student communities are around the campus. The large number of South Korean students, however, tends to result the subdivision between undergraduate and graduate students whereas those U.S. universities with a small number of South Korean students tend to have a small but unified South Korean student community. Even though the official Korean student association is not divided into two, many religious, interest-based student organizations and other communities for South Korean students are subdivided into two groups. In addition, differences between undergraduate

and graduate school rankings of Midwest University often solidify such subdivision in that South Korean graduate students tend to take great pride in attending one of the top-ranked graduate programs while treating the undergraduate program as a less-prestigious one.

As one of my participants describes her graduate life in Midwest University as “attending a Korean graduate school with other Korean colleagues”, South Korean graduate students tend to form strong bonds among themselves and invest in creating their own communities. A majority of participants during interviews indicate that they feel much more comfortable with other South Korean graduate students who share similar cultural, social and educational backgrounds than other groups of South Korean students or other ethnic groups. Since they have already acquired certain memberships in South Korea, they often utilize these memberships in order to formulate their own and exclusive membership-based communities in the United States. A school tie is one of the most frequently addressed membership categories, and there are more than five large-scale and active Korean university alumni associations (e.g., KAIST alumni association and Yonsei University alumni association) that hold regular meetings, encourage their members to form a strong, but exclusive senior-junior relationship (*sönhubae kwan’gye*) and support each other. These communities often continue when their members go back to South Korea after graduation and provide their members a space where they can continuously formulate a strong network.

### **Participants**

The participants of this research are 20 South Korean graduate students, including eight focal participants, who are currently enrolled in Midwest University at the time of data collection. The participants include 10 female and 10 male students who are in their early- and mid-thirties. They were born between 1979 and 1984, and have experienced first hand both the enactment of the globalization policy announced by President Kim Young-Sam in 1994

(*sekyeywha cengchayk*, see Kim, 2000 for more details) and the subsequent restructuring and neoliberalization of both the educational and labor markets (e.g., the 1997 East Asian economic crisis). In addition, they all received education under the sequential educational reformation of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum where the role of English and English education had been gradually emphasized (see appendix A for more details). Since early study abroad has become accelerated in the aftermath of the East Asian financial crisis around 1998 (Kang & Ablemann, forthcoming), these students are generally understood as members of a generation that predates the current upsurge in early study abroad. Half of my participants have a study-abroad experience before college although in most cases this overseas education is portrayed by them as involuntary (e.g., accompanying their father's sabbatical leave). Because early study abroad was not popular in their school time, their early study abroad experience and highly advanced English skill tend to be perceived something unique and valuable that helped them enter prestigious South Korean high schools or/and universities. Most participants who do not have early study abroad experience also have study abroad experience in English-speaking countries while attending college.

This particular participant pool is interesting in that they all have experienced rapid sociopolitical, economic and educational change occurred in contemporary South Korean society as a student, and witnessed how the role of English and English education has been dramatically emphasized and resulted phenomenon such as English frenzy and early study abroad. In addition, the fact that they chose to attend graduate school in North America makes this group of participants interesting to look at how they respond to circulating educational change and different language ideologies.

Participants were recruited through personal connection. Since this research asks participants to openly discuss their educational trajectories, personal lives and other identity-related issues, I used purposeful sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) to recruit people who could have a casual and friendly conversation with me and/or with each other. All the participants of this research have known me, the researcher, for more than one year and maintained a close relationship with me.

All the participants are from upper middle class families, with parents who are professors, lawyers and executives at major companies in South Korea. Even though they tend to actively distance themselves from the popular image of 'rich and spoiled' South Korean study abroad students, their relatively privileged backgrounds enable them to have affluent lives in both South Korea and the United States (e.g., driving their own cars, enjoying their vacations in popular vacation spots including Cancun, New York City, Hawaii and Las Vegas). Except one participant, all of them have their own cars ranged from \$10,000 to \$40,000 and they received financial support from their parents to buy their cars.

All the participants are proficient in both Korean and English. They have an experience of working at North American universities and/or American companies where the medium of communication is mainly English. Most of the participants are currently working as a graduate assistant in Midwest University at the time of data collection. None of participants were required to take ESL courses or English speaking test upon entering their graduate program in Midwest University in that their TOFEL score, especially English speaking score, is sufficient to satisfy their university's regulation to monitor 'non-native' English speaking graduate student and graduate assistant. Their assistantship duties include teaching or facilitating undergraduate and graduate courses, grading students' course works and assignments, and participating in research

projects. While their jobs generally involve a chance of interacting with both domestic and international students, two participants are specifically working in a position (an instructor at ESL course and a writing consultant at the Writers Workshop) where they mainly support international students and their academic literacy development.

Table 1

*Educational Background About Focal Participants*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>ESA</u>	<u>BA</u>	<u>Gender</u>
Mikyung	Liberal art	Yes	Korea	Female
Eunju	Science	Yes	Korea	Female
Sunmin	Humanities	Yes	Korea	Female
Yeonji	Education	No	Korea	Female
Peter	Engineering	Yes	US	Male
Jihoon/James	Engineering	No	Korea	Male
Dohyun	Social science	No	US	Male
Hoon	Science	No	Korea	Male

In order to collect more in-depth data, I selected eight participants as focal participants of this research after an informal conversational interview with 20 participants based on their willingness to participate in digital recording data collection and their relationship with each other. Focal participants include four female (Mikyung, Eunju, Sunmin, Yenoji) and four male South Korean graduate students (Peter, Jihoon/James, Dohyun, Hoon) (see Table 1). Half of the participants have an early study abroad experience, accompanying their fathers' sabbatical leave

or degree-seeking study abroad. Seven participants are South Korean citizen, and one participant, Peter, holds US citizenship because he was born while his father was pursuing his doctoral degree at a North American university. All of them have a privileged educational background—five of them graduated from specialized high schools in South Korea (e.g., foreign language high schools and science high schools that are considered elite schools in South Korea equivalent to prep schools in the United States), and six of them graduated from elite Korean universities (e.g., Korea University and Seoul National University) and two graduated from well-respected North American universities. They are pursuing graduate studies in the humanities, liberal arts, social sciences, education, science and engineering. Two participants expressed their desire to get a job in the United States upon graduation, and all the participants would like to settle in South Korea within five to ten years. Three participants including two who want to get a job in the United States are planning to apply both companies and academia, while others are aiming to get a job in South Korean universities. Despite their minor differences in terms of their educational background, they

### **Data Collection**

To investigate various sociopolitical and spatiotemporal discourses circulated in South Korea, I collected and analyzed 2,245 entries of news articles written in three major South Korean media, Donga Ilbo, Chosun Ilbo and Joongang Ilbo, between the 1930s and the present (see Park J., 2009 for selection criteria). The newspaper corpus program operated by South Korean media was utilized to collect archived news articles. Topics related to English, English education, educational policy, English-Korean bilinguals, study-abroad and English speakers were collected and sorted both chronologically and thematically.

The second data set includes various ethnographic data collected through qualitative interview with participants, daily observation, and recording of naturally occurring conversations among focal participants. Since qualitative interview allows researchers to understand more in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions (Rubin & Rubin, 2004), I first conducted qualitative interview with all the participants to understand their educational trajectories and language learning trajectories, their language practices and their perception on themselves and other groups of South Korean bilinguals. Each interview lasted one to three hours and all the interviews were conducted in Korean with occasional code-switching. I also collected naturally occurring conversation and computer-mediated conversation among focal participants over a period of one year in order to conceptualize different layers of semiotic processes generated by language users. Conversation data were collected through audio-recordings of monthly social gatherings by the researcher, which constitutes approximately 20 hours of audiotaped data. Each participant was asked to voluntarily audio-record other conversations with one another, and 10 hours of recording data were collected by the participants. I also observed and collected online discourse data among participants including text messages, computer-mediated interaction in an online social networking site, and online messaging throughout the research period. 330 entries of online conversation were collected and thematically analyzed. In addition to the collection of offline and online interaction data, the observation notes were written right after each meeting in order to capture non-verbal gestures, participants' feelings, and tensions or atmosphere surrounding the meeting, which could not be informed by the audio-recorded data. I also maintained field notes throughout the research period in order to document different events, activities, discussions and conversation among participants that are relevant to research topics.

Topics of their conversation and interactions vary greatly, including academic issues, personal relationships, marriage, celebrities, gossip about other South Korean students, sports, career plans, family and food. Most of their conversations were constituted in Korean though occasional code-switching and code-mixing were observed. None of the meetings or interactions was artificially arranged for research purposes, and none of the topics was purposefully specified by the researcher. Since interactional data were collected in naturally occurring conversation settings among participants who have known each other for a relatively long time and maintained an intimate relationship, they often contain gossip, “one of the most “hidden” of hidden transcripts” (Besnier, 2009b, p. 12). Gossip enables me as a researcher to observe how participants truly make sense of themselves and others in relation to surrounding events, social discourses and tensions (Gluckman, 1963; Merry, 1984).

### **Data Analysis**

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) define qualitative data analysis as “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others” (p 145). To effectively analyze multi-scaled qualitative data, I used the grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000, 2001; Strauss & Cobin, 1990) that enables researchers to work with data and draw generalizable patterns and meanings from the data rather than imposing constructed hypothesis.

Data analysis was done throughout the whole research period. Right after each meeting or interview, I listened the audiotaped data and read observation notes, and then created the timeline chart that shows the flow of conversation and different issues addressed in the moment-to-moment contexts. Specific themes and patterns of conversation were noted in a memo file.

During the weekend after the meeting or interview occurred, I listened to the audiotaped data again and transcribed them. While doing transcription, I wrote down thoughts and ideas that occurred to me so that I could later revisit these memos and find some possible themes and concepts (McCormack, 2000; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I also revisited all the observation notes and the time chart to examine reoccurring issues, patterns and themes across different interaction and interview data. All the interactional data were transcribed in Korean but only the selected conversation data were translated in English for further analysis. I selected data that are directly related to research questions including participants' positionality and language practices. The transcribed data were translated and analyzed by researcher, and member-checked by other participants for increasing the accuracy of data and decreasing the danger of biased interpretation (Hatch, 2002). I then systematically examined different data sets and analytic memos to look for reoccurring patterns, themes, events and perceptions relevant to research questions. All the transcripts were first color-coded and later thematically organized into separate data units.

As part of the process of media discourse analysis, I created two sets of charts using chronological and thematic groupings, and sorted news articles accordingly. Using these two charts, I cross-compared how historical and sociopolitical changes have generated different construction of English education, English language, and English speakers in contemporary South Korean society.

### **The Role of the Researcher**

Similar to my participants and many English-Korean bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society, I am always treading on thin ice between being a successful bilingual and a global citizen, and being a failed bilingual whose English skill and/or overseas education only articulate one's failed status. Born and raised in South Korea, I identify myself as a native

speaker of Korean, but I am still not comfortable publicly identifying myself as an English-Korean bilingual after seven years in the United States, including my short early study-abroad experience. Rather, I feel more comfortable identifying myself as a Spanish language learner or even a Spanish-Korean bilingual (though my Spanish is barely intermediate) because it does not involve any evaluative stance and bifurcated gaze or any forms of socially constructed expectations circulated in South Korean society. Even though I need to constantly negotiate my positionality as a bilingual across different settings, I always find it difficult to encounter South Korean students during my tutoring sessions in my job as a writing tutor: how much Korean or American do I have to be? How much ownership of English can I claim to have? Then, I remember that I had the exact same question while teaching returnee students in South Korea a few years ago.

The awareness of my fragile position and my own dilemma have made me more observant about how other English-Korean bilinguals locate themselves in relation to these floating language ideologies and claim their legitimacy. As a fragile bilingual myself who participates in the semiotic process of authentication and differentiation, I situate myself as a co-participant who shares experiences and co-constructs meanings with other participants with the sense of double consciousness that enables me to be a co-participant and a reflective researcher at the same time.

I am well aware of the possibility that my own positionality and perception, along with the fact that I share a similar educational and sociocultural background with my participants, can either provide me with an emic perspective for understanding the participants or hinder me from having an objective and biased-free interpretation. Since qualitative researchers are part of the research where their perceptions, experiences and stances shape how to conduct research and

how to interpret research data (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Emerson et al., 1995; MacBeth, 2001; Stake, 2000), I believe that my reflexive awareness allows me to have more in-depth understanding of participants' positionality, linguistic practices and metapragmatic work. In addition, my positioning as an insider and my close relationship with participants construct a shared status among the researcher and participants, which then facilitates a certain degree of trust and openness in my participants (Adler & Adler, 1987; Kanuha, 2000). This shared status enables me to access their intimate conversation such as gossip and solicit their more honest answers during the interview, which would likely not have been available to 'outsider' researchers (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

### **Chapter 3. Historical Construction of Languages and Language Practices in South Korea**

In the context of neo-globalization and late-capitalism, English has spread widely across the world and become a key element for success in various countries. As English has gained significant power and hence restructured local language dynamics, many scholars have adopted different approaches to examine how the global spread of English has generated a new English-oriented market and created new hybrid forms of languages. Even though traditional approaches such as World Englishes has shown how the global spread of English has generated varieties of English, they fail to capture the dynamic relation between English as a ‘global’ language and other local languages. More recent approaches consider language a social capital and a global commodity and explain the global spread of English and intense investment in English as a result of neoliberal globalization (e.g., Gal, 2012; Heller, 2003; Heller & Duchêne, 2012). As Park and Wee (2013) point out, the neoliberal logic of commodification and its market-oriented discourses, however, cannot fully explain the constantly evolving and changing indexicality of English. They argue that we need to examine more macro semiotic processes to understand the locally grounded and historically contingent linguistic value of English unique to the given society. Similar claims can be found in literature written in the field of critical applied linguistics, poststructuralist theories and linguistic anthropology where languages are understood as historical and sociopolitical situated accounts (e.g., Agha, 2007; Foucault, 1972; Pennycook, 2001; Weedon, 1987). Pennycook (2001), for example, stresses the importance of looking at historical contexts and developing an historical understanding in order to fully conceptualize the politics of languages and diversity in a given society, because “we exist as historical beings, how the words we use and the interactions we engage in are historically located” (p. 68).

Although one cannot deny the growing importance of English as a medium of global communication, their claims remind us of the importance of looking at the historically and socially constructed meaning of English unique to the specific speech community rather than simply assuming that English would be understood as a global language or a global commodity across the globe. The social meaning of English in many postcolonial countries, for example, cannot be fully explained without looking at the colonial relationship between colonized and colonizer and existing historical tensions (e.g., Pennycook, 1998; Schneider, 2007). Not only postcolonial countries, but also those countries where English is used as a foreign language have constructed their own ways of understanding and valuing English in relation to particular historical contexts and the local language dynamics. In other words, we need to look at historically and socially situated construct of English in order to conceptualize what English means in a given speech community.

Like many countries that have experienced rapid sociopolitical changes and neoliberal globalization, South Korea has been under the constant restructuring of its language hierarchies as different languages were introduced and affected the domestic linguistic market. By critically analyzing South Korean history and historical narratives, this chapter explores how languages have been differently represented across different historical moments by different historical players, and how selectively appropriated historical narratives have constructed typified chronotopic images of languages that often link a group of typified speakers (c.f., Agha, 2007). In particular, this chapter aims to demonstrate the historically and socially situated nature of English that reflect various sociopolitical changes and the constantly shifting local language dynamics. Based on historical analysis, it argues that English does not only serve as a global language but also entails postcolonial discourses and nationalist discourses in South Korea. It

further demonstrates how such complex construct of English and its dynamic social meaning have generated a binary evaluation of ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ English, and hence complicated contemporary linguistic market of South Korea.

### **Historical Narratives as Construed Truth**

Unlike the past when history and historical narratives were generally accepted as a transparent description of what had happened, more and more scholars start to question the validity of historical narratives, historical events and history itself. Prasenjit Duara, one of the well-respected historians who first raised a question about the power-laden nature of historical narratives, argues that historical narratives are the retrospective construction of historical events and historical figures, which have been carefully constructed and selectively appropriated according to the needs of historical players and present needs (Duara, 1995). Based on his historical reinterpretation of modern China, he further claims that historically constructed representations have powerful reality effects because they help individuals make a connection between the present and the past so that individuals can rely on already-circulating chronotopic representations to understand the present event. He also emphasizes the process of selective appropriation and its uptake by individuals who then become a part of evaluative process:

In trying to capture the dispersed event, social forces return it to the memory of an evolving narrative. The event which is returned, is recognized through a metaphoric or metonymic association with the memory of past events. As such, although it recasts both event and memory and reconstitutes the linearity of the process, the appropriation process is not entirely arbitrary. Not all events can equally be made to enhance the narrative. The selection is conditioned by a logic of historical and cultural affinity (p. 79).

In the same vein, Foucault (1977) who was influenced by Nietzsche argues that history is a constellation of selected historical events and narratives, and hence requires a critical evaluation and appropriation. Such arguments, along with Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined community", have encouraged scholars to look at the power-laden construction of history and historical narratives in the last two decades. Wells (1999), for example, demonstrates how male-centered historical perspective and its selected appropriation of historical narratives have constructed 'history' of South Korea, where a highly feminized image of South Korean women have been constantly articulated and the existence of alternative narratives about these women have been deliberately obscured. More focusing on the association between the past and the present, Choi H. (2013) examines how the traditionally imagined ideal of 'wise mother and good wife' (hyŏnmoyangchŏ) and its value-laden discourses have easily facilitated the construction of the New Woman (sin yŏsŏng) in modern Korea as being selfish, arrogant and indulgent. Even though their arguments and analysis stay on the past, these chronotopes of the New Woman or 'wise mother and good wife' are often projected onto women in contemporary South Korea. They then are often used as the authentic tool to judge contemporary group of South Korean women and frame them as the 'new' New Woman type who is equally selfish and wild-tempered thus fail to fulfill the ideal womanhood. In other words, these selectively appropriated historical narratives and representations, through the process of metapragmatic typification (Agha, 2007), have indexed recognizable social values associated with languages, language practices and language speakers, and enabled individuals to easily identify them in their daily lives and to involve in the process of evaluative response.

These historical representations, however, are not fixed, but are in the constant process of change and negotiation across different historical moments and spaces, reflecting unique

historical contexts, sociopolitical tensions, particular interests of historical players, and local dynamics. Even though they have functioned as authentic and authoritative discourses and exercised such power in contemporary linguistic market, few scholars in the fields of applied linguistics and education have emphasized the importance of looking at the underlying ideological construction of historically authenticated representations related to languages, language registers, linguistic practices and language speakers, rather simply understanding them as a transparent portrayal of historical events and historical figures. In other words, time and space coordinates embedded in particular personhood have been mapped onto different historical moments and historical players and reproduced a certain ideological stance.

In problematizing previous studies that tend to view languages as an automatic linguistic structure and undermine the importance of locating languages and language practices in social life, Agha (2007, 2011) introduces the notion of “language-culture-people” hybrid, which describes the inextricable connections among languages, cultures, models of personhood and language practices as ensemble. He, using the example of Received Pronunciation (RP) that has been viewed as a prestigious form associated with a small group of socio-politically privileged people in Britain, argues that a particular language and linguistic features have been typified in specific characterological terms (e.g., RP is typified as an indexical emblem of one’s privileged socio-political status and become an identifiable emblem in Britain), and employed typified models of personhood associated with them, including typified ways of how to think, act, believe and speak (e.g., RP is associated with the image of the large aristocratic gentleman who wears the expensive tuxedo with a well-groomed moustache and shows proper social demeanors, see Agha, 2007, p. 197-199 for more details). In other words, metapragmatic typifications formulate certain meanings for specific linguistic registers and semiotic display, imbuing typified

personhood and socially routinized metapragmatic features associated with these identifiable linguistic signs. According to him, such models have been produced and transformed in social history in order to become identifiable and deployable indexical emblems in the given society. Similarly, Bakhtin (1981) who emphasizes the importance of looking at chronotope argues that chronotope and its spatiotemporal indicators combine different scales of time and space with “image of man” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 85), a specific depiction of personhood in time and space. Their arguments, along with recent studies on chronotopic representations of languages, people and culture (e.g., Bucholtz, 2011; Bucholtz & Lopez, 2011; Dick, 2010; Inoue, 2006; Lo & Kim, 2012; Moore, 2011; Wortham et al., 2009), highlight the fact that chronotopic representations not only provide shared meaning of a particular language and linguistic features, but also link particular models of personhood with certain time and space.

In order to understand the broad picture of contemporary linguistic market and its hidden power dynamics, the following section examines historical representations of languages, linguistic practices and language speakers across different historical moments: (a) Chinese and Korean in the Chōsun dynasty from 14th to the late 19th centuries, (b) Chinese, English, Japanese and Korean in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, (c) English and Korean from 1940s to mid-1990s, and (d) English and Korean from the mid-1990s to the present.

### **Historical Representation of Languages in South Korea**

#### **A. Chinese and Korean in the Chōsun Dynasty from 14<sup>th</sup> to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

Before hunmin chōngūm (훈민정음, 訓民正音) was invented in 1446, hanmun (漢文), the writing system of the Han Chinese, was used as a major form of writing in Korea, along with three other writing systems of kugyōl (口訣), hyangch'al (鄉札), and idu (吏讀) that modify hanmun to suitably represent Korean language and its pronunciation. Hanmun is known

as the earliest writing system used in the Korean peninsula<sup>1</sup> and its exclusive usage among members of the aristocrat elite (yangban, 兩班)<sup>2</sup> and upper classes made it become the most prestigious writing system in Korea. Hunmin chŏngŭm, later known as han'gŭl, was officially promulgated in 1446 by King Sejong the Great (1397-1450) as an attempt to design the indigenous writing system for Korean people. As hunmin chŏngŭm literally means “proper sounds to instruct people”, King Sejong the Great invented han'gŭl as an attempt to provide a proper tool to his people: “The sounds of our language differ from those of China and are not easily conveyed in Chinese writing... Thinking of these, my people, with compassion, We have newly devised a script of twenty-eight letters, only that it become possible for anyone to readily learn it and use it to advantage in his everyday life” (cited in Eckert et al., 1990, p. 124). Despite his novel intention, hanmun maintained its prestigious status as the official form of writings for the next several decades while han'gŭl was rejected by many scholars and aristocrat elites as being too ‘simple’. Indeed, han'gŭl was mostly associated with the lower classes and women, and its usage was limited in materials specifically written for women and children (Lee & Ramsey, 2011; Oliver, 1993).

Since hanmun was functioned as one of most visible emblems that indexed one's prestigious status in the Chŏsun dynasty (1392-1910) and legitimized one's academic and political excellency, the invention of hunmin chŏngŭm and its initial goal of providing a unified writing system for everyone was not welcomed by the upper class and the members of the elite

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<sup>1</sup> Even though scholars are still debating on when hanmun was introduced in the Korean peninsula, some historical evidences indicate that hanmun was first used in Korea around the first century B.C. (Hyun, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Yangban is a group of the aristocrat elite constituted the dominant social class in the Chŏsun dynasty, who had the privilege of governing. Yanban preserved their prestigious positions by only marrying among themselves (see Eckert et al., 1990 for more details).

whose interests laid primarily in maintaining their prestigious position (Hyun, 2004). Most scholars, except those who had participated in the creation of *hunmin chŏngŭm*, called it *ŏnmun* (諺文), a term that vulgarizes *han'gŭl* compared to the prestigious and sophisticated writing form of *hanmun*. The invention of *hunmin chŏngŭm* deepened the complexity of writing systems that closely reflected the class and gender dynamics in the Chŏsun dynasty (Hyun, 2004): (a) *hanmun* was viewed as the language of the elite used in the formal writings and the medium of the highest-level state examination (*kwagŏ*), (b) other modified writing systems, the less prestigious ones compared to *hanmun*, were generally used by the middle people (*chugin*, 中人)<sup>3</sup>, and (c) *han'gŭl* was widely framed as a language for uneducated and lower-class people, children and women until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century where scholars started to revisit the value of this unique writing system and view it as an indexical emblem of Korean national identity. Indeed, most of *han'gŭl* writings that were written in this historical period were found in vernacular novels written by the lower class and in correspondence and personal narratives written by women, which were not even valued as literary works at that time (Lee & Ramsey, 2011).

### **B. Chinese, English, Japanese and Korean in the Late 19th and the Early 20th Centuries**

As the Chŏsun dynasty had undergone various foreign invasions and forceful persuasion to open its port to foreign countries around the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it had experienced the emergence of newly articulated historical narratives to emphasize the nation, national language and national identities. After the Chŏsun dynasty was compelled to open its port to the Japanese and other foreigners in the 1870s, more and more historical works had appeared to arouse patriotic sentiment among Korean people by revisiting historical figures who defeated foreign

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<sup>3</sup> While *yangban* mostly held their privilege of governing and their duty was to study Confucian doctrine, *chugin* refers to those who occupied professional positions in public office (e.g., medical officers, translators and accountants). They did not belong to *yangban* class, but they

invasions, tracing national and ethnic origins to prove a long-standing ethnic and national homogeneity, and articulating the value of han'gŭl as the unique and the most scientific writing system designed solely for Korean people (Shin, 2006; Shin & Robinson, 1999). This new sociopolitical changes and newly emerged historical narratives had resulted the construction of a new linguistic hierarchy among different languages used in Korean peninsula and transformed the social meaning of each language or writing system: (a) han'gŭl became an indexical emblem of national and ethnic identities, (b) English was first understood as a language of enemy and then became a tool to achieve independence, (c) hanmun gradually lost its prestige and its usage was minimized, and (d) Japanese became a medium of communication and education under Japanese imperialism (1910-1945).

In the mid- and late- 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chōsun dynasty insisted on a general policy of isolationism (*swaeguk chōngtoch'aek*) to protect the nation from foreign invasions, treating everything related to Western people (*sōyang orangk'ae*, the literal translation is “Western barbarians”) as a national threat and accusing the Korean people who were favorable to Westerners of betraying their nation. The stone monument, *chekhwapi* (the literal translation is “the monument about the rejection of negotiation”, 斥和碑), that was built by the Chōsun dynasty in 1871 after two foreign disturbances of 1866 and 1881 by France and the United States respectively, illustrates well the hostile and xenophobic attitude of the Chōsun dynasty toward Western nations. An inscription on the monument states: “If Western barbarians invade [our] country and [we choose] not to fight, that means we are making a peace agreement and thus selling [our] country.” This stone monument was placed in major areas of the Chōsun dynasty to promote national unity against continuous foreign invasions and foreigners’ strong demands for

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tended to preserve relatively privileged positions compared to commoners (Eckert et al., 1990).

opening the domestic market. The national isolation policy and its strong xenophobic attitude naturally posited Western languages including English as a language of Western barbarians, their enemy.

Even though the Chōsun dynasty tried to prevent any foreign penetration in their territory, the constant invasions of foreign nations with their troops made it difficult for the Chōsun dynasty to keep pursuing its national isolationist policy. In 1887, the Kanghwa Treaty between the Chōsun dynasty and Japan forced the Chōsun dynasty to open its market to other foreign nations, and made it become an export market (Eckert, 1991). This treaty not only brought the gradual penetration of ‘advanced’ Western goods and cultures into the Chōsun dynasty under Japanese rule but also introduced English as a tool for communicating with foreigners, and later as a necessary means for defeating the Japanese invasion. Since English was recognized as an essential tool for establishing diplomatic relations with other nations (Kwon and Kim, 2010), and schools for English education were established (Park, 2009) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, English started to be viewed as key to achieving social mobility and bringing personal or national development to Korea. As missionaries spread Western liberal ideas that promoted a national consciousness and a national identity among the Korean people (Eckert et al., 1990), English was also seen as an ‘advanced’ language that could enlighten the Korean people with advanced ideas and thoughts and eventually help them bring national independence.

In this period, the small number of Korean elites who received overseas education started to argue for the immediate needs of learning English in order to bring enlightenment and national development by absorbing more advanced Western technologies and materials. Yun Chiho who is known as the first English translator and English educator in Korean history states that it was a well-known active reform party member who made him realize the urgent needs of learning

English; “In 1882, Kim Okkyun recommended that I learn English so that we [Koreans] could learn Western civilization directly, and not through Japan” (Donga Ilbo, 1930: 5, cited in Kwon & Kim, 2010, p. 15). After receiving education from Vanderbilt University and Emory University, Yun worked as director of the Anglo-Korean School (*hanyǒng sǒwǒn*), teaching English to Korean students and publishing English textbooks (Kim M., 2006). Similarly, many Korean elites in this period strived for English education with their firm belief that English could bring national development and set Korean people free from Japanese imperialism (Kwon & Kim, 2010). As English had become a language for achieving independence, a small group of selected elites who received overseas education and had high English proficiency were naturally framed as nationalists and ‘legitimate’ national leaders. Whereas under the Chōsun Dynasty Chinese indexed elitism and high social status, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries English, preferably combined with overseas education, became the symbolic emblem that indexes one’s social status. The sociopolitical change in this period not only shifted linguistic hierarchies but also invited women to receive higher education and possibly overseas education through missionaries (Yoo, 2008).

Meanwhile, nationalist historians such as Sin Ch’aeho began to undertake various historical works to articulate ‘authentic’ national and ethnic identity in reaction to Japanese aggression and rapidly growing colonialist discourses (Em, 1999). The newly emerging historical narratives between the late 1890s and the 1910s highly praised the accomplishment of traditional heroes (e.g., Lee Sunsin and King Kwangaeto<sup>4</sup>) and emphasized ethnic, cultural and

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<sup>4</sup> Lee Sunsin (1545-1598) is one of the greatest men in Korean history whose statue is currently located in the center of Seoul, the capital of South Korea. He was a leading admiral who successfully defeated Japanese in the Japanese invasion of 1592. King Kwangaeto (374-412) is one of the greatest kings in Korean history who greatly expanded his kingdom up to the northern China.

linguistic homogeneity and uniqueness of Korea that could be traced back to Tan'gun (2333 B.C.E.), the legendary founding father of Korea, in order to arouse patriotic sentiments among Korean people. As the one language-one nation ideology reinforces the national unity with its essentialist equation, nationalists put a strong emphasis on the unique value of han'gŭl and framed it as the most valuable and prestigious emblem that demonstrates the uniqueness, purity and superiority of Korea over others. This movement primarily led by Chu sigyong, a leading nationalist linguistic scholar who advocated the immediate needs of minimizing the usage of hanmun and actively using 'our language', han'gŭl (Oliver, 1993). He, along with other nationalists, also started to promote the use of more nationalistic terms such as "han'gŭl", "kugo (a national language, 國語)" and "kungmun (a national alphabet, 國文)"<sup>5</sup> to substitute for the term "ŏnmun". Under the Japanese imperialism, language scholars and nationalists had continuously worked on promoting the usage of han'gŭl through various campaigns and publication, and trying to refine han'gŭl through the unification of han'gŭl orthography (Lee & Ramsey, 2011). Such attempts had clearly represented han'gŭl as a national language that is closely associated with independence and national unity, and made han'gŭl become an indexical symbol of national and ethnic identities.

The growing importance of English and han'gŭl as a major tool to achieve independence is well-illustrated in language choice of the Korean-English bilingual newspaper "The Independent" (*toklipsinmun*) in 1896. This newspaper was published by Seo Jayphil (also known as Philip Jaisohn) as an attempt to arouse a national consciousness among the Korean people and to appeal to international communities for their help. By using both Korean and English, this

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<sup>5</sup> The term "han'gŭl" came from hunmin chŏngŭm, and both the terms "kugŏ" and "kungmun" mean national language (Oliver, 1993).

newspaper made the Korean people to see the importance of English as an international language that could make Korea become independent from Japan, while emphasizing the significant role of Korean (han'gŭl) as a national language that could be used and understood by all the Koreans from upper to lower classes (Kwon & Kim, 2010).

### **C. English and Korean From 1940s to Mid 1990s**

The nationalist discourses still remained prominent in Korea after 1945 when Japanese imperialism ended and the United States placed their troops in the Korean peninsula, and after 1953 when the Korean War (1950-1953) ended and Korea was divided into North and South Korea. To legitimize their political stance and spread anti-Communism sentiments, South Korean leaders actively produced nationalist discourses of one bloodedness and descendants of Tan'gun, and strongly urged the Korean people develop strong faith in ethnic unity and purity (Shin, 2006). The same discourses were used to prioritize national development over other political agendas and later to justify dictatorship and military regime. Unlike the national isolationist policy of the Chōsun dynasty, these nationalist discourses did not entail xenophobia but rather articulating the needs of accepting advanced Western knowledge and goods in order to accelerate national development<sup>6</sup> (Shin, 2006). As the national development became the overarching political agenda and South Korea was under the overwhelming influence of the United States, the importance of English as an international language that could enable international trading and strengthen national economy became prominent in South Korea (Kwon & Kim, 2010).

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<sup>6</sup> President Park, for example, stated that Koreans “must accept, assimilate, and digest superior aspects of foreign civilization, while rejecting and repudiating any element that is injurious, decadent, or incompatible with our own cultural traditions (Park, 1979, p. 196, cited in Shin, 2006).

In this context, it is not surprising that Rhee Sungman, a well-known pro-American politician who received a Ph.D. from Princeton University, became the first Korean president in 1948. To emphasize the urgent need to foster elites who could develop the post-colonial and post-war nation, president Rhee (1948-1960) founded a government scholarship program in 1958 and sent selected elite students to the United States or England to receive advanced education. As the main purpose of this program was to foster a younger generation of elites who could bring rapid growth to the national economy with advanced scientific knowledge, many grantees of this scholarship program have occupied positions of importance in South Korean society and have been widely known as national leaders with their overseas degrees and fluent English proficiency. The program was ceased in 1960 for political reasons and resumed by president Park Chung-hee in 1977. Since the opportunities for learning English had been applied in a restricted way to a small group of socio-politically privileged groups due to dictatorship (1963-1979) and following military regime (1980-1993), English and overseas education had not only become an indexical emblem of elitism and high social status but also reflected one's endeavor to bring national development. The influx of American troops that started in 1945, however, resulted in the emergence of a new group of English speakers in South Korea who directly or indirectly worked for and worked with the American GIs, including *yanggongju* (洋公主, Western princess, literally meaning "Western whore"), *hausŭpoi* (houseboy, a young and poor boy who worked at the American military camps in Korea), and people who lived in *kichich'on* (military camptown). Given the fact that there were 62 camptowns in South Korea around the late 1970s (Lee, 1989) and the estimated number of the Western princess only was around 300,000, this new group of English speakers quickly became socially visible in South Korean society. In this context, the group of elites with overseas education and the group of people who worked for the American

GIs became the first ‘visible’ groups of English speakers in South Korea, who had an access to native English speakers and who had to learn English in order to either achieve national development through their advanced education from foreign nations or survive in poverty by involving themselves in illegal or vulgar business with American GIs and working as prostitutes, errand boys, or black marketers (Lee J., 2010). While the first group of English speakers mostly came from socio-politically privileged backgrounds and their English indexed their legitimacy in society, the second group tended to come from a low social class and their English indexed the nature of their job, which made other people to look down upon them.

While English had been widely understood as a tool for national development and global language, Korean language had continuously been framed as a unique national language after liberation in this historical period. As the independent Korea needed its independent language and later the democratization of its language, the Korean government had put effort in purifying the Korean language and eradicating the colonial remnant of Japanese and traditional usage of Chinese (Park, 1989). In 1948, the Korean government established the committee for the Korean language purification, and this government-led committee, along with other social associations, had actively replaced Japanese loanwords with Korean or Sino-Korean words and advocated the usage of Korean over hanmun. The use of Western words also became a target of Korean purification movements because most Western words were thought to be introduced by Japanese under Japanese imperialism and entail Japanese-influenced linguistic forms and pronunciation (Lee & Ramsey, 2011).

#### **D. English and Korean from the Mid-1990s to the Present**

With the end of the military dictatorship in 1987, the emergence of the first civilian government in 1993 and an oppositional party government in 1998, the developmental and

political regime in South Korea has changed from an authoritarian regime to a democratic, neo-developmental regime (Cho, 2000; Song, 2011). While the later regime operates by implementing neoliberal governing tactics, which encourage people to maximize individual fulfillment and desire (Yi, 2002), the New Economic Policy (*sin'gyŏngje chŏngch'aek*) and the Globalization Policy (*sekyehwa chŏngch'aek*) advocated by the government of Kim Yengsam (1993-1998) supported global mobility and the process of state-supported globalization. Toward the end of his five-year presidency, however, the East Asian financial crisis (often referred as 'IMF crisis' or simply 'IMF') began on November 1997, which forced South Korea to receive monetary support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to open its domestic market to international investors and companies (Kim S., 2000; Koo, 2007). While the IMF era consolidated financial capital as a driving force for national and individual well-being, it enhanced labor market flexibility with the increasing number of vulnerable workers, and intensified social inequality and class reproduction anxiety (Lee, K., 2011; Song, 2011). Post-IMF South Korea has also experienced social polarization in that high-income jobs became more available with the increasing governmental support for information technology while the flexibilization of labor market continued (Lee K., 2011; Shin, 2011). In this context, the newly emerging neoliberal governance projects ideal workers as self-managed and self-developed individuals who can "display initiative, vitality, flexibility, and responsibility as they engage in their work" (Park J., 2011, p. 453). Neoliberal workers, therefore, are expected to be in the process of constant self-development, trying to equip themselves with valued skills and well-achieved test scores that can prove their endeavor of self-improvement.

Since English in neoliberalism becomes a key for domestic and global success, English is understood as one of the most valuable forms of capital and marketable skills in contemporary

South Korea (Park J., 2009, 2011, Park & Bae, 2009; Park & Lo, 2012). In other words, people are expected to have high levels of English proficiency, with a high score in certified English assessments including TOEIC and TOFEL and preferably with overseas study, in order to apply for more stable and better-paying positions. Because English not only demonstrates one's linguistic skill but also entails one's successful alignment to the neoliberal labor structure and neoliberal subjectivity, high levels of English proficiency index one's personhood of being 'diligent', 'hard-working', and 'trustworthy' in South Korea (Park J., 2010). In addition, mediatized success stories often depict how successful English learners' endless endeavors to learn English eventually brought them a promising future, and present their usage of fluent English as a symbolic emblem of their constant efforts and their legitimacy in contemporary South Korean society. Being surrounded by these discourses, individuals are forced to blame themselves for their poor English proficiency and their undesirable status in the market (Abelmann et al. 2009; Park J., 2010), and to accept the typified personhood of being 'lazy' and 'idle' that is associated with their lack of English proficiency. English proficiency thus becomes the indexical symbol that can tell not only one's ability to succeed in the society but also one's personal characteristics.

As the growing emphasis on English and English education generates a dramatic increase of people with high English proficiency through their investment in English or study-abroad experience (Park S., 2011; Park & Lo, 2012; Song, 2010), English alone cannot be the 'authentic' indicator to regulate the overly crowded market with 'equally' qualified candidates who are equipped with a good command of English and overseas education. In other words, English itself cannot guarantee people to be succeed in society. Rather than solely celebrating the important role of English and English education, mass mediated discourses started to present more

diversified an' “domesticated” (Kang & Abelmann, 2011), which critically review the ways of speaking, learning and using English, and authenticate a certain group of English speakers and their linguistic registers while marginalizing others. For example, mass mediated discourses provide ‘how-to’ and ‘how-not-to’ discourses with a detailed guideline of when and where to send children abroad for ‘better’ English acquisition, and even construct a certain group of ESA students as a potential failure due to their ‘wrong’ ways of doing ESA. The increasing number of English speakers in South Korea also arouses suspicion about their authenticity in terms of their English, their educational background, their foreign experience and their morality. Indeed, many returnees have experienced situations where they are forced to prove their authenticity or legitimacy by publicly showing their university diploma, showing off their fluent English skills through English tests or English-medium interviews, or even visiting their professors and staffs in a foreign university to prove their successful graduation. Their authenticity as a Korean speaker and further a legitimate Korean is often questioned in that Korean language has been strongly associated with national and ethnic identities.

Not only English language speakers and returnees, but also different English varieties existed in South Korea has been continuously received a suspicious gaze. Even though Lee and Ramsey (2011) state that all the English loan words are welcomed in contemporary South Korean society, not all the English loan words, English varieties and English-influenced words are understood as an authentic English or an indexical emblem of one’s cosmopolitanism. For

examples, Konglish<sup>7</sup>, a mixed language of Korean and English (Hinton, 2001) and codified Korean English (Shim, 1999), has been framed as a ‘bad/broken English’ in contemporary South Korean society (Park & Wee, 2009, 2012). Despite the fact that Konglish has been widely accepted and used in South Korea and can be interpreted as a new hybrid form of language or a sign of glocalization, the word Konglish has been exchangeably used with the ‘broken English’ or ‘bad’ English in both academia and South Korean society, which often follows with an intensive discussion of why Konglish is bad and how to correct Konglish. Konglish is unlikely to be distinguished by any specific linguistic features or rules, but a label is widely used in South Korea to illegitimate the particular groups of English speakers or to indicate them as bad bilinguals (c.f., Henry, 2009). The following news article titled “Stop using Konglish and Konglish abbreviations that either English or American cannot understand” that was written by an English journalist provides an excellent example of how media discourse and its underlying ideology portrait Konglish as something ‘funny’, which Korean people need to correct immediately.

Nobody can deny the importance of English. But this can be only true when we use ‘a proper English in a proper way’. Stop making new and funny [Konglish] words, which native English speakers neither use nor understand (Alper, 2008).

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<sup>7</sup> Konglish has been defined as English loanwords (Tranter, 1976), a mixed language of Korean and English (Hinton, 2001), codified Korean English (Shim, 1999), Korean English with Korean syntax (Kim, 2002) or ‘bad/ broken English’ (Park & Wee, 2009). Konglish, however, cannot be simply defined as such in that it incorporates different elements of English, Korean and other languages, and often produces a new hybrid form rather than merely borrowing foreign loanwords or having a codified variety. Indeed, Konglish can be defined via mixed English vocabulary (e.g., 스킨쉽 [skin+ ship]), via mixed language of English and other languages (e.g., 빌지 [bill +紙 (paper)]), via Koreanized English pronunciation (e.g., 바나나 [banana], /panana/) or via grammatically incorrect English expressions used by Korean speakers.

The article, using the authoritative voice of a British journalist, highlights the urgent needs of stop using ‘funny’ and ‘shameful’ Konglish among Korean speakers because Konglish cannot be understood by ‘authoritative’ native English speakers, either British or American. Some newspapers even run a weekly column where well-respected English experts lament the ‘unintelligent’ Konglish speakers and correct their ‘psuedo-anglicist’ English usage. They all claim that Konglish is inauthentic English that could neither bring the national development nor prepare individuals to become a global citizen, but only a source of shame that reveals South Korean’s poor English performance and eventually damages the purity of Korean language.

The growing number of English-Korean bilinguals has not only generated suspicions towards their authenticity, but also resulted the reemphasis on hanmun as a reaction to the ever-increasing emphasis on English in contemporary South Korean society. Whlie English is seen as a language of newly emerging global elites who are mostly young and cosmopolitan, hanmun is strongly associated with older and conservative statu-quo elites in contemporary South Korean society. Even though these conservative elites do not deny the role of English as a global language, they often publicly express their unwavering belief in hanmun, a ‘true’ elite language that reflects the oriental wisdom and entails Korean tradition, and lament the exteremely low literacy rate of hanmun among the young generation. In 1998, the National Association for Hanmun Education (chöngukhanmunkyoyukchongyönhaphoe) was established by concerned scholars, politicians and citizen to promote haumun education in all school levels and mandate hanmun education in elementary schools. They claim that hanmun needs to be considered the base of han’gŭl and hence another form of Korean language. In this context, Seoul Metropolitan Office of Educaition established Council for Advancement and Support of Hanmun Education in

2013 to promote hanmun education in elementary and middle schools, and reduce hanmun illiteracy rate.

More and more South Korean media started to shed new light on the ‘true’ value of hanmun, which cannot be achieved through English education and/or han’gŭl education. Media discourses also frame hanmun as traditional language that embraces the oriental wisdom, and enables Korean language speakers to better understand Korean and Korean culture (e.g., Hwang, 2009; Kim, Y., 2009). For example, the following news article written in Donga Ilbo depicts hanmun as a ‘must-know’ language in the global world: “There is a report saying that more hanmun people know, the more in-depth thoughts and behaviors they have because they tend to read more books and newspapers... We need to value our Korean language, and English education is also important in this global world. I believe that it is equally important to familiarize ourselves to hanmun, which is vital to develop the oriental wisdom” (Kim Y., 2008). Her argument is also articulated in her title of “企業이 ‘漢字 人材’ 좋아하는 理由” (kiöpi ‘hancha inchaē’ choahanŭn iyu, The reason company likes talented people who know hanmun), where she purposefully chooses to use hanmun instead of Korean and appeal to readers who could read these hanmun to agree with her argument. In addition, hanmun has been often represented as a language of ‘true’ elites used by CEOs, politicians and professors. In the following pictures from the news articles, both the former president Lee Myung-bak and the Society of Professor, for example, chose to publicly use hanmun and Chinese calligraphy, instead of Korean or English, in New Year’s greeting (see figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1. Lee Myung-bak and hanmun/calligraphy (Park, 2006 in Donga Ilbo)

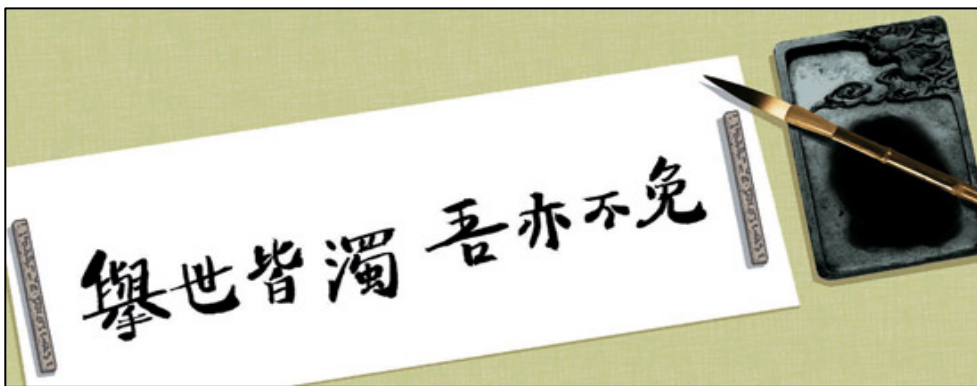


Figure 2. The Society of Professors and hanmun/calligraphy (Noh, 2012 in Chungang Ilbo)

The above pictures are followed by a detailed explanation of what these hanmun mean in Korean, which Chinese classic literature they originally come from, and how they fit into the current sociopolitical situation in South Korea. Given the fact that these newspapers provide detailed explanation about hanmun for their readers, we can see hanmun is constructed as an exclusive group marker for a selected group of ‘true’ elites, which cannot be used or understood by other people without further help. In this context, it is not surprising to see more and more South

Korean professors deplore the new generation's lack of human literacy skills, which is closely linked to their lack of "basic grounding" and "sophistication".

Consequently, one's failure to demonstrate a certain level of hanmun skills is often framed as a source of shame and dishonor. For example, the recent news article in Donga Ilbo describes a man who does not know hanmun 'stupid' and 'ill-educated': "Your boyfriend is unsophisticated. Even though he is always bragging about everything as if he knows all, he becomes completely mute when needed. The other day, you were reading newspapers with him and there was a difficult hanmun idiom. You asked him its meaning and then his face turned deadly pale. You laughed at it but now you are worried that he could humiliate himself in front of others any time and anywhere [because he does not know hanmun]" (Kang I., 2012). This news article then follows with suggesting women to buy a kindle for their boyfriends so that they could learn hanmun and stop ridiculing themselves in front of others. The same discourse can be easily found in other mass mediated discourses and even individual conversations where hanmun becomes an authentic tool to measure one's proper valuing of priceless traditional values and their level of 'true' education in contemporary South Korean society. As such evaluative construction of hanmun and hanmun users is increasingly utilized as a tool to measure 'true' elite, it certainly complicates contemporary linguistic market of South Korea and redefines the social meaning of English by linking hanmun to a discourses of 'pride' (valuing tradition and being a 'true' Korean) and at the same time framing English as a language of 'profit' (Heller & Duchêne, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter discusses how different languages, especially English, have had different social and symbolic meanings across different time and spaces in South Korea, reflecting various

sociopolitical changes and inherent language ideologies. Since South Korea has experienced rapid and drastic sociopolitical/socioeconomic changes (e.g., colonialism, civil war/post-war, dictatorship, military regime, fast economic growth, the economic crisis, globalization) within a relatively short period, the case of South Korea illustrates well how such changes have guided and informed how people view, use, practice and consume different languages and language ideologies. It also shows how different historical representations, historical events and historical players have generated different social meanings and attributes associated with languages, language practices and language speakers, which then have been selectively reproduced, rearticulated, resummoned and transformed throughout history.

As demonstrated in this chapter, English has been associated with different chronotopic representations and social meanings across different historical moments: (a) English as a language of enemy used by Western barbarians until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (under the influence of nationalist discourses), (b) English as a language of national independence under Japanese imperialism (under the influence of nationalist discourses), (c) English as a language of national development in postwar Korea (under the influence of nationalist discourses), and (d) English as a language of domestic and global success in contemporary South Korea (under the influence of global spread of English and discourses of neoliberalism and late capitalism). Similarly, different historical and sociopolitical change have affected how people understand hungul and hanmun, and determined what constitutes a language of elites and educated people. For example, hanmun had been considered a language of elites under the influence of Sinocentrism until the 19<sup>th</sup> century but Japanese imperialism and the urgent needs of arousing national unity had largely framed han'gŭl as the most important and prestigious language in Korean territory while treating hanmun as a language that needed to be removed.

In other words, what is understood as ‘authentic’ language and language practices in the present moment can be quickly turned into ‘inauthentic’ over time and across spaces, and hence put individual language users in a fragile position where they need to constantly reposition themselves in relation to rescaling construction and framing (c.f., Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Gal, 2012). The last example of hanum and its recasted value in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea also shows the precarious nature of linguistic market where chronotopic representation of hanmun and its previously given value are actively recycled and used as an authoritative tool to rescale what counts as valuable languages, language registers and language practices, and hence control the linguistic market where one particular language, English in this case, has an overwhelming power.

The process of constantly rescaling what constitutes valuable languages and language varieties puts South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a more vulnerable position in that historically constructed and circulated ambivalent feelings towards the United States (Abelmann & Lie, 1995) have generated a bifurcated gaze towards English-Korean bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society and constantly questioned their authenticity. Such dynamic tensions and evaluative stances casted upon English and English-Korean bilinguals cannot be fully explained by terms such as hybridity, multilingualism, plurilingualism, polylingualism and superdiversity, which all “support assumptions about the discreteness and the location of languages” (Pennycook, 2012, p. 19). Rather than celebrating ‘hybridity’ and ‘diversity’ by pluralizing languages and articulating linguistic purities (Pennycook, 2012; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010), we must understand historical situatedness and spatiotemporal locatability of languages and language practices in in order to conceptualize their ‘hidden’ social meanings in a particular speech community.

#### **Chapter 4. Historical Construction of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Bilinguals in South Korea**

As discussed in the previous chapter, socially and historically constructed discourses have gradually created shared images about a certain language and its language speakers, and produced socially recognizable chronotopic representations of events, people and language practices associated with that language. Since these shared images entail the “language-culture-people” hybrid (Agha, 2007, 2011), they enable people to construct shared understanding about the indexical meaning of a particular language and speech choice that contextually link models of personhood, characterological figures and other attributes associated with a particular language, and vice versa. A South Korean politician who frequently uses sophisticated hanmun idioms during his/her speech, for example, is often associated with the image of a ‘true’ elite and a descendant of yangban who is wise enough to cherish tradition. Here, his/her usage of hanmun not only shows his/her linguistic skill but also indexes typified personhood of being ‘wise’, ‘highly-educated’, ‘noble’ and ‘refined’.

In contemporary South Korean society, English has entailed two distinct sets of chronotopic representations that are associated with personhood of nationalists and national betrayal, respectively. Since English has become a ‘must-have’ language and the linguistic market is becoming crowded with growing numbers of English-Korean bilinguals (Park J., 2009; Park & Lo, 2012), these historically constructed chronotopic representations of English language speakers started to be actively used as an authoritative tool to regulate the overly crowded market of South Korea. Indeed, these distinct representations have created a thin boundary between the categories of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in South Korea, locating bilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean on “axes of differentiation” where contrasts in linguistic forms are mapped onto social differences (Gal, 2012; Irvine & Gal, 2000) and projecting them typified

models of personhood associated with ‘good’ (e.g., nationalists) and ‘bad’ (e.g., yanggongju and hausŭpoi) bilinguals. As the contemporary linguistic market gets more crowded and competitive, these two contrasting models of personhood have gained more authority as historical ‘truth’, and become a kind of authoritative discourses to control the market. Since the contemporary linguistic market is constantly raising the bar to regulate the overcrowded market and distribute economic consequences to the selected group of bilinguals, these two models of personhood have provided more detail and complex pictures what constitute ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in South Korea. These models of personhood then have constructed and reconstructed ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competences, and determined the market quality of different types of language competences, which then make South Korean bilinguals hard to claim their legitimacy.

This chapter, analyzing historical representations of bilingual South Korean speakers of English and Korean, first examines how these opposing chronotopic representations have been emerged, historically constructed, and become authoritative. It then examines how these representations are dexterously used by the dominant group and media as an effect tool to regulate the contemporary linguistic market and authenticate a certain group of bilinguals while marginalizing others.

**A. Historical Construction of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Bilinguals: the Late 19<sup>th</sup>~the Mid 1990s)**  
**a. English-Korean Bilinguals: Nationalists (For the Nation, By the Nation)**

Ever since English was introduced by missionaries and other foreigners in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it has become the most powerful language in the Korean peninsula that could bring national independence (the early 19<sup>th</sup> century~ the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, under Japanese imperialism), national development (the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century~ present), and global and individual success in the globalized world (the late 1990s~present). Despite the isolationist policy of the

Chōsun dynasty that identified any form of foreignness as a sign of national betrayal, the increasing number of missionary schools (e.g., paechehaktang, ewhahaktang, kyōngsinhakkyo<sup>8</sup>) and Western missionaries urged Korean intellectuals who were exposed to Westernized education and Western liberal ideas to develop a national consciousness and realize the importance of learning English (Eckert et al., 1990). In addition, the growing Japanese military and political aggression and its constant threat against the Chōsun dynasty had constructed English as a necessary tool to achieve national independence. English, under the influence of nationalist discourses, had been largely understood a language that could enable Korean to communicate with international community, to reveal outrageous Japanese colonial ruling to the world and to appeal for international support. In this context, a small group of Korean intellectuals who received English education from missionary schools in Korea and later went to abroad for studying English and receiving advanced education became one of the most active and visible group of nationalists, who could voice out Korea's strong will for independence to international community and tried to establish diplomatic relationship with other foreign nations using their English skills, their Western liberal thoughts and their advanced knowledge acquired through overseas education. For example, both Seo Jayphil (a nationalist who received BA from George Washington University in 1893 and graduate degree from University of Pennsylvania in 1926) and Rhee Sungman (a nationalist and the first Korean president who received BA from George Washington University in 1907, MA from Harvard University in 1908, Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1910) were central figures of the Independent Club (tongniphyōphoes),

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<sup>8</sup> Paechehaktang was established in 1909 by Henry Appenzeller, an American Methodist minister, and English was one of the major subjects taught in the school. Ewhahaktang was the first school for women built in 1885 by Mary Scranton, an American missionary. It later became Ewha Womans University and Ehwa Girls high school. Kyōngsinhakkyo was founded in 1886 by Horace Underwood, an American Presbyterian missionary (Kwon & Kim, 2010).

one of the major nationalist organizations, and later leaders of the Korean provisional government (the Korean interim government in Shanghai since 1919). They also published Korean-English newspapers (*The Independence* edited by Seo and *Maeilsinmun* edited by Rhee) to spread Western liberal thoughts, arouse a national consciousness among Korean people, reveal atrocious acts led by Japanese imperialism to international community and advocate the urgent needs of achieving national independence (Shin, 2006). South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in this historical period thus have been widely understood as a nationalist, a national leader and an elite.

Historical accounts and media discourses about Rhee Sungman whose successful overseas education and a good command of English have been generally praised provide an excellent example how English is used as an identifiable and authoritative emblem that both indexes his active involvement in nationalist movements, and legitimizes and neutralize his socio-political position. Rhee Sungman's high English proficiency has been widely framed as a major tool to bring national independence by setting up diplomatic relationship with the United States and constantly appealing Korea's strong will for independence to international community including the United States and Britain. Lew Young Ick, the head of the National Institute of Korean History<sup>9</sup>, claims that Rhee Sungman made a significant contribution to bringing a successful outcome from the Cairo Declaration that directly resulted in unconditional surrender of Japan and Korea's independence in 1945: "Rhee Sungman was the only person who was able to express Korean's strong will for national independence in English to President Roosevelt and Hopkinson, the president's special adviser" (during his interview in Donga Ilbo, Bae, 2013).

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<sup>9</sup> The National Institute of Korean History (kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe) is a government-led institute established in 1946. It aims to systemically collect, analyze and publish various historical documents in order to better understand Korean history.



*Figure 3.* President Rhee in the inauguration day, 1948 (Rhee Sungman Memorial Society, 2008)

Even though his long political dynasty and the fraudulent election forced him to resign and made his presidential achievement somewhat questionable, his good command of English has been generally valued as a national asset and a source of national pride, which not only accelerated national independence but also successfully built up a friendly diplomatic relation with other foreign countries, especially with the United States, after independence (Lew, 2013). Indeed, many newspapers and books have featured Rhee as the most fluent bilingual Korean speaker of English and Korean and the most influential nationalist who successfully addressed in the US Congress in English (e.g., Shin & Kang, 2013), who did not stop learning and practicing English till death (e.g., Shin, 2013; Kim, 2012), and who was able to bring national independence and national development through his excellent English and his power of diplomacy (e.g., Hwang, 2010; Lee J., 2012; Lew, 2013). Despite his advanced English skill and education, he always presented himself as Korean by wearing *turumagi*, a traditional Korean

overcoat, in public (see figure 3) and writing calligraphy characters in formal documents<sup>10</sup> rather than demonstrating his English skill or Western lifestyle in public.

However, such praise of Rhee's competence in English is not politically neutral. Those people who question the validity of his dictatorship and his pro-US stance often frame his fluency in English as the solid evidence for disloyalty to his nation. While the conservative government and politicians tend to consider Rhee the most successful bilingual president in Korean history and a nationalist, more progressive politicians and scholars tend to frame Rhee as the opportunist who cunningly used his good command of English as a chance to become the first president of South Korea with the help of the US government and pursue dictatorship regime over 12 years. In other words, Lew's work of describing Rhee as a great character and his competence in English as love of his country and nationalistic spirit is hailed by conservative ideology and the New Right movement, which are then widely criticized by others.

Since President Rhee established a government scholarship program in 1958 and sent a selected group of elites (approximately 100 grantees per a year) to abroad for bringing national development through the adoption of advanced Western technology and scientific knowledge, South Korean society started to experience slow but gradual emergence of elites who could speak English and had advanced overseas education. Because studying-abroad had been restrictedly allowed to the selected group of elites who received governmental support until the Korean government loosened its policy for studying abroad in 1988, having English proficiency and receiving overseas education had generally been recognized as an indexical emblem of one's elitism between the 1950s and 1990s. Equipping themselves with overseas degree, privileged government funding and English language skill, these selected elites who were also English-

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<sup>10</sup> He wrote calligraphy characters in the letter sent to President Truman in 1949 (Jung, 2010).

Korean bilinguals have occupied socio-politically privileged positions in South Korea, becoming congressmen (e.g., Baek Young-hoon, Park Jin), ministers (e.g., Chin Dae-Je, Han Seoung-soo, Han Sung-joo), chairmen of conglomerate (e.g., Ku Ja-hong), CEOs (e.g., Jang Young-shin), senior officers (e.g., Cho Soon, Kim Dong-yeon), professors (e.g., Kim Moon-hwan, Kwak Soo-keun), and chief scientists (e.g., Yoon Se-won). They have been largely framed as national leaders/nationalists who have made valuable contribution to the rapid growth of the national economy and enabled South Korea to join the ranks of advanced countries, escaping from the devastating post-war economy. This group of English-Korean bilinguals also has been described ‘smart’, ‘hard-working’, ‘patriotic’, and ‘righteous’ individuals who have worked for the nation not pursuing their individual interests or success, and who have always been framed as ‘our proud Korean’ (uriüi charangsülön han’gugin), whereas their privileged social class and inherent fortune have been apparently naturalized and obscured (c.f., Park J., 2010).

#### **b. English-Korean Bilinguals: A National Betrayer and A Faker (Against Nation)**

While English-Korean bilinguals with overseas education, mostly males, were quickly framed as nationalists and represented as ‘good’ bilinguals, other English-Korean bilinguals were associated with the contrasting image of ‘bad’ bilinguals who betrayed nation or chose to pursue personal interests over nation. These groups of English-Korean bilingual include (a) a small group of the New Woman (sin yösöng) who studied in Western countries, (b) the Western princess (yanggongju), and (c) people who worked at and reside in the military camptown (kichichon chumin). English used by these groups has been widely constructed as an identifiable and inexpungible emblem that indexes their fake bilingual status, and their immorality and selfishness. Even though these bilinguals seem to acquire English through constant exposure of

native English similar to the former group of bilinguals, their English has been always viewed as undesirable and wrong one.

**The New Woman.** Modern education provided by Western missionary schools and the gradual penetration of Western liberal thoughts into the Korean peninsula had brought the emergence of the New Woman around the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Choi, 2013; Yoo, 2008). The New Woman generally came from upper or upper-middle class families, received Western style education, and advocated gender equality. Some of them furthered their education in Japanese or Western universities; the number of female study-abroad students was around less than 10 % of the total study-abroad student population in this period, and those who studied in Western countries were few (e.g., Park In-duk who received BA from Wesleyan University and MA degree from Columbia University in 1928, Kim Maria who receive MA from University of Chicago in 1928). Unlike male returnees who quickly elevated to social positions such as professors, scientists and politicians, female returnees were not generally perceived as nationalists but instead framed as fakers who bragged about their ‘fake’ Westernness and looked down on Koreaness (Kim, 2005). Indeed, their Westernized outfits, appearances and behaviors were strongly criticized for their obscenity and seen as an indexical emblem of their fakeness and also their selfishness, while Westernized appearance of male returnees were generally accepted without any criticism. Newspapers, magazines and other media were competitively reporting the scandalous and deplorable scenes created by the New Woman where they wore a short skirt and tottered on high heels with their bobbed hair (Yoo, 2008).

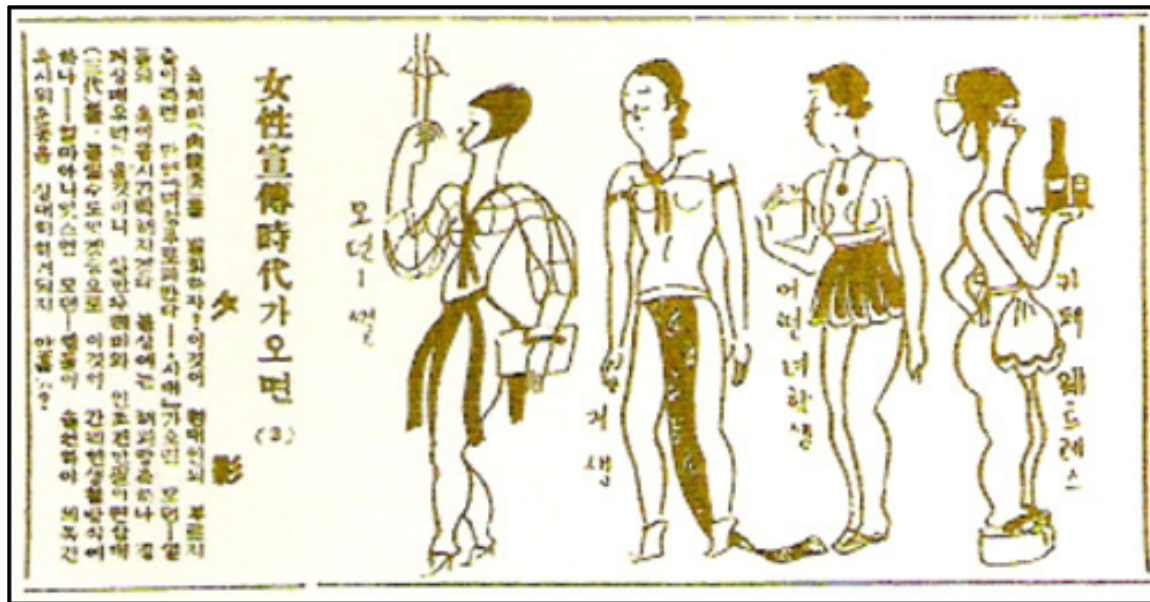
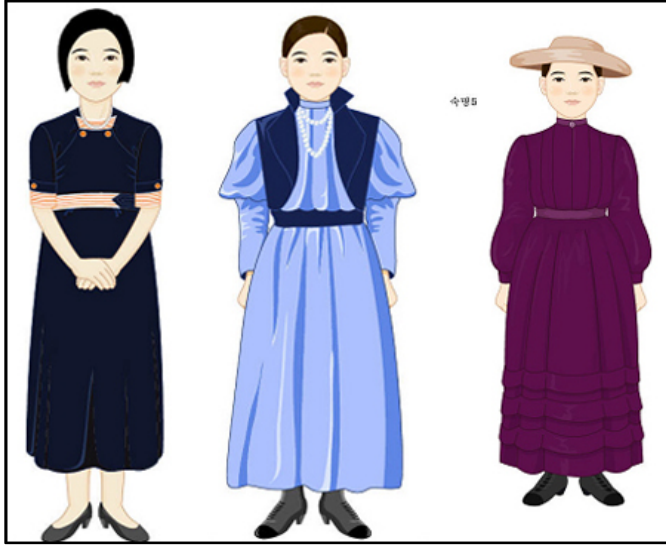


Figure 4. The portrayal of Modern girls/the New Woman (1930 in Chosun Ilbo)

This news article written in 1930, for example, laments the destruction of traditional womanhood, and highly criticized the newly emerging Westernized and modernized womanhood. Four pictures in the above news article are represented modern girls (모던-걸, motön-köl), Korean geisha (기생, kisaeng), girl students (어떤 녀학생, öttön nyöhakhang), and café waitress (카페 웨트레스, kape wetüresü), respectively. Even though these four groups of women had different social class and educational background, they were all described as “modern girls”, who could be easily recognized by their typified attributes of being half-naked with bobbed hair, showing their breasts and legs, and displaying no shame. It is quite obvious that physical appearance and gender display of the New Woman were the most identifiable and displayable attributes of this newly emerging female intellectuals, while their educational background and bilingual skills were deliberately obscured. The major focus on their physical appearance then constructed the New Woman equivalent to Korean geisha, who had traditionally belonged to the lower or slave class in the Chösun dynasty.



*Figure 5.* The typical outfits of the New Woman (Korean Women’s Studies Institute, 2006)

As illustrated in figure 5, the typical outfits of the New Woman, however, were not those gaudy outfits depicted in figure 4 or any other mediatized images, but formal and modest Western outfits that did not display women’s body shape nor expose their breasts or legs. Even though their outfits were far from those worn by the Korean geisha or café waitress, their Westernized outfits and hair styles made others to typify them as ‘vulgar’ woman who humiliated themselves and other Koreans and hence degraded the nation. In other words, the linkage between the New Woman and their sexually extravagant display has been carefully constructed through the process of typification (c.f., Agha, 2007; Bucholtz, 2011, Dick & Wirtz, 2011).

Not only their ‘Westernized’ physical appearance, but also their ‘Westernized’ love affairs were widely criticized as love affairs of some female study-abroad students became shocking scandals in a relatively conservative Korean society. Park In-duk and Na Hye-sok, the two main figures that represent the first generation of the New Woman who received overseas education, were both famous for their love affairs and scandalous divorce, which were not viewed as an acceptable female behavior at that time. Even though Park In-duk had actively

participated in nationalist movements and later other philanthropic works, the fact that she left her husband and children for studying abroad and pushed ahead with the divorce has widely framed her as ‘Korean version of Nora (chosŏnŭi nora)’ and obscured her other achievements. This image of the New Woman being ‘sexually extravagant’, ‘morally wrong’, and ‘extremely aggressive’ had become a typified representation of the New Woman, which was always accompanied with the traditionally valued model of ‘wise mother and good wife’ (Choi, 2013; Choi, H., 2009). Lee Yang-sun, one of female study-abroad students at that time, even publicly urged other female study-abroad students to focus on studying: “Female study-abroad students, please be careful not to hear from others that we study to either get other people divorced or become a concubine” (yŏsŏnggye, 1920).

While various nationalist movements led by Christian nationalist women and socialist women were largely obscured in the New Woman discourses (Kim & Choi, 1998), Westernized appearances and scandalous affairs of the New Woman became the center of discussion on the New Woman. They were widely described as ‘selfish’, ‘arrogant’, ‘extravagant’, and ‘full of vanity’, who pretended they were an artist and a philosopher and whose only interests lay deep in themselves (Yoo, 2008). Especially, female emancipation movements led by the New Woman were framed as an extremely selfish act because “Liberalization is a word to be used for all Korean people and not only women” (Donga Ilbo, 1921, cited in Yoo, 2008, p. 79). The South Korean male elites and nationalists who were largely saturated in patriarchy and androcentrism in particular produced and articulated such construction of the New Woman where “ [the educated and modernized] women’s desire for the recognition of multiple female subjectivities as a kind of *whoring*, while valorizing multiple male subjectivities as nationalistic and therefore heroic” (Kim & Choi, p. 28, add emphasis by author). In other words, the New Woman who

were equipped with both English and Korean skills and advanced education were only framed as a faker who bragged about their Western liberal thoughts and tottered the street with their shameless Westernized outfits, and a selfish individual without morals nor patriotic spirit.

**The Western princess.** The Western princess (*yanggongju*, also known as *yanggalbo*, yankee whore) was another group of English-Korean bilinguals who emerged with the influx of American troops since 1945. The large number of American troops stationed in South Korea (the 325,000 American troops during the Korean War, the 63,000 between the 1960s and 1970s, and the 28,500 in the present day), along with the rapid process of urbanization and the post-war economic system (Lee, 2010), resulted the newly emergent sex industry where the poor, low-class and uneducated women ended up participating in. The estimated number of the Western princess is around 3,000 (Kim, 1995), and most of them lived and worked around the military camptown located in places such as Tongduchŏn and Yongjugol (Kim, 1980). Though this newly emerging group of sex workers contributed to the economic development of post-war South Korea, they have been largely portrayed as a source of national shame whose existence was denied by their families and other Korean people due to the nature of their job (Lee J., 2010).

Unlike the elite group, both male and female English-Korean bilinguals, who had mostly learned their English from Anglo-American missionaries or scholars through schools and private tutoring (Kwon & Kim, 2010), the Western princess ‘picked up’ English words from their clients in order to continue their business with the American GIs. Their English has been often depicted as a ‘vulgar’ and ‘coarse’ one, just as their sex trade was considered an unforgivable act of betraying their country and deeply humiliating their parents and other Koreans (Lee J., 2010; Lo et al., under review); “Even though English teachers taught them a refined English such as “may I sit down?”, women [the Western princess] snorted at the usage of polite words such as “may”

because they felt that they needed to learn English sentences like “let’s go short time”, “let’s go long time”, and “how much”” (Han, 2012).



*Figure 6.* The portrayal of the Western princess and her English (Donga Ilbo, 1955)

The above illustration depicts the Western princess who tried to solicit her potential client by using a short and incomplete English phrase, “hello...my x...hmm”. Similar depiction can be easily found in other media discourses where the Western princess were portrayed with clumsy and broken English and messy mixture of English and Korean, along with their extremely heavy make-up, Westernized outfits and frivolous laugh. Despite the fact that the Western princess used limited English to their limited clientele within the limited place, their usage of English has been widely framed as a social emblem that indexes their status in South Korean society. The news article written in 1962, for example, makes a clear linkage between the Western princess and English; “when you enter the backdoors of this maze-like brothel, there are boxed rooms, a living room for the Western princess, where weird laughing sound, mixed with English, is constantly echoing the room, even in the daytime” (Donga Ilbo, 1962). In this news article, English is used as one of the major signs that index the presence of the Western princess and the

nature of their job, along with other social signs such as ‘filthy brothel’ and ‘weird laughing’. Not only news articles written in the 1950s and 1960s, but also those written later also has typified the Western princess as a lousy but frequent English user whose English indexes the nature of their job, a national whore, but who does not afraid to use it.

The visible connection between the Western princess and English can be also found in other mediatized discourses where the Western princess is often presented with their Americanized name, not with their Korean name. For example, *Chiokhwa* (The flower in hell, released in 1958), one of the classic Korean films, captures a miserable life of people who were living in the military camptown. In this film, two Western princesses are introduced as *ssonya* (Sonia) and *chuti* (Judy), whereas two male characters are presented with their Korean names, Dong-sik and Young-sik. Similarly, the Western princess in the novel *hwangguŭi pimyoŋ* (Screaming yellow dog) written by Cheon in 1975 [2007] uses her Americanized name, Tambi Kim with hyper-articulated, aspirated English [k<sup>h</sup>] sound instead of a voiceless lenis [k] sound for ‘kim’. Even though she has a Korean name Eunju, she was referred by her Americanized name by other characters. In much of the literature and films, the Western princess has been depicted with their Americanized names; *Meki* (Maggie, in the novel *Chungguginŭi kŏri* written by Oh, 1979 [2012]), *ttaring* (Darling, in the novel *ssyori Kim* written by Song, 1957), Sonia (in the novel *Agya* written by Kim, 1950), Maria (in the novel *munsinŭi ttang* written by Moon, 1987), Jane (the movie *kipko purŭn pam* released in 1987) and *Holli* (Holly, the movie *Holly* released in 2013). These mediatized discourses have constructed an active and visible connection between the Western princess and English by assigning them an Americanized name, and framed them as national betrayals who were either forced to or voluntarily abandoned their Korean names. Here, the Americanized name has become another sign to index their vulgar status.

Throughout Korean history, the Western princess has been depicted as an ‘untouchable’, the very subject that other people including their parents and friends were desperate to obscure or even deny their existence. Although some scholars started to pay attention to the fact that the Western princess contributed to national economic development and they are the victim of war (e.g., Kim J., 2010; Yeo, 2007), the popular image of the Western princess has been a national betrayal, and their English has been framed as an indexical symbol of their prostitution and hence a source of national shame.

**People who worked at and resided in the military camptown (kichichon chumin).**

Along with the new emergent sex industry, more and more people moved to the military camptown and started illegal business with the American GIs. These people include pimps, black marketers who sneaked out the American goods sold in the PX with the help of the American GIs, the Western princess or Korean people who were working at the PX, and errand boys. As described in Park’s autobiographic novel (1970 [2012]), working closely with the American GIs, even those who are not involved in any form of vulgar business, was generally viewed as obscene.

The most visible English speaker among them was hausŭpoi (errand boy) who had a direct contact with the American GIs. Many of them were war orphans who lost their parents during the Korean War (1950-1953), or came from the lower class family where they needed to earn money in order to survive. They usually stayed in an army barracks with the American GIs and did various chores for them, including shining military boots, cleaning barracks, and doing laundry (Kim, 1996). Even though they were widely exposed to English speaking environment and they had a certain level of English communicative skill in order to communicate with the American GIs, their English was not framed as ‘authentic’ or ‘native-like’, but rather depicted as

‘uneducated’, ‘lousy’ and ‘inauthentic’. The following news articles from the 1960s and 1970s show how hausŭpoi English is used as an identifiable sign to position English speaker as a faker and a poser who could only speak inauthentic and clumsy hausŭpoi English.

The president of export enterprise, Mr. P, rolled his tongue in an excessive manner while speaking English, which shows how sloppily he learned English abroad. Because he extremely exaggerated “r” sound and skipped all the “t” sounds, he was received harsh critique such as “[his English] is like hausŭpoi English” (Kyŏnghyang sinmun, 1979).

Among people who came back from the overseas trips, there were some people who blindly worshiped America and American values and pretended they forgot our unique national language, which consequently resulted the emergence of the dishonorable new word, “distorted overseas trips”... While going through the entry procedure last June, Mrs. Yang made immigrant officers embarrassed by saying “I totally forgot Korean [language]” and mumbling “hausŭpoi English”. (Kyŏnghyang sinmun, 1962).

Both of these news articles describe the ridiculous scenes where people with a short overseas experience brag about their hyper-exaggerated English pronunciation. Even though these people see the deliberate use of English and over-articulated English pronunciation as a sign of being ‘modern’ and ‘cosmopolitan’, the above news articles make clear that their hausŭpoi-like English rather articulates their ignorance of ‘authentic’ English and their failed attempt to acquire ‘true’ globalness. Without providing further explanation of what hausŭpoi English means, these news articles invite readers to join the process of evaluation and encourage them to use their prior exposure to hausŭpoi and their already established image of hausŭpoi English (Inoue, 2003, 2006).

Even though hausŭpoi English was framed as inauthentic English that was often used by fakers and posers, it has not been used as an indexical emblem of national betrayers or positioned its speakers as untouchable beings. On the contrary, the success stories of hausŭpoi have been occasionally presented in the newspapers where their hausŭpoi experience led them to meet some generous American GIs who helped them go to schools and later become successful in either the United States or South Korea (e.g. Cheong, 2010; Kim S., 1995; Kwon, 2007). Given the fact there are no successful stories about the Western princess and their existence is still considered as a source of national shame<sup>11</sup> in South Korean society, the success stories about hausŭpoi who are not afraid to reveal their previous experience of working at the military base show that hausŭpoi does not get the same evaluative gaze that has casted upon the Western princess.

The issue of authenticity became prominent in this period in that these two groups had been seen as the most visible groups of English speakers in South Korea, and their Englishes were represented qualitatively different from one another. While English spoken by elite groups was imagined as ‘good’ English that could bring national development, English spoken by the latter group was depicted as ‘bad’ English that identified speakers as national whores or traitors. As an effort to distance one group from the other and make the difference more visible, the process of typification began to make a link between English varieties spoken by individuals and their positions in South Korean society (Agha, 2007). The process of authentication also constructed various social signs that indexed their authentic or inauthentic status as a bilingual and typified them as either ‘good’ or ‘bad’ bilinguals; for example, Westernized outfits and

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<sup>11</sup> There are few books or autobiographic narratives that capture the stories about the Western princess. Unlike the success stories about hausŭpoi, the narratives about the Western princess rather capture difficulties and hardships they went through such as sex trafficking, rape,

appearances of female Korean bilinguals of English and Korean, the usage of an Americanized name, and public display of the English language had become recognizable indexical emblems that immediately categorized English speakers as ‘bad’ bilinguals in South Korea. The process of typification had not only reflected social class, but also reinscribed gender difference as exemplified in the contrasting images of male and female returnees. The different narratives associated with *hausŭpoi* and the Western princess also demonstrates how the process of authentication and metapragmatic typification had been highly gendered.

### **Two Contrasting Representations of English-Korean Bilinguals:**

#### **In Progress (the Mid 1990s- Present)**

As part of a general trend of celebrating English in neoliberal societies, English has become a ‘must-have’ language in contemporary South Korea, which demonstrates one’s ability to become a competitive member of the globalized world and shows one’s constant effort to develop his/her skills and meet the needs of neoliberal logics (Park J., 2009). As Joseph Park shows, South Korean people hold an unwavering belief in the ‘promise’ of English. English holds the key to everything—from entering a privileged school/university to getting a highly desirable job and eventually becoming a successful member of society. Many South Korean companies require their job applicants to demonstrate a high score on certified English tests (e.g., TOEFL or TOEIC) and English is used as a major tool to decide one’s academic achievement on various occasions including school entrance exams and job promotions. In this context, the ‘promise’ of English does not simply result from people’s imaginations, but rather from their own experiences of being authenticated or marginalized by their English proficiency in the precarious market. In addition, they have already seen how people with high English proficiency

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numerous abortion, drug addiction, depression and suicide (e.g., Kim Y., 2005; Kim S., 2013).

and possibly overseas education have positioned themselves in socio-politically desirable positions such as minister, CEO and president. They have also been widely exposed to fairytale-like success stories where people claim their English and/or overseas study have helped them and their nation become affluent.

Their prior observations combined with their “fear of falling” (Besnier, 2009) and historically constructed chronotopic representations of English and English speakers have generated an overwhelming emphasis on English and English education, resulting in a large number of study-abroad students and growing numbers of English private institutions in South Korea. Since the intense anxiety surrounding learning ‘authentic’ and ‘valuable’ English has quickly disseminated throughout the middle class, it has generated various ways of learning English and studying abroad. Indeed, the number of South Korean students enrolled in higher education institutions abroad was 239,213 in 2012, whereas only 24,315 students were abroad for their higher education in 1985 (KEDI, 2013). The number of ESA students has been also increased from 3,274 students in 1997, to 29,511 in 2006 and 16,515 in 2011 (KEDI, 2013).

The rapidly increasing number of study-abroad students, especially ESA students, who equally claim their legitimacy as ‘valuable’ bilinguals and hence ‘important’ workforce has complicated contemporary linguistic market of South Korea, unlike the past when there was only a restricted number of intellectuals who were equipped themselves with English skill and study-abroad experience and who later hold important positions in the society. As the linguistic market is becoming crowded with increasing numbers of multilingual speakers who try to claim their legitimacy, the suspicion toward ‘equally qualified’ bilinguals has been intensified. In addition, the long-standing bifurcated gaze towards the United States (Ablemman & Lie, 1996) and two distinct images of ‘for nation’ and ‘against nation’ has casted a suspicious gaze upon the rapidly

growing number of bilinguals and their legitimacy. The growing suspicion has widely questioned the ‘value’ of English competence acquired by overseas education. It has also suspected the authenticity of study-abroad experience, foreign degree and English acquired from overseas education. The following newspaper headlines all reflect such growing suspicion: (a) people spend a lot of money for study-abroad to simply add something to their resume (Donga Ilbo, 2010), (b) perfect English guy with study-abroad experience wanted to get a job in South Korea...but was surprised by reality (Joongang Ilbo, 2013), (c) 1,000 people are under suspicion of faking foreign degrees (MBC, 2007), and (d) USA: a factory for Ph.D. degrees (Cheon & Choi, 2007). These headlines argue that ‘perfect’ English acquired by overseas education is not sufficient to get a job in South Korea and ‘precious’ foreign degrees can be easily fabricated. They further claim that overseas education and foreign experience merely help individuals add something to their resume, not enabling them to acquire valuable and marketable English competence.

This bifurcated and suspicious gaze has certainly complicated the already complex and over-crowded linguistic market of contemporary South Korea. In this context, historically constructed chronotopic representations of English and English speakers are widely accepted as ‘historical truth’ and hence an authoritative guideline to sort out ‘truly qualified’ candidates among other fakers or less qualified ones in the precarious market. The two distinct models of personhood associated with ‘good’ and ‘bad’ English speakers have been constructed under the process of differentiation (Gal & Irvine, 1995; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Gal, 2005) that juxtaposes two qualities of personhood at each extreme; for nation, by nation” and “against nation”, “Koreaness” and “Weternized/Americanized”, “morally right” and “morally wrong”, and “socially privileged” and “socially underprivileged”. Since these axes of differentiation and

opposing personhood have been understood as a ‘realistic’ representation, they tend to provide authoritative criteria to decide ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea. In addition, English competences of these two groups have been typified and mapped onto these extremes. For example, ‘good’ bilinguals have been often depicted as someone who is proficient in both Korean and English but yet who does not show off his/her bilingual competence unless necessary. In other words, their English competence is only displayed in communication settings where English is required to be used as a medium of communication and often these linguistic choices are closely related with national development. ‘Bad’ bilinguals, however, have been generally associated with the excessive use of English, hyperarticulated English pronunciations and even the use of English phonological features while speaking in Korean. Their English seems to be depicted ‘wrong’ registers of English they have picked up from undesirable English speakers such as American GIs, and hence demonstrates their ‘vulgar’ status in the society.

As media plays an important role to reproduce and disseminate the ideologically constructed “realistic but not real representations” (Jaffe, 2011, p. 567) and provide media consumers a tool to systematically authenticate themselves and marginalize others. Especially, even though these historically constructed chronotopic representations are widely recognized and accepted as historical truth, they are highly contested in that it is subjective to decide to whom they could truly apply. The following section examines different mediatized discourses in order to see how historically constructed models of personhood and assigned qualities are actively evoked in the current South Korean society and inform the decision making process. It also explores how such models of personhood and contrasting qualities are mapped onto the construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual competence in contemporary South Korean society.

**For nation/by nation vs. against nation.** The overemphasis on English and English education and the inherent increase of study-abroad students have generated counter-discourses where study-abroad is framed as a major reason to jeopardize national economy and study-abroad students are consequently depicted as a selfish and self-conceited individual who harms national economy in order to pursue their own individual interests. As the South Korean English frenzy (e.g., Park J., 2009, 2010) has invited the South Korean middle class to join the rapid increase of study-abroad and made studying-abroad more feasible and accessible, terms like *topi yuhak* (studying-abroad because one wants to flee from one's country) and 'mutchima' yuhak ('don't ask' study-abroad) have emerged to indicate a group of study-abroad students who choose to go abroad to allegedly disguise one's academic failure in South Korea. This newly emerging group of students is described as a low-achieving student who prefers to attend a foreign university rather than a third-rate South Korean college (Lee K., 2013), who only hangs out with other Korean students and hence whose failure in abroad can be easily predicted (Moon & Kim, 2006). Both media and social discourses depict their studying-abroad experience as a result of their failed academic achievement in South Korean schools and their 'pathetic' efforts of faking academic success with a foreign degree and overseas experience. The newly emerging group of study-abroad students are not portrayed as a privileged elite but rather depicted as a faker or a loser in contemporary South Korean society.

Unlike the traditionally valued model of bilinguals whose overseas education and bilingual skills are associated with their patriotic spirit and their contribution to national development, this newly emerging and rapidly growing bilinguals are considered as a selfish individual who damages national economy by wasting money abroad. Indeed, many news articles have competitively reported an astronomical amount of money that has been spent by the

growing number of study-abroad students and then pointed out how this national expenditure jeopardizes the South Korean economy. The news article written in 2010, for example, draws a clear linkage between the increasing rate of study-abroad students and national economy; “loss of money spent in overseas education is the main factor that aggravates the foreign exchange market in South Korea. The estimated amount of money that was spent for overseas education is around 4.3 million dollars in 2009 alone” (Donga Ilbo, 2010). These media discourses not only frame study-abroad students as the main culprit of resulting a troubled national economy, but also question the validity of their overseas education and English skills. Especially, their ‘questionable’ English competence has been presented as another evidence that shows why their study-abroad experience is such a waste of ‘national’ money. Various news articles have reported that English acquired from overseas education cannot result a good score in certified English tests such as TOEIC or English subject at the national College Scholastic Ability Test (Kim & Kim, 2013). Given the fact that certified English tests are widely used as a major tool to evaluate one’s English skill in South Korea, weak correlation between receiving overseas education and achieving a good score in certified English tests can raise doubts on the validity of their overseas education, and frame study-abroad students as someone who merely wastes ‘national’ money without bringing any valuable skills that could contribute to national development.

In order to make such portrayal more authoritative and make a contrasting image of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals more distinctive, media discourses have often borrowed voices of the traditionally valued figure of South Korean study-abroad students/bilinguals. These discourses have actively adopted the success stories of South Korean bilinguals who received overseas education before the mid-1990s and articulated the fact that their education was not for

themselves but for their nation and for other Koreans, which makes them qualitatively different from the newly emerging group of study-abroad students/bilinguals. By presenting success stories of Kim Yong (the president of the World Bank) and Koh Hongju (dean of Yale Law School), the Choongang Ilbo news article written in 2012 laments that South Korean parents only focus on their children's academic achievement and English acquisition unlike Kim's and Koh's mothers who always reminded their children the importance of working for social justice and contributing to public welfare (Ki, S., 2012). Another news article written in 2005 directly uses the voice of Lee Joo-han, one of traditionally valued bilinguals who studied in Britain on a national scholarship and now works at Korea Institute of Science and Technology<sup>12</sup> as an authoritative figure to criticize the current increase of ESA students.

[While I was studying in London,] I had witnessed numerous South Korean students who came to Britain by themselves or with their mothers and illegally attended schools there. Some of them became delinquent because they could not overcome cultural and racial barriers, and I had seen lots of students who could recite the British royal genealogy fluently but barely knew Korean history. I had also seen students joyfully singing “happy birthday” in the Queen's birthday. How come the Queen's birthday means something to Korean?...ESA has resulted lots of problems such as aggravating family dissolution, generating wild geese fathers and wasting money in abroad. We need to rethink about driving our children out to a foreign country in the name of ESA that does not even guarantee any success (Lee, 2005 in Donga Ilbo).

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<sup>12</sup> Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) is one of the major public scientific research institute located in South Korea where over 1,800 researchers are actively participated in various scientific research projects. It is well known for its contribution to the rapid growth of national economy in the 1970s and 1980s.

While positioning himself as a selected elite who received a national scholarship for his overseas education and using his own observation in London, Lee depicts ‘other’ study-abroad students as impostors who pretend their legitimate membership in Britain by memorizing the British royal genealogy and celebrating the Queen’s birthday just like other British people do, but who are in fact an illegal alien in Britain. He emphasizes the fact that these students do not value or concern their nation because they are too preoccupied with the idea of being successfully assimilated into British culture to value Korean history and develop Korean identity (chǒngch’es ōng). This portrayal of study-abroad students as impostors, national betrayers and selfish individuals then invites criticism on ESA, where the loss of national money and family breakdown are concerned. At the end of the article, Lee further argues that speaking English cannot be seen as a valuable asset unless these bilinguals are equipped themselves with strong Koreaness and Korean identity.

While such criticism is generally applied to early study-abroad students whose number has been dramatically increased in last two decades, those elite students who have received/receive tertiary education in abroad and who are qualitatively more similar to traditionally valued bilinguals have been also questioned for their authenticity in terms of their contribution to nation. As a national brain drain has become one of the vibrant issues in contemporary South Korean society, media discourses started to blame the traditional elite type of study-abroad students for their pursuit of selfishness. The news article titled “where were all the smart male students gone” describes traditional study-abroad students as a nationalist whose overseas study was solely for national development, and contemporary study-abroad students as a selfish individual whose overseas study is for their personal interests; “Those [South Korean] study-abroad students during the industrialization period were a glowing patriot who considered coming back to their country upon graduation and dedicating themselves to their nation as honor.

But things are different now. Because they [South Korean global elites] do not want to come back to their country, CEOs [of the major South Korean companies] have to beg them for working at South Korean companies (samgochoryō)” (Kim, S., 2011).

Since nationalist discourse has become a major resource to indicate one’s ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual status, the success stories of bilinguals who have recently received overseas education tend to include some anecdotes or stories where their patriotic mindset is articulated. Jin Kwon-yong, the first South Korean Harvard graduate with summa cum laude honors who is framed as the most successful figure of South Korean bilinguals within last decade, expresses his strong desire of becoming a public defender during his interview, who could help poor people and improve the South Korean economy upon graduating Yale Law School; “I would like to contribute to the development of macro-prudential regulation in South Korea by classifying and resolving problems in the financial system” (Cho, K., 2012). Similar usage of nationalist discourses can be found in other success stories where contemporary bilinguals frame their overseas education and English-Korean bilingual competence as a major tool to bring national development, describe themselves as a descendent of traditional elites and authenticate themselves as ‘good’ and ‘true’ bilinguals compared to ‘other’ bilinguals who waste national money and worsen national economy.

**Koreaness vs. Westernized/Americanized.** The increasing number of South Korean bilingual speakers including returnees, Korean Americans and study-abroad students has generated the question about ‘authentic’ South Korean and ‘proper’ Koreaness. As maladjustment of returnees in both schools and workplaces has become a social issue in contemporary South Korean society, media discourses have competitively reported failed stories of these bilinguals who are too Westernized/Americanized to readjust themselves to South

Korean society. These bilinguals have been depicted as “mentally lost children” (chöngsinjök mia) who could not overcome linguistic and cultural barriers (MBC, 2012), and “another multicultural family” (tamunhwa sikku) who could not successfully adjust to South Korean group culture (Son, 2013). Given the fact that the term ‘multicultural family’ (tamunhwa sikku or kachok) is generally used to indicate the international or interracial marriage migrant’s family in South Korea, framing returnees as ‘another’ multicultural family reflects the underlying assumption that they are ‘too internationalized’ and ‘migrant-alike’ to be treated as South Korean.

The news article written by professor Son, for example, argues that Westernized returnees could not readjust to ‘our’ culture and hence need ‘our’ support, the same support we would provide to embrace foreigners.

Because ESA students spend 10~15 years of their childhood abroad surrounded by different language, education and culture, it would be really hard for them to learn Korean culture or custom, and develop Korean identity and citizenship...They have never experienced strong family bonding moments since they grew up fatherless...They cannot be judged by what university they were graduated from or how competent their English is (Son, 2013 in Donga Ilbo).

This news article clearly demonstrates how the process of “othering” (Jefte, 2011) constructs ESA students and returnees as foreigners whose unfamiliarity with Korean culture is presented as an undesirable consequence of their overseas experience. They are presented as someone who fail to develop both national identity and national awareness, and someone who needs to be understood and accepted by the Koreans in Korea. Because their lack of Koreaness indexes their failed bilingual status, their English competence does not even be considered something valuable.

The news article continues with an anecdote where the axes of differentiation and the process of “othering” become more prominent.

An office worker in his mid-30s said, “It was when North Korea attacked a South Korea island. One of my colleagues who had lived in the United States for 10 years said to me that he would go back to the United States as soon as a war breaks out. I then realized that he was a total foreigner” (Son, 2013 in Donga Ilbo).

The above anecdote not only portrays an individual with overseas experience as a failed bilingual without national consciousness, but also represents him as a total foreigner (chōngmal tarūnnara saram) whose overseas experience surprisingly erases his ethnic and national identities. The same discourse of erasing Koreaness and articulating Westernness can be also found in many narratives of South Korean wild geese fathers where they describe their shocking moments when they realized how Westernized/Americanized their children have become. These narratives express wild geese fathers’ deep embarrassment and frustration on their children’s Westernized lifestyles and behaviors. For example, Um Sang-Ik, a well-respected lawyer who has witnessed his son’s study-abroad and still remembers a dizzy moment (ajjilhan sun’gan) when he was shocked by a huge cultural gap between his son and himself, argues that ESA is a dangerous practice (Um, 2005). He claims that ESA infuses Westernized ways of thinking, behaving and valuing to ‘our’ children (uriūi aitul), brainwashes (senoe) them and eventually endangers them by losing Koreaness and Korean identity.

Such media discourses have all argued that one’s bilingual competence and global competitiveness can be only viewed as a valuable resource when they are combined with one’s healthy Korean identity (kōn’ganghan hankukchōk kachikwan) and proper Koreaness. These

discourses then put South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position where their national identity can be questioned and their English competence can be easily devalued.

**Morally right vs. Morally wrong.** As morality is one of the main criteria to distinguish two contrasting models of English-Korean bilinguals constructed throughout Korean history, it has become a major criterion to decide ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society. If morality of bilinguals is under the question, their English competence and bilingual competence quickly become questionable. The issue of morality associated with South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean is not simply limited to their individual morality. It is deeply involved in the evaluative process to decide whether these bilinguals have received overseas education via ‘morally proper’ way without ruining their families or themselves.

The phenomenon of English frenzy and the growing popularity of ESA have been highly criticized for its extreme investment on children’s English education, which brings about family dissolution, generates the increasing number of wild geese fathers who are forced to sacrifice themselves for their children and results children being grown up without good breeding that helps them build up their character. While these discourses articulate huge sacrifice of wild geese fathers and their tragic stories and question morality of ESA practice in general and morality of mothers and children in particular, they present a sneaking suspicion on individual morality of study-abroad students/bilinguals who, according to these discourses, could not have enough chance to properly develop both moral and guilt consciousness. Especially, female study-abroad students/bilinguals are frequently questioned for their sexual morality and a sense of virtue, which were the major criticism for two historical figures of female bilinguals, the New Woman and the Western princess.



*Figure 7.* The portrayal of a wild geese father (Kim S., 2005)

Following the above illustration where a bent and weary wild geese father is struggling to drag his family (see figure 7), the news article titled “men who want to cry and their children, a source of headache who turns his/her back to his/her father” introduces four cases of wild geese fathers who express their deep sorrow caused by unwanted family separation and their being an outcast in their own family (Kim, S., 2005). It describes how their family members including their wives and children forced them to give up their retirement savings and to stay and work alone in South Korea. It then emphasizes the fact that these fathers are willing to make any sacrifice for their precious family, “the apple of their eyes” (nune nŏoto anapŭn), but they cannot bare the pain caused by their children who become “cold” (chagaun) and “calculating” (kyesanjŏgin) person and who do not respect them anymore. It not only presents four ‘real’ stories but also includes professional opinions of four scholars who are the expert in education, neuropsychiatry and sociology to strengthen the construction of ‘devoted but deserted’ wild geese fathers and their ‘selfish and self-conceited’ children.

This contrasting image of wild geese fathers and children can be easily found in South Korean media where wild geese fathers lament for the fact that their children show more respect toward their pets than their fathers (e.g., Park, 2013; Um, 2005) and where the lonely death of these fathers are occasionally reported (e.g., Choongang Ilbo, 2013; Song, 2008). As such construction of ‘poor but great’ wild geese fathers and their spirit of self-sacrifice has become widely accepted and aroused media consumers’ sympathy and compassion, ‘real tears’ of wild

geese fathers has become a popular icon that indexes their unconditional love for family and their painstaking sacrifice despite the fact that shedding tears in public has been traditionally considered a sign of weakness, shame and disgrace in Korea. Indeed, ‘real’ tears of male celebrity wild geese fathers have been regularly presented in talk shows, reality shows, radio programs and other media discourses as illustrated by following examples; (a) the reality show ‘I live alone’ broadcasts a scene where Lee Sung-Jae, an actor and a wild geese father, burst into his tears while reading a letter from his daughter (MBC, 2013), and (b) Kim Heong-kuk, a singer and a wild geese father, in the radio talk show ‘MC Mong’s Tongotongrak’ was choking back tears as he talked about his wife and children (SBS radio, 2007). Here, the wild geese fathers are portrayed as a good-hearted victim who makes sacrifice to support his family while his ‘selfish’ and ‘heartless’ family takes his unconditional sacrificial love for granted. It echoes with what Yoon Cheong-hyeon, the minister of Strategy and Finance, laments in public, “What were wild geese fathers doing so wrong that they should send huge amount of money [to their family abroad] (kiögi appatüli musün choero tonül p’ö nallaya hana)” (Donga Ilbo, 2010).

These media discourses have further introduced immoral behaviors of study-abroad students and their mothers, which strengthen the image of wild geese fathers as an innocent victim, frame ESA practice and its outcome as morally wrong ones and hence construct the newly emerging group of study-abroad students/bilinguals as ‘bad’ bilinguals. First of all, the wild geese mothers have been often depicted as a cheater and an extravagant person who enjoys her life abroad using her husband’s hard-earned money. Many news articles have competitively reported that wild geese mothers often have an affair with foreigners including their children’s teachers and their golf/tennis coaches, and they usually drive a luxurious car that costs around \$100,000 and live in a billion dollar house (Kim, W., 2006). As various media discourses have

enthusiastically reported stories about how wild geese mothers cheat on their husbands and their husbands who are in South Korea do not have any clue, the well-grounded suspicion among wild geese fathers has generated a booming business of private detective agency services. According to the news article written in 2009, the growing number of concerned wild geese fathers would spend \$5,000 per a week to make a private detective to tail his family and they often discover the hidden reality where his wife is going out with another guy and his son is partying around (Lee, S., 2006). In addition, media discourses have often depicted study-abroad students as someone who seldom has a chance to build his/her moral consciousness and easily develops a habit of doing drugs and heavily drinking due to the absence of ‘proper’ parental guide. South Korean media not only criticizes their immoral conduct abroad but also problematize their immoral behaviors as a returnee when they come back to South Korea with their overseas education and bilingual skills. For example, the MBC news reports that police cut a lot of (mutōki) returnees who were doing drugs and according to police they do not have any guilt consciousness and do not even know why they were arrested (Seo, 2009).

This particular construct of wild geese mothers and study-abroad students has provided a negative image upon the educational practice of study-abroad and English-Korean bilinguals with overseas education. It depicts South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean as a selfish and immoral individual who does not appreciate his/her father’s huge sacrifice but only cares about his/her personal interests. Media discourses have also reported that the same individualistic and selfish mindset of these returnees/bilinguals tends to cause troubles in South Korean workplaces because they do not respect seniors and refuse to adjust themselves to Korean working culture. The fact that they fail to develop their morality and their English was acquired through immoral educational practice thus leads them to be categorized as ‘bad’ bilinguals and

framed their English as wrong and unworthy. Their failed nature has become more evident in other media discourses where those bilinguals who received overseas education in involuntary-based (e.g., study-abroad during his/her parent's sabbatical leave) are described as 'better' and 'successful' bilinguals without causing any family dissolution or risking themselves to fall into immoral conduct (e.g., Lee, K., 2013; Moon & Kim, 2006).

As the historical construct of 'good' and 'bad' bilinguals has been deeply gendered, the sexual morality of English-Korean bilinguals has been functioned as a major criterion to decide one's authentic bilingual status. South Korean dramas have often depicted hypersexualized study-abroad students who live together without marriage or enjoy one night. News articles have also made a linkage between study-abroad students and their sexual openness; "living together in a rooftop house before marriage means that woman and man who barely know each other have sex as soon as they start to move in together. This pattern can be easily found among both degree-seeking and temporary study-abroad students" (Lee, S., 2003). The issue of sexual morality has brought the evaluative judgment towards female study-abroad students, not necessarily towards male counterparts, just like how it was the most visible tool to criticize the traditional female English-Korean bilinguals than male bilinguals. Indeed, various South Korean media including dramas, news articles, magazines and reality shows has actively presented South Korean female bilinguals of English and Korean with overseas education as a 'freewheeler' and a 'swinger' who is sexually promiscuous. For example, the South Korean drama 'Love and War' broadcasts a story of a female bilingual who lived with her boyfriend abroad, had a daughter from this 'illegal' relationship and later got married to another guy, a judicial apprentice, without telling him her past when she came back to South Korea (KBS, 2002). Similarly, a Donga Ilbo news article reports that a female bilingual with overseas experience who is sexually and

financially extravagant cheated on his husband with her student at college where she was working as a professor (Choi, J., 2013).

While the same image of hypersexualized female English-Korean bilinguals can be easily locatable in news articles published within two decades, recent media portrayals display more complex picture. The news article written in 2009 shows how this image can be applied not only to adult female bilinguals but also to younger female bilinguals; “A daughter who came back from study-abroad acts weird. She, a fifth grader, has kept retching since last summer vacation [when she went abroad for a temporary study-abroad program]. Her mom could not even suspect [her being pregnant]... but she hears from doctor her daughter is pregnant. She also discovers the fact that her daughter was flirting around with a middle school student out of curiosity when she was in abroad” (Hwang, K., 2009). This news article warns readers the potential danger of study-abroad that can make ‘your little girl’ become ‘a player’, ‘a single mother’ or ‘a swinger’. Similarly, the news article that examines the recent trend of digging into fiancé’s past before marriage specifically introduces a female bilingual with overseas education as representative candidates whose past needs to be questioned: “Because of her overseas education, I am suspicious about my girlfriend who I am thinking about getting married...can you [a private dictator] investigate whether she has had an abortion or not?” (Kim, S., 2013). This news article, along with others, frames female study-abroad students and returnees as swingers and unwanted marriage materials whose sexual morality is deeply suspicious. Bilingual competence of these female bilinguals has been deliberately erased or considered something vulgar and wrong that indexes their wrongful sexual conducts and their wrong sexual morality.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter examines how historically constructed bifurcated gaze towards English and English speakers have created two distinct and spatiotemporally locatable figures of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ English-Korean bilinguals in South Korea. These models of personhood and their socially recognizable attributes, both linguistic and non-linguistic ones, have guided and informed how people understand what constitutes ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and how to sort out ‘good’ candidates out of an overwhelming number of English-Korean bilinguals in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea. In particular, these contrasting models of personhood and their socially recognizable attributes have been fragmented through the process of differentiation (Gal & Irvine, 1995; Irvine & Gal, 2000), and provided detailed criteria for being considered ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals. As Bourdieu (1993) makes clear, social and symbolic representation of languages is always a subject to be changed in relation to sociopolitical changes, often reflecting a particular interest of historical players and dominant groups. Thus, typified personhood associated with English and its recursive construction has not only complicated contemporary linguistic market of South Korea but also positioned South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position where they are in a constant danger of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals. For example, while President Rhee has been generally depicted as a nationalist and his good command of English has been seen as priceless national asset that brought national independence, his English, overseas education and pro-American stance have sometime become a solid evidence to frame him as a national betrayer. In other words, a ‘good’ bilingual today can be quickly framed as a ‘bad’ bilingual tomorrow as the construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals is constantly rescaled and reinterpreted.

It is also quite noticeable how such models of personhood have been closely related to the evaluation of one’s bilingual competence in contemporary South Korean society. Since these

models of personhood are historically contingent and spatiotemporally locatable, they tend to provide people highly naturalized resources for representation of how English competence of a certain group of bilinguals is ‘wrong’ and ‘bad’ while English competence of other groups is ‘valuable’ and ‘good’. Especially, the historically constructed ‘good’ bilinguals have been widely constructed as bilingual speakers of ‘educated’ and ‘standard’ English acquired through formal education, whereas ‘bad’ bilinguals have been associated with ‘wrong’ and ‘vulgar’ English that they randomly pick up from undesirable groups of bilinguals such as the American GIs. In addition, ‘bad’ bilinguals have been depicted as someone who excessively use English and displays hyper-articulated English phonological features, which then have framed as an indicator to index their fakeness. Such contrasting construct of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ language registers and language practices have then solidified and rearticulated the construct of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals.

This chapter also highlights how media as one of the most powerful institutions has reproduced and disseminated historically constructed models of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and their attributes as if they are the truth. By presenting such binary construct and attributes as authentic tool to measure one’s ‘good’ bilingualism, it also makes media consumers to appropriate such construct and to be participated in the process of evaluation and differentiation. Even though these chronotopic representations have been generally portrayed and accepted as historically mediated truth (Foucault, 1972), they entail already essentializing discourses that reflect gender politics, social inequality and other power-laden stances. In other words, the evocation of historically constructed models of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals reinscribes and reproduces essentialist construct of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and hence makes it hard for

South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean to claim their legitimacy in contemporary South Korean society.

Historically constructed personhood of female English-Korean bilinguals and contemporary portrayal of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ female English-Korean bilinguals provide an excellent example of how already gendered and classed construct of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals reinscribe and rearticulate gendered discourses, and marginalize female bilinguals and devalue their bilingual competence in South Korea. As discussed in this chapter, both historical discourses and contemporary media discourses have posited sexual morality (virginity) as one of the major criteria for being ‘good’ bilinguals. They have quickly evoked historically locatable personhood of the Western princess or the New Woman if female bilinguals fail to demonstrate a socially expected level of sexual morality. Similar suspicion and construct can be easily found in web discussion boards or online communities where female South Korean bilinguals are frequently framed as the contemporary version of the Western princess. These suspicious looks often describe female South Korean bilinguals’ alleged sexual relationship with foreigners as an unfortunate result of their twisted desire to learn English from these foreigners. Gohackers.com, one of the major websites for people who are in abroad or who prepare for study-abroad, for example, includes numerous web discussions, which depict female study-abroad students as ‘kölle’ (slut) who sleeps around with foreigners with an intention to learn English and hence can not be qualified as neither ‘good’ bilinguals nor desirable marriage materials; “female South Korean study-abroad students, please do not think about marrying South Korean men”(2008, September), “slutty female South Korean study-abroad students, please go out with foreigners, [not with South Korean men]” (2008, August) and “[South Korean men], never marry South Korean women who have overseas experience” (2007, November). Some of web discussions

further use the specific term ‘the Western princess’ to describe South Korean females with overseas experience. Here, we can see how historically constructed models of personhood do not simply stay in the past but actively affect current construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and leave little space for the growing number of English-Korean bilinguals to negotiate their positions and claim their legitimacy.

## **Chapter 5. Looking Inside: The Construction of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Bilingual Personhood**

The construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and bilingual competence have always entailed various time/space coordinate embedded with different sets of personhood. Its complex and multi-layered nature has certainly complicated the contemporary linguistic market in that what constitutes ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals is always subject to be changed. Similar to the example of President Rhee discussed in the previous chapter, any South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean, even those who have been widely accepted as ‘good’ bilinguals with their glorious contribution to national development, can be easily framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals, and their bilingual competence being quickly framed as a sign of their fakeness. Especially, mass media has produced various discourses that evoke different time-space-personhood coordinates and allows or even facilitates the constantly rescaling construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society. As examined in previous chapters, mass mediated discourses and historical narratives have functioned as one of the most powerful institutions in which language ideologies are reproduced and legitimize a certain group of bilingual and bilingual competence while marginalizing others. While the analysis of these metalinguistic discourses successfully demonstrate their significant influence to the construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and bilingual competence, we cannot see the actual process of how these macro discourses are transferring into individuals and their moment-to-moment interaction without examining micro discourses.

In this chapter, I explore the dynamic process of metapragmatic typification (Agha, 2007), which shows how U.S.-based transnational South Korean graduate students discursively typify linguistic registers, linguistic practices and models of personhood as indexical emblems of ‘good/successful’ or ‘bad/failed’ bilinguals as an attempt to legitimize themselves. As the

vulnerability of South Korean bilinguals accelerates tensions among the growing number of bilinguals, they must actively participate in the process of developing sense-making discourses (Heller & Duchêne, 2012) in order to secure their positions (e.g., Agha, 2003; Inoue, 2006). Although participants are generally seen as elites in South Korean society, they nonetheless are precarious and vulnerable as macro discourses constantly redefine what constitutes ‘good’ bilinguals. Positioning themselves as ‘good’ bilinguals and global elites involve constant work of distancing themselves from already existing models of personhoods associated with ‘bad’ bilinguals and those linguistic registers and linguistic practices that has been typified as ‘wrong’ ones, which they run the risk of being identified with. As historically constructed representations of English and English speakers have generally functioned as a kind of authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1991), participants actively evoke and utilize historically contingent and ideologically typified models of personhood, linguistic registers and other attributes to distinguish themselves from others, and to assert their legitimacy as ‘good’ bilinguals. In particular, they often utilize some typified English registers and practices associated with historically constructed ‘bad’ bilinguals including the excessive use of spoken English forms and slang, the preference of using English over Korean and the adoption of American names as an authoritative indicator to frame other South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean. Participants then carefully distance themselves from such damaging linguistic emblems and emphasize their ‘properly’ balanced position as English-Korean bilinguals who are not too much Americanized but still have a socially expected level of bilingual competence and a strong national identity. Such positioning generally involves the process of distinction (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) where participants attempt to reify the distinction between themselves and others. This can also sometimes shade into more agentive and aggressive processes of disparaging.

### Positioning Oneself: Agentive Processes

Since the process of globalization has generated ethnoscaples (Appadurai, 1990) and linguascaples (Pennycook, 2003)<sup>13</sup>, it has brought the emergence of various diasporic communities and transnational migrants, diversified language practices, language registers and language speakers, and complicated linguistic hierarchy and linguistic market. In order to conceptualize such dynamics, recent studies have turned away from structuralist accounts where languages are understood as static system and language learners/users are seen as passive recipients. Rather, these studies have given priority to individuals and their linguistic performance (Grbich, 2004). Terms such as ‘identities’, ‘subejctivity’, ‘agency’, ‘positionality’ and ‘voice’ have been introduced to fully conceptualize individuals’ active engagement in shaping meanings of languages, language practices and language speakers, and making sense of themselves in relation to already existing tensions (e.g., Butler, 1997; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Weedon, 1997). In problematizing structuralist-influenced approaches that only explain languages and language speakers as a fixed entity, poststructuralist feminist scholar Judith Butler (1997) argues for the urgent need of looking at “the possibility of an agency that emerges from the margins of power” (p. 156). Her claim, along with others, has urged scholars in applied linguistics, education, communication and linguistic anthropology to see the role of individuals as social actors who actively participate in positioning themselves and claiming their legitimacy while negotiating, resisting, rearticulating and reproducing the imposed discursive constitutions (e.g., Besnier,

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<sup>13</sup> To conceptualize the complicated natures of globalization, Appadurai (1990) describes five *scapes* of globalization: (a) *ethnoscaples* refer to the flow of people between nations, (b) *technoscaples* refer to the movement of technology, (c) *finanscaples* refer to the international movement of money, (d) *mediascaples* refer to the global flow of information and (e) *ideoscaples* refer to the international discussion of idea. Pennycook (2003) added the notion of *linguascaples*.

2011; Davis, 2011; Duranti, 2009; Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Jaffe, 2011; Kanno, 2003; Lam, 2009; Pavlenko, 2003; Rymes, 2012; Wortham et al., 2011).

Similarly, new approaches to language, language practices and language speakers have examined individuals' linguistic performance and their strategic positioning through theoretical frameworks such as 'style' (Coupland, 2007) and 'stance' (Englebretson, 2007; Jaffe, 2007, 2009). As Landolf and Pavelko (2001) make clear, the relationship between macrosociological contexts and individual language users/speakers can be described as “ [being] constantly co-constructed and renegotiated with those around the individual and with the society at large” (p. 148). In other words, individuals do not simply accept imposed language ideologies or ideological constructions but rather actively participate in reshaping macrosociological contexts through their selective appropriation, reinterpretation and reproduction of existing discourses. Individual language speakers also articulate their positionality and distinguish themselves from others by taking a particular linguistic stance (e.g., Jaffe, 2009), using stylized speech (e.g., Bucholtz, 2011; Eckert, 2000) or deauthenticating particular types of language registers or language speakers (e.g., Besnier, 2009; Inoue, 2006; Moore, 2011).

The agentive role of individual language speakers/users has been particularly prominent as the contemporary linguistic market has become ever crowded, highlighting the issue of authenticity. As Coupland (2001, 2003) points out, late capitalism and modernity makes the concepts of language communities and memberships of communities complex and less predictable, which then puts individuals in charge of actively navigating their positionality and claiming their legitimacy. Similarly, Heller and Duchêne (2012) argue that the neoliberal linguistic market and its neoliberal logics complicate what counts as marketable linguistic resources and valuable speakerhood. They further claim that social changes shape and reshape

the ways people perceive and use languages and language registers, but at the same time individuals utilize such ideological constructions to maintain the value of their capital and legitimize their positions. The crowded and competitive market in particular tends to evoke individuals' intense investment in sense-making discourses, which often involve the act of distinction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) and the process of othering (c.f., Besnier, 2009; Inoue, 2006).

### **Positioning Oneself As a 'Good' Bilingual**

While previous studies tend to overlook the dynamics of diasporic communities and categorize them using an oversimplified category such as ethnicity, recent studies have become more aware of the diversified and multi-layered nature of the growing transnational communities and transnational migrants. In particular, scholars who explore transnational South Korean communities and migrants have noted that what might be considered a single group of 'South Korean transnational migrants' is in fact subdivided by participants into groups like '1.5 generation (iljöm ose)'<sup>14</sup>, 'Korean American', 'FOB (Fresh Off the Boat)', 'wild geese families', 'study-abroad students (yuhaksaeng)', and 'early study-abroad students (choki yuhaksaeng).' Such subdivisions are generally made by transnational South Korean themselves who try to distinguish themselves from others and from widely circulating models of typified personhood (Park, 1999; Kang & Lo, 2004; Lo & Kim, 2012; Shin, 2012). For example, Shin's (2012) study of South Korean high school students in Toronto shows how these transnational students try to claim their legitimacy as 'cool' and 'cosmopolitan' subjects by framing South Korean immigrants (iminja) as 'backward' and 'outdated'. In so doing, these transnational

students successfully distance themselves from this particular construct of transnational South Koreans. Similarly, participants of this research extremely invest in distinguishing themselves from other transnational South Koreans through the act of distinction and sometimes the act of disparaging. Their intense investment is driven by their precarious position in contemporary South Korean society. As contemporary linguistic market of South Korea has become precarious and complicated due to the dramatic increase of studying-abroad students and bilinguals, participants of this research are in a precarious position. Even though they are generally understood as members of a generation that predates the current educational migration and hence are not often depicted as a rich and spoiled yuhaksaeng (a study-abroad student), the more market gets complicated and overcrowded, the more danger such damaging portrayal and evaluative gaze are cast upon them as well. In other words, there is always potential risk for them to be framed as ‘escapee’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals as contemporary linguistic market of South Korea, which then leads them to actively participate in the process of developing sense-making discourses (Heller & Duchêne, 2012) in order to avoid such risk.

Their vulnerability and anxiety have intensified as unemployment of South Koreans with foreign Ph.D.s has dramatically increased due to the growing popularity of studying-abroad (Kim H., 2012). Many elite returnees with overseas education have occupied socio-politically privileged positions in South Korea, particularly those who migrated in an earlier era, when very few were able to go abroad. The future of participants in this study, however, is more precarious in that overseas education and a foreign Ph.D. degree are no longer guarantee socio-politically privileged positions in contemporary South Korean society. In addition, most of the participants

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<sup>14</sup> The 1.5-generation refers to Korean American immigrants who are not quite fitted into first- or second-generation Korean. The term itself was coined by the Korean community in the early 1970s to indicate an in-between generation who immigrated to the United States during their

in this study cannot expect to financially depend on their parents or to inherit a fortune but need to financially support themselves upon graduation unlike some study-abroad students who come from affluent families. Because most of them would like to go back to South Korea in the near future, their anxiety and frustration about the overcrowded South Korean market and the increasing unemployment rate is a common topic of their daily conversation. One often-repeated phrase is “someone’s gotta die in order for me to get a job” (chugōya chariga nanda). This phrase illustrates the overcrowded nature of South Korean academia where universities/colleges are already filled with tenured professors and people with foreign Ph.D.s often end up waiting for years to become a professor.

In order to differentiate themselves from other groups of South Korean bilinguals in the precarious market of South Korea, participants tend to create strong bonds with one another in order. Both interview and ethnographic data show participants’ constant work of constructing rigid boundaries between themselves and others to solidify their legitimate membership as global elites and ‘good’ bilinguals and to be seen as effective employees with marketable resources. Even though participants have different educational backgrounds, they all identify themselves and one another as a cohesive group of South Korean graduate students who share common experiences at a North American university. In interactional and ethnographic data, they strongly identify themselves as people with strong Korean identities, and carefully position themselves as subjects who are globalized yet still maintain a strong sense of Koreaness. Such positioning can be read as a strategic effort to minimize the potential risk of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals who are ‘too Americanized’ or ‘too Korean’. As both historical discourses and South Korean media have constructed a discourse of properness that depicts ‘being too Americanized’ as a sign

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childhood (see Danico, 2004, for more details).

of one's inauthenticity and being 'too Korean' as a sign of one's lack of modernity, participants carefully appropriate these ideological constitutions, create a space where they can be safe from these evaluative constructions, and position themselves accordingly.

Their strong identification towards their native country and their aspiration of returning to their country are illustrated in both interviews and daily conversations. For example, they often portray themselves as "those who came out from their country to study [kongbuhaldõ naon salam]". They mark the United States as the place they "came out to", and South Korea as the place they would like to eventually "go back to". Their use of deictic expressions of "coming out" and "going back" indicate that the deictic center, the spatiotemporal locus, is South Korea. Such spatial deixis demonstrate the fact that participants consider the United States as a temporary residence where they get educated while considering South Korea as their nation and their ultimate destination where they actually belong. These explicit verbs of "coming out" and "going back" is quite opposite than "living", the verb they choose to describe other transnational South Koreans including ESA students, 1.5 generation and Korean American (e.g., "they are the ones who live here" (kũ salamtülün yöki sanün salamtüligo) and "because they are living here" (kyaenetülün yöki sanikka). While "coming out" and "going back" particles index participants' strong affiliation to their nation, the verb "living" does not encode any alignment with the deictic center and hence does not mark any affiliation.

Participants' strong affiliation to their nation can be also observed in their choice of using Korean names instead of creating American names as many undergraduate South Korean students and other transnational migrants do. Because "self and identity are closely bound to name" (Dion, 1983, p. 246, cited in Thompson, 2006), naming practices of transnational migrants show their stance towards different communities of practice and their projected

identities (e.g., Choi J., 2010; Kirwin, 2001). Transnational South Koreans seem to have two naming choices on entrance into North American society, that is either maintaining their Korean names or adopting American names as many immigrants from non-European countries do. While maintaining Korean names are generally seen as one's effort of valuing Korean ethnic and national identity, the practice of renaming are understood as one's active choice of abandoning Korean identity and one's strong desire of being assimilated into North American mainstream society (e.g., Hurh et al., 1979; Thompson, 2006). Only three participants including two with US citizenship, use American names such as David, Peter and James. Most of the participants are well aware of the fact that it is hard for their American colleagues and professors to pronounce or remember their Korean names correctly. Instead of adopting Americanized names, most of the participants go by their "Korean names" (e.g. writing out approximations of their hangŭl names in roman letters). Participants note that English speakers frequently mangle these 'semi-Americanized' names. For example, my name 'Lee Jin Choi' is pronounced as /i-jin- ch'oe/ in Korean with sounds of /o], i/ and /ㅈ], oe/, which are not existed or commonly used in English. To make these sounds more accessible to English speakers, I spelled my name as 'Lee Jin Choi' /li-jin-ch'o-i/ in English, switching 'i' with 'li' and 'oe' with 'o-i'. However, I do not correct people when they call me 'Lee' or 'Jin'<sup>15</sup>, or who pronounce "Choi" as /ch'o-i/, [tɕhoi] rather than /ch'oe/, [tɕhø]. Most participants agree that such compromise is acceptable. They, however, believe that using American names is a definite sign of 'trying too hard' to become an American and 'betraying one's nation'. When I ask them "how do you feel about South Korean who use American names?" during interviews, 16 participants immediately express their disapproval, saying "it is embarrassing", "who do they think they are? American?", and "I hate it, really hate

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<sup>15</sup> For romanizing Korean names, it is quite common to write Korean given names in two

it". They further explain that using Americanized names is equivalent to betraying one's parents and nation, and they would like to be known by their Korean names, the emblem of their strong national and ethnic identity, in public not by "random" (amulökena) or "forcibly coined" (ökchiro mandün) American names. During the interview, one participant even points out that using an American name is no different than *ch'angssigaemyöng* (創氏改名, the name-changing system implemented during Japanese imperialism that forced Korean people to change their Korean names to Japanese ones). Such comparison frames people who use American names as equivalent to Korean collaborators under Japanese imperialism.

Participants are also eager to distance themselves from chogiyuhak discourses and associated models of personhood such as 'crazy' educational manager mothers and 'academically failed' and 'morally corrupt' ESA students. The prevalent discourses of chogiyuhak often describe chogiyuhak as an 'aggressive', 'extreme' and 'invest-oriented' educational choice mainly driven by the phenomenon of English frenzy and extreme educational investment (Lo & Kim, forthcoming). To disassociate themselves from this particular construct of study-abroad, participants emphasize the fact that their study-abroad is a 'natural' outcome of their academic endeavor and academic success in South Korea. Similarly, all the participants with studying abroad experience before college repeatedly stress that their early study-abroad experience is 'involuntary' and 'natural' unlike the current educational migrations. To maximize the differences between them and the current educational migrants, they also choose not to use the word 'chogiyuhak' to describe their experience but rather use expressions such as "I lived [abroad] when I was young, and returned [to South Korea] (na öllttae salda wassö)". In so doing, participants distance themselves from the image of chogiyuhaksaeng who are escapees

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separate words with a hyphen or a space in between.

and ‘bad’ bilinguals. They instead align themselves with historically constructed ‘good’ bilinguals whose academic success ‘naturally’ provided them an opportunity of studying abroad and later being national leaders. A similar strategy of idealizing ‘involuntary’ chogiyuhak can be also found in their answers to the question of whether they would be willing to send their children abroad before college. More than 70% of the participants state that they would not consider chogiyuhak a feasible option for their children. Even though they generally oppose the idea of chogiyuhak, they all agree that ‘involuntary’ chogiyuhak such as receiving overseas education during their fathers’ sabbatical leave would be an ideal educational practice. Participants again construct ‘involuntary’ chogiyuhak as a practice that does not entail any intentional and agentive efforts on the part of both parents and children and as an ideal educational trajectory. Here, the fact that most participants aim to become professors who will therefore have greater opportunity to actualize such chogiyuhak for their children compared to others is conveniently disguised and erased.

### **Positioning Others As ‘Bad’ Bilinguals**

Locating the self in social space and claiming one’s legitimacy always involves the process of distinction where individuals distinguish themselves from others in terms of their tastes, lifestyles, cultural practices, aesthetic choices, and language registers. In order to assert their legitimacy and distinctive qualities, participants constantly differentiate themselves from ‘other’ transnational South Korean students such as ‘South Korean undergraduate students’, ‘1.5 generation<sup>16</sup>’, ‘Korean American’, ‘South Korean graduate students’, ‘temporary study-abroad students’, and ‘exchange students’. Fully acknowledging diversified discourses that have

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<sup>16</sup> The 1.5 generation refers to Korean American immigrants who are not quite fitted into first- or second-generation Korean. The term itself was coined by the Korean community in the early 1970s to indicate an in-between generation who immigrated to the United States during their childhood (see Danico, 2004, for more details).

increasingly criticized the practice of study-abroad and questioned authenticity of growing numbers of bilinguals, participants project socially recognizable models of personhood, linguistic practices and linguistic registers associated with ‘bad’ bilinguals onto other groups of South Korean bilinguals. By positioning themselves as connoisseurs who can tell the difference between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ language practices, they portray other groups as morally corrupt, academically unsuccessful and hence failed ones, just like other ‘bad’ bilinguals in Korean history. They then align themselves with the typified image of morally appropriate and academically exceed ‘good’ bilinguals who have all the ‘right’ qualities and dispositions, and ‘socially appropriate’ bilingual competence. As the process of distinction is based on a criticism and “the refusal of other tastes” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 56), participants’ act of distinction sometimes involve a more agentive act of disparaging ‘other’ transnational South Koreans and claiming their distinctiveness compared to others.

While ethnographic and qualitative interview data provide rich descriptions of how participants frame other groups of transnational South Korean by attributing typified and value-laden models of personhood and language practices, both naturally occurring conversation and computer mediated communication data capture how they fashion and stylize their positions in their daily interaction (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). In particular, these various sets of data enable the researcher to see the dynamics of how participants claim their legitimacy by constructing axes of differentiation (Irvine & Gal, 2000), where they selectively locate all the attributes and indicators that can be applied to them in one axis while putting others in another extreme. Throughout interaction, they strategically use chronotopic representation of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and inherent linguistic attributes that are often understood as ‘historical fact’ and hence ‘objective truth’ in South Korea to favorably locate themselves and disparage others. Their

usage of chronotopic representation and models of personhood then authorize both themselves and interlocutors (audiences/interpreters) to draw the line between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and later put a certain group of South Korean bilinguals into either group.

#### **A. South Korean Undergraduate Students: Fakers & Wannabe Americans**

In both interview and ethnographic data, participants often frame South Korean undergraduate students as fakers and wannabe Americans whose fakeness could be easily recognized not only by their status of studying-abroad students in Midwest University but also by their extensive use of English slang and spoken forms, their Americanized names, their desire to hang out with Americans and their strong preference of using English over Korean.

By adopting the prevalent discourse of *top'iyuhak* that depicts both college and pre-college level study-abroad as a sneaky attempt to disguise one's academic failure in South Korean schools, participants generally describe South Korean undergraduate students and those with ESA experience as selfish and cunning individuals whose purpose of study-abroad lies solely in their personal interests of covering up their academic underachievement. Such students are framed as people who only pretend to be global elites without any appropriate credentials. Participants often bring up the fact that the undergraduate programs of Midwest University are ranked only in the top 50 in the nation whereas many of the graduate programs that they attend are ranked in the top 1-20 (U.S. News & World Report, 2013). According to participants, attending Midwest University as an undergraduate is a sign that students could not get into privileged South Korean universities (see Kim, J. Y., 2011 for more details). It also indicates academic failure of those undergraduate students with *chogiyuhak* background because Midwest University is not seen as a top-tier educational institution at the undergrad level, but as a mediocre fallback for those who could not get in anywhere else. Through this particular portrayal

of South Korean undergraduate students, participants then construct these students as academic failures and fakers who try hard to cover up their limited abilities by obtaining a foreign degree, which allows them to pretend they are global elites. In so doing, participants frame the educational migration of undergraduate South Korean students as a waste of national resources, while describing their own overseas education as an extension of their academic success in South Korea.

As South Korean media discourses gradually blame yuhaksaeng as a whole for wasting national resources and damaging national economy, participants of this research are also exposed to the potential danger of being a victim of such discourses. To disassociate themselves from such portrayal, they typify South Korean undergraduate students as people who fit perfectly into this particular image of ‘rich’, ‘spoiled’, ‘extravagant’ and ‘academically failed’ yuhaksaeng. By erasing their relatively privileged backgrounds and affluent lives in the United States, participants then characterize themselves as ‘modest’, ‘hard-working’, ‘academically and professionally motivated’ elites. Indeed, participants often describe South Korean undergraduate students as ‘bad’ students who always go to clubs, karaoke and bars, while depicting themselves as ‘good’ students who always stay late in the office working and studying. In other words, participants align themselves with the image of traditional South Korean elites and ‘good’ bilinguals and strategically distance themselves from damaging portrayal of yuhaksaeng. In their daily interaction, participants frequently criticize South Korean undergraduate students’ extravagant lifestyles. They often use some visible emblems such as luxury cars, upscale housing and designer clothes and accessories to index these students’ extravagancy and to frame these students as typical ‘bad’ bilinguals. They, however, carefully erase the fact that the most of them receive financial support from their parents.

Participants' act of distinction is quite evident in their daily interaction where participants frequently talk about South Korean undergraduate students with nicknames that identify them with extravagant wealth such as 'the M3 kid', referring to the BMW sports sedan, and 'the Tower Palace kid', which refers to a luxury apartment building in Seoul. Given the fact that participants generally address other South Korean graduate students or postdocs with their Korean names or affiliations (e.g., 'that guy in Biology' or 'the new Econ postdoc'), this particular choice to identify undergraduate South Korean students with material characteristics can be understood as a strategic effort to present them as rich, spoiled, extravagant and academically failed individuals, and to distance themselves from these students.

The following demonstrates how participants construct South Korean undergraduate students as 'bad' bilinguals by identifying these students with material objects that index their extravagant lifestyles and by framing their study-abroad as a result of their academic failure. This excerpt comes from a lunch conversation among three female participants, Eunju (E), Yeonji (Y) and Sunmin (S). Since these three participants are members of a South Korean social club in Springfield with both South Korean undergraduate and graduate students, they often talk about people who they know through this association. The following conversation starts with a discussion about Sujin and her boyfriend who are undergraduate students in Midwest University and who are also members of the association.

Excerpt 1. *South Korean undergraduates and their luxury cars*

1. E: sujini namjachinguga külöke chalsandanunde?  
수진이 남자친구가 그렇게 잘산다는데?  
Did you know that Sujin's boyfriend is really rich?
2. Y: a chinjja?  
아, 진짜?  
Oh, really?

3. E: ǒ (.) öje chömsim möngnünde chihuniga küldölägo  
어, 어제 점심 먹는데 지훈이가 그러더라고  
Yep, Jihoon told me over lunch yesterday.

4. S: sujinin namjachinguga nuguji?  
수진이 남자친구가 누구지?  
Who is Sujin's boyfriend?

5. E: gǔgǔ (.) kwiyöun ae ijjana//  
그그 귀여운 애 있잖아//  
That that, cute boy, you know.

6. Y: //ölgul haya//k'o  
얼굴 하얗고  
The one with a light complexion?

7. E: //öǒ yakkan nunusüm chinün kwiyomi  
어어 약간 눈웃음 치는 귀요미  
Yepyep, the cutie with the smiley eyes.

8. ((E&Y laughing))

9. Y: kü ppalgan k'aessün mini kkülgo taninün//  
그 빨간 캡쓴 미니 끌고 다니는  
The one drives that red mini cooper with a helmet roof.

10. S: //a, na kyae algö kat'a  
아, 나 개 알거 같아  
Oh, I think I know him.

11. S: hoksi kyöngminilang chal taniji ana?  
혹시 경민이랑 잘 다니지 않아?  
Doesn't he usually hang out with Kyeongmin?

12. Y: //öǒ  
어어  
Yepyep.

13. E: //maja kyae  
맞아, 개.  
Right, [that's] him.

14. S: kyaelang kyöngminilang sübögesö chaju pwassö  
개랑 경민이랑 스벅에서 자주 봤어.  
I see him with Kyeongmin at Starbucks a lot.

15. Y: kyōngminido mwō maennal cha pakkwinūn kō pomyōn kkwaē chalsanūn chip ae kattōnde  
경민이도 뭐 맨날 차 바뀌는 거 보면 꽤 잘사는 집 애 같던데  
Given the fact that Kyeongmin changes his car pretty often, it seems like he comes from a  
very rich family.

16. E: kūnikka tuli chinhangaboji  
그니까 둘이 친한가보지  
Yeah, that must be why they are close.

17. ((laughing))

18. E: tuli maennal cha yaegi hago  
둘이 맨날 차 얘기 하고  
They're always talking about cars

19. Y: maennal cha salō tanigo  
맨날 차 사러 다니고  
They're always going around and buying cars

20. ((laughing))

21. S: künde mwō soljik'i yogi hakbuaedūl chigo kananhan aega inna?  
근데 뭐 솔직히 여기 학부애들치고 가난한 애가 있나?  
But to be honest, are there any undergraduates here who are poor?

22. Y: kūgōn kūlōch'i  
그건 그렇지  
Yeah, seriously.

23. S: yōgiga musūn habōdūdo anigo yōgilo taehak ponaeljōngdo//myōn  
여기가 무슨 하버드도 아니고 여기로 대학 보낼정도면  
It's not like we're at Harvard or something. I mean, if they were sent here for college.

24. //Y: ööö  
어어어  
Yepyepyep.

25. S: chom chōktanghi kongpu mot hago (.) chōktanghi chal sala//ya  
좀 적당히 공부 못 하고 적당히 잘 살아야  
That means that, they are academically underachieving, relatively speaking, and they are also  
rich, relatively speaking.

26. Y: //ō kūgōn kūlōch'i  
어 그건 그렇지

Yep, that's right.

27. E: kŭch'i yŏgiga habŏdŭdo anigo  
그치, 여기가 하버드도 아니고  
Yeah, this is so not Harvard.

28. ((laughing))

29. Y: a (.) nado t'it'i t'ago sipta  
아, 나도 티티 타고 싶다  
Gee, I'd like to drive an Audi TT.

30. E: kongbuna hasijyo baksasaengyang  
공부나 하시죠, 박사생양  
Why don't you just concentrate on studying, Miss Ph.D. candidate.

31. ((laughing))

In the above except, participants make a clear and concrete construction of 'us' versus 'them' by linking South Korean undergraduate students with visible material goods and associating them with damaging stereotypical image of yuhaksaeng—a rich but academically failed individual who spends an enormous amount of money abroad to disguise his/her academic underachievement and deceive others. Although other identification markers (e.g., cutie, smiley eyes) are used throughout the interaction, luxury cars owned by these undergraduate students<sup>17</sup> are served as one of the important identification markers and also one of the most visible emblems that index their extravagance, vanity and fakeness. In lines 23 and 25, they typify South Korean undergraduate students in Midwest University as someone who is academically underachieve and rich. Such description shows their criticism of these undergraduate students who are not able to enter prestigious universities in neither South Korea nor the United States but are willing to

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<sup>17</sup> The red mini cooper owned by Sujin's boyfriend costs over \$35,000, and the BMW M3 owned by Kyongmin costs over \$50,000. Both of these cars are generally classified European luxury cars. Three participants in this interaction also own used/new Honda cars, ranging from \$15,000 to \$30,000.

spend approximately \$50,000 per year for overseas education to obscure their previous academic failure. Through systems of distinction, participants construct South Korean undergraduate students as ‘bad’ bilinguals who cannot legitimately call themselves ‘good’ bilinguals or global elites. By framing them as such, participants position themselves as ‘good’ bilinguals who know better than those undergraduate students and their parents. The distinction between the ‘undesirable’ figure of extravagant undergraduate students and ‘elite’ graduate students becomes more clear in line 30 where Eunju collectively identifies herself and her interlocutors as ‘professional students’ while distancing themselves from the act of driving a luxury car. The fact that all three participants own cars in the United States and they all received financial support from their parents to buy their cars is erased in the above interaction.

While linking South Korean undergraduate students with typified characteristics of ‘bad’ bilinguals who are ‘trying too hard to be like American’ and ‘pretending to be like American’, participants often describe South Korean undergraduate students as wannabe American who strongly believe that acting and speaking like American is cool and cosmopolitan. Participants typify South Korean undergraduate students as someone who constantly uses English, quickly adopts an American name upon entering the United States and abandon his/her Korean name, and intensively invests in making American friends. These typified linguistic and non-linguistic features are seen as a sign of these undergraduate students’ pro-American tendency, which is then highly criticized by participants. With a disapproving tone, participants often describe these undergraduate students as pathetic and helpless individuals who could not see the value of Korean language and Korean identity, and who fail to make a fine balance between being ‘Korean’ and being ‘cosmopolitan’ (c.f., Besnier, 2009; Lo & Kim, forthcoming). They then depict these students as people who ‘still’ believe that they might be able to successfully enter

mainstream US society by speaking and acting like Americans. Participants see the act of choosing to use English and minimizing the use of Korean language as a sign of these students' failed balancing act. They also evaluate it as an attempt of trying too hard to be seen as monolingual English speakers despite the fact that their English is 'crappy', 'lousy' and 'accented'.

By typifying the lack of appreciating Koreaness and the characteristics of wannabe American as a distinctive marker of South Korean undergraduate students, participants distinguish themselves from this group of transnational students, and disassociate with this damaging construct of bilinguals. Participants further use this constructed image of South Korean undergraduate students to predict these students' potential failure in South Korean society. According to participants, these undergraduate students with no respect to Koreanness cannot fully adjust themselves into more 'conservative' and 'hierarchical' working environments where a collectivist culture and its cultural practices (e.g., the usage of honorific expressions and the senior-junior relationship) are respectably existed. In addition, participants sometimes adopt negative images associated with English frenzy and wild geese families in contemporary South Korean society to depict these students as a potentially flawed moral character.

### **B. Korean American: American not Korean**

Throughout their interaction and interviews, participants generally construct Korean American and 1.5 generation as 'Americans' who have limited or no Korean language proficiency and who have actively chosen to renounce a 'natural' Korean identity. While South Korean undergraduate students are depicted as national betrayers who actively choose to adopt Americanness and abandon Koreaness, Korean American is described as 'foreigners' and 'aliens' whose loyalty solely lies with the United States. In other words, participants characterize Korean

American as people who have made the voluntary choice to become Americans. By framing Korean American's lack of Koreaness as a result of their agentic choice, participants intentionally overlook the fact that many Korean American have been in the situation where they do not have access to the resources that might signify "Koreanness," like chances of learning Korean language, attending Korean heritage schools, having a local Korean community and visiting South Korea. Participants frequently mention Korean American's American names, their Americanized outfits, behaviors and belief system, and their limited Korean language skill and cultural knowledge as evidence of their exclusive investment in being Americans. By framing and typifying Korean American as a 'foreigner' with little Koreaness, participants then explain that Korean American will not function as potential competitors in the South Korean market where 'native' Korean proficiency, 'strong' Korean identity and 'proper' cultural understanding are required. They further claim that Korean American might have a 'native-like' English proficiency but their lack of 'native' Korean language proficiency and Koreaness disqualifies them from being seen as good bilinguals and valuable employees in South Korean society.

Such construction and typification can be observed how participants reconstruct David/Junho's positionality and assign typified personhood and attributes associated with Korean Americans to him when he expresses his plan to apply for South Korean company upon graduation. David/Junho, one of the participants, is a South Korean graduate student who was born and raised in the United States until he was 12 years old. He then went to South Korea and received secondary and college education in South Korea. He even went to Korean military service and served more than two years in order to maintain his U.S. citizenship.<sup>18</sup> He rarely

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<sup>18</sup> Because all the South Korean males are required to fulfill compulsory military service,

displays his American identity or any social and linguistic emblems that could be read as a sign of Americanization, except the occasional code-mixing and code-switching and the usage of an American name. David self-identifies as South Korean and during the interview he expresses his preference for hanging out with South Korean graduate students rather than Korean Americans. Indeed, he gets along well with other South Korean transnational students including many participants, and he is actively involved in several South Korean student associations in Springfield. While participants generally do not make a distinction between them and David/Junho, they strongly evoke his Americanness and treat him as a total foreigner every time they discuss his desire to get a job in South Korea. Even though they are aware of the fact he is well acquainted with Korean cultural practices such as Korean drinking culture and the senior-junior relationship and he is fluent in Korean, they tend to purposefully articulate his non-Korean characteristics to present him as ‘American’ who lacks appropriate cultural knowledge to navigate South Korean society; “An easy-going and relaxed American cannot bear such demanding and competitive working environment in South Korean companies.”, and “He would be the kind of guy who would say that he needs to go home in the middle of a department get-together (hoesik) before all the seniors had left.<sup>19</sup> It would be hilarious.” Some participants also bring up his ‘under-qualified’ bilingual competence as one of the major reasons he could not survive in South Korean society because he could neither fully understand nor produce advanced

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there has been increasing numbers of people who try to get foreign or dual citizenships to avoid such mandatory military service. South Korean government has made multiple reforms to prevent such attempt. David was born in the United States, and held dual citizenships, both South Korean and U.S. citizenships. The nationality law at that time required him to go to military service in order for him to maintain his U.S. citizenship.

<sup>19</sup> Hoesik is one of the common cultural practices in South Korean companies where all the employees including managers regularly get together after work. This generally involves heavy drinking and staying up late. It is considered rude and inappropriate to leave early before seniors do.

Korean words/expressions. They sometimes laugh about how his “black” English (hŭgin yŏngŏ) influences his limited Korean even though there is no actual influence from African American English in David’s English. Through such framing, participants claim that David’s ‘limited’ Korean language proficiency, Koreaness and Korean identity would be an obstacle for him to enter the South Korean society despite his foreign degree and ‘native-like’ English proficiency.

### **C. Female South Korean Undergraduate Students: Hypersexualized, Undesirable**

#### **Bilinguals**

Even though gender differences have been reduced and the value on women’s virginity<sup>20</sup> has been understood as the legacy of the old days in contemporary South Korea (Shim, 2001), South Korean female bilinguals of English and Korean are still trapped into the historical legacy where their English indexes their loss of virginity and sexual morality. The typified figures and personhood associated with female bilinguals in the mid- and late-20<sup>th</sup> centuries can be still prevalently found not only in South Korean media discourses but also in naturally occurring interactions among participants. Participants often hypersexualize South Korean female undergraduate students and depict them as a contemporary version of the Western princess or the New Woman. These female undergraduate students are generally associated with typified attributes such as ‘heavy makeup with smoky eyes and thick mascara’ and ‘sexually provocative poses’ (e.g., participants state that they can easily recognize these female students by looking at their selfie on facebook where they show off their cleavage and pout their lips). Their excessive use of English is also used as an evidence to support such construction.

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<sup>20</sup> Due to the influence of Confucian ideology, sexual discourses in South Korea has emphasized the concept of chastity that mainly referred to bodily chastity (virginity) in the past and refers more to love and relationship nowadays (Shim, 2001).

The following conversation illustrates how such models of personhood and their attributes are strategically used by participants to frame this particular female undergraduate and later the entire group of female South Korean bilinguals as the modern equivalence of the Western princess and hence failed bilinguals. This conversation takes place on facebook chat between Eunju (E) and Yeonji (Y) after Eunju gave a ride to a female South Korean undergraduate students, Lena, because her friends was not able to pick her up.

Excerpt 2. *A messy Female South Korean undergraduate*

1. E: wanjŏn kyaega nŭjŏkajigo na onŭl senesigan taegihago issŏjjana  
 완전 개가 늦어가지고 나 오늘 세네시간 대기하고 있었잖아  
 She was so late and I had to wait for her for three to four hours today.
2. E: nan kyaee chŏnhwabŏnhodo morŭgo...  
 난 개 전화번호도 모르고...  
 I didn't know her phone number...
3. E: soljikhi raitŭhaejunda hassŭm pŏnhorul mili namgyŏya hanŭn kŏ anigo?  
 솔직히 라이드해준다 했음 번호를 미리 남겨야 하는 거 아니고?  
 Honestly, shouldn't she have given me her number first when I offered her a ride?
4. Y: a..wanjŏn jjajŭngnaggeda  
 아..완전 짜증났겠다  
 You must be totally pissed off.
5. E: kŭrŏdŏni ttik chŏnwhaga wasŏ paro yŏngŏlo ssŏ kkk  
 그러더니 딱 전화가 와서 바로 영어로 써 ㅋㅋㅋ  
 Then, she called me and started to speak in English right away. lol
6. Y: kyaega yŏngŏssŏ?  
 개가 영어써?  
 Did she use English?
7. E: ayu missŭkim? aim hia- mak irae..kŭ hŭnhan sswalido ŏpsŏ  
 아유 미쓰킴? 아임 히아- 막 이래..그 혼한 짜리도 없어  
 Are you Miss Kim? I am here- she actually said that without a simple "sorry".
8. Y: missŭkimi mwŏya? Chine hoesa chigwŏniya?  
 미쓰킴이 뭐야? 지네 회사 직원이야?

What is that Miss Kim<sup>21</sup>? Are you her office lady?

9. E: naemali missükim telilö olae

내말이 미쓰킵 데리러 오래

Tell me about it. [She said] Miss Kim, pick me up.

10. Y: a wanjön pölüjangmöliömnün...

아 완전 버르장머리없는...

What a rude...

11. E: külaesö nado wanjön künyang yöngölo taehaessö. Yeüigo mwögo..

그래서 나도 완전 그냥 영어로 대했어. 예의고 뭐고..

So I totally spoke to her in English. Without really paying any attention to manners or anything...

12. Y: yeppö? aenün?

예뻐? 애는?

Is she pretty? That girl?

13. E: a mwö...künyang wanjön tip'ikal hakpu yöjae alchana

아 뭐...그냥 완전 טיפిక알 학부 여자애 알잖아

Well... you know, a totally typical undergraduate girl.

14. Y: yönye'in konghangp'aesyön? syanel ssön'güllasü?

연예인 공항패션? 샤넬 썬글라스?

[Did she look like ] a celebrity dressed up in the airport? Chanel sunglasses?

15. E: kkk ani. ttik masük'ara kkkk

ㅋㅋㅋ 아니, 떡 마스크라 ㅋㅋㅋㅋ

lol, nope. Thick mascara. lol

16. Y: anwa hh külö'm kipke p'ain kasümgol?

아봐 ㅎㅎ 그럼 깊게 파인 가슴골?

No way, haha. And deep cleavage?

17. E: üngü'ng k sisönül ttelsu öpnün kkk

응응ㅋ 시선을 땡수 없는 ㅋㅋㅋ

Yes, yes, haha you couldn't take your eyes off of it. lol

18. Y: taechaegi an sönünguman hh

대책이 안 서는구만 ㅎㅎ

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<sup>21</sup> The address term “Miss xx” is generally associated with negative connotation in South Korean society and indexes its user’s intention of looking down on women interlocutors. The term is often used in working places.

What a messy girl. haha

19. E: hilŭn tto ōlmana noptōnji...kū hillo kabang chiljil kkŭnŭnde..polmanhaessōm kk  
힐은 또 얼마나 높던지...그 힐로 가방 질질 끄는데..불만했음 ㅋㅋ  
And her heels were so tall...it was quite a scene to see her dragging her bags with her  
heels on. lol
20. Y: kosayngmanassōyo. kŭlŏn ae sangdaehanŭla..tangō sajulkke. p'ŭlap'ŭchino k'ol?  
고생 많았어요. 그런 애 상대하느라.. 단거 사줄게. 프라프치노 콜?  
You've been through a lot today, dealing with someone like that. Let me treat you to  
something sweet. How about a Frappucino?

Throughout the interaction, two participants typify female South Korean undergraduate students as either a 'wannabe celebrities' who shows off designer clothes and accessories (line 14) or a 'sexually provocative girl' (lines 15-18) who wears thick mascara, shows her cleavage and wears killer heels. Their detailed description of Lena's physical appearance, along with their criticism on her excessive English usage, certainly evokes the evaluative gaze casted upon the historically constructed model of female bilinguals whose English and Westernized appearances index their 'bad' bilingual status and their 'morally wrong' sexual behaviors. In particular, both Eunju and Yeonji highly criticize Lena's usage of English and her choice of addressing Eunu as 'Miss Kim' instead of 'onni' (a Korean honorific addressing form to indicate a female interlocutor who is older than a female speaker) between lines 5 and 11. Given the fact that Yeonji provides a confirmation question in line 6, Lena's choice of using English to Eunju instead of Korean is understood something unexpected, bad-mannered and inappropriate. In line 11, Eunju states that she intentionally used English to Lena "without really paying any attention to manners". Here, the linguistic choice of using English among Korean speakers is again constructed as inappropriate and socially wrong. Participants also criticize Lena's linguistic choice of 'Miss Kim', the address term that is intentionally used to look down on women

interlocutors in South Korean workplaces, and frame it as a sign of her failed bilingual competence and flawed morality.

Interestingly, all the female participants including Eunju and Yeonji often talk about the hardship of being a professional woman in academia and get indignant about gender inequality in contemporary South Korean society. Although they are aware of how discriminatory gender politics existed in the society tend to victimize and marginalize women, they actively evoke historically constructed yet male-centered representation of hypersexualized and undesirable female bilinguals in order to construct South Korean female undergraduate students as the modern equivalent of such female bilinguals and distance themselves from this typified construct of female bilinguals. The same construction can be often found in their daily conversation where participants concern about many of female South Korean undergraduate students who are still ‘too young’ become sexually extravagant and are not afraid of having one night stands or living with their boyfriends before marriage. In addition, participants explain these female undergraduate students’ sexual openness as a sign of “being too Americanized” and “trying to be like a character in ‘Sex and the City’”. By using expressions such as “I was really surprised to see...” and “I have had never imagined...” to describe sexually provocative behaviors of South Korean female undergraduate students, participants locate themselves as ‘morally right’ and ‘good’ female graduate students in contrast to ‘sexually deviant’, ‘too Americanized’ and hence ‘bad’ female undergraduate students.

As discussed in this section, participants tend to selectively appropriate existing discourses on bilinguals, and use them to frame other groups of South Korean bilingual as ‘bad’ bilinguals and distance themselves from these groups. Especially, they actively adopt typified models of personhood and their linguistic and non-linguistic attributes associated with South

Korean bilinguals of English and Korean. Because these models of personhood and attributes have been historically constructed and produced, participants' appropriation of them could successfully evoke a particular temporal and spatial coordinate. It could also arouse a certain evaluative stance that is generally shared by South Korean people. The typified feature of being too Americanized/cosmopolitan, for example, evokes the historically locatable figure of those 'bad' bilinguals in the mid- and late 20<sup>th</sup> century whose English indexes their undesirable social and moral status, and hence connects two different time/space coordinates. Since these chronotopic representation have been historically constructed and hence have been generally understood as authoritative discourses, participants' construction of 'good' and 'bad' bilinguals through the selective usage of chronotopic representation could enable participants to successfully position themselves as the kind of person who can readily recognize 'bad' bilinguals and who can draw a clear difference between worthy and unworthy' bilinguals.

### **Positioning Others As 'Bad' Bilinguals: English**

As Agha (2007, 2011) points out, historically constructed discourses and language ideologies have generated shared images that entail the "language-culture-people" hybrid. In other words, a particular language register can summon models of personhood and cultural interpretation associated with that language register and vice versa. While the strategic evocation of historically locatable figures and attributes enables participants to draw a boundary between 'us' and 'them' and construct themselves as 'good' bilinguals who are qualitatively different from others, specific types of language usage, language register and language practices can also evoke particular models of personhood and evaluative stance associated with them (e.g., Agha, 2007; Besnier, 2009; Cavanaugh, 2012; Inoue, 2006).

As the two historically constructed groups of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals are linked to the visible use of English and their Englishes are depicted qualitatively different from one another, English has been seen as an authentic tool to determine one’s ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual status in contemporary South Korean society. Indeed, English language competence has been widely used to measure one’s global competitiveness and one’s academic and professional abilities and also seen as a result of one’s constant endeavor and self-development (Park, 2010; Park & Lo, 2012). As the issue of authenticity has become prominent and the two distinct models of personhood are recontextualized in contemporary South Korean society, the ‘proper’ and ‘authentic’ use of English has become a socially recognizable emblem to index one’s ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingualism. A particular type of sociolinguistic competence that determines one’s socially proper ways of using English and Korean has then become an effective tool to measure one’s authentic bilingual competence.

As the excessive sign of Americanization/cosmopolitan or pro-American is generally understood as a failed balance between Koreaness and Americanness, the excessive usage of English and English-mixing is often depicted as ‘improper’, ‘too-American’ and ‘wrong’. The following excerpt demonstrates how the choice of using English is read as ‘inappropriate’, and then serves as an indicator to categorize three different groups of South Korean bilinguals— 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Korean American, 1.5 generation Korean American, and temporary studying-abroad students at a language institution- into the same group of ‘bad’ bilinguals. The following excerpt takes place in a local coffee shop where three female participants, Eunjo (E), Mikyung (M), and Yeonji (Y), enjoy their Friday afternoon and talk about their weekdays.

Excerpt 3. *Some South Korean students and excessive English usage*

1. E: gŭ chung hana yŏjaaega hangugaengŏya. Yunhi (.) yunhi (.) mwŏ kūlae  
그 중 하나 여자애가 한국엔거야. 윤희, 윤희 뭐 그래

[In my class], there was one Korean girl. Yoonhee, Yoonhee something like that.

2. E: ta hanguksalamdüli kwönyunhi (.) ilönünde  
다 한국사람들이 권윤희 이러는데  
Kwon Yoonhee is so like Korean.
3. M: ö  
어  
Right.
4. E: wassö. tochahaessö. nae samusile wattan malya. a (.) hi öjjögo chöjjögo ilae  
왔어. 도착했어 내 사무실에 왔단 말야. 아 하이어쩌고 저쩌고 이래.  
She Came. She Arrived. She came to my office. Ah, she said “hi” blah blah.
5. E: gülaesö hanguksalamijyo? külaettöni taedabül an hago kaman pwa  
그래서 한국사람이죠? 그랬더니 대답을 안 하고 가만 봐  
So [I said to her] “you are Korean, right?” and she just looked at me without saying anything.
6. Y: an hae?  
안 해?  
She didn’t say anything?
7. E: ö  
어  
Nope.
8. E: gülaesö a twaessöyo  
그래서 아 됐어요  
So, forget about it.
9. M: never mind.
10. E: ö (.) nebömaindühago künyang yöngö hago ponaekködüng  
어, 네버마인드하고 그냥 영어 하고 보냈거든  
Yes, I thought “never mind”, and spoke to [her] in English.
11. E: gyae kago nasö mwöji ilömyönsö ((laughing))  
개 가고 나서 뭐지 이러면서  
After she left, I was like what was that?
12. M: mwöji kyaen? hangugaega aninga? isenga?  
뭐지 걀? 한국애가 아닌가? 2 셀가?  
Who is she? She is not Korean? 2<sup>nd</sup> generation, maybe?
13. Y: ise anya?

2 세 아냐?  
[is she] 2<sup>nd</sup> generation?

14. E: mwō kŭlōmyōnŭn aa chagi hangungmal mot handa::  
뭐 그러면은 아아 자기 한국말 못 한다  
If so, [she could have at least told me] that she couldn't speak in Korean.
15. E: gōtto anigo toege nal isanghan salam chwigŭphamyōnsō::  
것도 아니고 되게 날 이상한 사람 취급하면서  
Rather she treated me like a weirdo.
16. E: ō (.) k ōŭi migugae (.) migugaehant'e hangungmal han kōlang  
어, 거의 미국애, 미국애한테 한국말 한 거랑...  
Well...it is like speaking Korean to an American, American.
17. M: migugaehant'e ((laughing))  
미국애한테..  
To an American.
18. E: mwōyamwōya ilōk'e ch'yōdaponŭn gōyeyo  
뭐야뭐야 이렇게 쳐다보는 거예요.  
She stared [at me], like “what are you looking at? What is your problem?”.
19. E: aninga mak ilōmyōnsō ((laughing))  
아닌가 막 이리면서  
[I was like] she is not [Korean]?
20. M: kyaedo toege sin'gihane  
개도 되게 신기하네  
She is really strange.
21. E: aninga (.) animyōn malgo  
아닌가, 아니면 말고  
[I was like] she is not [Korean]?, if not whatever.
22. M: kyaen toege ilŭn'ga p'oji. kŭlōn ke  
걔 되게 싫은가 보지. 그런 게  
She must hate it. That kind of thing.
23. M: kŭlōn aedŭ; ijjana.  
그런 애들 있잖아.  
You know there are these kinds of kids.
24. M: mak (.) alilanggat'unde kado yōngō toege mot hanunde yōngō kŭlōk'e hanŭn aedŭl ijjana  
막 아리랑같은데 가도 영어 되게 못 하는데 영어, 영어 그렇게 하는 애들 있잖아

When you go to places like Arirang [a Korean restaurant], there are kids who use English, English even though their English sucks.

25. Y: majö

맞어

Right.

26. M: han'guedülkkili

한국애들끼리

Among Koreans.

27. Y: na nömu silö

나 너무 싫어

I really hate that.

28. E: kügön külön kö kat'a. wenji ielsi aedüli yöngö

그건 그런 거 같아. 웬지 ELC 애들이 영어..

They must be...maybe ELC<sup>22</sup> kids [who are speaking] English...

29. M: hakpuaedüliya waenyamyön maik'ülobaioloji mak ilön ch'aek tülgo ittan malya aedüli

학부애들이야 왜냐면 마이크로바이알러지 막 이런 책 들고 있단 말야 애들이

They are undergraduates. Because they are carrying books like microbiology. They are.

30. E: a külae?

아 그래?

Ah, is that right?

31. M: ö

어

Yes.

32. Y: küde külön aedüli issö (.) kü::

근데 그런애들이 있어 그...

Well, there are these types of kids. that

33. E: yöngö yönsöp halyögo különa?

영어 연습 할려고 그러나?

Are they doing so to practice English?

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<sup>22</sup> English Language Center (ELC) is a university-affiliated English language learning center for those students who would like to develop their English skills. Because the Midwest University has its own English as a Second Language program for students who are currently enrolled in the university, ELC is mainly for temporary study-abroad students whose purpose lies in learning English.

34. M: kŭlŏn kŏ kat'a. yaggan  
그런 거 같애. 약간  
Seems like. A bit.

35. Y: p'it'ŏ kŭ chon rumme (.) kyaega 1.5seinde  
피터 그전 룸메, 개가 1.5 세인데  
Peter's ex-roommate is 1.5 generation.

36. Y: yŏdga kŭlŏk'e chayŏnsŭlŏpke naonŭnde palŭmi choch'inŭn ana  
영어가 그렇게 자연스럽게 나오는데 발음이 좋지는 않아.  
She uses English comfortably but her pronunciation is not good

37. Y: hangungmali p'yŏnhanaende mujogŏn yŏngŏlo hae  
한국말이 편한데 걀 무조건 영어로 해  
M: She is more comfortable with Korean, but she only uses English.

38. M: kŭnikka yakkan kŭlŏn aedŭli issŏ  
그니까, 약간 그런 애들이 있어  
Right. There are definitely these kinds of kids.

39. Y: chi ch'ingulangdo  
지 친구랑도  
Even with her friends.

40. M: kŭnyang aident'it'i kat'a  
그냥 아이덴티티 같아  
It is just [the issue of] identity.

41. M: najungenŭn hangungmal chal hanŭnge aesesi toelsudo innŭnde::  
나중에는 한국말 잘 하는게 애셋이 될수도 있는데...  
Being fluent in Korean can be an asset in future.

42. Y: mwŏ (.) ŏlilttaen mwŏ kŭlŏn ke poina  
뭐, 어릴땐 그런 게 보이나  
Well, when you are young, it is hard to see that.

Between lines 1 and 12, Eunju explains her strange experience of meeting Yoonhee, an undergraduate student. As evidenced from line 1 to line 4, Eunju assumed that Yoonhee is South Korea based on her Korean name, and asked her in Korean language if she is Korean. Because the question “you are Korean, right?” is often used among South Korean students in North America to indicate their shared identities and serves as a cue to switch their language choice

from English to Korean, the expected answer would be a positive confirmation in Korean such as “Yes, are you also Korean?” (ne, hanguginiseyo?). Yoonhee, however, did not respond to Eunju’s question, which then made Eunju to switch back to English. This particular interaction is described as ‘strange’ by Eunju in line 11, and Yoonhee’s silence raises a suspicion among participants. In line 12 and 13, Mikyung and Yeonji suggest that Yoonhee could be Korean American. Eunju, however, still believes that Yoonhee’s reaction was inappropriate because second generation Korean Americans can still recognize Korean and respond to Eunju that they cannot speak in Korean. Eunju’s description of the event then makes Mikyung to think that Yoonhee must hate to use Korean. The characteristic of one’s reluctance to use Korean then invites “these kinds of kids” in line 23 who prefer to use English even though “their English sucks” (line 24), and “[their] English pronunciation is not good” (line 36). Participants all agree that temporary study-abroad students at English Language Center, (line 28), South Korean undergraduate students (line 29) and 1.5 generation students (lines 35, 37) could be fitted into “these kinds of kids”. Participants then depict these students as incompetent and failed bilinguals who do not see the value of Korean and Koreaness unlike participants.

Throughout the interaction, participants construct the act of using English when speaking to a Korean peer as a typified sign that indexes one’s failed balancing act and ‘bad’ bilingual status. We first have an assumably 2<sup>nd</sup> generation undergrad student who has a Korean name but does not respond to Korean. She is immediately read as “strange” and “pretending to be American”. Participants then assign this feature to ELC students, temporary study abroad students in their university who try to use English in order to practice it. They also assert that both undergraduate South Korean students and 1.5 generation Korean American fall into this group whose English is “not good” or “sucks” but insist to use it over Korean. Even though these

groups have different linguistic, educational and social backgrounds— for example, ELC students are here for English language learning and Korean Americans mostly grew up with English, the fact that they are excessively using English and choosing not to use Korean make them to be grouped together. By grouping these bilinguals as incompetent ones, participants successfully position themselves as ‘good’ bilinguals who make a ‘proper’ choice of using Korean and presenting Koreaness—who can tell when and where to use English and Korean, and who are also wise enough to notice the value of Koreaness in the future.

### **Conclusion**

Although recent research have emphasized the importance of viewing language learners and users as social actors rather than mere recipients, little research has successfully conceptualized the dynamics of how these language learners and users stake a claim for their legitimacy beyond the simplistic explanation of ‘negotiation’, ‘struggle’ and ‘reposition’. As the process of late capitalism and neoliberal globalization has made contemporary linguistic market overcrowded and precarious, language learners and users are required to take more agentive action to claim their legitimacy and to secure their position. As examined in this chapter, language learners and users as social actors are actively participating in the process of sense-making discourses and positioning. They utilize and selectively reproduce already-existing discourses that are favorable to them, and construct ‘us’ versus ‘them’ dichotomy through the process of distinction. In particular, participants often invite the historically constructed figures of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and their bilingual competence to typify a certain group of South Korean bilinguals in the processes of distinction and disparaging. They sometimes take more agentive and more aggressive act of disparaging in order to effectively differentiate themselves from others and dissociate themselves from circulating discourses that could potentially

disqualify them in the market. Indeed, participants of this research marginalize and disparage other transnational South Korean students by assigning them to damaging figures of morally corrupt fakers and national betrayers.

This chapter also highlights how participants strategically uses the discourse of properness that stresses the importance of making a socially appropriate balance between two axes of being too Americanized/cosmopolitan and being too Korean to marginalize other South Koreans. It is interesting to note that the discourse of properness is one of the increasingly complicated and domesticated discourses that put South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean, including participants of this research, in a fragile position. Instead of being trapped by this delicate discourse, participants use it as an authoritative tool to successfully marginalize other groups of South Korean bilinguals while positioning themselves as ‘good’ bilinguals.

## **Chapter 6. Looking Inside: The Construction of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ English Competence and Bilingual Competence**

The historically constructed model of ‘good’ bilinguals is associated with ‘educated’ and ‘native-like’ English that they acquire through overseas education in English speaking countries, whereas ‘bad’ bilingual figures are associated with ‘spoken’ and ‘uneducated’ English that they randomly pick up from undesirable kinds of English speakers such as American GIs. Since English spoken by two groups of bilinguals have been differently portrayed and indexed different social meanings, speaking ‘good’ variety of English has been an important quality to be seen as ‘good’ bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society. Historically constructed model of ‘good’ bilinguals has idealized native-like and educated English. In addition, the prevalent ideology of native-speakerism has also justified such ideological construct and posited the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English as a goal for English language learners in both ESL and EFL countries (Holliday, 2005; Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1997). What counts as ‘native-like’ English and ‘good’ English variety, however, are always changing as market dynamics are in the constant process of upgrading their criteria in the overcrowded and competitive linguistic market of South Korea, and so does the construction of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals (Park, 2011). In particular, the evaluation of language competence and marketable linguistic resources are constantly recalibrated to control the crowded market and hence put South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position (c.f., Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Gal, 2012). In this precarious market, how do South Korean bilinguals then situate themselves as ‘good’ and ‘competent’ bilinguals?

To answer these questions, this chapter first examines South Korean educational language policies and media discourses to see how ‘good’ English competence has been

ideologically constructed and reconstructed in large-scale language socialization institutions in South Korea. In particular, I explore how English communicative competence, under the prevalent influence of native-speakerism (Doerr, 2009; Llurda, 2004; Park, 2010) and government-led adoption of communicative language teaching (CLT), has been idealized and posited the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English as an ultimate goal of English education in South Korea. The crowded linguistic market, however, has domesticated such ideological construction in response to local dynamics and tensions, and added more diversified and complicated criteria for what counts ‘native-like’ and ‘good’ English speakers. By analyzing ethnographic and interview data, I then examine how participants make sense of themselves by critically evaluating the ideological-laden models of ‘good’ English language competence in contemporary South Korean market and redefining ‘good’ English language competence. Rather than simply consuming imposed discourses that idealize the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English, they strategically utilize the discourse of properness that treats ‘being too Americanized/cosmopolitan’ as an indicator of failed bilinguals to frame ‘native-like’ English competence as a sign of being too Americanized/cosmopolitan. They then argue that ‘good’ bilingual competence includes a particular type of sociolinguistic competence that enables bilinguals to make a ‘proper’ use of English and Korean in socially expected ways and in socially appropriate contexts. The analysis demonstrates that language competence is not only socially constructed and historically contingent, but also is redefined and reified by individuals in their daily interaction. It also suggests that the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English competence is not a goal for English language learners unlike many literature in English language teaching and learning have suggested and assumed.

### **The Social Construction of ‘Good’ English Language Competence in South Korea**

The notion of communicative competence was coined by Hymes (1972) as a reaction to Chomsky's (1965) static notion of competence. Communicative competence generally refers to knowledge that enables language users or hearers to make the socially appropriate usage of language in order to successfully communicate within a given speech community; that is, "acquir[ing] competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (Hymes, 1972, p. 277). Canale and Swain (1980) further explain that the major components of communicative competence include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. The notion of communicative competence with its emphasis on functional competence has been widely accepted by applied linguists, educational policy makers and educators, especially those who work for second/foreign language learners. In criticizing traditional approach of prioritizing grammatical competence, many scholars and educators started to see communicative competence as a goal of second/foreign language learning and testing (Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1997). Under the huge influence of communicative competence, communicative language teaching (CLT) was introduced in the 1970s as an authentic English teaching method that emphasizes the importance of developing communication skill and having a meaningful interaction (Nunan, 1991). Since then, CLT has become known as one of the most effective teaching methods in second/foreign language classrooms (Savignon, 1990; Widdowson, 1978). As English began to be widely understood as a global language in the context of globalization, many EFL governments started to quickly adopt CLT as an attempt to provide effective English education and hence increase global competitiveness. Communicative competence has thus become the primary goal of English language learning and teaching in these countries.

Like other EFL countries, the South Korean government emphasized communicative competence in its curricula in the early 1980s. The 4<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1981-1987), for example, aims to help students acquire ‘living’ English (sayngwhal yǒngǒ, salainūn yǒngǒ)<sup>23</sup> by establishing language labs in schools and emphasizing the importance of English listening and speaking skills (Kwon & Kim, 2010). Both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1987-1992) characterize communicative competence as the ultimate goal of English education, and the 6<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1992-1997) introduced CLT as an advanced teaching method to replace Audio-Lingual and Grammar-Translation methods (see appendix A for more details). The 7<sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1997-2006) advocates CLT as at all levels of the school system, and President Lee’s 2007 proposal for English immersion also advocates the urgent need of acquiring an advanced level of English communicative competence (Lee J., 2010). Despite growing concerns about the challenges of adopting CLT in South Korea (e.g., Butler, 2005; Li, 1998), CLT and its emphasis on communicative competence has quickly come to dominate English education in both the public and private sectors. The current educational policy also stresses the acquisition of “practical” English (siryong yǒngǒ) and “expressive” English (p’yohyǒn yǒngǒ). Since communication skill and fluency get heralded as essential while devaluing the traditional focus on grammar, these educational policies and practices idealize the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English communicative competence and English pronunciation.

As various educational policies and practices have repeatedly emphasized the significance of English communicative competence, English pronunciation has become the most visible and socially recognizable emblem to index one’s authentic English proficiency in

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<sup>23</sup> ‘Living English’ (sayngwhal yǒngǒ, salainūn yǒngǒ) emphasizes the importance of acquiring naturalist English through the extensive exposure to a naturalistic English-speaking environment (see Park, 2010b for more details).

contemporary South Korean society and hence reinscribed native speakerism. Although the usage of English idioms, English slang terms and culturally embedded English expressions are often associated with ‘native’ English speakerhood, English pronunciation in particular is thought of as a measurable element that South Korean people use to determine one’s English communicative competence. Indeed, English pronunciation is a major component to evaluate one’s English communicative competence in South Korean schools (Lim, 2010) and in South Korean companies (Lee J., 2007). South Korean companies have increasingly used English speaking tests in order to evaluate both job applicants’ and employees’ English communicative competence (Choi Y., 2011). OPIc (Oral Proficiency Interview-computer, developed by The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), for example, was first introduced in South Korea in 2007, and is currently used by approximately 1,500 South Korean companies including conglomerates such as Samsung and LG to determine one’s employment and job promotion.

While both institutional and social discourses have placed a high value on one’s English pronunciation, South Korean media has also played a powerful role in disseminating and reproducing such ideological emphasis on English pronunciation. In media, South Korean celebrities with overseas experience are often called upon to demonstrate their authentic English skills, oftentimes their ‘native-like’ English pronunciation, in interviews with native English speakers, who also administer English-speaking tests. If they fail to demonstrate the ‘expected’ level of English communicative competence and pronunciation, they are quickly framed as fakers whose English skill, overseas experience and morality become highly questionable. Tablo, a Korean hip-hop singer who graduated from Stanford University, for example, was labeled as a faker who spoke English poorly and whose English pronunciation was lousy, which later raised a

strong suspicion of forging his Stanford degree. Even though both Stanford University and Korean Supreme Court proved his innocence, his English and authenticity are still questioned by many South Korean. The following newspaper headlines also illustrate how English pronunciation is served as one of the most effective tools to measure one's 'good' and 'bad' bilingual status; "Crystal's (a member of a South Korean idol group who was born and raised in California) English pronunciation, 'she can be in American soap operas'...perfect and native-like [English pronunciation]" (Chosun Ilbo, 2013)", and "Kang Sung-jin (a South Korean actor with overseas experience) being humiliated because of his [lousy] English pronunciation" (SBS News, 2011). These news articles also contain reported speech, directly coming from netizen and native English speakers who positively or negatively evaluate these celebrities' English competence and pronunciation, such as "her English pronunciation is so perfect, is she a native English speaker?" (Chosun Ilbo, 2013). As evidenced by the above news articles, the evaluative gaze is always casting upon English-Korean bilinguals, and English pronunciation often becomes one of the authentic criteria to decide one's legitimate bilingual status in contemporary South Korean society.

Even though English pronunciation has become the major sign that people use to determine 'good/authentic' or 'bad/inauthentic' English communicative competence, having 'native-like' English pronunciation alone is not sufficient in contemporary market of South Korea. Positive evaluations are almost always followed by other socially recognizable credentials that 'truly' prove one's legitimacy such as graduating from prestigious universities, receiving a high score on certified English tests, being praised by native English speakers and showing dedicated efforts to practice English despite a hectic schedule. For example, a Chosun Ilbo article that explains why Kim Soo-hyun was offered the part in the American blockbuster

'Avengers 2' provides a long list of her 'authentic' credentials, including her bachelor's degree from a prestigious university and her perfect score on TOEIC, to prove her 'real' authenticity (Chosun Ilbo, 2014). Here, her 'native-like' English proficiency is described as a natural outcome of her academic endeavor, which then makes an indirect but rigid connection between her advanced English communicative competence/fluent English pronunciation and her privileged credentials. In the same vein, English communicative competence without any supporting credentials is often framed as inauthentic, explained by either previous interaction with undesirable kinds of native English speakers such as American GIs (see Lo & Choi, in preparation for more details). Similarly, the extensive use of English and hyperarticulated English pronunciation in public sphere is seen as a sign of fakers who try too hard to express their 'true' ability of participating in the global world and fail to make a 'proper' balance between Koreaness and globalness (c.f., Besnier, 2009). In other words, English communicative competence and fluent English pronunciation can be only seen as a valuable asset when they are accompanied by socially recognizable credentials and when they are performed in a socially appropriate manner to meet situated expectations.

By revisiting Goffman and Bourdieu's work on the sociopolitically and historically situated nature of language competence, Blommaert et al. (2005) argue that language competence, both linguistic and communicative competence must be understood in relation to how language competence is positioned in situated practices— what counts as valuable and invaluable language competence in the given environment— where “scale-based agentivity” and “negotiation and repair” constantly occur (p. 212). That is, language competence is socially constructed as different models of language competence are evaluated, a particular set of language competence is idealized and speakers are positioned accordingly in a specific

environment. In the case of contemporary South Korea, communicative competence has been seen as a primary goal of English education and as a major criterion to measure one's 'authentic' English proficiency. In this context, it is hard to deny that the 'native-like' English pronunciation and 'native-like' English fluency tend to be widely recognized as one of the major components to become a successful English language learners/speakers. However, the socially constructed and situated understanding of what counts as a valuable and authentic English communicative competence is more complicated in that the notion of communicative competence and an ideal English speakerhood are constantly changing in interacting with and in responding to local dynamics, tensions between 'old' and 'new' regimes, and historically constructed discourses. As illustrated above, having an ideal English communicative competence in South Korea is closely associated with locally constructed and socially recognizable attributes unique to the given environment such as having a high score on standardized tests, graduating from prestigious universities/colleges, and neither demonstrating too much globalness (e.g., using too much English over Korean) nor framing oneself as too much Korean that shows one's backwardness. Such attributes can be always changed, added and articulated in the overcrowded and competitive market of South Korea in order to control the market dynamic and select 'true' bilinguals among many.

The complex construction of communicative competence has no doubt accelerated the vulnerability of South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean. To be seen as 'good' bilinguals, South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean must acquire 'native-like' English fluency and pronunciation, be equipped with socially recognizable credentials, know how to use languages and language registers in socially appropriate manners, and properly utilize socially recognizable linguistic emblems. Those who meet all the socially expected qualities of being 'good' bilinguals

and global elites, however, can be easily framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals as locally and socially constructed credentials of being ‘good’ bilinguals are constantly shifting. In other words, the constantly rescaling construction of communicative competence and an ideal English-Korean speakerhood puts South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position and makes it hard for them to prove their authentic language competence in English and claim their legitimacy as a bilingual.

### **The Reconstruction of ‘Good’ English Language Competence Among Participants**

While language competence has been generally considered a production of macro construction and determination, recent studies (e.g., Gal, 2012; Jaffe, 2013) point out the agentive and dynamic role of individuals who are actively participating in the process of appropriation, reinterpretation and reproduction of what counts as ‘ideal’ language competence. Rather than simply denying or accepting the power-laden discourses and their discursive construction of communicative competence and ideal speakerhood, participants of this research firmly acknowledge existing discourses and discursive construction, critically evaluate them, and selectively articulate those that are favorable to their position. In particular, they strategically use the delicate tensions between local and global and between tradition and modern, and articulate a locally grounded sociolinguistic competence as an important tool to measure one’s ‘good’ bilingual status. In so doing, they reconstruct what counts as valuable languages and language competence, and successfully claim their legitimacy as ‘good’ bilinguals with ‘good’ bilingual competence.

#### **A. Rejecting the Imposed Label of ‘Non-native’ English Speakers**

Since all the participants have received a formal education in South Korea and they would like to go back to South Korea in the near future, they tend to be strongly aware of the fact

that South Korean society places a high value on English communicative competence and ‘native-like’ English proficiency. They are also exposed to the discourses of native-speakerism in the North American academic discourse community where they could be easily marginalized as ‘non-native’ speakers (Braine, 1999, 2010; Holliday, 2006; Pennycook, 2012). Midwest University, for example, publicly labels international students as ‘non-native’ English speakers in various university policy documents and websites. The university describes international students as someone who needs continuous monitoring to detect and control the quality of their English, and who needs to constantly practice English in order to speak intelligibly. It also mandates ‘non-native’ English speaking teaching assistants to prove their spoken English language proficiency through oral English proficiency screening assessments and interviews, while requiring academic units to continuously monitor their English. Such discourses indirectly question their credentials as ‘non-native’ English speaking teaching assistants, lecturers and research assistants, and put them in a peripheral position.

Previous studies argue that the prevalent ideology of native speakerism in the North American academy tends to segregate non-native speakers from dominant native speakers and marginalize them accordingly (e.g., Braine, 1999; Holliday, 2005, 2006). All the participants, however, claim that their so-called ‘non-native’ English speaking status does not negatively affect their academic and professional performance in any way. Even though they all admit that they could be easily framed as non-native English speakers by others including South Korean undergraduate students at Midwest University, they state that they have not experienced any difficulties from their supposed English deficiencies while working as graduate assistants, attending classes, or writing academic papers in English. They mention that they sometimes encounter academic and professional challenges such as difficulties in publishing their academic

papers in a peer-review journal, occasional miscommunication with their colleagues and the time-consuming nature of preparing classes and grading students' papers. However, these difficulties, according to participants, are not driven by their 'non-native' English or their imposed position as 'non-native' English speakers, but happen to any graduate student or teaching assistant no matter how good or bad their English is. As many of my participants succinctly put it in interview, they strongly believe that the most important element to succeed in the North American academia is not having a 'native-like' English proficiency or being perceived as a native English speaker but being equipped with advanced academic knowledge that they can convey to their students and colleagues. Even though they do not see their English abilities as a source of problem, more than half of them have an experience where their legitimacy was questioned by their students or colleagues. They all admit that such experience was unfortunate and unpleasant but they believe that it is not their problem but the problem of those who still blindly believe in native-speakerism. Instead of blaming their accented English or feeling marginalized, they tend to resolve the situation by recommending students in question to talk to the program director/coordinator or to take other courses taught by 'native' English speakers.

Unlike previous studies where 'non-native' English speaker are struggling to get rid of the essentialist label of 'non-native' English speakers (e.g., Braine, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003), participants of this research critically evaluate such ideologically imposed labeling and reject to be positioned as such. While the act of struggling implies that individuals internalize such essentialist positioning, their act suggests that they acknowledge the already constructed dichotomy between native speakers and non-native speakers but choose not to be governed by such problematic ideological constitutions and labeling. This can be also interpreted as their

strategy of differentiation in that they authenticate themselves by demonstrating the fact that they are not those fakers who are only able to use superficial and ‘native-like’ English but in fact cannot have ‘real’ and ‘advanced’ English competence. Their attitude is illustrated well in the following interview excerpt with one of participants; “I have not had any difficulties of teaching courses in English here”, said by one of my participants, a fourth-year Ph.D. student who does not have an early study-abroad experience and has two years of teaching experiences in Midwest University. He continues, “I fully understand all the course materials and I am pretty good at teaching others...If some concepts, theories or names of scholars are hard to pronounce in English, I simply write them down in a white board because I know that there is a high chance my students get confused. If students cannot fully understand my classes, they are more than welcome to ask me questions during and after classes. But if they have a problem with my accent, I really cannot help them or their ignorance.”

### **B. Rejecting the Imposed Goal of Becoming ‘Native-Like’ English Speakers**

While participants claim that their English proficiency does not become a source of marginalization in the North American academic setting, most of the participants admit that they sometimes experience difficulties successfully interacting with American colleagues and native English speakers in settings where more casual communication skills are required. They state that culturally specific knowledge (e.g., college football, NFL, baseball, night shows, Star Trek, American music and old movies), culturally embedded expressions and slang often cause communication failure between them and other native English speaking counterparts in informal communication settings. They, however, do not see such communication failure as something problematic they need to quickly improve or overcome. They rather see such less successful experiences as a result of their limited experience and investment in fully appropriating North

American cultural practices and acquiring a particular type of sociolinguistic competence needed in small talk. They perceive this particular sociolinguistic competence as a necessary linguistic resource for getting along better with ‘native’ English speakers and entering into mainstream US society, but at the same time they see it as a sign of ‘being trying too hard to be like American’.

Many participants state that they choose not to invest in acquiring this particular type of sociolinguistic competence because this particular sociolinguistic competence is an ‘optional’ one that is needed only if your goal is to become a core member of North American society. They also argue that such English competence is closely related to damaging images of ‘bad’ bilinguals who try too hard and who would like to become Americans. In other words, someone who tries to acquire or displays such sociolinguistic competence is either a faker who tries too hard to be like American, or a novice English speaker who does not know that this particular English competence could be associated with ‘bad’ and ‘inauthentic’ bilinguals. Participants claim that both fakers and novice English speakers use particular English language registers that are widely viewed as ‘authentic’ and ‘native-like’ English in contemporary South Korean society. The use of culturally specific English expressions (e.g., idioms and proverb) and spoken English (e.g., slang) are all read as a sign of trying too hard to speak like native English speakers. By using their local knowledge acquired in the United States, they also argue that ‘native’ English speakers tend to use these particular language registers in a restricted manner so using them without properly knowing when to use them, where to use them and whom to use them with would be embarrassing and wrong. Such view can be found in their daily interaction where participants often make fun of a South Korean colleague who frequently uses English idioms such as “once in a blue moon” and “raining cats and dogs”. Since most of them have shared experiences memorizing English idioms in South Korean schools, they interpret the excessive

use of English idioms as a typical effort made by South Korean English speakers to display their authenticity and perform ‘native-likeness’. But at the same time, participants are well aware of the fact that the extreme usage of English idioms can be considered dorky and awkward by ‘native’ English speakers in the United States. Their local knowledge acquired in both South Korea and the United States then enables them to evaluate of the practice of using English idioms excessively as a sign of one’s insufficient exposure to a ‘real’ native English speaking environment.

In other words, participants frame the excessive usage of English idioms as a sign of being ‘too novice’, ‘too Korean’ and ‘too scholarly with limited exposure to the real world (a native English speaking environment)’, while constructing the extreme use of spoken English as a sign of being ‘too Americanized/ American-wannabe’, which evokes spatiotemporally locatable figures of ‘bad’ bilinguals and invites evaluative gazes casted upon these figures (c.f., Agha, 2007; Koven, 2013; Moore, 2011). In so doing, participants articulate their successful acquisition of appropriate sociolinguistic and discursive competence required in a given discourse community, which results in their selective usage or non-usage of particular types of language register. In addition, participants construct themselves as ‘good’ and ‘sophisticated’ English bilingual who can tell what English registers to use/what not to use, when to use/when not to use, and how to use/how not to use. Such sociolinguistic competence and language registers are generally used as indicators to determine one’s ‘native-like’ and ‘authentic’ English competence, participants refuse to simply accept such ideological constitutions. Such attempt of resisting the hegemony of nativeness could be explained in relation to their privileged sociocultural and educational background. While English language learners tend to be described as a struggling victim of native-speakerism in previous research, participants in this research are

in the position where they could actively use their sociocultural capital of higher education credentials in order to resist the essentialist ideology of native-speakerism and to claim their legitimacy over others including Korean bilinguals and less-educated native English speakers. In addition, they could successfully claim their superiority over the growing number of ESA students and other transnational South Korean without their privilege of ESA.

### **C. Reconstructing ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Bilingual Competence**

As the historically constructed models of ‘bad’ bilinguals are closely associated with ‘spoken’, ‘uneducated’ and ‘nonstandard’ English registers that they randomly pick up from undesirable kinds of native English speakers, participants often evoke this historical representation to authoritatively evaluate others as failed English speakers. Throughout their daily interaction, participants frequently describe other transnational South Korean bilinguals as American-wannabes who use too much English slang and spoken forms of English (e.g., “what’s up”, “oops”) in order to be seen like native English speakers. This particular sociolinguistic competence that is closely associated with spoken forms of English and communicative English serves as an authoritative indicator to distinguish themselves from other incompetent South Korean bilinguals and functions as active means to disparage others as an attempt to claim their legitimacy.

The act of distinction and occasional disparagement is not limited to other group of South Korean English speakers but also applies to their own group members. Participants, for example, often make fun of Hoon (a focal participant who is often called as Enrique Park, a nick name given by his friends), and Jongdoo (a South Korean graduate student who is also known as JD, an English name he made for himself) for their frequent usage of English slangs that is, accordingly to most of participants, wrong and inappropriate. Dohyun, one of focal participants,

once shared his embarrassing moment when he bumped into JD in quad with his American colleagues and JD tapped on his shoulder saying “whassup bro”. Dohyun said that he got so embarrassed in front of his American colleagues due to JD’s ‘awkward’ and ‘totally inappropriate’ English usage. Other participants who also know JD all agree with his evaluation, describing JD as being ‘too loud’, ‘clownish’, ‘stupid’ and ‘silly’.

The following dinner conversation demonstrates how the excessive usage of English slang is constructed as a sign of one’s inauthentic bilingualism in moment-to-moment interaction. The conversation begins with Mikyung and Yeonji discussing Yeonji’s on-going research plan and participant criteria.

Excerpt 4. *‘Wrong’ English registers and ‘bad’ bilinguals*

1	Mikyung:	아니 오년 이상 산 사람 구하는 거 아니야, 지금?	You are looking for people who have lived [in the United States] for more than five years, right?
2	Yeonji:	그...잘 모르겠어. 범위를 어떻게 좁힐지.	Well... I’m not quite sure. I haven’t yet determined the criteria yet.
3	Mikyung:	그래서 <u>엔리케</u> <u>팍</u> 도 안 된대메?	Because of that reason, [you said] <u>Enrique Park</u> is also not eligible to be in your study, right?
4	Yeonji:	<u>엔리케</u> <u>팍</u> ?	<u>Enrique Park</u> ?
5	Mikyung:	어	Yeah.
6	Yeonji:	아, <u>엔리케</u> <u>팍</u> 은 여러가지로 안 되고	<u>Enrique Park</u> cannot be a participant for various reasons.

7	Eunju:	누가 <u>엔리케</u> <u>팍</u> 이야?	Who is this <u>Enrique Park</u> ?
8	Mikyung:	박훈씨	Mr. Park Hoon.
9	Eunju:	어어	Yeah.
10	Yeonji:	근데 훈오빠가, 훈오빠가 들어가야 재밌단 말야	But it would be fun to have Hoon oppa in the study.
11	Eunju:	아니, 훈오빠, 너무 남발해. 짜증나.	Hoon oppa really overdoes it. He is totally annoying.
12	Mikyung:	막질러, 막질러.	He is out of control. He is out of control.
13	Yeonji:	막질러.	He is out of control.
14	Mikyung:	맨날 “요~요~” 이래.	He’s always saying “Yo yo”.
15	Eunju:	얘기 안 했나? 언니한테?	Didn’t I tell you the story? ((to Yeonji)) Didn’t I tell the story to you?
16	Yeonji:	<u>씨스</u> ?	[The story about] <u>sis</u> ?
17	Eunju:	어어어어... 오늘은 막 아 맞다, 내가 무슨 실수하니까, “아~ 두드~”막 이러면서...	Yeah, yeah. Today, like, right, when I did something wrong, he was like “Ah, <u>dude</u> ” ((/du:d/))”...
18	Eunju:	제발 하지 말라고	I told him please don’t say that.
19	Mikyung:	오우	Oh
20	Eunju:	짜증난다고.	It’s totally annoying.

21	Mikyung:	영어하면 안돼. 으흐흐흐	[He] should not use English. ha ha ha
22	Yeonji:	안 그래도 테니스장에 가서 뭐라고 그랬단 말이야 왜 왜 은주가 오빠 <u>씨스</u> 냐구	Actually, when we went to the tennis club, I got on his case. I was like “Why- why is Eunju your ‘ <u>sis</u> ’?”
23	Eunju:	응.	Yeah.
24	Yeonji:	그랬더니 걀 내 <u>씨스</u> 라며.	Then, [he said to me], “Cause she is my <u>sis</u> .”
25	Mikyung:	그때도 막 은주 내꺼라고 뺏어가지 말라고 그랬었어. 나한테.	The other day, he also told me “She’s mine; don’t take her away from me.”
26	Eunju:	이상해, 그오빠.	He’s weird. That oppa.
27	Mikyung:	응.	Yes.
28	Yeonji:	은주야, 조심해.	Eunju, you better watch out.
29	((Laughter))		
30	Yeonji:	좀 짤하다.	I feel sorry for you.
31	Dohyun:	<u>시스</u> 터라고?	Did he say <u>sister</u> ?
32	Mikyung:	“ <u>씨스</u> ” 막 이래	He said “ <u>sis</u> ” ((/ssis/))
33	Eunju:	그러니까 막...흑인들이 헤이 브로 막 이러는 거 같이	So... just like...like black people say “hey bro”, he said <u>sis</u> to me.

		나한테 막 <u>씨스</u> 라고 그래.	
34	Yeonji:	<u>브로</u> 같이	Like “ <u>bro</u> ”.
35	Dohyun:	영영	Yeah, yeah.
36	Mikyung:	와럽	<u>What’s up</u> ((/walep/))
37	Eunju:	어	Yeah
38	((Laughter))		
39	Eunju:	막 나한테 그러는 거야. 남발해 막 내가 무슨 실험 대상잔가봐 계속 나한테	He’s always doing that to me. He always overdoes it. It’s like I’m a participant in some research project. He’s like always doing that to me.
40	Dohyun:	개 온지 한 이년정도 됐나?	He’s been here about two years?
41	Mikyung:	2011 년에 왔나 그분이?	Did he come here in 2011?
42	Yeonji:	2 년 안 됐을걸	Probably less than two years.
43	Mikyung:	1 년 반?	One and a half years?
44	Yeonji:	1 년 반	One and a half years
45	Dohyun:	딱 그럴...	That’s exactly the time when...
46	Mikyung:	그게 문제가 아니야 그냥 잘하는 사람이 하면... ((laughing))	That’s not an issue. If a person who was good [at English] did that ...
47	Yeonji:	웃겨, 그냥.	Just funny.
48	Eunju:	동양애가 막...	Asian kids just...

49	Dohyun:	아냐, 딱 그럴 때네. 1 년반 딱 요때 지나고?	No, that's exactly when it happens. Exactly after one and a half years?
50	Dohyun:	어..한창 막 듀우~ 이러다가	Yeah... that's when people start saying things like “Du::de ((/ tyuwu/))”
51	Mikyung:	이쁜, 이쁜 여자한테 잘해	[He] is always hitting on pretty girls.
52	Eunju:	그런오빠들이 한국가서 막...	Those oppas always go to Korea...
53	((Laughing))		
54	Eunju:	이태원가서 영어하고.	Go to Itaewon and speak English.
55	((Laughing))		
56	Yeonji:	클럽가고...	They go to clubs...
57	Mikyung:	<u>오마이갓</u> - 막 이러 xxxx	“ <u>Oh, my god</u> ((/oh maikat/))”_ They're always saying stuff like that xxxx – [Stylized feminine English, animating Korean girls who want to be like a native speaker]
58	((.....))		
59	Mikyung:	말만 <u>요요요요</u> 이라고 막	[He] is always messing around saying “yoyoyoyo”.
60	Eunju:	맨날 즐기고 싶대.	He said he wants to have a good time everyday.
61	Mikyung:	<u>듀드</u>	<u>Dude</u> ((/ dju:d /))

62	Eunju:	아, <u>두드</u> 너무 싫어.	Geez, I really hate it when [people/Senor Kim] say “ <u>dude</u> ” ((/du:d /)).
63	Yeonji:	<u>두드</u> 는 왜 해?	Why does [he/people] say “ <u>dude</u> ” ((/du:d /))?
64	Eunju:	나 정말 <u>씨스</u> 할때 진짜 짜증났어, 정말.	I was really annoyed when he said “ <u>sis</u> ” to me.
65	Mikyung:	<u>듀드</u> 는 정말 미국애들만 쓰는거야	Really, only real AMERICAN KIDS use “ <u>dude</u> ” ((/ dju:d /)).
66	Mikyung:	백인 남자애들 딱 “ <u>듀드</u> ” 딱 그런거 하는거	White American guys—they’re the ones who really say “ <u>dude</u> ” ((/ dju:d /)).
67	Yeonji:	그그그... 언더애들	That that that..., <u>undergraduates</u>
68	Mikyung:	어어어	Yeah, that’s right!
69	Yeonji:	결렁결렁하게 다니면서...	Goofing around...
70	Mikyung:	그것도 딱 개네들만 쓰잖아.	Moreover, it’s really only those guys who use that word.

Throughout the conversation, participants construct Hoon who is exchangeably referred as Enrique Park [ehn-REE-kei par-k with aspirated/released stops English sounds ‘p’ and ‘k’ instead of Korean lenis consonants ‘b’ and ‘g’] as a novice English speaker whose English

proficiency and foreign experience has not been matured yet<sup>24</sup> (see lines 40-50). He is also framed as a faker whose authenticity can be only valued in Itaewon, an area of central Seoul known for its intimate connection with historically undesirable English speakers such as the American GIs, yanggongju and black marketers due to its close location to American military base (lines 54-57), and an inauthentic English speaker with limited sociolinguistic and discursive competence in English (lines 62-70). Hoon's usage of English slang such as "yo yo" (line 15), "dude" (line 17), and "sis" (lines 22, 32) are all framed as signs of his inauthentic English competence. Participants describe his usage of English slang as "totally annoying" (lines 11, 20, 64), "just funny" (line 47) and "really hate it" (line 62), which needs to be immediately stopped (lines 18, 21). Such evaluation then enables participants to construct him as a faker who is equivalent to the historical constructed model of 'bad' bilinguals who always hang around camptown (here Itaewon), pick up spoken English through the exposure to the American GIs, use their limited English to conduct illegal business and brag about their limited English as if it is authentic and valuable. Between lines 51 and 57, participants not only locate Hoon's English in a limited and undesirable space of Itaewon, but also assign him a typified personhood of a faker who goes to clubs in Itaewon and speaks English to South Korean girls in order to impress them. In line 57, Mikyung uses an imagined, but yet typified voice of South Korean girls ("Oh, my god", /oh maikat/ with a high pitched and stylized feminine English and a thick Korean accent) in Itaewon clubs who get seemingly impressed by Hoon's hyperarticulated English. These

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<sup>24</sup> He got his nickname 'Enrique Park' from his friends due to his hyper-articulated English pronunciation and his excessive usage of English slang and other spoken English forms. His friends named him 'Enrique', one of the most common Spanish names, because they thought Hoon's English and attitude of speaking English are fit into a stereotypical image of Spanish English speakers. For his surname, they also intentionally pronounce it as /p'ark/ with articulated English /p/ and /k/ sounds instead of /bak/ to imitate his hyper-articulated English pronunciation.

women in Itaewon are often depicted as wannabe Americans in South Korean media who cannot afford to attend private English institutions and go to Itaewon as an attempt to learn English from American GIs. Mikyung's reported or imagined speech in line 57 then suggests that Hoon's inauthentic English can be only read as authentic within marginalized space by a particular group of wannabe Americans. Throughout the above interaction, participants position themselves as 'good' and 'authentic' English speakers who could righteously point out Hoon's inauthentic English proficiency and his fakeness. In so doing, they successfully differentiate themselves from Hoon and other fakers who pathetically fail to understand what really counts as 'good/authentic' and 'bad/inauthentic' English varieties and shamelessly display them in public as if they are 'authentic'. Participants further position themselves as a successful English speaker with an advanced sociolinguistic competence between lines 65 and 70 who know the 'hidden' fact that 'real' and 'authentic' English slang speakers are White American male undergraduates, not Asian kids (line 48) or any other groups of English speakers.

#### **D. Redefining 'Good' and 'Bad' Bilingual Competence**

Through the systemic process of distinction, participants position themselves as successful English-Korean bilinguals who have developed a properly balanced bilingual competence, which do not run the risk of being considered 'being too much Korean/backward' or 'being too much American/cosmopolitan' in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea. Unlike traditional SLA research that have often explained the goal of English language learners is to be like 'native' English speakers, participants of this research reject such socially imposed goal and ideologically idealized model of English competence. Rather than investing in acquiring 'native-like' English competence, they critically evaluate the already existing discourses, remake what constitutes as valuable and invaluable English registers and bilingual

competence, and make investment decisions of acquiring or not acquiring a particular set of sociolinguistic and discursive competence. In so doing, they attempt to present their cultural and linguistic capital and transnational experience as a valuable asset and secure their positions in the given market. Such selective investment can be explained by their strategic choice of not acquiring a particular type of sociolinguistic competence needed in informal communication settings but yet associated with ‘bad’ bilinguals, and their careful efforts of distancing themselves from English registers associated with such sociolinguistic competence. Rather, they rationalize their bilingual competence as valuable by arguing that they do not invest in ‘native’ norms and ‘native’ language competence as an attempt to disassociate themselves from damaging images of ‘bad’ bilinguals and to secure their positions.

Their agentive process of distinguishing themselves from other groups of South Korean bilinguals sometimes involves the act of disparaging where they actively devalue others’ English language competence, marginalize others and frame others as fakers and failed bilinguals. Then, does that mean participants see themselves as a ‘good/authentic’ bilingual? Do they claim their authenticity as a ‘good’ bilingual? When I ask participants “do you identify yourself as a bilingual?” (chagi chasini bailinguõrilago saengakhaseyo?) during the interview, all of them except two participants with U.S. citizenship are reluctant to identify themselves as ‘bilinguals’. They rather try to distance themselves from the very label of ‘bilinguals’. While two participants with U.S. citizenship casually state that they are Korean-English bilinguals because they can speak two languages, other participants identify themselves as South Koreans with advanced English proficiency (yõngõrül chalhanün hangugin, õdũbaensũ yõngõgusaja) and reject identification as bilinguals. These participants are strongly aware of the social baggage that accompanies the label of ‘bilinguals’ in South Korean society, and the bifurcated gaze casted

upon South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean by other South Koreans. They are aware of the fact that being a bilingual can evoke various suspicions towards their English/Korean bilingual proficiency, their Korean/global identities, their morality and personhood, and even their academic background in contemporary South Korean society. In addition, they know that being read as the “wrong” kind of bilingual could jeopardize their credentials and future career. To minimize the potential risk of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals but at the same time claim their legitimacy in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea, participants provide an extremely idealized definition of ‘bilinguals’ and hard-to-achieve criteria of being bilinguals. They strategically use the discourse of properness that stresses the importance of making a proper balance between tradition (Koreaness) and modern (Amercanization/globalness) to idealize the model of true bilinguals, and to position themselves as advanced English language users who successfully make a ‘proper’ balance between such extremes. According to most of participants, bilinguals are those individuals who are capable of fluently communicating in two different languages, and who are fully appropriating cultural practices and sociolinguistic competence in two discourse communities so that they would know how to speak, think and behave according to situated expectations. Most of participants believe that becoming ‘true’ bilinguals entails the complex moving back and forth between two countries multiple times before college so that they could fully develop linguistic, sociolinguistic and discursive competence in two distinct discourse communities, and also have a full membership in both communities. They believe that living in two countries enables individuals to acquire not only culturally embedded expressions but also socially expected knowledge and cultural practices that could fully help them successfully and effectively communicate in two different language communities. Their idealized construction of ‘true’ bilinguals is explained in the following

interview excerpt where one of my participants who has a three-year early study abroad experience in Britain provides his rationale why being a ‘true’ bilingual requires such complex educational trajectory; “It is such small stuffs (kūnayng chagūn kōtdul) that make me frustrated. Something like fairy tales. Nolbu simbo, ūnhye kap’ūn kkachi<sup>25</sup>, you know what I am referring to, right? We all just know their implicit meanings. But I could neither understand nor use [English expressions equivalent to them] here, because I was not exposed to these things when I was young. How am I supposed to identify myself as a bilingual without even understanding such small stuffs?... And that is exactly why going back and forth is necessary”. They also emphasize that this complex educational trajectory must be involuntary; that is, their educational migration must not be driven by English fever and educational zeal but by other “natural” causes like accompanying parents on atemporary relocation abroad. Participants claim that involuntary educational migration is the only way of raising ‘true’ bilinguals without sabotaging their development of morals and family value, which are, according to participants, more valuable than learning and speaking two languages. In other words, the ideal educational trajectory involves going back and forth between two countries multiple times before college with one’s parents but in a non-agentive way. This is, of course, almost impossible to execute. By positing such complicated educational trajectory as a key criteria for being a ‘true’ bilingual, participants then construct a model of bilingualism that is not accessible to anyone, including themselves.

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<sup>25</sup> These expressions all come from Korean traditional folktales. The phrase “Nolbu simbo” (Nolbu’s nasty temper) comes from Korean traditional folktale titled “Hūngbuwa Nolbu” where Nolbu did a lot of mean things to his younger and kind brother, Hūngbu. This phrase is generally used to describe someone who is mean to others and who is greedy. Another phrase “ūnhye kap’ūn kkachi” (The grateful magpie) is also from Korean traditional folktale where a good Samaritan saved a dying magpie who later paid back. This phrase is often used to depict someone who returns a favor.

When I specifically ask them whether they know actual people who could be fitted into such description, most of them fail to recall any. Instead, they provide an explanation of why other South Korean bilinguals cannot be categorized as ‘good/authentic’ bilinguals; (a) South Korean undergraduate students tend to strongly prefer to use English despite their lousy English pronunciation and limited English literacy skill, (b) South Korean early study-abroad students, especially long term study-abroad students, tend to fail to develop advanced literacy skill in both English and Korean, (c) 1.5 generation and Korean American tend to fail to achieve advanced, oftentimes even intermediate or basic, Korean literacy skill, and (d) ‘pure’ South Korean who has no overseas experience cannot have advanced English communicative competence even though they might acquire advanced grammatical competence and achieve a perfect score on certified English tests. In so doing, they carefully construct and utilize the discourse of properness that enables them to put ‘Koreaness’ and ‘globalness’ at each extreme and measure one’s ‘proper’ balance between these two value-laden categories. As examined in the previous chapter, ‘Koreaness’ is generally associated with ‘tradition’, ‘Korean identity’, ‘pride’, ‘nationalism’ and ‘non-modern’, whereas ‘globalness’ is associated with ‘globalization’, ‘global membership’, ‘profit’, ‘transnationalism’ and ‘modern’ (c.f., Besnier, 2009; Duchêne & Heller, 2012; Kubota, 2002). By using this typified value-laden continuum model, participants assign groups (a), (b), and (c) typified characteristics of ‘being too Americanized’ or ‘American wannabes, while describing the group (d) as ‘being too Korean’ with little or zero global competitiveness. While participants frame other groups of South Korean English speakers as ‘bad’ bilinguals who fail to make a ‘proper’ balance between Koreaness and globalness, they then strategically position themselves as successful English language learners who are equipped with a strong Korean identity and ‘native’ Korean language competence, but who are still able to

acquire advanced English competence and sufficient global competitiveness. Since they extremely idealize what counts ‘true’ bilinguals so that few can identify with, such positioning then make these participants be seen as the most competent and socially valuable workforce in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea.

### **Conclusion**

While language competence has traditionally been understood as ideologically neutral and measurable linguistic skill, recent studies have highlighted the ideologically and socially situated nature of language competence (e.g., Jaffe, 2013; Kataoka, 2013; Kramsch, 2012; Park, 2011). This chapter expands such discussion by demonstrating the agentive role of individuals who are actively participating in the construction and reconstruction of ‘good’ English language competence and ‘good’ bilingual competence. Like any other bilinguals with their precarious futures in a neoliberal globalized world (c.f., Besnier, 2009, 2013), participants of this research are in a precarious situation where the already-existing discourses firmly construct ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and constantly upgrade criteria for being ‘good’ bilinguals. Instead of internalizing such discourses and struggling to position themselves, participants refuse to accept or to be governed by imposed ideologies, ideological constitutions and ideologically constructed model of ‘ideal’ English language competence. Rather, they strategically utilize delicate tensions between local and global and between tradition and modern, and redefine what counts as ‘good’ bilinguals and bilingual competence. Even though they acknowledge the prevalent ideology of native speakerism and its emphasis on the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English competence in both South Korea and the United States, they critically evaluate such ideological construct and choose not to be governed or become a subject of marginalization due to such problematic discourses. Through interview and interactional data, participants make clear that they would not

want to speak like native English speakers and even dissociate themselves from a particular type of English varieties associated with native English competence.

Many literature in English language teaching and learning, along with various educational policies and practices, describe and assume the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English competence as the ultimate goal of English language learners. The analysis of this chapter, however, demonstrates that English language learners and users do not necessarily see ‘native-like’ English competence as an ideal model of English competence. Rather, it suggests that the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English has been structurally idealized and widely implemented by scholars, educational policy makers and educators without closely examining local dynamics and sociopolitical tensions unique to the given speech community where English language learners and users are located in.

## **Chapter 7. Looking Inside: The Construction of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Bilinguals Through Novel Respelling Forms**

As the South Korean linguistic market has become crowded with growing numbers of bilingual speakers, the issue of authenticity has become prominent and put South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position where they need to prove their authenticity. As examined in previous chapters, these bilinguals are always exposed to the potential danger of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals if they fail to distance themselves from socially recognizable linguistic and non-linguistic emblems associated with ‘being too Americanized/cosmopolitan’. In other words, they are required to constantly do a laborious work of making socially proper balance among delicate tensions between ‘local’ and ‘global’ and between ‘tradition’ and ‘modern’, and in response to historically constructed models of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals and bilingual competence. In order to survive in the precarious South Korean job market, these bilinguals, however, need to find some ways to display their ‘good’ and ‘authentic’ bilingual competence that could minimize the risk of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals but at the same time successfully claim their legitimacy as ‘good’ and competent bilinguals.

Orthography is one of the indexical emblems that have come to index one’s subject position as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ bilinguals. Orthography has been a highly charged topic in South Korea in that the Korean writing system, hangŭl, has been closely linked with national identity and considered a valuable national asset by Koreans. Hangŭl has been framed as the most scientific and greatest language because of its system of phonetic symbols that enables the representation of sounds (Chao, 1968; Lee & Ramsey, 2000). In other words, hangŭl has been represented as a system that transparently maps phonology to orthography, which make it “[distinguishable] among writing systems of the world with its scientific qualities and its unusual

linguistic fit to the Korean language (Kim-Renaud, 1997, p. 4)”. This ideological representation of hangŭl has been often combined with nationalist discourses that frame hangŭl as a symbol of national pride and national spirit (Shin, 2006; Shin & Robinson, 1999). Since hangŭl has been highly praised for its scientific system of ‘correctly’ representing phonological features via alphabets, the gradual influx of foreign words and foreign loanwords has generated an on-going and heated discussion among South Koreans focusing on how to ‘correctly’ and ‘authentically’ transfer foreign loanwords in Korean writing. In particular, the issue of ‘correct’ and ‘authentic’ foreign loanwords has become salient because many English loanwords and English-derived words in Korean have been understood as coming ‘via Japanese’ and thus as emblems of Japanese imperialism, versus words that come ‘directly’ from English (Kang et al., 2008). In this context, South Koreans are under pressure to distinguish between ‘new’ orthographic forms that more ‘authentically’ and ‘correctly’ represent foreign sounds versus ‘old’ spelling forms that are ‘incorrect’ and ‘Japanese-influenced’.

Drawing insight from recent approaches that view orthography as a social practice, not a socio-politically neutral technology (e.g., Jaffe, 2012; Horobin, 2013; Sebba, 2007, 2009, 2012; Schlegel, 2012), this chapter examines how participants strategically display their ‘authentic’ bilingual competence through the practice of producing novel respelling forms. The chapter begins by analyzing historical and contemporary debates on foreign loanword orthography in South Korea. In particular, it looks at how various foreign orthographic reforms and social discourses have constructed ‘old’ spellings as colonial remnants that need to be eliminated immediately. Such metapragmatic work has advocated the urgent creation of ‘new’ spellings that would authentically represent foreign sounds using the scientific Korean writing system. Based on historical and social analysis, it analyzes novel respelling forms used by U.S.-based South

Korean bilinguals in computer-mediated communication that reflect hyper-articulated English phonological features in Korean. This naturally occurring data demonstrate how participants as social agents are actively producing and reproducing novel respelling forms in order to be seen as authentic bilinguals whose highly advanced Korean and English language competence enables them to correctly represent English phonological features in Korean writing. Throughout 330 entries of their online communication, their effort of distinction is also noticeable where they are constantly one-upping each other's respelling forms in order to construct previous forms as 'old' and 'inauthentic' while framing theirs as 'new' and 'authentic' orthographic forms. In this chapter, I argue that these novel respelling forms reflect how delicate tensions between 'old' and 'new' regimes have constantly shifted what counts as an authentic or inauthentic language register, and hence made the contemporary linguistic market more precarious. Ironically, these novel respelling forms also serve as an effective tool for fragile South Korean bilinguals to stake a claim for their legitimacy and to differentiate themselves from 'other' group of English language speakers.

### **The Historical Debate on 'Good' and 'Bad' Orthography in South Korea**

English loanwords and English-derived words in Korean language have been largely divided into two types. Ones that are understood as coming 'directly' from English are known as English-style loanwords, but ones that are understood as coming 'via Japanese' are seen as Japanese-style loanwords (Kang et al., 2008). English loanwords initially introduced by Japanese during the Japanese colonial period have been widely understood as 'Japanese-influenced' English loanwords or even 'Japanese', rather than English. The process of dejapanization attempted to remove anything considered 'Japanese' in postcolonial Korea. 'Japanese style' English loanwords were consequently framed as colonial contamination. As an attempt to

remove Japanese elements in Korean writing, the Korean government established a committee for the Korean language purification. Part of the committee's task was to remove 'Japanese style' English loanwords in Korean through multiple orthographic reforms. Certain phonemes were seen as 'Japanese' and were replaced by 'Korean' ones. Because of this historical construction, 'Japanese-style' loanwords in Korean writing have been widely put into chronotopes as colonial remnants and old-fashioned, only used by uneducated, old and ignorant South Koreans (Harkness, 2012). The authenticity of English-style loanwords has been also questioned since the origin of a loanword is not immediately readable off of its form.

The example of the English word "cream" illustrates how different historical moments have created and invited different chronotopes. The word "cream" was written as 'gurimu [gurimu]' (구리무) in newspapers written in the 1930s and 1940s, and the word "tongtong gurimu [donḡonḡ gurimu]" (똥똥구리무, boom-boom cream)<sup>26</sup> designated one of the most popular facial creams in South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s. In the late 1950s, the word "gurimu", however, started to be seen as an inauthentic and improper word with 'Japanese elements', and hence needed to be replaced by a 'correct' and 'direct' English borrowing, k'ŭrim. A 1959 news article entitled "anti-Japanese movement has lots of loopholes" argues that South Koreans need to immediately substitute the word "gurimu" with "k'ŭrim [k'urim]" because gurimu is the reflection of "extremely sloppy Japanese English pronunciation" (chikŭkhi puchayŏnsŭrŏun ilbonsik parŭm) (Kyunghyang Shinmun, 1959). The word "gurimu" is then framed as a source of shame in the 1980s that evokes chronotopes as unmodern, uneducated, old-fashioned and Japanized. A Donga Ilbo news article written in 1981, for example, describes a

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<sup>26</sup> Lucky cream, one of the most popular facial creams in the 1950s and 1960s, was often called as tongtong gurimu (똥똥구리무, boom-boom cream) because its salesperson used to play a drum while they were advertising the product.

scene where the use of the word *gurimu* brings scorn upon its speaker; “When my husband said to me ‘What happened to your face? It got so tanned. Put some more *gurimu* on it’, I couldn’t help myself and burst out laughing. I snapped at him and said, ‘What is *gurimu* [g̃urimu]? it is *k’ŭrim* [kʰir̥im], *k’ŭrim*” (Paek, S.H., 1981). Similar to the case of *k’urim*, many English loanwords have been indexicalized as colonial remnants that projected colonial features of personhood onto their users.

What counts as a ‘Japanese-influenced’ English loanword, however, is not always clear in contemporary South Korea (Lee & Ramsey, 2011). For example, words such as “*waisyō(sya)ch’ŭ* [wɛisʰjʌ(sʰjɐ)tɕʰw̥]” (와이셔츠(셔츠), ワイシャツ, white shirt) and “*kkassŭ* [k̚aʃu]” (까쓰, カツ, cutlet)<sup>27</sup> are not interpreted as Japanese remnants but are labeled as Konglish, a ‘wrong’, ‘broken’ and ‘shameful’ English variety exclusively used by Koreans (Park & Wee, 2009). In fact, etymologically, they too could be considered ‘Japanese’. Words that are enregistered as ‘Konglish’ and those enregistered as ‘Japanese-style’ English often share similar linguistic features such as epenthetic vowels and the light <a [a]> or <o [o]> vowel rather than the dark <ɔ̃ [ɔ̃]> vowel. In both cases, the dark <ɔ̃ [ɔ̃]> vowel is understood as a more desirable linguistic choice because it indirectly indexes ‘stylistic’, ‘modern’, and ‘sophisticated’ images while the light ‘a’ sound is associated with being ‘inaccurate’, ‘old’, and ‘dumb’ (Harkness 2012).

Orthography thus evokes certain time/space coordinates embedded with certain models of personhood in South Korea. The use of ‘Japanese-style’ English, for example, evokes the typified models of personhood of ‘uneducated’ and ‘ignorant’ people during the Japanese

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<sup>27</sup> Both *waisyō(sya)ch’ŭ* (와이셔츠(셔츠)) and *kkassŭ* (까쓰) were directly borrowed from hybrid Anglo-Japanese loanword that was created around the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Tranter, 1997 for more details).

colonial and post-colonial periods who used ‘Japanese-style’ English words without even recognizing their ideologically laden meanings. The use of ‘wrong’ English registers in contemporary South Korean society seems to invite the same model of personhood and evaluative stance in that these English registers are seen as the modern extension of ‘Japanese-style’ English words. Indeed, South Korean media often describe Konglish, a localized variety of English used in South Korea, as a shameful remnant of ‘Japanese-style’ English words that were initially introduced in Japanese imperialism. In other words, using the ‘wrong’ orthographic form could frame someone as a person who harbors colonial sentiments and is thus ‘inauthentic’ and ‘backward’, while a ‘correct’ orthographic form could legitimate its user as an ‘authentic’ and ‘modern/global’ bilingual who has sufficient bilingual competence to recognize ‘wrong’ registers and create ‘correct’ ones.

### **Contemporary Debates in ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Orthography**

The standardized orthographic system established in 1986 provides national guidelines for how to ‘correctly’ spell English loanwords as followed: (a) foreign loanwords must be written with the 24 Korean consonants and vowels that are currently used in Korean language, (b) one phoneme of a foreign word must be written with one Korean phoneme, (c) acceptable word final consonants are ‘ㄱ, ㄴ, ㄷ, ㅁ, ㅂ, ㅅ, ㅇ’, (d) the tense sound cannot be used to indicate plosive consonants, and (e) foreign loanwords that have been largely accepted could be considered exceptions to this rule. Despite these detailed guidelines, some South Korean scholars and policy makers are still arguing for inventing new ways to write English loanwords to reflect more ‘accurate’ and ‘native-like’ English phonological features in Korean. Such debate can be found in personal blogs, online discussion boards and newspapers where professors, linguists and politicians present their arguments about orthography to the general public.

In a news article written in 2007, Dr. Jae-Kyung Choi, a professor at Korea Institute for Advanced Study, introduces a new orthographic system with five new consonants (Park, K.T., 2007). He argues that the current loanword orthographic system cannot accurately capture English sounds like /v/ and /f/ and potentially hinders globalization. His new orthographic system sparked a huge debate in South Korea. A week later, Dr. Eung-bae Lee, a respected linguist and an emeritus professor at Seoul National University, publicly replied to Dr. Choi (Lee, E.B., 2007). Dr. Lee claimed that hangŭl is the most scientific and greatest language in the world and rather than inventing new consonants, South Koreans should use the consonants  $\text{ㅂ}$  [v],  $\text{ㅍ}$  [f], and  $\text{ㄷ}$  [z] that were initially included in hunmin chŏngŭm (see chapter 2 for details) but later removed. It is quite interesting to observe how one of the most prestigious South Korean linguists also presents an alternative way of modifying the current orthographic system, instead of denying the need to revise the system at all. In other words, he supports the stance that the current orthographic system for English loanwords is neither accurate nor authentic.

The inauthenticity of the current loanword orthographic was brought to the fore in 2008 when Kyung-suk Lee, a leader of the presidential transition team who received her doctoral degree from the University of South Carolina, publicly problematized the current orthographic system and advocated a new one that fully embraces ‘native’ English pronunciation. The following MBC news report captures a press conference where she argues for the urgency of adopting a new orthographic system for loanwords.

Reporter: Lee Kyung-Sook, a leader of the presidential transition team argues that we need to romanize English according to the ways that English is actually pronounced.

Lee: I said I would be p'üresŭ **hurentŭlri** [pures<sup>h</sup>u hurendulri] (프레스 후렌들리, press

friendly), but all the media printed it as p'üresü p'ürentülri [pures<sup>h</sup>u puarendulri] (프레스 프렌들리). I asked for an orenchi [orentei] (오렌지, orange) in the United States, and no one understood what I was asking for. So I said örinchi [arentei] (어린지) and then they said ‘oh, örinchi’ and brought one to me.

Reporter: Her claim is to change p'ürentülri [puarendulri] to hürentülri [hurendulri], and orenchi [orentei] to örinchi [arentei] or orwinchi [Λrɥintei] (MBC, January, 2008, added emphasis by author).

Here, Dr. Lee, using her own experience of living in the United States and interacting with native speakers of English, positions herself as an authoritative figure who can determine what kinds of English pronunciation and spelling are ‘correct’ and ‘authentic’. She even laughs at her own naïve and embarrassing mistake of pronouncing the word ‘orange’ using the ‘inauthentic’ /orentei / (the standardized Korean orthographic form) instead of the ‘authentic’ /arentei/. Here, the mispronunciation results in failed communication between her and a native speaker of English.

Her argument was highly criticized by scholars and other South Koreans, but it revealed how any English loanword, even ones that are widespread and standardardized, can be reindexicalized as emblems of inauthenticity. By suggesting that the current accepted spelling of orenchi be replaced by örinchi, Lee made only one’s ‘hearable’ English pronunciation, but also one’s ‘visible’ English pronunciation a tool to measure one’s bilingual competence in contemporary South Korean society. Indeed, more and more South Korean media discourses have argued that the current loanword orthographic system is “inaccurate” because it does not successfully reflect ‘native’ English pronunciation: “we [South Korean] write the word ‘milk’ as ‘milk’ü [milku]’ (밀크), but it is more close to ‘miölk’ü [miΛlku]’ (미얼크) when you actually

hear how Americans pronounce the word” (Cho, H.Y., 2011 in Joongang Ilbo).

In this context, novel respellings that hyper-articulate English phonological features have become a highly visible way to demonstrate a particular type of sociolinguistic competence in contemporary South Korean society. These respellings are often represented as ‘modern’, ‘global’, ‘chic’ and ‘sophisticated’ and their users identify themselves as people with overseas education who know how native English speakers actually pronounce English words. These respellings are hence thought to index their users’ first-hand acquaintance with native English speakers. These novel respellings are frequently found in subtitles used in entertainment television programs and newscast, news articles, computer-mediated communication including online discussion boards, social networks, personal blogs, popular web-based cartoons, and even government documents in South Korea. They often point to a casual register of spoken American English, made evident through labialization, assimilation, diphthongization, flapping, elision, and aspiration.

The uniqueness of these novel spelling forms lies on the fact that they can be only produced and fully understood by a group of fluent Korean and English bilinguals who know how these English words are ‘really’ pronounced by native speakers of English and who also know how to transfer these ‘authentic’ American phonological features into Korean writing. These novel repelling forms do not follow the standardized foreign orthographic system yet there are no specific rules that specify how to correctly produce these forms. These respellings can be produced in multiple ways depending on the writers’ level of English and Korean phonological awareness and language competence and what kinds of English phonological features they would like to articulate. For example, the word “orange” by Kyung-suk Lee in a press conference in 2008 was written as ‘**or**winchi [orɥintɕi]’ (오ړ윈지), ‘**ar**winchi [arɥintɕi]’ (아ړ윈지) and ‘**ŏr**winchi

[ʌɾɥintɕi] (어원지) in the Donga Ilbo newspaper between 2008 and 2013. Such characteristics of respelling forms tend to create a free-for-all where everyone can come up with their own respelling forms. The act of presenting a new form hence is always coupled with a self-authorizing move where the person who creates and uses the respellings has to establish their credentials as someone who can speak to what authentic English is.

Another unique aspect of these novel respellings is that these forms are understood as ‘correct’ and ‘authentic’ orthographic forms only when they are produced by South Korean bilinguals who point to socially recognizable credentials such as having overseas education. That is, if these respelling forms are produced by second language learners of Korean whose first language is English or South Koreans who do not have socially validated evidence to prove their exposure to native English speakers, they could be easily understood instead as evidence of not completely understanding English or Korean phonological structure. Respelling forms produced by those who are not seen as ‘good’ and qualified bilinguals are framed as ‘wrong’ linguistic registers, and as an indicator of being too Americanized and ruining the purity of Korean language. For example, a news article titled “sikūhan p’aesyōn [sʰikuhan pʰɛsʰjʌ] (시크한 패션, chic fashion) vs. mōsinnūn ok [mʌsʰinun ot] (멋있는 옷, fashionable cloth)” criticizes the popular use of these novel respellings among South Korean people in the fashion industry. Instead of validating these respellings as ‘chic’ and ‘cool’, it frames these respelling forms produced by people in the fashion industry as ‘Konglish’, the word that is commonly used to indicate ‘wrong’ and ‘incorrect’ English variety used in South Korea. It argues that the very reason that these respelling forms are seen as Konglish is their users ‘wrong’ mindset (munjenūn sayongjadūlūi maūmgajimme ijjo). It says, “it is outrageous that there are people who feel superior to others by using the respelled writing ‘sikūhan [sʰikuhan]’ (chic) instead of Korean

word ‘mösinnŭn’. They pretend they are heroines of *Sex and the City* or true New Yorkers through the use of such forms... Would you please shut your mouth? (dak.chyö. chul.rae)” (Kim, B. S., 2008). These metalinguistic discourses associate novel respellings not with ‘good’ bilinguals but with impostors who try to fake their authentic English skills and overseas education through the usage of this socially recognizable orthographic representation. Thus, using of novel respelling forms is risky. It could frame users as ‘authentic’ biliguals but could also frame them as fakers or wannabe Americans.

Indeed, the indexical value of these respellings is not settled. As the number of novel respelling forms has grown, more and more metalinguistic discourses have problematized hyper-articulated English phonological features. South Korean media discourses have often made a linkage between using novel respellings and being an ‘inauthentic’ speaker who wrongly imitates ‘authentic’ bilinguals. One of the popular web-based serial cartoons which ran from 2011-2013, titled *Gosami ran away from home*, for example, associates novel respellings with two main characters who take on airs as people who have received overseas education. Novel respellings used in the cartoon series, which had 17 million readers, include ‘ssaemrŭi [ʃɛnrŭi]’ (쌔릭, Sam Lee with articulated ‘r’ sound) instead of ‘saemli [sɛnri]’ (쌔리), ‘kŭtjab [gutteap]’ (근잡, good job with a near-close near-back vowel /ʊ/) instead of ‘kutjab [gutteap]’ (긋잡), and ‘wassöpmæaen [wɛʃpmɛ:n]’ (와썹매앤, what’s up man with assimilation and lengthening of the vowel) instead of ‘watchŏpmaen [wɛtɕʰuɔpmɛn]’ (왓츠업맨), which all hyper-articulate English phonological features rather than following the standardized orthographic system. Certain typified phonological substitutions (e.g., replacing /ㄱ, g/ with /ㅋ, k/ or replacing /ㅂ, b/ or /ㅃ, p:/ with /ㅍ, p/) even in native Korean words like ‘oekuk [økuk]’ (외국) instead of

‘oegug [øguk]’ (외국, foreign country), and ‘nap’wa [napwə]’ (나빠) instead of ‘nappa [nappa]’ (나빠, It’s bad) get emblemized as a distinctive linguistic practice of South Korean people who have lived abroad for a long time, perhaps too long (orae salta on aetül). Here, English phonology creeps into Korean in ways that index one’s ‘too’ long overseas experience that has resulted his/her lack of appreciating Koreaness and Korean language, or one’s fakeness that results a wrong imitation of other ‘authentic’ bilinguals. A similar portrayal can be also found in another popular web-based cartoon titled *God of bath* (published between 2011 and 2011 and currently be in a process of being cinematized) where a pretentious character is framed as someone who frequently uses novel respellings, and his inauthentic and fake nature is readily apparent to everyone. His inauthenticity and fakeness are evident in his overuse of respellings, especially his frequent attempts to anglicize Korean words.

Even though these forms do not have any social recognition in the United States, they are understood as a sign of successful English acquisition by Koreans who may not be able to produce these novel forms themselves but can ratify their use. A news article written in 2012 provides an excellent example of the metapragmatic work surrounding these forms. This news article reports how the orthographic representation of ‘baerüllet [bæruɫnet]’ (배를넷, battlenet<sup>28</sup>) instead of the widely accepted standardized form ‘baetüllet [bætuɫnet]’ (배틀넷) gets read as a sign of one’s authentic English skill and overseas education.

In a storefront sign, the owner of an internet cafe wrote the word baetüllet [bæruɫnet], a game server, as baerüllet. Rolling his/her r’s. Netizens who have looked at the sign wrote in comments posted on the Internet, “That internet cafe must be owned by someone who has received overseas education... [Their comments include] “you are now a caveman if

you use the word baetüllet [bært<sup>h</sup>ulnet]<sup>28</sup>...and “how sad it is not to receive overseas education (Donga Ilbo, 2012).

The above news article demonstrates how novel orthographic representations have become framed as signs of one’s overseas education and authentic English skill, as ‘modern’, ‘global’, and ‘chic’ while standardized orthographic form gets understood as ‘old’ and ‘outdated’ only used by cavemen. However, it is not the form itself that assigns such contrasting values and authenticates novel respellings. It is the dynamic process where ‘new’ orthographic forms are come to authorize by successfully distinguishing themselves from ‘old’ or standardized orthographic forms that are commonly used by South Koreans. In other words, the use of novel respelling forms always involves the process of upping (upgrading) ‘old’ and ‘lame’ forms to ‘new’ and ‘more correct’ forms.

While hybrid language practices such as code-switching and code-mixing has been generally understood as an act of identity (e.g., Bailey, 2007; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; De Fina, 2007), these respellings do not simply function as identity markers in that they could either index speakers as ‘good/authentic’ or ‘bad/inauthentic’ bilinguals. They rather reflect dynamic tensions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ regimes, and between ‘global’ and ‘local’ in the precarious linguistic market. As these novel respellings come to be seen as social emblems that indexes one’s ‘good’ bilingual competence through a great deal of metapragmatic labor, they tend to provide a growing number of bilinguals an authoritative tool to actively claim their legitimacy. Yet, they can easily be read as framing these bilinguals as ‘fakers’ and such risk of being seen as a faker could motivate participants to constantly ‘up’ their respelling choices. In other words, the novel orthographic forms put South Korean bilinguals of English and Korean in a fragile position

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<sup>28</sup> Battlenet is a popular South Korean website that provides various multi-player games.

where they are required to appropriate novel orthographic representations to maximize their legitimacy (Heller & Duchêne, 2012; Gal, 2012), but at the same time their usage runs the risk of framing them as fakers and imposters.

### **The Novel Orthographical Representation in Interaction**

Novel respellings were a common linguistic practice that I observed in 322 entries of online communication among participants. These included their computer-mediated communication on social networking sites, KakaoTalk<sup>29</sup>, emails, and text messages. Since electronic communication sphere offers language users a partially regulated space where both standard and nonstandard spellings are available (Androtsopoulos, 2006; Sebba, 2003, 2009), novel respellings are frequently found in online communication. Similar to novel orthographic forms in media discourses, novel orthographic forms created by participants reflect English phonological features and rules that depart from standard Korean phonological structure. Especially, they tend to apply rules that have been widely associated with direct English borrowing, such as the deletion of epenthetic vowels, adaptation of English voiceless stops, and the alternation of ‘o’ vowel, that is often known as a Japanized vowel. Unlike media discourses where English phonological features are also applied to Korean words, participants are careful to use novel orthographic representation only for English loanwords or English expressions.

Table 2  
*The List of Novel Orthographic Representations Used by Participants*

	English word	Standard orthographic representation	Novel orthographic representations
Assimilation	how are you	hauaryu (hauarju, 하우알유)	hawaryu (hawɛlɾju, 하왈유)
	without	witūaut	witaut

<sup>29</sup> KakaoTalk (카카오톡) is one of the most popular South Korean mobile messenger applications that provides free individual and group chats via smartphones.

		(ʷidwaut, 위드아웃)	(ʷidaut, 위다운)
Table 2 (cont.)			
Lenition	I don't know	aitont'ŭno (aidont <sup>h</sup> u <sup>no</sup> , 아이돈트노)	atonno (adonno, 아돈노)
	sweetie	sŭwit'i (suwɨt <sup>hi</sup> , 스위트)	sŭwiri (suwɨri, 스위트)
	party	pat'i (p <sup>h</sup> at <sup>hi</sup> , 파티)	parwi (p <sup>h</sup> ari, 파뤼)
Diphthongization	fighting	p'ait'ing (p <sup>h</sup> ai t <sup>hi</sup> ŋ, 파이팅)	hwairwing (hairɨŋ, 화이윙)
	social	sosyŏl (sosjɨɮ, 소셜)	ssous yŏl (ʃousjɨɮ, 쏘우셜)
	go	ko (go, 고)	kou (gou, 고우)
Vowel lengthening	coach	k'ochi (k <sup>h</sup> otɕ <sup>hi</sup> , 코치)	k'ouchi (k <sup>h</sup> outɕ <sup>hi</sup> , 코우치)
	goose	kusŭ (gusɯ, 구스)	kuusŭ (gu:sɯ, 구우스)
	soon	sun (sun, 쉰)	ssuun (ʃu:n, 쉰)
Deletion of epenthetic vowels	life	laip'ŭ (laip <sup>h</sup> ɯ, 라이프)	laip' (laip <sup>h</sup> , 라읻)
	carpet	k'ap'et'ŭ (k <sup>h</sup> apɛt <sup>h</sup> ɯ, 카페트)	k'ap'et' (k <sup>h</sup> apɛt, 카펫)
	stake	sŭtek'ŭ (sutɛik <sup>h</sup> ɯ, 스테이크)	sŭtek' (sutɛik, 스테익)

As evidenced in Table 2, they tend to use rules that have been widely associated with borrowing ‘directly’ from English, such as the deletion of epenthetic vowel, adaptation of English voiceless stops, and the alternation of Japanized ‘o’ vowel. For example, the word without /wiðaut/ is written as ‘witŭaut [ʷidwaut]’ (위드아웃) in standard orthography with four

syllables. As written by my participants, ‘witaut [ʷidaʊt]’ (위다운) collapses these into three syllables by deleting the epenthetic vowel X, often known as a Japanized vowel (Kang et al., 2008). By adapting these phonological features in their writing, participants reindexalize ‘standard’ loanword orthography as ‘inauthentic’ and somewhat ‘Japanese-style’. At the same time, they position themselves as ‘good’ bilinguals who know how to authentically incorporate ‘native-like’ English sounds in Korean writing by using their advanced knowledge of Korean linguistics and of authentic English pronunciation.

It is also noteworthy that participants are careful not to apply these English-driven linguistic features to Korean words. As examined earlier, novel respellings serve as a socially recognizable emblem to index one’s authentic bilingual competence, but at the same time they are associated with damaging images of fakers and pretenders. In particular, simultaneous use of nonstandard spellings in English and Korean often functions as an index of one’s inauthentic bilingual competence and imposturous nature. Participants’ selective use of novel respellings then can be read as a strategic endeavor to dissociate themselves from those fakers in South Korean media who are frequently portrayed with nonstandard spellings in both English and Korean, and to avoid the potential danger of being framed as ‘bad’ bilinguals.

Their seemingly unmarked usage of the novel orthographic representation can be interpreted as an emblem of membership and belonging. However, their frequent act of distinction (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) indicates that they are not simply performing and enhancing their identity category, rather they are actively responding to social tensions and producing a binary construction between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals through orthography. Because there are no standardized rules for respellings, participants have the autonomy to create and produce their own varieties by using ‘authentic’ English and Korean skills.

In my data, participants often present different orthographic forms for the same English word. These different forms are generally built upon each other's forms with a minor change of a particular phonological feature (e.g., a standardized form 'orenchi [orentɕi]' (오렌지, orange) becomes 'örinchi [Λrentɕi]' (어린지) and later gets changed to 'örwinchi [Λrɥintɕi]' (어윈지) with the articulated 'r' sound). I will call this process as *the process of upping* where participants are constantly making an assessment of each other's 'new' respelling forms and trying to come up with 'more correct' and hence 'truly new' ones. As novel respelling forms could be only come to be seen as 'new' and 'cool' ones by putting already existing forms as 'old' and 'lame', the process of upping involves the act of (re)constructing the respellings produced by others as 'old' and 'less correct' ones compared to their 'truly new' and 'more correct' ones. Because this orthographic representation arguably reflects their 'authentic', 'good', and 'localized (Americanized)' English skills, the process of upping allows participants to emphasize their 'true' authenticity by producing more 'articulated' orthographic forms that could make their linguistic choice distinctive than others. The following excerpt from facebook demonstrate how participants are actively participating in the process of upping and trying to come up with the 'new' form that better represents those phonological features unique to English.

Excerpt 5. *The Word Costco in Facebook Interaction*

1. J: ssamsũ k'at'ũ [ʃɛmsu kʰadu] chom ipönjumare pillyöchulsu innun saram?  
 쌤스 카드 줘 이번주말에 빌려줄 수 있는 사람? ^^  
 Is there anyone who can lend me a membership card for Sam's Club this weekend? :)
2. M: yöchanghako kal chasin issũm naeka pillyötürichiyo kk  
 여장하고 갈 자신 있음 내가 빌려드리지요 ㅋㅋ  
 If you are willing to dress up as a woman, you can borrow mine. Haha
3. Y: nan k'osüt'ük'o [kʰosutuukʰo] k'atũ pake öpsũmyo. chenchyang!!  
 난 코스트코 카드 밖에 없어요. 젠장!!  
 I only have a Costco membership card. Damn!!

4. M: **k'osŭk'o** [**k<sup>h</sup>osuk<sup>h</sup>o**]? kŭkŏ ul tongne ōpchana? kk  
 <u>코스코?</u> 그거 올 동네 없잖아? ㅋㅋ  
 <u>Costco?</u> We don't have that in our town, right? Haha
5. Y: sŭp'ŭringp'ildŭ [sup<sup>h</sup>urɪŋp<sup>h</sup>ildu] pankyŏng 50 mail naee ōptōrako..  
 <u>스프링필드</u> 반경 50마일내에 없더라고..  
 We don't have it within a 50-mile radius of <u>Springfield</u>.
6. J: **k'ōsŭk'o** [**k<sup>h</sup>asuk<sup>h</sup>o**] syap'ingharō k'aep'it'al siti [k<sup>h</sup>ep<sup>h</sup>ithalʃiti] kalkka? kkk  
 <u>커피탈</u> 사평하러 <u>캐피탈</u> 씨티 갈까? ㅋㅋㅋ  
 Should we go to <u>Capital City</u> to shop at <u>Costco?</u>
7. M: kkkk a sŭlp'ō, **k'asŭk'o** [**k<sup>h</sup>asuk<sup>h</sup>o**] to ōpnŭn sikoltongne hh  
 ㅋㅋㅋㅋ 아 슬퍼, <u>카스코</u>도 없는 시골동네 ㅎㅎ  
 Hahahaha ah, that's sad. [We live in ] A country village without even a Costco.  
 Haha

Throughout this short interaction, the English word 'Costco' is represented in four different orthographic forms;

- (a) k'osŭt'ŭk'o (k<sup>h</sup>osutuk<sup>h</sup>o, 코스트코): a standardized orthographic form
- (b) k'osŭk'o (k<sup>h</sup>osuk<sup>h</sup>o, 코스코): a first modified form with deletion of /t/ sound and epenthetic vowel
- (c) k'ōsŭk'o (k<sup>h</sup>asuk<sup>h</sup>o, 커피탈): a second modified form with ㅓ <ō> instead of ㅏ <o>
- (d) k'asŭk'o (k<sup>h</sup>asuk<sup>h</sup>o, 카스코): a third modified form with ㅏ <a> instead of ㅓ <ō>

We first have a standardized form k'osŭt'ŭk'o [k<sup>h</sup>osutuk<sup>h</sup>o] in line 3 that follows the 'one foreign phoneme- one Korean phoneme' rule required by the standardized loanword orthographic system. As the choice of vowels in foreign orthographic forms tend to index one's bilingual competence and education level, and different nuance of social meanings in South Korea (Harkness, 2012), participants' assessment and modification are mostly focused on how to 'correctly' represent English vowels in Korean writing. In particular, they intensively invest in modifying and remodifying the initial vowel <o>, which is pronounced as the open front vowel

/a/ in English. Unlike the final vowel /oʊ/ that could be unarguably represented as <o> or <ou> in Korean, the issue of how to ‘correctly’ transfer the vowel <o> into Korean writing is highly controversial in South Korea. Because the English vowel <o> can be differently pronounced as /a/, /ɔ/ or /u/ depending on words but the standardized loanwords orthographic system generally recognizes it as the sound /o/ and uses the Korean vowel <ㅏ, o> to transfer the sound without considering other varieties. That is why the English vowel <o>, as also examined in the multiple discussions on how to ‘correctly’ write the word “orange”, has become one of the major features that both South Korean media and participants of this research have highly invested in. It is also known as one of the most difficult English vowels to correctly pronounce and recognize for South Korean English language learners (Cho, S., 2004; Kim & Koo, 2007).

In line 3, Y uses the form “k’osūt’ük’o [k<sup>h</sup>osutuk<sup>h</sup>o]”, which follows the standardized system for loanwords and hence the first vowel <o> is written with the Korean vowel <ㅏ, o>. This four-syllable form “k<sup>h</sup>osutuk<sup>h</sup>o” is a version that has been commonly used in South Korea and the version Costco Korea uses on their website. Mikyung in line 4, however, immediately provides a first modified form “k’osūk’o [k<sup>h</sup>osuk<sup>h</sup>o]”, where she deletes the /t<sup>h</sup>/ sound and removes the epenthetic vowel <ㅓ [u]> that is widely seen as a Japanized vowel. M’s modified form signals her localized English knowledge about how the word is actually pronounced in the United States by native English speakers. This ‘new’ form then constructs Y’s standardized form as ‘old’, ‘wrong’ and ‘inauthentic’, which cannot be understood by any ‘native’ speakers of English. In line 6, the first modified form “k’osūk’o [k<sup>h</sup>osuk<sup>h</sup>o]” gets remodified and reconstructed as “k’ōsūk’o [k<sup>h</sup>Λsuk<sup>h</sup>o]” by J who alters M’s linguistic choice of the light <o [o]> vowel with the dark <ō [Λ]> vowel. Given the fact that the light <o [o]> vowel and the dark <ō [Λ]> vowel have been seen as a colonial remnant of Japanized language forms and a more

modernized linguistic choice respectively, it can be said that J's remodified form invites such contrasting values and evaluative stances embedded in Korean vowels <o [o]> and <ö [ʌ]>, and puts M's respelling form as 'old' and 'Japanized' while framing his own respelling form as 'new' and 'stylistic'. In line 7, M replaces <ö [ʌ]>vowel with <a [a]> vowel. The Korean mid back vowel <ö [ʌ]> is similar to the English vowel /ɔ/, but more similar to the close-mid back vowel /ɤ/. On the other hand, the Korean vowel <a [a]> is the near-open central vowel, similar to /ɐ/ (see appendix B). Because the process of upping always entails the act of assessment and selective articulation of a particular English phonological feature they would like to stress, M's remodified form k'asük'o [kʰasikʰo] can be understood as her strategic choice of coming up with more 'correct' vowel than J's previous choice of using the Korean vowel <ö [ʌ]> and hence making J's remodified form in line 6 as 'wrong' and 'inauthentic'.

The concentrated and intense investment of participants in the process of upping is quite noticeable in the above interaction. Their interaction only consists of seven lines and yet there are four different orthographic forms to indicate the same word. It demonstrates how strongly participants are aware of social values and judgment associated with novel respellings and other foreign orthographic forms in contemporary South Korean society. It also reflects their constant "fear of falling" (Besnier, 2009, p. 234) as vulnerable South Korean bilinguals of Korean and English who are constantly attempting to secure the profit of distinction by demonstrating their 'authentic' bilingual competence to come up with 'better' linguistic choices compared to others.

Since participants are well aware of different social meanings embedded in novel orthographic forms and the existing tensions between 'old' and 'new' writing forms, they tend to be conscious of their linguistic choices while producing novel respelling forms. In my data, participants sometimes engage in the act of evaluating each other's novel respelling forms and

even self-check those respellings created by themselves. While the process of upping involves an indirect and nuanced evaluation, more direct evaluation can be also found in their interaction. The following excerpt occurs in facebook between Yeonji and Mikyung right after Mikyung gave Yeonji a box of chocolate to cheer her up.

Excerpt 6. *The Evaluation of Novel Orthographic forms in Facebook Interaction*

1. Y: au naüi sarang **ch'wak'allit** [tɕʰwɛkʰalrit] komawöyo yölsimhi halkke kk  
 아우 나의 사랑 초칼릿 고마워요 열심히 할게 ㅋㅋ  
 Aw, thanks for the chocolate, my favorite. I will do my best haha
2. M: **ch'wek'öllet** [tɕʰwɛkʰɔlret] (hök parümi isanghanka...) ün hangsang chöngtapisim  
첼컬렛 (헉 발음이 이상한가..) 은 항상 정답이심  
Chocolate (oh my, does it sound weird..) always cheers [us] up.
3. Y: **ch'wek'öllet** [tɕʰwɛkʰɔlret] kwa **k'wöhwi** [kʰwɔhwi] hhhhh  
첼컬렛과 커피 ㅎㅎㅎㅎㅎ  
Chocolate and coffee hahahahaha
4. M: **k'wöhwi** [kʰwɔhwi] kkkk kot masirö kacha  
커피 ㅋㅋㅋㅋ 곧 마시러 가자  
Coffee hahahaha let's grab a cup of coffee soon.

In the above interaction, we have two English words, chocolate and coffee. The English word 'chocolate' is normally written with the standardized form ch'ok'olit (초콜릿). In the above interaction, participants produce two novel orthographic forms, ch'wak'allit (초칼릿) and ch'wek'öllet (첼컬렛):

- (a) ch'ok'ollit (tɕʰokʰolrit, 초콜릿): a standardized orthographic form
- (b) ch'wak'allit (tɕʰwɛkʰalrit, 초칼릿): a first modified form with ㅊ <wɛ> instead of ㅈ <o>, and with ㅏ <a> instead of ㅓ <o>
- (c) ch'wek'öllet (tɕʰwɛkʰɔlret, 첼컬렛): a second modified form with ㅈ <wɛ> instead of <wɛ>, with ㅓ <ɔ> instead of ㅏ <a> with ㅈ <e> instead of ㅏ <i>

All the three vowels in the word ‘chocolate’ get changed as followed: (a) the initial vowel sound /a/ is represented with the Korean vowel <o [o]> according to the standardized rule but gets replaced <wɐ> and <we>, (b) the epenthetic vowel <o [o]> becomes <a [a]> and then <ɔ [ʌ]>, and (c) the final vowel sound /ʌ/ is represented with the Korean vowel <i [i]> but is substituted with <e [e]>.

The word “chocolate” is another example how the English vowel <o> is pronounced as /a/ but written with the Korean vowel <o>. In addition, the final vowel sound /ʌ/ is written with the Korean vowel <i [i]>, which is more front and higher. These English sounds have been considered features that are not ‘correctly’ transferred in Korean writing (Kim, H., 2007). Consequently, participants’ modification mostly focuses on these two English sounds /a/ and /ʌ/. The first modified form ch’wak’allit [tɕʰwəkʰalrit] coined by Y in line 1 replaces the Korean mid back vowel <o [o]> with another Korean vowel <wa [wɐ]>. Because the English sound /f/ is an oral consonant with the air escaping through nearly closed rounded lips and the following sound /a/ is an open sound, Y’s linguistic choice of using the vowel <wa> can be seen as an attempt of capturing the movement from more close sound to more open sound. Her choice of changing the epenthetic vowel <o [o]> with a more open vowel <a [a]> can be understood in the same vein. This novel orthographic form ch’wak’allit [tɕʰwəkʰalrit] is often used among participants to indicate the word ‘chocolate’ and generally seen as more authentic and new writing form than a standardized form. In line 2, M modifies Y’s respelling form and ‘upgrades’ it to ch’wek’öllet [tɕʰwekʰʌlret] by changing all the three vowels. Her altered writing ch’wek’öllet [tɕʰwekʰʌlret], however, is quickly followed with her own negative assessment of “oh my, does it sound weird” in line 2. Since the word ‘chocolate’ is often represented as ch’ok’olet [tɕʰokʰolret] with a final vowel <e [e]> instead of a standardized vowel <i [i]> and the dark <ɔ [ʌ]> vowel is generally

seen as more desirable linguistic choice than the light <a [a]> vowel among South Koreans, it can be said that her negative evaluation is about her linguistic choice of using <we [we]> to represent English sound /ʌ/.

In line 3, Y repeats M's respelling form ch'wek'öllet and adds another word 'coffee'. The word 'coffee' is commonly written as k'öp'i [kʰʌpʰi] and there is no case where the word gets respelled by participants across different data. Y, however, respells the word as k'öwehi [kʰwʌhʷi] by switching <ö [ʌ]> with <wö [wʌ]> and <p'i [pʰi]> with <hwi [hʷi]>. Y's respelling form does not reflect any English phonological features, similar to M's choice of altering <ch'o [tʰo]> and <ch'wa [tʰwə]> with <ch'we [tʰwe]> that fail to correctly articulate English phonological features. Y's choice of using the word "coffee" instead of any other English words is worthy noting because it is one of the most commonly used English words and yet the most ideologically loaded words in South Korea. The word 'coffee' has been widely used to determine one's authentic English pronunciation in that the English sound /f/ is considered one of the most difficult English sounds to correctly pronounce by South Korean learners of English and the word (Donga Ilbo, 2010). In other words, the word "coffee" has a similar value with the word 'orange'. Given the fact that it is the only time Y writes the word "coffee" as k'wöhwi [kʰwʌhʷi] throughout data, it is possible that she intentionally uses the most ideologically loaded English word 'coffee' and respells it in a 'wrong' way where the respelling form does not 'correctly' articulate English sounds but rather is seen as one's attempt of trying hard to imitate those 'authentic' respelling forms, which is metapragmatically calling attention to the practice itself. In so doing, Y indirectly provides her negative assessment to M and M's respelling form.

As illustrated in the above excerpt, participants are extremely conscious of their linguistic choices that can be easily framed them as fakers and impostures. M's self-evaluation that comes

right after “ch’wek’öllet [tɕʰwekʰɔlret]” in line 2, for example, shows her in-depth awareness of distinct ways that the novel orthographic representation can be interpreted. Her immediate assessment also indicates her constant anxiety of making a ‘proper’ balance between ‘authentic’ orthographic forms and ‘inauthentic’ ones that could easily frame their uses as someone who tries hard to imitate ‘real’ and ‘cool’ bilinguals. In other words, while the novel orthographic representation has become one of the major linguistic tool to demonstrate their authenticity and legitimacy among participants, the successful and failed production and interpretation of novel orthographic forms has consequently indexed one’s ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilingual status.

While the overly articulated production of novel orthographic forms is one shibboleth, the failure of interpreting ‘authentic’ respellings is another one. The following interaction among six participants demonstrates how H’s failure of understanding a novel repelling p’omii results in the other participants making fun of H’s Korean and English proficiencies. The following excerpt occurs in a group KakaoTalk chat where all the eight participants freely exchange casual conversation. It is initiated by P’s suggestion of having a barbeque during fall break.

Excerpt 7. H’s Failure of Interpreting the Word ‘p’omii’

1. P: kaül panghakttae papek’yu [babekʰju] haemöggülggayo?  
가을 방학때 바베큐 해먹을까요?  
Do you all want to have a barbeque during fall break?
2. Y: ttaengsũ kinyömk papek’yu [babekʰju] gutgut [gutgut]!  
땡스 기념 바베큐 굳굳!  
Barbeque for Thanksgiving good good!
3. Y: urichip kũriresö rip’ai [ripai]? hh  
우리집 그릴에서 랠아이? ㅎㅎ  
How about having ribeye at my house?
4. E: ee...na p’ölbüreik [pʰɔlbureik] choe  
에에...나 펄브레익 초에  
Hmhm...At the beginning of fall break,

5. E: hakhoe tanyöonũnte, tũ hunũn choayo~  
 학회 다녀오는데, 그 후는 좋아요~  
 I am going to go to a conference, but I'll be free after that.
6. D: k'ol! koki chochi k  
 콜! 고기 좋지 ㅋ  
 I am in! Steak sounds good haha
7. M: p'ölbürwek [p<sup>h</sup>ɔlburwek] kinyöm kkokip'arwi [p<sup>h</sup>arɥi]~! yep pepe [je bebe]  
 펄브웁 기념 꼬기 파뤼~! 엡 베베  
 A steak party to celebrate fall break~! Yep, baby
8. Y: pechit'eryan [bedzit<sup>h</sup>erjɛn] ũl wihan (p'omii [pomi:]) saengsön + yachaeto  
 chunpihaketsawayo hh  
 베지테란을 위한 (포미이) 생선+야채도 준비하겠사와요 ㅎㅎ  
 I will also make fish and vegetables for the vegetarians (for me) haha
9. E: rip'ai [ripai]!  
 립아이!  
 Ribeye!
10. E: yachaenũn p'iryööpũm  
 야채는 필요없음  
 I don't need vegetables
11. H: hh yachaenũn p'iryööpũm 2222 kkkkkk  
 ㅎㅎ야채는 필요없다 2222 ㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋ  
 haha I also don't need vegetables hahahahahahaha
12. Y: kkkkk  
 ㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋ  
 hahahahaha
13. H: ani kũnte nuka kokirũl an mökchi?  
 아니 근데 누가 고기를 안 먹지?  
 By the way, you don't eat meat?
14. E: yönchi onni koki ani tũsichano kkk  
 연지언니 고기 아니 드시잖오 ㅋㅋㅋ  
 Yeonji onni does not eat meat hahaha
15. Y: waeirae. Irök'e kiöngmotalgöyo? hh  
 왜이래. 이렇게 기억못할거요? ㅎㅎ  
 What are you doing. Don't you remember? Haha

16. Y: simchiö chöki “p’omii [pomi:]” an poyö? hh  
 심지어 저기 “포미이” 안 보여? ㅎㅎ  
 Moreover, can you not see the phrase “for me” over there? haha
17. H:ahaha;; ssorissori [sorişori]  
 아하하;; 쏘리쏘리  
 hahaha;; sorry sorry
18. E: p’omi [pomi] saengsönirümin chul aratön kö anyeyo? kkk  
포미 생선이름인 줄 알았던 거 아니예요? ㅋㅋㅋ  
 Did you think p’omi (for me) is a name of fish? hahaha
19. Y: kkalkkalkkal- p’omi [pomi] saengsönim öjjöl hh  
 깔깔깔- 포미생선님 어쩔 ㅎㅎ  
 hahaha- Sir. p’omi (for me) fish. what the haha
20. D: kkkk naemari  
 ㅋㅋㅋㅋ 내말이  
 hahahaha tell me about it
21. Y: miyan Hunssi, naüi parüm muncheyökuna hh  
 미얀 훈씨, 나의 발음 문제였구나 ㅎㅎ  
 Sorry, Mr. Hoon. My pronunciation caused you some trouble.
22. D: hyöng, tomi [dömi] rako saengkakhankö anim? A..chöngmal..kkk  
 형, 도미라고 생각한거 아님? 아..정말..ㅋㅋㅋ  
 Hey, or did you think it was tomi (sea bream)? Ah...seriously..hahaha
23. H: waetürirae..nöneto nüröpwa  
 왜들이래..너네도 늙어봐  
 what are you all doing...you will understand when you get old.
24. Y: tomi hhhh  
 도미 ㅎㅎㅎㅎ  
 Sea bream hahahaha
25. E: kkkkk  
 ㅋㅋㅋㅋㅋ  
 hahahahaha
26. H: yochüm chöngsini orakkarak hae ㄸㄸㄸ  
 요즘 정신이 오락가락해 ㄸㄸㄸ  
 I’ve been going crazy recently :’(

The above excerpt captures various novel orthographic representations created and used by participants; gutgut (gutgut, 굿굿, good good in line 2), rip'ai (ripai, 린아이, rib eye in lines 3 and 9), büreik (bureik, 브레이크, fall break in line 4), bürwek (burwek, 브렉, fall break in line 7), pechit'eryan (bedzit<sup>h</sup>erjæn, 베지테란, vegetarian in line 8), and p'omii (pomi:, 폼이), for me in line 16). The words 굿굿 [gutgut] (instead of 굿굿[gutgut]) and 린아이 [ripai] instead of 린아이[ribai]) alter the consonant 's /s/' with 't /t/', and 'b /b/' with 'p /p/' respectively in order to demonstrate their knowledge of how these words are actually spelled in English instead of following a standardized orthographic form where English spelling cannot be accurately marked. The word pechit'eryan (베지테란 [bedzit<sup>h</sup>erjæn] instead of 베지테리안[bedzit<sup>h</sup>erian]) reflects the process of assimilation by altering the three syllabled 'terian' with the two syllabled 'ryan' to better indicate /riæn/ sound in a rapid speech. The process of upping is also noticeable in lines 4 and 7 where E's initial writing büreik (브레이크 [bureik] in line 3) was modified as bürwek (브렉 [burwek] in line 7) by another participant, M. As E deletes epenthetic vowel and makes 'k /k/' as a final consonant in her writing büreik, M shortens it as a two syllabled word by altering 'ei' with 'we'.

In the above excerpt, their frequent usage of novel repelling forms and the process of upping do not invite any marked responses or cause communication breakdown. It is evident that participants are accustomed to participate in creating and producing novel orthographic forms, and to join the process of upping. Because the novel respelling forms are closely related with their 'authentic' bilingual skill and their 'good' bilingual status, the failure of comprehending an arguably authentic orthographic representation can be understood as a source of shame and one's failed bilingual status. As evidenced in lines 16-26, H's failure of decoding the novel

orthographic form causes other participants to question H's authenticity as a fluent Korean-English bilingual or at least to make fun of him. In line 8, Yeonji writes the English word 'for me' as p'omii (포미이) [pomi:] instead of 포미 [pomi] to articulate a long vowel /i:/. Even though Yeonji points out that she is a vegetarian in line 8, H's question in line 13 indicates that he could not successfully understand Y's remark in line 8. H's failure then leads Eunju to get suspicious of his English-Korean proficiency in line 18. E's suspicion is immediately shared by Yeonji in line 19 and by Dohyun in line 20. In line 21, Yeonji makes a clear link between H's failure of comprehending information given in line 8 and novel respelling of p'omii by stating that her written form of English pronunciation causes H's failure. Dohyun then furthers their suspicion in line 22 by drawing a link between the word p'omii [pomi:] and the Korean word tomi [domi] (a sea stream). It is followed by Y's and E's laugh in lines 24 and 25. Hoon responds to their suspicion in lines 23 and 26 where he admits his failure of interpreting the novel orthographic form in line 8 and makes excuses for his failure by saying that he is older than others.

Here, we can see participants constantly participate in the process of upping in order to claim their legitimacy as 'good' and 'authentic' bilinguals. The above interaction also demonstrates how one's failed attempt of comprehending these 'authentic' orthographic representation is thought to signify his/her failed bilingual status and limited bilingual competence. It also shows how those participants who could not successfully produce or understand 'authentic' novel respelling are often framed as a source of shame and ridicule among participants.

### **Conclusion**

As Kress (2000) defines spelling as "knowing how to write words correctly" (p. 1), the idea that there are 'correct' and 'incorrect' ways of writing words have been widely shared by

many people including scholars, policy makers and educators. What counts as ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect’ spellings, however, is deeply situated in sociopolitical and historical tensions. Orthographic choices thus have social symbolic meanings unique to the given speech community (Sebba, 2007, 2009). The analysis of novel respelling forms in South Korea presents an excellent example how spellings and orthographic choices are historically and ideologically contingent, and reflect locally grounded tensions. On one hand, the emergence of novel respellings can be viewed as an extension of historical debate on how to ‘authentically’ and ‘correctly’ transfer foreign words in Korean while successfully removing all the colonial remnants of Japanese or Janapnized language forms. On the other hand, these novel respellings reflect delicate tensions between global and local, between modern and tradition, and between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ bilinguals existed in contemporary linguistic market of South Korea.

The chapter also highlights how bilinguals strategically use novel respelling forms to stake a claim for their legitimacy. Similar to personalized orthographies where users intentionally use non-standard spellings to articulate their identities or to distinct themselves from others (e.g., Horobin, 2013; Jaffe, 2009; Sebba, 2007), these novel respelling forms are generally understood as the bilingual creativity (Kachru, 1985) and ‘authentic’ English in contemporary South Korean society. Through novel respelling forms and their socially recognizable meanings, participants thus successfully position themselves as ‘good’ and ‘authentic’ bilinguals, and differentiate themselves from other incompetent and inauthentic bilinguals. The intensive process of distinction can be also observed in their use of novel respellings where they are constantly monitoring each other’s respelling forms and reproducing more ‘authentic’ respelling forms to prove their legitimacy. In doing so, they rearticulate the ideologically constructed

meaning of the novel respelling, and solidify their legitimacy as ‘good’ bilinguals in South Korean society.

## **Chapter 8. Conclusion**

Even though my analysis is mainly focused on the case of South Korea and transnational South Koreans, the findings of my dissertation can help researchers better understand growing numbers of transnational students, heritage language learners and migrant students across the world. They could also provide educators and policy makers a new lens to look at their students' language acquisition and language practices, while offering language learners and users themselves an insightful chance to think about their own positionality and language learning trajectory in this precarious linguistic market.

### **A. The Importance of Taking a Historical Perspective**

It has been an aim of my dissertation to highlight the importance of taking a historical perspective to understand the complex role that English has played in the contemporary linguistic market of South Korea. In chapters 2 and 3, I look at how languages, language registers and language practices enact ties of language to place and time, and combine different time and space with "image of man" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 85). I then examine how such chorotopic representations have guided how people understand different language registers, language speakers and language practices in contemporary South Korean society. The analysis of media and interactional data also suggests that historically constructed models of 'good' (nationalists) and 'bad' (national betrayers) bilinguals and their linguistic and non-linguistic attributes have served as an authoritative tool to marginalize or legitimize growing numbers of English-Korean bilinguals in contemporary South Korean society. This suggests that we as researchers need to pay more attention to the ways that metapragmatic typifications formulate certain social meanings for a specific pronunciation and semiotic display, imbuing typified personhood associated with these identifiable linguistic features. Without examining historical narratives and

social discourses that have contributed to such metapragmatic work, we cannot fully understand how dynamic tensions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ regimes and between ‘global’ and ‘local’ discourses are mapped onto different languages and language speakers.

My dissertation challenges scholars in the field of applied linguistics and education to take a historical perspective to explain language-related phenomenon rather than simply looking either macro or micro data (Lemke, 2000). Taking a historical perspective can provide researchers more in-depth understanding and new interpretations on language learners/users’ language practices and language acquisition, which are historically and socially contingent.

### **B. The Importance of Acquiring Sociolinguistic Competence**

The analyses presented in my dissertation have demonstrated that English language learners and users consider acquiring a particular set of sociolinguistic and discursive competence that enables them to speak English and Korean in a socially expected manner as one of the most important goals. Participants tend to put investment in acquiring how to speak and use two different languages in a socially proper way that prevents them to be seen as ‘being too Americanized/cosmopolitan’ or ‘being too Korean’, rather than investing in speaking like ‘native’ English speakers. In other words, they invest in developing a particular type of sociolinguistic competence that displays their successful balancing work between two extremes while distancing themselves from another type of sociolinguistic competence that is associated with damaging image of ‘bad’ bilinguals in a given speech community. The findings of my dissertation have significant implications for traditional SLA researchers and educators who have heavily focused on the acquisition of linguistic competence and undermined the importance of looking at the role of sociolinguistic competence. Indeed, we could find numerous SLA research that have highlighted the importance of acquiring writing, reading, listening and speaking skills

but only few literature have discussed about the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence, which according to my participants plays a vital role in their ‘real’ lives.

The findings of my dissertation also make clear that the acquisition of ‘native-like’ English competence is not a goal of second/foreign language learners. Even though the ideology of native-speakerism has been highly criticized for last two decades (Holliday, 2006; Pennycook, 2012), traditional SLA research, along with various English language learning and teaching materials, standardized English tests and educational policies, still widely assume ‘native-like’ competence as an ideal goal of language teaching and learning, especially in ESL and EFL classrooms. My dissertation, however, demonstrates that language learners and users are not simply governed by such imposed model of ‘ideal’ language competence, but rather critically evaluate this ideological constitution and reconstruct what counts as valuable language competence by using existing social tensions and local dynamics. Participants in my research even try to distance themselves from language registers and language practices that could be seen as ‘native-like’ English to avoid the potential risk of being framed as fakers and ‘bad’ bilinguals in a given speech community. That does not mean all the English language learners would not want to acquire ‘native-like’ English proficiency. The point I have tried to make is that we as researchers and educators need to consider their unique needs and try to understand dynamics of their local speech communities where they are located in, rather than idealizing a certain type of language competence and speakerhood and imposing it upon language learners. As we are living in the world where approximately 600 million people are using English as a second/foreign language (Crystal, 2010), the discussion presented in my dissertation would help educators, policy makers and school administrators at all levels of the school system to better understand the increasing number of transnational students and migrant students. It also suggests SLA

researchers to see the significant role of sociolinguistic and discursive competence, which could help language learners be seen as a legitimate speaker of language/languages.

### **C. The Important Role of Language Learners/Users as Social Agents**

The currently burgeoning state of literature on second language learners' identities and a rise of the poststructuralist perspective have explained language learners as social agents who are actively engaging in shaping meanings of languages, language practices and language speakers, and making sense of themselves. Indeed, the recent research have successfully demonstrated how language learners “negotiate” (e.g., Kanno, 2003; Lam, 2009), “invest” (e.g., McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2001) and “reimagine” (e.g., Pavlenko, 2003) their multiple social identities in order to position themselves. Others have used different terms such as “subjectivity” and “agency” to explain the active positionality of language learners and users (e.g., Butler, 1997; Davis, 2011). The findings of my dissertation contribute the ongoing discussion on the role of language learners and users by demonstrating the dynamic processes of distinction where language learners are strategically using the already-existing social and ideological discourses to differentiate themselves from others. They suggest that language learners and users are not simply negotiating among different identity options or ideological labels given to them but strategically formulating their own position through the systematic process of distinction. This dynamic processes sometimes involve the process of disparaging, a more agentive and aggressive process where language learners and users are speaking ill of others and assigning socially undesirable attributes to them as an attempt to maximize differences between them and others.

Even though previous identity-related studies have successfully highlighted the agentive role of language learners and users, the findings of my dissertation suggest that we need more

agentive terms to explain the dynamic and complicated processes of their sense-making discourses. Since all the language learners and users are located in the linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1977, 1982) and trying to establish their ‘marketable’ identity or positionality to a specific target market, I find the concept of “self-branding” useful. The concept of self-branding was first introduced by Erving Goffman (1956) and has been widely used in the field of psychology, economy and communication to explain language speakers’ active involvement in sense-making discourses. As exemplified by the findings of my dissertation, language learners and users need to constantly brand themselves as ‘valuable’ bilinguals and distinguish themselves from others to survive in the precarious market. They are actively consuming local market dynamics, and creating and performing a particular identity (in the case of my participants, someone with a strong Korean identity and advanced English and Korean competence) that could produce the most favorable impression to audiences in a target market and thus make their bilingual competence be seen as ‘valuable’ linguistic capital. In other words, individual language learners and users are forced to do the constant laborious work of engaging in performances and presenting themselves as ‘good’ and ‘marketable’ bilinguals because “If you don’t brand yourself, someone else will...you’re giving the power to other people to brand you if you don’t do it yourself” (Kaputa, 2005). The process of successful self-branding involves the act of constant evaluation, stylization and marketing. Similarly, language learners and users are the subject who are always engaging in the process of self-branding that requires them to become more attuned to existing ideological constitutions, to evaluate others’ linguistic and non-linguistic resources, and to brand themselves with socially recognizable and marketable resources, and actively marketing them.

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Appendix A. *The National Curriculum Reform*

	Sociopolitical changes	English language teaching methods/practices
The 1 <sup>st</sup> National Curriculum (1954-1963)	1954-1960: President Rhee	Grammar-Translation method being prevalently used
	1961: President Park's military takeover and his dictatorship began	Audio-Lingual method being introduced
The 2 <sup>nd</sup> National Curriculum (1963-1973)	President Park's dictatorship continued	Grammar-translation method and Audio-Lingual method being prevalently used
	Major focus on national economic development	
The 3 <sup>rd</sup> National Curriculum (1973-1981)	1978: President Park's dictatorship ended	Audio-Lingual method being prevalently used
	1980: President Chun's military regime began	Cognitive approach being introduced but not widely used
The 4 <sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1981-1987)	President Chun's military regime continued	Establishing extensive number of language labs in schools as an attempt to help students acquire "live English" (sayngwhal yǒngǒ, salainūn yǒngǒ, see Kwon & Kim, 2010, p. 127)
		English education available in elementary schools as an extracurricular activity
The 5 <sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1987-1992)	1987: President Noh's government began	Introducing communicative competence as the goal of English education, but still grammatical syllabus being largely used
	1988: Seoul Olympic	Emphasizing fluency and accuracy
The 6 <sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1992-1997)	1992: President Kim's government began	Emphasizing communicative competence and fluency
	1994: Globalization policy enacted	Introducing CLT as a mean to replace Audio-Lingual and Grammar-Translation methods

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		Establishing EPIK (the English Program in Korea) in 1995, a government-led program that actively recruits native English speaking teachers
The 7 <sup>th</sup> National Curriculum (1997-2006)	1997-1998: the East Asian financial crisis (IMF crisis)	Emphasizing live English (sayngwhal yǒngǒ) and communicative activities
	1998-2003: President Kim's government	CLT becoming a major teaching method along with notional-functional syllabus
	2003: President Rho's government began	Introducing English at the elementary school level
2006 Revised National Curriculum (2006-2009)	2008: President Lee's government - advocating English immersion	Emphasizing communicative and functional competence, and encouraging a spoken language-focused language education (ũmsǒng ònǒ kyoyuk)
		Establishing TALK (Teach and Learn in Korea) in 2008, a government-sponsored program to invite native English speaking undergraduates to work as English teachers in South Korean public schools
2009 Revised National Curriculum (2009-present)	2013: President Park's government began	Emphasizing communicative competence and increasing the importance of acquiring practical English (silyong yǒngǒ)

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